

Sojourner Relationship

with the





*Living and promoting active
nonviolence and peacemaking.*

- Mission Statement



Left: Sister Eileen Golby and Sojourner Shelly Seifert

Right: Sojourner Dick Roberts and Sister Joan Theiss

PHILOSOPHY

As Francis and Clare desired to be attentive to Jesus and his Gospel message, the Sojourner seeks to share in the life of the Clinton Franciscan Family as we, together, strive to live this Gospel message. The Sojourner will be encouraged to internalize this tradition through:

- embracing a simple way of life
- fostering relationships of mutuality
- sharing gifts for the building of the reign of God
- committing to living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE SOJOURNER RELATIONSHIP

To realize more fully one's baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ, the Sojourner offers her/his life and gifts to the mission of the congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis.

A Sojourner shares community within the Clinton Franciscan Family, becoming ever more attentive to the Gospel as lived by Francis and Clare. She/he participates in a process which includes:

- living faithfully the mission, corporate stands, and Chapter commitments of the Sisters of St. Francis
- praying Morning and Evening Prayer
- deepening her/his personal prayer life
- attending congregational meetings and gatherings
- maintaining contact with other Sojourners
- communicating with her/his Companion
- engaging in ministry of service
- studying Franciscanism and Scripture
- considering participation in spiritual direction
- participating in an annual retreat

The Sojourner will maintain financial and legal independence from the Sisters of St. Francis.

SOJOURNER / CONGREGATION RELATIONSHIP

A Sojourner chooses to live a covenant relationship with the Clinton Franciscan Family. This relationship is non-canonical. At the end of each five-year covenant, the Sojourner, the Companion, and the Coordinator discern together if this relationship is to be renewed for

another five years or, if the Sojourner chooses, to make a life-long covenant.

The initial covenant will ordinarily take place during the Commissioning Liturgy at The Canticle. The five-year renewal of the non-canonical covenant will ordinarily take place during a regional meeting.

The Sojourner relationship may be terminated at any time, by either the Sojourner or the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis, after dialogue with the Sojourner and the Coordinator. This termination is in writing and will be signed by the Sojourner and President.

SOJOURNER COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis will appoint a vowed member to be Coordinator. The Coordinator has the responsibility of overseeing the Sojourner process.

The responsibilities of the Coordinator are to:

- oversee the Sojourner process and periodically review the steps involved
- submit regular updates to the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis
- coordinate the discernment process for each Sojourner
- maintain regular contact with the Sojourner throughout the relationship
- appoint vowed members as Sojourner Companions
- introduce inquirer to the Clinton Franciscan Family and ask the community to pray intentionally for Sojourner inquirers

COMPANION RESPONSIBILITIES

A Companion is a vowed member of the Sisters of St. Francis who:

- walks with the Sojourner
- connects with the Sojourner at least every 4-6 weeks via personal contact, phone/virtual call, or e-mail
- encourages reading and discussion of Franciscan literature
- acquaints her/him with the recent Chapter enactments/statements
- supports the Sojourner's involvement in local activities that promote the community's mission of living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking

- helps to provide opportunities to learn about the history of the Sisters of St. Francis through
 - readings
 - roots trip
 - storytelling with community members
 - Wisdom Circle
- encourages the Sojourner to share what she/he is doing with the Clinton Franciscan Family
- discerns with the Sojourner and the Coordinator her/his readiness for the next phase of the process
- maintains regular contact with the Coordinator
- participates in the study of The Rule and Life of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis and helps her/him explore the Franciscan core values

DISCERNMENT PROCESS

The discernment process for the Sojourner begins with the initial contact and the Sojourner's desire to enter the first phase of discernment.

Inquiry Phase: Getting to know the Clinton Franciscan Family and its mission and spirituality.

Any Christian man or woman, 21 years of age or older, who desires to deepen her/his spiritual life may begin the Sojourner process which includes, when possible:

- writing a letter to the Coordinator asking to begin this journey
- completing the application form along with a reflection that includes answers to the following questions:
 - What do you find attractive about Francis and Clare and the Clinton Franciscan Family?*
 - What are your hopes and expectations for the Sojourner relationship?*
- participating in a "Following in the Footsteps of Francis and Clare" workshop
- getting to know Francis and Clare through several opportunities: reading and/or multimedia material, studying the Scriptures of the Day
- introducing the inquirer to the mission of living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking

- participating in local activities that support the corporate mission
- experiencing and participating in summer gatherings, retreats, Commissioning, and regional meetings
- gathering with the Clinton Franciscan Family in one's local area and participating in prayer, faith sharing, and other activities
- connecting with other Sojourners
- visiting The Canticle and getting to know the larger community
- discussing with Companion the reading or multimedia material the Sojourner inquirer has done
- initiating and familiarizing the inquirer with *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise*



*Sister Ida Green and
Sojourner Jayne Connors*

Pre-Covenant Phase:

Deepening personal knowledge of Franciscanism:

- studying The Rule and Life of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis
- participating in local activities that support the Sisters of St. Francis' corporate stands and mission of living and promoting active nonviolence and peacemaking
- reading and reflecting on Franciscan material recommended by the Companion and/or Coordinator
- uniting more deeply with the Clinton Franciscan Family through actively participating in congregational events
- studying the recent Chapter enactments and statements
- praying *Franciscan Morning and Evening Praise*
- considering participation in spiritual direction
- experiencing a 1-3 day retreat

Working with the Coordinator and Companion, the inquirer will:

- have at least one year formation before making first Covenant
- write a letter to the leadership team of the Sisters of St. Francis requesting to make her/his first five-year Covenant as a Sojourner with the Clinton Franciscan Family

- submit at least two letters of recommendation from the following:
 - spiritual leader
 - recent employer or supervisor
 - friend or relative
 - member of the Clinton Franciscan Family
- have an interview with the Coordinator and a member of the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis

Covenant Rite:

Ordinarily, at the time of the annual community Commissioning Liturgy, a simple ritual celebrates a Sojourner's initial non-canonical five-year Covenant.

At the time of a regional meeting, with a simple ritual, a Sojourner renews her/his non-canonical covenant for another five years or may choose to make a lifelong Covenant.

Deepening the Covenant:

Exploring the ongoing activities under the umbrella of active nonviolence and peacemaking by:

- exploring the core values of the Third Order of Franciscans

Conversion of Heart	Contemplation/Prayer
Humility (Minority)	Poverty
Joy	
- praying with scripture
- participating in local activities that support the mission and corporate stands
- continuing to read and learn about Francis and Clare
- attending local events/presentations that will deepen her/his spirituality and understanding of Franciscanism
- strengthening the Clinton Franciscan Family connection through actively participating in congregational events like summer gatherings and regional meetings
- connecting with Sisters in the local area, if possible
- connecting with other Sojourners, if possible
- participating with the Clinton Franciscan Family in prayer, faith sharing, reconciliation, outreach

Revised: September 2022

Contact us to learn more about the Sojourner Relationship!



Seated, from left: Gabriela Egging, Lou Egging, Dick Roberts, Mardy Bloch, Todd Seifert, and Connie Beck. Standing, from left: the late Ellen Zethmayr-Lolakos, Jayne Connors, Ruthann Notz, Gail Burkamper, and Shelly Seifert.



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