

## **AFFIRMATION OF LIZ'S READINESS FOR FIRST PROFESSION**

Liz, it is my privilege today to attest to your readiness to live the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience as a prophetic sign of hope in our world.

I affirm Liz's readiness to live a vowed life according to the spirit, charism and mission of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When Liz entered the IHM Congregation on March 20, 2018, she expressed a deep desire to serve God's people. And during these past three and a half years Liz has had every opportunity to do just that ... serve. Many of us have witnessed first-hand Liz's kindness to and compassion for our aging sisters, her advocacy for issues of justice and the creation of policies that uphold the rights of the most vulnerable, especially the physically and cognitively challenged at St. Joseph Center and her capacity to welcome Marywood University students of diverse cultures, religions, sexual orientations and gender identities. The list of Liz's gifts and the places where she has given service is long.

However, since her entrance day, Liz's understanding of her vocation has deepened and broadened. During her two-year novitiate, which coincided with the pandemic, Liz's desire for a more loving and intimate relationship with God became stronger with each day and each new experience. She says of that time: "I relied on God in a way I never had before.... I shared the depths of my heart ...new, painful, distressing experiences.... Spiritual direction helped me be attentive to the people and resources God puts in front of me and to the way God works in and through me."

We all know that Liz is a person who enjoys being in relationship. Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, Liz was able to form new relationships. As a novice, she studied, initially in-person and then virtually, with women and men in initial formation from various congregations. Liz chose a sister of St. Joseph from Chestnut Hill to be her spiritual director. She sought a sister of St. Joseph from Baden as well as sisters from our own IHM Congregation to mentor her. Since her entrance day, Liz has come to appreciate our IHM spirit, charism and mission and to recognize the value of being exposed to other expressions of religious life beyond the IHM Congregation.

I believe that Liz's desire to deepen her relationship with God and her willingness and eagerness to expand her circle of relationships are the fertile soil needed for the something new that is emerging in religious life. Liz brings energy and passion to religious life and a willingness to embrace change for

the sake of the mission. She is not afraid to engage in open, honest conversation with God and with us. Liz welcomes a vowed life that is intergenerational, intercultural and inter-congregational. She is ready to risk everything for God's dream.

And so, Sister Ellen, I attest to Sister Elizabeth Ann McGill's readiness to live the vowed life, as a Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and also as a sister to all women religious who, at this moment in time, desire to move boldly into the future together.