



Sisters of  
St. Francis™

CLINTON, IOWA



# Associate Partnership Handbook

Revised December 2020



*Living and promoting active  
nonviolence and peacemaking.*

*- Mission Statement*

# ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT

*As Associates, we partner with the  
Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa,  
in radically living gospel values of  
active nonviolence and peacemaking.*

*We espouse compassion, diversity,  
equality, and inclusivity as we respond  
to God's love.*



*Associates Lanie Lass, Sandy Jacobs, and Deb Jacobsen with  
Sisters Ann Martinek and Kathleen Holland.*

*“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;  
and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord;  
and there are varieties of activities, but it is the  
same God who activates all of them in everyone.  
To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit  
for the common good.”*

1 Cor: 12:4-7

## **RATIONALE**

Our creator calls each person to share in the new creation, to continue the loving action of creating a dynamic world full of promise.

All Christians, church leaders, religious, and laity are urged by the Church to grow in interdependence and to recognize that we together are responsible for Christ’s mission on earth.

Therefore, the Sisters of St. Francis extend a loving invitation to those who wish to join our Franciscan commitment in this dynamic process.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Associate Partnership is to form a unique bond between the Sisters of St. Francis and individuals who, within their own lifestyles, share our Gospel vision, our congregational goals, and our Franciscan values and concerns.

The Associates, by sharing the common mission of the Congregation to live and promote active nonviolence and peacemaking, broaden the apostolic sphere of the Sisters of St. Francis. In the mission section of our *Constitution*, we recognize our common call and response.

*"We see every person as a visible image of the invisible God and as a sister or brother in Christ. Therefore, we enable people to recognize their particular rights and dignity and to shape their destinies."*

Constitutions 37

*"We help each other to respond to the Church's call to mission as we co-minister with the people of God."*

Constitutions 39

By including and utilizing the gifts of those in the Associate Partnership, we broaden the scope of our effort to:

*"... share the gospel in word and deed  
until the Creator's vision of*

*Love*

*Justice*

*Freedom*

*and Peace*

*is incarnated everywhere."*

Prologue to Constitution

## PARTNERSHIP

Associates respond to a desire to embrace the Clinton Franciscan mission. They aspire to understand and embody the mission of active nonviolence and peacemaking by living it more deeply in their daily life. They are nourished by mutual support, fellowship, and relationships shared with the Sisters of St. Francis, Sojourners, and each other. Regular gatherings, common prayer, and Franciscan study enrich their commitment to the mission.

The invitation to become an Associate is extended to adults who wish to deepen and enrich their lives through mutual exchange with the Clinton Franciscan Family. We invite individuals who desire to create supportive community, to witness Franciscan values more fully, and to make Gospel living more credible in our society, as well as to broaden our vision and to become better able to find ways to meet global needs.

## ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATE

The Associate will be encouraged to develop a sense of continuity in relationship with the Regional Coordinator and Associates. The fundamental relationship is to the entire Clinton Franciscan Family. As followers of Francis, we are called to be in relationship and are reminded to treat one another as sister and brother.

The Associate maintains financial and legal independence from the Sisters of St. Francis.

## **BECOMING AN ASSOCIATE**

- Upon request, information regarding the Associate Partnership is sent to the interested person by the Regional Coordinator.
- The individual becomes acquainted with the members of the congregation, as well as the spirit and charism of the Sisters of St. Francis.
- She/he will participate in a session of "Following in the Footsteps of Francis & Clare," when possible.
- An interview will be arranged by the Regional Coordinator with the individual (phone and technology may be used).
- At a time mutually agreeable to the individual and the Regional Coordinator, an application form should be submitted to the Associate Partnership Coordinator.
- The Associate Partnership Coordinator, after consulting with the Regional Coordinator and the President, sends a letter of acknowledgement to the individual and a copy to the Regional Coordinator.
- The President, after consulting with the Associate

Partnership Coordinator and Regional Coordinator, makes a decision regarding acceptance of the relationship.

- An official letter of acceptance is sent by the President to the candidate. A date for formalization of the initial commitment is then determined.
- In the Commitment Ceremony, the candidate signs a Commitment Statement (ordinarily a 3-year renewable commitment) with the congregation.

## RENEWAL OF COMMITMENT

Every three years each Associate is asked to reflect and discern her/his continued association. A renewal ceremony is planned and Associates are invited to participate.

- All Associates are asked to respond with a request to:
- a. renew for 3 years
  - b. make a permanent commitment *or*
  - c. terminate her/his association.

## ASSOCIATE PARTNERSHIP COORDINATOR

One Sister and one Associate will be appointed by the Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Francis to serve a 3-year term as Coordinators of the Associate Partnership program.



The responsibilities are:

- To communicate to the Leadership Team that application(s) for the Associate Partnership have been received.
- To provide an opportunity for the individuals to attend "Following in the Footsteps of Francis and Clare" or an alternative program.
- To contact the Regional Coordinator to prepare and implement a commitment ceremony, which will occur at a Regional Meeting.
- To keep the records of Associates up-to-date.
- To be a resource for the various regions.

## **THE REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

One Sister or Associate will be appointed to serve a 3-year term by the Associate Partnership Coordinators from among the Associates/Sisters of each region.

The responsibilities are:

- To invite individuals to Associate meetings and other opportunities to be with the Clinton Franciscan Family.
- To provide individuals with an application and information regarding Associate Partnership.

- To call regional Associates together for regular meetings.
- To encourage Associates to continue to learn about Francis and Clare; and to participate in a ministry/ activity which reflects the Clinton Franciscan mission.
- To inform Associates of recommitment time.
- To evaluate the regional program with Associates and report periodically to the Associate Partnership Coordinator.
- To communicate with the Associate Partnership Coordinator regarding:
  - a. a yearly regional program plan.
  - b. the progress of those seeking Associate Partnership.



*Chicago Region Associate Recommitment Ceremony*

## ROLE OF THE CONGREGATION

The Sisters of St. Francis will:

- Share their mission and charism with the Associates.
- Pray for and with the Associates.
- Engage with Associates through:
  - spiritual and theological input from guest speakers, tapes, videos, and library resources.
  - mutual sharing and support afforded by contacts of a ministerial, spiritual, or social nature.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Many books, including the following, are available to be borrowed:

*Living Like Francis Today*, by Marci Blum

*Journey of the Sacred*

CD programs available include:

*The Treasures of a Poor Man*, by Bill Short

*St. Francis of Assisi: A New way of Being Christian*, by Bill Short

*Franciscan Prayer: How Saint Francis Prayed*,  
by Murray Bodo

Resources on active nonviolence and peacemaking are also available at [www.clintonfranciscans.com](http://www.clintonfranciscans.com).



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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