

Mid-Atlantic Member Area Meeting Minutes



April 30, 2024, 12n-3pm

Location: Franciscan Friar Residence
1359 Monroe Street, NE Washington, DC 20017

Attendees: Sister Kathy Persson, OSB. and Sister Jean Rhoads, DC (*coordinators*), Father Ed Nowak, CPS, Brother Nick Romeo, OFM Conv., Sister Ruby Sampang, RMI, and Father Manny Vasconcelos, OFM Conv.

Via Zoom: Sister Terry Bretthauer, MSB, Sister Josita Colbert, SND deN., Sister Pat Dowling, CBS, Ernie Garrido (Communicator for Paulist), Sister Kieran Williams, IHM., and Lisa Schneider (Assistant to DC Vocation Directors),

Recorded Zoom Link : https://www.canva.com/design/DAGEM3Brk8w/GSrlyDhk2A2--YZUSZEhtQ/edit?utm_content=DAGEM3Brk8w&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

Opening Blessing: Sr. Kathy Persson, OSB

Presentation: ***Understanding, Interaction & Generational Impact on Vocation Ministry*** facilitated by Sr. Kathy Persson, OSB

Highlights

- A. Video 1: Unlock the Gen Z employee: Inside the mind of a native digital-TED Talk by Hannah
- Gen Z is identified as those people who were born between 1994-2010 and they are called native digital. They grew up completely integrated with technology, and they work, think, and play in a digital world.
 - People over thirty-five are called native analog. The native digitals outnumber native analogs and by 2025, a projected 25% of all employees will be Gen Z.
 - A lot of Gen Z high school students opt to not go to college and choose to be entrepreneurs. Social media has created a new way to earn money, create businesses, advertise businesses, build a reputation, and be influencers. Gen Z's are creative, more assertive, and inventive.
 - It is time to build a bridge with Gen Z and become more native digital so that we remain relevant.

The NRVC members were very engaged in discussing how to apply this information to our vocation ministry. Ideas included the following:

- Host a native digital focus session.
- Ask the Gen Zer's their opinion on business decisions.
- Incorporate the young person's voice in how to reach people.
- Be available to listen and be open. Be authentically yourself with Gen Z's.
- Teach them the value in the process instead of instant gratification.

B. Video 2: Living as Gen Z: From Fear to Positive Change- Madi Hammond-TEDx

- Gen Z has had the amount of available information as this generation does right now. They use Google for quick info.
- Things they learn from the internet are positive as well as negative and disturbing, e.g., how to kill, fight, ways people can invade your school, ways you can die, etc.

- Multiple news sources are available and
- almost everything is negative. As a result, Gen Z has more anxiety, fear, anxiety, and depression and looks to their electronic devices as a way to escape facing emotions and problems.

The NRVC members continued to have a good discussion on this topic. Some ideas shared included the following:

- Focus on interpersonal communication and how to communicate with one another. Listen, listen, listen. Have honest conversations with genuine answers to tough questions.
- Structure is needed for Gen Z to feel safe and taken care of.
- Gen Z's appreciate the richness and mystery of our Catholic faith.

NRVC Updates (provided by Sr. Debbie Borneman, SS.C.M., Director of Mission Integration):

1. All Convocation information is posted on the website now and registration is open. These website articles have details: [Pre-Convocation workshops](#), [Convocation](#), and [award nominations](#). Consider inviting members of your community to attend with you as the topics are central to all religious.
2. Resources abound in the Member Toolbox! Just log into the website first, then go to Membership>Member Guidebook>Member Toolbox. All members can download any resource they need, we kindly ask resources not to be shared on digital platforms as they are a member-only benefit. Our newest resource is *Transforming Religious Communities to be Antiracist and Interculturally Inviting: Welcoming the Cultural Abundance of African American and Black Catholics*. It can be downloaded from the Member Toolbox or [purchased in the store](#). It is a resource for the internal work of communities (and Member Areas), not a vocation promotion resource.
3. The Ordination Class Report has been published by the USCCB/CARA. The link to the full report is in the [NRVC studies section](#) of the website. Religious Brothers Day is May 1 and all NRVC members are encouraged to reach out to thank our Brothers. There are 2 Zoom celebrations sponsored by the Brothers Think Tank that are open to the public to attend on May 1st. Get the link in this [website article](#).
4. There are 5 workshops at the [Summer Institute](#) held at the Marillac Center in Leavenworth, KS. All members are encouraged to stay updated on best practices and this year we have a new workshop, the [Health and Wellness in Candidate Assessment](#).
5. We continue to add content [the StoryMap](#)--take a look and consider submitting information about the ministries of your religious institute.
6. I am working on expanding the [collaborator events website page](#) to share national events to promote vocations to alert vocation directors of events to consider participating in around the country. If you know of any events not listed, please send me the name of the event, date, and a link for more information.
7. In August, we are saying goodbye to Marge Argyelan who has served with the NRVC for 9 years (She is retiring) and in May, we are welcoming Sr. Kathleen Branham, OSF, to be mentored into her position and the leadership team model.

Member Area Vocation Events: Members present shared events.

- Sister Jean will check with The Catholic University to coordinate a *Pray, Walk, Eat* event in September. This was very successful last year with about 70 students and 10 congregations participating.
- Sister Ruby shared that the Archdiocese of Washington, DC held a vocation mass for students who are in the sixth grade. This event occurs annually.
- Sister Jean shared that Mt. St. Mary's hosts a "*Back from the Dead*" event during the weekends in October in Emmitsburg, MD. This consists of a guided walk at night through the cemetery with different actors portraying saints who talk about their lives. It costs \$5/person and sells out very quickly.
- Sister Constance is trying to organize something for the Eucharistic Congress Procession which goes through DC on June 18th. Sister Ruby said there will be activities at the John Paul II Shrine for those with limited mobility or disabilities. She will see if they are open to seniors or high school students having an honor guard when the Blessed Sacrament arrives. She will find a contact for Sister Constance.
- Sister Kieran mentioned the Diocese of Scranton is going to have a *FIAT* for the first time. The cost is \$25. Information is on the Diocese website. It is for high school students. It is June 24-26. For the boys, *Quo Vadis* days are happening at the same time. If you would like for your community to join, you are welcome to come. Talk to Sister Kieran for more information.
- On June 12-16, Sister Kieran's community will be the hub for 30 youth/young adults to participate in a service trip in North Carolina. Members are welcome to attend.
- August 11-25th, Sister Kieran along with three other communities is organizing a service trip to the border. This is for young adults.

Next Meeting Date in Fall 2024:

Please send ideas for topics for the Fall meeting to Sister Kathleen Persson or Sister Jean Rhoads.

A doodle poll will go out in the future to determine the best date for the next meeting.

