

If, faced with the challenges not just of this pandemic but of the ills that afflict us at this time, we can act as a single people, life and society will change for the better. This is not just an idea but a call to each of us, an invitation to abandon the self-defeating isolation of individualism, to flow out from own" little lagoon" into the broader river of reality and destiny of which I am a part yet which at the same time is beyond me.

Pope Francis, Dare to Dream p.103

CALL

In this change of era, we are called as women of the gospel to set hearts on fire and imaginations free. We do this by:

- ◉ Nurturing a joyful and hopeful way of life characterised by contemplation, hospitality and simplicity
- ◉ Committing to the urgent plea of Laudato Si' to respond to the cry of Earth and peoples rendered poor
- ◉ Embracing our role in the one community of life
- ◉ Animating our mission by expanding our engagement with colleagues and their gifts, in a spirit of mutuality and profound respect
- ◉ Stewarding and sharing generously our spiritual and material resources for the flourishing of all life
- ◉ Progressing the sacred work of the completion tasks required to bring our Congregation to fulfilment.

Inspiring voices...

Maina Talia, Pacific Calling Partnership

His key question to us is: 'Am I not your neighbour?' He believes governments are intent on watering down the language about climate change while people are dying, islands are sinking, and culture is lost.

The non-economic loss and damage of losing one's culture and language cannot be measured in monetary terms. Islanders face the challenges of freak storms, drought, reliance on rainwater, and risks to food security and food safety. There are no options. Whatever is on the table, says Maina, I'm thankful for. There is no legal framework to address the issues of displacement.

Choose life, then, so that your descendants may live in the love of your God, obeying God's voice, clinging to God: for in this your life consists....

Deuteronomy 30:19-20



Invitation and Call

From Congregational Forum of Sisters of St Brigid, March 2022

INVITATION

'Choose Life' is a continuing invitation for all Brigidines, now and into the future.

As women of the Gospel and pathfinders, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, Brigid of Kildare and Daniel Delany, we seek new ways to proclaim wholeness and holiness of Earth and her people.

At this time in the life of our world, Church and Congregation we have reached other crossroads that call for deep listening. Wisdom and energy will be needed as we animate our mission. This prompts an active, prophetic response to the many challenging issues in our world.

As Brigidines with unwavering faith, open hearts and courage, we go wherever the river of life flows.

It demands that we live in the present with passion and embrace the future with audacity and hope.

Pope Francis offers us an invitation to flow out from our 'little lagoon' into the broader river of which we are part.

In this context we are challenged to listen and respond to the cry of all life, pleading, 'Am I not your neighbour?'

Cycles of life are calling us to a new crossroad, engaging in the tasks of completion in a life-giving way.

Inspiring voices challenge us as live into this Invitation and Call

Fatima Measham

Consumption of fossil fuels, consumption in general and rise in temperatures are already disrupting the balance of physics and chemistry that has made for an exuberant life on Earth. We are moving from a profusion of colour, shape and sound to a muted flat monochrome – from a state of excellence to one of mediocrity. If the quality of our relationship with nature remains transactional or extractive then what will then change?

... Love of nature can only be authentic in solidarity with indigenous peoples who do not distinguish themselves from the plants, animals, rivers and mountains which inspire their languages practices, and spirit. So loving one must include the other.

- ◉ In what ways have you met the call to be excellent at love?
- ◉ How will you steer others away from mediocrity in a world that was made good for good?
- ◉ What role can you play as Brigidine Sisters to foster a Church culture that is consistent in its love for nature and for first peoples and embraces the fuller range of humanity?

Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv DD STL Bishop of Parramatta 12 March 2022

Perhaps there is another way to understand and live religious life today. This alternative way is not by looking into our rear vision and longing in nostalgia for some bygone era. Rather, it lies in the consciousness that religious life is not about being the infantry troops for the institutional Church. It is not about the capacity to staff hospitals, schools, orphanages and the like. Religious life is the art of scanning the horizons above and exploring the terrain below for signs of a new life and a new future. These reconnaissance specialists or the Delta Force, if you like, do not require a cast of thousands.

Religious are pathfinders who venture into the untrodden. We are not settlers but pilgrims; not guardians of status quo but explorers of what is possible. Religious are like the aboriginal pioneers who refused to sit on the edges of the shrinking billabong. It's in our DNA to go to where the river flows in order to explore new frontiers of engagement and new possibilities of solidarity.

Where are the thresholds, the peripheries and crossroads that we are called to venture into today? Where are the spaces where we can be the catalysts for the Kingdom and yeast for the leavening of God's people?

Where are we in the intersection between the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor? If there is an issue with absolute currency and urgency in the world today, it is the ecological crisis and the disproportionate impact on the poor.

