



**Pre-Congress Workshop: Orientation to Formation  
November 16, 2017**

*Mentoring: A Near-Occasion of Grace*

Mentoring *is* a near-occasion of grace! That is, every one-on-one encounter, every dialogue, is always open to God's presence, to God's grace!

We have all known the value of mentors in our lives: those graced companions whose single-mindedness and contagious spirit sparked our own longings to follow Jesus in the tradition of our founder and foundresses. Today, the women and men entering our congregations seek mentors of their own, graced companions whose lives of contemplation and action have readied them to "give the gift they have received" with joy, enthusiasm and wise counsel! Likewise, our perpetually professed members seek graced companions so as to be nourished as they daily serve God's people.

This Pre-Congress Workshop is designed for leaders of congregations, vocation and formation personnel and those responsible for on-going formation programs. Through interactive processes and the lenses of theology and contemporary psychology we will explore various types of accompaniment/mentoring for those who minister in initial formation as well as those who accompany perpetually professed members. Materials will be provided for use within participants' own congregations.

Topics such as the following will be addressed: the selection and appointment of mentors/graced companions (e.g., vocation and formation personnel as well as those responsible for on-going formation); mentoring and the formative community; the spiritual and psychological capacities necessary to engage in the formative process, both initial and on-going; mentoring during apostolic experiences; mentoring during times of discernment for vows and ministerial placement.



**Presenter: Mary Pat Garvin, RSM** is a member of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, currently serving on her congregation's general leadership team. Sister Mary Pat holds a Ph.D. in psychology from the Gregorian University where she was a faculty member from 1994-2001. For twenty years, she worked with conferences of religious as well as with many religious congregations in the United States and internationally, focusing on the preparation of competent women and men religious capable of meeting the challenges facing their congregations, whether through roles of leadership or directors of initial or ongoing formation programs.