

† *Levels of commitment ...*

The following are ways of participating as Associates.

**Active Associates**

- † Spiritually unite themselves through personal prayer and good works
- † Regularly attend monthly gatherings.

**Praying Associates**

- † Those who still wish to be Associates of the congregation but can no longer participate actively
- † Those who spiritually unite themselves through personal prayer and good works
- † May join the larger Associate community for special events.

***Goals of the Associate Program***

1. To deepen and broaden the relationship and identification with The Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
2. To collaborate in Jesus' mission of reconciliation and unity, which is also the specific purpose of The Sisters of St. Joseph.
3. To provide mutual enrichment and support in prayer and service.
4. To enable opportunities for sharing ideas and vision so as to participate in bringing about the transformation of self, society and the planet through inclusive and active love.

*Maxim #73*

*Live out your life with one desire only: to be and to become the person God wants you to be, in nature, grace, and glory, for time and eternity.*

**ASSOCIATES**

**OF**

**THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH**

**SAULT STE. MARIE**



For women and men  
married or single,  
who have a desire to share in the  
Spirituality  
of  
The Sisters of St. Joseph

*October 2015*

### ***What is meant by Being an Associate?***

Being an Associate is one way of participating in the life of the Congregation of The Sisters of St. Joseph. The Congregation consists of professed members who make public profession within the canonical structure of the Catholic Church and Associates who make commitment to the Congregation yearly on an individual basis.

Associates are women and men who desire to share in the Congregation's spirit and spirituality, and in the challenges of responding to the changing needs of the Church. They wish to provide mutual support in living the Gospel values of love and service.

Associates do not profess canonical vows, undertake no binding financial or legal commitments and continue to live in the life styles to which they have been called to by God.

Associates are united with The Sisters of St. Joseph to develop their faith, share themselves through prayer, offer each other the gift of encouragement, and to develop relationships with a dedicated Christian group.

### ***Who is eligible to be an Associate?***

Association is open to Christians of all faiths who wish to be affiliated with the Congregation. People who have been recommended by an Associate or a Sister will be interviewed by the Regional Coordinator before attendance at the first meeting.

#### ***Why do some persons wish to be Associates?***

Many people are seeking to meet the challenges of the gospel message and to experience more fully the spirit and community life of The Sisters of St. Joseph. Community life, however, is always in the process of becoming. It is a search after that which is life-giving. It allows persons to share their deepest feelings, hopes, fears, and beliefs.

Associates with the Congregation celebrate unity and diversity. This is expressed and experienced in shared prayer, friendship and in the mission of unity and reconciliation. Associates are seeking fullness in Christ through a special bond with the Sisters of St. Joseph.

## ***BECOMING AN ASSOCIATE***

### **INITIAL CONTACT**

- made with one of the Sisters or Associates
- made with a personal interview with the Regional Co-ordinator of the Associate Program

### **COME AND SEE**

- After initial contact the Candidate is included in meetings, events and gatherings to experience the nature and the spirit of the Association.
- The Candidate enters a "Come and See Period" (usually one to three years)  
During this time the Candidate will participate in an Orientation Program which consists of six to eight sessions. This process will provide opportunities to review and reflect on the Associate Handbook.

### **DISCERNMENT**

- After the "Come and See Period" the Candidate enters a discernment process to determine if he or she is called to make a formal commitment. When they are ready, a letter is sent by the Candidate to the General Superior requesting Associate Status.

### **COMMITMENT CEREMONY**

- Approved Candidates are invited to a commitment ceremony to be held at a designated time.
- A reception follows the ceremony.
- The Commitment is renewed annually, usually after a time of discernment.
- The Commitment which the Associate makes can endure for her/his lifetime. It can also be terminated by either party for good reason.