2016 Chapter Visioning Statement
“That all may be one...” (Jn. 17:21)

Broadening the involvement of members through the structures we have been developing as well as new structures as yet unknown.

Opening up inter-faith conversations and collaborative efforts.

Partnering among ourselves (leaders to members, members to leaders) and among members and companions in mission.

Enlivening consecrated religious life through solidarity with other women religious.

Respond to the call to expand our boundaries, to strengthen our relationships and to foster mutual partnerships among ourselves, in the Church, and with others in our world by:

Respond to the signs of the times and continue to seek out the needs of people, by dividing the city and serving the dear neighbor without distinction by:

Stimulated by the Holy Spirit and conscious of the aching, gaping needs of our wounded world, we pledge ourselves to grow and deepen our identity as the Congregation of the Great Love of God. We long to participate in the Mission of Jesus, a mission of generous courage and self-emptying love, in joyful service to the dear neighbor without distinction. Individually and communally, we pray for the grace to:

Renewing our sense of “being called and sent” in the name of the congregation.

Creating ways for all sisters to take personal responsibility and action.

Partnering with other religious congregations to address unmet needs.

Igniting our ministerial passion to inspire and enhance our creative response to ministry.

Expanding our understanding and efforts to address issues of ecological justice and care for our common home.

Supporting the spiritual and ministerial mission of women religious, within and beyond our borders.

Expanding and enhancing our charism of unity and reconciliation through the programs and structures that currently exist and those that may develop.

Enhancing and supporting formation in the CSJ charism through programs and opportunities open to our own members and to those beyond vowed membership using our human, financial, material and technological resources.

Witness joyfully to God’s abundant love through the quality of presence we bring to one another in community and to those with whom we minister and live by:

Addressing cultures of prejudice, racism, divisive language and behaviors against any who suffer discrimination.

Continuing to develop the CARE skills among ourselves and with others, in order to build trust and respect, to do the needed grief work, to heal, reconcile and to create bonds of mutuality that endure.

In and through these actions, we pray that we might continue to respond to God’s abundant love by living out our life “with one desire only: to be always what God wants us to be, in nature, grace, and glory for time and for eternity.” (Maxim 73)

Vigil of Pentecost, May 14, 2016
A Vision Statement that Resonates

All Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange contributed to the Vision Statement for 2016-2021. The statement echoes the heart of the congregation and serves as a guide for action already underway and to be taken in the next few years. Below, General Council members share thoughts about a few of the statement’s elements.

Animate the Charism

The charism - a gift from God of reconciling and inclusive love - is not on paper. It's action. If it remains only a document or text for prayer, then it's not the charism anymore. We need to keep asking the question about what we're called to be and do.

Any one sister, wherever they are, can spread inclusive love and make the charism come alive wherever they are. All of us can do that; be a visible expression of reconciling, inclusive love.

Equally important is to be able to recognize the charism in others and encourage them to use it as a lens to guide the way they live and minister in the world. Many women and men are attracted to our charism of reconciling, inclusive love. Part of our work is to continue our legacy of formation in the charism in our current ministries and in new and evolving works.

Animating the charism means that who we are, what we do and why we do it flows from our charism of unioning love. It is through our individual and communal thoughts and actions that our charism comes alive within ourselves and among the people with whom we are engaged.

It means looking with a critical eye to the needs of our neighborhood, our world, and working with others to determine how best to respond to these needs given our call to be good and faithful stewards.

As Sisters of St. Joseph, one of our strengths is bringing people together from all walks of life in order to break down barriers that divide us. We are steadfast in our belief that there is more that unites us as brothers and sisters to one another than what divides us.

Expand Our Boundaries

Expanding boundaries means moving toward inclusiveness for all. It can be pushing beyond our own comfort zone. Where is it that our charism is needed? It might take us to avenues that we've never been to before.

It's about the more. If you get to the edges of the horizon, there's always a new horizon. Expanding our boundaries is always opening our arms to embrace.

Fear is never the reason to not try something. It may be with me, but it won't stop me because there is something stronger. Perfect love conquers all fears.

Our desire is to join with others in addressing the enormous needs and woundedness in our world. Pope Francis, Bishop Kevin Vann, the leadership of LCWR and other Catholic organizations are modeling this same desire to bring people together to talk about and address the suffering in our world and in our neighborhoods.

Mutual collaboration is the only path to successfully serve the “dear neighbor without distinction” and to assure the ongoing influence of the charism in our world.

Witness Joyfully to God’s Abundant Love

Each of the key words in that phrase is jam-packed with meaning. I strive to be self-emptied so God’s immense joy and unconditional love is experienced by those I encounter. Yet, even my short comings don’t limit God’s ability to love. I will continue working for unity and embracing the good in each person, and know that God will do the rest.

Pope Francis calls us to be joyful people, not sourpusses. You are bringing the message of God...shouldn’t you be happy? Focus on the joyful love of God has been a tradition in our community. We choose to be joyful in whatever circumstance we find ourselves. Gratitude leads to joy, and if you are joyful, it communicates itself and people ask questions.

At the heart of who we are as Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange is the joyful love of God. We are women in love with God, the Church and the world. Our joy flows from our grounding in our relationship with God and with one another.