

## Facilitator Directions Unity in Diversity

The Facilitator will need to prepare herself by reflecting on **Extended SSND Family**. These directions focus primarily on the emotional reality of living in crisis. Sensitivity to those who have experienced crisis is essential to this session.

The Facilitator needs copies of **Unity in Diversity**. This is a transcript of SSNDs sharing some of their experience regarding both World War II and the Cold War. The audio is also available. Using speakers attached to a laptop computer, participants could follow the script together. This is found in Extended SSND Family, fourth paragraph.

The FACILITATOR welcomes participants and says: "Like many people, women religious living in Eastern and Central Europe, experienced living under communism. In 1941, there were 366 SSNDs in the Hungarian Province, 203 in the Czechoslovakian Province, and 415 in the Romanian Province. In 1934 there were 234 SSNDs in Poland, some of them later settled in Berlin and the DDR. (Deutsche Demokratische Republik) With more than 1000 School Sisters of Notre Dame living in communist controlled countries their experience invites our reflection."

Before we consider their experience, however, I wonder if any of us have experienced living in sustained crisis. Let's **pause** for a few moments and consider those crisis events in our lives. (participants might remember living through severe weather like a hurricane and recall rebuilding their lives, perhaps some are immigrants whose lives have been marked by civil war, ETC.)

After time for reflection The FACILITATOR continues: "Would anyone like to share a story of her/his experience of living in crisis times?" (Allow enough time for all to be heard and their experience received by the group. Sometimes others in the group will respond with questions to the speaker, or remembering similar situations. Encourage this kind of conversation among the group.) After all have shared The FACILITATOR continues: "What kept you going during these hard times?" "Where did you find hope?" "What gave you strength to live each day?"

When the participants have shared their insights, The FACILITATOR says: "Often in times of crisis we realize we're part of a larger family. We've just heard stories of people reaching out to one another, sharing the little they had. (or withdrawing into an unhealthy isolation...)

Among School Sisters of Notre Dame living under communism, Mother Georgianne Segner, General Superior from 1968-1977, was a strong connection with a larger SSND family. (The FACILITATOR might share an overview of Mother Georgianne's visits to sisters as related under Extended SSND Family.) At an Extended General Council meeting in Rome some of the sisters shared their experience of unity during these difficult times. We'll listen to a recording of this sharing and invite you to follow it with a written text. (Distribute copies of **Unity in Diversity**).

After listening to the recording (or reading the text together), The FACILITATOR asks: "What was the emotional tone of the sharing?" (Serious, honest, faith-filled, close to tears, etc.) "Is there one comment that touched you?" (Invite participants to name the paragraph from the written text so that all can follow.) "What sustained the SSNDs who spoke?" Other questions or comments may arise.

(One question may arise: how did this recording get into Sturdy Roots, since we usually don't record faith-sharing? Answer: the author received this tape from S. Mary Luke Baldwin who was present at this EGC. She had kept it knowing the sacredness of its content for SSND.)

The FACILITATOR asks a final question: "What do you take home with you from this sharing?" When responses conclude and they have been thanked for their participation The FACILITATOR says: We'll conclude with praying the "Our Father." As we join hands to recite this prayer, let us remember all who carry the wounds of war."