

NCVR Board Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2021 via Zoom
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Present: Sister Maryann Seton Lopiccolo, SC (President)
Sister Elizabeth Ann Vasquez, SSCJ (Vice-President)
Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ (Treasurer)
Sister Gilmory Kay, RSM (Secretary)
Sister Ann Strohming, OSF (Eastern Region)
Sister Frances. Moore, CDP (Midwestern Region)
Sister Kathy Warren, OSF (Western)
Sister Mary Prinski, OP (Southern Region)

- 1. The meeting opened with a prayer led by Ann**
- 2. The Minutes of the April 13, 2021 Executive Board Meeting were approved and accepted.**
- 3. Update on Officers' Reports**

Maryann

Maryann participated in the webinar on *Mutual Relations* sponsored by CMSM. Archbishop Hartmeyer presented on the relations between religious and the local church from the point of view of a bishop. The board needs to plan for our participation in Mutual Relations webinar in the future. Father Frank Donio, SAC Executive Director of CMSM, would like to have another webinar in the fall in which the vicars would participate and share the perspective of a vicar in relation to the bishop and other religious. Maryann requested that we think about what we would want to bring to the table. There is a link to the webinar with Archbishop Hartmeyer on the CMSM website.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth sent an additional 3 names to the NCVR who will be part of the NCVR Summer Institute.

Gilmory

Gilmory will sent out the registration information prior to June 1st. She will be working with the Notre Dame Archives about our archived information.

Mariette-

Mariette shared that the computer system of the Archdiocese of Hartford suffered a ransomware virus attack in April. It has slowed the posting of information on the NCVR website. Once it is resolved, Nicole Mele and Mariette will be working together to upload the proceedings from the Assembly.

4. National Assembly:

A. Evaluations

Mariette formulated 10 survey questions for “post-assembly” feedback. The survey was distributed to 67 attendees and 36 responded. There was 5 non-vicars who responded. 70% of the respondents gave the assembly an “excellent” rating. With the exception of one “fair” rating, the rest rated the assembly “very good.” The overall comments were positive. The survey revealed a strong positive response to having the assembly as a virtual meeting. Participants expressed appreciation for the coordination and planning involved as well as the thoughtfulness regarding time zone scheduling and breaks. The speakers and breakout groups received a positive response with one concern about the “Consecrated Virgin” breakout session. The respondent said that some of the information in the breakout session was “not correct”.

Mariette thought the positive outcome of the assembly was due to three factors. 1. The cost made it more likely for vicars to attend. 2. All the regions were able to participate relatively easily because of the afternoon meetings and respect for time zone changes. 3. The members were able to continue to work because the sessions were in the afternoon. Since a hybrid possibility is available for the Jesuit Retreat Center in Cleveland, the board recommends consider continuing with a hybrid option.

Some of the new vicars expressed difficulty with having a virtual conference because of the lack of personal interaction and orientation to the ministry. The board speculated that these comments from new vicars may have come from those who had not previously attended the virtual New Vicars Orientation that was held in September, 2020. To assist the New Vicars after the orientation, Mariette suggested recording and posting the PowerPoint presentation from the orientation on the website.

Mariette recalled a previous discussion where the board discussed the use of technology in the service of members. She suggested that the board sponsor mini sessions from NCVR members throughout the year. The board discussed several options for mini sessions, which included case studies, chancery dynamics, panel discussions, and supporting international sisters.

B. Proceedings: website

Mariette will post the transcripts of the 2021 assembly proceedings on the website and Gilmary will archive them. In addition to the Proceedings, Mariette will also post the survey results from the assembly on the website.

Maryann requested Father Hank Lemoncelli's presentation a second time so that it could be included in the proceedings. Father Hank is transitioning out of his position, so she will also contact Sister Rosemary about receiving the presentation. Marianne will share Sharon Euart, RSM presentation and material with Kathy Warren for the western region.

C. Dates of Assembly 2022:

The 2022 Assembly will be held **March 28-31, 2022**. This will be a Monday through Wednesday event. Board members can arrive after noon on Sunday to set up the conference room and check in. The Western Region will host the event.

Maryann will contact Sister Connie about items NCVR may have left at the Felicians Sisters in Chicago. Sister Mariette has a contact from Sacred Heart (Susan) who may be willing to pick up the items for us in Chicago and ship them.

D. Discussion /plans: theme: Instruments of Communion?

The Board deliberated at length about ideas for the 2022 Assembly theme. Board members prefer a dynamic theme related to the expected promulgation of *Mutual Relations* at the end of the summer. The Board wants a theme in which mutuality and communion (communio) is something moving, or something towards which we should strive. How can vicars be channels of mutuality and encounter?

Synodality was also a broad theme that was discussed. The Holy Father has requested that the world's dioceses engage in a synodal process. This process involves listening and learning together, and discovering together a way forward.

To aid the development of the theme, Maryann reviewed the presentation of CMSM and the many roles and relationships of the Vicar/Delegate. Vicars value the presence and charisms of the diversity of religious in their diocese and seeks to support and unite them in the local church. Building bridges between religious, bishops, and the religious among themselves is a theme recurring every year because bridge building describes a key aspect of our ministry. The presence of a religious is of great value and supersedes the work or ministry they do.

Some potential themes:

Mutuality: Journeying together, the Vicar's Role.

Mutuality and Communion: Journeying together, the Vicar's

Mutuality and Communion: the Vicars Role.

The board approved of adding a mini paragraph to explain the theme when the registration for the assembly is distributed. The paragraph should explain how the assembly will this help the vicars in their ministry.

E. Suggestions for Speakers.

1. Cardinal Tobin as a Keynote speaker if he is available. He maybe able to join in a virtual format.
2. Sister Sharon Euart, RSM to present again on the timely canonical topic for the vicars. We can offer her case studies and questions.

3. Sister Mercedes Castillo Razo from the Inter-Congregational Leadership Group of Women Religious in San Antonio to speak about immigration and international sisters. Sister Mercedes might also be able to participate via zoom. The board also considered asking a member from a national organization who could represent Asian and African sisters. The African Conference of Catholic Clergy and Religious in the United States (ACCRUS) would be a good resource to ask for speakers.

4.

5. Executive Board to Rome

We will most likely not be going to Rome prior to the Assembly. It could be April or early May. We can have a conversation during the assembly and at regional meetings about the topic to discuss with the various dicasteries.

6. Other Business

A. We will do the New Member Orientation on **September 15, 2021**

B. We can ask the membership through a survey or in regional meetings, what kind of case scenarios they are interested in hearing or if they have a particular cases in mind.

C. Maryann will write to the proposed speakers to ask them to present.

Next meeting: September 1, 2021 1-4

Respectfully submitted:
Sister Gilmary Kay, RSM
Secretary

ADDENDUM

2023 Assembly Planning Follow-up

August 6, 2021 via Zoom

12:00- 1:00 pm

Present:

Sister Maryann Seton Lopiccolo, SC (President)

Sister Elizabeth Ann Vasquez, SSCJ (Vice-President)

Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ (Treasurer)

Sister Gilmary Kay, RSM (Secretary)

1. Updates:

Maryann asked for a meeting because of some difficulties she has encountered with speakers and planning. The Board met to iron out some of the difficulties. Two members of Board have stepped down, Sister Fran Moore, CDP and Sister Mary Prinski, OP. Maria Reinagel, from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati has replaced.

2. 2023 Assembly

A. Keynote Speakers

Cardinal Tobin is not available to speak at the assembly. Maryann would like to invite Cardinal Gregory if he is available. Gilmary will send contact information and facilitate the invitation. The invited speaker would present and then engage in a dialogue with Sister Sharon Euart, RSM and the members.

The following names were also suggested as speakers:

1. Archbishop Gregory Hartmayer, OFM Archbishop of Atlanta who spoke at the CMSM conference.
2. Archbishop Bernard Hebda, Archbishop of Minneapolis/St. Paul, a civil and canon lawyer, worked for the Apostolic Signatura.
3. Bishop Edward Malesic, Bishop of Cleveland. He will be invited to celebrate a liturgy. may wish to participate in this discussion on *Mutual Relations*.
4. Bishop David O'Connell, Diocese of Trenton, a Vincentian and canon lawyer.
5. Bishop Robert Lombardo, CFR, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, Franciscan

B. Sharon Euart, RSM

We will submit questions and cases to Sharon before the assembly. A suggestion would be to use a survey monkey tool or for members to contact their president of their regions. We can also ask region presidents to include assembly topics in their regional meetings.

C. Participation of Vicars in the Synodal Process

Pope Francis has asked the local Churches to prepare for the 2023 through the using the synodal process in particular churches throughout the world. He recently sent a letter to all cloistered communities asking them to pray for the Synod.

Maryann learned that a letter was sent to the USCCB concerning how to participate. NCVR did not receive a letter from the Congregation because the NCVR was not established by Rome. The NCVR is considered to be an organization under the USCCB because of NCVR's participation in the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations (CCLV). Maryann will be in contact with Bishop Checchio, the CCLV Committee Chair about how Vicars of Religious can participate. We want to elicit responses from our membership and ensure that our input is heard and received.

We want to include time to speak about the Synod and the synodal process during the assembly. Since the concept of synodality may be new to the members, Mariette suggested that we break the session into two part. She suggested we invite Dr. Chad Glendinning, JCD, Dean of the St. Paul's School of Canon Law to inform the assembly participants about the Synod and the synodal process first.

We can then have Father Luke Ballman, executive director of the CCLV, if he is available, to speak specifically about how religious and our conference can participate in the process.

D. Interest Groups and breakouts during the Assembly

The Board discussed the advantages of moving the interest groups sessions that are conducted at the assembly to another time. If we move these times off the agenda of the assembly, it will leave more time for Sharon Euart and the discussions around synodality. If we move the interest groups, we can hold Facebook live sessions before and after the assembly, which will allow more members to participate instead of having to choose which breakout session. It will also allow for more time for each topic.

Mariette suggested using Facebook live to facilitate these mini sessions. The hope is that the members experiences more benefits and programs throughout the year than just a the assembly. We can offer three dates and explain how to access the link. Some of the topics of interest could include:

1. Records and Record Retention
2. Safe environment protocols
3. Immigration and Religious Worker Visas
4. Care of the international sisters

3. Case Studies and the Assembly Panel

During the assembly, there will be a panel made of the Executive Officers and perhaps 1 or 2 other seasoned vicars, to answer questions or discuss case studies. In order to facilitate having a greater breath of cases and representation, each president of a region will ask the members of that region if there are cases of interest. These can be submitted to the Board prior to the Assembly.

4. Planning for NCVR Spring Rome Visit

We will need to query the members about topics to discuss with CICSAL and other dicasteries while in Rome. If we plan to do a mini-session via Facebook live, it should be at the end of this year so we have enough time to include these items in the report.