From April 9 through April 13 the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart gathered for their 22nd General Chapter, held at the Mother Boniface Spirituality Center. A Chapter is held every five years to elect new leadership and to collaboratively set the direction of the Congregation for the next five years. This shared time together is shaped by prayer, attentive listening and contemplative dialogue. Sister Margaret O’Brien, OSU was the facilitator for the Chapter.

In her welcome, Sister Margaret asked, “What is God dreaming for you?” This theme ran through the days of Chapter. As sitting President, Sister Julia Lanigan convened the Chapter and took roll call of the delegates. There were 50 Sister-delegates present for this Chapter.

During the Chapter, Sisters received information regarding the current state of the Congregation. This was especially important after the decommissioning of the Yardley Motherhouse and the relocation of a majority of the Sisters.

Significant time was given for the discernment of leadership qualities, both personally and communally. The Spirit of Wisdom was called upon unceasingly!

Chapter Days provided space for group conversations, and individual conversations, reflection, prayer and some fun too. Stories were shared of the “olden” days, praise for the present, and presence, with each other, and deep hope and abiding trust in Providence for the future of the Mission of St. Marguerite d’Youville, with which we have been entrusted.

Five women were selected to lead the Congregation for the term 2018-2023 they are: Sister Denise Roche, President (center), to the left Sister Anne Marie Beirne and Sister Barbara Schiavoni, and to the right Sister Eileen White and Sister Bridget Mary Connor.

At the 22nd General Chapter of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart (2018), we re-affirmed a call to risk relational newness with God, each other, our Church and world.

With trust in our Provident God and in the spirit of our foundress, St. Marguerite d’Youville, we re-commit ourselves to:

- embrace a contemplative stance
- cultivate relational integrity in all our interactions
- offer faithful witness as women in the Church
- foster cosmic consciousness
General Chapter

Chapter is a graced time in the history of a Congregation. It is a time to reaffirm one’s personal commitment to the Congregation, and to celebrate the communal response to the charism entrusted to each Congregation. This year, our Chapter took place over the second week in April from Monday through Friday. **Monday** was devoted to hearing about the State of the Congregation financially, physically and spiritually. Sister Julia presented the *Future Challenges Report*. Decisions were made regarding items to focus on during the next term. Adjustments were made to the internal governmental structure to reflect ongoing changes and the prior chapter directional statements were affirmed as worthy of deepening understanding and continued discussion. **Tuesday** was a Retreat-style day with space for individual and collective reflection, time for prayer, sharing and conversations. Tuesday would prepare the way for the discernment of Leadership over the next few days. A Liturgy of the Holy Spirit and ritual of gratitude celebrated out-going leadership and those who continue to remain open to being elected. **Wednesday** was a day of discernment. Through a reflective process, Sisters who remained open to Leadership engaged in dialogue with participating members of the Chapter. **Thursday** began with a time of contemplative prayer in which the members of Chapter carefully considered the names of the Sisters willing to serve as President. After the election and affirmation of Sister Denise Roche as president, the process continued to select 4 additional Sisters to serve on leadership. By the end of the day, two members were selected by a similar process undertaken for the Presidency and Sisters Eileen White and Barbara Schiavoni had been elected. **Friday** again began with contemplative prayer focused on the remaining names. Sisters Anne Marie Beirne and Bridget Mary Connor were selected. Sister Julia Lanigan formally closed Chapter just before noon.

**Some Chapter 2018 Facts:**
- 50 Sisters were active participants in Chapter,
- remaining community members offered their prayers and sufferings for the fruitfulness of the Chapter
- This was the 22nd chapter for the GNSH
- Two new members of leadership will be serving for a second, non-consecutive term.

GNSHappenings...

**Retreat Centers**

- **St. Mary by-the-Sea**, Cape May, NJ:  
  [www.stmary@ssjphila.org](http://www.stmary@ssjphila.org) or call: 609-884-8708  
  (not able to accommodate wheelchairs or walkers)

- **St. Raphaela Center**, Haverford, PA:  
  [www.straphaelacenter.org](http://www.straphaelacenter.org) or call: 610-642-5715  
  (no elevator, limited first floor rooms)

- **Villa of Our Lady Retreat House**, Mt. Pocono, PA:  
  [www.villaourlady.com](http://www.villaourlady.com) or call: 570-839-1027

- **The Jesuit Center**, Wernersville, PA:  
  [www.jesuitcenter.org](http://www.jesuitcenter.org) or call: 610-678-8085

- **Emmaus House**, Ocean Grove, NJ:  
  [www.EmmausHouse.com](http://www.EmmausHouse.com) or call 732-776-5458

**Eco-Spirituality Weekend**

The Retreat will take place in Clarks Summit, PA on June 22 to 24. This year’s retreat will be the 20th annual effort to learn, pray, discuss and plan actions on behalf of our environment. The retreat is open to all. For more information, please contact [Sheila Stone](mailto:SheilaStone).

**GNSH Associates**

The Philadelphia area Associates met at Holy Redeemer Lafayette on Saturday, April 14. Nine Associates were joined by 7 Sisters for the gathering. Mimi Palkovics opened the meeting with a prayer written by GNSHA Dorothy Neumann (dec’d) *Christ is Risen in Us*. The spiritual part of the gathering was a Reflection on *Marguerite’s Gifts and Life Experiences ~ Unconditional Love*. Associates and Sisters had a contemplative dialogue on unconditional love and then shared a Gratitude Reflection with one another. The business part of the meeting included updates on the newly elected leadership, the May retreat, Jubilee, the upcoming Pizza Party at St. Joseph/St. Vincent Home for Youth. Associates were asked to suggest donation sites for local ministries. All are invited to attend the annual Eco-Spirituality Weekend (information to the left) and the fall Inter-Congregational Associates Retreat. The meeting closed with prayer. Learn more about our Associates [HERE](http://www.gnsh.org).
Thank you to our photographer Sister Anne Zita Crudden for capturing the spirit of the week. More photos available on our Flickr page.

Sisters Mary Elizabeth Looby, Dawn Gear, Ceil Cosgrove, Diane Bardol and Julia Lanigan receive a blessing of thanksgiving for their Leadership.

Evenings were for relaxing as Community. Foreground: Sisters Donna Lord, Eileen Spanier, Kate Woody (standing), Mary Joan Elias and Mary Dee Smith. Background: Sisters Ann McKee, Margaret O’Brien, Maureen O’Hara and Karen Marie Voltz.

Sisters listening and digesting all that they were hearing during Chapter days.

Sisters Rita Margraff, Mary Salvador, Diane Bardol and Mary Lee Farrell.

Newly elected Leadership members Sisters Anne Marie Beirne, Barbara Schiavoni, Denise Roche, Eileen White and Bridget Mary Connor.

Newly elected GNNSH President, Sister Denise Roche and Sister Eileen White as the new Leadership takes shape.

POPE FRANCIS QUOTE

Communication is an art learned in moments of PEACE - in order to be practiced in moments of DIFFICULTY.

Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia, # 234
Reflection from Chapter

Jesus promised a different healing to the apostles when he promised to send the Holy Spirit, that Divine River that flows into our world. We have within each of us that fountain of life, the Spirit. We live not only near this river but also in this River. This is the water that arises from the deep springs within each of us.

Our prayer today is that this fountain of life will flow through us, through all the days ahead to wherever God is carrying us on our journey, to this place, to this land that God will show us.

Adapted from the words of Sr. Rita Margraff, GNSH April 10, 2018

Death Penalty Information

Pray for an end to the death penalty, for those scheduled for execution, for the victims of these crimes and all whose lives have been impacted by violence.

Scheduled Executions for May 2018

3: Robert Earl Butts Jr., GA
16: Juan Castillo, TX

Catholic Mobilizing Network wants YOU to take action and ask for clemency for those scheduled to die by the death penalty. They have recently updated their website with more opportunities for advocacy. Be sure to take a look!

CALENDAR

May
9 Gratitude Dinner for GNA, BOT and FAC Members
12 Working Retreat for GNSHA & GNSH
17 Employee Recognition Luncheon
26-27 Leadership Transition Meetings

FUTURE DATES

June
8 Feast of the Sacred Heart Celebration
9-10 Leadership Transition Meetings
22-24 20th Eco-spirituality Weekend

July 1: Installation of New GNSH Leadership

Death Penalty Update:

Last month, we reported that William Montgomery, OH had his sentence commuted. We applaud Governor John Kasich for signing the order removing William from death row, and “commuting” his sentence to life without the possibility of Parole. Click here for the official document.

Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart

Creating a Compassionate World

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