Two aspects of leadership have been mentioned quite frequently these past several years. One is: “Why do we need four full-time people in leadership?” The companion question is “Why do all on the leadership team members need to live in Dubuque?”

So let us take a quick trip through history:

In 1959 when I entered, and many of you will recall this with me, I remember watching two councilors, Sisters deLourdes Verhey and Innocentia Sanner going ‘down the hill’ to teach at St. Columbkille’s. Another councilor, Sister Robert Reidy, taught college classes of biology and Old Testament to members of the novitiate. Two years later councilors were living in Farley, Waukon and Monticello, MN and traveled to Dubuque for their meetings. In fact, my first memory of Mother Perpetua was her regular trips to Dubuque from Monticello, MN.

Fast forward about 20 years to the early/mid 80s where there were some years when all councilors were full-time and lived in Dubuque.

However, in the late 80s and early 90s Sister Mary Elizabeth Presseller was councilor and principal at Resurrection. On the following team councilors had ministries in Dubuque, Iowa City and Sioux City while carrying out their leadership responsibilities.

If we fast forward once again to our present day, three of us have part-time ministries in addition to our service on the leadership team: Beth is Mt. Loretto liturgist, Ann is retreat director at Prairiewoods and I am adjunct at Loras College. In addition, Ann lives between Dubuque and Cedar Rapids.

So in summary, it has not been our tradition/practice since I entered in 1959 (and actually before that as well) to have all the councilors full time or to have them all live in Dubuque – for a few years this was true – almost all of the time it was not. The only time we did have full-time councilors was that short time in the 80s. An important aspect of this is that it once they were elected, it was the team’s responsibility and prerogative to determine who was part-time or full-time, how many were each, and to what ministries councilors would be assigned. These decisions were based on the needs of leadership during that time, the gifts and talents of each team member and the available ministries.