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School Sisters of Notre Dame elect international leadership team and set future direction

Marriottsville, Maryland, USA – Forty-five School Sisters of Notre Dame from 30 countries came together Sept. 26 – Oct. 24 for their 24th General Chapter to elect a general council and set the future direction for the congregation for the next six years.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame hold a general chapter with elected and ex-officio representatives from each administrative unit (province) every six years. The theme of the Chapter was “Trust and Dare. Content with little, we joyfully direct our entire lives toward that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent.”

General Council

Sister Roxanne Schares was elected general superior at the chapter. She will work with a team of five elected general councilors: Sister Inês Camiran, general councilor/vicar; Sister Carolyn Anyega, general councilor; Sister Julianne Lattner, general councilor; Sister M. Martina Radež, general councilor; and Sister Kathleen Storms, general councilor.

The newly-elected general council members will begin their six-year term when they are installed on Jan. 20, 2018, at the Generalate in Rome, Italy.

Sister Roxanne Schares, general superior-elect, will be the 12th successor to Blessed M. Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, the foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Sister Roxanne currently lives in Nairobi, Kenya, and serves as the temporary professed director for the Province of Africa which includes The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria. Previously, Sister Roxanne was novice director for seven years, worked with the Jesuit Refugee Services in Africa for 10 years and served as the International *Shalom* Coordinator (2007-2015) in Rome, Italy. Sister Roxanne entered the congregation in Mankato, Minnesota, and was professed in 1972. She was missioned to Kenya in 1982 and is now a member of the Province of Africa.

Sister Inês Camiran, general councilor/vicar-elect, is a native of Brazil. She will enter her second term as a general councilor and will also now serve as vicar. Previously, she was provincial leader of the former São Paulo Province and worked as a teacher and in the formation of postulants. She was professed in 1985 in São Paulo, Brazil.

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Sister Carolyn Anyega, general councilor-elect, is headmistress of Notre Dame Senior Secondary School and lives in Sunyani, Ghana. She is a native of Kenya and has served in Ghana since 2005, when she was missioned to form community with the sisters in Sunyani and teach at the secondary school. Previously she taught in schools and served as headmistress in both East and West Africa, worked as vocation director and in the formation of postulants and served as temporary professed director. She was professed in 1997 in Nairobi, Kenya, East Africa.

Sister Julianne Lattner, general councilor-elect, currently serves as a facilitator working with religious community groups and returning missionary groups in Canada. She has served as temporary professed director in the Province of Africa, as postulant director in Kenya and as novice director for the former Interprovincial Novitiate in the United States. As a provincial councilor of the former Canadian Province, her leadership role took her to Bolivia, Peru and England. She was professed in 1966 in Canada.

Sister Kathleen Storms, general councilor-elect, is director of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat Center in Wheatland, Iowa. Her previous ministries include elementary and junior high school education; director of novices for the former Mankato Province; director of vocations for the archdiocesan vocation office in St. Paul, Minnesota; co-director of the SSND Center for Earth Spirituality in Mankato; and council member for the former Mankato Province. She was professed in 1966.

Sister M. Martina Radež, general councilor-elect, is a native of Slovenia. She currently serves as local leader of the community at Ilirska Bistrica, Slovenia, as well as working in the Mother Theresa retreat center in Ilirska Bistrica. Previously, she served on the provincial council for three terms and in the formation of candidates, postulants, and junior sisters. She was a novice in the Bavarian Province and professed her first vows in 1980 in Munich, Germany.

Future Direction of the Congregation

The directional statement was the result of a congregation-wide consultation before the Chapter and intense dialogue and prayerful reflection during the Chapter. The directional statement will be shared on the congregational website when all translations have been completed. The newly elected general council will lead the congregation in implementing the Spirit-inspired direction set by the Chapter members.

“This Chapter and our directional statement for the future have been an act of love, a love that gives everything, gladly and gratefully,” Sister Roxanne said. “In that spirit, in the spirit of our Foundress Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are committed with the entire congregation to follow the direction that God has given us and live into the future what this directional statement and these Acts of the Chapter call us to be and to do – out of love that gives everything.”

The School Sisters of Notre Dame is an international congregation of more than 2,500 women religious in 30 countries. Their mission, to deepen communion with God and among all people, is lived out in ministries focused on education. They educate with a world vision believing that the world can be changed through the transformation of persons. The congregation was founded on October 24, 1833, by Blessed M. Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger in Bavaria.

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