



**Statement on SND Sponsorship of Notre Dame College  
February 28, 2023**

Since 1874 the Sisters of Notre Dame have contributed to the growth of Catholic education throughout the United States, staffing parish and diocesan schools as well as our own institutions. In Northeast Ohio, that legacy includes Notre Dame College, our only institution of higher education in the worldwide SND congregation.

The Sisters of Notre Dame founded the College in 1922. In 1990, we revised our relationship, passing governance of the College to an independent Board, comprised largely of lay people. At that time, oversight of all operational, academic, financial, extracurricular, and administrative aspects of the College was transferred to the Board of Trustees. Our continuing sponsorship focused on ensuring the Catholic identity of the institution.

Over the past 33 years, our sisters have gradually withdrawn from the Board and leadership positions at the College in the face of the increasing complexities of higher education and as fewer sisters with appropriate training and expertise were available to serve at the institution.

Today, with little remaining experience in higher education, we are no longer equipped to meet our canonical obligations as a sponsor of the College and will relinquish our sponsorship responsibilities effective June 30, 2023. This decision is consistent with our long-term planning to ensure our mission and ministries continue despite our aging population. With a median age of 78 and 87% of our sisters aged 70 and older, we combined our four U.S. provinces into one national province in 2020. At that time, to facilitate continued sponsorship of our 16 SND ministries across the country, we established a National Ministry Corporation whose board includes lay members.

The decision to conclude our sponsorship of Notre Dame College does not impact our continuing sponsorship of our other K-12 educational ministries and healthcare institutions.

Many of our sisters are alumnae and past faculty, staff, or board members whose ties to the College remain strong. When we notified the Notre Dame College Board of our decision in late September, we pledged to work with leadership and support them as they identify a path forward that's right for the College, its students, staff and faculty and the important mission of the College. We will continue to do so in whatever path they choose.

In the ongoing evolution of the Sisters of Notre Dame, we continue to prioritize our mission. As we focus our efforts where we can have the greatest impact, we are confident that entrusting our institutions to lay governance will ensure our ministry legacy. We look forward to working with Notre Dame College during and after this transition.

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