



“IHM Living Witness”

November: “Living Witness”

Goal: *“Respond to the emerging needs for ministry with inclusion and cultural sensitivity.”*

Question: 2) In light of our goal for 2020-2021, where have you seen the need for more efforts with inclusion and cultural sensitivity in your local mission/ministry? Can you give specific examples of efforts made in your “world” in last 6 months?

Responses:

- ✚ “I try to see ways where we can make our sisters and the people in our ministry aware of situations where there is a lack of cultural sensitivity.’
- ✚ “Here at the University, there has been as increased effort to hire a more diversified faculty and staff.”
- ✚ “As sisters differed in the way they dealt with the global shut-down, personal isolation, positive test results, and living together more closely, a peaceful life became difficult to achieve. I saw the need for greater tolerance of each other’s actions, reactions, loneliness, and resentments. It became a daily need on the local level to find ways of including different thoughts and opinions without a right or wrong judgment on my part or on that of other sisters. Sensitivity was needed to understand sisters from different cultural backgrounds as their conflict resolution styles and perceptions varied at times from our typical “American” approach to challenge and crisis.”
- ✚ “[In light of pondering the places where *more effort was needed in my world, THE world, I can name the following*]: we have been called to come together, to be more mutually supportive. This is a new learning experience requiring trust, patience, and listening [skills]. I am, we are, called to leave the ‘familiar’ behind and to be stretched to a new level. We are called to BE MORE and DO LESS!”
- ✚ “Since the front-line workers have been elevated to ‘essential,’ it made me more conscious of their presence and contributions. It made me want to acknowledge them, from the trash and garbage collectors to the paramedics... to ‘thank them’ for their service to our community... for putting their lives at risk.”
- ✚ “The efforts of our Sisters to keep informed of and respectful of the science of the mandates related to COVID-19 has been an example of inclusion. The process of developing a local assembly response to the virus and the implementation of the response has been an example of cultural sensitivity.”
- ✚ “Our school enrolls graduate theology students from around the world; our ethnic population at CTU reflects this causing us – faculty and students – to see diversity as our great strength. Although not many international students will be able to come here now [due to the travel restrictions and ongoing virus complications] – online classes became the norm as we begin the new academic year.”

- ✚ “Remote/virtual learning has made us aware of the economic disparities in our schools. Some of these disparities are related to race and culture, especially in our urban settings. Remote learning has caused challenges at all levels... for both faculty and students alike.”
- ✚ “In the last six months, the world has gotten both smaller *and* larger all at the same time! My own world grew smaller due to being confined to a more limited number of shared places and spaces. At the same time, due to both the need to move into ZOOM classes with students, and the headlines of our U.S. and world scenes, my home “walls” sometimes took more of a back seat as I pondered the needs of this much larger picture. As a result, I think, my own spaces became stretched as we became part of one another’s “worlds” when sharing class content and the personal and interpersonal responses invited when sharing that material in this year of 2020. In the end, I think that the *goal* of becoming more *culturally sensitive* has come knocking at the blessed security of my convent doorstep!

Articles for Further Consideration:

- 1) <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/people/social-justice/sisters-determined-get-determined-people-vote>
- 2) <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/about-title>