

together

INTERCONGREGATIONAL | INTERCULTURAL | INTERGENERATIONAL



TOGETHER IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

How is *Together* engaged as a program during the time of pandemic?

On August 17 of this year, CTU announced that all classes for the Fall Term would be conducted online. This decision was made to protect the CTU community from the spread of the Coronavirus. As a result, members of the *Together* Program were discouraged from moving to campus for this semester. Due to individual circumstances, one member of *Together* decided to reside on the seventh floor of 5401, while the other two women chose to remain living with their religious congregations. The three participants in *Together* are introduced below.

Sr. Haerok Na, a Sister of Charity of Seton Hill, is a member of the Korean Province. This is Haerok's second year in CTU's Master of Arts in Spiritual Ministry. Haerok is complementing this degree by participating in the Spiritual Direction Internship Program at the Claret Center. Haerok resides in the *Together* wing on the seventh floor of CTU.

Sr. Jane Aseltyne is a second-year professed member of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM), of Monroe,

Michigan. While living in community with other IHM Sisters in Riverview, Michigan, Jane has begun her second semester in the Master of Arts in Theology.

Sr. Nicole Varnerin is a third-year professed Sister of Notre Dame (SND), whose motherhouse is in Chardon, Ohio. This semester, Nicole has begun her Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies while living with other members of her community in Cleveland, Ohio.

In addition to studying theology at CTU, two other significant dimensions of *Together* are building supportive relationships while living in community and participating in formative experiences that will foster both personal and communal growth. As a result of CTU's decision to conduct all courses online this semester, several adaptations have been made to the Program.

On Monday evenings, Haerok, Jane and Nicole "hang out" in a Zoom session, at a time of their choosing. This provides the three women with the opportunity to engage in conversations that might normally happen in the *Together* lounge at the end of a day of study. Then on Thursday evenings from 6:15 – 8:15 PM (CST) the three *Together* participants and Maribeth Howell,

OP (Program Coordinator) have another session on Zoom. Our Thursday evenings alternate between having a "guest" join the group for input and discussion one week, and the four women sharing prayer and conversation the next. This semester's topics and guests are:

"Praying with the Psalms" - Maribeth Howell, OP

"Discipleship in the Gospels" - Donald Senior, CP

"Reflection on the Visitation" - Barbara Reid, OP

"Dealing with Stress" - Mariane Fahlman, OP

"Introduction to Theological Reflection" - Joye Gros, OP

"Advent Reflection" - Maribeth Howell, OP

The group regularly discusses how our Thursday evenings meet the desires and needs of *Together* participants. If changes are desired, we will adapt our schedule to better engage the women in *Together*. Invitations are in the process of being sent to possible guests for second semester.

(continued on next page)

TOGETHER

On October 12, Mark Francis, CSV, President of CTU, announced that CTU would continue to offer its classes online during the Spring Semester, May Term, and Summer. This decision was reached after consultation with the CTU faculty and students, and after additional consultation with the CTU Leadership Council.

What is the *Together* Program?

Together is a unique Program designed for newer members of religious life. It is currently co-sponsored by the Religious Formation Conference and Catholic Theological Union. The purpose of *Together* is to provide a place

where these newer members can not only live, but thrive in their commitment to community, to study, and on-going formation. Ordinarily, participants in *Together* share a common life in one wing of the seventh floor of CTU's residence. Each participant has a private room and bath, while sharing a kitchen and lounge with one another.

How does one become a participant in the *Together* Program?

If you are interested in exploring the possibility of having one of the "newer" members of your Congregation join *Together* for Fall Semester of 2021, please go to the

Together website at www.together-formation.com. Go to "apply" and you will see three pdf documents that you can complete and submit to the Program co-ordinator, Maribeth Howell, OP. Or, for additional information, please send an email to mhowell@relforcon.org.

While we are all living in uncertainty these months, we pray that the Covid virus will soon be under control. Once restrictions on travel are lifted, we would be delighted to arrange for you to visit CTU and RFC.

Blessings,

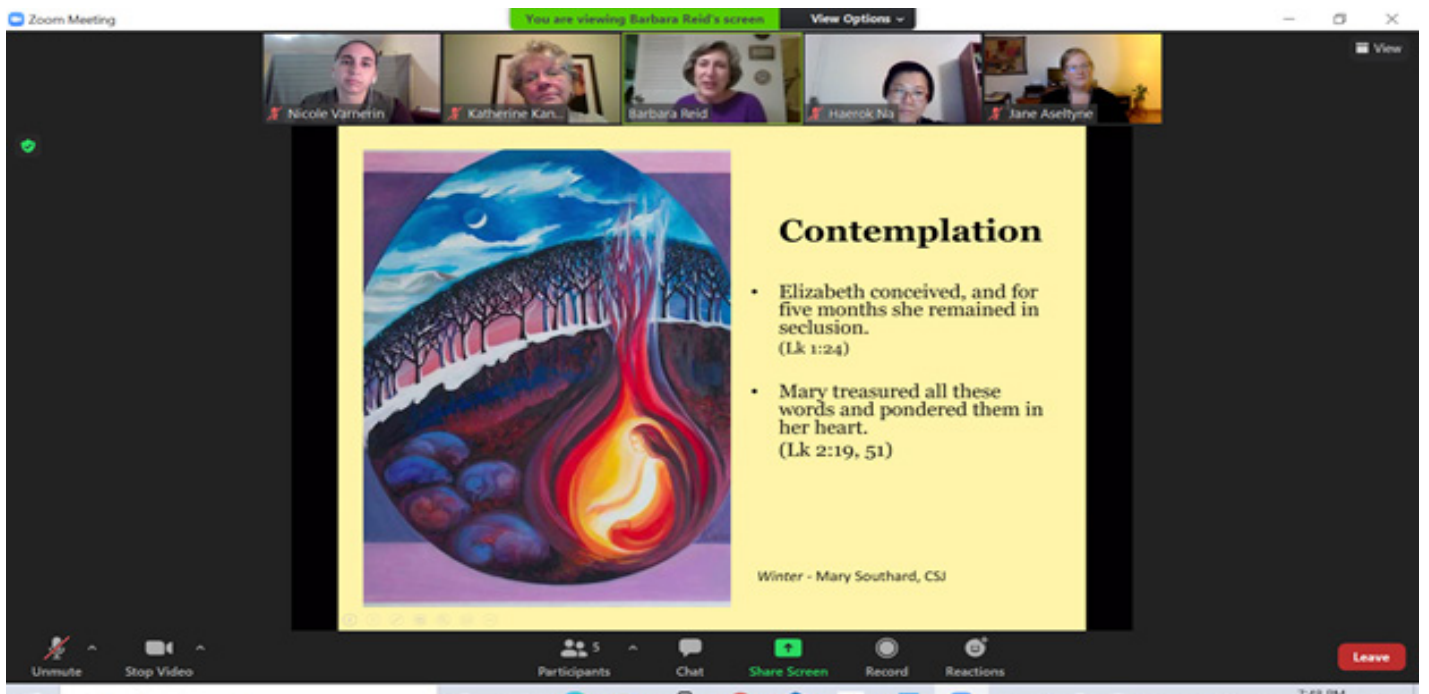
Maribeth Howell, OP, PhD, STD
Together Program Coordinator



You are invited to join us for a **virtual information session** on **Thursday, November 12th at 1:00pm**. Prospective participants, formators, community leaders and others will have the opportunity to ask questions about CTU's academic programs, the formation component of the program, and living as community.

Visit www.relforcon.org to register.

Recently *Together* participants enjoyed an evening of reflection with **Sister Barbara Reid, OP** as part of the formation component of the program (pictures below).



**Collaborative partnership sponsored by Catholic Theological Union
and the Religious Formation Conference**



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Questions? Please reach out.

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