

## Small Group Contributions after Session 4 Towards setting priorities **Gathered by themes**

### I - Affirmations and confirmations

#### The CRC is us!

##### CRC as organisation

- We are all supportive of CRC as an organization.
- The CRC must support the members of Consecrated Life
- We have become aware of the original vision and mission of the CRC and our whole process shows that the CRC has been faithful to this vision and mission and that they remain very alive.
- We can say that "we" are the CRC, all of us Canadian men and women leaders of the Congregations. We represent another vision of the Church by our distinctiveness, uniqueness and togetherness.
- Sense of belonging to the CRC.
- The CRC must be attentive to accompanying consecrated persons in this process of profound transformation that religious life in Canada is undergoing. We need practical ways to encourage and strengthen our faith and hope since our commitment is first and foremost a commitment of faith. To this end, it is important that the permanent staff of the CRC understand "from within" the essentials of consecrated life and fully embrace them.
- We need you, CRC. And you, to keep us alive, continue to need us!
- The CRC, like the Congregations of Canada, is at an important turning point in its history.
- Be open to what is being born in the CRC. We feel we do not need a top-down organization but one that will assist our internal needs especially in our dying/rising organizations. A collegial approach always remembering the different Legacies that we bring to the organization.
- Beware of anything that might run counter to the inclusiveness we want to live, especially being attentive to the distinction "in Canada / Canadian": the CRC is for religious in mission in Canada (and their collaborators), in all the provinces and territories that make up Canada, regardless of their origin and the length of time they have been in mission.

## Remain, and help members remain, grounded in God's call for religious life in Canada

### Emmaus : encountering Christ in our vulnerability

- Everything starts from Christ. Christ must be at the center of everything we do and say: discern and let his face shine in everything. He is the one who allows us to accept our vulnerability, to be full of compassion, and to live in unity.
- At the heart of our sharing, we experienced together the visit of the risen Jesus in our vulnerability. This vulnerability has given rise to a search, an openness and a need to unearth three main elements which will be the sap of our reflections and the compass of our steps forward.
- Within our convergences, we claim that the risen Jesus is there in the depths of our nights, of our desires. He manifests himself in our midst through the CRC, this spirituality of challenge and care that continues to set the table for the next generation, for leadership and for all members to keep our wick of visibility lit.
- The personal encounter with Christ in our vulnerability leads us to go out to bear witness and enter into relationship.
- We think that the Emmaus experience could be the inspiring focus for the next years.
- In the face of our vulnerability, the transmission of the heritage of consecrated life bears fruits of hope and resurrection.
- Like the Congregations, the CRC will have to assume and name its vulnerability, in a hope illuminated by the light of a resurrection. To resurrect, one must die to what has been in order to see the birth of the new. And that is good. To assume this vulnerability, it is necessary to anchor it in today's reality. (Few or no vocations, aging, average age of the Congregations, etc.) It is only by being rooted in reality that we can hope for "something new.
- The Dying and Rising of Religious Life today and continued belief that we are witnesses even in our vulnerabilities.
- We don't know what lies ahead for us, for our church, or for our society. Still, we strive to live our lives as beacons of hope during dark times. This is the legacy we pass on to future generations. Our heart burn with hope and compassion as we walk in faith embracing new ways of being in the world witnesses to our common humanity.
- To encourage religious institutes to encounter Christ in vulnerability, find fruitfulness in fragility, and nurture hope within diminishment, ever confident that we are made for this time, to be artisans of connections and heralds of the beauty of diversity, open to transformation as we pivot to continue the mission of the Risen Lord through new means and opportunities.
- Your second role is to keep us ALIVE: to listen, to recognize and accompany the life that is there, but also to gently challenge us on occasion. In the face of our temptation to say like Charlie Brown, "One day we're all going to die," we entrust you to remind us, with Snoopy, "Yes, but every other day we're going to live! "
- Aging, the decrease in the number of members of our religious communities and other conditions of vulnerability, do not diminish the encounter of Christ with each

consecrated person and the call to follow him. Our daily frequentation of the Word of God and of prayer gives us a new prophetic impetus to take up the road again and to go and tell our brothers and sisters in humanity the reality of the Kingdom of God

- We are a group on our way to Emmaus, breaking the bread of our lives. In our deep listening and vulnerability, we will find hope in our scars and grow in right relationship with all that is.
- Embracing our vulnerability, as it moves us together into transformative possibilities of our time,
- With the disciples of Emmaus, we recognize ourselves as those disciples walking with the Risen One.
- Our fragility is not an accident...
- We fully recognize ourselves in the call to consecrated life in Canada that has been identified. That Christ is at the center is an important element for us.
- Inspired by the text of the Word of God, the disciples of Emmaus and in connection with the deepest call to consecrated life....
- Following the moment of individual prayer, it became clear to us that we need to be in relationship in order to witness. So we would reverse the last two elements of the synthesis: Encountering Christ in our vulnerability leads us to go out, enter into relationship and witness.

### Keep the mindmap as a reference tool

- We also feel identified with the "mindmap" presented at the last Plenary session.
- The six members of the group found themselves on the same page. The mindmap was a useful tool to help us better focus our thinking.
- The mindmap resonates with our vision of religious life today and can be used as a reference point for any activity/decisions of the CRC moving forward.
- Strong support for five key elements (be prophetic, dare to encounter, embrace vulnerability, listen deeply, be open to what is being born) with a clear understanding about the real challenges in truly living each one – the need to live each one in the ordinariness of our lives, the need to listen to the story of "the other" over and over.
- The essentials of consecrated life: being prophetic, assuming our vulnerability, daring to meet, opening ourselves to what is being born (mindmap);
- We support the mindmap and desire to stay the course to be prophetic witnesses by listening deeply, risking being vulnerable on the journey toward greater joy, peace and hope.
- We agree that the mindmap accurately reflects our conversations over the past months.
- At the heart of the essential call of the consecrated life is well formulated in the Mindmap.
- From the vision of the CRC, the mindmap and the needs expressed by the members...  
CRC leadership in the spirit of the "mindmap"

## The encounter at Emmaus as a source of inspiration for ways of being and acting

- Jesus' pedagogy of accompaniment: respect for people, loving patience, opening the heart with intelligence and gentleness (Disciples of Emmaus);
- like Jesus, our call is to meet people where they're at.
- It is in these small gestures of hospitality - walking together, listening to each other, and sharing a meal - that we come to know Christ. The deeper the encounter the deeper our awareness of God's presence and unconditional love.
- We as religious are made for these times. We are co-travelers on this journey of life and witness. We still have a lot to give through our presence and witness, not in grand gestures but in the day-to-day acts of kindness and affirmation especially for the most vulnerable in our society.
- We as religious are called to live lives of encounter. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), we walk together seeking the support of each other during difficult times. Our vulnerability as religious congregations does not keep us from welcoming the stranger and offering hospitality.
- Prophetism:  
Like the disciples of Emmaus, we are on the move, on a journey. We are aware of our vulnerability. But we also carry within us the prophetic charism. The CRC is there to help us live this charism with passion. in unity, for the Church and for the world. We have to communicate our values: we are rich in our differences. The question that keeps asking us: how can we still be signs, how can we still be prophets in this world and in the Church?
- Trusting we are continually living the paschal mystery, evolving with continual change that occurs in our world, and broadening the vision of how we think of things or reality, and open to growth, mindful that facing death as the Emmaus disciples did, we also rise to new life assured that in our collaboration God is in charge of all. As such we keep walking mindful of the question "What is religious life called to?" and motivated to respond.