



FRANCISCAN FEDERATION  
2023

# ANNUAL REPORT



**PRESENTED BY**  
The National Board of the  
Franciscan Federation

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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

SARA P. MARKS, M.A.

A popular meme started popping up on social media streams a few years back that read, “not my circus, not my monkeys.” It is a great adage to describe one’s recognition of something not being their responsibility—particularly when that something is chaotic. There are many beautiful metaphors that could describe the transformational space in which the Federation finds itself. One could describe the uncertainty as Monet’s described London in the fog, “London wouldn’t be a beautiful city. It’s the fog that gives it its magnificent breadth.” Organizational transformation could be equated to the caterpillar’s transformative journey to becoming a butterfly. As eloquently as I could describe this past year as Executive Director, the image that most resonates is the recognition that this IS my circus and these ARE my monkeys.

Transformation is never easy, growth always comes with sharp edges that require attention to smooth out, and change—even when desired—pushes us beyond the comfort zone of what we have always known. But transformation also offers the opportunity to dream, and hope, and ask questions that move us closer to alignment with God’s desires for each of us. As you will read in this report the Federation has, and continues to ask such questions, to hold such hope, and move toward a new organizational reality. It is a movement toward inclusivity that stands on the foundation of the Third Order Regular sisters and brothers of the United States. Organizational structures are shifting and new models are emerging and the Spirit is in it all.

In this first year as your executive director, I have been honored by your affirmations, challenged to bring harmony from dissonance, and thankful for the ways in which I have been gently guided by the spirits of Francis, Clare, and all Franciscans who have come before me. I am reminded of Habakkuk 2:3,

FOR STILL THE VISION AWAITS ITS APPOINTED TIME; IT HASTENS TO THE END—IT WILL NOT LIE. IF IT SEEMS SLOW, WAIT FOR IT; IT WILL SURELY COME; IT WILL NOT DELAY.

We are the living embodiment of this vision, and as Cathy Tisel Nelson wrote and we sang, “now is the time, and we are the ones.” So, YES, this is OUR circus, and these are OUR monkeys! As we continue to make the vision a reality, may we be curious like George, relational like Abu, and wise like Rafiki.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successful implementation of an online database and donation/payment processing system.
- Advanced staffing opportunities through the creation of a benefits package
- Created the position of Commission Coordinator and hired Eunice J. Park.
- Effectively transitioned the Federation to a payroll system that provides organizational independence.
- Wrote for and awarded 2 grants; \$50,000 from the Sacred Heart Charitable Fund, \$5,000 from FSPA Ministry Grant Fund.
- Chaired the AFC 2023 Planning Committee.
- Successful launch of new website.

# CONVOCAION OF CANONICAL LEADERS REPORT

DAMIAN NOVELLO, OSF

The Convocation of Canonical Leaders continues to connect the leadership of our member congregations and provinces.

Through close cooperation with the Transformation Task Force (TTF), the National Board and member congregations, the Convocation of Canonical Leaders (CCL) spent the year re-imagining itself from the former Commission of Canonical Leaders (CCL) and redefining its role as part of the greater Franciscan Federation.

The CCL, through three Executive committee and two General Zoom meetings, discussed and deliberated on the changes proposed by the TTF and the National Board. Our meetings continued the discussions from the last Annual Federation Conference strategizing ways to further communicate and collaborate with other Franciscan entities. The Leaders of member congregations approved changes to the bylaws that would broaden Board membership to include persons from other Franciscan or non-profit sectors who bring needed expertise to the Federation operations.

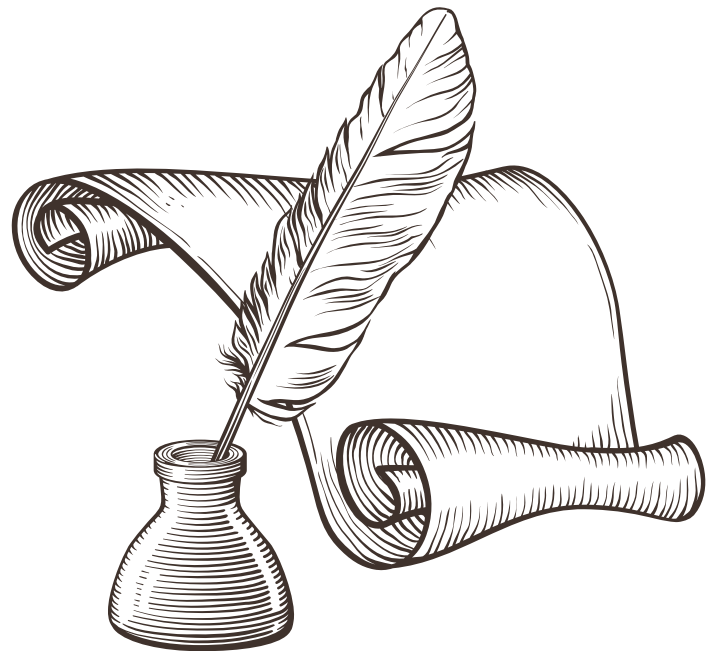
## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Damian Novello OSF, Chair  
Jeanne Bessette OSF  
Renita Brummer OSF  
Janet Gardner OSF  
Leonette Kochan OSF  
Joyce Shanabarger OSF  
Judith Woods SSI-TOSF

As the plan stands now, once the total set of bylaws has been revised, three of the nine to eleven National Board members would be elected from the CCL and have designated Reserve Powers<sup>1</sup>. These Reserved Powers are being discussed and evaluated at this time to properly reflect the role of CCL members and their responsibility for the mission.

The process to elect these Board members needs to be decided by the CCL. Their term would begin in the summer of 2024.

The CCL expresses its gratitude to all its members, especially those on the Executive Committee.



1. The number of Third Order Regular members elected to the National Board is not limited to three, but only the designated three would have Reserved Powers.

# NATIONAL BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SUZANNE M. KUSH, CSSF

It's been a year full of growth and moving forward for the Federation. As you may recall at the AFC in 2022 – the National Board was directed to continue to envision a new Franciscan Federation. Change happened quickly, and the Franciscan Federation National Board hired an executive director, Sara P. Marks who began on July 1, 2022. As the first layperson hired, there were several new office procedures that needed to be addressed. A new hiring and onboarding system was created that included tax filings, health insurance, orientation, and the creation of a new office. Time was spent cleaning out and organizing the former Brooklyn office to prepare it to be moved to a new location.

To envision a new federation, it was important to address the Franciscan Federation website. Through several months of work in collaboration with our website committee and Blustery Day consultants, a new website was launched. The new site is user-friendly, re-gearred toward mobile phones and is easily managed. Continued improvements to the website are made possible through a grant from the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity, Sacred Heart Province. The Federation is grateful to the work of the committee on this project for sharing resources.

The Federation continued to change and evolve with the hiring of Eunice J. Park as the Commission Coordinator. Sara Marks and Eunice Park have both worked enthusiastically and have greatly strengthened the operational aspects of the Franciscan Federation. Their work has allowed the National Board to focus on the mandate given by the membership to transform the Federation.

## FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

At the AFC 2022, the Convocation of Canonical Leaders agreed that the Fiduciary matters would be the responsibility of the National Federation Board. The Canonical Leaders requested that the National Board leadership meet with the Canonical Leaders two or three times a year to report on key issues and provide a report of the financial standing of the organization.

The Convocation of Canonical Leaders and the National Board met on January 23 and April 24, 2023, and received a financial report and discussed the reorganization of the Federation's National Board. Suggestions were made by the CCL members and incorporated into the Reorganization document. The area of reserved powers of the CCL needs further clarification. Members of the Federation had an opportunity to provide input during two Zoom Meetings held on May 19 and 22, 2023. A final draft of the document will be presented to the CCL during their meeting during the AFC 2023.

## NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

Suzanne Marie Kush, CSSF, President  
Joyce Shanabarger, OSF, Vice-President  
Michelle Balek, OSF, Secretary  
Frank Scornaienchi, TOR, Treasurer  
Sara P. Marks, Executive Director  
Jeanne Bessette, OSF  
Jeanne Connolly  
Celeste Crine, OSF  
Elizabeth Hughes  
Kathleen Warren, OSF

## EXPANSION INITIATIVE

The expansion of membership began with AFC 2021 with a recommendation from the Transformation Task Force – lead by Sister Margaret Carney, OSF. The National Board began to make structural changes to the Franciscan Federation including defining membership. The idea of expansion was embraced immediately at last year’s assembly as the Federation welcomed those individuals who share the Third Order Charism including Associates, Co-Journers, Order of Secular Franciscans, Emergents and Executive Leaders of Franciscan Organizations (ELFO). This initiative helped to expand our membership as we witnessed new leadership emerging in the various Commissions. Their gifts and talents have been invaluable to the Federation.

## STRUCTURAL CHANGES UPDATE

The restructuring of the National Board began in 2022 and will be completed in 2024. The work undertaken by the present National Board is based up the recommendations received by the Transformation Task Force who submitted its final report in December 2022. Working with the recommendations a subcommittee of the National Board began working to prepare a draft to the Convocation of Canonical Leaders and presented to them on January 23, 2023. Membership had the opportunity to comment on the Board Restructuring during two Zoom Meetings in May 2023. Upon approval of the restructuring of the National Board a nomination process will be developed by a committee. All members of the Franciscan Federation will be eligible for nomination. Rewriting of the By-laws will take place in 2024 pending the acceptance of the Reorganization of the National Board at AFC 2023.



National Board Retreat 2022

## BOARD RETREAT CREATES GOALS

During a Board Retreat held in Chicago September 8-11, 2022, three goals were established for 2022 to 2024.

**Rooted in openness and a Franciscan Spirit of belonging, we create opportunities for building and strengthening relationships.**

The National Board has clarified roles, responsibilities, needs and expectations around the work of the Commissions. By hiring a staff member dedicated to the coordination of Commissions, the Federation is beginning to breakdown silos and moving toward deeper collaboration. This will continue to be a work in progress as each commission lives into its new reality.

Status Ongoing: This will require continued evaluation of the National Board and the Commissions. The National Board is also investigating the possibility of shared services with other Franciscan organizations.

EXPANSION WAS EMBRACED IMMEDIATELY AT LAST YEAR’S ASSEMBLY AS THE FEDERATION WELCOMED THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO SHARE THE THIRD ORDER CHARISM INCLUDING ASSOCIATES, CO-JOURNERS, ORDER OF SECULAR FRANCISCANS, EMERGENTS AND EXECUTIVE LEADERS OF FRANCISCAN ORGANIZATIONS (ELFO).

With honesty and a view to the future, we continue to reimagine the Franciscan Federation as an ever-evolving organization.

In collaboration with the Convocation of Canonical Leaders (CCL), the National Board has been engaged in creating a new structure for the National Board that will integrate representatives of the canonical leaders with reserved powers and an increase of lay directors with a variety of skills to strengthen the National Board.

Status Complete: This new structure was developed in consultation with experts in board development. A By-law committee will be formed to review and revise the present by-laws to reflect the present reality of the organization.

Committed to transparent communication and vibrant networking, we collaborate with our members and form partnerships across the Franciscan world.

The National Board of the Federation has shared updates on what has been taking place. Through a user-friendly website, programs, retreats, and workshops from various Franciscan organizations have been made available to its members.

Status Ongoing: The National Board is committed to being transparent with its membership.



*Deo Gratias!*

The National Board is grateful to the staff, members and leadership teams who are working toward the Franciscan Federation's mission of promoting the exploration and study of Franciscan Charism and implication for these times and our world. The National Board asks you to join in embracing our new partnerships with lay staff – Sara and Eunice – who bring a new level of energy and creative skills to the National Office. The leadership and members of the Commissions have worked diligently to defining their focus and have offered much to support the work of the Federation. We are most grateful to the Convocation of Canonical Leaders who have offered much advice and direction in the restructuring of the National Board. The ideas to expand and build the Federation have been heard and are now being implemented.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

FRANK SCORNAIENCHI, T.O.R.

I would like to begin this report by thanking the members of the Finance Committee, Virginia Spiegel, O.S.F. and Malachi Van Tassell, T.O.R., for their service, guidance and advice concerning the finances of the Federation. Also, I want to thank our Executive Director, Sara P. Marks, for her work in the National Office streamlining the reporting of our finances. Sara and I have been working this year to better organize how our finances are handled.

Our General Fund Bank Account has been moved to M&T Bank, West Chester, PA., a bank with better branch options to support increased collaboration between the executive director and treasurer.

As for our Investment Fund, PLANCORP in St. Louis, MO, has managed our investments for a year. As most of you realize, this has been the worst year for the stock market since 2008, the seventh worst year for the S&P 500, and 2022 ranks with the ugliest years of the Great Depression. The simultaneous collapse of bond and stock prices can both be traced back to the same sources – inflation and rising interest rates by the “Fed.” Therefore our investments have fared just as bad. Hopefully, in the long run we will recoup our losses in years to come.

The National Board continues to implement the plan of “widening our tent of membership” in the Federation. The Transformation Task Force II has given suggestions to the Board concerning our future structure that the Board has taken under advisement and proposed an implementation plan. There are plans to increase individual membership in the Federation which will help our finances in the membership category.

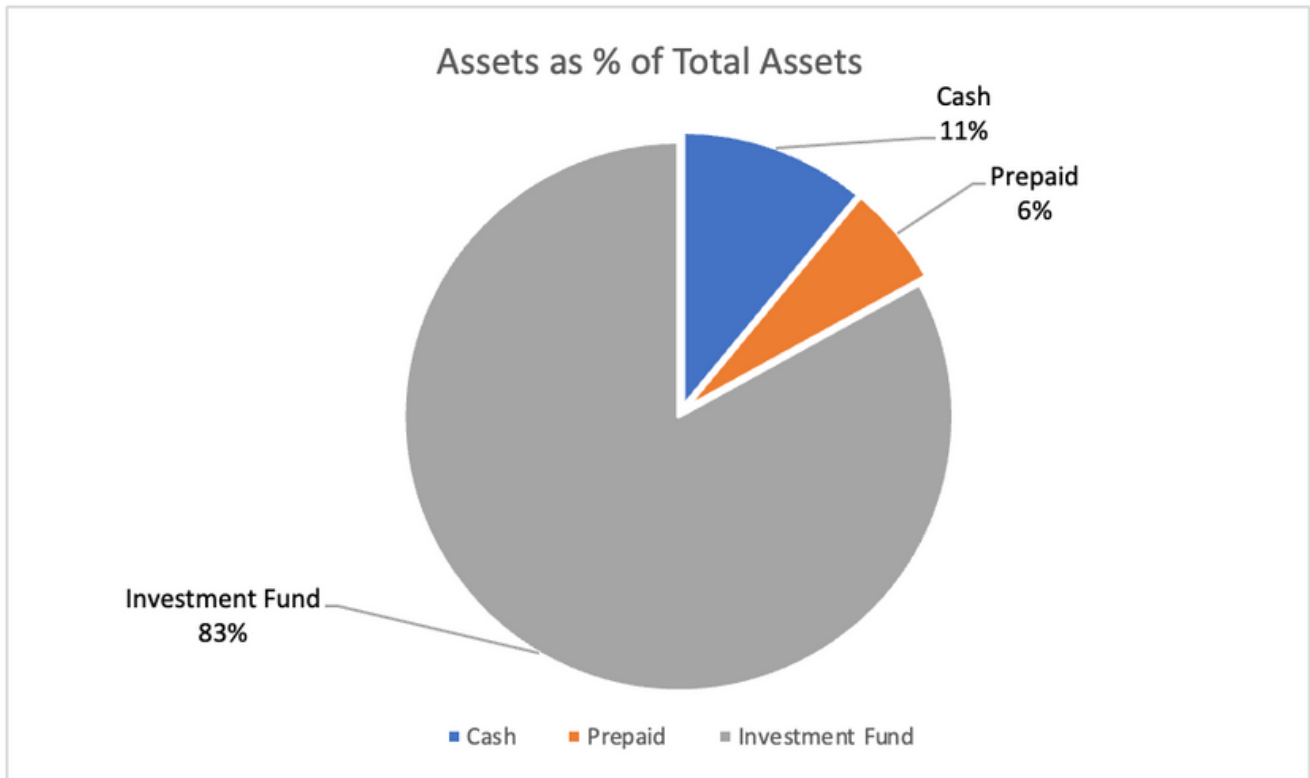
We have received a \$50,000 Grant to be utilized in the areas of Technology, the Commissions and Scholarships.

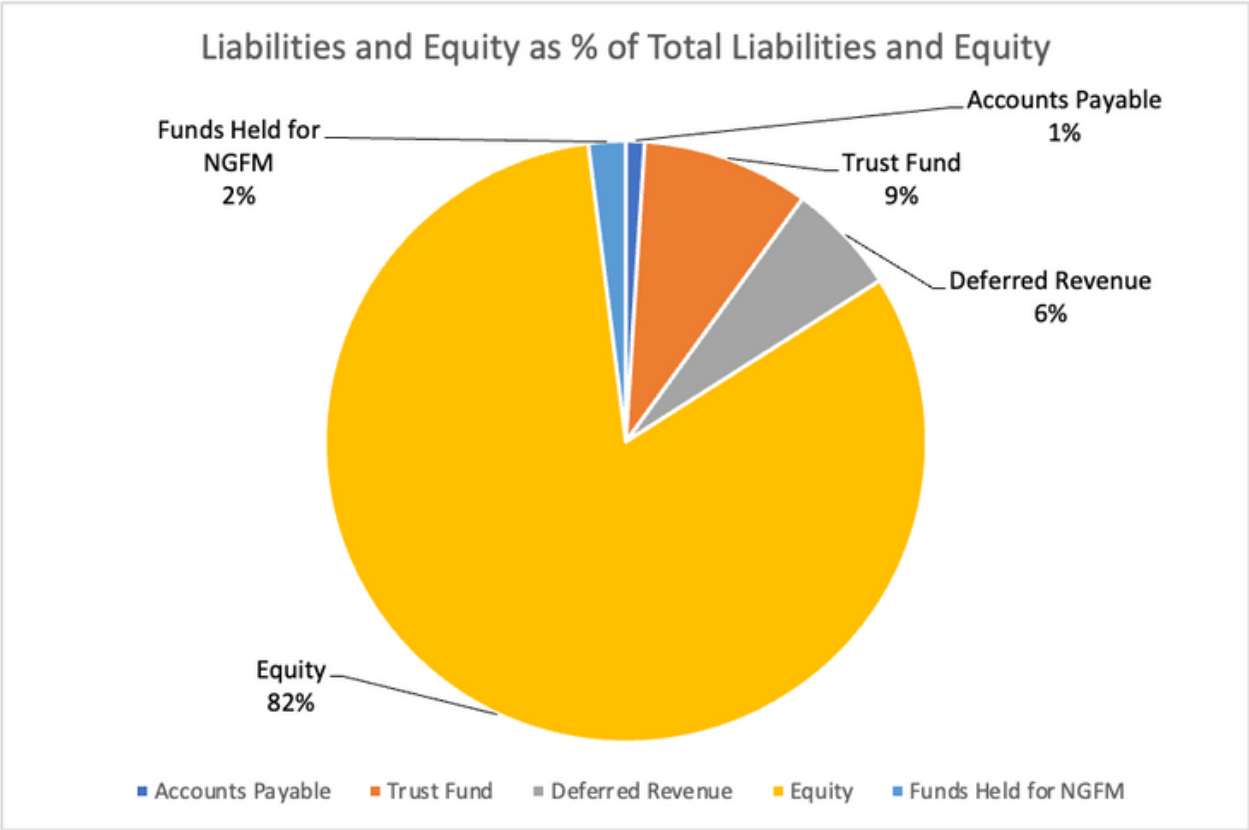
As we look to the future we hopefully continue to evolve and grow.



BALANCE SHEET 2022

<b>ASSETS</b>		December 31, 2021	December 31, 2022
Cash Checking	\$	79,282.00	72,800.00
Investment Fund		664,398.00	552,352.00
Prepaid Expenses & Inventory		38,936.00	38,936.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	\$	<b>782,616.00</b>	<b>664,088.00</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			
Accounts Payable	\$	3,035.00	-600.00
Trust & Loan Fund		60,500.00	60,500.00
Deferred Revenue		20,840.00	49,265.00
Funds Held for NGFM		4,866.00	3,706.00
Equity		693,375.00	551,617.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	\$	<b>782,616.00</b>	<b>664,488.00</b>

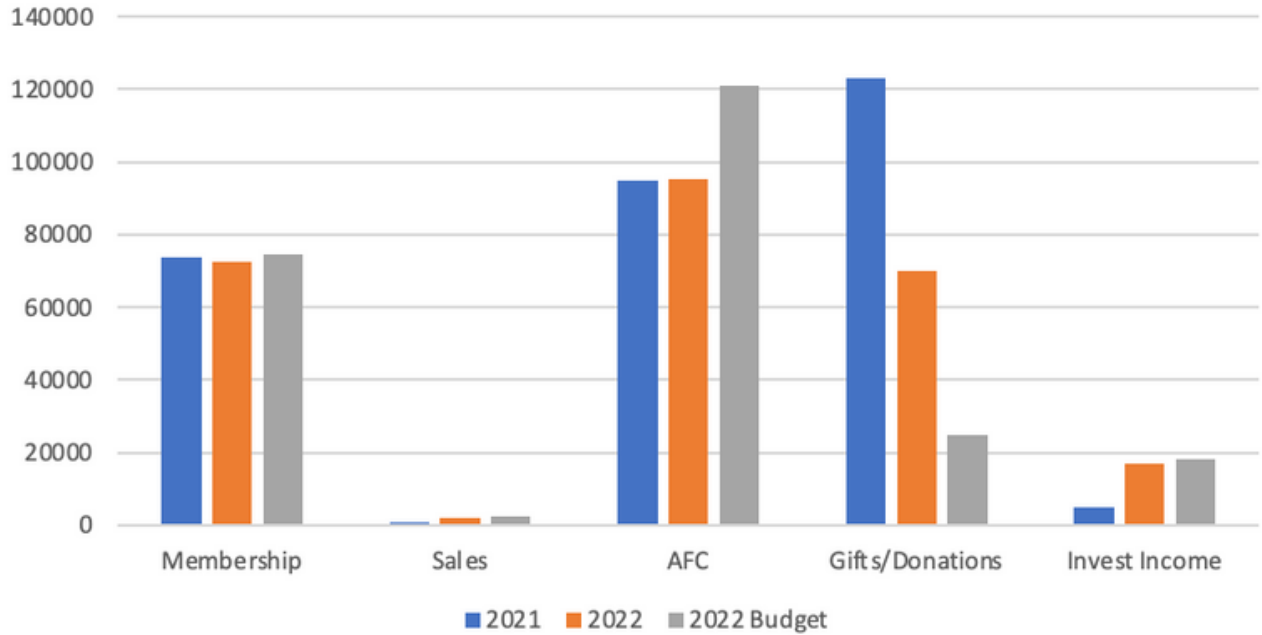




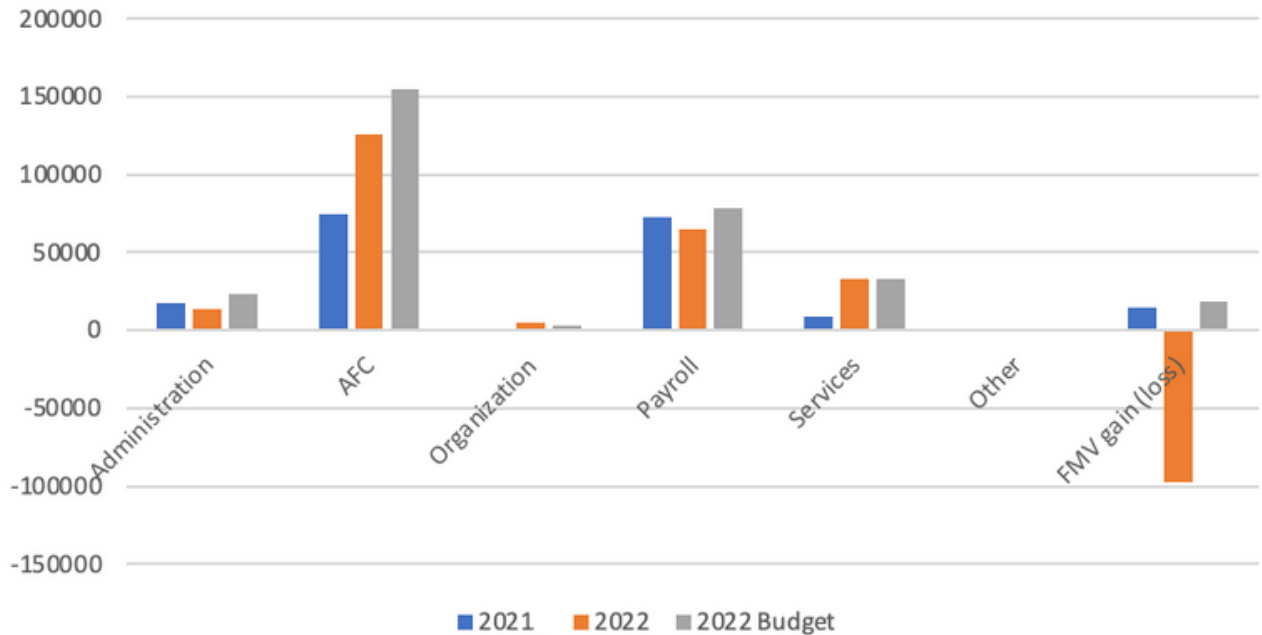
INCOME AND USE OF INCOME 2022

INCOME		December 31, 2021	December 31, 2022
Membership	\$	73,825	72,350.00
Sales/Services		872.00	2,206.00
Conference		94,789.00	95,251.00
Gifts & Donations & Grants		123,211.00	70,020.00
Investment Income		4,846.00	17,061.00
Fair Market Value Increase in Invest.		-14,147.00	-97,320.00
Donated Services			3,678.00
<b>Total Income</b>	\$	<b>283,396.00</b>	<b>163,246.00</b>
<b>USE OF INCOME</b>			
Administration	\$	17,430.00	13,925.00
Conference		74,369.00	125,628.00
Organizational Expense		1,250.00	4,841.00
Payroll Expense		72,998.00	64,873.00
Services/Programs		8,436.00	32,977.00
Other		361.00	-226.00
<b>Total Use of Income</b>	\$	<b>174,844.00</b>	<b>242,018.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	\$	<b>108,552.00</b>	<b>-78,772.00</b>

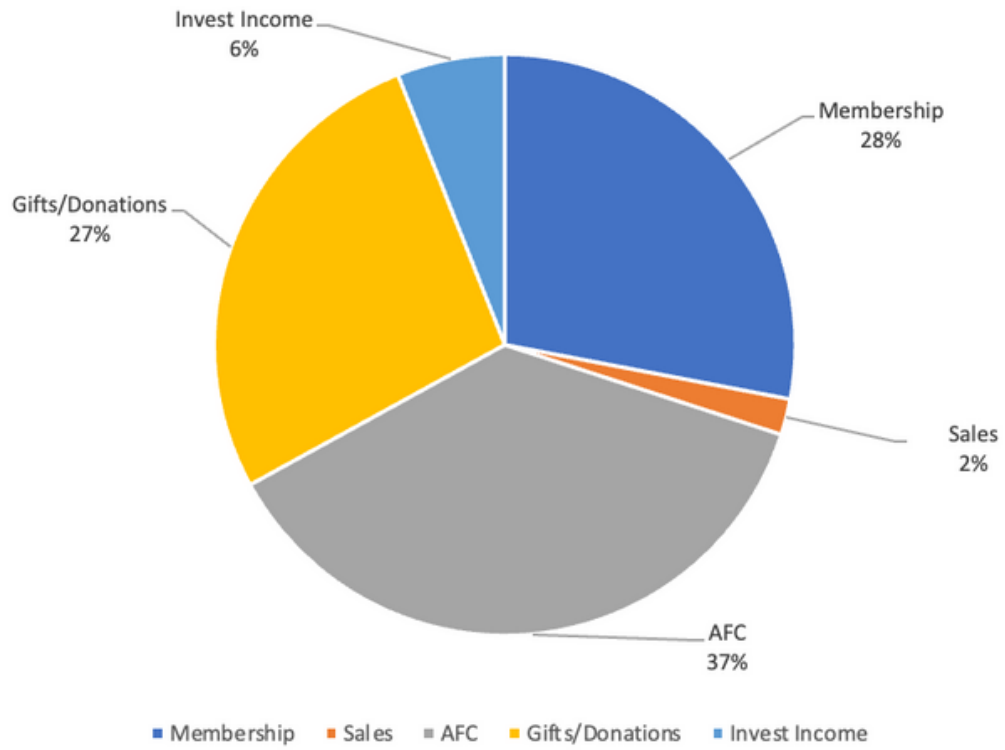
### 2021 Income compared to 2022 and 2022 Budget



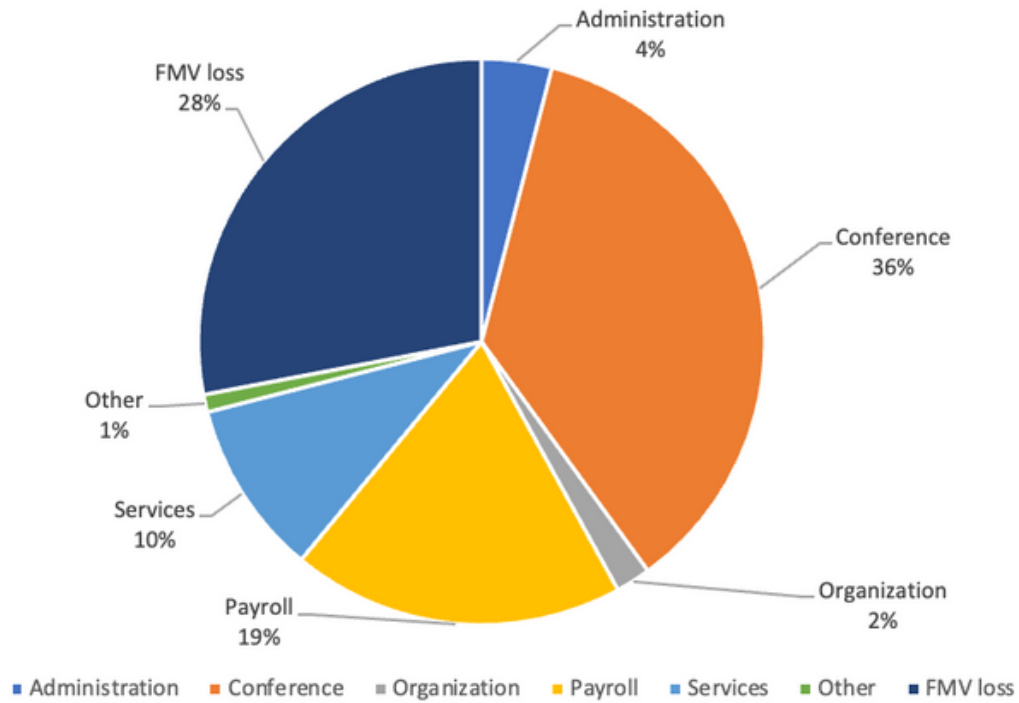
### 2021 Expenses compared to 2022 and 2022 Budget



Income as % of total Income for 2022



Expenses as % of Total Expenses for 2022



## ANNUAL FRANCISCAN FEDERATION CONFERENCE 2022

In order to be transparent and informative, I would like to summarize the use of the restricted donations and restricted sponsorships from the member congregations of the Franciscan Federation for the 2022 AFC (Annual Federation Conference) held in Pittsburgh, PA. I will do this by listing to what category the funds were used and the amount used in each category.

CATEGORY	AMOUNT UTILIZED
Facilitator	\$ 1,750.00
Keynote Speakers	\$ 8,441.00
Printing	\$ 1,770.00
Liturgist, Musicians & Cantors	\$ 2,623.00
Food and Beverage	\$ 3,500.00
General Conference Expenses	\$ 7,139.00
Youth Participants	\$ 1,008.00
Scholarships	\$ 3,407.00
Conference Donations	\$ 4,930.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 300.00
TOTAL	\$ 34,868.00

I want to express my thanks to all the Congregations that have sponsored these various categories. Your support helps to make our Federation Conference so successful. Any funds that were left over have been placed in the Investment Fund and will be utilized for the next Annual Federation Conference.

# COMMISSION COORDINATOR REPORT

EUNICE J. PARK, MTS, MAMC

The definition of the word “commission” is “a group of persons assigned to perform a duty.” But the root of the word comes from a combination of the words com, meaning “with” and missio, meaning “being sent.” We are, in fact, a mission community.

This seems particularly fitting for this past year, when the three Commissions of the Federation have in fact been on a mission, of sorts. With changes, transitions, and growing edges, the Commissions have been in dialogue, embracing, brainstorming, and working toward new ways of being commissioned, of being missioned, and of being community.

Much like the way Francis rebuilt and refortified the church by forming a new community, our Commissions have also been restoring and strengthening the Federation – through new ideas, new goals, new structures, and new members!

As you will read in the reports, all three Commissions have been working toward some common themes: working with and for the younger generations; balancing action and contemplation; creatively meeting the signs of the times; revisiting what it means to be community; advocating for justice and diversity; and always being grounded in the spirit of Francis and Clare.

First, the Commission of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation continues its urgent advocacy, education, and resolution work. Of note, JPIC has recently created both intergenerational and collaborative ways of working toward ecological and climate justice programs. The Commission of Life and Mission (formerly “Charism Services”) is helping to channel our charism to move the Federation forward. CLM’s three subcommittees are doing outreach in formation and education, capturing new and emergent initiatives, and offering guidance for journeying together with various lay leaders. The Commission of Member Engagement (formerly “Regions”) bears the crucial responsibility of listening to Federation members, helping articulate their relational needs, inspiring member engagement, and growing membership. CME is the relational glue of our Federation family.

This past year was a very busy time for the Commissions and the work was challenging. There were lots of changes, some unknowns, and even confusion, at times. But as the dust has begun to settle, we can see how fruitful and exciting the year ahead looks. The potential and possibilities for the Commissions – for engagement, for collaborative work, for new energy, and for new members – is incredibly hopeful and exciting. Perhaps this is how Francis felt as he rebuilt San Damiano!



# COMMISSION OF JUSTICE, PEACE, AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION (JPIC)

PAT MILLEN, OSF, CHAIR

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Pat Millen, OSF, Chair  
Caryn Crook, SOSF  
Michele Dunne, OFS  
Liz Fuhr, OSF  
Kelly Anne Moltzen, OFS  
Carolyn Townes, OFS

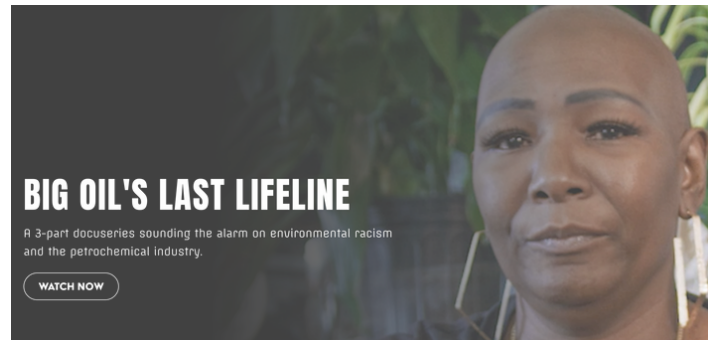
After consultation with the Executive Director, Sara Marks, as well as with the National Board, a decision was made for the JPIC Commission to continue implementing the 2022 Resolution ("Confronting Environmental Racism with a Franciscan Heart") rather than developing a new Resolution.

To this end, we formed an Executive Committee, following AFC 2022, which then met monthly via zoom, and created an email distribution list to promote our advocacy efforts.

In the Fall of 2022, in collaboration with the Franciscan Action Network and the Franciscan Friars (OFM) US-6 JPIC Working Group, we offered a 4-part webinar series on "Confronting Environmental Racism." The centerpiece of the series consisted of three short documentaries produced by the Hip Hop Caucus called "Big Oil's Last Lifeline." At three of the four gatherings, we viewed one of the documentaries and heard from a speaker from one of the "sacrifice zones" in the US: Texas, Louisiana, and West Virginia. At the fourth gathering, we discussed advocacy options with experienced activists. This series was recorded and is available on the Federation website.

Next, with the help of the Franciscan Action Network (FAN), we sent a survey to all members of the Franciscan family, Federation Canonical Leaders, JPIC Coordinators, and members of FAN. The survey was released March 1, 2023. From the 27 responses received, representing 24 communities in 19 states, FAN reviewed the information and suggested 6 case studies, from which 3 were subsequently chosen.

The executive committee will further research each case, to understand its status, determine its direction, and assess how JPIC and FAN advocacy efforts can support the project. Results will be shared at AFC 2023, including a fact sheet with additional information on each case, so that members can support this year's webinar series.



## INTERGENERATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH CORE SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE JPIC COMMISSION

### SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Joan Brown, OSF  
Caryn Crook, OSF  
Liz Fuhr, OSF  
Kayla Jacobs  
Kelly Anne Moltzen, OFS

In early 2022, Sr. Liz Fuhr contacted Sr. Caryn Crook regarding her possible interest in supporting environmental youth programs. This led to the formation of a small committee, which now includes Kelly Moltzen, Kayla Jacobs and Sr. Joan Brown.

We met via Zoom to see what could be done to promote environmental youth programs. The conversations focused our goals to include an intergenerational collaboration for spiritually rooted ecological and climate justice programs.

We named ourselves the Intergenerational Environmental Youth Core and made plans to present this new initiative at AFC 2022, at the Piazza Round Table Session. For the gathering, we developed a handout which included what is ours to do, a proposal, and ideas for programming. The proposal asked:

**Could there be a program where young adults are helped financially through existing organizations, to do earth justice and climate centered work:**

- As they commit to a formal spiritual development program
- Be inspired by Franciscan values and spirituality
- Over the rocky climate crisis path ahead in the coming decades?

The Piazza conversations were fruitful. We collected contact information for 17 people who wanted to be kept updated on the work.

Participants at the three round table sessions agreed on the proposal, highlighting two ideas: (1) The development of a database of resources for youth programs to use, including a list of organizations which may want to support groups financially; and (2). To network with other organizations and groups who are already doing this work and support them.

At the JPIC Commission, the Intergenerational Environmental Youth Core was accepted as a Subcommittee of the Commission. The team met monthly to develop more detailed goals:

- Intergenerational collaboration for spiritually rooted, ecological and climate justice work.
- Creation of a database of resources for those interested in starting an environmental youth core
- To support young adults who are dedicated to addressing ecological issues, including climate change, with the resources they need

Due to insufficient funding to create a database, we are developing a new resource page instead, to take advantage of the new Federation website now under construction. The page will include:

- Farming and Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Protection
- Educational and Spiritual Formation Programs
- Care For Creation Bibliography

Through networking, ten organizations and programs received grants from the Sisters of St. Francis Sacred Heart Charitable Fund for ongoing environmental work.

NEXT STEPS . . .

The Intergenerational Environmental Youth Core will continue to meet, to finalize the resource page and work with the national office to include it on the website.

The group also plans to reach out to the grantees and other like-minded individuals to meet and explore the possibility of an Intergenerational Eco-justice and Spirituality group. We hope to explore how to walk together and root ourselves on a spiritual path, to inform and sustain us as we move into what is sometimes a daunting future.

# COMMISSION FOR LIFE & MISSION (CLM)

MARGARET CARNEY, OSF, CO-CHAIR

SUSAN MARIE PLEISS, OSF, CO-CHAIR

SUBCOMMITTEES FORMED:  
OUTCOME OF TRANSFORMATION  
TASK FORCE PROPOSALS

Education/Formation Outreach:

Margaret Carney, OSF

Susan Marie Pleiss, OSF

Associates & Co-journers:

Rick Deitz

Geri Deitz

Emergent Initiatives:

Diane Tomkinson, OSF

Br. Ian Boden, OLF

These six leaders make up the  
Coordinating Committee of CLM

The first task the year was the re-organization of the Commission (formerly “Charism Services”) so that it now has 3 subcommittees, each of which pursues an agenda which came from either:

- The survey done by the former Commission of Charism Services in 2020; or
- Ideas surfaced at AFC 2022

Next, we announced Sr. Susan Marie Pleiss, OSF as the new co-chair of the commission, to succeed Sr. Corrina Thomas, FSPA. We also made decisions regarding the frequency of meetings and timely communications.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

This report compiles the summary of each subcommittee. Certain outcomes are clear:

1. Members will be served by our continued networking with directors of formation and spirituality ministries. The resources for these programs will also be more clearly identified and shared on the Federation website or by other means.
2. Associate groups are gradually responding to the idea of a national Federation platform, which will allow them to widen horizons and gain programmatic help. This is especially important for those whose congregations are facing completion. (Of note: this group is able to do a Spanish translation of an important session with financial assistance from the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, MN).
3. The Emergent Initiatives subcommittee\* continues to foster an open space for new ideas and projects related to future Franciscan life and mission. But from this space, a new entity has emerged:
4. The “successor” initiative, which the Federation continues to support, is the Franciscan Intentional Communities Network (FICN).

\*Note: Some additional structural realignment may be helpful to best manage the important work of this subcommittee and its successor initiative.

## SUBCOMMITTEE: FORMATION/EDUCATION

### MEMBERS

Michelle Balek, OSF  
Margaret Carney, OSF  
Jeanne Connolly  
Ann Kenyon, OSF  
Susan Marie Pleiss, OSF  
Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR

The focus of this subcommittee this year was developing a Zoom consultation with those in our member congregations who are directors of initial and on-going formation, directors of centers of spirituality/retreat, and those who are engaged in spirituality ministries.

- The CCL sent the nominations of members of their congregations/provinces who were to be notified of the project.
- We had approximately 30 responses in total. From the registration process, we now have a database of those engaged in this work.
- Shell Balek created a well-developed program with as much information as possible (with Zoom tech support from the Franciscan Sisters of Dubuque).
- Two sessions were held, on April 11 and April 12, each lasting 90 minutes.

As we move forward, we have a much clearer idea of what types of resources and programs would be most beneficial. We can now take advantage of the offers of help we received at AFC 2022. We will discuss the possibility of doing a second round of consultations. This effort is helping us in the slow work of building new networks.

Kevin Elphick, OFS, an Associate of the Neumann Franciscan Sisters, is preparing a pilot educational program on issues confronting LGBTQ persons and creating a framework of responses within Catholic Social Teaching.

## SUBCOMMITTEE: EMERGENT INITIATIVES NEW EMERGENT GROUP COHORT

### MEMBERS

Br. Ian Boden, OLF Chair  
Krista Clements, Facilitator

### MAJOR WORK

- With Krista Clements as our facilitator, we are in the planning and preparation phase for the next iteration of the Emergent Cohort - to discern, dream and vision what is emerging, happening, and needed within Franciscan life in a primarily North American context.
- We have drafted an invitation letter and are collecting names of individuals we would like to invite into this process, from across demographics, orders, contexts and congregations.
- We have decided to postpone convening the new Emergent Cohort until after AFC 2023. This will build on the momentum of AFC and open the possibility of inviting those who may attend and be persons that would add to this dreaming and visioning process. At that point, we will begin our organic and spirit-filled conversations.

### HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

At this time, we ask for your prayers, as we continue to prepare for another Emergent Cohort process.

## SUBCOMMITTEE: EMERGENT INITIATIVES FRANCISCAN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY NETWORK (FICN)

### MEMBERS

*Convening Group, post AFC 2022-March 2023*

Diane Tomkinson, OSF, Current Chair

Michael F. Fenn, Next Chair

Michelle L'Allier, OSF

Patricia George, OSF

Kathy Joyce

Eunice J. Park

*Coordinating Group, March 2023-ongoing*

Diane Tomkinson, OSF

Michael F. Fenn

Michelle L'Allier, OSF

Patricia George, OSF

Maria Brizuela, OSF

Caryn Crook, OSF

Karen Pulaski

Eunice J. Park

### MAJOR PROJECTS

- Post-AFC 2022 Piazza session, had six follow-up Zoom gatherings to discuss the idea of intentional communities.
- Created a coordinating group to continue planning, supporting, visioning Franciscan intentional communities.
- March 23-26, 2023: Held a planning meeting in New York, facilitated by Sara Marks and hosted by the Mt. Irenaeus community.
- Drafted the FICN Vision Statement for action steps for the coming year.
- Going forward, will establish working groups, to include non-coordinating group members.



Intentional Community Planning Weekend at Mount Irenaeus, March 2023

### FICN VISION STATEMENT

Franciscan Intentional Communities are ongoing relational gatherings of people, inspired by Francis and Clare of Assisi and the early Franciscan movement, who choose to:

1. Consciously cultivate a shared and Spirit-led gospel life, through diverse expressions of community.
2. Respond, through a rhythm of action and contemplation, to the needs of the world today.
3. Deeply honor the dignity and uniqueness of each living creature, through mutual respect and kinship with all of creation.
4. Practice authenticity, mutual vulnerability, and simple living.

### HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

- A public FICN information page on the Federation website with a searchable database to help interested persons identify possible “matches” with FICN member communities.
- A member-only resource page to share best practices, handbooks, forms, etc.
- Requested networking space at AFC 2023 to share info and invite others to participate.



## SUBCOMMITTEE: ASSOCIATES & CO-JOURNERS

### MEMBERS

#### FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF ALLEGANY

Linda Dees  
Colleen Brady, OSF  
Cheryl Maggio  
Kathy Doyle  
Mary Laubenthal  
Rita Canfield

#### FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION

Krista Clements

#### JOLIET FRANCISCANS

Darcy Mason

#### FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF ROCHESTER

Janice Manahan  
Margo Kroshus

#### SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA

Colleen Collins  
Kathy Joyce  
Patricia St Clair  
Paul St Clair

#### WHEATON FRANCISCANS

Jeanne Connolly

#### FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF LITTLE FALLS

Veronica Rivadeneira – Quito  
Geri Dietz, Co-Chair  
Rick Dietz, Co-Chair

#### SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF THE NEUMANN COMMUNITIES

Kevin Elphick

Based on the results of a survey of Franciscan Associate Directors, we identified six areas where they felt the Federation could be of assistance and formed a work group for each. They have all been meeting monthly on Zoom since October 2022.

1. Make available various materials for initial and ongoing formation of Associates: In the process of identifying materials.
2. Create a database of presenters who offer Franciscan-themed retreats and workshops: Created a Google form to send to presenters starting in July 2023.
3. Host semi-annual Zoom gatherings for Associate Directors: Held the first gathering on May 2, 2023 with 49 in attendance.
4. Develop articles about and by Associates for the Federation Facebook page and website: Had two articles in Board Updates and Facebook, both are available on the website.
5. Research possible models of sustainability for Associates into the future: Identified seven possible choices, each with pros and cons. The goal of this group is to help communities start conversations about their sustainability.
6. Develop materials for Associate Directors on training and formation of small group leaders from within their own communities: Held two Zoom gatherings with 175 total attendees.

### HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

There is excitement around each work group! All the groups want to continue toward meeting their goals. There is also desire among participants for various Zoom gatherings to continue. We hope there will be some level of funding for remuneration of presenters and interpreters.

# COMMISSION OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT (CME)

MEG EARSLEY, CO-CHAIR

CAMILLA WOLFGRAM, CO-CHAIR

## MEMBERS

Anne Amati, OSF

Maryann Mueller, CSSF

Jeanine Morozowich, CSSF

Maria Brizuela, OSF

Steve Grieco, TOR

Celeste Crine, OSF (Liaison to the Board)

The last few months have allowed our newly formed commission (formerly "Regions") time to adjust to the transformation, get to know each other, and discern how we will work together. Although this time is full of newness and is somewhat nebulous, the commission is filled with engaged members who are ready to begin the work that is ours to do.

CME has met three times in 2023, with the following accomplishments and changes:

- Introduced Sr. Meg Earsley, FSPA as the new co-chair for the Commission with Sr. Camilla Wolfgram, OSF. (Update: Sr. Camilla Wolfgram has recently stepped down as co-chair of this commission due to health reasons).
- Accepted an invitation to provide opening prayers at the pre-AFC sessions.
- Created an initial draft of our purpose and responsibilities (currently being reviewed by members) which will provide us with our focus for the next 6-8 months. Details are as follows:

## VISION & PURPOSE

The Commission of Member Engagement's purpose is to inspire a sense of inclusion for the members of the Federation, as well as offering invitation to potential members.

CME will inspire Federation members to engage in grassroots efforts to keep the Franciscan spirit alive throughout the year.

CME will also keep our eyes and ears open to the Spirit's guidance in these areas:

- To highlight opportunities to invite members to events developed throughout the Federation
- To explore other ways to meet the relational needs of its members
- To explore ways of inviting others to consider membership with the Federation