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Sisters *focus*

SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR

Making known God's goodness

This series is compiled from the Constitutions and Directory of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur—an international congregation of religious women serving on five continents.

Community and Spirituality

Loved by God and animated by the Spirit, we gather in the name of Jesus, to participate in the new community of love and justice which he promised.

The public character of our consecration as Sisters of Notre Dame and our identity as ecclesial women are shown in the ways we seek to live our profession of the evangelical counsels, to form genuine relationships among ourselves, and to collaborate with others who share our hope for the world.

We are united by a common vision of the Gospel and a common call from God to follow Jesus according to our

heritage in Notre Dame, in Julie's simplicity and joy. We share resources in community and make a communal response to local and world needs, especially as they are voiced by the poor.

We foster this unity and assume responsibility for the quality of life of the Congregation by—respecting each sister and the uniqueness of her call, —bringing our special gifts to our communal life and ministry and evoking the gifts of others,

(continued on page 2)



Saint Julie and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur arrive in Cincinnati, OH in 1840. "Ite... missa est." by Sr. Vincent de Paul Curran SNDdeN, Our Lady Queen Chapel, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Ipswich, MA



CHURCH AS COMMUNITY

At the center of the Gospel message is God's desire to share the communion of Trinitarian life with us. Jesus came to invite everyone to participate in the loving communion that Father, Son, and Spirit have with one another. All creation is meant to show us the Trinity's plan of love for us. Everything Jesus did pointed to this goal. (Adapted from the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, p. 119)



Community and Spirituality continued from p. 1

“Loved by God and animated by the Spirit, we gather in the name of Jesus, to participate in the new community...” (Constitutions #31)

“We develop a community climate of warmth, spontaneity, and simplicity where sisters feel at home. We welcome and offer hospitality to our families, friends, co-workers, and those in need, while respecting the needs of those in our own community.

We value speech which fosters sharing, and silence which fosters recollection.

We meet regularly as a community in a variety of ways. We conduct our meetings in a spirit of prayer, reflection, and celebration.

(Directives #8-10)

—listening to the community and being accountable for our personal choices and actions as they affect the life and mission of the Congregation,
—supporting both intermediate and general government by our participation and collaboration.

As a Congregation we pledge ourselves to provide for one another that support, nurture, and challenge needed at every stage of life. In particular, we care for our aged, sick and infirm sisters with love and reverence.

Our commitment to community extends to our families and we assure them of our continued love and concern.

Our life is essentially communal. We live together in established houses of the Congregation. In each house we provide space that allows for the privacy of each sister and the community.

Sisters who live alone, or in other than a Notre Dame community because of particular circumstances, do so with the approval of the intermediate unit moderator, and according to the norms of Canon Law. These sisters continue to participate in the community life of the unit.

(Constitutions #31-36)

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?



The Church, the Body of Christ, is the assembly of people gathered into her by Baptism and their participation in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, which open their minds and hearts to the Trinity, a loving communion of divine persons. In this communion of the Church, the members are called to love God, others, and self, and so to be a communal witness of the love by which Christ saved the world. By divine love, we are joined to the communion of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

US Catholic Catechism for Adults, p. 119.

As gospel women we are called to be holy regardless of our state of life. These reflection questions are offered as a guide for your discernment.

Food for thought

- How are you called to participate in the “new community of love and justice” which Jesus promised?
- How are you called to form genuine relationships and to collaborate with others “who shape our hope for the world?”
- How do you foster unity and assume responsibility for the quality of life of your parish?
- How do you “respect” each person and the uniqueness of his/her call?
- How are you called to follow Jesus and to respond “to local and world needs, especially as they are voiced by the poor?”
- How do you bring your “unique gifts” to your community and ministry?
- How does your way of living “complement and strengthen” others?
- How are you accountable to your parish community? —family community? —school community?