

Backgrounder

The Sisters of Service and the Sisters of St. Joseph enter a sponsorship agreement

January 25, 2012

At their 2007 General Chapter, the Institute of the Sisters of Service recognized their present reality and saw the need to plan for their future. They decided to stop seeking new members and to make preparations to ensure the care of their sisters as long as a Sisters of Service lives. This set the direction that led them to explore various options that would allow them to maintain their identity while ensuring the care of their sisters and while entrusting their governance to another organization.

Following consultation, prayer, study and discernment, the Sisters of Service looked at the possibility of a sponsorship agreement. Just as they had courageously established a new congregation in 1922, they now courageously responded to their present reality.

In October 2009, after further consultation and discernment, the Sisters of Service made a formal request to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto to discuss the possibility of sponsoring the Institute.

The two congregations have some shared history. When they were first founded, the Sisters of Service asked the Sisters of St. Joseph to provide sisters to serve as superiors and to assist in the religious formation of the members of the new community. As such, the first two SOS superiors were members of the Sisters of St. Joseph and a collaborative link was created. Both congregations also have headquarters in Toronto.

After a number of exploratory meetings, in November 2010, the Sisters of St. Joseph indicated a willingness to enter into a sponsorship relationship and journey with the Sisters of Service. Together, they developed a sponsorship agreement.

The underlying principle of the sponsorship agreement is that the Sisters of Service will continue as a religious institute as long as a Sister of Service lives. The Sisters of St. Joseph will ensure the care of the Sisters of Service according to their wishes. The Sisters of St. Joseph will assume governance and responsibility for the management of the corporations in a manner that is consistent with the Institute's charism, mission and values.

The Sisters of Service have appointed an animator for community life. The animator position has a 2-year term and will ensure that the personal, physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs of the members are met.

On January 25, 2012, both congregations signed a sponsorship agreement in the CSJ Administration Centre of the Sisters of St. Joseph at 101 Thorncliffe Park Drive in Toronto. Both congregations continue to move forward in a relationship based on trust and mutual respect during this time of transition.

For more information, contact:

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