**St. Louis Visitation Association of the Christian Faithful**

**Visitation Academy (St. Louis, County, Missouri)**

**Tenth Annual Report: October 31, 2013**

**Members**

Mrs. Mary Anne Spruell, Moderator (September through December; Mrs. Ginny Starke, Moderator January forward; Msgr. John Unger, Chaplain; Miss Mary Beth Concannon; Mr. Jeff Cupps; Mrs. Marilyn Fitzgerald;

Mrs. Cathleen Fogarty; Mrs. Jennifer Germanese; Mrs. Julie Ivers; Mrs. Julie Ledbetter; Mrs. Chris Nassif;

Mrs. Michelle Reagan; Mrs. Kathryn Snodgrass; Mr. John Sturm; Sr. Veronica Haronik, Superior; Sr. Lucy

Beres; Sr. Margaret Mary Gibson; Sr. Mary Grace McCormack and Sr. Marie Therese Ruthmann

**Formation Summary**

Four formation sessions were held on Saturday mornings for ninety minutes during the year. The theme of *Humility* was chosen and interwoven into formation planning for the year. The group read and discussed Francis de Sales’ *Introduction to the Devout Life*. The formation discussion provided insightful conversation and opportunities for personal growth in Salesian spirituality. The formation offerings were well attended by the ACF members, and the cohesiveness of the group continues to grow. Crosses are donned when we gather as a visible symbol of the group’s primary focus on faith and formation. The ACF also traveled to Kaskaskia in July 2013 to gain deeper insight into the roots of Visitation Academy and Monastery.

In addition, several ACF members attended the National Salesian Convention held in St. Louis in November, 2012.

**Association of the Christian Faithful (ACF) Summary of Business Meetings**

The Visitation Association of the Christian Faithful held 6 business meetings: 9/13/12, 11/15/12, 1/17/13, 3/18/13, 4/18/13 and 5/20/13. All members signed an agreement of commitment and confidentiality at the beginning of the year. Complete meeting minutes are available for review upon request.

Our goals set forth at the beginning of the year included:

* Establish closer working relationships with the Visitation Associates, Alumnae Association and Visitation Academy
* Maintain the viability and enrichment of the ACF in structure and sound formation
* Initiate planning for the ACF’s Ten Year Anniversary during the 2013-14 school year
* Review the ACF statutes and consider updates, as needed

**Update of the St. Louis Visitation Association of Christian Faithful Statutes**

At this ten year milestone, the ACF Statutes are in the process of a comprehensive review. The ad hoc statute committee, which included the Monastic Superior, met several times throughout the year to discuss appropriate ACF formation, term of membership, and responsibilities. The committee then brought recommendations to the full ACF membership for discussion. This work will continue in the 2013-2014 academic year.

**Overview of Outcomes**

The ACF advanced in structure and scope of service to the Sisters this year. Members participated in the Academy’s Board of Director meetings and served on all Board of Director committees. The ACF committees of Communication, Formation and Membership successfully met and collaborated with other Visitation entities to facilitate communication and participation in common activities and initiatives. The ACF Council (akin to an executive council) met regularly with Sr. Veronica Haronik to assist in leadership and Monastery service, as needed. The specific outcomes completed in the 2012-2013 academic year include:

* ACF representatives now serve as either a Board member or an ex-officio member on all Board of Director committees.
* ACF Council members traveled to St. Paul, MN to attend the Second Federation Collaborative Leadership Conference. The purpose of this meeting was to form community and share resources with other Visitation representatives. The presented information, “Servant Leadership,” was shared with all St. Louis ACF members following the conference. ACF Council also participated in a follow up Leadership meeting of the Second Federation Monasteries held in St. Louis in February, 2013.
* The ACF Council attended and assisted the Sisters in Visitation Trust discussions throughout the year.
* An online ACF calendar of Visitation events was developed to apprise members of community events.
* The Formation committee assisted in the planning and presentation of Salesian Spirituality as part of the orientation process for new faculty and staff.
* The Formation committee worked with the Visitation Associates program to consider how ACF members might be able to assist in the formation of new Associate members with the Sisters. An ACF member will now assist the Sisters in leadership duties of the Associates.
* ACF members participated in the faculty’s formation meetings, *Listen with Your Heart*, and attended all-school masses.
* ACF members assisted the Sisters in the development of their Legacy statement for the Academy.
* ACF members participated with the Sisters in discussions regarding a future Salesian Center on campus.
* Name tags were designed and acquired to assist in ACF identification and visibility in the Visitation community.
* An ACF member was appointed to serve as the Alumnae Association co-moderator with one of the Sisters.
* The ACF contributed an article about the ACF to the publication *The Visitor Commencement Issue.* The article is scheduled for print in the spring 2014 issue.
* ACF information will be added to the Monastery website starting fall of 2013. Initial preparations were discussed and a consultant identified for online coding needs.

**Ten Year Anniversary of The Visitation Association of the Christian Faithful**

September of 2013 marked ten years since the ACF statutes were approved by Archbishop Justin Rigali. Several events for the ACF’s Tenth Anniversary are planned. Events will include all entities of the Visitation community in celebration of the Sisters proactive initiatives to keep their Catholic identity and Salesian spirituality flourishing into the future. The first event, a Mass of Celebration and Reception, was held September 22, 2013 at 11 o’clock in the morning. Approximately eighty members of the Visitation community were in attendance.