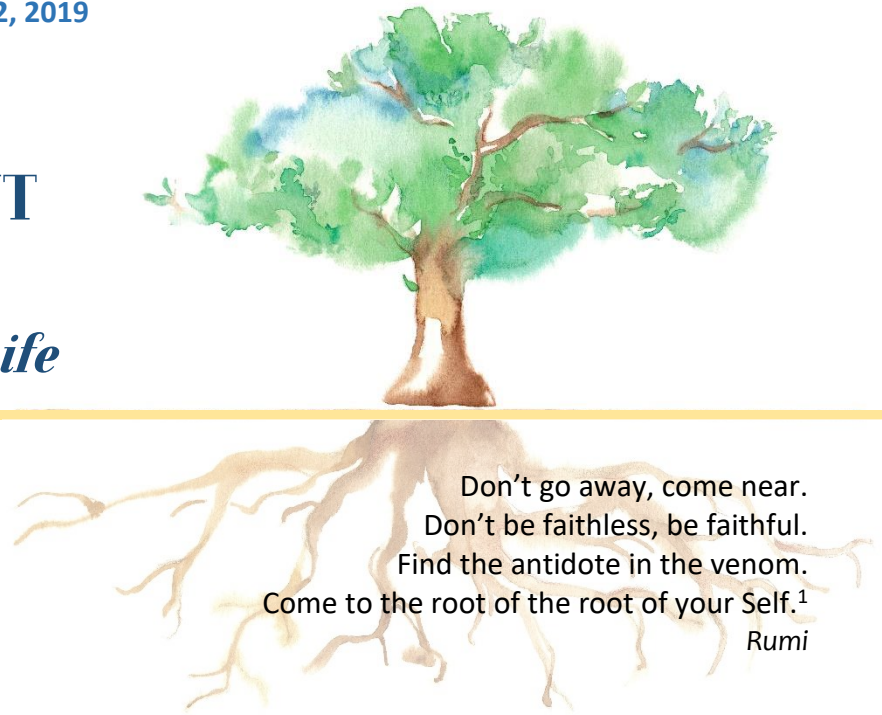


# LEADERS IN A DIASPORA MOMENT

## *A framework for the emergent in Religious Life*

By Linda Buck, CSJ



So much is still unknown in terms of what the future of Religious Life will look like? What is emerging? How is our past and future colliding at this very moment? Since the Second Vatican Council, rapid changes have created tension between a Spirit-led vision that is still being lived into and the grief of what was and what will never become. This tension holds great potential, if we continue to bring it into consciousness.

“In situations of conflict and chaos we are impelled toward a new reality which is rooted in who God is and what God desires for the world.”<sup>2</sup> With this consciousness, we can hold it, see it, experience it, and become a container for this chaos and conflict. No easy task indeed! It is out of this tension that something new emerges.

*The greater the tension,  
the greater is the potential.  
Great energy springs from  
a correspondingly great  
tension of opposites.<sup>3</sup>*

C.G. Jung

Women in religious life are searching for meaning and waiting for insight to understand what is unfolding. We will not have answers until after-the-fact; and for many, even those currently in their 20s, 30s and 40s, this unfolding will not be realized in their lifetime. As Women Religious, we are called to hold this tension – to hold this space – allowing something to emerge from the fullness of this current life, the emptiness of loss, and the hope for the emergent.

In this search, we need to reflect on our assumptions and traditions, gleaning what is essential to this life-form and what ideologies create barriers to new or different expressions of this life.

“Transformation implies an irreversible, qualitative change toward something better...a change in the way we perceive and understand the world.”<sup>4</sup> We are in a moment that is irreversible – and it is happening regardless of our participation because it is the Spirit’s movement of throwing open the windows and letting in new air.<sup>5</sup>

To begin expressing this journey of transformation many have used the two-loop theory of change based on the work of Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze. In preparing for the 2019 Biennial Gathering for the Leadership Collaborative, the planning committee<sup>6</sup> for this event emerged from a conversation with a sense of something (a model if you will) that allowed for some understanding of where we are, and a possible framework for this journey. It is not *the* model! It is *one* model that has potential to be part of this holding space for the emergent. This model began with the two-loop theory, and uniquely integrates the Leadership Circle Profile development tool, elements of the Catholic-Christian faith tradition, and our lived experiences. *We came to the conclusion that we are leaders in a diaspora moment.*

It is important to note that you may hear your own voice as you read this document. This written word may seem familiar to conversations you have had recently. This is a ‘living’ concept – pulled from many sources, conversations, and experiences. With each subsequent conversation, more can be added and refined, thus it is a dynamic model which hopefully provides a framework for how we see our current reality and where we are going. For myself, this model provides a foundation for understanding what is happening in our world today, even beyond Religious Life. This document focuses on Religious Life; however, I invite you to expand it to our global reality, including the Catholic Church and corporate/governmental systems. This model has helped me to navigate my experiences differently and find grounding during a very chaotic time.

### The Two-Loop Theory<sup>7</sup>

This concept of diaspora is further explored by integrating the framework of the two-loop theory of change as described by Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze.

The two-loop cycle of change in living systems has been a popular and helpful framework for Congregations around the world. It gives language to and normalizes the natural process of death and rebirth as

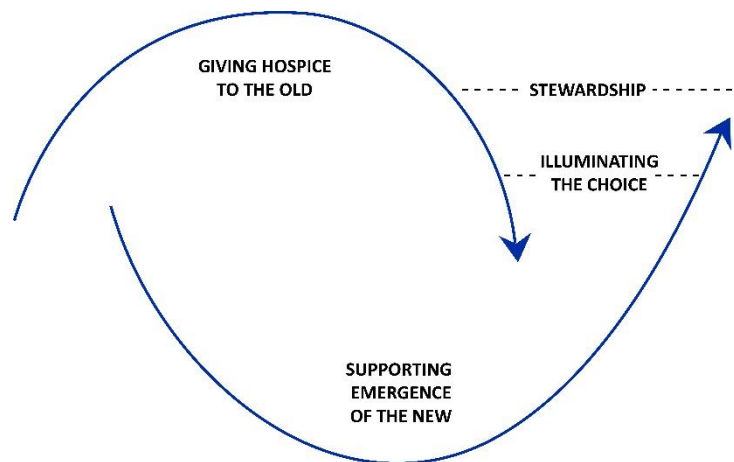


Figure 1: Two-Loop Theory of Change<sup>8</sup>

applied to the life cycle of what we know as Religious Life. Fundamentally, it provides a contemporary and systems theory look at the paschal mystery of death and rebirth.

Inherent in the two-loop model is the importance of forming critical connections of likeminded individuals, referred to as ‘wayfinders,’ those who are committed to co-creating emergent possibilities while still living in the declining dominant systems.

These ‘wayfinders’ consists of four roles described by Deborah Frieze as *illuminator, hospice worker, protector, and trailblazer*. We will explore these roles with the expanded framework of the two-loop model to allow each person in Religious Life today to see how she can and is participating in this challenging and exciting moment in time.

Using this model as foundational fodder, a framework emerges that incorporate the reactive and creative attributes of the 360° Leadership Performance Evaluation tool from *The Leadership Circle Profile*,<sup>10</sup> scriptural underpinnings, the paschal mystery and the movement of apostolic Religious Life at this moment. It becomes clear that we are leaders in a diaspora moment, holding the potential for continual transformation and consciousness, while letting go of expectations and what has been the dominant understanding of how Religious Life is to look. This tension of the emergent and of letting go allows for the grace of transformation in our present reality.

It is in this moment in our lives that we have a choice: to be “reactive” and maintain the status quo, which supports the dominant narrative or to be “creative,” moving with bold faith and challenging the dominate narrative within society and Religious Life to allow our fullest potential to be reached. We are in a moment that will not allow us to rest comfortably in the middle.

*This shock between a yesterday which is losing relevance but still seeking to survive, and a tomorrow which is gaining substance, characterizes the phase of transition as a time of announcement and a time of decision.*<sup>11</sup>

Paolo Freire

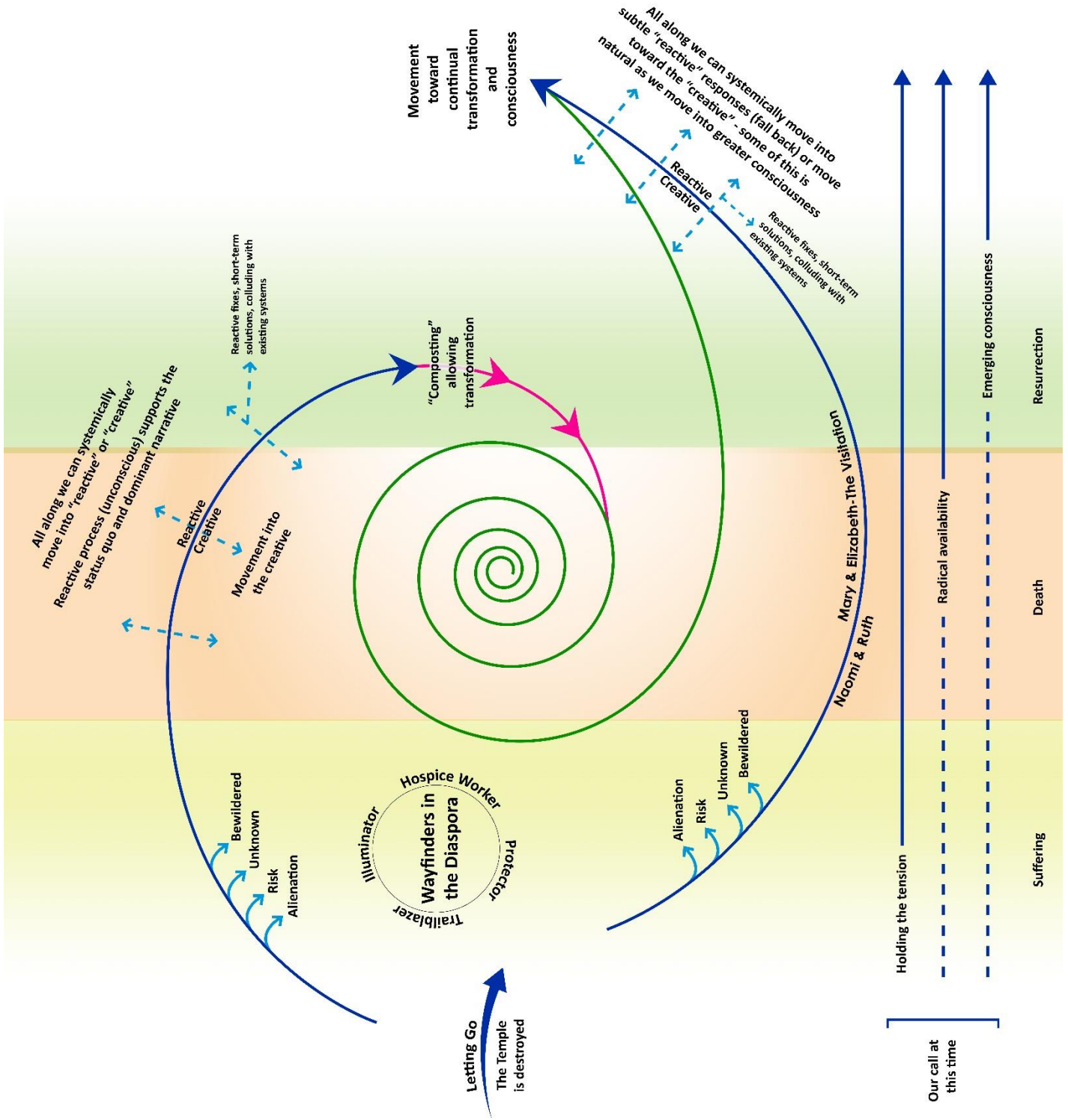
*As one system culminates and starts to collapse, isolated alternatives slowly begin to arise and give way to the new.*<sup>9</sup>

The Berkana Institute

“If we wish to engage in collaborative efforts that contribute to social transformation, need to embrace a world-view based on the organic oneness and interdependence of humankind, recognizing that our very survival depends upon our seeing and embracing a new paradigm – *humanity constitutes one family and one race with a collective heritage and a common destiny.*”<sup>12</sup>

*Figure 2* depicts the model/framework which emerged during the planning meeting for the 2019 Leadership Collaborative Biennial Gathering and continues to evolve with subsequent dialogue. For the purpose of this paper, we call it the Diaspora Model. This paper and model provide a launching point for a collaborative effort through more dialogue to influence

and allow the concepts to further unfold. To enable a deeper exploration of the various components of this model, it is divided into segments. It is then brought together as an integrated unit to allow for a dialogue regarding implications for us today and how we are called to be *a force for good*.<sup>13</sup>



4 Figure 2: Pictorial description of the Diaspora Model

## Wayfinders in the Diaspora

For the ancient Polynesians, the wayfinder was almost a mystical role in which a person could read the most minute shifts in the wind, water, and stars while sailing in the vast ocean. They could sense the land approaching without actually seeing it on the horizon. They were tuned into the everchanging aspects of the open sea and these changes were their guides toward their destination.<sup>14</sup>

*As we voyage we are creating new stories within the tradition of the old stories, we are literally creating a new culture out of the old.*<sup>15</sup>

Nainoa Thompson

Similar to the vastness of the ocean, the diaspora is a space of wandering. Historically, it is largely identified with the Jewish people who lived outside the land of Israel and began with the Babylonian Exile (597 – 538 BCE) and intensified in 70 CE after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple. During these diasporic times, Jewish communities were scattered and wandered for years in search of a new home. It was in this time that the need for their religious practice to shift occurred and moved from being centered around the Temple to Rabbinic Judaism.<sup>16</sup> In contemporary times, this term is often used in postcolonial studies to denote “the voluntary or enforced migration of people from their native homelands...and is often concerned with questions of maintaining or altering identity, language, and culture while in another culture or country.”<sup>17</sup>

The term diaspora is used in this model to denote the wandering space of our time in Religious Life. There is perhaps the lure to search for a new home, and we definitely experience the tension of maintaining or altering our identity and culture with that which was known as well as with that which is unknown and emergent. The diaspora is a place to reflect on our identity and on what is critical to us as Women Religious. It is our home during our journey as Women Religious, and for many, we will not know anything different.

This wandering and seeking is our way of life, and it is an exciting and yet painful aspect of the current state of Religious Life. Maria Cimperman, RSCJ captures the challenge and courage this moment in Religious Life entails: “The *capacity for transformation* is already within creation as the cosmos continually changes. We are constantly changing, growing, and adapting as we encounter each interaction. This is part of our experiences each day. Being intentional about the changes we seek is part of living in hope. Just as creation changes, so do the systems that people create change.”<sup>18</sup>

The four roles as described by Frieze<sup>19</sup> and used in the Diaspora Model help us name the tasks at hand while in this diasporic moment (see *Figure 3*). Part of the movement as these wayfinders journey toward continual transformation and consciousness is to face the reality of change in which the difficult tasks of alienation, risk, experiencing the unknown and bewilderment are necessary companions. These

experiences will be further discussed. For now, it is enough to understand that these experiences allow us to dive deep into our reality, cultivate the soil of the near-future, the present and the past, and move into the creative call of the Spirit, allowing new life to emerge.

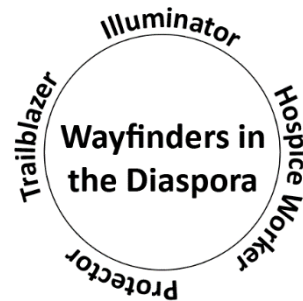


Figure 3: Four Roles

Regardless of the trajectory of our journey (the upper arc or the low arc of the Diaspora Diagram), we are all wayfinders, called to see the unseen horizon and have a role in birthing the future. The four wayfinder roles highlight a framework for the needed functions so as to allow for this emergent life. These four roles, as described by Frieze, are used for the exploration at hand. It is important to note that as this concept is developed through additional input, there may be other roles waiting to be named that are vital to ushering in the emergent.

*Illuminator*

Illuminators are the storytellers that articulate the efforts of those that are forging into new territory. They hold our collective memory and hope. In the midst of resistance and criticism, they repeat the story, ensuring it continues to live in the present. As Catholic Women Religious, our tradition is exemplified in this role of “remembering” – which brings the past into the present, allowing it to be a part of who we are today. “We remember...”<sup>20</sup> guides our daily lives. Yet, it is not simply remembering the past for the past’s sake. When we remember the past and the present collide, and something is enfolded among us. The Illuminators help this become conscious.

*Hospice Worker*

Hospice workers bring comfort to those in transition – passing from one life to another. They advocate for the needs brought about by this transition. They offer compassion and support to those suffering in the transition – and they are reminders of hope for what may emerge. As Catholic Women Religious, we experience the tension present since the changes at the Second Vatican Council, the Apostolic Visitation and sanctions, the discriminatory practices of patriarchy, the exclusive power of clericalism, and the rapid, almost unbearable changes which occur in the global context. In the midst of this, we are reservoirs of hope. It is the Hospice Worker who helps us remain steadfast in our belief that something different will emerge.

*Protector*

Protectors work within the current systems to nurture transformation within the existing, dominant structures. They generally hold positional power within this dominant system and are quiet revolutionaries. As Catholic Women Religious, we saw this modeled

*Even as we stop struggling to fix things, even as we reject the status quo, we don't leap empty-handed into the future. We need to consciously carry with us the values and practices that feel essential.<sup>21</sup>*


Wheatley & Frieze

during the Apostolic Visitation and sanctions placed on LCWR. The women who held positional power during this time exemplified the ability to work in the dominant system of pervasive patriarchy and androcentrism so as to nurture and effect change.<sup>22</sup> It is the Protector that allows for the work to find root within the dominant structure.

### *Trailblazer*

Trailblazers can be thought of as pioneers, forging ahead to create a new future. They free themselves of the constraints of the system, take risks, and develop new networks that inform the emergent. These trailblazers are really partner-builders, desiring to connect with others because they know that they alone cannot realize the dream. As Catholic Women Religious, our earliest founders and foundresses were trailblazers. This is deep in our roots and may have been overshadowed by the many wonderful institutions we developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Today, trailblazers see beyond these institutions, knowing something else is possible and needed. It is the Trailblazer which keeps us looking forward and seeing glimpses of what is possible.

These roles in the Diaspora help us name the tasks at hand. It takes commitment and a lifetime to become a wayfinder – to sense the emergent without seeing the horizon. We need each person to respond to the movement of the Spirit, and for all to honor their unique gifts for the whole. The Spirit calls us to the most difficult tasks to prompt a metanoia moment.

A photograph of a person standing on a rocky peak, arms raised in a gesture of triumph or awe, overlooking a vast, hazy landscape. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The landscape features rolling hills, fields, and distant mountains under a soft, hazy sky. The image is framed with a blue border.

*Most traditions and cultures have initiation rituals that require setting out in order to be transformed. We willingly and bravely undertake a quest. We leave the comforts and safety of home, travel to strange and unfamiliar lands, and are welcomed to return only after we've discovered answers to our quest that we're prepared to put into practice.<sup>23</sup>*

Wheatley & Frieze

## Movement Toward Cultivating Transformation

For the Jewish people, the Temple was at the core of their religious experience. It was where Yahweh dwelled. The destruction of the Temple placed the Jewish people into a religious crisis, and the political upheaval moved them out of their homeland into the Diaspora. They became a wandering people who searched for their home. Their reality forced them to let go of how they worshipped and how they lived. The one thing that remained intact was their sense of community and relationship.



In so many ways, the ramifications of the destruction of the Temple for the Jewish people parallel what is happening for Women Religious today. We all have to let go of what we thought it *should* be and how we saw ourselves in this life. For the newer generation, this letting go still exists, yet perhaps it is less profound than the oldest generations.

As we move along this journey, we can move into a space that is generative and creative or one that is reactive and maintains the status quo (*Figure 4*). However attractive it may be to see oneself

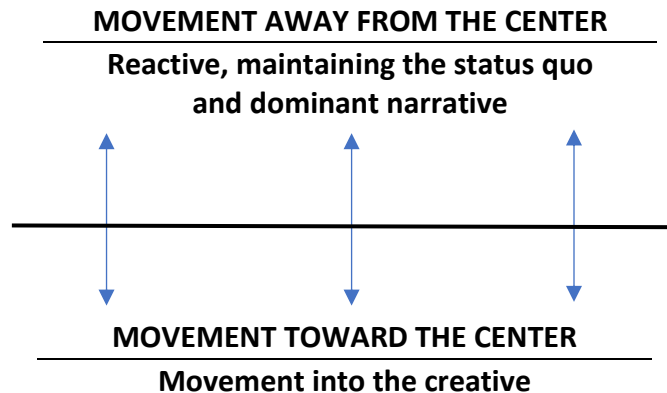


Figure 4: Creative/Reactive Movement

in this generative/creative space, it takes effort to move away from the dominant narrative. The dominant narrative is the existing system that strives to remain in homeostasis,<sup>24</sup> meaning to remain the same. Anthony Gittins, in writing about intercultural norms, reflects quite accurately how our cultural norms become embedded in our way of being in life – that we need “radical conversion” so as to think and act differently. This also applies to norms in a system, such as Religious Life. He writes: “After a lifetime of learning just how to think, and then to think that our thinking is right thinking (and even to think that the way we think is actually the way God thinks), we all become rather resistant to thinking differently. To think and act differently often requires less than a radical conversion.”<sup>25</sup>



Along the way, it is tempting to fall into the societal call for quick and reactive fixes, short-term solutions and colluding with the existing systems that support the status quo. In so many ways we do not know that is what we are doing. It is like the air we breathe. It is just there. However, a person in this space moves away from the center of this model. The center is where there is energy moving toward transformation. To move away from the center creates stagnation (*Figure 5*). It is important to note that being in reactive space does not automatically equate with bad; rather, it is an indicator of something that may need to shift or lessen.

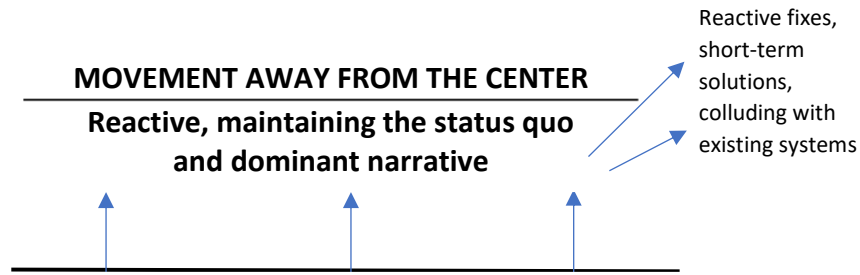


Figure 5: Reactive Movement

This type of reaction can occur regardless of where a person finds herself on the Diaspora Diagram. Both journeys, the upper arc and lower arc, are not immune to the pull toward the dominant systems. This is a natural inclination when change occurs. When we experience loss, transition, or change of any kind, we have options that allow us to move toward “integration,” or reflecting the Diaspora Diagram, the “movement into the creative” or we can move toward “stagnation” and “fragmentation,” or “reactive and maintaining the status quo.”

*Figure 6, Hope in Suffering,*<sup>26</sup> expresses this movement and the process it takes to move toward either of these outcomes. It captures the process of living into the tension of life and loss, allowing us to move into the diaspora in a creative manner.

Loss is something that we acutely experience every day. We see loss and disruption in our world, in our individual lives, and in our communities. As aging continues, there is a loss in ability. As Church and Religious Life change, there is a loss of what has been. For many, the impact of Vatican II continues to be grieved. It is not that the loss or disruption is viewed as bad or unwanted; rather, it is a change of what has been known and cherished.



There is a reality that we must face in apostolic Religious Life – that there is no turning back, that so much of what has been is no longer, such as institutional ministries. We are called to let go of our expectations and hopes for how things were. We are in a moment that is irreversible, and it is happening whether we participate or not. If we continue to hold onto how life *should* be, or what we hoped it *would* look like, we do not provide the space for the emergent. By moving through this process of living into the tension of life and loss we move closer to our authentic selves – we move toward wholeness. We are also able to experience greater freedom and hope, which influences our relationships with God and the neighbor.

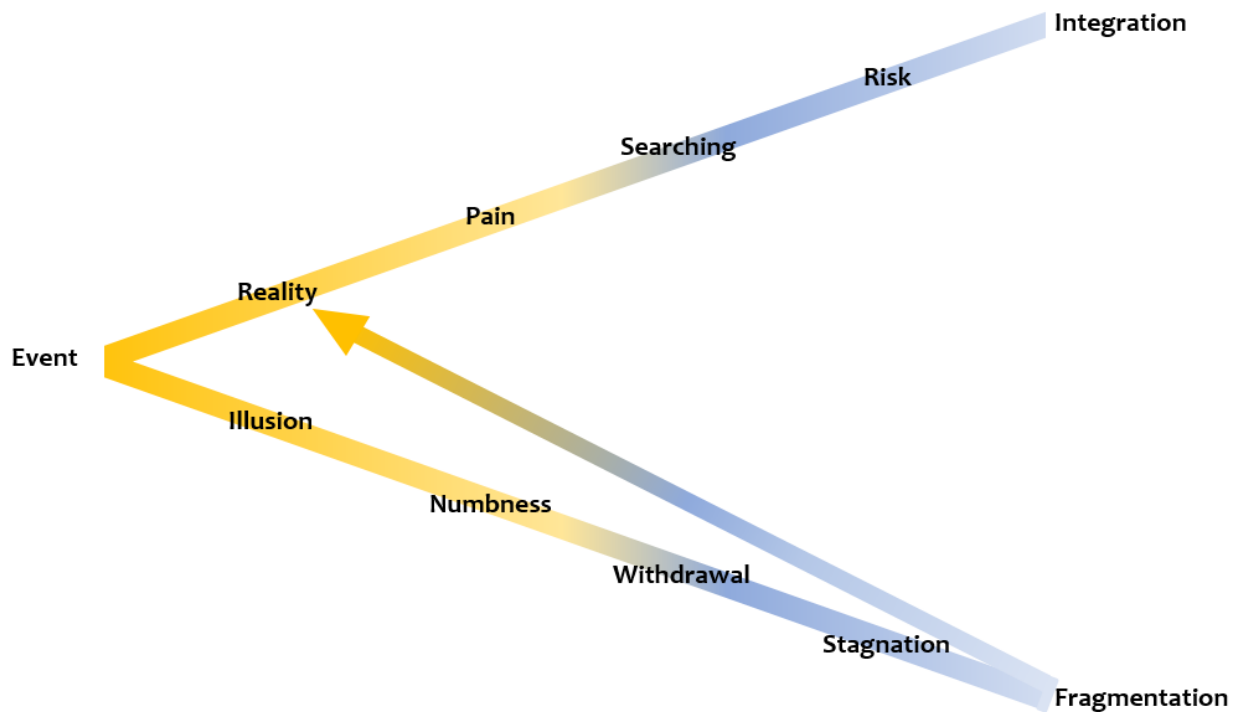


Figure 6: Hope in Suffering<sup>27</sup>

When an experience of loss occurs (an “event”) we are conditioned to avoid it, or only deal with it for so long – *as if* the impact of loss is time limited and vanishes if we determine it to disappear. For some, they have learned not to cry or express emotions. Others learned to compartmentalize or internalize the experience. Using these modes of reaction can move us away from “reality” into the “illusion” that something different has transpired.

Once this “illusion” is established, there is a need to reinforce it and build up its supports to continue coping, or what Barbara Ehrenreich calls “the tyranny of positive thinking.”<sup>28</sup> In order to do

this, a person moves to a place of “numbness” and “withdrawal.” She becomes disconnected from that part of herself which holds the emotional impact of the “event.” She may experience being sheltered from the pain that is evident in the reality of the “event”; however, this pain has only been pushed aside and continues to hold energy. This energy takes energy to contain – thus a lot of energy is expended and is then not available for life-giving pursuits that propel us forward toward wholeness. Unfortunately, this eventually leads to “stagnation” – or reactivity. An individual finds herself stuck, disconnected, lacking energy for life. In the end, she may lead a life full of “fragmentation” in which experiences are compartmentalized and fullness of self is unrealized.

Many people in our society are caught in this dynamic of “fragmentation.” Unfortunately, it keeps a person from experiencing God’s abundant and extravagant love. “Stagnation”/ reactivity keeps a person hindered and stingy with sharing oneself for the world. It is a reality to which those who live out of the charism of Religious Life must also contend. Not immune to societal ways, we collude with these reactions to loss. We can easily cover up losses through busyness, distraction, and perfection.

We also need to grieve and embrace what is happening. Our challenge as people of faith is to move to a place of “reality” – a most difficult place to be, as one must be truly present to the real. Not too long after facing the reality, we begin to experience the “pain” of the loss or losses. It can be excruciating pain and suffering – feeling abandonment, isolation, and anger.

A useful metaphor is the alchemist’s crucible in which our losses, pain, and reality are like unrefined precious metal waiting to be purified.<sup>29</sup> The crucible holds the unrefined metal and by applying high temperature, the impurities from the metal are separated and taken out. This is similar to the process of unresolved loss. Eventually, the pain begins to subside, and we move toward understanding what has occurred and/or how life will differ. We begin “searching” for new meaning. Coupled with this is the ability to “risk” and try out new experiences of self. It is in this time of “searching” and “risk” that a person stumbles, moves back into “pain” (or reactivity), and eventually reenters the movement of “searching” and “risk.” This process continues and helps move a person toward “integration” or toward wholeness, sustaining a creative stance.

Knowing that we are people invited into the reality of the paschal mystery – embodying the dying and rising in our lives – we open ourselves to the pain – to the cross, and we then allow life to re-inhabit our bodies – resurrection. As Women Religious we are called to grieve more profoundly and deeply because we know our life is grounded in God and in the paschal mystery. Yet, as Christians, we are in an alien world where there is a denial of death, a covering up of loss, and the tendency to avoid those who grieve.<sup>30</sup> We also collude with these reactions to loss, deny the process of death, holding on for all its worth. We cover up losses by keeping busy, distracted, engaging in addictive tendencies and other behaviors that help us hide the messiness of our internal life. The question at hand is if we, as

Women Religious, can risk being different? Can we truly risk entering the paschal mystery knowing our foundation rests in the abundant love of God? In carrying the darkness of grief, we risk being countercultural. In being the container for a change without colluding with the pull of dichotomous thinking, we risk being countercultural and moving toward greater integration and creative space.

In order to do this, we need to accomplish several tasks, which align with the experiences encountered by the various wayfinder roles (see *Figure 7*). Remembering the Diaspora Diagram (see *Figure 2*), we recall that the temple is destroyed. Religious Life will never be what we have known. It is in rubble with remnants of the structure remaining.

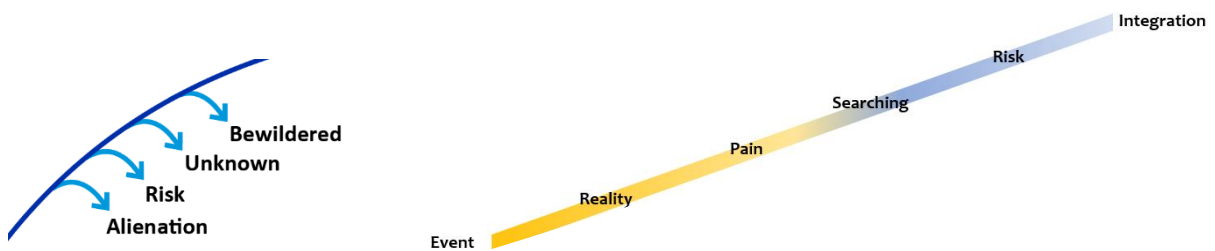


Figure 7: Comparison of Wayfinder's Experiences and Process Toward Integration from Hope in Suffering Diagram

As wayfinders, we forge ahead to experience this reality in a profound manner, working through the difficult experiences of alienation, risk, the unknown, and bewilderment. These experiences are vital because they help us move forward. It is like the butterfly who needs to struggle to break out of the cocoon. If we help the butterfly to ease its way, it will not survive because it needs the struggle to force fluids into its wings in order to fly.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, if we do not go through the struggle, we can stagnate and not thrive.

Unfortunately, these four experiences are a very difficult part of the journey. They are at the beginning of the Diaspora Diagram. As soon as we realize the temple is destroyed – as soon as we realize things cannot be the same – we move into these experiences. Even though the experiences are placed at the beginning of the Diaspora Diagram, they correlate with the suffering within the paschal mystery and thus, we continue to experience these four components throughout the journey. They are a vehicle to help us grow in our understanding of reality and to face the loss we have before us. As wayfinders, these are tasks and experiences that we encounter in our journey – or perhaps they encounter us!

### *Bewildered/Reality*

When we move into the reality of our situation, we often become bewildered. It is difficult to understand why it is so, and it is disorienting. In this state, we hold a paradox – on one hand, seeing what is happening, as it actually exists (as opposed to an idealistic interpretation or denial) and on the other hand, being perplexed and confused. It is difficult to hold paradoxes. This state demands our time and energy to work through this disorienting moment toward embracing the reality that is in front of us.

### *Alienation/Pain*

For most people, these two words evoke discomfort. Alienation can be experienced as isolation, detachment, or estrangement. It is not connecting with the larger whole. For many, it may be experienced as being a lone voice or having a different way of looking at something among the dominant collective. It is in this place that we hold individually and collectively the suffering and pain of the marginalized group, which in this case are those who journey on the lower arc of the Diaspora Diagram. The youngest/newest members of Religious Life are considered marginalized because of their numbers – the inverted pyramid, voice, and misunderstandings.<sup>32</sup> This condition provides the grounds for these members to experience alienation – being alone amidst many.

### *Unknown/Searching*

In this pain and sense of alienation, we begin to search and ask questions about what this reality means, where are we going, and what needs to emerge? We enter more consciously into the unknown, and we find more and more like-minded people with whom to journey.

This is time when our faith in a relational and dynamic God is vital. We may find ourselves in a more reflective space than usual, listening for God's voice amidst the clamor of our minds trying to figure it all out. We may find that we need to focus on relationships that understand this part of the journey. We may find some sojourners in our own Communities or find important connections in groups like the Leadership Collaborative and Giving Voice.

*History has not stopped, and the processes of change and transformation remains as dynamic today as ever. The world can only appear monochromatic to those who persist in interpreting what they experience through the lens of a single paradigm, their own. For those with eyes to see and the heart to feel, it remains a rich and complex topography of the spirit.<sup>33</sup>*  
Adapted, *The Wayfinders*

### *Risk*

With a greater sense of consciousness and experiencing a sense of being one-among, we move into the environment with a stronger sense of purpose and voice. We risk in speaking about what we have learned thus far on this journey, we risk being vulnerable and being hurt, and we risk being authentic to our own reality. We witness within ourselves and others the ability to speak our truth during Community meetings – small and large. We experience more confidence in our deep knowing of our way into the future, confident with the Divine plan unfolding in the now. All of these, albeit challenging

and difficult, are generative and move us toward transformation. If we do not move toward this integrative and creative stance, we find ourselves on the trajectory toward stagnation and fragmentation; a movement which sustains a reactive stance.<sup>34</sup>

At any point on this trajectory on the upper and lower arc, we can become more conscious of the reality of our situation and move into the work of integration and creativity.<sup>35</sup> It is in this creative response to letting go, that a person moves toward the center of this model and new life is cultivated. For the upper arc, this is characterized by the idea of composting.<sup>36</sup> Composting is taking an organic matter, such as vegetable peels, and transforming it into fertile soil. Before it can become this, it must be tended, stirred to provide space, and given time. It definitely does not happen overnight! It needs time to break down and transform. There is also an intentionality to composting. One must be cognizant to collect the organic refuse and add it to the composting bin.

*The ground's generosity  
takes in our compost and  
grows beauty! Try to be  
more like the ground.<sup>37</sup>*

Rumi

We see this in Religious Life by example of the many Sisters who continue to address the needs around them, serving in a ministry based on their ability, and seeing the need to mentor the newer generation. A key characteristic of these Sisters is their ability to accept intergenerational diversity.<sup>38</sup> These Sisters are generative, giving of themselves for the other and for the larger picture of Religious Life. They may not see the future in the same way as Sisters on the lower arc see; however, they trust that this is the working of the Spirit and participate in the ways they are able. They continue to move into a creative stance, folding into the center of the Diaspora diagram where the composting provides nourishment for the new seedlings.

On the other hand, and as a comparison, sisters who find themselves on the upper arc can easily move into a place of fear, reacting to the unknown future. Some find themselves in denial about the aging process.<sup>39</sup> It is only in Religious Life that a 'younger' member is in her late 60s! This skewed perception about aging keeps many in the reactive stance, fearing their own decline – and holding on even tighter to ensure their own sense of self. Unlike the first example that moves toward generativity, this type of thinking and behavior moves a Sister to stagnation and reactivity – the very opposite of providing rich soil for the new seedlings.

Is this fear and stagnation claiming the vitality of the younger generations within our Congregations? For many, the answer is “yes.” Actually, the Sisters that are in this space (the upper arc) have actually provided rich ground for the continuation of Religious Life and they need to trust that, although it will look very different, some form of the life will continue.

## Women on a Journey

Just like the wayfinders, who experience alienation, the need to risk, the unknown, and bewilderment, our Sacred Scriptures provide ample modeling for this experience. For the sisters on the lower arc, this is characterized through the stories of Naomi and Ruth, and Mary and Elizabeth.

### *Naomi & Ruth*

In the Book of Ruth, the relationship between Naomi and Ruth speaks to one of sacrifice and risk. Naomi, her husband and their two sons migrate to Moab due to famine in Bethlehem. The sons each married a Moabite woman, Ruth and Orpah. Sadly, the husbands died, and the three women remained. This alone was a difficult situation for a woman during this time in history.

Naomi heard that the famine in her homeland had ended and decided to return. She implored Orpah and Ruth to return to Moab, to their own people and their own gods (Ruth 1:15). Culturally, this would be their way to a decent life. Orpah acquiesced and remained in Moab; however, Ruth insisted on remaining with Naomi and going to Bethlehem with her: “Where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge,” she insists. “Your people shall be my people, and your God my God” (Ruth 1:16).

This is a lovely story of friendship and support; yet, there are a few points important to our work today. The Moabites and Israel had a difficult history (ref. Num 21:21-31; Num 24:10; Deut 23:3; Num 25). In staying with Naomi, Ruth risked the fate of being an outsider, never accepted in a foreign land. She left her parents, homeland and gods.

In similar ways, wayfinders are moving into a foreign land. There is both a wonderfully rich and yet difficult history in our story. Wayfinders are called to risk, to follow God’s pull toward the emergent. Perhaps, if Ruth was with us today, she would say: “Where you go, listen to your heart and risk being different. I have experienced alienation and so will you. Have faith in your God.”

There is also inherent in this story the rich relationship between Naomi and Ruth. These women were of different generations; and it is evident that both had great affection for one another. Both sacrificed herself, wanting what was best for the other. For Naomi, she wanted Ruth to remain in Moab and to be alone as she reentered her homeland. For Ruth, she sacrificed her future, as well as



being an outsider, in order to remain with Naomi. As wayfinders, we need to find the supportive relationships that allow us to gain strength and fortitude for a very difficult journey. This type of relationship can often be found with sisters who are older and in generative space.

### *Mary & Elizabeth*

In the Gospel of Luke, we encounter another difficult journey – Mary, learning of her pregnancy with Jesus, traveled some eighty miles to visit her cousin Elizabeth. It was a risky journey, as an individual traveler and a woman. This was also done in haste (Luke 1:39), implying that Mary knew what she needed and did not let anything stop her. Both women were pregnant under unusual circumstances and both found comfort and solace in each other’s company. Mary came to Elizabeth with great vulnerability. She was pregnant, unwed and likely bewildered about her circumstances. Mary remained with Elizabeth for three months. Their support of one another during their pregnancies was one of great love and affection.

Similarly, as wayfinders travel, it becomes a risky journey. Yet, they understand that it must be done and there is an impulse (perhaps the Spirit) to not let anything stand in the way of what is needed. Wayfinders are giving birth to something new and need the support of one another during this time. This journey builds a strong connection – relationships of great love and affection.



### **Moving Toward Consciousness**

In many ways, the four experiences (alienation, risk, the unknown, bewilderment) indoctrinate us into a rite of passage which cultivates our transformation, and the transformation of Religious Life. It is the work of all who find themselves on this diagram – either on the upper arc or the lower arc.

A word needs to be said about the phrase: *Movement toward continual transformation and consciousness*. It is not to imply that those journeying through the process of letting go and enriching all of Religious Life with their rich composting (the upper arc) are not also experiencing a movement toward greater consciousness and transformation. What is important and needs emphasis is that when we are in the creative space (versus the reactive space), we tend to the emergent and are part of what needs to occur to allow for this emergent to come to fruition. One way to envision this is centrifugal force, or a whirlpool, pulling and whirling into the center – creating a dynamic, life-giving energy that propels us forward (see *Figure 8*).



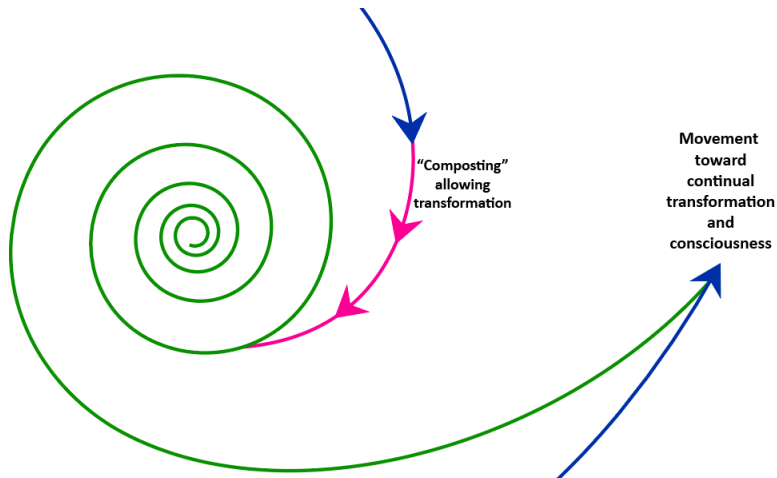


Figure 8: Moving into Creative Space

We continue to need some of what the dominant system offers, while that which does not benefit emergent movement needs to be cast off. There are some core truths of Religious Life that continue. In surveying a few Sisters from my Community, they responded that some of these core truths include: the vows, community living, service to the Church, a free response to the call of the Holy Spirit, responding to the signs of the times, witnessing of Christ through relationships, and living the Gospel through a Congregation’s particular charism. A fuller conversation needs to ensue regarding what these core truths are for the broadest group of Women Religious. Perhaps, there are only two or three core truths, or possibly a few more would be added. Regardless of what these core truths are, they are vital for what is emerging, and how they are expressed may look very different for a Woman Religious who entered in the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century to now, as we near completing the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

However, and more specifically, the task at hand for the wayfinders on the lower arc of the diagram is daunting and we need one another as support and companion. For those on this journey, it comes with great risk and peril. Like the ancient, Jewish communities, we can find ourselves wandering into hostile territories that do not understand the critical nature of this journey. We face four very real encounters that call upon our sense of self, the ability to remain steadfast, and at the same time, flexible. In the truest sense, we are like the ancient Polynesian Wayfinder who knows the land is right beyond the horizon and yet cannot see it.

Once again, we visit the four critical experiences of the wayfinders (see Figure 9). We move toward *choosing life*; however, the structures and behaviors of the dominant system are pointing away from this option. This is when finding fellow wayfinders is crucial because sharing stories of bewilderment allow us a clear picture to see the reality of what is at this moment. Examples of



Figure 9: Wayfinder’s Experiences

such groups include the Leadership Collaborative, Giving Voice, and Congregational/Provincial/Federation initiatives for gathering peers. If we do not see the reality, support networks will not be available and we will continue to be in this state of disorientation, batted around like a small ship in a storm.

### *Alienation*

Even though we have a network of wayfinders helping us navigate the conditions of the sea, we can experience alienation from our Congregations and other parts of Religious Life. The wayfinder is not going along with the flow and colluding with the dominant system. Rather, she begins speaking about a new reality – a new system – which is unseen and over the horizon. She is an isolated voice among the dominant system, seeking refuge with other wayfinders when they can and yet solo or in small groups when speaking about her own horizon. There may be individuals in the dominant system that support her through words; however, often in behavior, these supportive words become transparent to uncover an entrenched system. This is a confusing reality for the wayfinder – wanting to believe in the supportive words and yet, perplexed by the contradictory behavior.

Unfortunately, it seems that this experience is common for the newest generation of Women Religious. Many times, this group is lured into speaking up about their passions and view of Religious Life when there is a call by their Sisters to hear from the youngest (or newest) members. The lure of being heard is enticing for this new generation – it is setting up a hope, which is often dashed when there is a reactive response to what is said. Of course, the process of communal discernment is important, and not every idea that the newer/younger Sisters have are the right choices for the time. However, to single this group out by asking for their input and then to revert to what seems like a predestined outcome is not life-giving and does not tend the emergent.

Another way to see alienation at work is in what I coin the “myth of the system.” This is when a system lives out of myth of what it has been, or perhaps had hoped it was and yet did not achieve. For example, this can happen in Religious Life when a Congregation portrays itself as having vibrant, newer ministries that address issues on the margins. When a new Sister enters, she has a vision of these ministries – as if they started a few years ago – only to realize they are twenty years or older and experienced as more institutionalized than grass-roots. The dominant system is living a myth based on reality; however, it is a reality that is in the distance.

### *Unknown*

The wayfinder sets sail to journey toward a new horizon. She has moved into a space of allowing the dominant system to remain as it demands, resisting the temptation to fight it in order to change it. She challenges the system in a different manner – moving along her journey, seeking the horizon and attempting to articulate it in a manner that her journey becomes a bridge between the dominant system

and the unknown horizon. Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze wrote a book titled, *Walk Out, Walk On*,<sup>40</sup> which speaks of people walking out of the system to create a new reality. As Women Religious, we cannot simply walk out; however, can we walk out of the entrenched systems that do not support new growth? What would happen if we moved into a space of understanding these entrenched dynamics (e.g., patriarchy, androcentrism, abusive power structures) and agreed to not participate in them anymore?

### *Risk*

Risk is implied with all the steps of the wayfinder. To move into a more conscious understanding of the present reality and facing an unknown horizon is, at the very core, risky. Taking the first step away from the dominant system on this perhaps unstable bridge, is dire. So many things can happen. A sense of abandonment, heightened alienation, criticism – all things that happen when she moves away

*The task of prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us.*<sup>41</sup>

Walter Brueggemann

from the dominant system. It is at this point of risking that she is at the greatest peril of moving into the reactive due to fear. For the wayfinder, it is turning the boat back toward the safety of home. Wayfinders need to resist this temptation and use the guidance of the stars, winds and waves to navigate the unknown waters. In Religious Life, she needs to have a deep faith, trust her intuition, and call upon the Spirit to show her the way.

### *Bewilderment*

This state of disorientation is difficult. There is a sense of disbelief and wondering if the wayfinder's experience is accurate. Is this the reality to which she said 'yes'? What is this talk about decline and dying, or coming to a natural end for some Congregations? For her Congregation?

There can be many mixed messages around the current state of Religious Life. Some Congregations are not addressing their own decline, or some are bringing in new vocations without the change in their existing culture to allow space for different needs. A newer Religious can stumble into thinking it is her issue or that something is wrong with her as she faces the dominate culture of her Congregation and of Religious Life (e.g., perhaps she begins to believe she does not have a vocation to Religious Life).

## **Our Call at this Time**

As we move to greater consciousness and move away from the dominant structures that hold the status quo so tightly as *truth*, we find the resolve and necessity to see this journey through a larger lens. In so doing, we can look to the rise and decline of civilizations and the reality of the paschal mystery witnessed in our lives (see *Figure 10*).

British historian, Arnold Toynbee, noticed that “a new civilization arises whenever there exists a

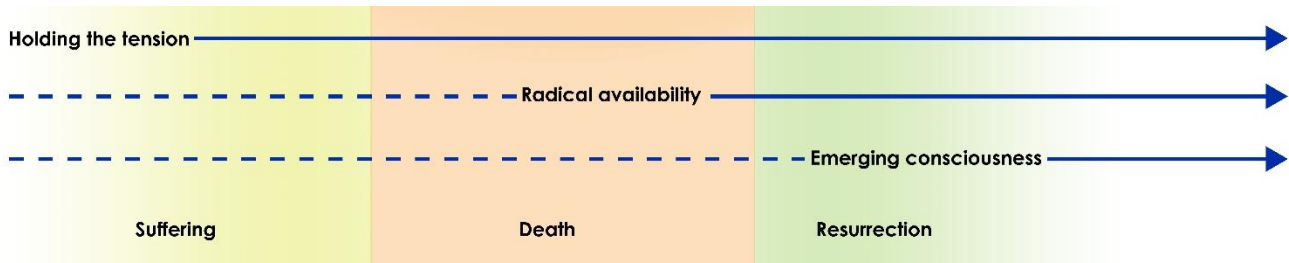


Figure 10: Our Call at This Time

series of challenges to which the society responds effectively, inspired by the vision of a creative minority that guides the society’s meeting these challenges. On the other hand, a civilization gradually falls into decline when vision is lost, and a dominant minority attempts to impose its will by force” (see *Figure 11*).<sup>42</sup>

It is in this time of falling, before the rising, that transformation occurs. We witness this play out in Religious Life when there was a rise in membership and the institutionalization of ministries during the 1920s through the 1990s. Once this movement reached its apex in 1965 with 181,421 sisters in the United States, we experienced the fall, dropping to 102,504 sisters in 1990 and 49,883 in 2014.<sup>44</sup> These large drops in numbers continue to be a time of great difficulty, loss, and reactive tendencies. The impulse for most is to remain faithful to the status quo. As this decline occurs, the creative impulse is gaining ground and beginning to name what needs change.

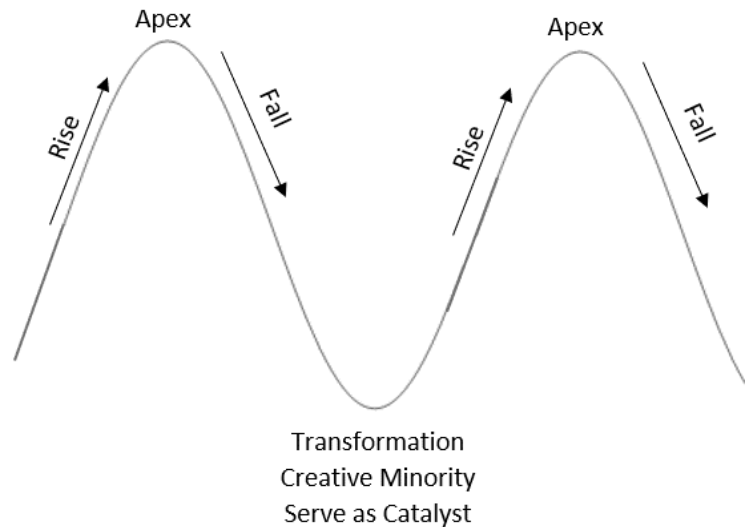


Figure 11: Rise and Fall of Civilizations<sup>43</sup>

We then move into the transformation phase of this process. For those on the upper arc of the Diaspora Diagram, the fall continues. There is a sense of great loss, holding onto an institutional model and focusing on security of the system. For those on the lower arc of the Diaspora diagram, there is movement into transformation.

### *Holding the Tension – Suffering*

In Paul’s Letter to the Philippians he wrote, “For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well.”<sup>45</sup>

Holding the tension is one of the most difficult realities we must face, and it provides the foundation to move toward the other two calls of our time: radical availability and emerging consciousness. All three propel us into the reality of our time – that as Women Religious, we are called to hold the fullness of the current life and the hope for the emergent. The work of holding the tension that emerges out of the reality of the dominant system and the emergent system takes enormous energy, focus, intentionality, and strength. At any time, either system wants to consume the individual or group and eject what is not to that system’s benefit. The pull within the tension is to do anything in order to reduce or preferably eliminate this tension.

For example, the emergent system may seek to discard the elder sisters as ‘not getting it’ or ‘not wanting to change.’ This is an inflation in which the energy of the emergent system establishes a belief that it is the correct way of moving forward and nothing else matters. Elder sisters can, in reality, have a lot to offer in terms of generativity and composting. This process is also evident in the dominant system (in this case, the elders) in which anything new is an assault to the core functioning of the system.

In this tension there is an abundance of energy that can be captured, and it becomes the vehicle for something new to emerge. However, in so doing, it is not without personal sacrifice, as indicated in the experiences and tasks of the wayfinder.

### *Radical Availability – Death*

In Paul’s Letter to the Romans we hear that, “If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord, so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.”<sup>46</sup>

For this call toward radical availability, the paradox of passion and detachment is key. As the Apostle Paul proclaims, regardless of living or dying, “we are the Lord’s.” Jesus is the embodiment of radical availability through the modeling of his life as well as his acceptance of death. The wayfinder must be 100% in and at the same time, detached from any one outcome. It is a dying to one’s hopes and expectations of where she is going. This is the beauty of the Diaspora Model – it provides guidance and does not tell us what will be at the end. It provides glimpses of how to proceed, knowing that something will emerge; however, it does not name the end result.

*Everyone must be willing to stand and be counted: the future, viable or not, demands and depends on it.*<sup>47</sup>

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Entering into this type of process is challenging and takes focus – it calls for radical availability to catch glimpses of the *signs of the times* and discern the next course. It is exemplified in the wayfinder discerning the combined analogical data of the waves, wind, and sky. The wayfinder becomes the holder of this data and over time, with more and more data, the horizon begins to emerge.

When our foremothers created the institutions of healthcare, education, and social services there was a need for these to address the gaps in society. However, the issues they saw are no longer gaps in the same way, and others are trained and able to take on these endeavors. We are in a new time, yet many of our structures and institutions demand that we continue to sustain them. Does this promote the status quo? We need to let go of the myths and the history that holds us hostage. These become *the* story rather than a part of the story. To what are we called today?

### *Emerging Consciousness – Resurrection*

In the First Epistle of John, we hear the Evangelist as he exhorts about love and fellowship with God: “Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when Christ is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.”<sup>48</sup>

The resurrection allowed things to be seen differently – eyes were open to a new reality and a new consciousness emerged. The same is happening for Religious Life currently in history. Perhaps the story of Emmaus is appropriate (Luke 24:30-31) – we are walking along the road and discussing what has just happened and yet we don’t recognize the stranger until the breaking of the bread, and then life for these sojourners is changed forever. Walter Brueggemann, in *The Prophetic Imagination*, writes: “Jesus is remembered and presented by the early church as the faithful embodiment of an alternative consciousness. In his compassion, he embodies the anguish of those rejected by the dominant culture, and as embodied anguish, he has the authority to show the deathly end of the dominant culture.”<sup>49</sup>

There is no question that the dominant structures are dying and in a reactive stance. This is not just seen in Religious Life; it is seen in governmental, corporate and Church structures. Women Religious have been thought and behavioral leaders since their Congregations were established.<sup>50</sup> In our modern era, Women Religious have shown a different manner of collaborative leadership.<sup>51</sup> How are we called to continue this legacy at this time in our world as a model of offering something different? How are we called to companion Jesus and be “the faithful embodiment of an alternative consciousness”?<sup>52</sup>

## **Meaning for Today**

One of the gifts of *The Leadership Circle Profile* is the concept of moving into a reactive space or into a creative space. Otto Scharmer’s Theory U,<sup>53</sup> and specifically the idea of *absencing* and *presencing*, can help us explore this concept. This model of *absencing* and *presencing* provides another

way of speaking about the Diaspora Diagram. Perhaps, it is beneficial to review this in an effort to bring more clarity and richness to the Diaspora Diagram – as well as a different lens for summarizing the basic concepts.

Regardless of where you find yourself on the Diaspora Diagram (upper or lower arc/reactive or creative space), it is imperative to remain focused on staying in the creative space – in that whirlpool of dynamic energy (see *Figure 8*). Otherwise, the tendency is to move into the reactive and support the status quo. It is revealed globally in the resurgence of nationalism, racism, clericalism and fundamentalism, and Religious Life is not immune to these dynamics and the all-to-many ‘isms’.<sup>54</sup>

Movement toward the reactive state can be equated with what Scharmer calls *absencing* and it is expressed in a moving apart or separating from *the other*. Scharmer states that “we recognize that the system is broken and that we can’t continue on the same old path. But we see the problem as ‘them,’ not ‘us.’ So, we build a wall around us to keep ‘them’ out.”<sup>55</sup> With *absencing*, the world becomes very small, lives become isolated, and fear of anything beyond the safe harbor becomes the norm.

Scharmer’s use of the concept *presencing* can be equated with movement toward the creative. It is an expression of moving together and co-creating. Scharmer states: “The walls come down and a new architecture of collaboration and connection takes shape. In dealing with any of the complex challenges of our time, very soon you realize that there is nothing any company, [Congregation] or country can do alone, so sustainable solutions must include an entire global eco-system of partners and players. To do that well, we must become aware of our own role in co-generating the problem and then step up to co-create different ways of operating.”<sup>57</sup>

*We are made wise  
not by the  
recollection of our  
past, but by the  
responsibility for  
our future.*<sup>56</sup>  
George Bernard Shaw

This is part of the emergent dynamic for Religious Life today and into the future. With *presencing*, we need one another, our Congregations cannot continue to be isolated from collaborative partnership with those beyond our walls, and that the future depends on our recognizing the reality of what is in front of us (the problem, if you will) and working together to co-create the future.

*Figure 12* is adapted from Otto Scharmer’s book, *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges*.<sup>58</sup> If we look at the basic movement of this diagram, we envision the movement to the reactive as the upper arrow of *absencing*, hallmarked with being stuck, denial, and deluding with the resultant destroying. This can also be envisioned as “stagnation” and “fragmentation” (see *Figure 6*). The lower arrow of *presencing* is characterized with seeing, sensing and co-creating. This can also be envisioned as “integration” (see *Figure 6*).

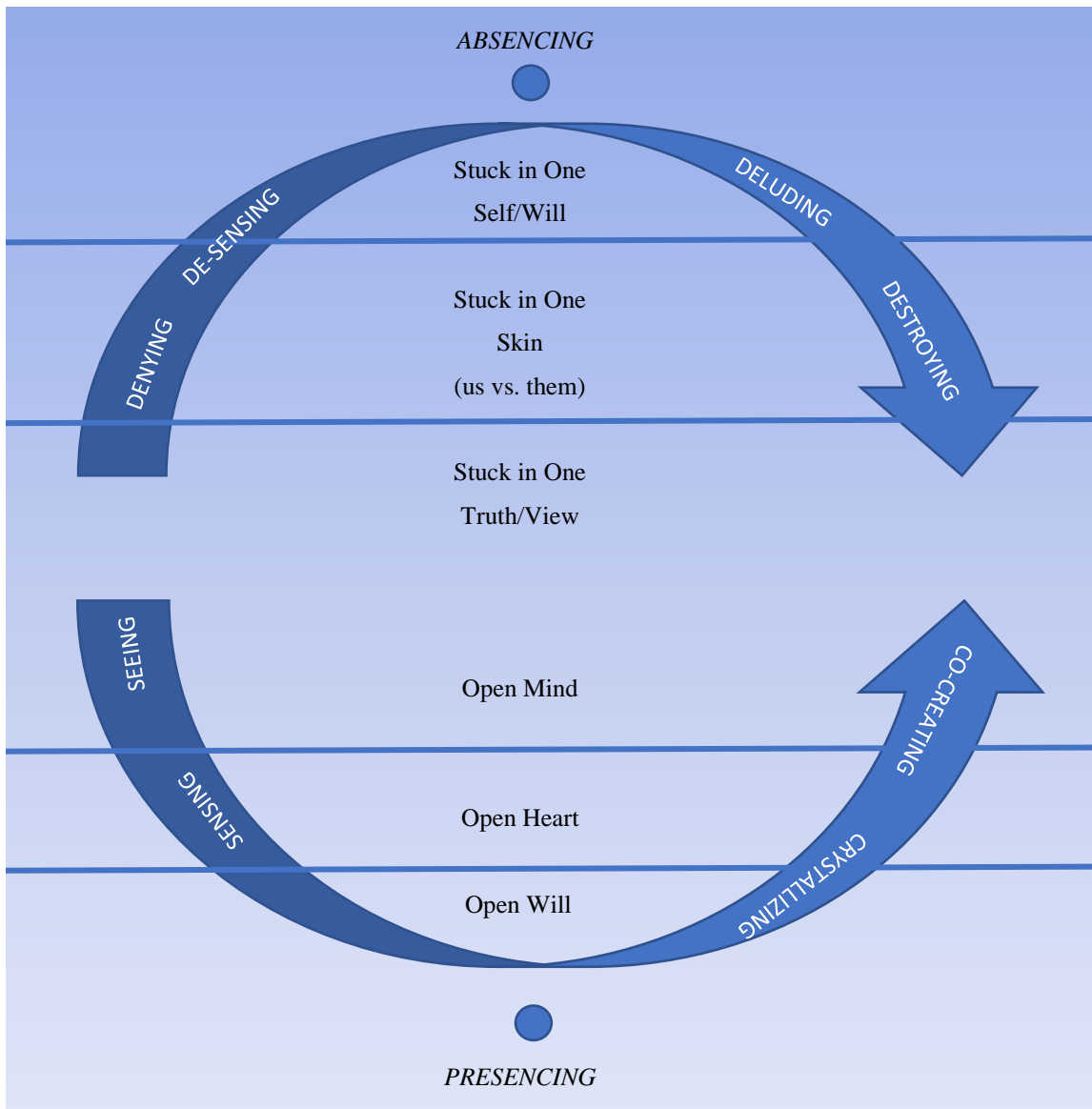


Figure 12: *Absencing and Presencing*<sup>59</sup>

As we hold the tensions of creativity and reactivity within ourselves, our Congregations, Religious Life, the Church and the world, we are incubating the Divine spark that desires for us to transform and allow something beyond what we can see in the horizon. In reality, God is the ultimate *Wayfinder*; we are the incarnate presence in today's world called to this Divine initiative to move toward *presencing* and co-create with an ever-emergent consciousness.

To be on this daunting yet hope-filled journey, we need some guidance. What are the values needed for this journey? It appears that there are three paradoxical pairs of values needed to move into



the emergent: humility and sense of self, strength and vulnerability, and detachment and passion. Interestingly, these values offer the tension that is pervasive in the tasks of the wayfinder. Without this tension, something new would not emerge. Thus, we embrace this paradox/tension as grace.

### *Humility and Sense of Self*

In society, humility is generally seen as the antipathy of a sense of self. In reality, this is a myth. To foster true humility, one must have a strong sense of self and possession of self. It is only then that a personal sense of humility can be authentic.

For a system, this is needed as well. For those moving toward the creative space, regardless of whether they are on the upper or lower arc, a sense of purpose and self is vital.<sup>61</sup> Coupled with this is the humility to be open and stand in the midst of the struggle. It is in the struggle that our ego may become inflated and move toward the reactive. The deep sense of purpose and self will allow the movement forward, stay in the tension of the struggle, and be open to the emergent – in essence, remain in the creative stance.

*God's invitation and our life's work is to keep God's vision before us, lest we find ourselves taking the initiative away from God or simply going through the motions of religious life rather than remaining faithful to authentic 'religious living.'*<sup>60</sup>

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### *Strength and Vulnerability*

Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. “Truth and courage aren’t always comfortable, but they’re never weakness.”<sup>62</sup> In many cultures, vulnerability is a risky proposition and may lead to harm or death. Our brains are wired to ensure survival.<sup>63</sup> Yet, in this paradox, it is viewed as a strength and as lifegiving. Jesus models the ultimate example of vulnerability and strength. Without these two characteristics working in concert, a Woman Religious is not able to stand firmly in her authenticity.

### *Detachment and Passion*

French philosopher, Simone Weil stated that “attachment is the great fabricator of illusions; reality can be obtained only by someone who is detached.”<sup>64</sup> This final paradox asks if a person can be energized and passionate about what is emerging, yet not hold onto any one conclusion or reality? This detachment allows her to remain indifferent, in the Ignatian sense of this concept.<sup>65</sup> If her own attachments – to ideas, models and hopes – get in the way, she is actually in reactive space and becomes a “great fabricator of illusions.”<sup>66</sup>

## What is Needed to Move Forward?

The first thing to reconcile is that we are creating in the present and looking toward the future. We must keep this in mind as we keep talking about the future of Religious Life. We talk so much about being in the future that we are no longer in the present. We need to speak of our future in the present moment because we are the “now” of Religious Life. If we continue to relegate ourselves to the future, how can we create that future? The creation of our future is in the present.<sup>67</sup>

Based on the Diaspora Diagram, if we are obliged to the future, we are actually putting ourselves in reactive space. This attitude does not pull us into the creative center. We must face our reality and not deny that life is changing – that apostolic Religious Life is changing.

### *Collaboration*

The importance of working together is so that something new emerges beyond what any one person or group could have imagined. If we work in silos, we will not move forward.

### *Unity in Our Diversity*

Our lives embody the cycle of creating unity out of diversity and thus need to move into the uncomfortable space of diversity and the unknown space of other. How are we listening for this diversity? How do we see and experience being in our periphery?

### *Faith, Foresight and Flexibility*

“[We are called to the heritage of] a pioneer spirit of bold faith, foresight, and flexibility as gifts for our mission.”<sup>68</sup> Is there anything else needed for the journey? As Women Religious, we are pioneers. We have traditionally had our sense of what is needed, where there are gaps, and we work to alleviate those areas that need tending. Then, we move to the next task and so on. We have a rich heritage and continue to foster a pioneer spirit, especially as we move into the emergent. This is a different type of terrain for the pioneer. As we move with the emergent, we will need to have a bold faith, knowing that God is at work (even if we do not quite understand what that work is); we need to have foresight, similar to the wayfinder looking beyond the horizon; and we need to have flexibility, in order to shift course as needed.

## Conclusion

We are reminded that the Temple is destroyed. We cannot return to what has been and we grow to understand that Religious Life is not the same as it was a decade ago – or even 2 – 3 years ago. What *has been* is being deconstructed and we move into the diaspora. This deconstruction becomes an opportunity and we have a choice to be a leader on either arc of the Diaspora diagram. We are drawn to the emergent and move toward the dynamism of the creative; yet the pull of the dominant narrative can

thwart our efforts. We struggle to find our grounding in such disorienting space. It is a dance of moving back and forth from the reactive to the creative...from the creative to the reactive.

We have work to do so as to transform and increase our consciousness of the dynamics at hand and where God is leading us. Most importantly, we are holders of emergent hope. Our journey is grounded in God. We know the work of God is at hand, and we seek to partner with this Divine Energy. With this partnership, we journey as wayfinders, seeking a glimpse at the horizon that holds the potential for our future.

## Endnotes

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2. Unknown source.
3. Jung, C.G. (1968). *Collected Works of C.G. Jung (Book 8): Alchemical Studies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, par 154.
4. Anello, Eloy, Hernandez, Joan and Khadem, May (2014). *Transformative Leadership: Developing the Hidden Dimensions*. Houston, TX: Harmony Equity Press, p. 188
5. Referencing John XXIII in his statement to commence the Second Vatican Council in 1959. In this same statement, he notes that the “the church is not a museum of antiques but a living garden of life.” Perhaps this can be applied to Religious Life today in terms of the ever-changing nature of a living garden.
6. In January 2018, a group gathered to begin the planning of the 2019 Biennial Gathering for the Leadership Collaborative. The Diaspora Model began to emerge as the fruit of brainstorming and talking about what they were seeing in religious life today. Those present were: Debbie Asberry, MA (senior consultant with CommunityWorks, Inc.), Linda Buck, CSJ (Sister of St. Joseph of Orange), Charlene Diorka, SSJ (Sister of St. Joseph of Chestnut Hill), Connie Kelly, OP (Dominican Sister of Hope), Eileen McKenzie, FSPA (Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration), Sandra Prucha, RSM (Sister of Mercy of the Americas) and Montiel Rosenthal, SC (Sister of Charity, Cincinnati).
7. For more information on the two-loop theory of change, please see The Berkana Institute: <https://berkana.org/about/our-theory-of-change/>. A summary of this theory is also found on pages 9 – 13 in Wheatley, Margaret and Frieze, D. (2011). *Walk Out Walk On: A Learning Journey into Communities Daring to Live the Future*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
8. This image is re-created from the video found on <https://berkana.org/about/our-theory-of-change/>. See above (End Note 7) for other additional resource for the two-loop theory of change.
9. The Berkana Institute, accessed on 09/18/18 at <https://berkana.org/about/our-theory-of-change/>.

10. For more information on the Leadership Circle Profile, please see The Leadership Circle: <https://leadershipcircle.com/en/home/>.
11. Freire, Paolo (1973). *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury Press, p. 7.
12. Anello, *Transformative Leadership*, p. 188. In addition, this idea, although resonating with many faith traditions, comes from the Baha'i Faith tradition. It can be seen most clearly in the document released on August 24, 2001 titled, Baha'i International Community issues statement to World Conference against Racism. <https://news.bahai.org/story/133/>.
13. This phrase is used by The Leadership Collaborative for a process to move the organization forward and pay attention to what is emerging and desired from those associated with the organization. In 2015, Daniel Goleman wrote a book titled *A Force for Good: The Dalai Lama's Vision for Our World* (Bantam Publishing). This book focused on this idea of "a force for good" as envisioned by the Dalai Lama, in which action is inspired by a genuine concern for others. For more information on "A force for good" visit: [www.joinaforce4good.org](http://www.joinaforce4good.org).
14. Davis, Wade (2009). *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Salzberg, Alieza. "Judaism after the Temple: Coping with Destruction and Building for the Future." Accessed on 05/15/19 at <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/judaism-after-the-temple/>. In this article, the author states with the destruction of the Second Temple, there was "an important shift in the political and religious life of the Jewish people" in which "a way of life focused on Torah and Jewish law, rather than Temple worship or political sovereignty."
17. Dallas Baptist University, accessed 09/18/18 at <https://www3.dbu.edu/mitchell/postcold.htm>.
18. Cimperman, Maria (2015). *Social Analysis for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: How Faith Becomes Action*. New York: Orbis Books, p. 22.
19. These four roles, which Deborah Frieze calls wayfinders, are described by Deborah on a TEDxJamaicaPlain (Published on Dec 17, 2015) titled How I Became a Localist. This talk is found at <https://youtu.be/2jTdZSPBRRE>.

20. This is a reference to the hymn “We Remember” by Marty Haugen which speaks of Christ’s love for us, especially as we celebrate the Eucharist.
21. Wheatley, *Walk Out Walk On*, p. 11 (see endnote 7).
22. For more information regarding the Doctrinal Assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and how the leadership of LCWR navigated this time, refer to Sanders, Annmarie, Ed. (2018) *However Long the Night: Making Meaning in a Time of Crisis*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing.
23. Wheatley & Frieze, *Walk Out Walk On*, p. 11.
24. To understand this idea of homeostasis within family systems, see Gostecnik, Christian (2017). *Relational Family Therapy: The Systemic, Interpersonal, and Intrapsychic Experience*. Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge. This understanding is easily translated into the dynamics of Religious Life.
25. Gittins, Anthony (2015). *Living Mission Interculturally: Faith, Culture, and the Renewal of Praxis*. Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier Publishing, p. 25.
26. “Hope in Suffering: A Spirituality of Life and Loss” is a model for working through unresolved loss developed by Linda Buck, CSJ in 2005 for a workshop at the Center for Spiritual Development, Orange, CA.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Ehrenreich, Barbara (2010). *Smile or Die: How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World*. United Kingdom: Granta Books.
29. Manning, Brennan (2004). *The Wisdom of Tenderness: What Happens When God’s Fierce Mercy Transforms Our Lives*. New York: HarperOne. Manning states, “One of life’s greatest paradoxes is that it’s in the crucible of pain and suffering that we become tender” (p. 48).
30. For more about avoidance during times of grief, refer to the book, *The Nature of Grief* (1999) by John Archer or visit the online article “Avoiding Grief: Why It Doesn’t Work” (<https://www.griefincommon.com/blog/avoiding-grief-why-it-doesnt-work/>)

31. To learn more about the process of a caterpillar transforming to a butterfly, visit <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/caterpillar-butterfly-metamorphosis-explainer/> for an article by Ferris Jabr (August 10, 2012), “How Does a Caterpillar Turn into a Butterfly?”
32. For more on this issue of the inverted pyramid, see Harvard Business Review’s article “Talent Management When the Old Outnumber the Young” by Tammy Erickson (2012), <https://hbr.org/2012/03/demographic-geometry-talent-ma>. Although this article is not specifically about Religious Life, it provides a quick overview of the present reality regarding the change in age distribution in the United States.
33. Davis, *The Wayfinders*, adapted.
34. Anderson, Robert J. and Adams, William (2015). *Mastering Leadership: An Integrated Framework for Breakthrough Performance and Extraordinary Business Results*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, p. 179. Chapter 8 of this book offers more information on Reactive Leadership.
35. Fox, Matthew (2009). *The Hidden Spirituality of Men: Ten Metaphors to Awaken the Sacred Masculine*. Novato, CA: New World Library, p. 170. Fox states, “We must use our powers of creativity, which increase when consciousness increases, to engage and solve the many problems facing us at this important time in history. We must take our expanded consciousness into all our relationships.”
36. Fleming, Dave (2005). *The Seeker’s Way: Cultivating the Longings of a Spiritual Life*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, p. 72.
37. Smith, Christian and Davidson, Hilary (2014). *The Paradox of Generosity: Giving We Receive, Grasping We Lose*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, p. 94.
38. In his book *Wisdom at Work: The Making of a Modern Elder* (Random House, 2018), Chip Conley discusses the traditional concept of mentoring, as well as introduces the idea of reverse mentoring, in which a younger person helps older person to help understand and navigate generational differences. Both are generative manners of mentoring to promote intergenerational relationships.
39. Gillick, Muriel (2006). *The Denial of Aging: Perpetual Youth, Eternal Life, and Other Dangerous Fantasies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 5 – 6.

40. Wheatley, *Walk Out Walk On*.
41. Brueggemann, Walter (1978). *The Prophetic Imagination*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, p. 3.
42. Anello, *Transformative Leadership*, p. 203 – 204.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
44. Berrelleza, Erick, Gautier, Mary and Gray, Mark. “Population Trends Among Religious Institutes of Women.” *CARA Special Report*, Fall 2014. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Washington, DC: Georgetown University.
45. Philippians 1:29
46. Romans 14:8
47. Gittins, *Living Mission Interculturally*, p. 3.
48. 1 John 3:2
49. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p. 91.
50. Grenz, Stanley and Muir Kjesbo, Denise (1991). *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, p. 41.
51. To understand how Women Religious express leadership in a counter-cultural manner, refer to the book *However Long the Night: Making Meaning in a Time of Crisis* (see endnote 22).
52. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p. 91.
53. Scharmer, Otto (2009). *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
54. Florian Bieber (2018) “Is Nationalism on the Rise? Assessing Global Trends.” *Ethnopolitics*, 17:5, 519-540.
55. Scharmer, *Theory U*, p. xxxi.



56. *The Collected Plays of George Bernard Shaw* (Illustrated), Including Renowned Titles like “Pygmalion,” “Mrs. Warren’s Profession,” “Candida,” “Arms and The Man,” “Man and Superman,” “The Inca Of Perusalem,” “Macbeth Skit,” “Caesar and Cleopatra,” “Androcles and the Lion,” loc. 3315 (Kindle).
57. Scharmer, *Theory U*, p. xxxi.
58. Scharmer, *Theory U*, p. xxx.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Gittins, *Living Mission Interculturally*, p. 27.
61. Kent, Dan (2019). *Confident Humility: Becoming Your Full Self without Becoming Full of Yourself*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, p. 91.
62. For more on this concept of vulnerability and survival, see Brown, Brené (2012). *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead*. New York: Gotham Publishing.
63. Aten, Jamie. “Wired for Survival: Understand and Harness your Body’s Natural Stress Response When it Counts,” *Psychology Today*. Posted June 15, 2017. Accessed April 12, 2019 at <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/heal-and-carry/201706/wired-survival>.
64. Quote by Simon Weil found in book: Piha, Elaine (2011). *What on Earth Are We Doing Here?: Exploring the Case for Human Suffering*. Balboa Press, p. 30 – 31.
65. Traub, George (2008). *An Ignatian Spirituality Reader*. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, p. 204.
66. See endnote 64.
67. Buck, Linda. “The Paradigm of Age: Shifting Perceptions of ‘Old’ and ‘Young’.” Global Sisters Report, published August 25, 2015. Accessed 03/21/19 at [https://www.globalsistersreport.org/column/\\_trends/paradigm-age-shifting-perceptions-%E2%80%98old%E2%80%99-and-%E2%80%98young%E2%80%99-29781](https://www.globalsistersreport.org/column/_trends/paradigm-age-shifting-perceptions-%E2%80%98old%E2%80%99-and-%E2%80%98young%E2%80%99-29781).

68. This phrase comes from The Constitution of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange (1984). It is Article Number 10 and states: “[We are called to the heritage of] a pioneer spirit of bold faith, foresight, and flexibility as gifts for our mission.”



