

NCVR Board Meeting
June 30, 2020
10:30 am -12:30 pm (EST) Zoom call

Present: Sr. Maryann Seton Lopiccolo, SC (President)
Sr. Elizabeth Ann Vasquez, SSCJ (Vice-President)
Sr. Mariette Moan, ASCJ (Treasurer)
Sr. Gilmory Kay, RSM (Secretary)
Sr. Ann David Strohmingher OSF (Eastern Region)
Sr. Frances, CDP (Midwestern Region)
Sr. Mary, OP (Southern Region)
Sr. Rene Backe, CSA (Western Region)

1. The meeting opened with a prayer led by Sister Elizabeth Ann Vasquez, SSCJ
2. The Minutes of the May 14, 2020 Executive Board Meeting were approved and accepted.
3. Checking in with each other: personally, regionally, by diocese

Eastern Region:

Sister Ann David Strohmingher reported on the effects of the pandemic on the vicars in the Eastern Region, including Covid-19 deaths among community members. Bishops in the Diocese of Bridgeport and Camden have discontinued the vicar position. Ann shared that the diocese of Wilmington will most likely be welcoming a new Bishop this fall. The Eastern Region meeting scheduled for October may not occur due to COVID-19. Other options for a meeting were discussed including a shorter Zoom call meeting. It was noted that if the meeting occurs by Zoom, more vicars are likely to attend and this may be a model for other regions. Mariette offered to help facilitate the technology to make the regional meeting happen virtually.

Midwestern Region:

Sister Fran Moore shared that she is well and enjoying cooking and baking. Fran reported some difficult recent experiences in her community concerning sisters having to leave long cherished ministries. She asked for prayers for her community. There are no changes in the positions of vicar in her region with the exception that Sister Louise Hembrecht, OSF will be leaving to go to Nebraska. Fran anticipates that the Bishop of Green Bay will appoint a new delegate.

Western Region

Sister Rene Backe reported that she is living a cloistered life. She is well and enjoying gardening and cookie making. Rene reports that Gallup has been a hotspot for the virus and the struggles she has experienced to contain the virus. She shared that the Navajo peoples are suffering tremendously. Sister Jean Bartholomeaux's position in the Diocese of Tucson has been permanently eliminated by the Bishop. Sister Anthony Mary Diago in the Diocese of Phoenix has had to considerably reduce her hours and budget. She will no longer be able to travel to NCVR events.

Southern Region

Mary Priniski reports that Archdiocese of Atlanta has a new Archbishop. There have been many requests from communities to enter the Archdiocese. There have been

peaceful marches for racial equality in her Archdiocese and other area of her region. Mary learned of a religious in her region who is doing the work of a vicar, but does not have the title. Sister Margaret Downey from the Diocese of Savannah suggested we reach out and see what support could be offered to her.

4 Elections and Registrations

The elections were completed. Maryann welcomed Sister Gilmary Kay, RSM to the Board. Gilmary provided an update on the events and social unrest in the Archdiocese of Washington. It is a challenging time as pastors of parishes are laying off lay and religious employees because of the financial impact of the pandemic.

Gilmary gave a brief overview of the registration challenges to the members.

Registrations are in process, but many vicars have had difficulty meeting the timeline due to the closure of Chancellery Offices and the need to request checks for the payment of dues. Several vicars have contacted Gilmary asking for extensions. As of June 18th, there were 15 registrations sent by email and 23 by regular mail. Some of the registrations have gone to Louise who is forwarding them to Gilmary. Gilmary and Mariette will work to compare registrations to the checks received.

6. Update on new webmaster

Mariette updated the Board on the new webmaster, Ms Nicole Mele. She encouraged the Board to review her works at (www.nicolemele.com). Ms. Mele will give an estimate for her work and Mariette will inform the Board about the cost. She anticipate it will be lower than the current webmaster. The Regional Chairs will be able to directly email Ms Mele with pictures to be posted. Mariette will let us know when the website is completed. Gilmary will send the minutes and others resources to Mariette to be posted when the website is live. Gilmary has created an email distribution list in Outlook and iContacts. She is updating the list as registrations come in and will send it out the board. She is also updating the directory.

7. Digital Style Sheet and Letterhead

Elizabeth Parker, the graphic artist who designed the NCVR logo, has created style guide for use with the digital letterhead and other media. Mariette will email the style guide to the board. The style guide is a useful aid to determine which type of extension is needed to use the logo in the various media platforms. The board discussed the advantages of digital letterhead. Mariette will send the logo to the members and provide Maryann a ream of paper with the NCVR paper template and labels.

Elizabeth Ann requested that her email address on the digital letterhead be changed to: ElizabethAnnVasquez@archsa.org.

8. Encouraging and retaining members

The board discussed the effects of the pandemic on membership and membership retention. The discussion centered around the advantages of reaching out to former members to inquire why they have not renewed membership. Survey Monkey would be a good tool for this survey. A renewed invitation could be sent to those who are delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The board discussed leveraging technology to allow for more meetings of the members. If members experience benefits from membership and networking opportunities

throughout the year, perhaps this would encourage retention and new membership. Some members have wondered how the yearly dues will be used if the Assembly is canceled. Elizabeth Ann suggested we send out a message refreshing the membership on the use of the yearly fee and reminding the membership about scholarships and other aid to members who have financial issues.

Mariette suggested better networking among regions via technology to share resources with the whole membership. Each vicar is aware of resources that in her diocese that have the potential to be circulated to other vicars or other regions. A good example is Ann David who sends out the Saint John Vianney Center podcasts for members in the Eastern Region to share.

Some suggested topics to consider for regional workshops or webinars:

Safe environment responsibilities of vicars of religious

Conflict resolution between pastors and religious

What every vicar should have in their files

SOAR, NRRO, RCRI events aid to help religious communities during the pandemic

9. Orientation

Due to the cancelation of the Assembly in March, there are vicars who have not received the new vicar orientation. The board discussed waiting until fall to provide a new member orientation. The board decided to wait until early September to provide a program for orientation. Mariette and Maryann will work together and send out information on the time and content to the board.

11. Upcoming Events

The AHLMA will have a two-day conference in which they will be looking at restructuring the association. AHLMA offers many resources to Hispanics and they wish to cultivate relationship and leadership. The conference will be a zoom call.

CMSWR may be having a Eucharistic Congress in October. It is very unclear whether it will go forward.

12. November meeting

If the November Board meeting is in person, it will be November 15-17th at the Jesuit Renewal Center in Cleveland. A Zoom call will be scheduled if travel restrictions remain.

Respectfully submitted,

Sr. Gilmary Kay, RSM