



Religious Law and Consultation Newsletter



Share



Tweet



Forward



Share

Commissaries and Collaboration

While moving to completion is not the story of all communities, it is the need of some who face an aging membership, a dwindling leadership pool, and the ongoing demands of this phase of the community's life journey in today's world.

Leaders must focus their attention on specific issues related to completion: ensuring sponsored ministries are entrusted to others, ensuring their members will be well cared for, walking with their sisters as they face not only the end of their lives but also the end of the congregation in which they have given their lives, ensuring good stewardship, settling the legacy of the congregation, and canonical leadership.

Some communities have attempted to address these issues by merging institutes or provinces. Other communities have entered into non-canonical relationships with larger more stable communities, through an arrangement commonly called a covenant. Whereas merger and covenant met the needs of some communities in the last few decades, another approach is needed today. Increasingly, we are aware that we need a systematic approach to collaborative efforts for Sponsorship, for Eldercare, for finance and Administration, and for canonical Leadership; I use the acronym SEAL.

Sponsorship – refers to the responsibility that many institutes exercise over their ministries. They may have established schools, universities, health-care ministries, and social services. These ministries are

Upcoming Webcasts

**Online Forum of Law
for Religious Leadership**
ongoing in 2020

**Commissaries and
Collaboration**
November 17, 2020

**Councils, Chapters and
E-Participation**
February 2021

**Canonical Leadership
and Collaborative
Governance**
May 2021

**Ministerial Public
Juridic Persons**
August 2021

Associates
November 2021

Time:

Tuesdays, 2:00 pm ET,
11:00 am PT

[For more information and
to Register](#)

often separately incorporate while the institute continues to retain some level of relationship and responsibility. Many communities see the need of entrusting these works to others to continue their service. This may be done by establishing a relationship between the ministry and another religious community or a diocese, or a separate ministerial Public Juridic Person (mPJP). Such a transition takes time and many communities are already working toward this. Establishing a separate mPJP can be done by one community acting alone, or by a group of communities acting in collaboration, either regionally or by charism.

Elder-care – is the need to identify means of ensuring the ongoing care of sisters/brothers. In addition to providing a place to live and adequate care, the institute also ensures their ongoing personal and pastoral support and assists them as their needs change over time. This is an area where institutes have found opportunities for collaboration by accepting members into one another's elder-care facility, by jointly establishing an elder-care facility, and/or by sharing the services of elder-care support services.

Administration – refers to the business office functions, administrative, financial and legal services. Sometimes these functions are carried out within the institute by brothers/sisters, working with professional staff. In other cases, leadership identifies providers and partners outside the institute. This too is an area where there may be opportunities for collaboration between communities, sharing a finance office, sharing business office personnel, or by one religious institute taking on the business office services of another religious community.

Leadership – is the canonical oversight of each of these areas together with the pastoral care of the sisters/brothers and the shepherding of the continued life of the institute. This is generally done by the elected leadership of a religious institute. However, there comes a time when an institute can no longer elect leadership from among its members. At such time, a community can petition the bishop (for

Format: Live, On-Demand
or CD-ROM

Cost: \$70 for Live or On-Demand;
\$90 for CD-ROM

Past programs are available [here](#).

Contact

Amy Hereford, CSJ
Attorney Canonist
CSJ Ministries
6400 Minnesota Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63111-2807
Phone: 314-972-4763
amyhereford@gmail.com

[Newsletter](#)

[Web Seminars](#)

[Technical Requirements](#)

[Attorney](#)

[Canon Law Reference](#)

diocesan institutes) or the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (for pontifical institutes) for a religious from another community to take on the leadership responsibilities, this person has been called a commissary or a canonical trustee.

Many institutes are wrestling with these issues: Sponsorship, Elder-care, Administration, and Leadership. As they do, we are also seeing the benefits of collaborative projects and initiatives. These collaborative ventures certainly have their own challenges but at the same time, they can build supportive structures that will enable communities to reap the benefits of working together, without the difficulties that come from more formal mergers that require alignment of all levels of an institute's life and ministry.

Register for November's webcast which will explore issues related to commissaries and collaboration. [Register here.](#)

Online Forum of Law for Religious Leadership

In response to the pandemic, many regional and national conferences and workshops have been postponed or canceled. I would like to provide an alternative that may fill a need for those seeking to enhance their understanding of canon law and civil law as they impact leadership in religious institutes. To this end, I have developed a list of recorded webcast series and bundles of recorded webcasts that can be used by individuals and teams. You can find [more information here.](#)

First Place Award

We are pleased to announce that the Catholic Publishing Association awarded First Place honors in the Future Church category to Sr. Amy Hereford's [*Beyond the Crossroad, Religious Life in the 21st Century.*](#)

To view our archive of newsletters, [click here](#). And to view our archive of webcasts, [click here](#).

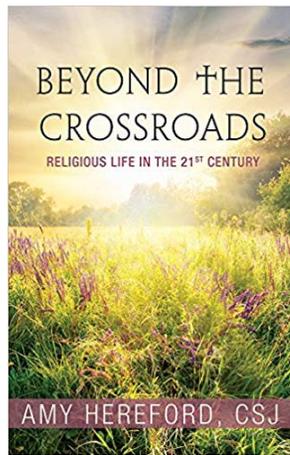
As always, feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance to you and your community.

Be safe! and let's hold one another in prayer.

Sincerely,

Amy Hereford

[Printable Newsletter](#)



Copyright © 2020 Religious Law and Consultation, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

