

IHM Direction Statement 2018-2022
Reflection and Discussion for Associates #4
We.....Embrace our Giftedness and Vulnerability



IHM Direction Statement

We, Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Associates, rooted in God and the Gospel, search for prophetic ways to live our vowed and committed life in a world hungering for justice and meaning. We steep ourselves in prayer and contemplation, delve deeply into our brokenness and shadow, and embrace our giftedness and vulnerability, as we share in a life of radical interdependence. On fire with the passion to love unconditionally, we desire to be in the midst of the pain of our world and join with others in seeing and being the light that shines through the cracks of broken hearts. We use imagination, creativity, and fresh thinking to bring about God's dream for our beautiful, yet wounded world.

Our IHM Direction Statement presents numerous challenges. It calls us to nurture and offer our gifts as well as embrace and deal with our vulnerabilities. This provides us with both affirmation and challenge as we strive to be faithful disciples.

“This phrase.....offers us the grace to use our God-given gifts to the fullest, to nurture them, to be blessed in them as we bless others.Embracing our vulnerabilities, being willing to experience rejection for the sake of the Kingdom brings us closer to Jesus as His disciples.”

Song: *Mary Did You Know*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mN70R-3ao0U>

Read - Pray - Reflect on these Scripture passages.

The following Scripture passages offer inspired messages for reflection and discussion about how our strengths and struggles need to be used and expressed in our lives.

Parable of the Lamp - Luke 8:16

“No one who lights a lamp conceals it with a vessel, or sets it under a bed; rather, he places it on a lampstand so that those who enter may see the light.”

Consider all the ways that God works through you when you would rather conceal your gifts. People and situations often call you to bring them forth and share them in ways that bring light and life to others.

When have you been challenged to let your light shine? In what ways was the challenge beneficial to you and others?

Parable of the Talents – Matthew 5:20

“The one whom had received five talents came forward bringing an additional five. He said, ‘Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.’”

God has blessed us with many gifts. He gives us the grace to use and nurture them. We are often challenged to increase our gifts in new and unexpected ways.

Name some of your gifts. Share ways that you have developed additional ones as the circumstances of your life have changed.

Peter's Confession About Jesus - Mark 8:27

“Now Jesus and his disciples set out for the village of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

Jesus was forming a community with his disciples. As they traveled from one town to another, he felt he could ask them how people perceived his identity.

Consider a time when you have felt vulnerable and wondered how people with whom you live or minister to perceived you. To whom were you able to talk with about this?

The Agony in the Garden - Matthew 26: 36-38

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.” He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, “My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Remain here and keep watch with me.”

In his humanity, Jesus felt sorrow, distress and even rejection. He turned to his Father in prayer and needed the accompanying support of his disciples.

When have you endured (and embraced) times of vulnerability in your life. What did you do? To whom did you turn for support?

Attuning to the Spirit:

How has your reflection on these Scripture passages been a source of hope as you embrace your gifts and are sustained in your times of vulnerability?

In what ways do you affirm the gifts of others and support them in times of struggle?

Our Direction Statement assists us in being disciples who realize our gifts can take us *places* where we may not want to go, where our voice is not appreciated or our strengths not utilized. Likewise, expressing what our heart reveals can be frightening and emotionally draining. This is when we find it challenging to embrace what God asks of us.

Jesus emphasized the importance of using our gifts in order to be a shining light of faith, hope and love for others. His humanity also portrayed times when vulnerability was expressed. Being able to do this with trusted friends is also a gift to be shared.

Reflect and Share:

- *Name some of your gifts and ways in which you share them with others.*
- *In what ways do you experience your vulnerability and with whom do you express it?*

Sending Forth

Our prayers become life-giving when we open our hearts to God's grace and transformation. Let us strive to interact authentically and honestly with others, respecting diverse opinions.

Song: We Are Called

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDljPsRIryo>