



Association

We Imagine an Association

- that allows individual congregations to retain their identity and continue their mission while engaging in collaboration with other member congregations
 - Allows congregations with international commitments to preserve those relationships
- that is respectful of individual cultures while calling us to more
 - that can include all and encourages all voices
 - that promotes both agency and accountability
- that immediately helps congregations secure needed governance support
 - provides overlapping leadership roles if and when necessary, among the member congregations
 - provides commissary for those choosing completion while still supporting the mission
- that is flexible and able to support members immediate needs: (for instance, do you need a gathering space?)
 - Association can organize itself for mission and charism as it decides.
- that could grow into a union
 - An institution that holds “both and”: holds our individual identities as we make the journey from “I” to “We”
 - that is both global and local: locally intimate and nationally accessible
- Promotes relationship and shared commitment to Dominican life and mission among the member congregations
 - Opportunity for shared ministries among the members
- Supports individual member congregations as they work to secure the future of sponsored ministries; share knowledge and learnings
- An association that could be one with regions or with multiple associations

Benefits

- Allows mission and collaboration to continue
- Allows for practical assistance and for commissary assistance as needed
- Simpler model to achieve in a timely fashion; the groundwork is already done and evolving can continue into the future

- Allows congregations to do their internal work while preparing for union
- Provides more resources for mission; sharing resources, assistance with civil matters; collaboration among leaders around sharing knowledge, experience and wisdom
- More time to deepen relationships and Dominican Identity
- Provides a potential for a larger leadership pool
- Each congregation retains its identity and when ready can join the association
- DSC is still the networking container
- Shared formation from inquiry to final profession; continued collaboration for the CDN
- Enriched by the diversity of our congregations



Union

We imagine a Union

- One Dominican Identity, all our DSC congregations witnessing together as one voice
- We imagine a flexibility of structure that allows as many OP congregations as possible to join and when they are ready to join
- Simple, bare bones structure; small leadership team with “regional” leadership
 - Regions financially support the union
 - We imagine an international region
- Union calls us to be countercultural for times such as these
- We imagine a union that would be apostolic
- Deepens our identity as Dominican Preachers rather than geography
 - Will provide cohesion over geographical distances
- Sharpens our focus on the larger charism as Dominican Preachers
- Invite the best of each Congregation into leadership
- A union that will bring us together sooner than later;
- Dominican Sisters Congregation united for mission
- Becomes the next step to Dominican Sisters International
- Creates Newness: hope rises, joy and hope rises; creates new energy
- Our vocation and formation programs will be centralized
- Where peer relationships are created and supported across geographies
- We imagine a space that provides younger members the opportunities grow and evolve the union structures

Benefits

- Draws on the historical experience of Sisters of Hope and Sisters of Peace
- We have energy now to create this and may not in the future
- Frees up sisters for mission with one leadership team
- Larger leadership pool
- More ministry options
- More viable community living options

- Greater opportunity to attract vocations
- This is the desire of the younger members, to form a union
- Brings us and our ministries together under one identity and one public face rather than 19 separate congregations
- Dominican identity has priority over individual congregational identity.
- Common vocation and formation process
- Collective research lessens work burden (researching cemeteries, etc.)
- Allows newer members to embrace a common Dominican identity
- Consolidation of resources
 - Creates more resources of people and finances for mission
- Potential for structures/ways of connecting that we don't even imagine yet
- Attracting new members internationally with our vitality
- Joining a universal movement of convergence and movement towards wholeness
- A future for our younger members
- We DID IT!

Other Insights on Both Models:

We identified “functional requirements” for either model, including;

- Benefits of relieving administrative responsibilities associated with healthcare, disposition of properties, shrinking leadership pool.
- Benefits of strengthening opportunities for justice, peace, and ministry in general and vocation/formation, and preaching
- Benefits of deepening and broadening our relationships
- Must serve as a safety net for every institute.

We identified the importance of an evolving process, akin to our religious formation that goes from first vows to final vows. We imagine:

- The Association model as our first vows because it's an easier sell to membership, respects and challenges self-governance structures, honors

diversity and bio-regional uniqueness, avails of our current experience in collaboration leading up the Union model.

- The Union model as our final vows because it's a bolder, nobler endeavor toward communion that enlivens unity in our diversity, and ultimately moves us toward one Dominican voice for time such as these.