A CHANGING WORLD:
THE ASSOCIATES' RESPONSE

Prepared for the Conference on the
History of the Congregations of Holy Cross
in the United States

June 15 - 17, 1990
New Orleans, Louisiana

by

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TO BE PRESENTED BY

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With the General Chapter of 1989, the Sisters of the Holy Cross committed themselves to a reassessment of the needs of the Congregation's members and to the implementation of a new government model that would be most likely to answer those needs. Such a move within the Congregation provided the impetus for change within the structure of the Associates Program. This is a new moment in history for the Sisters of the Holy Cross and therefore, an opportunity to look back at the beginnings in search of some clues as to where we might be going.

THE YEAR IS 1967............
The 200 millionth American has just been born and Gary, Indiana has just elected its first black mayor, Richard Hatcher. *Newsweek* reports that Mr. Honda of Japan has his "eye on the United States car market". *The Naked Ape* has been published and is appearing on bookstore shelves. The "American Pope", Cardinal Spellman, dies, and the Shah has been crowned in Iran with headlines reading: "A crown well earned". Don Meredith is playing football with the Dallas Cowboys. The first successful heart transplant has been conducted. The movies we are seeing are "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" and "Camelot". Ed Sullivan is celebrating 20 years on television. *LIFE* magazine is selling for $6.00 for 52 weeks while *Sports Illustrated* advertises a 33 week subscription for the low cost of $3.97. The cover story of *LIFE* is "The Chilling Facts Behind Anti-Ballistic Missiles", and *Newsweek's* cover reads: "The Nun: Going Modern".

Immersed within this world reality, the Sisters of the Holy Cross continue to hear echoes of Vatican II's call to the laity. It is the Council which has written a document affirming the laity's special and indispensable role in the mission of the Church. It is the laity--former students, employees, relatives, and friends--
who turn to Holy Cross, seeking new, fuller relationships in prayer and service.
Adapting Father Moreau's sense of mission to the conditions of the modern world and
responding further to Sister Olivette's invitation to 2 St. Mary's graduates to serve
with the Sisters in Bangladesh (in 1960-61), this year's General Chapter recommends
that the mission procurator "take immediate steps to organize a lay missionary as-
sociation with the twofold purpose of providing generous young women an opportunity
to give some service to the Church and through this apostolic service to live a deeper
Christian life. The association will cooperate in the apostolate of the Congregation
of the Sisters of the Holy Cross on the missions at home and abroad." (Capitular
Decrees, 1967, no. 124). This program will be known as CSC ACT.

Throughout its ten year history, CSC ACT welcomed young women into long term service
in Brazil and shorter terms of service in Texas and Washington, D.C. These times of
service by Mary Lou Schneider, Patricia Carey, Coleen O'Rourke, Molly Donovan, Therese
Bush, and Mary Hullinghausen speak of the value of such a relationship:

"I want to thank you, Sister [Madeleine Therese]
for allowing me one of the most precious experiences
I could ever hope for. I've learned so much from
the Brazilians, the Sisters and the life here...
To be able to work with the poor has been such a gift--
to witness their faith, their unselfishness, and to
see the meaning, the dignity, and the challenge in
suffering." (Therese Bush)

"Before I begin, I must thank you...What I'd like
to share with you is my realization of how neat it is
to 'BE AVAILABLE'. That is, available to our Father's
will, available to be open to receive the strength and
wisdom of the Holy Spirit, available to let Christ work
miracles of healing through us, and available to serve
[others] in whichever way God chooses for us...I can
be available to these people, not only as a nurse, but
as a compassionate person, as a listening ear and a
fellow Sister in Christ." (Kim Kuzmic)
NOW...THE YEAR IS 1979...AND............

11, 553 people have donned running gear and are taking part in the New York City Marathon. The Saudis own \( \frac{1}{4} \) of the free world's proved reserves of oil. Ayatullah Khomeini has returned to Iran to start his Islamic government and the Shah has gone into exile. The movies in our theaters are "Star Trek: the Movie", "Saturday Night Fever" and "Apocalypse Now". Evita, the new pop-opera, is on Broadway. We have just been witness to the disaster at Three Mile Island. The Dalai Lama has emerged after a 20 year retreat. The Vietnamese Boat people have begun flocking to the U.S. shores. And it is the 50th anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. It has just been announce that 32 year old Thurman Munson, the famed Yankee catcher, has been killed in a plane crash. Jimmy Carter and Ted Kennedy are running against each other in a heated race for the presidency. We are getting ready for the Olympics and Kurt Thomas looks like a favorite in gymnastics. The Voyager I has accomplished a flyby of Jupiter. The Bee Gees are still around musically, however a new sound is emerging with groups like Devo, the Police, the Talking Heads, and Blondie. Pope John Paul II is touring the U.S. and Barbie Doll has turned 21. The big bumper sticker this year is "Save the Whales" and we are reminded daily that there are alternatives to oil production, namely wind and solar energy. Last year we witnessed the birth of Joy Louise Brown, the first test tube baby and it was the year of 3 Popes. LIFE magazine is selling for $18.00 a year.

Vaticall II continues to ring in the ears of all of us. Dialogue has continued about the further development of a lay associate program. One year ago, in early 1978, the movement received a new direction, when Sister Rose Anne, CSC wrote to all Sisters:

"Consciousness of sharing the richness of our life in Holy Cross with the laity has heightened. The idea of a lay association was very much in the vision of our Founder and reiterated in the Chapter discussions of 1967 and 1973. Response to Vatican II statements referring to the need to foster the true role of the laity
in the Church and our own Congregational charism were instrumental in presenting the request to you in May, 1977 for suggestions about the development of a lay Associate program. Suggestions received from the Sisters were included in the research which has been done during the past year. A committee developed the Associate Program which has been presented to the General Council and approved for presentation at Regional Chapters. In the past many Sisters of the Holy Cross, especially our older members, have maintained an informal relationship with former students, patients, friends, and co-workers. The program makes this relationship more formalized." (5/78).

The reasons, then, for establishing such a program were in answer to those persons who had relatives in the Congregation, had worked for the Sisters, had friends in the congregation, were searching for deeper meaning in their spiritual lives, were looking at the implications of Vatican II, and sought to somehow integrate this openness in their relationship to the Sisters of the Holy Cross. People were asking to share in the spiritual life of the Sisters in a new kind of relationship. The Associates Program was the Congregation's answer to that request.

A research committee made up of Sisters and lay women was appointed to look at the viability of such a program and they presented the final proposal to the General Council in April 1978. Presentation of the Associates Program was then made at each Regional Chapter meeting in June of that year and each region, vice region and missions abroad were asked to select a Sister to work in collaboration with the general coordinator for implementation. The work of the new committee included further outlining of the design for each of the different aspects of the Associates Program.

The Associates Program enables lay people to share the spiritual life and mission of the Holy Cross Sisters in three different ways. The first is through prayer, in which Associates and Sisters pray for one another daily, share special concerns, and participate in prayer experiences provided for them. This is an informal phase of the program and does not entail any formalized commitment.

Program 2, on the other hand, was developed to provide a means for individuals who may be looking for a community of committed Christians with whom to share, and from
whom to gain support as they strive to live out more fully their personal commitment to Christ. The second means of contact, then, is contact between a lay person and a Sister, a one-to-one relationship, in order to share prayer experiences, set personal goals for growth and share in the prayer, recreation and celebrations of a Holy Cross community. This is a more formalized relationship than Program 1 and the agreement is ordinarily made for one year. Upon mutual agreement this relationship can be extended beyond that time.

The opportunity for one or two years of "field service" with the Sisters of the Holy Cross, what had formerly been called CSC ACT, is the third program available through the Associates Office. It is in this program that Edna Eide, Rosalie Rodgers, Kathy Schneider, and many others have participated. Our Associates in Program 3 have focused their attentions on pastoral ministry, community outreach, education, health care, and social work throughout the United States and overseas in Brazil, Peru, Uganda, and Israel. Associates sign a personal contract formalizing this relationship and they are provided with room, board, travel and a small stipend.

Sister Rosaleen Dunleavy, CSC, midwestern regional representative of the Associates, stressed in a 1980 article appearing in the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocesan newspaper: "It is not a vocation thing; it is just an opportunity to serve." The article continues: "Sister Rosaleen says that many young people join the field service branch of the Associates because they feel they have been given so much with their educations that they want to 'give something back' before starting careers or marriages."

Kathy Schneider joined the Associates soon after its inception in 1978-79. After earning a B.A. in government from the University of Notre Dame, she sought an opportunity to see "how most of the world lived and to understand [her] responsibility to them." Through her experience of five months of pastoral ministry in a Texas parish and as a catechist and pastoral minister among the poor of Brazil for
15 months, Kathy said she was able to solidify her own "sense of vocation to ministry." Says Kathy of her time as an Associate:

"I just offered them my presence and the fact that I cared enough about them to be there. The poor have such power & dignity. I believe God is revealing Himself among the poor, and it was a privileged glimpse of where He's working that I experienced."

WE'VE TRAVELLED ACROSS TIME AND IT IS NOW 1989...

All of Paris, indeed France, is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the building of the Eiffel Tower. The Voyager has just accomplished a flyby of Triton, a moon of Neptune, capturing the sights beautifully on film. It is 20 years since Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon. In show business it has been 50 years since Clark Gable kissed off Vivien Leigh on the big screen and since the public got its first glimpse of television, and this year Lucille Ball, Sir Laurence Olivier, Bette Davis, Salvador Dali, and Irving Berlin are among the "greats" that we mourn. Two decades have passed since Woodstock--"the great hippie happening"--. The Exxon Valdez has spilled 11 million gallons of crude oil in the western coastline waters. The U.S. has invaded Panama. An earthquake has rocked San Francisco and Oakland. A patchwork quilt covering 14 acres in front of the White House reminds us of the continuing battle against AIDS. We have just witnessed a funeral of grandiose magnitude in Japan, the funeral of Emperor Hirohito. Terrorists downed Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland killing hundreds. Six Jesuits and 2 women were brutally slain in El Salvador. The world is watching, on the edge of its seat, the horror of Tianenman Square as students shout for democracy, and Salman Rushdie has made international headlines with the writing of The Satanic Verses. The first woman Episcopalian Bishop has been ordained in the Boston Diocese. The Berlin Wall has come tumbling down and Rumania has experiences a new freedom with the ousting of dictator Nicolae Ceaceasu. The Ayatullah Khomeini has died. LIFE magazine is selling on
newstand shelves for $2.95 an issue. Pope John Paul II has issued the Apostolic Exhortation on the Laity and the South Bend Tribune reports on: "The New Nun: Today's Sisters are tackling new ministries...and Risks". The campus of Saint Mary's College, the motherhouse for the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, is buzzing with the activities of the 20th General Chapter. There are possibilities of change, rumor has it, and yet a sense of excitement surrounding such talk.

As we look back to the year 1989, the General Chapter is yet another historic moment in the life of the Congregation and the Associates Program. The fruit of such a moment has been the writing and distribution of the Pastoral Letter which continues to send the message that the Sisters of the Holy Cross will immerse themselves into the world reality and respond to the needs of the world's people. The letter begins: "Dear Sisters and Friends," and it states:

"God's people cry out from a fragmented world...
WE CHOOSE LIFE...
We know we are not groups set apart with specific solutions for the problems of the world...We are missioned in co-discipleship with our lay brothers and sisters."

It further states:

"Collaboration is a way of being that is integral to the mission of Jesus. It requires mutuality."

And:

"Encouraging new understanding of community, we nourish life-giving relationships as gift."

In short, the General Chapter of 1989 has challenged persons connected with the Associates Program to reassess the needs of our "members" within these times of transition and discovery and within this changing world. The Sisters of the Holy Cross will continue to invite other persons to closer association with themselves in prayer, in journeying spiritually and in service to our world. We are currently looking at ways to initiate, nurture and sustain those relationships. But they
have proved life-giving throughout the years and we intend to creatively use our energies for the future, raising such questions as:

1. How can we best respond to the needs of those persons desiring a relationship with the Sisters of the Holy Cross?

2. What are the expressed needs of our Associates as we move into a new decade and a new vision of Church?

3. What do we currently do that is DIFFERENT from other programs? What do we do BEST?

4. How are such relationships life-giving for the Sisters of the Holy Cross?

5. What does it mean for the future that we have combined the Associates Office and the Vocations Office, making it the Membership Office?

The list of questions goes on......

THE YEAR IS 2004..............

The Sisters of the Holy Cross are preparing for their 23rd General Chapter and the headlines read.............