

10 General Chapter Themes

U.S.-Ontario Province

33rd General Chapter SNJM

2009-2011

PROVINCE THEME

(One theme per sheet; maximum of 10 themes per province)

Province/Sector U.S.-Ontario

Contact Person Joan Saalfeld, SNJM

Date January 29, 2010

THEME: Interdependence/Collaboration

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

Commit to collaboration in our ministries with other religious communities, church organizations, civic organizations, other churches, NGO's non-profits, etc. to create the best possible future.

Every decision starts with those who don't have enough: food, jobs, dignity, land, voice, home, freedom. Such generous interdependence with persons and the earth requires practical changes to free resources to become more collaborative and inclusive. For example, change CLT administrative structure to assure viable participation of the global South. These actions and attitudes will enable our understanding of the effects of globalization.

Take action in bold, collaborative projects that address needs and attract 20-30 year olds to collaborate with SNJMs and Associates. This requires outreach, creativity, bold initiatives and financial resources.

Collaborate with others to research solutions to world hunger, water consumption, global warming and health issues such as food additives and contaminants like hormones, pesticides and antibiotics.

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Province / Sector U.S.—Ontario

Contact person: Joan Saalfeld

Date: Jan 29, 2010

THEME: Justice

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme :

Participate in global partnerships working ecumenically and inter-culturally to impact global systemic issues of the cycle of poverty and the abuse of power.

Actively advocate for changes to bring justice in the Church and in society.

Collaborate with others in local areas to support congregational priorities and corporate stands through involvement by presence, prayer and financial assistance.

Actively collaborate with others in working against oppressive systems and for victims of violence and injustice, especially women and children. The call to justice includes acceptance of differences, being inclusive, and recognizing the least or the poor among us. We cannot have peace until we have justice.

Continue stands on trafficking, water, death penalty, care of the earth, women's issues.

Work with the political process.

Take an interdependent, corporate approach to justice issues.

We need more leadership to involve our members in issues that stem from poverty--like the environment, the status of women and children, lack of education, collusion of government with big business.

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Contact Person Joan Saalfeld, SNJM

Date January 29, 2010

THEME: Creation

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

We need to deepen our awareness and focus on slowing global warming and reducing consumption of non-renewable resources.

We need to attend to our Earth, its people and its coming generations. We need to attend to our Earth's resources as the property of all living people and use them in light of future generations.

We need to work for more just access to natural resources for 3rd world. We need conservation awareness and action. We need to work to preserve ecosystems, respect for Earth's processes, cycles.

We need to attend to all creatures of the Earth—plant, animal, and human. We need to recognize and honor the interdependence of all creation for our Earth's survival.

As we continue to experience disasters and shifts in climate, we need to respect the gifts of the earth; have a greater acceptance of our responsibility for global warming; and be actively concerned about the distribution and use of the earth's resources. We also need greater awareness and education about the moral rights and obligations connected to the ownership, use and control of resources.

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Date January 29, 2010

THEME: Spirituality

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

All we do is primarily **ROOTED** in prayer. By our lives we are witnesses of communion in a broken world. Contemplation is the basis of our Congregations and grounds all we do in other areas.

We need to **DEEPEN** our contemplation in action, our reverence for the earth, our understanding of the vows, Eucharist, prayer, liturgy.

We need to explore the meaning of religious commitment (individually and communally) at this time in history. We need to do this with others.

We need to explore how we can share our spirituality with others.

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THEME: Women in the Church

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

Address the problem of women excluded from leadership (decision making) in the Church. Ordination of women,

Use gospel to see how Jesus treated women.

How will we as a congregation address our role and relationship to the Church together?

Study what it means to be a prophetic witness in the Church today.

Raise awareness of Church as it exists on different continents.

How do we make Eucharist available to everyone when celibate male ordained clergy are unavailable?

We need to identify a relevant issue and take a corporate stand: i.e. women's rights, persons of different sexual orientation, clergy abuse, ordination of women.

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THEME: Compassion

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

To let compassion be the center of our personal lives, work and congregation. In imitation of Jesus, to live a compassionate heart, we actively respond to the charter for Compassion and will implement the principles contained on justice, basic human rights, care of the earth, respect, spirituality, interdependence. Charterforcompassion.org

CHARTER FOR COMPASSION

"The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religions, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion—to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate—to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures—to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity—to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings, even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community."

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THEME: Attracting new members/associates

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

Accommodate persons of various cultures, languages and ages.

Make “permanent” profession an option.

Refer to NCCB’s current program for “Lay Ecclesial Ministers.”

Look for collaborations that could sustain our Charism in the future.

Continue researching, exploring new forms of membership.

Empower and support younger SNJM vowed members. Rely on wisdom of younger members to provide leadership in attracting new members.

Commit to support this ministry with personnel and financial assistance.

Reach out to churched and un-churched Catholics and those of other faiths who have a passion for justice and peace and share our values.

Recognize the importance of prayer in this outreach.

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THEME: Fidelity to Mission

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

In fidelity to our mission as an apostolic community of educators, we are committed to the full development of the human person, We are called to continue to promote Gospel values in the contemporary global, socio-economic, political, and ecclesiastical contexts.

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THEME: Leadership

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

We need to find ways to develop leadership among younger SNJMs and Associates.

Need leadership workshops throughout the Congregation.

Perhaps could use "Women's Justice Circle" model.

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THEME: Relationship/Identity

Province compilation of **main ideas** that surfaced on this theme:

How are we committed to one another? How are we going to be congregation to one another—associates, locally, province, congregation?

We need to claim our identity as an international congregation of women religious committed to ministry and active participation in the world within our unique cultures: We are: rooted in our baptismal call; collaborative in carrying forth the vision of Vatican II; contributing to the full human development of each person and to lay leadership; living contemplation in action.