

Sinsinawa Dominicans: SWOT synthesis of the Reflection Circles

<p>Guiding principles or Identity statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Authenticity is rooted in contemplation ❖ Significance of ritual ❖ Essential role of contemplation ❖ Interdependence calls us to move beyond silos and stretches us to a deeper place
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unifying power of ritual allows us to be one in our diversity ✓ See charism as freely given for people of God (vowed Dominicans do not own the charism) ✓ Search for community – recognize the power of being with one another (this is a strength AND challenge) ✓ Our numbers – strength: there are lots of people, many sponsored institutions; ✓ The impact of our evolving spirituality that is not bound by institutions on this project.
<p>Weaknesses (internal challenges)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lack of emphasis on emerging theology and role of Dominican Scholarship (in the material) ❖ Minimal recognition of Care of Earth in mission (in the material) ❖ Not much focus on political advocacy (in the material) ❖ Missing - Evolutionary/transformational consciousness & universe story (in the material) ❖ Challenge (of lower numbers) : in some venues, we are siloed and see ourselves in a more parochial manner
<p>Opportunities (i.e. concrete ideas for situations/needs to address in the world outside the cong)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to grow in our recognition and understanding of who we are as a global family – embracing the richness of who we are & what we are about ● Being Dominican in a new cosmic understanding
<p>Threats</p>
<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We need to enlarge our vision of God, the world, ourselves and bring a contemplative, intrinsic listening to our search for truth and maintain a joyful stance in the midst of a suffering world. ✓ Recognizing the gift that diminishment may be offering us ✓ Holding the tension that exists between present realities and future visioning ✓ Imperative to always stretch ourselves ✓ In order to be able to dialogue with others, we must have a strong sense of roots, a sense of self from which we can embrace both that which is newly emerging, as well as engage the “original sin” of racism permeating the U.S. ✓ The need for a sense of community (that so much more can happen when there are others who provide a support, solidarity, when compared to people who may be the only Dominican in their area). ✓ Search for community – recognize the power of being with one another (this is a strength AND challenge)

- ✓ Our numbers – strength: there are lots of people, many sponsored institutions; challenge: in some venues, we are siloed and see ourselves in a more parochial manner
- ✓ Truth with risk taking calls us to a thoughtful expansiveness. This evolution requires nurturing and deepening our Dominican roots without becoming root bound
- ✓ Learn from the current dialogue on communal life and spirituality by the NONE's (those who do not identify a religious affiliation) with NUNS. How this might inform new possibilities of communal life.

Observations/Reflections on the process:

- Missing - Bigger picture of the process (in the material)
- Reflections highlighted importance of identity, charism and study
- Aware that the Dominican family is even more diverse than the survey results reflected.
- Lay term didn't seem to fit (we are all lay, except for ordained)
- We didn't see much that was missing – it was pretty comprehensive.
- It seemed that the information provided was a lot of rehashing old ideas without a lot of newness. Overall meeting grant requirements seemed to overwhelm the process which lacks purpose and direction.
- Lack of ownership of the ideas (of the process???)
- Those who would be most affected by change must be involved (in the process or in the Futuring charism project?)