



# FROM THE CIRCLE

*A monthly letter for  
contemplative leadership  
in times of change*

OCTOBER 2026

## What Is Ours to Carry?

*The faithful work of  
keeping and releasing*

**T**here is a time to keep, and a time to cast away.  
Ecclesiastes 3:6

Leadership asks us to hold many things with gratitude.

But it also asks us to know the hard truth:

Not everything we have carried was meant to come with us forever.

Honoring something does not require preserving its form forever.

**What gifts have we received?**

**What must we carry forward?**

**What can we bless and leave behind?**



A time to keep, and a time to cast away;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain.

— ECCLESIASTES 3:6





## RUTH AT THE THRESHOLD

Ruth 1:1–18

**R**uth stood at a threshold.  
Behind her was a life she knew.  
A people, a home, and a future  
that could have been.

Before her was uncertainty.

Naomi did not hold on to Ruth.

She gave her permission to return.

But Ruth chose a different path.

She chose what mattered most.



“Where you go I will go,  
and where you lodge  
I will lodge.  
Your people shall be  
my people, and your God  
my God.”

— RUTH 1:16

Ruth did not carry everything.  
She carried what gave life and purpose  
to who she was.

Leadership requires this same discernment.  
We cannot carry everything forward.  
But neither can we abandon what is essential.

### WHAT WE'RE NOTICING

*Honoring something does not require preserving its form forever.*

| WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED                                                                                                                     |   | WHAT WE MUST CARRY                                          |   | WHAT WE CAN BLESS AND LEAVE BEHIND                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  A mission that has shaped lives for generations.       | → | The mission and the values that give it life.               | → | The structures that once served the mission but no longer fit today. |
|  Buildings that have sheltered community and ministry. | → | The functions they carry and the people who depend on them. | → | Buildings that no longer serve those functions faithfully.           |
|  Ministries that have been signs of God's love.        | → | The charism expressed through those ministries.             | → | Ministries that have completed their time and purpose.               |
|  Ways of working that once served us well.             | → | The wisdom and relationships formed along the way.          | → | Practices that no longer serve who we are becoming.                  |

Faithful leadership distinguishes between the gift  
and the vessel that once carried the gift.





## AROUND THE TABLE

### What Is Ours to Carry?

Bring one reality before you that your community is discerning.

What have we received, what must we carry, and what can we bless and release?

The reality we are discerning: \_\_\_\_\_

1

#### WHAT HAVE WE RECEIVED?

*What gifts have been given?*



- What has this given to our community, our members, and others?
- What has been life-giving?
- What are we grateful for?

2

#### WHAT MUST WE CARRY?

*What is essential?  
What cannot be lost?*



- What is core to our mission and charism?
- What commitments or responsibilities are ours to uphold?
- What would be a betrayal to let go of?

3

#### WHAT CAN WE BLESS AND RELEASE?

*What has completed its time and purpose?*



- What no longer serves what we are now called to be?
- What can we bless, release, and let go with gratitude?
- What might be carried in a different way?

*There is grace in letting go.*

*There is freedom in faithful discernment.*





## TO CARRY WITH YOU



“

Ruth did not carry everything.  
She carried what mattered.  
Leadership asks us to do  
the same.

We are not called to hold on  
to what has already served its  
purpose.

We are called to carry forward  
what gives life.

We are called to release,  
with gratitude, what it is  
time to let go.

**There will be a time to decide.**

***Be quick to listen.***

***Be willing to bless and release.***

***And carry forward what***

***Christ is still calling us  
to become.***

”

RUTH 1:16 | ECCLESIASTES 3:6

### What Is Ours to Carry?

Something we are discerning:

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What gifts have we received?

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What must we carry forward?

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What can we bless and release?

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What is one faithful next step?

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You are not called to carry everything.  
You are called to be faithful with what  
belongs to this season.



# Learn More About Our Specialty Work

SERVING RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES



## Otwarte Circle

accompanies religious communities and LCWR regions through times of transition—creating the conditions for honest discernment, courageous decisions, and faithful next steps. Areas of expertise include:

- Temporal Affairs & Back-Office Management
- Leadership & Discernment Support
- Fractional COO & Consultation

## Sacred History Technologies

helps religious communities make their stories living, accessible, and formative. This work exists to keep the stories of women religious within reach so the legacy they carry can continue to form, guide, and live on through those who come next. Our platform serves as a vessel to protect what is sacred while illuminating what is meant to be seen.



## Elysian Acres

is a restorative hospitality house in Wisconsin where rest and renewal is the ministry. Surrounded by the quiet beauty of nature and the gentle rhythm of the water, this riverside retreat offers space for rest, reflection, prayer, and renewal. Bookings for 2027 will open within the next month.



DIFFERENT GIFTS. A SHARED MISSION.

