

Brief History of Companion Relationship

The idea of looking into different models of membership with the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration goes back to 1983. At that time, a committee of Sisters investigated Associates of other Religious Communities and worked diligently on the process, forms, and applications and made a brochure (that we still use.) One of the first recommendations was to change the name from “Associate” to “Companion,” which comes from the Latin “cum panis” meaning “with bread.” The symbol of shared bread on a journey has come to be our logo and represents our mutuality of experience.

By April 1988 the first Companions had applied, namely Jan Palsgrove and Helen Mitchell; thereafter, the number grew rapidly. By the end of that year there were 13 Companions and three years later there were 56 Companions. With the rapid increase, the Companions were divided into four regions and Coordinators appointed for each: Sisters Barbara Ann and Bernice for Nebraska; Sister Macrina and Jeannette Marie for Denver; and Sister Josephine for Colorado Springs and New Mexico.

In 1998 Sister Margaret Mary Preister was appointed Director of Companions to provide central organization, based at Mount Saint Francis. Four years later Monica Lichtenberger, a Companion from Colorado Springs, was hired as Assistant Director. Now in 2004, there are 71 Companions in five regions.

Any person, 18 years and older (man, woman, married, single, Catholic, non-Catholic) who wishes to be more deeply associated with the Sisters of St. Francis are eligible.

Companionship is an experience of mutuality. Companions offer the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration of Colorado Springs a broader base of support, shared faith and Gospel vision. The Sisters offer the Companions the opportunity to deepen their prayer life, the bonds of friendship and mutual support. After a time of preparation, the Companion makes a commitment to be faithful in prayer, live the Gospel and the Franciscan values in mutual relationship with the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration.

Sister Margaret Mary Preister resigned and on November 1, 2006, Sister Michelle Micek too over the position as Director of Companions.