On August 11, 2020, the Province of St. Clare faced the reality of changing demographics and transitioned into the St. Clare Regional Community. This transitus ... this transition ... opened up greater opportunities for the community, commonly known as the Wheaton Franciscans, to explore what God is calling us to NOW! In a world that has been severely impacted by COVID-19 that has created challenges in every aspect of our lives, including how we are able to gather... In a world that is suffering from racial injustice and climate injustice bred from indifference and greed ... how are we called today?

October 1—5, 2020, the Wheaton Franciscan Community of Sisters and Covenant Companions met to pray together, share together, and explore together this call. It was the first REGIONAL Community Assembly.

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From August through September, the Sisters took care of business ... discerning a new leadership team, affirming new recommendations for governance, and renewing bylaws and statutes to meet these new times.

With business taken care of, we gathered as the Wheaton Franciscan Community, vowed members and covenant companions, in our collective role of inspiring, supporting, and fostering the ongoing evolution of our new St. Clare Regional Community.

Together we developed and affirmed our vision ... our prayer ... for how we choose to live, work, and be in our world today.

The St. Clare Regional Assembly took place over our Franciscan Feast days. On Saturday evening, October 3, we gathered over Zoom for a lovely Transitus service that included stunning images along with the story of the transitus of St. Francis.

On Sunday, October 4, we celebrated a joyful livestream liturgy for the Feast of St. Francis. On Monday, October 5, we celebrated the Feast of Mother Clara Pfaender, the foundress of our Congregation of Franciscan Sisters (and Brothers) of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. This liturgical celebration officially welcomed and blessed our new Regional Leadership Team.

Many, many people help to make a gathering such as this possible, and we are deeply grateful for each person, on the screen and behind the scenes.

We are also deeply grateful for your prayers and support.

As Sr. Alice said in her reflection on the Feast of St. Francis, “With our whole being... our eyes, our ears, and our hands, with our minds, our hearts, and our entire lives...we take this first next step into the unknown.

New Regional Leadership Team left to right: Srs. Glenna Czachor, Melanie Paradis (regional directress), and Rose Mary Pint.