Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Women’s Institutes in the United States (shortened) = CMSW = CMSWR and LCWR

The beginnings of CMSW go back to 1952 when the first world congress of mothers general was held in Rome. As a result of this meeting, on November 1956, 235 major superiors met in Chicago and development of CMSW in the United States was formulated. By 1962 the conference received papal approval. The specific function of the conference was: “to strive that the theological, juridical, and apostolic principles of religious life be more fully understood and that the proper religious and apostolic formation be given to those who are bound by it.” In 1966 the “Sisters’ Survey”, composed of 649 questions, went out to nearly 400 congregations numbering over 130,000 individual sisters. It focused on the process of renewal and adaptation according to the mind of the Church. (A copy is on display in Heritage Display Room)

CMSWR = In 1971 a division emerged in CNSW when its name was changed to LCWR, Leadership Conference of Women Religious. A group, called Consortium Perfectae Caritatis, expressed concern that LCWR was turning towards secular and political interests and as supporting dissent from the Church’s teaching. Thus, in 1992 this smaller group with a more traditional view of religious life, was officially founded as the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, CMSWR, receiving Vatican approval in 1995. Our Congregation belongs to CMSWR.

NCHC = National Coalition on Health Care

NCHC grew out of the New Covenant process in the late eighties and was made up of Bishops, Sponsors and System leadership. They met several times a year to discuss common issues around health care and the emergence of collaborative ventures. In the beginning Sister Laura Wolf represented CMSWR on the coalition and eventually chaired the Coalition.

CRS = Catholic Relief Services

Founded as War Relief Services, the agency’s purpose was to aid refugees of war-torn Europe. Events in the mid 1950s — the continuing support of the American Catholic community and the availability of food and financial resources from the U.S. Government — helped CRS expand operations. Its name was changed to Catholic Relief Services in 1955. Certification cards date our membership to 1955. Operation Rice Bowl is the official program of CRS.
Franciscan Federation

The day was November 29, Feast of all Franciscan Saints; the year — 1965. Sixteen Franciscan sisters met in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Three months later Mother Viola Leininger a Millvale Franciscan wrote: The Holy See...has given encouragement and approval to groups who have collaborated in restoring the distinctive spirit of their founder. The results are so encouraging that we feel other members of our Franciscan family will want to be part of this effort. Notes from our archive records state: Mother Agna Beller and Sister Henriella Emde attended the “pre-federation” organizational meeting on November 12, 1966 at Mt. Alvernia, Millvale, PA. Our Community became charter members of the new Federation. (1966 Christmas Letter of Mother Agna)

1968: Go To My Brethren—first document produced—focused on St. Francis’s conversion and way of life of “penance”. In 1981 Brothers were welcomed and the name changed to The Franciscan Federation Third Order Regular of the Sisters and Brothers of the United States, better known as Franciscan Federation. In July 1982 workshops were organized on the proposed Rule of the Third Order Regular...”Roots and Wings”. On December 8th 1982 Pope John Paul II gave his approval to the up-dated Rule with the Brief Franciscanum Vitae Propositum - the project of Franciscan life...publication in English. In 1985 A Vision of Franciscan peacemaking was ratified. In 1993-94 the National Board issued a Response to the Lineamenta in Light of the 1994 Synod...on Consecrated life. Today the vision remains: “to deepen the understanding and love of the Third Order Regular Charism in our lives in order to share this gift in the Church and in the world. See monthly Musings, with contributions by our Sisters. In 2016 the Federation celebrated its 50th Jubilee! Our Guitar Outreach group provided music for the liturgical celebration in Milwaukee!! Our congregation belongs to Region IV. This is a very brief explanation of all that the Federation is involved in. See a copy of their 50 Year History Publication in the Heritage Display room. Copies of the above documents are available if you would like one.

IFC-TOR = International Franciscan Conference—Third Order Regular

After the Second Vatican Council’s call to religious congregations to return to their roots and charisms, communities discovered that the basic Rule given them had little Franciscan inspiration. As a result, a new Rule was approved by John Paul II in 1982. Communities of diverse charisms, following the TOR Rule, established IFC-TOR to ensure the continuation of their common bond of Franciscan heritage. On May 6, 1989 the IFC-TOR was recognized by the Congregation for the Institutes of the Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL). To consolidate their bonds and their shared Franciscan spirituality a school for Franciscan formation and the publication of PROPOSITUM were established. The 2009 General Assembly chose to concentrate on the publication of PROPOSITUM as a medium for formation. It reflects upon the significance of the vows, how they are perceived, as well as the basic founding values of the Rule of the Third Order Regular. In 2009 Sr. Louise Hembrecht was a member of the Council (on far left). Brothers and sisters of various diverse cultures, including several of our Sisters, have made contributions to these studies. The objective is to help us/others to understand how the evangelical counsels can serve as a presence to inspire and invite young people to want to live their vows as a new form of consecrated life, based on the TOR Franciscan charism. As of June 2014 Propositum is now published on the IFC-TOR website. AIM: To foster Franciscan life and spirituality in harmony with the spirit and content of the Rule and its fundamental values which are based on the Gospel and in accordance with the teachings of the Church. The TAU series is also published by the Franciscan Federation, TOR/USA 1983.