Welcome New Covenant Companions

On Sunday, September 19, the Wheaton Franciscans joyfully welcomed four new covenant companions into our community. Ida and John Kelsey and Sharon and John Niemet began their journey in September 2018 when they started the two-year Exploring the Franciscan Way of Life program. At that time, they did not foresee it leading to a formal commitment with the Wheaton Franciscans as covenant companions. Three years later, despite a global pandemic, Ida, John, Sharon, and John stood before God and the community and made their formal and public commitment to the Way and Life of Covenant Companionship.

The community of vowed sisters, covenant companions, friends, and family joyfully welcomed each of them into the St. Clare Regional Community. We hope you enjoy some of the photo highlights of this special occasion.

Covenant Companionship is a way of belonging to the Wheaton Franciscan community through a public and formal commitment.

The Way of Life of Covenant Companionship is to share in and live out the spirit and life of the Wheaton Franciscan charism within one’s own vocational call and lifestyle so that together we might BE peace, transformation, hope, and healing in our world.

Covenant companions choose to make a formal commitment to embody the charism and mission after a period of study and discernment.
On our part, we, the Wheaton Franciscan Community, agree to:
1. share our prayer and spiritual journey and to provide companionship and support on her/his spiritual journey;
2. affirm and encourage the Covenant Companions commitment to The Way and Life of Covenant Companionship with the Wheaton Franciscans and to live the Intention and Values of Covenant Companionship;
3. share information and communication as appropriate;
4. extend invitations as appropriate to gatherings, liturgies, meetings, and events.

ALL Covenant Companions commit to:
1. The Way and the Life of Covenant Companionship with the Wheaton Franciscans;
2. embrace the Intention Statement for Covenant Companionship by sharing in and living out the Wheaton Franciscan charism;
3. incorporate the Values of Covenant Companionship one’s life:
   - living with respectful mutuality
   - taking personal responsibility
   - deepening my spiritual life
   - sharing in the spirit and life of the Wheaton Franciscan community
   - being present to one another
   - living in simplicity
   - integrating contemplation and action
4. engage in an annual reflection for living as a Covenant Companion.
Ida Kelsey - I honor my personal call by:
1. Serving my parish by active participation in the Adult Faith Formation committee.
2. Continuing service to those in need through St. Vincent de Paul as a home visitor.
3. Continuing to discover how to best live out the Franciscan Way and especially the charism of Mother Clara as it applies to my vocation of marriage, my relationships with family and friends, and all of my daily encounters.
4. Continuing to explore my own spiritual growth by engaging a spiritual director and by participating with the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters and Covenant Companions in the many prayer and learning opportunities.

John Kelsey - I honor my personal call by:
1. Continuing active involvement with The Society of St. Vincent de Paul.
2. Continuing active involvement with worship, spiritual growth, and service at my parish.
3. Becoming actively involved with the Laudato Si’ Action Platform initiatives at the local level.
4. Living the Franciscan Way in my love and care for my wife, family, friends, and all persons I encounter.
5. Increasing my dedication to listening, contemplating, and pondering the wonders of God’s creation.

John Niemet - I honor my personal call by:
1. Witnessing to Christ daily, returning only true blessings in the face of trials and difficulties.
2. Benefiting from all that is good for humanity, by becoming spiritually detached from temporal goods.
3. Protecting the peace that dwells in my heart, by continually speaking peace to all.

Sharon Niemet - I honor my personal call by:
1. Deeper learning: Continue to learn and embrace the Franciscan concepts of incarnation, community, and humility and apply them to my daily life and relationships.
2. Gift sharing: As called and needed, humbly share my gifts of writing, analytical thinking, laughter, and encouraging people.
3. Committed serving: Continue my volunteer work with the unemployed and LGBTQ+ community while opening my life and heart to other opportunities to be a blessing in the heart of the world.
Patio Reception

When the surge of COVID 19 cases forced the continued closure of the Motherhouse, the Covenant Companionship Leadership Circle (CCLC) was not deterred. The CCLC hosted a reception following the ceremony outside of entrance #7 for all Sisters and Covenant Companions.

The CCLC serves as the coordinating group responsible for supporting and fostering the Wheaton Franciscan Covenant Companionship way of life.