Sisters of the Valley Ministry Strategic Vision 2026

A Matriarchal Religion

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Sisters of the Valley Ministry exists to advance a modern matriarchal religious tradition rooted in service, community, stewardship, and spiritual practice. The Sisters' beliefs are rooted in the beliefs of the ancient Beguine enclaves of Northern Europe, and the Sisters refer to themselves as 'the New Beguines'. A book of their beliefs was released in 2019 called 'The Book of the New Beguines'.

The Ministry preserves and teaches the beliefs, customs, ceremonies, and communal traditions developed by the Sisters of the Valley over more than a decade of continuous operation. Through worship services, educational programs, seasonal observances, retreats, community gatherings, and spiritual guidance, the Ministry seeks to provide meaningful religious participation and support to its members and the broader public.

The Ministry's immediate focus is the development of a sustainable religious community supported through member contributions, charitable donations, educational programming, and volunteer participation. Future charitable projects, including residential sanctuary communities, will be undertaken as resources permit and as funding becomes available.

The Ministry views housing not as a stand-alone objective, but as one expression of its broader mission: creating stable, supportive communities in which individuals can experience belonging, spiritual growth, mutual aid, and personal dignity.

Two sisters preparing for the Spring Equinox fire circle ceremony (Spring, 2026)

About This Plan

This document is a strategic roadmap rather than a fixed blueprint. It reflects the Ministry's understanding, priorities, and financial assumptions at the time of publication. As experience is gained, opportunities emerge, and community needs evolve, individual programs, timelines, and financial projections will be revised accordingly.

The Ministry is committed to updating this plan periodically so that it remains an accurate reflection of its mission, stewardship, and long-term vision.

Ministry Operational Budget Forecast

Year 1 – Partial Year

	Aug-26	Sep-26	Oct-26	Nov-26	Dec-26	Year 1
Number of Monthly Contributors	**launch**	25	50	75	100	100
Monthly Contribution per Donor	**month**	$10	$10	$10	$10	
Sustaining Members	$0	$250	$500	$750	$1,000	$2,500
Expenses:						
licensing and fees	$1,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$1,000
community events & outreach						
salaries support staff / admin						
educational media & content creation						
office space / rental		these activities will be				
contingency / reserve		performed by or covered by				
grant-writing		the founders until donations				
website/tech		create funding for the positions.				
bookkeeping/legal						
travel						
retreats/fire circles						
	$1,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$1,000
Operating Surplus (Shortfall)	($1,000)	$250	$500	$750	$1,000	$1,500
Revenue Assumptions						
a. Four months after launch, we have 100 monthly donors						
b. Every month thereafter, 10% (reducing to 5%) growth in small donors						

Launching the Ministry

The Sisters of the Valley Ministry begins operations during the second half of 2026. Accordingly, Year 1 reflects the Ministry's first five months of activity (August through December) rather than a full fiscal year.

The Year 1 forecast represents the administrative launch of the Ministry, including governance, educational programming, ceremonies, community outreach, and development of a sustainable donor base.

During this initial period, many operational activities—including administration, planning, educational content, and community support—will continue to be provided by volunteer founders until recurring donations permit the gradual addition of paid staff and expanded programming.

Ministry Operational Budget Forecast

Year 2 – 2027

	Jan-27	Feb-27	Mar-27	Apr-27	May-27	Jun-27	Jul-27	Aug-27	Sep-27	Oct-27	Nov-27	Dec-27	Year2
Number of Monthly Contributors	110	121	133	146	161	177	195	214	236	259	285	314	314
Monthly Contribution per Donor	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	
Sustaining Members	$1,100	$1,210	$1,331	$1,464	$1,611	$1,772	$1,949	$2,144	$2,358	$2,594	$2,853	$3,138	$23,523
Expenses:													
licensing and fees													
community events & outreach	$198	$218	$240	$264	$290	$319	$351	$386	$424	$467	$514	$565	$4,234
salaries support staff / admin	$176	$194	$213	$234	$258	$283	$312	$343	$377	$415	$456	$502	$3,764
educational media & content creation	$132	$145	$160	$176	$193	$213	$234	$257	$283	$311	$342	$377	$2,823
office space / rental	$110	$121	$133	$146	$161	$177	$195	$214	$236	$259	$285	$314	$2,352
contingency / reserve	$77	$85	$93	$102	$113	$124	$136	$150	$165	$182	$200	$220	$1,647
grant-writing	$77	$85	$93	$102	$113	$124	$136	$150	$165	$182	$200	$220	$1,647
website/tech	$77	$85	$93	$102	$113	$124	$136	$150	$165	$182	$200	$220	$1,647
bookkeeping/legal	$55	$61	$67	$73	$81	$89	$97	$107	$118	$130	$143	$157	$1,176
travel	$55	$61	$67	$73	$81	$89	$97	$107	$118	$130	$143	$157	$1,176
retreats/fire circles	$55	$61	$67	$73	$81	$89	$97	$107	$118	$130	$143	$157	$1,176
	$1,012	$1,113	$1,225	$1,347	$1,482	$1,630	$1,793	$1,972	$2,169	$2,386	$2,625	$2,887	$21,641
Operating Surplus (Shortfall)	$88	$97	$106	$117	$129	$142	$156	$171	$189	$207	$228	$251	$5,006

Ministry Operational Budget Forecast

Year 3 – 2028

	Jan-28	Feb-28	Mar-28	Apr-28	May-28	Jun-28	Jul-28	Aug-28	Sep-28	Oct-28	Nov-28	Dec-28	Year3
Number of Monthly Contributors	345	380	418	459	505	556	612	673	740	814	895	985	985
Monthly Contribution per Donor	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	
Sustaining Members	$3,452	$3,797	$4,177	$4,595	$5,054	$5,560	$6,116	$6,727	$7,400	$8,140	$8,954	$9,850	$73,824
Expenses:													
licensing and fees													
community events & outreach	$621	$684	$752	$827	$910	$1,001	$1,101	$1,211	$1,332	$1,465	$1,612	$1,773	$13,288
salaries support staff / admin	$552	$608	$668	$735	$809	$890	$979	$1,076	$1,184	$1,302	$1,433	$1,576	$11,812
educational media & content creation	$414	$456	$501	$551	$607	$667	$734	$807	$888	$977	$1,075	$1,182	$8,859
office space / rental	$345	$380	$418	$459	$505	$556	$612	$673	$740	$814	$895	$985	$7,382
contingency / reserve	$242	$266	$292	$322	$354	$389	$428	$471	$518	$570	$627	$689	$5,168
grant-writing	$242	$266	$292	$322	$354	$389	$428	$471	$518	$570	$627	$689	$5,168
website/tech	$242	$266	$292	$322	$354	$389	$428	$471	$518	$570	$627	$689	$5,168
bookkeeping/legal	$173	$190	$209	$230	$253	$278	$306	$336	$370	$407	$448	$492	$3,691
travel	$173	$190	$209	$230	$253	$278	$306	$336	$370	$407	$448	$492	$3,691
retreats/fire circles	$173	$190	$209	$230	$253	$278	$306	$336	$370	$407	$448	$492	$3,691
	$3,176	$3,494	$3,843	$4,227	$4,650	$5,115	$5,627	$6,189	$6,808	$7,489	$8,238	$9,062	$67,918
Operating Surplus (Shortfall)	$276	$304	$334	$368	$404	$445	$489	$538	$592	$651	$716	$788	$9,040

Ministry Operational Budget Forecast

Year 4 – 2029

	growth slows to 5% per month in year 4 and 5 as other programs provide grants and foundational funding												
	Jan-29	**Feb-29**	**Mar-29**	**Apr-29**	**May-29**	**Jun-29**	**Jul-29**	**Aug-29**	**Sep-29**	**Oct-29**	**Nov-29**	**Dec-29**	**Year4**
Number of Monthly Contributors	1,034	1,086	1,140	1,197	1,257	1,320	1,386	1,455	1,528	1,604	1,685	1,769	1,769
Monthly Contribution per Donor	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	
Sustaining Members	$10,342	$10,859	$11,402	$11,972	$12,571	$13,200	$13,860	$14,553	$15,280	$16,044	$16,846	$17,689	$164,618
Expenses:													
licensing and fees													
community events & outreach	$1,862	$1,955	$2,052	$2,155	$2,263	$2,376	$2,495	$2,619	$2,750	$2,888	$3,032	$3,184	$29,631
salaries support staff / admin	$1,655	$1,737	$1,824	$1,916	$2,011	$2,112	$2,218	$2,328	$2,445	$2,567	$2,695	$2,830	$26,339
educational media & content creation	$1,241	$1,303	$1,368	$1,437	$1,509	$1,584	$1,663	$1,746	$1,834	$1,925	$2,022	$2,123	$19,754
office space / rental	$1,034	$1,086	$1,140	$1,197	$1,257	$1,320	$1,386	$1,455	$1,528	$1,604	$1,685	$1,769	$16,462
contingency / reserve	$724	$760	$798	$838	$880	$924	$970	$1,019	$1,070	$1,123	$1,179	$1,238	$11,523
grant-writing	$724	$760	$798	$838	$880	$924	$970	$1,019	$1,070	$1,123	$1,179	$1,238	$11,523
website/tech	$724	$760	$798	$838	$880	$924	$970	$1,019	$1,070	$1,123	$1,179	$1,238	$11,523
bookkeeping/legal	$517	$543	$570	$599	$629	$660	$693	$728	$764	$802	$842	$884	$8,231
travel	$517	$543	$570	$599	$629	$660	$693	$728	$764	$802	$842	$884	$8,231
retreats/fire circles	$517	$543	$570	$599	$629	$660	$693	$728	$764	$802	$842	$884	$8,231
	$9,515	$9,991	$10,490	$11,015	$11,565	$12,144	$12,751	$13,388	$14,058	$14,761	$15,499	$16,274	$151,449
Operating Surplus (Shortfall)	$827	$869	$912	$958	$1,006	$1,056	$1,109	$1,164	$1,222	$1,284	$1,348	$1,415	$19,688

Ministry Operational Budget Forecast

Year 5 – 2030

	Jan 2030	Feb 2030	Mar 2030	Apr 2030	May 2030	Jun 2030	Jul 2030	Aug 2030	Sep 2030	Oct 2030	Nov 2030	Dec 2030	Year5
Number of Monthly Contributors	1,857	1,950	2,048	2,150	2,258	2,370	2,489	2,613	2,744	2,881	3,025	3,177	3,177
Monthly Contribution per Donor	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	$10	
Donation Income	$18,573	$19,502	$20,477	$21,501	$22,576	$23,705	$24,890	$26,134	$27,441	$28,813	$30,254	$31,766	$295,631
Expenses:													
licensing and fees													
community events & outreach	$3,343	$3,510	$3,686	$3,870	$4,064	$4,267	$4,480	$4,704	$4,939	$5,186	$5,446	$5,718	$53,214
salaries support staff / admin	$2,972	$3,120	$3,276	$3,440	$3,612	$3,793	$3,982	$4,181	$4,391	$4,610	$4,841	$5,083	$47,301
educational media & content creation	$2,229	$2,340	$2,457	$2,580	$2,709	$2,845	$2,987	$3,136	$3,293	$3,458	$3,630	$3,812	$35,476
office space / rental	$1,857	$1,950	$2,048	$2,150	$2,258	$2,370	$2,489	$2,613	$2,744	$2,881	$3,025	$3,177	$29,563
contingency / reserve	$1,300	$1,365	$1,433	$1,505	$1,580	$1,659	$1,742	$1,829	$1,921	$2,017	$2,118	$2,224	$20,694
grant-writing	$1,300	$1,365	$1,433	$1,505	$1,580	$1,659	$1,742	$1,829	$1,921	$2,017	$2,118	$2,224	$20,694
website/tech	$1,300	$1,365	$1,433	$1,505	$1,580	$1,659	$1,742	$1,829	$1,921	$2,017	$2,118	$2,224	$20,694
bookkeeping/legal	$929	$975	$1,024	$1,075	$1,129	$1,185	$1,244	$1,307	$1,372	$1,441	$1,513	$1,588	$14,782
travel	$929	$975	$1,024	$1,075	$1,129	$1,185	$1,244	$1,307	$1,372	$1,441	$1,513	$1,588	$14,782
retreats/fire circles	$929	$975	$1,024	$1,075	$1,129	$1,185	$1,244	$1,307	$1,372	$1,441	$1,513	$1,588	$14,782
Total Expenses	$17,087	$17,942	$18,839	$19,781	$20,770	$21,808	$22,899	$24,044	$25,246	$26,508	$27,833	$29,225	$271,981
Operating Surplus (Shortfall)	$1,486	$1,560	$1,638	$1,720	$1,806	$1,896	$1,991	$2,091	$2,195	$2,305	$2,420	$2,541	$23,650

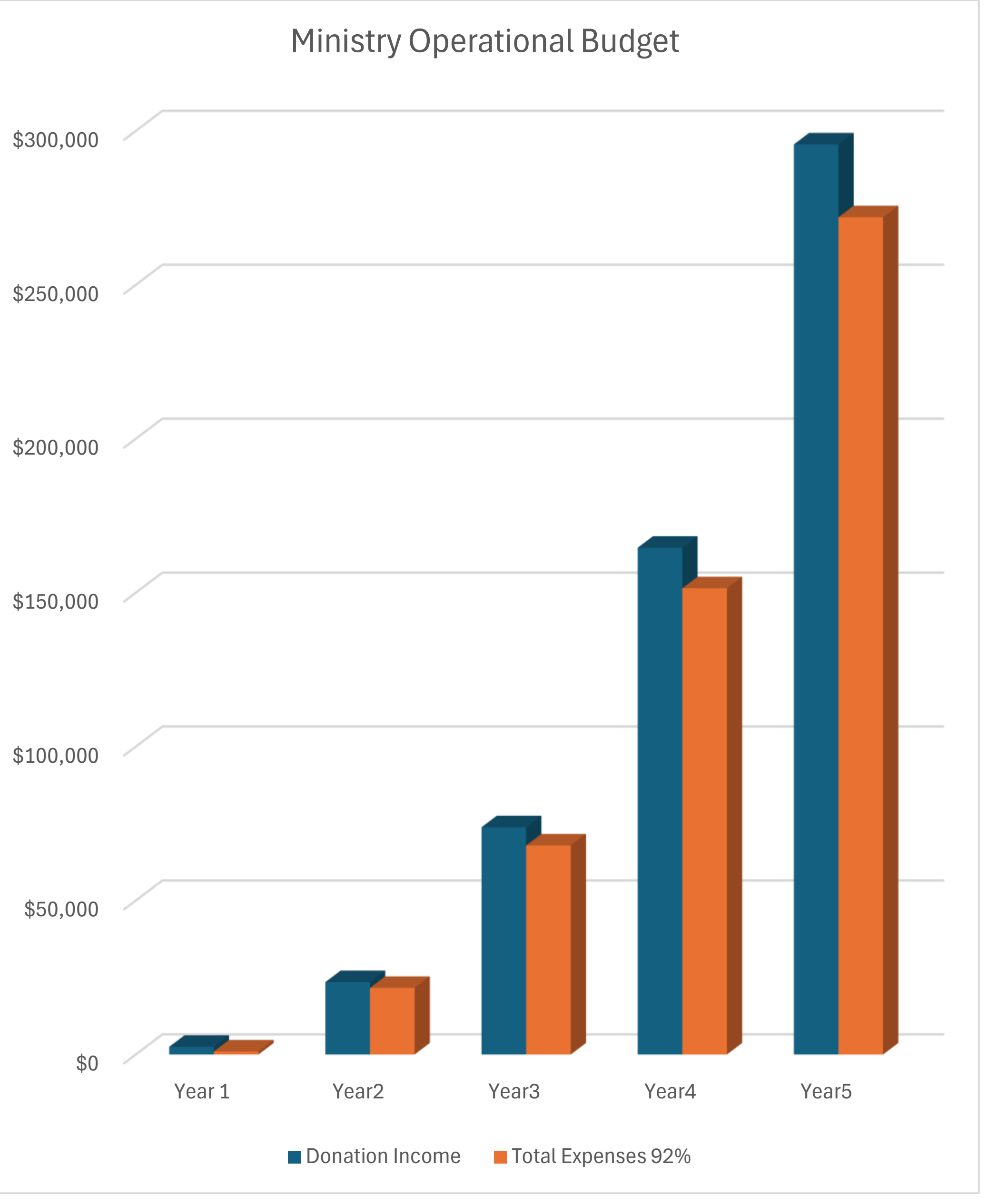
Ministry Operational Budget Five-Years

Stewardship of Operating Surpluses

The Ministry is committed to maintaining positive operating margins whenever possible. Early operating surpluses will first strengthen financial stability through prudent reserves and repayment of startup obligations.

As recurring donations increase, operating surpluses will be invested in expanding educational programming, community services, outreach, leadership development, and future charitable initiatives, including the Urban Sanctuary Communities described later in this plan.

Maintaining sustainable operations before undertaking major capital projects reflects the Ministry's commitment to responsible stewardship.



Operations Budget Independent of Capital Investment Projects

	Year 1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5
Number of Monthly Contributors	100	314	985	1,769	3,177
Monthly Contribution per Donor					
Donation Income	$2,500	$23,523	$73,824	$164,618	$295,631
Expenses:					
licensing and fees	$1,000				
community events & outreach		$4,234	$13,288	$29,631	$53,214
salaries support staff / admin		$3,764	$11,812	$26,339	$47,301
educational media & content creation		$2,823	$8,859	$19,754	$35,476
office space / rental		$2,352	$7,382	$16,462	$29,563
contingency / reserve		$1,647	$5,168	$11,523	$20,694
grant-writing		$1,647	$5,168	$11,523	$20,694
website/tech		$1,647	$5,168	$11,523	$20,694
bookkeeping/legal		$1,176	$3,691	$8,231	$14,782
travel		$1,176	$3,691	$8,231	$14,782
retreats/fire circles		$1,176	$3,691	$8,231	$14,782
Total Expenses	$1,000	$21,641	$67,918	$151,449	$271,981
Operating Surplus (Shortfall)	$1,500	$5,006	$9,040	$19,688	$23,650

Sisters of the Valley Inc, the ‘for profit’ corporation founded in 2015, is already receiving monthly donations of approximately $10 per month from 50 followers on the Patreon platform. In a board meeting in the summer of 2025, the Sisters of the Valley Inc. formally released its name for use by the ministry, formally released for use the tenets spelled out in the Book of the New Beguines, and approved the transition of donations being collected. These donations are to be moved over to the ministry and become the starting point for the Year 1 financials (see chart above). The ministry is something the followers have been asking for -- a vehicle for tax deductible donations, to allow them to give more. The Operations Budget shows what community activities the sisters will be making available to the residents, but the residential housing agreements do not require the residents to be involved in these activities. They do require them to be responsible renters and neighbors.

Expenses Organized by Program

Year 1 (in this chart) represents the first full operational year, August 2026 thru July 2027; year 2 is the subsequent 12-month period, and so forth.

	Program	Funding Source	Activities	Estimated Annual Cost	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
1	Community Gatherings & Fire Circles	Donations	monthly fire circles	community events & hospitality	1,880	2,760	4,960
		Event Contributions	solstice/equinox gatherings	media production & technology	600	1,200	2,400
			community meals	music & performers	0	1,000	2,560
			seasonal ceremonies		2,480	4,960	9,920
			public gatherings				
2	Outreach Programs & Workshops	Grants	sustainable living workshops	education materials & publications	940	1,600	3,100
		Educational Program Revenue	herbal education	media production & technology	630	1,100	1,900
			ecofeminist history	educational guest programs	0	400	1,200
			cooperative living education		1,570	3,100	6,200
			spiritual discussions				
			online educational videos				
			guest speakers				
3	Educational Publishing & Media	General Fund	website articles	media production & technology	630	1,260	2,520
		Sustaining Members	ministry teachings	educational materials & publications	940	1,880	3,760
			videos		1,570	3,140	6,280
			podcasts				
			printed materials		5,620	11,200	22,400
			translations				
			social media educational outreach				
4	Mutual Aid & Community Support	Donations	emergency assistance	mutual aid & community support		3,400	6,800
		Grants	community food support	educational materials & publications		350	700
			transportation assistance			3,750	7,500
			temporary housing assistance				
			volunteer coordination				
5	Sanctuary Development Planning	Sancturary Development Fund	feasibility studies	sanctuary development planning		3,000	5,000
			travel to potential locations	travel & site development		950	23,730
			architectural consultation	professional services & compliance		0	5,000
			zoning research			3,950	33,732
			cooperative housing planning,				
			pilot project development				
6	Arts, Music & Cultural Preservation	Grants	music gatherings	arts, music & cultural programs		1,900	3,800
		Community Donations	women’s arts programs	media production & technology		1,000	2,000
			storytelling	community events & hospitality		890	1,780
			historical education			3,790	7,580
			ceremonial arts				
			community performances				
			visual arts				
				Total from Budget for these Categories	**5,661**	**22,690**	**71,212**

This slide maps the programs to the expense categories.

1. Educational Materials & Publications	**Program**
Includes:	
educational material dvlpmt	2
printing & publications	3
translation support	3
outreach materials	4
2. Media Production & Technology	
Includes:	
livestream & media tech support	2
podcast production support	3
video production support	3
recording & media production	6
media equipment	1, 2
website & hosting	3
3. Community Events & Hospitality	
Includes:	
event supplies	1
food & hospitality	1
venue, seating & permit costs	1
4. Arts, Music & Cultural Programs	
Includes:	
artist & performer support	6
music & performers	1
musical equipment & supplies	6
exhibit & performance expenses	6
cultural programs supplies	6
historical preservation projects	6
workshop materials	6

5. Educational & Guest Programs	
Includes:	
speaker support	2
workshop materials	2
travel & transportation	2
6. Mutual Aid & Community Support	
Includes:	
emergency supplies	4
food & meal support	4
temporary housing assistance	4
transportation assistance	4
volunteer coordination & support	4
7. Sanctuary Development Planning	
Includes:	
feasibility studies	5
pilot project planning	5
cooperative housing planning	5
fundraising development	5
8. Professional Services & Compliance	
Includes:	
architectural consultation	5
legal & organizational consultation	5
zoning & permitting research	5
9. Travel & Site Development	
Includes:	
travel & site visits	5
travel & transportation	2

Conservative Financial Assumptions

The operational budget intentionally reflects only one recurring source of revenue: sustaining monthly contributions from supporters.

Although the Ministry anticipates future fundraising campaigns, grants, retreats, educational events, and charitable contributions, these revenue sources have not been included in the financial projections because they have not yet been demonstrated.

The projections instead rely exclusively upon a funding model the Sisters have already operated successfully for many years through monthly supporter contributions. However, as additional unrestricted donations, grants, retreat fees, and educational programming develop, those revenues will supplement – not replace – the sustaining-member model presented here.

This conservative approach allows future fundraising success to strengthen, rather than determine, the Ministry's financial sustainability.

The Foundational Beliefs of the Sisterhood

Sisters of the Valley is a Ministry and has no dogma to sell to or push upon the residents. The belief system is simple and is honored by the Sisters. Participation or involvement by residents is not relevant to the model here. The Sisters are serving as stewards of the community and as a resource to the residents.

Here are the values guiding the women who will steward these communities.

1. The sisters organize their lives by the cycles of the moon.
2. The sisters believe that human intelligence gives us a unique obligation toward our environment and seek to live in harmony with nature.
3. The sisters believe in a depth of power far greater than what the eyes can see, a Creator, and a connectedness between the people and the planet. The sisters believe that the hurt of one is the hurt of all and the honor of one is the honor of all.
4. The sisters recognize both the outer and inner worlds, the spiritual and the physical, and see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal activities.
5. The sisters believe that it is necessary for humans to control the urges within themselves that make life possible, in order to live wisely and without harm to others.
6. The sisters believe in honoring the past, the present, and the future – to remain conscious of those who came before, those who walk with us now, and those generations yet to come.
7. The sisters believe it is necessary to fight the forces of evil who seek power through the suffering of others.
8. The sisters believe in treating all people and their spiritual beliefs with respect, with the exception of those who claim to the only way or seek to deny freedom from others.

The beliefs, vows, customs, readings, prayers and chants can all be found on the ministry website: www.sotvministry.org

Urban Sancturary Communities

Sisters of the Valley Ministry

A replicable model for affordable housing, community, and stewardship

Mission & Vision

The Sisters of the Valley Ministry was established to expand a community-centered model developed through more than a decade of shared living, governance, cooperative work, and spiritual practice at the founding Sisters of the Valley farm in California.

Rooted in the principles expressed in the *Book of the New Beguines*, the Ministry draws inspiration from historical women-led cooperative communities while adapting those traditions to modern urban and international environments.

The Ministry's values emphasize: cooperation over competition, sustainability, compassionate service, mutual aid, shared responsibility, peaceful conflict resolution, spiritual practice, and community resilience.

Through education, publications, ceremonies, leadership development, cultural preservation, and Urban Sanctuary Projects, the Ministry seeks to create modern sanctuary communities designed to address growing social challenges including housing insecurity, isolation, economic instability, and the erosion of community-centered support systems.

The Ministry's long-term vision is the development of replicable sanctuary communities where sisters, families, elders, educators, artists, volunteers, and residents can live, learn, and thrive together in stable and supportive environments rooted in stewardship, cooperation, and shared purpose.

The Societal Problem: A Growing Need for Community-Based Solutions

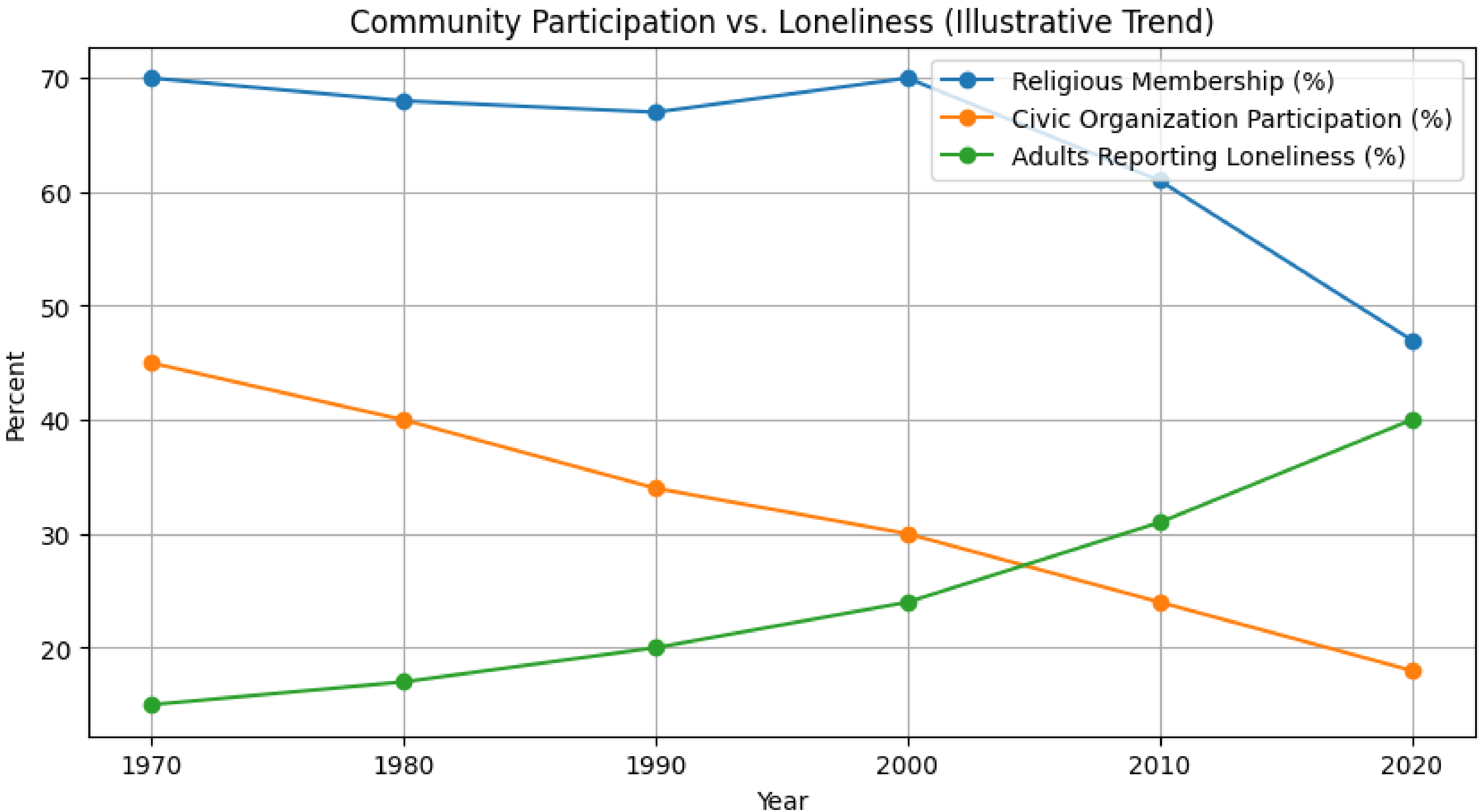
Modern society faces interconnected challenges that cannot be solved by housing alone.

Rising housing costs, economic instability, and the loss of traditional support networks have left many people financially vulnerable and socially isolated.

For generations, communities relied on extended families, neighbors, shared resources, and local support systems to provide stability during difficult times. As these structures have weakened, more individuals and families face life's challenges without a reliable community around them.

The housing crisis is not only a shortage of affordable units — it is also a crisis of connection, belonging, safety, and support.

The Sisters of the Valley Ministry believes the next generation of solutions must rebuild not only places to live, but communities where people have support and the opportunity to thrive.



The housing model developed by the Sisters acknowledges that it's not enough just to have subsidized housing; people and families need other kinds of assistance, other kinds of support, those traditionally provided by religions and civic organizations.

Urban Sanctuary Communities

A Proven Model for Harmonious Living

Ten Years of Proof – The Mother Farm Model

Sister Kate quips casually, ‘We practice living alone together’ -- but it is in the taking of that practice seriously that harmony is built.

For more than a decade, the Sisters of the Valley founding farm in California has served as a living laboratory for cooperative community, shared governance, and sustainable sisterhood. Through years of daily operations, the Sisters developed practical systems for managing the realities of communal life — not by avoiding conflict, but by creating structures to resolve it.

Proven community practices include:

Harmony Agreement
A shared commitment to respectful communication, accountability, peaceful conflict resolution, and community standards.

Monthly Harmony Meetings
Regular gatherings where members discuss concerns, resolve conflicts, make improvements, and strengthen community bonds.

Shared Governance
A collaborative leadership model balancing individual responsibility with collective stewardship.

Sisterhood Formation
A tested process for welcoming, training, mentoring, and integrating new sisters into the community.

The Urban Sanctuary Projects are not the beginning of an experiment — they are the expansion of a model already practiced for more than ten years.

How Sanctuary Communities Work

A sanctuary is more than shared housing — it is a community supported by intentional governance, clear expectations, and shared values. At the center of each Urban Sanctuary is a resident sisterhood responsible for preserving the culture, traditions, and mission of the community.

Sisters
Provide stewardship, mentorship, ceremonies, education, community leadership, and continuity of the sanctuary model.

Residents
Participate as valued community members, including families, elders, couples, artists, educators, and others aligned with the values of cooperation, respect, and shared responsibility.

Prioress
Serves as the community steward responsible for resident relations, harmony processes, accountability, conflict resolution, and daily community coordination.

Harmony Meetings
Provide an established structure for communication, problem-solving, mediation, and continuous improvement.

Community Standards
Create safe, stable environments through shared agreements regarding respect, peaceful conduct, safety, quiet hours, and responsibility toward others.

HOW SANCTUARY COMMUNITIES WORK

A community built on stewardship, respect, communication, and shared values.

Sisters (Stewardship)

Provide spiritual leadership, mentorship, education, ceremonies, community leadership, and continuity of the sanctuary mission and culture.

- Preserve the mission and traditions
- Offer guidance and support
- Welcome and train new sisters
- Lead by example in daily community life

Urban Sanctuary

A safe, stable, and spiritually nourishing community where people can live, learn, work, and thrive together.

Residents (Community)

Include individuals, couples, families, elders, artists, educators, and others who share the values of cooperation, respect, and shared responsibility.

- Live in community with respect
- Participate in harmony processes
- Contribute to a peaceful and supportive environment
- Respect community standards

Prioress (Governance)

Serves as community steward responsible for resident relations, accountability, conflict resolution, policy enforcement, and daily community coordination.

- Oversee admissions and move-ins/outs
- Facilitate harmony processes
- Uphold community standards and policies
- Ensure the safety and well-being of all residents

Harmony Meetings (Communication)

Regularly scheduled gatherings where concerns are heard, conflicts are resolved, decisions are made, and community relationships are strengthened.

- Open, respectful dialogue
- Mediation and problem-solving
- Continuous improvement
- Strengthen trust and community bonds

Community Standards (Safety & Respect)

Shared agreements that create a stable, peaceful, and supportive environment for all residents, including children, elders, families, and individuals seeking sanctuary.

- Respectful communication
- Peaceful conduct
- Safety and security
- Quiet hours
- No violence, threats, or harassment
- Accountability and shared responsibility

**The goal is not simply affordable housing—
the goal is rebuilding the support systems that help communities thrive.**

Three Scalable Sanctuary Models

	Pilot Sanctuary	Flagship Sanctuary	Regional Sanctuary
Capital Investment	$5 Million	$12 Million	$20 Million
Total Units	16	30	50
Sister Units	6	10	15
Resident Units	8	18	30
Transitional Housing	—	—	2
Guest Sister Housing	1	1	2
Community Center	1	1	1
Sister Ratio	38%	33%	30%
Primary Purpose	Prove the Model	Expand the Model	Replicate the Model

As sanctuary communities grow, the percentage of sister residences decreases while the number of community-serving units expands. Sisters provide stewardship and continuity while the broader housing mission scales.

$5M Model
16 Units

Pilot Sanctuary

Category	Year 1 Q1	Year 1 Q2	Year 1 Q3	Year 1 Q4	Year 2 Q1	Year 2 Q2	Amount
Building Acquisition	$1,000,000	$3,000,000					$4,000,000
Due Diligence & Closing Costs	$75,000	$75,000					$150,000
Architecture, Engineering & Permits	$100,000	$100,000					$200,000
Renovation & Improvements			$100,000	$75,000	$75,000		$250,000
Furnishings & Equipment					$100,000		$100,000
Community Formation & Resident Development					$50,000	$50,000	$100,000
Launch Operating Reserve	$200,000						$200,000
Total	**$1,375,000**	**$3,175,000**	**$100,000**	**$75,000**	**$225,000**	**$50,000**	**$5,000,000**

Total Units:	16	Starting Rent per Month	2% increase	Year 1 Q1	Year 1 Q2	Year 1 Q3	Year 1 Q4	Total Yr 1	Year 2 Q1	Year 2 Q2	Year 2 Q3	Year 2 Q4	Total Yr2	Year 3 Q1	Year 3 Q2	Year 3 Q3	Year 3 Q4	Total Yr3	
studio sister apartment		$750	$765						1	2	2	2		2	2	2	2		
single sister apartment		$950	$969			1	2		2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2		
two bedroom sister apartment		$1,250	$1,275			1	1		1	1	2	2		2	2	2	2		
Total Sister Units	6					2	3		4	5	6	6		6	6	6	6		
				repairs, construction															
studio resident apartment		$938	$956	and remodeling						2	2	2		2	2	2	2		
single resident apartment		$1,188	$1,211				2		2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2		
two-bedroom resident apartment		$1,563	$1,594				2		2	2	2	4		4	4	4	4		
Resident Units	8						4		4	6	6	8		8	8	8	8		
Reserved for Visiting Sisters	1									1	1	1		1	1	1	1		
Reserved as the Resident's Commons	1									1	1	1		1	1	1	1		*excludes*
	16					2	7		8	11	12	14		14	14	14	14		*reserved*
Percent Occupancy						14%	50%		57%	79%	86%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%		*& common*
																			spaces
Sister Rents						$6,600	$9,450	$16,050	$11,700	$13,950	$17,700	$17,700	$61,050	$18,054	$18,054	$18,054	$18,054	$72,216	
Resident Rents						$0	$0	$0	$16,500	$22,125	$22,125	$31,500	$92,250	$32,130	$32,130	$32,130	$32,130	$128,520	
Rents Collected						$6,600	$9,450	$16,050	$28,200	$36,075	$39,825	$49,200	$153,300	$50,184	$50,184	$50,184	$50,184	$200,736	
Adjusted for Evictions/Transitions								*$15,248*					*$145,635*					*$190,699*	

Sisters	**Sisters**	**Rent Per Month**	**mid-market L.A. range**	**Subsidized Component**
occupied studio apartments	2	$750	$1,300–1,800	$550 to $1,050
occupied one bedroom apartments	2	$950	$1,800–2,500	$750 to $1,550
occupied two bedroom apartments	2	$1,250	$2,500–3,500+	$1,250 to $2,250
	6			
Residents				
occupied studio apartments	2	$938	$1,300–1,800	$500 to $925
occupied one bedroom apartments	2	$1,188	$1,800–2,500	$700 to $1,300
occupied two bedroom apartments	4	$1,563	$2,500–3,500+	$1K to $2K
	8			

This is the proof-of-concept model and for the smallest size urban sanctuary, the first to be implemented outside the farm environment, the ratio of sister units to resident units is intentionally higher than in later models in order to provide additional stewardship and support during the pilot phase.

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Occupancy	**43%**	**93%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	100% occupancy of a 16 unit building is 14 rental units
Property Taxes	$44,000	$44,000	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000	Property Tax 1.1% first two years, then 1.2% subsequent years
Insurance	$16,800	$16,968	$17,138	$17,309	$17,482	$1.4Kper month, 1% increase per year
Utilities	$15,360	$15,514	$15,669	$15,825	$15,984	energy and water $80 x 16, increasing 1% per year
Landscaping/Garden	$4,000	$12,000	$12,300	$12,608	$12,923	$1000 per month part-time resident job, increasing 2% per year
Building Maintenance	$9,000	$36,000	$36,720	$37,454	$38,203	$3000 per month resident job, increasing 2% per year
Governance / Prioress Position	$1,525	$14,564	$19,070	$19,261	$19,452	10% of rental income
Cleaning/Common Areas	$3,900	$13,000	$15,600	$15,756	$15,914	$200 per week first year, $250 per week second year (low activity years) then $300 per week and 1% increase annually thereafter
Internet	$2,880	$9,600	$9,696	$9,793	$9,891	16 units at $50 per month; 1% increase per year
Maintenance Reserve	$0	$0	$5,040	$5,040	$5,040	$30 per month per unit
Capital Replacement Reserve	$0	$0	$5,040	$5,040	$5,040	$30 per month per unit
Total Annual Expenses	$97,465	$161,645	$184,272	$186,086	$187,928	

Gross Rental Income	Year1	Year 2	Year 3*	Year 4	Year 5	
Sister Units	2	4	6	6	6	**Pilot Project Ratio of Sister Units to Resident 1 : 1.3**
Resident Units	2	4	8	8	8	
Sister Rent	$16,050	$61,050	$72,216	$72,938	$73,668	
Resident Rent	$0	$92,250	$128,520	$129,805	$131,090	
Total Rent Revenue	$16,050	$153,300	$200,736	$202,743	$204,758	
Rentals Received (5% reduced for vacancies and eviction gaps)	$15,248	$145,635	$190,699	$192,606	$194,520	
Loss / Contribution to Sanctuary Fund	($82,217)	($16,010)	$6,427	$6,520	$6,592	
from capital purchase operating reserve			*2% rent increase*	*1% rent increase*	*1% rent increase*	

The capital reserve is to cover the losses in the period where the building is purchased and being prepared and gradually occupied. By year 3, the model is producing a contribution toward the next sanctuary building.

$12M Model
30 Units

Flagship Sanctuary

Flagship Sanctuary $12M Model			Year 1 Q1	Year 1 Q2	Year 1 Q3	Year 1 Q4	Year 2 Q1	Year 2 Q2	Amount
Building Acquisition			$2,000,000	$7,000,000					$9,000,000
Due Diligence & Closing Costs			$187,500	$187,500					$375,000
Architecture, Engineering & Permits			$125,000	$200,000					$325,000
Renovation & Improvements				250000	$500,000	$250,000			$1,000,000
Solar & Sustainability					$300,000				$300,000
Furnishings & Equipment							$250,000		$250,000
Community Formation & Resident Development						$10,000	$20,000	$20,000	$50,000
Launch Operating Reserve			$700,000						$700,000
Total			**$3,012,500**	**$7,637,500**	**$800,000**	**$260,000**	**$270,000**	**$20,000**	**$12,000,000**

Total Units:	30	Starting Rent per Month	2% increase	Year 1 Q1	Year 1 Q2	Year 1 Q3	Year 1 Q4	Total Yr 1	Year 2 Q1	Year 2 Q2	Year 2 Q3	Year 2 Q4	Total Yr2	Year 3 Q1	Year 3 Q2	Year 3 Q3	Year 3 Q4	Total Yr3	
studio sister apartment		$700	$714			1	1		2	2	3	3		3	3	3	3		
single sister apartment		$900	$918			1	1		2	2	3	3		3	3	3	3		
two bedroom sister apartment		$1,200	$1,224			2	2		3	3	4	4		4	4	4	4		
Total Sister Units	10					4	4		7	7	10	10		10	10	10	10		
				repairs, construction															
studio resident apartment		$875	$893	and remodeling						2	3	3		4	4	5	5		
single resident apartment		$1,125	$1,148				2		2	2	3	3		4	4	5	5		
two-bedroom resident apartment		$1,500	$1,530				2		2	2	3	3		6	6	8	8		
Resident Units	18						4		4	6	9	9		14	14	18	18		
Reserved for Visiting Sisters	1									1	1	1		1	1	1	1		
Reserved as the Resident's Commons	1									1	1	1		1	1	1	1		*excludes*
	30					4	8		11	13	19	19		24	24	28	28		*reserved*
Percent Occupancy						14%	29%		39%	46%	68%	68%		86%	86%	100%	100%		*& common*
																			spaces
Sister Rents						$12,000	$12,000	$24,000	$20,400	$20,400	$28,800	$28,800	$98,400	$29,376	$29,376	$29,376	$29,376	$117,504	
Resident Rents						$0	$0	$0	$15,750	$21,000	$31,500	$31,500	$99,750	$52,020	$52,020	$67,320	$67,320	$238,680	
Rents Collected						$12,000	$12,000	$24,000	$36,150	$41,400	$60,300	$60,300	$198,150	$81,396	$81,396	$96,696	$96,696	$356,184	
Adjusted for Evictions/Transitions								*$22,800*					*$188,243*					*$338,375*	

Sisters	Sisters	Starting Rent per Month	2% increase	mid-market L.A. range	Subsidized Component
occupied studio apartments	3	$700	$714	$1,300–1,800	$900 to $1,100
occupied one bedroom apartments	3	$900	$918	$1,800–2,500	$900 to $1,200
occupied two bedroom apartments	4	$1,200	$1,224	$2,500–3,500+	$1,200 to $2,300
	10				
Residents					
occupied studio apartments	5	$875	$893	$1,300–1,800	$400 to $900
occupied one bedroom apartments	5	$1,125	$1,148	$1,800–2,500	$700 to $1,300
occupied two bedroom apartments	8	$1,500	$1,530	$2,500–3,500+	$1,000 to $2,000
	18				

The rental fees per unit are $50 a month higher for the 16-unit model than for the two larger models.

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Occupancy EOY	**64%**	**93%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	100% occupancy of a 30 unit building is 28 rental units
Property Taxes	$99,000	$99,000	$108,000	$108,000	$108,000	Property Tax 1.1% to 1.2%
Insurance	$35,500	$35,855	$36,214	$36,576	$36,941	~$3Kper month, 1% increase per year
Utilities	$28,800	$29,088	$29,379	$29,673	$29,969	energy and water $80 x 30, increasing 1% per year
Landscaping/Garden	$12,000	$12,240	$12,485	$12,734	$12,989	$1000 per month part-time contract work, increasing 2% per year
Building Maintenance	$50,000	$51,000	$52,020	$53,060	$54,122	~$4,100 per month resident job, increasing 2% per year
Governance / Prioress Position	$2,400	$19,608	$31,400	$36,284	$36,284	10% of rental income
Cleaning/Common Areas	$18,200	$18,382	$18,566	$18,751	$18,939	$350 per week with 2% annual increase
Internet	$10,800	$10,908	$11,017	$11,127	$11,239	30 units starting at $30 per month
Maintenance Reserve	$0	$0	$8,000	$5,760	$5,760	$30 per month per unit
Capital Replacement Reserve	$0	$0	$8,000	$5,760	$5,904	$30 per month per unit
Total Annual Expenses	$256,700	$276,081	$315,080	$317,726	$320,147	

Revenue	Year1	Year 2	Year 3*	Year 4	Year 5
Sister Units	4	10	10	10	10
Resident Units	0	9	18	18	18
Sister Rent	$24,000	$98,400	$122,400	$137,088	$137,088
Resident Rent	$0	$108,000	$208,128	$244,848	$244,848
Total Rent Revenue	$24,000	$206,400	$330,528	$381,936	$381,936
Rentals Received (5% reduced for vacancies and eviction gaps)	$22,800	$196,080	$314,002	$362,839	$362,839
Loss / Contribution to Sanctuary Fund	($233,900)	($80,001)	($1,079)	$45,113	$42,692
		from capital purchase operating reserve	*2% rent increase*	*1% rent increase*	*1% rent increase*

Flagship Project Ratio of Sister Units to Resident Units: **1 : 1.8**
nearly 1 sister unit for every 2 residential units

For the flagship sanctuary model with 30 units, break-even is achieved or nearly achieved in year three. The contributions to the next building of the next sanctuary begin to be substantial in year four. In all models, the rent stays the same the first two years, a 2% increase is applied in year 3, and an annual one percent increase thereafter.

$20M Model
50 Units

Regional Sanctuary

Regional Sanctuary $20M Model	Year 1 Q1	Year 1 Q2	Year 1 Q3	Year 1 Q4	Year 2 Q1	Year 2 Q2	Amount
Building Acquisition	$3,000,000	$12,000,000					$15,000,000
Due Diligence & Closing Costs	$250,000	$250,000					$500,000
Architecture, Engineering & Permits	$200,000	$300,000					$500,000
Renovation & Improvements		$250,000	$750,000	$500,000			$1,500,000
Solar & Sustainability			$250,000	$250,000			$500,000
Furnishings & Equipment					$350,000	$150,000	$500,000
Community Formation & Resident Development				$50,000	$100,000	$100,000	$250,000
Launch Operating Reserve	$1,250,000						$1,250,000
Total	**$4,700,000**	**$12,800,000**	**$1,000,000**	**$800,000**	**$450,000**	**$250,000**	**$20,000,000**

				Year 1 Q1	Year 1 Q2	Year 1 Q3	Year 1 Q4	Total Yr 1	Year 2 Q1	Year 2 Q2	Year 2 Q3	Year 2 Q4	Total Yr2	Year 3 Q1	Year 3 Q2	Year 3 Q3	Year 3 Q4	Total Yr3	
Total Units:		starting rent	2% increase																
studio sister aptmt		$700	$714			1	2		2	3	4	4		4	4	4	4		
single sister aptmt		$900	$918			1	2		2	3	4	4		4	4	5	5		
two-bedroom sister aptmt		$1,200	$1,224						2	2	2	4		4	4	4	5		
Total Sister Units	15					2	4		6	8	10	12		12	12	13	14		
				repairs, construction															
studio resident apmt		$875	$893	and remodeling			2		2	2	4	4		6	6	7	7		
single resident apmt		$1,125	$1,148				2		2	2	4	4		6	6	8	8		
two-bedroom resident apmt		$1,500	$1,530						2	4	6	8		10	12	14	16		*excludes*
Total Resident Units	32						4		6	8	14	16		22	24	29	31		*reserved*
																			sister suites,
Reserved for Visiting Sisters	2					2	2		2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2		*common*
Reserved as the Resident's Commons	1					1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1		*areas for*
	50					2	8		12	16	24	28		34	36	42	45		*gatherings,*
Percent Occupancy						4%	18%		27%	36%	53%	62%		76%	80%	93%	100%		*and transitional*
																			housing units
Sister Rents						$4,800	$9,600	$14,400	$16,800	$21,600	$26,400	$33,600	$98,400	$34,272	$34,272	$37,026	$40,698	$146,268	
Resident Rents							$12,000	$12,000	$21,000	$30,000	$51,000	$60,000	$162,000	$82,620	$91,800	$110,543	$119,723	$404,685	
Rents Collected						$4,800	$21,600	$26,400	$37,800	$51,600	$77,400	$93,600	$260,400	$116,892	$126,072	$147,569	$160,421	$550,953	
Adjusted for Evictions/Transitions								*$25,080*					*$247,380*					*$523,405*	

Sisters		**Starting Rent per Month**	**2% increase**	**mid-market L.A. range**	**Subsidized Component**
occupied studio apartments	5	$700	$714	$1,300–1,800	$900 to $1,100
occupied one bedroom apartments	5	$900	$918	$1,800–2,500	$900 to $1,200
occupied two bedroom apartments	5	$1,200	$1,224	$2,500–3,500+	$1,200 to $2,300
	15				
Residents					
occupied studio apartments	8	$875	$893	$1,300–1,800	$400 to $900
occupied one bedroom apartments	8	$1,125	$1,148	$1,800–2,500	$700 to $1,300
occupied two bedroom apartments	16	$1,500	$1,530	$2,500–3,500+	$1,000 to $2,000
	32				

Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Occupancy EOY	**64%**	**93%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	100% occupancy of a 50 unit building is 45 rental units
Property Taxes	$165,000	$165,000	$180,000	$180,000	$180,000	Property Tax 1.1% to 1.2%
Insurance	$54,000	$54,540	$55,085	$55,636	$56,193	$4.5Kper month, 1% increase per year
Utilities	$48,000	$48,480	$48,965	$49,454	$49,949	energy and water $80 x 50, increasing 1% per year
Landscaping/Garden	$24,000	$24,480	$24,970	$25,469	$25,978	$2000 per month part-time resident job, increasing 2% per year
Building Maintenance	$75,000	$76,500	$78,030	$79,591	$81,182	one full time or two parttime jobs
Governance / Prioress Position	$2,508	$24,738	$52,341	$52,864	$53,393	10% of rental income
Cleaning/Common Areas	$26,000	$26,520	$27,050	$27,591	$28,143	$500 per week with 2% annual increase
Internet	$18,000	$18,180	$18,362	$18,545	$18,731	50 units starting at $30 per month
Maintenance Reserve	$0	$0	$8,000	$5,760	$5,760	$30 per month per unit
Capital Replacement Reserve	$0	$0	$8,000	$5,760	$5,904	$30 per month per unit
Total Annual Expenses	$412,508	$438,438	$500,803	$500,671	$505,233	

Revenue	**Year 1 (partial yr occupations)**	**Year 2**	**Year 3***	**Year 4**	**Year 5**
Sister Units	4	12	15	15	15
Resident Units	4	16	30	30	30
Transitional Housing			2	2	2
Sister Rent	$14,400	$98,400	$146,268	$147,731	$149,208
Resident Rent	$12,000	$162,000	$404,685	$408,732	$412,819
Total Rent Revenue	$26,400	$260,400	$550,953	$556,463	$562,027
Rentals Received (5% reduced for vacancies and eviction gaps)	$25,080	$247,380	$523,405	$528,639	$533,926
Loss / Contribution to Sanctuary Fund	($387,428)	($191,058)	$22,603	$27,968	$28,693
		from capital purchase operating reserve	*2% rent increase*		

Type	Studios	1 BR	2 BR	Total
Sisters	5	5	5	15
Residents	6	8	16	30
Transitional	2			2
Support	-	2	1	3
Total	**13**	**15**	**22**	**50**

Regional Sanctuary Ratio of Sister Units to Resident Units: 1 : 2
approx 1 sister unit for every 2 residential units
this model introduces two units for transitional housing

Measurement and Accountability

The Ministry believes that charitable organizations should be accountable not only for their finances, but also for their impact on the people they serve.

Many organizations report outputs: the number of beds provided, meals served, events hosted, or dollars raised. While those measures are useful, they do not fully answer the question that matters most: Are people's lives improving?

For that reason, the Ministry will maintain a longitudinal community assessment program. Every resident and participant will be invited to complete an intake assessment upon joining the community and a follow-up assessment every six months thereafter.

The purpose of the assessment is not to prove predetermined outcomes, but to establish an ongoing feedback loop through which the Ministry can evaluate its effectiveness, identify unmet needs, improve programming, and measure changes in housing stability, emotional well-being, community belonging, safety, participation, and overall quality of life.

The Ministry considers this process essential to responsible stewardship. Success will be measured not only by occupancy rates or financial sustainability, but by whether participants report increased stability, reduced isolation, stronger community connections, and improved quality of life over time.

Measuring Impact

The Ministry recognizes that community well-being cannot be measured solely through occupancy rates, fundraising totals, or financial performance. Instead, the Ministry will maintain an ongoing assessment program designed to measure the health and effectiveness of its communities over time.

Participation in surveys will itself be tracked as a measure of engagement. Residents and participants will be invited to complete detailed surveys twice annually. The Ministry will report participation rates alongside all survey findings.

Areas to be measured include: (a) housing stability, (b) sense of belonging and community connection, c) mental and emotional well-being, d) perceived social support, e) participation in community activities, f) volunteerism and contribution to community life, g) conflict resolution skills gained and processes deployed, h) economic stability and resilience, i) satisfaction with Ministry programs and services, j) overall quality of life.

The Ministry will track changes over time rather than relying on a single benchmark. The objective is not to claim outcomes in advance, but to establish a consistent framework for listening, measuring, learning, and improving.

Survey results, participation rates, and community indicators will be reviewed regularly by leadership and the survey process itself will be incorporated into all initial and future programs.

The following questionnaire represents the initial core assessment tool. These core questions will remain consistent over time to preserve historical comparability, while supplemental modules may be added as new programs and research priorities emerge.

Community Well-Being & Housing Stability Questionnaire

Purpose: This is a draft, a sample of the questionnaire that will guide the circle of feedback. It helps the Ministry understand whether participation in the community is improving housing stability, emotional well-being, belonging, safety, and quality of life over time.
Frequency: At intake, then every six months.
Tracking Rule: Core questions remain unchanged year to year. Additional questions may be added in separate optional sections.

Section 1: Housing Stability

1.Where are you currently living?
- Stable housing
- Temporary housing
- Staying with family/friends
- Shelter/transitional housing
- Vehicle/RV
- Unsheltered
- Other

2. Is your current housing private for you and your family, or it is shared with others? ___ private ___ shared

3. Are you living in a place you consider 'safe' or 'unsafe'? ____ safe _____ unsafe

4. Rank how stable your current housing feels? Scale 1–5 _____
Very unstable (1) Unstable (2) Somewhat stable (3) Stable (4) Very stable (5)

5. In the past six months, have you worried about losing your housing?
_____ Never
_____ Rarely
_____ Sometimes
_____ Often
_____ Almost always

6. In the past six months, how many times have you moved? _____

Community Well-Being & Housing Stability Questionnaire

Section 2: Emotional Well-Being (Evaluate based on Prior Six-Month Period)

7. In the past six months, how often have you felt anxious, overwhelmed, or unable to relax? Scale 1–5

8. In the past six months, how often have you felt sad, hopeless, or emotionally exhausted? Scale 1–5

9. How would you rate your overall emotional well-being today? Scale 1–5

10. Compared with six months ago, is your emotional well-being:
_____ Much worse
_____ Somewhat worse
_____ About the same
_____ Somewhat better
_____ Much better

Section 3: Belonging and Isolation

11. I feel like I belong to a community (or in this community) Scale 1–5

12. I have people I can turn to when I need help. Scale 1–5

13. I feel less isolated than I did six months ago. Scale 1–5

14. I feel more isolated than I did six months ago. Scale 1-5

15. How often do you participate in community meals, ceremonies, meetings, or activities?
_____ Never
_____ Rarely
_____ Monthly
_____ Weekly
_____ Several times per week

Community Well-Being & Housing Stability Questionnaire

Section 4: Community Contribution

16. In the past six months, have you volunteered, helped another resident/member, supported an event, or contributed labor/service?
    _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure

17. What is one way you have contributed to the community in the past six months? ____

Section 5: Safety and Conflict

18. I feel emotionally safe in this community. Scale 1–5 (5 is the safest)

19. I believe conflict is handled fairly here. Scale 1–5 (5 is the most fair)

20. In the past six months, have you experienced unresolved conflict that affected your well-being?
    _____ Yes
    _____ No
    _____ Prefer not to say

Section 6: Program Impact

21. Which Ministry activities have helped you most?
    _____ Fire circles / ceremonies
    _____ Community meals
    _____ Spiritual guidance
    _____ Assistance with Trouble Resolution
    _____ Peer support
    _____ Educational programs
    _____ Retreats
    _____ Housing support
    _____ Volunteer/service work
    _____ Other ____

22. Are the Ministry's programs helping you become more financially stable? Scale 1–5
23. What program, support, or change would help you most in the next six months? ____

Community Well-Being & Housing Stability Questionnaire

Section 7: Overall Quality of Life

24. How would you rate your overall quality of life today? Scale 1–5

25. Compared with six months ago, your life feels:
_____ Much less stable
_____ Somewhat less stable
_____ About the same
_____ Somewhat more stable
_____ Much more stable

26. What is one thing that has improved for you since joining the community? ______________________________
27. What is one thing that remains difficult? ____

Section 8: Consent and Participation

28. May the Ministry use your anonymous responses for internal evaluation, grant reporting, and research partnerships? _____ Yes _____ No

29. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview? _____ Yes _____ No
If 'yes', then indicate best contact information: ____

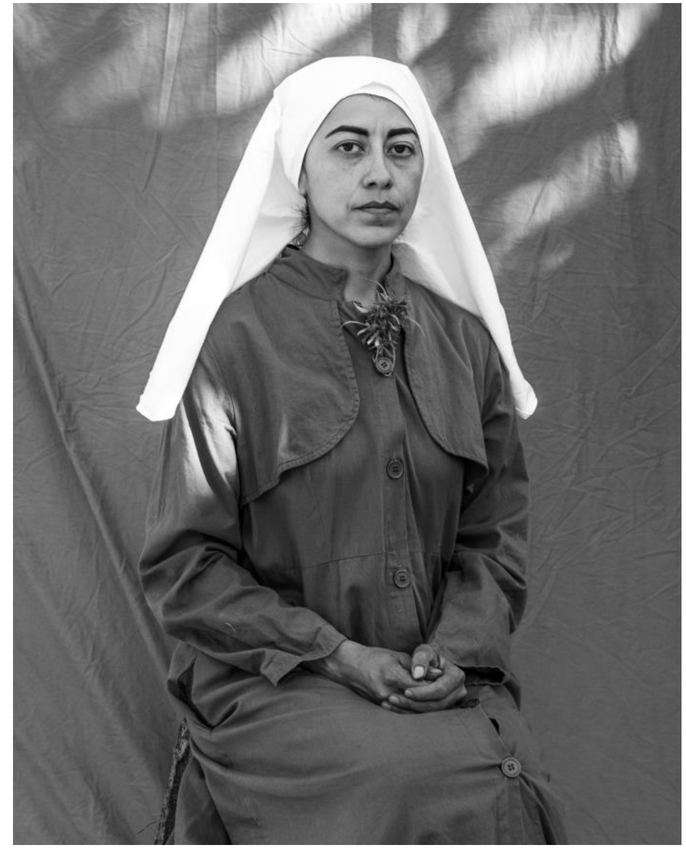
The Founding Team

The founding team consists of four sisters and two new Beguines, members of the enclave who are not wearing the veil or necessarily living in community.

The Ministry's founding team consists of four founding sisters and two community members. Collectively, the founding team brings experience in community governance, education, non-profit leadership, administration, communications, and religious stewardship.

Sister Kate	Author of the Book of the New Beguines – Established the Spiritual practices of the order in 2014
Sister Camilla	Seven years as a practicing sister
Sister Esme	Five years as a practicing sister
Sister Hilda	Novitiate Sister, one year with the Sisters
Devan Culpepper	New Beguine, Practitioner/Member of Five Years, Resides with the Sisters
Nicole Aguilar-Copp	New Beguine, Practitioner and Member

Sister Camilla - Talia Romero has built her career around education, empowerment, and sustainable practice. She holds a BA in International Business and a Master's in Economics Sciences. Her early decision to study business was driven by a desire to create practical, independent pathways rather than pursuing a conventional job. After the BA and two years of traveling and operating as an independent business owner and consultant, Camilla sought to deepen her understanding of economics and its real-world impact. In order to pursuit that she enrolled into a Economic science program choosing to research the role of educational institutions in developing entrepreneurship



Following the Masters degree, Camilla launched a project she had long envisioned. What began as a strategic plan evolved into a mission-driven initiative centered on education, sustainability, and community empowerment. She believes in building ventures that create positive environmental and social impact, and she critically evaluates business models that seek only profit without value creation for people and the planet.

Recognizing the gap between theory and practice, Camilla sought mentorship and found inspiration in the Sisterhood of the Valley. This encounter motivated her to pursue further academic work while committing herself to hands-on experience. She enrolled in a PhD program to broaden her perspective, focusing on social studies with an emphasis on entrepreneurship and regional development, all with the aim of validating his ideas within the scientific community and addressing broader questions about the benefits and challenges of plant-based enterprise.

After three years, Camilla chose to dedicate herself full-time to the Sisterhood, and since 2021 she has served as the project manager for chapters in Mexico connecting with the United States. In this role, she has facilitated knowledge transfer between regions, helping to adapt and apply the Sisterhood's practices across borders. Her hands-on learning includes direct engagement with farming operations and exchange with founder Sister Kate, travels to farms, and community education on home-based extraction methods. She has taught workshops in Latin America, including Brazil and Colombia, and joined Sister Kate on a conference in Chile to share their expertise.

Since 2021, Camilla has expanded her work beyond traditional scientific channels to education outreach. She dedicates herself to teaching home-based extraction methods as a means of fostering independence, resilience, and resistance to monopolies in the health and pharmaceutical sectors. Her overarching goal is to democratize knowledge, empowering more women to learn, share, and grow together within the Sisterhood. Over the past two years, she has overseen and supported volunteer programs designed to connect women worldwide with farming experiences and practical training.

Sister Esme — Giselle Esmeralda Lira has lived a life shaped by movement, resilience, and a search for belonging. Born in Mexico and brought to the United States at the age of five, she grew up navigating language barriers, financial uncertainty, and the invisible fears that often accompany the pursuit of the American dream. Raised among strong women and within a deeply spiritual family, she learned early that survival was often built through community, faith, and creativity. Those experiences left her with a lasting curiosity about healing — not only how people survive hardship, but how they learn to feel whole again.

Throughout her life, Giselle worked alongside children and young people through schools, after-school programs, community events, and volunteer work. She participated in food and clothing drives and helped organize art and organic market events, finding fulfillment in creating spaces where people felt seen and connected. Running through all of it has been a constant relationship with art. Though largely self-taught, she gradually developed art not simply as a practice of making images, but as a form of meditation and emotional restoration. Through line work, symbolism, and spiritual themes, she continues building a path as an artist, creator, and meditative art guide.

Her journey with the Sisters began during the uncertainty of 2020, when the world felt increasingly fragile and disconnected. During that period, she found herself confronting personal struggles with health and emotional isolation, searching for a sense of peace and meaning. Drawn toward meditation, nature, and communities centered around healing, she came across the Sisters through social media. What began as curiosity quickly became something deeper: a recognition of values she had long carried within herself — spirituality, service, sisterhood, and care for the Earth. After reaching out and offering her art and support, she was welcomed into the community through virtual meetings and eventually invited to participate in ceremonies at the farm.

Since first arriving at the farm in 2020, Sister Esme has continued traveling by train, car, and any available means to participate in ceremonies, events, outreach, and service with the Sisterhood. She later became ordained through ministry and continues developing projects rooted in creativity, healing, and community support.

Her vision for the Sisterhood is grounded in the belief that women thrive when they are allowed spaces where they can feel heard, supported, and fully themselves. Influenced by a family tradition of service — including her grandmother and father, who traveled through remote areas of Mexico offering prayer and hope to others — she sees spirituality not as separation from everyday life, but as something lived through human connection. For Sister Esme, art, meditation, and community are inseparable: they are ways of creating places where people remember they are not alone

Sister Hilda — Caroline McCarthy — has lived a life shaped by a wide variety of cultures and a restless curiosity about how people and societies are structured.

Before pursuing her degree, she traveled and worked extensively abroad, spending more than two years living in Germany and Australia, where she worked alongside a philosopher and performed stand-up comedy, respectively. Running through all of it is a consistent preoccupation: a keen interest in the underlying systems that organize human life. Her time hopping trains was part of this same inquiry — a way to understand the veins of capitalism firsthand, to see how the system moves and connects to itself. She believes that understanding that infrastructure is necessary for imagining change.

Returning to the States, she founded a startup called Ouro in 2019, serving as CEO and assembling a team to apply to Y Combinator; though not accepted in the first round, the team was invited to return, having placed in the top ten percent of rejected applicants. She was accepted to UC Berkeley for Physics, but chose to attend UC Santa Cruz, where she completed a degree in Mathematics, Theory, and Computation. Her movement between mathematics, entrepreneurship, philosophy, and physics reflects a habit of thinking in systems — of tracing how the parts of a thing connect and move together, whether in markets, in matter, or in human community.

Sister Hilda first visited and stayed with the Sisters at their original farm in Merced in 2024, during her time at university. Captivated by the lifestyle — the interdependence it required alongside the independence it afforded — she returned to work side by side with the Sisters, and after graduating in 2025, she made the move official. She has lived on the farm with the Sisters since, continuing her European travels, her academic studies, and her service to the ministry.

Her vision for the Sisterhood is rooted in a conviction that humans are meant to live in community, and that life is made not only easier but more whole through mutual support. She believes the Sisterhood exists to create autonomy and agency for women through that community — pooling collective skills in service of those most neglected under the prevailing economic order, and of the living world that sustains us all. For Sister Hilda, the spiritual and the structural are inseparable: rigorous thought and devotion work together, and the work of the ministry is to build a form of life that protects and empowers what the system most overlooks.

Devan Culpepper was born in Southern Mississippi and raised by her grandmother from the age of six, when she lost her mother to a tragic car accident, followed by losing her town and home to Hurricane Katrina.

Surviving multiple traumas, Devan and her grandmother had to start all over, a start that began living in a FEMA trailer and having only a lantern and a deck of cards to occupy their time. Her childhood with her Grandmother instilled Devan with a sense of determination, resilience, and innovation, along with a love for community, ecology, and service. Growing up in the most impoverished state in the country shaped her worldview and fueled her desire to help people experiencing poverty, hunger, and homelessness connect with needed resources.

Devan holds an A.A. from Pearl River Community College and a B.A. in Biological Anthropology from California State University Stanislaus. While earning her A.A., Devan acted as Chairwoman of the Honors in Action Project, leading a team of students through a community outreach project focusing on rebuilding homes in flood-zone areas of Mississippi. Her time at PRCC fostered her passion for community involvement and resource coordination. Following graduation with her B.A., Devan accepted a position coordinating a clinical center for individuals with developmental and cognitive disabilities, deepening her passion for service and helping others.

Devan began her journey with Sisters of the Valley in September of 2019. She felt a deep connection to the eco-feminist mission started by Sister Kate and felt called to help spread awareness. Within Sisters of the Valley, she found solace, humanitarianism, a sense of belonging, and a calling to dedicate herself to the mission. Throughout her time with Sisters of the Valley, Devan grew into the role of a New Beguine and structured her life around the eight core beliefs of the Sisterhood.

Nicole Aguilar-Copp is a third generation Mexican American, Native of California . She is a daughter, sister, wife, mother, local artist and a small business owner from Whittier, California. Born into a loving family of six, she was raised with a strict Catholic upbringing. She attended Catholic school for twelve full years and was very active in her church, choir, and community. She attended community college for a few years and studied Fine Art. She started working at the age of thirteen and hasn't stopped. She has thirty-seven years of retail experience in her heart. This includes management, buying, and merchandise design. She was a gallery coordinator in Sherman Oaks for many years and in 2009, she decided to follow her dream and she started her own business called “Love Nicole Stitchery”.

She began her art career and hasn’t looked back. She is an artist with a passion for painting, sewing, creating, and supporting her community. She is currently serving on the PTA board of her child’s school and is also the class librarian. She is a swimmer and swims to fundraise for The American Cancer Society. She is active in her community, helps the homeless in her city, and supports local small businesses in Whittier and the Los Angeles area through social media posts and reviews. Nicole was raised with strong family values of respect, honesty, faith, and love.

Nicole has been a member of the Sisters’ spiritual community since the fall of 2025, although she began studying their beliefs and following their progression through social media for a long time before then. She is considered to be an esteemed member of the community and wears the title of New Beguine.

Sister Kate — Christine Meeusen founded the Sisters of the Valley in 2014 after a career in education, business development, and entrepreneurship. Inspired by the historical Beguines of Northern Europe, she established a modern matriarchal spiritual practice dedicated to service, stewardship, and community. Over more than a decade, she has guided the development of the Sisterhood's beliefs, ceremonies, governance, and communal traditions, documenting them in *The Book of the New Beguines*. Her work laid the foundation for the Ministry's vision of building communities rooted in belonging, mutual support, and shared responsibility. Having established the foundation, Sister Kate's role is increasingly one of stewardship, mentoring, and preserving the Ministry's traditions while supporting the next generation of Sisters who will carry the work forward.


The four founding Sisters. Left to right. Sisters Esme, Kate, Camilla and Hilda.

Prepared by Sister Kate, Sisters Camilla, Hilda and Esme
9516 Lupin Avenue
Winton, California 95388
sisterkate@sotvministry.org
sistercamilla@sotvministry.org
sisteresme@sotvministry.org
sisterhilda@sotvministry.org


"Building Communities Worth Belonging To."
The Sisters of the Valley Ministry believes that stable housing begins with stable community, and that lasting community begins with stewardship, compassion, and shared responsibility.
Sisters of the Valley Ministry