

Marie's Gift Proposal

Names: Gloria Mog, Carmela Ormando, Nancy Veldhuis

Requesting \$27,000

Proposal: To provide seed money to host a **Bi-Annual Conference** in Northern Virginia that features progressive Catholic (or non-Catholic) thinkers/theologians/movers and shakers as speakers. It is our hope that the Conference would be co-sponsored by other area IECs. A vote of interest was taken at the last IEC regional meeting and several IECs expressed interest in the project.

We believe creating a space to learn, reflect, and share ideas relevant to new visions for our Church, our Community and our world is a service to all believers and especially those willing to go beyond the boundaries of traditional ways. We seek to bring more progressive Catholic thinking into the Diocese and DC Metro area and provide a network of mutually supportive and experiential learning opportunities with other IECs. It may also lead to collaboration opportunities with other like-minded organizations such as Women's Ordination Conference, Call to Action, Dignity, WATER, etc. Additionally, the Conference is an opportunity to highlight the presence of NOVA and other IECs in the area. This could be helpful in the recruitment of new members as well as the diversification of our membership.

Initial thoughts on the format of the Conference are that it would begin on a Friday evening with a major keynote address by the featured speaker. It would then run all-day Saturday and might include opportunities for prayer, reflection, journaling, small group discussion, etc. led by the same speaker. It might conclude late Saturday afternoon with a Community Led Liturgy demonstrating the worship style of NOVA and other IECs. We would hope to attract major speakers such as Joan Chittister, Edwina Gately, Parker Palmer, Ken Himes, etc. Scheduling the Conference during Lent might further attract those looking for a mini-retreat or Day of Reflection experience. Speakers and venues would probably need to be contracted 2 years in advance. We might also decide to start with a smaller conference and lesser known speaker in order to test the concept without investing as much. Target date for first gathering could be Spring of 2018. Some possible names for such a recurring conference might be: "Callings", "Gatherings", "Speak Out", "Reflections", etc.

There would be a reasonable Registration fee with serious discounts for students and those unable to afford the full fee. A goal would eventually be to cover the costs of the Conference with the registration fees, but that may take a while to achieve. The money would be administered by a Conference Committee established within NOVA. A separate Conference bank account may be the best way to handle the funds. Knowing that a Conference of this size involves a good deal of work and know-how, we propose hiring a professional Conference Planner who can meet with the Committee and carry out its wishes regarding venue booking, speaker liaison, marketing, set-up, etc.

Participants would be asked to evaluate their experience at the end of the Conference. Attendance numbers as well as evaluation ratings would provide measures of success.

Rough Budget Draft for Proposed Conference

Expenses:

Conference Planner

(Proposal received from 1 Planner was \$7,000) \$5,000

Speaker (honorarium, hotel, airfare) \$5,000

Marketing materials \$1,500

Venue (church, school, university, non-profit setting) \$1,200

Refreshments \$ 300

Miscellaneous \$ 500

Total: \$13,500

Income:

Registration (100 X \$100) \$10,000

Obviously, the more people we attract, the more expenses are covered and even a small profit earned to replenish the Fund. Figures given reflect approximations based on similar conferences. Some things could be scaled down depending on volunteer help available, etc.