



DELAWARE VALLEY MEMBER AREA

Delaware Valley Member Area Zoom Meeting Minutes

October 3, 2024 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Members Present: Sr. Anita Bolton, CSR, Sr. Anita Quigley, SHCJ, Sr. Anna Marie Phuong Nguyen, RA, Sr. Carol Ann Nawracaj, OSF, Sr. Cathie Meighan, SSJ, Sr. Cecilia Nanni Costa, FMIJ, Sr. Diane Tomkinson, OSF, Sr. Helen Sanchez, MPF, Sr. Jean Rhoads, DC, Sr. Kieran Williams, IHM, Sr. Laura Downing, IHM, Sr. Lisa Valentini, MSC, Sr. Liz Sjoberg, DC, Sr. Maria Zepeda, MSBT, Sr. Michele Fisher, CSFN, Mrs. Nancy Costello (for MSC Sisters), Sr. Pat Stringer, OP, Sr. Sherly “Sunny” Padayattil, FSSE.

Welcome and brief introductions

Sister Michele Fisher began by welcoming Sister Anita Quigley, our newly elected Delaware Valley Member Area Coordinator, who along with Sr. Michele, will support our NRVC members and activities in our Delaware Valley Area. Following this introduction, members invited each other to introduce themselves. We were happy to welcome new members, Sisters Anna Marie Phuong Nguyen, RA, Cecilia Nanni Costa, FMIJ, Sr. Liz Sjoberg, DC, Sr. Maria Zepeda, MSBT and Sr. Sherly “Sunny” Padayattil, FSSE. For a brief minute, Srs. Shannon Hoffman, SC and Sr. Luciana D’Cruze, MPF had signed on the meeting, but seemed to have lost the connection. We hope they’ll be able to sign on for our next meeting and look forward to their presence with us.

Opening Prayer:

Sr. Michele Fisher shared a power-point Prayer for the Synod (attached) that included a song composed by Sr. Santrina, IBVM and produced by the Pauline Sisters in Africa. The words after the song were taken from Pope Francis’ homily for the opening of the 2024 Synod on Synodality.

NRVC Updates

Sr. Michele noted that the NRVC National Office, after bidding a fond farewell to Marge Argyelan for her nine years of service as our Director of Database Administration, now welcomes Sister Kathleen Branham, OSF to the NRVC Staff as the new Director of Database Administration.

- On the local level, we welcomed Sr. Anita Quigley, SHCJ, as our Delaware Valley Member Area Coordinator after being elected by our members at our June meeting. Her first term began July 1, 2024.

- Mrs. Nancy Costello shared some NRVC Board updates and noted that this past September the Board met here in Pennsylvania at the Rafaela Retreat Center in Haverford. It was extra special as this was Nancy's final meeting with the Board as she has completed her one term of office (3 years). We are grateful for Nancy's excellent service on behalf of NRVC and look forward to her continued presence with us here in the Delaware Valley Member Area.
- **Convocation 2024**
- Sr. Michele reported that we have reached the 200 mark for participants in Convocation 2024. NRVC strongly encouraged members of leadership teams, formation ministers, communications and mission advancement members to join with fellow vocation ministers for a shared experience of walking humbly and learning together. Go to the NRVC website for more details about Convocation 2024.
- The NRVC Board Intercultural Committee is preparing an *Ofrenda* to honor the celebration of El Dia De Los Muertos (November 2). Participants in Convocation are asked to bring photos or other mementos of their deceased loved ones (make sure your name is on each of the items) for the Ofrenda.
- We invited those members who are registered to attend Convocation to consider getting together as a Member Area to share a meal and conversation. After discussion, the group that was present voted to gather for dinner on Friday, November 1. We will gather after the afternoon prayer (remain in the room after everyone else exits) to decide where we would like to go. To help keep things simple, kindly bring cash rather than credit cards for this meal. In addition to going out to one of the local restaurants, given our various dietary needs/restrictions and likes, we may have the option of ordering in and finding a more conducive space to meet and share at the hotel. Whatever we decide to do, it will be great to have a chance to be together in person!
- It was suggested that since there is no hotel shuttle from the airport, people may want to meet up at the airport to share transportation. To facilitate this, we ask those going to Convocation to share your flight arrangements with Sister Anita Quigley (aquigley@shcj.org) who will try to organize and create a list of similar arrival and departure times. Please include your cell phone numbers for easy contact.
- **NOTE:** A question was raised about our Convocations being held either during or right before National Vocation Awareness Week when many events are planned. Vocation ministers, if attending Convocation, miss out on invitations or opportunities that are specially planned for NVAW. Can the timing of Convocation be re-considered when planning for Convocation 2026?
- **Invitation from Sr. Debbie Borneman for Delaware Valley Member Area to host a 2-day workshop in Fall 2025.**
- Sister Debbie Borneman, NRVC Director of Mission Integration, reached out to Sr. Michele Fisher, Member Area Coordinator, to explore the possibility of the Delaware Valley Member

Area hosting a two-day NRVC workshop sometime in Fall 2025. After discussion, there was an excitement and openness among the members to hosting such an event in our area. Members began brainstorming possible venues including San Rafaela Retreat Center, Haverford, Malvern Retreat Center, Malvern, the IHM Spirituality Center in Immaculata, PA, The Mother Boniface Center (MSBT Sisters) in northeast Philadelphia, The Norbertine Center at Daylesford Abbey and the Filippini Sisters Retreat Center in Mantoloking, NJ.

- Sister Michele Fisher will reach out to Sister Debbie for further information including possible dates, number of participants, needs for technology and other details we can share with our retreat centers. Members have already begun contacting the various retreat centers to look for openings for Fall 2025 (September thru November), weekend and mid-week openings. Sr. Michele will contact the group once more details become available and we will follow up with a report at Convocation and at our December meeting.
- **Financial Report**
- Sister Michele Fisher reported that a \$500 donation from our Member Area was given to NRVC for a Convocation Sponsorship. This was agreed upon at our June meeting and then arranged through Mrs. Maureen Cetera at the National Office
- At present, the Delaware Valley Member Area has a balance of \$ 3,486.82 in our NRVC account.
- There have been some questions about collecting dues from the Area member congregations for our ongoing needs. We have not collected dues in the past two years as we were still coming out of COVID and were not having in-person meetings or events. We will add this discussion to our December meeting agenda.

Local Updates

National Vocation Awareness Week activities/requests

- **St. Hubert High School for Girls, Philadelphia, PA – Classroom Visits – In=Person or Zoom**

Mary Tomczuk, campus minister, is once again inviting women religious to come and speak with the Junior theology classes for National Vocation Awareness Week. November 4th and 5th are open. Several communities are already committed for Nov. 6, 7 & 8, but always room for more!

The Junior Theology schedule would be:

2nd period: 8:57 AM - 9:42 AM

3rd period: 9:45 AM - 10:30 AM (classroom change)

6th period: 12:09 PM -12:54 PM (classroom change)

7th period: 12:57 PM -1:42 PM

Sisters Helen Sanchez and Pat Stringer volunteered for Tuesday, November 5th by Zoom. Mrs. Nancy Costello also offered her presence to represent the MSC Sisters

Some vocation directors will be traveling home from NRVC Convocation on November 4th and 5th making it impossible to be present on those days.

Any interested Sisters may participate. If anyone, especially those living closer to Philadelphia, has Sisters who wish to attend, please contact Sr. Michele Fisher (sorellamichele@aol.com) at your earliest convenience.

- **Possible Senior Retreat on Discernment for St. Hubert High School**

In addition to the Junior class visits, Mary Tomczuk has invited us to consider participating in their annual Senior Retreat (110 girls) which is scheduled for Dec. 13 at the Life Center and lower church of Resurrection of Our Lord Parish in Northeast Philadelphia. Mary is asking if it would work to bring sisters there and lead the retreat as a day of discernment.

Sisters Anita Quigley, Diane Tomkinson, Kieran Williams, Laura Downing, Lisa Valentini and Mrs. Nancy Costello expressed interest in participating. If anyone else is able to or interested in participating, please contact Sr. Michele Fisher at your earliest convenience.

Young Adult Activities/Events

- **“The Well”** November 23, 2024 Conference for Young Adults, Philadelphia
<https://phillyyam.org/thewell/#registration>
Sr. Michele Fisher will contact Fr. Timothy Tarnacki at the Office for Ministry with Young Adults to see if there may be space for vocation ministers to set up an informal break area where young adults can come and relax between sessions and engage with vocation ministers. They are looking for “sponsors” for the day, so it might be a way for us to lend both financial and personnel support.
- Jubilee Pilgrimage to Rome with Archbishop Perez. July 26-Aug. 4, 2025
- We discussed the possibility of hosting another one-day Young Adult retreat/day of prayer for Spring 2025. This would be a general invitation open to all young adults with hopes of drawing a larger, diverse group from which we may find those who wish to continue a conversation about discernment. Sr. Michele Fisher will run this idea past Fr. Timothy as well as to the Young Catholic Professionals group. More information will follow.
- **Rosary For Vocation Discernment** – Thursday, October 17 at 7 PM
Sr. Pat Stringer invited us to participate in an on-line vocation event (see attached flyer) sponsored by the New Jersey vocation Ministers group. The flyer contains the Zoom link.
- **“Eat, Pray, Walk”** Event – Sunday, October 6th at Catholic University in Washington DC sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Member Area.

- **Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware Eucharistic Congress – Weekend of October 5-6 in Ocean City, Maryland.**
- **IHM Scranton “Come and See” Weekend – November 15-17**
 - Please contact Sr. Kieran Williams, IHM if you have a young adult who may be interested in attending. (see attached flyer)

Possible Shared Retreat with RFC members – Spring 2025

- At our June meeting, there was some discussion of a possible shared retreat for vocation and formation ministers to be arranged for Spring 2025 by the RFC member area. The date is for March 21-23, 2025 at Villa Maria By The Sea in Stone Harbor, NJ. Sister Laura Downing will check with Sr. Mary Ann Spaetti, IHM about the status of this retreat (whether it is still happening and whether it's for RFC members only or if NRVC is to be invited) and will report back to the group.

Next meeting

In addition to connecting with members during the NRVC Convocation, we will hold our next meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, December 10 at 7PM to accommodate those who have other daytime ministries. Sr. Anita Quigley will facilitate. We are seeking a volunteer to prepare and lead our opening prayer. Please e-mail Sister Michele Fisher if you can do this for the December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Sister Michele Fisher

Sr. Michele Fisher CSFN
Member Area Co-Coordinator

Your Delaware Valley Member Area Coordinators

Sr. Anita Quigley, SHCJ aquigley@shcj.org
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