

Summary of Presidential Address

We have lived through so much, as individuals, as an organization, and as a world. The pandemic challenged us. In all that we went through, grace was with us. Grace continues to be with us. Before the pandemic, the board met in DC and asked challenging questions about the future of USCMA and its work. Board members then reached out to listen to members' concerns and hopes for the USCMA. One troubling response was members who saw themselves as recipients of services but not active members participating and creating.

The board hired Bob McCarty to guide the organization through either dissolution – which seemed a very real possibility - or a necessary restructuring process. In March 2022, after much reflection and deep, honest conversations, the board decided that USCMA is a viable association with a mission in the church and with God's people, composed the new mission statement, and developed a restructuring plan that included Town Hall meetings to engage the membership in a synodal process.

“For the vision still has time, presses on to fulfillment and will not disappoint.” (Habakkuk 2)

We are shifting from a world of ministry silos to collaboration. As Ilia Delio writes in her book: *Christ in Evolution*: “Christ is the power of God among us, the fullness of the earth and of life in the universe. We humans have the potential to make Christ alive; it is what we are created for... If we allow the Spirit to really take hold of us and liberate us from our fears, anxieties, demands, and desire for power and control, then we truly seek the living among the dead; we can live in the Risen Christ who empowers us to build this new creation.”

God has placed God's trust and confidence in us, that is why we are here. Can we correspond to God's trust and confidence? Do we believe in the grace being poured out on us at these times?

Let us, faith leaders, joined together as members of the USCMA, contribute to this new creation with passion, endurance, and love. When we leave, we will see flames of fire on top of your heads as we send you forth. God bless you all.

*Presented by Sr. Nancy Schramm, OSF at USCMA 2022 Convention
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