



Women at the Well *Dialogues*

Visioning Carmel for the 21st Century

October 1, 2018

Objective: Create six on-going formation dialogue sessions open to all CCA members. These dialogues are in response to encouragement from Pope Francis' apostolic constitution *Vultum Dei Quaerere* On Women's Contemplative Life; Father Saverio's Formal Proposal on On-Going Formation of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns (February 2016); Father Saverio's letter to nuns on formation (July 16, 2012), and the CCA Newer Member Task Force proposal, approved at the 2018 CCA Assembly, for a virtual program of on-going formation.

Program Format:

- 6 1.5 hour virtual sessions (using Zoom technology) over the 2 year term of the current Leadership Team (2018-2020).
- Initial three sessions (phase 1) are considered a pilot for CCA members only and will focus on themes of leadership. Themes for the subsequent three sessions (phase 2) will be determined after phase 1 evaluation.
- Phase 1 will be open to any CCA member, estimating 30 participants per session.
- Each session will include pre-session activity (reading & reflection), evaluation and feedback, and post-session activity (further reflection and engagement with home community.)
- Each session will be designed as a stand-alone session to accommodate members seeking to do one or two sessions and others seeking to participate in all sessions.

Desired Outcomes for Phase 1:

- forming women to lead and be contributors
- develop skills to draw women together in community
- draw participants to be deeply immersed in spirituality
- promote authentic collegiality in community
- opportunity for participants to take elements of sessions back to community
- promote CCA inter-community relationship building

The project will be under the direction of the CCA Leadership Team and managed by a Women at the Well Dialogue Project team. The Project team will seek input from the Leadership Team and the CCA Newer Member Task Force.

Women at the Well Dialogues Project Team

Claire – Project Team Lead. Responsible for convening the Project Team, drafting for LT communications to CCA at-large regarding the Women at the Well Dialogues. Participates in the design, content and implementation of sessions. Coordinates key logistics (ie. registration and email distribution lists, sends pre-reading material, evaluation/feedback surveys) or delegates. Works with Elizabeth to define themes and will monitor impact of Women at the Well dialogues.

Elizabeth – Project Team Consultant. In collaboration with the Project Team Lead (Claire) participates in the design, content and implementation of dialogue sessions. Provides specific input on pre-reading, reflection and discussion questions, and provides evaluation/feedback questions for each session, compiles feedback report for each session. Serves as facilitator for initial 3 pilot sessions.

Celia – Project Team Member & Newer Member Task Force liaison. Participates, with Project Team Lead and Project Team Consultant design, content and implementation of dialogue sessions. Assists in creative adaptation of technology to meet objectives, particularly guidance on Zoom capability and effective evaluation survey methods (ie. Survey Monkey.) Additionally serves as Newer Member Task Force liaison by ensuring NM Task Force receives regular updates on Women at the Well dialogues; and coordinates NM Task Force input sessions with Project Team as requested.

Bernadette Therese – Leadership Team liaison. Receives regular updates from Women at the Well Dialogue Project Team on progress. Provides regular updates to the LT. Meets as requested or needed with Project Team. Coordinates input and feedback from LT to Project Team during development and following each session.

Logistics:

Fall 2018 – Identify Project Team, Communication from LT to CCA members, phase 1 content design, technology test, participant registration, pre-reading distribution. Phase 1 sessions will involve registration of participants and creating email distribution list, emailing pre-reading and reflection questions, sessions will involve a 20 minute input by facilitator on a defined topic, break-outs into small groups via Zoom for discussion, return to large group for report-outs and further dialogue, determine ‘take-away focus’, electronic evaluation, and an electronic post-session touch-base with each participant.

January 2019 – Launch session 1.

Spring – Summer 2019 – Implements 2 additional pilot sessions (Phase 1) between April and July 2018 (in advance of the Newer Member Task Force in-person heritage experience.)

Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 – 3 additional sessions (Phase 2) in advance of the 2020 CCA Assembly.

Pedagogical Approach:

This approach is designed to utilize a pedagogy that encourages personal and communal reflection on contemporary concerns in light of the Carmelite tradition, the cultural realities of CCA in the 21st century, and the lived experience of members. It has an emphasis on dialogue and discussion, pulling wisdom and insight from members rather than relying on a 'speaker.' The initial sessions (phase 1) provides an introductory experience of on-going formation in this model. Phase 1 feedback and evaluation will inform phase 2 sessions. This approach provides an opportunity for people to experience the model and to simply begin the journey knowing we will learn as we go. Introducing guest speakers/facilitators, etc. will be open for discussion as we learn and grow.

Recommendations:

Use Women at the Well Dialogues, visioning Carmel for the 21st century as the overarching name for CCA's on-going formation endeavors recognizing the over-arching theme of on-going formation programs may take different forms as it unfolds. The initial step builds on formation work developed by the Women at the Well Formation Program Committee and is focused on developing 1.5 hour dialogues to begin to break open questions of 'how will members of CCA be responsible for their own thirst and also carry a jar to nurture others.' Initially maintain small and limited Project Team to nimbly utilize feedback and evaluation data to revise and shape the process as we lean into this virtual on-going formation experience with the larger CCA membership.

Participation in initial 3 pilot sessions (phase 1) limited to CCA members only.

Recognition 1.5 hours will limit an ability to dive deeply into dialogue and discussion. However, it can lay ground-work, plant seeds for on-going discussion among and between communities and provide a baseline experience of a dialogic approach to on-going formation.