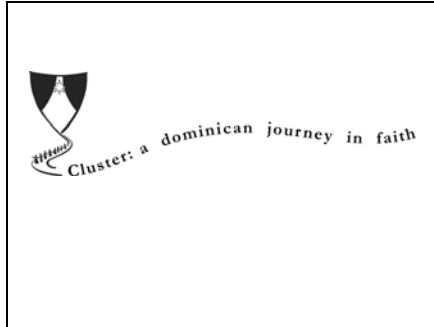


Slide 1



Cluster has truly been a Dominican journey in faith, as is imaged in our logo. On any journey, I think it always helps to look at where we've come from and where we're going in order to better appreciate where we are right now. So we'll take a brief look at our Cluster process: past, present, and future. (CLICK)

Slide 2

Cluster Mission Statement
As members of the Cluster, we are committed to a process for the reconfiguration of Sister Congregations for Dominican life and Mission.

- Akron
- Columbus
- Eucharistic Missionaries of St. Dominic
- Great Bend
- Kentucky
- Oxford
- St. Mary's New Orleans

Congregational leaders began conversing about some kind of Cluster in 2000. Akron, Columbus, and St. Mary's New Orleans were the earliest participants in this conversation. By Spring of 2004, 7 congregations had committed themselves to participate in the Cluster process for the reconfiguration of sister congregations for Dominican life and mission: Akron, Columbus, Eucharistic Missionaries, Kentucky, Great Bend, Oxford, St. Mary's New Orleans. (CLICK)

Slide 3



Leaders established a Cluster Coordinating Committee by the end of 2002. This committee planned a discernment process of seven cycles of meetings (congregational and inter-congregational) beginning in Fall 2003 and extending to the Spring of 2006. We had originally planned to have leadership present a final structure for decision-making at congregational chapters during the summer of 2006. However, as a result of recent congregational gatherings, Cluster leadership has decided to extend the timeline for decision-making to April 2007. This will allow more time for sisters to process the options for reconfiguration at congregational and pre-chapter meetings. (CLICK)

Slide 4

Cluster Subcommittees

- Documents and Government Structures
- Congregational Histories
- Reconfiguration
- Prayer and Ritual
- Communications
- Sponsored Ministries
- Resources

The Cluster Coordinating Committee established the following subcommittees to work on various aspects of the process: Documents and Government Structures, Congregational Histories, Reconfiguration, Prayer and Ritual, Communications, Sponsored Ministries, and Resources. Each subcommittee has representatives from each of the Cluster congregations and has made significant contributions to the Cluster discernment process. We owe a debt of gratitude to the sisters who serve on these subcommittees.

To set the context of this convocation, let's look at the Cluster process cycles past, present and future. (CLICK)

Slide 5

**Cycle 1
Congregational Meetings**
Fall 2003 – Spring 2004

- inform members about the discernment process and subcommittees
- hear and respond to Margaret Ormond's reflection on clustering
- discuss the potential gifts of Cluster
- consider modes of participation and ritualize individual commitments
- receive input for Cluster Coordinating Committee

**Cycle 1 Congregational Meetings
Fall 2003 – Spring 2004**

The purposes of these meetings were to

- inform members about the discernment process and subcommittees
- hear and respond to Margaret Ormond's reflection on clustering
- discuss the potential gifts of Cluster
- consider modes of participation and ritualize individual commitments
- receive input for Cluster Coordinating Committee (CLICK)

Slide 6

**Cycle 2
Inter-Congregational Gatherings**
September, 2004 • Columbus and New Orleans

- reflected on Dominican life and mission
- became acquainted with members from the seven congregations
- rejoiced in the sacred stories of each congregation
- received and reflected upon pertinent information from subcommittees
- began to dream some possibilities for reconfiguration

**Cycle 2 Inter-Congregational Gatherings
September 10-12, 2004 (Columbus) and
September 24-26, 2004 (New Orleans)**

At these gatherings we

- reflected on Dominican life and mission
- became acquainted with members from the seven congregations
- rejoiced in the sacred stories of each congregation
- received and reflected upon pertinent information from subcommittees
- began to dream some possibilities for reconfiguration (CLICK)

Slide 7

Cycle 3
Inter-Congregational Assembly
February 18-20, 2005

- affirmed our "Cluster Statement on Dominican Life and Mission"
- reviewed statistical data that has relevance for reconfiguration
- evaluated the options for reconfiguration, offered suggestions, requested additional information
- considered the implications of each option from the perspective of ministry groups and an age cohorts

**Cycle 3 Inter-Congregational Assembly
February 18-20, 2005**

Nine months ago in this very place we

- affirmed our "Cluster Statement on Dominican Life and Mission"
- reviewed statistical data which has relevance for reconfiguration
- evaluated the options for reconfiguration, offered suggestions, requested additional information
- considered the implications of each option from the perspective of ministry groups and an age cohorts (CLICK)

Slide 8

Cycle 3 (continued)

Options for Reconfiguration

- *New Canonical Union with Regions*
- *Eventual Formation of an 8th Congregation*
- *Federation (with or without canonical structure)*
- *Two New Congregations (both canonical) formed from the merger or union of member congregations*

Options for reconfiguration presented were:

- New Canonical Union with Regions
- Eventual Formation of an 8th Congregation
- Federation (with or without canonical structure)
- Two New Congregations (both canonical) formed from the merger or union of member congregations (CLICK)

Slide 9

Cycle 4
Congregational Meetings
Summer 2005

- share our experience of the Cluster journey while being sensitive to the diversity of involvement
- review the Revised Options for Reconfiguration, discuss implications, and offer changes and direction
- discern our congregation's continued commitment to the Cluster process

**Cycle 4 Congregational Meetings
Summer 2005**

The purposes for these meetings were to

- share our experience of the Cluster journey while being sensitive to the diversity of involvement
- review the Revised Options for Reconfiguration, discuss implications, and offer changes and direction
- discern our congregation's continued commitment to the Cluster process (CLICK)

Slide 10

Cycle 4 *(continued)*

Options for Reconfiguration

- *Canonical Union*
- *Canonical Federation*
- *Inter-Congregational Connection*

Options for reconfiguration presented were:

- Canonical Union
- Canonical Federation
- Inter-Congregational Connection (CLICK)

Slide 11

Cycle 5
Convocation of Cluster Congregations
November 4-6, 2005

- be challenged to look at "mission" in new and deeper ways by our keynote speaker: Don Goergen, OP
- present and clarify the Revised Options for Reconfiguration
- evaluate each option in light of Dominican Life and Mission
- consider the implications of the options for each congregation and for all congregations
- give an initial indication of preference for one of the options

Cycle 5 Convocation of Cluster Congregations
November 4-6, 2005

Here we are gathered in St. Louis once again to

- be challenged to look at "mission" in new and deeper ways by our keynote speaker: Don Goergen, OP
- present and clarify the Revised Options for Reconfiguration
- evaluate each option in light of Dominican Life and Mission
- consider the implications of the options for each congregation and for all congregations
- give an initial indication of preference for one of the options (CLICK)

Slide 12

Cycle 5 *(continued)*

Options for Reconfiguration

- *Canonical Federation*
- *Canonical Union*

Options for reconfiguration presented are:

- Canonical Federation
- Canonical Union (CLICK)

Slide 13

Cycle 6
Meetings for Personal/Group Discernment
January – May 2006

- further discussion of implications of each option, using the learnings from this Convocation
- personal discernment
- leaning expressing each sister's support for one option

Cycle 6 Meetings for Personal/Group Discernment

January – May 2006

In the Spring of next year, there will be opportunities for

- further discussion of implications of each option, using the learnings from this Convocation
- personal discernment
- leaning expressing each sister's support for one option (CLICK)

Slide 14

Cycle 7
June 2006 – April 2007

CCC and Leadership Meeting • June 2006

- CCC reviews data from each congregation and makes recommendation of option(s) to leadership
- Leadership Teams discern one option and presents this option to the congregations for their discernment and decision-making

Cycle 7

June 2006 – April 2007

CCC and Leadership Meeting: June 2006

At this meeting

- CCC reviews data from each congregation and makes recommendation of option(s) to leadership
- Leadership Teams discern one option and presents this option to the congregations for their discernment and decision-making (CLICK)

Slide 15

Cycle 7 (continued)

Pre-Chapter Meetings • July 2006 – April 2007

Consider the proposed structure for reconfiguration in preparation for decision-making at Chapter

Pre-Chapter Meetings:

July 2006 – April 2007

During these months, congregations will meet to

- Consider the proposed structure for reconfiguration in preparation for decision-making at Chapter (CLICK)

Slide 16

Cycle 7 (continued)

Congregational Chapters • April 2007

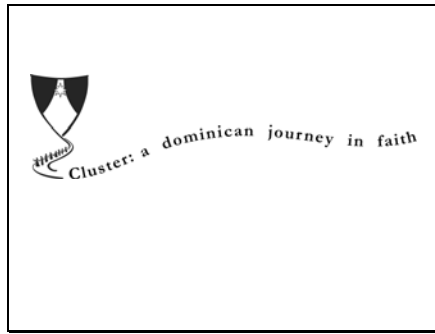
Each congregation must decide whether or not it will be part of the proposed structure for reconfiguration of Cluster congregations

Congregational Chapters: April 2007

At Congregational Chapters scheduled during the month of April 2007

- Each congregation must decide whether or not it will be part of the proposed structure for reconfiguration of Cluster congregations (CLICK)

Slide 17



In conclusion, I would like to recall to mind the spiritual dimension of what we're about here. We are here to communally discern the future direction of Cluster reconfiguration. We are here to consider the common good, not just for the members of our own congregation, but the common good for all seven congregations, including future members who are not presently a part of us.

I encourage you to reflect on Carole Shinnick's words expressing the reasons for her own province's reconfiguration: "We were doing this as a communal generative act, creating a future some of us will never see . . . the effort of restructuring is about stewarding the mission for future generations."

Cluster is all about consolidating our resources so that future generations of Dominican Sisters will have a stronger foundation to enable their mission to continue. Let us trust that the Spirit who has brought us to this day will not leave us, but will provide what we need in insight, creativity and courage. Our sacred stories have shown us over and over that God will provide what we need to do God's work and preach God's word. (END)