

Sisters of St Joseph, Lochinvar 13TH GENERAL CHAPTER

DAY THREE —Report

We began with prayer on the theme of Saint Teresa of Avila whose feast is today. The prayer, led by Louise Gannon, brought among us a woman whose love for God summoned her to extraordinary, energetic administration in her Congregation and to extraordinary union with God in contemplation, a union unfolded in her writing.



Carmel Moore shared a moving reflection on various aspects of Teresa's life, summoning us to see her as a whole, and calling us to live as women consecrated to God. Carmel reminded us that it was Teresa's words on Saint Joseph, which Julian read as a Passionist novice, which gave his love for Saint Joseph a new depth and influenced his entire life. Later, he dedicated his first church to Saint Joseph (Penola), and another to Saint Teresa (Mount Gambier). Jeannine French led us in singing Teresa's words, 'Nothing can trouble or frighten. God alone fills us'.

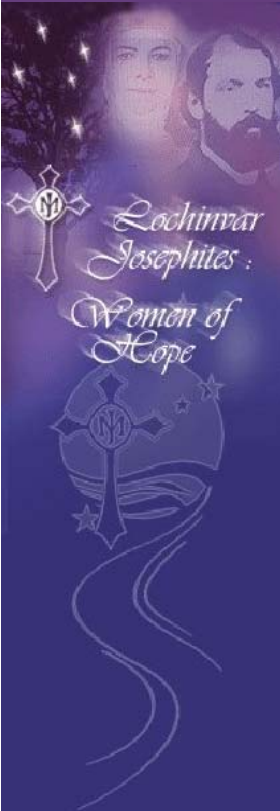
[Click here to view Prayer](#)

We accepted a collated statement of our commitment as to how we shall interact in this Chapter, aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in each sister and the group.



We searched our answers to 'what do we stand for?' There was a strong sense of affirming the direction given in our Constitutions, as well as needing to be more specific about the call of 'now'. We sought to focus on material that is :

- Inspiring and pointing to the future.
- Needs ongoing reflection.
- Needs practical decisions in the Chapter.



DAY THREE—Report cont....

There was a real struggle to articulate a specific sense of our call, but, as one group suggested, there was a positive energy in the struggle. We felt that a clear awareness was still coming to birth in us. At one stage our youthful-minded eldest Chapter member, 83 years old, commented, 'I'm thinking of Jesus', and before she went on to tell us the specific aspect of Jesus she was thinking of, she added with a smile, 'I often think of Him.'

We moved into discernment on three significant issues:

- Future membership
- Connections with other Josephite congregations
- Networking with other people with a Josephite spirit.

We gave time to a creative, prayerful process to present and sift our convictions and insights. We listened carefully to divergent views.

At one stage when we looked very serious, Laretta Baker invited us to share a couple of jokes which gave us a good laugh.

We ended with a hymn focusing on the presence of God –
'In our living and our dying
We are bringing You to birth.'



The view from Monte Pio—Venue for today's Chapter

Comments during tea breaks

'I feel relieved that we've come to some practical stuff.' 'I've recognized that now we are talking both practically and at another level – the level of our heart's longings.'

'I'm enjoying the process.'

'It's good.'

'I'm finding it demanding and I'm tired.'

'It's going well, but we're into the nitty-gritty, and it's not easy.'

'I've enjoyed it. Our group came to an outcome I was really happy with – and it was different from what I started with.'

