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European women religious send warm support to U.S. sisters

Thomas C. Fox | Dec. 15, 2009 NCR Today

A number of U.S. women religious in leadership positions have received the following letter, which originated at the Continental Assembly of European women religious earlier this month. U.S. women religious have already received words of support, during this trying time of an Apostolic Visitation, from women religious leadersin Rome[1] andin Asia[2].

This new letter to the U.S. women reads as follows:

Dear Sisters,

These days of December 2009 the Continental Assembly of Europe has gathered for its annual meeting in Spain. Among us were the team from Rome, the European Continental team and the provincial teams of Europe, as well as the European representatives of the intercontinental Commissions Economy and of Justice and Peace.

At one point in the agenda, we were told that LCWR and the apostolic institutes of religious women in the United States are being "visited" in order to analyze the quality of religious life in this country. The initiative came from the cardinal Franc Rodé, C.M., prefect of the Congregation for institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life. It was mentioned that Cardenal Rode had chosen Mother Mary Clare Millea, superior general of the Apóstolas of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to carry out the task.

Our European Assembly would like to communicate to the Sisters of the U.S. conference our sadness by this decision of the institutional church; the lack of trust, it?s tone of inquisition against women and the apparent refusal to dialogue.

At the same time we want to send our love and support for religious in the United States who continue being the presence of a human and merciful God, the One always at the side on the poor and disenfranchised. We unite in prayer that the Church open new horizons: more evangelical, more universal, more suited to the times we are living. May she be open to a dialogue for peace, justice, life and the dignity of all.

On this II of advent Sunday Eucharist, we read this poem of Benedetti. May it give you light:

Opening doors,
removing the locks,
leaving behind the walls which protected us,
live life and accept the challenge,
retrieve laughter,
practice the singing,
extend hands, open wings and try again
celebrate life
and return to the open sky.

Do not give up, please do not yield:
Although the cold burns, although fear bites,
Although the Sun goes down and the wind goes silent,
there is still fire in your soul,
there is still life in your dreams
every day is new,
because this is the moment
because you are not alone
because (we) love you.

Please receive our most fervent solidarity and our sisterly affection.
December 8, 2009t

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Links:
[1] http://ncronline.org/news/women/international-nuns-group-supports-us-women-religious
[2] http://ncronline.org/news/women-religious/asia-oceania-women-religious-offer-support-beleaguered-us-sisters