



**ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
COMMUNIQUE  
2020**

SOCIETY OF APOSTOLIC LIFE •  
CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM  
CHRISTI

*PROVISIONAL EDITION*

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# Message of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Regnum Christi Federation

Saturday, February 29, 2020

(Unofficial Translation from the Italian original)

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to be able to meet with you as you are concluding a phase of your journey under the maternal guidance of the Church. You, Legionaries of Christ, have just concluded your General Chapter and you, both Consecrated Women and Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi, your General Assemblies. These were a chapter and assemblies which produced your new General Governments, concluding a phase in the journey you have undertaken. This means that the journey continues and is not yet completed.

The criminal behavior of your founder, Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado, which emerged in all its gravity, produced a deep crisis in the whole of *Regnum Christi*, both as an institution and individually. While, on the one hand, it cannot be denied that he was the “historical” founder of the entire reality you represent, on the other hand, he cannot be considered as an example of holiness to be imitated. He made himself the point of reference, through a false image that he created with his double life. Moreover, his long-centralized government had, to some extent, tainted the charism that the Holy Spirit had originally given to the Church; and this was reflected in the norms, as well as in the practice of government and obedience, and in the style of life.

Faced with these revelations, the Church did not fail to show her motherly concern and reached out to you in various ways, placing alongside you people of great human and pastoral sensitivity and recognized juridical competence. Among them I wish to recall the late Cardinal Velasio De Paolis, Pontifical Delegate. The new Constitutions and the new Statutes are truly “new,” both because they reflect a new spirit and a new vision of religious life consistent with the Second Vatican Council and the guidelines of the Holy See, and because they are the product of three years’ work, in which all of your communities have been involved and which has led to a change of mentality. It was an event that brought about a real conversion of heart and mind. This was possible because you were docile to the help and support that the Church offered you, having realized the real need for a renewal that would bring you out of the self-referentiality in which you had been enclosed.

You opened yourselves with courage to the action of the Holy Spirit, thus entering the path of true discernment. Accompanied by the Church, you have carried out with patience and willingness a demanding task to overcome even very strong tensions which sometimes arose. This prompted a further change of mentality, because it required a new vision in the mutual relations between the diverse realities that comprise Regnum Christi. I know well that it has not been easy, because what we are most strongly attached to are our own ideas. We often lack holy indifference, to

which we must be open by an act of will, to allow the Holy Spirit to work within us. The Spirit leads us to detachment from ourselves in the search for God's will, because only from God's will can come the good for the whole Church and for each of us.

This work has led to the establishment of the Federation of Regnum Christi, composed of the Religious Institute of the Legionaries of Christ, the Society of Apostolic Life of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and the Society of Apostolic Life of the Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi. Numerous lay people, who do not profess the evangelical counsels, associate to this Federation individually, thus constituting a "Spiritual Family," a broader reality than the Federation itself. The Federation is a canonically "new," but also an "old" reality, because this unity and autonomy was already existent, in fact, since 2014. There remains a vast area which must be the subject of continued discernment on your part. Therefore, the journey must continue, looking forward, not backwards. Look back only to find confidence in God's support, which has never been lacking.

At hand is the question of determining the concrete application of the Statutes of the Federation. This requires the discernment of both the collegial governing bodies, and the general and territorial governments of the three federated realities. The Statutes must always stimulate discernment. However, if discernment is not easy on a personal level, it is much less so on the level of government. Discernment requires humility and prayer of everyone; the latter, nourished by contemplation of the mysteries of the life of Jesus, leads one to become more like Him and to see through His eyes. In this way, you can progress with objectivity, with a healthy detachment from your own ideas: this does not mean that you should not have your own evaluation of reality and the problems to be confronted, but it means submitting your personal opinion to the common good.

You have elected the new general directors and their councils. Certainly, the directors are the first ones responsible for the direction of the Legionaries of Christ or the Consecrated women or the Lay Consecrated Men of *Regnum Christi*, but the councils have a very important function, even if the councilors are not superiors or directors. In fact, the councils must be a valid help to the directors in their government, but at the same time, they also have a responsibility to supervise the work of these directors. In fact, they are called to govern with respect for persons and in keeping with the common law of the Church and the proper law of the Institute or of each Society. For this reason, canon law provides that when a matter is submitted to the consent of the council, the director does not vote, precisely in order to leave the councilors greater freedom (cf. can. 627 §2; 127 CIC; Pont. Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law, response of August 1, 1985, in AAS 77 [1985] 771).

I hope that your new governments will be aware that the journey of renewal is not over, because a change of mentality in individuals and in an institution requires a great deal of time for assimilation, and therefore a continuous conversion. It is a change that must continue in all members of the Federation. To return to the past would be dangerous and meaningless. The individual governments of the three federated institutes are called to follow this path with perseverance and patience,

both with regard to their own Religious Institute or Society of Apostolic Life and with regard to the Federation and the laity associated to it. This requires that the three governments have a vision consistent with the will that the Church has shown in all these years by her closeness and by all the concrete means she has put at your disposal.

You, members of the new general governments, have received a mandate from the Church to continue the path of renewal, reaping and strengthening the fruits matured in these years. I exhort you to act *fortiter et suaviter*: energetically in the substance, and gently in the form, knowing how to grasp with courage, and at the same time with prudence, the other paths that must be taken, which have been outlined and approved by the Church. If you humbly place yourselves in the school of the Holy Spirit, you will not be overwhelmed by fear or doubt, which disturb the soul and prevent action. I entrust you to the motherly protection of the Virgin Mary; I accompany you with my affection and a sure place in my prayers, and from my heart I impart to you the Apostolic Blessing, which I extend to the whole Family of Regnum Christi. And please, do not forget to pray for me.

# **GREETING TO THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS TRANSMITTED BY THE GENERAL DIRECTORS OF THE LEGIONARIES OF CHRIST, THE CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI AND THE LAY CONSECRATED MEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI**

Saturday, February 29, 2020

Holy Father,

on behalf of the Legionaries of Christ and the Societies of Apostolic Life of the Consecrated Women and Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi: thank you very much for receiving us in this audience. Ten years ago, during a time of great tribulation for us, the Holy See carried out an apostolic visit to our spiritual family. Since then the Holy See has accompanied us on a journey of purification and renewal. Thank you, Holy Father, the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life and, in particular, Fr. Gianfranco Ghirlanda, S.J., Pontifical Assistant, for having guided us with such generosity, prudence and resolve. Today we come to your house and your welcome is one more experience of the goodness of God and of our mother, the Church. We want to be grateful sons and daughters who announce the Gospel of mercy that heals, restores and encourages us.

Holy Father, we come to you as the newly established Federation of Regnum Christi. Thank you also for this step which allows us to preserve the just autonomy of each institute and to govern the Federation collegially. In this way we live the co-responsibility and complementarity of the different vocations, including the thousands of lay people with whom we share a common spirituality and mission.

We are concluding the General Chapter and the General Assemblies which were an encounter with the living Christ. He has called us to conversion, especially to eradicate any kind of abuse and to repair the damage caused. Holy Father, as Vicar of Christ, you exhort us to advance also on the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion. You remind us that every renewal within the Church must have the mission as its goal so as not to fall prey to a kind of ecclesial introspection (cf. Gen 25 and 27).

Today we can assure you, Holy Father: we do not want to leave things as they are (cf. GS 25), but we ask God to grant us a change of heart to enter fully into the spirit of the Kingdom of God, to discover His presence in the world, to make it grow and not to let ourselves be seduced by human appearances or successes.

Holy Father, we will commit ourselves to making the mystery of Christ present so that people may encounter him. We recognize that Christ wants to gather and send us out as a community of apostles who will help transform society according to the Gospel. Sharing this mission renews us and we thank you that you, with your

person and your magisterium, present to us so attractively the joy of living entirely consecrated to the Lord and of evangelizing. We assure you of our prayers and ask you to guide us on our way and to impart your apostolic blessing upon us.

**GENERAL  
COMMUNIQUE  
AND TOPICS DISCUSSED**

# General Assembly Communiqué

I have come that they may have life  
and have it more abundantly.  
(John 10:10)

## A. INTRODUCTION

1. The second Ordinary General Assembly of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi was held from 18 January to 6 March 2020 in Rome. This is the first Ordinary General Assembly since we were established as a Society of Apostolic Life. Forty-five delegates participated in the Assembly. They represented the nine territories, delegations and those in general government. There were also two Consecrated Women in temporary vows as guests, who were elected by the rest of the Consecrated Women in temporary vows of the Society. The delegates came from nine different nationalities: 20 from Mexico, 6 from the United States, 6 from Spain, 4 from Canada, 4 from Chile, 4 from Venezuela, 1 from Australia, 1 from Brazil and 1 from Ireland.
2. Gloria Rodriguez began by presiding over the Assembly as General Director. On February 11, the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes, we held the election of the new general government. Nancy Nohrden was elected General Director and Elena Bartolomé, first Councilor and Vicar. In addition, four other general councilors were elected: Eugenia Álvarez, África Pemán, Viviana Limón and Jacinta Curran. From the moment of the election, Nancy became president of the Assembly and Gloria continued her participation as a delegate and member of the central commission.
3. It was originally planned to elect the General Administrator, as indicated in our Constitutions. However, considering the scope of the challenges that lie ahead for us as a newly constituted Society of Apostolic Life, the decision was made to allow more time for this appointment and to delegate it to the new general government. The Assembly asked the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CIVCSVA) to authorize a transitional norm that would allow us, for the time being, to delegate this decision to the next government, without modifying our proper law. This authorization was granted (Prot. n. 852/2019 of February 4, 2020).
4. As an Assembly we would like to express our deep gratitude to Gloria Rodríguez, her councilors: Paula Errázuriz, Mari Carmen Ávila, Denise Funke, Viviana Limón and Cristina Danel, to the general administrator, Beatriz Pimentel, and to other members of the team who have so wisely led us during the previous six-year term. Gratitude springs from our

hearts as we contemplate our previous government's contributions: an ability to constantly learn, seek counsel from experts in the Church, embrace challenges with responsibility and commitment, persevere and dedicate themselves to carrying out the tasks received by the previous Assembly and, at the same time, an openness in order to amplify the scope of the Society. Above all, they have done so with an attitude of service with simplicity and gratuity. The Assembly also wishes to recognize and express gratitude for all the relevant steps taken for the consolidation of our Society. This includes carrying out the process of canonical establishment, the elaboration of the Ratio Institutionis, the work with the other branches for the configuration of Regnum Christi as a Federation, and the elaboration of the corresponding Statutes.

5. Through this communiqué we wish to share with all the Consecrated Women of the Society the experience lived in the Assembly, the topics discussed in it, the conclusions and the orientations for the next period, as well as the tasks that the Assembly has given to the general government.

## **B. CONTEXT**

### **In continuity with the Jubilee Year for the 50th anniversary of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi**

I will put my spirit in you and you will live.  
(Ezekiel 37:14)

6. This phrase from Sacred Scripture accompanied us throughout our jubilee year starting with Gloria's letter dated December 1, 2018 (Prot. DG CRC 1976/2018) in which she invited us to remember and to look forward with hope. It was a true jubilee, a year of grace that allowed us to enter into a reading of our history by recognizing God's gift and His uninterrupted presence. It was a year that propels us forward, without triumphalism, but full of hope.
7. We feel called to live the next six years in continuity with the Jubilee Year: led by the Holy Spirit along paths of life, freedom and responsibility so that God's gift may continue to unfold.

### **Assembly sustained by and in dialogue with the whole spiritual family of Regnum Christi**

8. We are aware that the prayers of the entire Regnum Christi family have sustained us during our Assembly. We wish to express our gratitude to the Consecrated Women, the Lay Members of Regnum Christi, to the Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi and to the Legionaries of Christ. We have been especially mindful of all the Consecrated Women of Regnum

Christi whom we represent and in whose service we have gathered as an Assembly. Each one carried in her heart the concerns of her sisters, seeking the greatest good for each individual Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and for the Society as a whole. In our work, we took into consideration the results of the territorial Assemblies and the documents and contributions sent to us.

9. It was important that our Assembly should take place simultaneously with that of the Lay Consecrated Men and the Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ. Besides supporting each other, this allowed us moments of dialogue and common work as well as encounters as a family.
10. With regard to the times of common work, a "mixed commission" was constituted, with members from each of the federated institutions. This commission had the objective of maturing the proposals drawn up by each territory, based on recommendations from the Extraordinary General Assembly of Regnum Christi in 2018, and which were to be approved by the supreme body of each of the institutions. These proposals sought to provide a patrimony for the Societies of Apostolic Life of Consecrated Women and Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi, as well as establishing models of governance to ensure the proper development of apostolic works and the fulfilment of their mission in the new situation arising from the canonical establishment of both the Societies of Apostolic Life and the Federation.
11. To facilitate decision making, the Assembly took time to receive insight from the previous term's delegates, Cristina Danel and Beatriz Pimentel, members of the working commission of the patrimony of the Society and the governance of the works at the general government level as well as from the territorial directors and other delegates who are members of these commissions in their respective territories. In addition, Luis Manuel Gutiérrez, L.C., and the Lay Consecrated Men, Félix Gómez Rueda and Mario Olivieri, were present to clarify doubts and receive suggestions from our Assembly. This period of "enlightenment," dialogue, and deliberation, as well as the dynamics of the mixed commission, allowed the Assembly to fulfill this objective.

### **An inevitable theme in the ecclesial and institutional context**

The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry.  
(Ezekiel 37:1-2)

12. Our Assembly took place in an ecclesial and institutional context in which the theme of abuses of power, of conscience and of sexuality deeply troubled us, moved us profoundly and challenged us... and from there, a path of deep conversion is necessary.

13. This is such a grave theme that we could not but face it as an Assembly by entering into it, in order, there, to seek God and His Word for us. It was extremely painful, in a way that words cannot adequately express. It seemed to us that we were plunging into darkness, and indeed we did; however, from there, we found new light. More than “a theme,” we allowed the space in our hearts to be filled with the victims’ faces, names and cries that grew louder and louder within us.
14. This experience marked each and every one of us with this common attitude of the heart as we lived out the Assembly in a spirit of listening, guided by the breath of the Spirit who gives life.

### **C. FIRST STEPS IN THE ASSEMBLY**

Come, spirit, from the four winds,  
and blow on these dead that they may live.  
The Spirit entered them; they were revived...  
(Ezekiel 37:9-10)

#### **Time to prepare our hearts and days of retreat**

15. The first days were dedicated to a spiritual retreat directed by Father Eduard López Hortelano, S.J.<sup>1</sup> Each day he allowed us time to share particular movements of the Spirit in groups of two or three: Our “Bethany” time as a time of friendship; and another time to share all together: our “Jerusalem”, a time of community.
16. In this way, we became a prayerful and discerning community, and this was the basis for the whole Assembly. During all these weeks we have tried to grow and strengthen these dispositions by putting in place the means to do so, such as: pauses during the sessions in the assembly hall to gather what we heard and to have interior silence; personal and team moments of “reading” the interior motions through the perspective of discernment; moments of adoration, of personal and community prayer; the daily Eucharistic celebration and a retreat atmosphere on the day of the election of government, among others. And we were reaping the fruits: an atmosphere of trust that allowed us to express ourselves freely; diversity of opinions and ways of thinking and, at the same time, a union of hearts; a climate of work, commitment and maturity.

#### **Enlightenment phase: conference and briefings**

17. In the first part of the Assembly, the illumination phase, we invited Fr. Gianfranco Ghirlanda, S.J. Considering his recent experience with us, we

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<sup>1</sup> Father Eduard Lopez Hortelano is a Jesuit. He was born on December 15, 1979 in Spain. He is a professor at the University of Comillas where he teaches spiritual theology. He has a doctorate in spiritual theology and a master's degree in Ignatian spirituality.

asked him to share his vision of the Society and of Regnum Christi (cf. Appendix I). He commented, "The first important aspect about Regnum Christi in recent years has been the realization that you, Consecrated Women, (...) could exercise (...) the capacity to govern yourselves both in your internal and external apostolic life. All this has translated into an autonomy of life, of government and also of finances. I believe that this has been a way of becoming aware of the Consecrated Women's dignity and of advancing in maturity, both natural and supernatural." He also offered recommendations for living the Assembly and, specifically, for the election of the new government. We also asked him for clarification on some issues of Canon Law concerning Societies of Apostolic Life and their application in matters related to poverty and the administration of goods.

18. Most of the time during this stage consisted of the presentation of reports, both of the general government of Regnum Christi and of our Society of Apostolic Life. For the part of the general government of Regnum Christi, we were briefed on the work done and the current situation in different areas:

- Cristina Danel- the spiritual life of Regnum Christi
- Viviana Limón- the life and mission of Regnum Christi
- Jorge López - educational centers
- Fr. José Cárdenas, L.C. and Beatriz Pimentel - the economic-administrative topic
- Cristina Danel-the work commission on the patrimony of the Society and the government of the works among the federated institutions.

Gloria Rodríguez briefed us on the General Government of the Society (shared with all the Consecrated Women via e-mail on February 10). Her presentation gave us a global vision of our situation and allowed us to contemplate the road we have traveled together in these last six years. The overall vision of our current reality was completed with updates from each territory and delegation, presented by the respective territorial directors and those in charge of the delegations.

19. This process produced admiration and gratitude as we recalled our journey over these past six years. The clarity, transparency and depth with which all the issues were presented also brought peace and hope. Listening to the section of the general report on the errors in the exercise of authority, we identified its roots in our history and the system derived from it, and we perceived with greater clarity the scope, centrality and radius of influence of this theme in many dimensions of our life. We experienced pain and confusion; we remembered many situations we had lived through. We want to apologize to all the people we may have hurt because of our incorrect way of exercising authority, and we make a firm commitment to continue working on this point. At the same time, what Jesus affirmed became life in us: "the truth will set you free." (Jn 8:31)

20. Once we were situated in the "today" of our Society, we allowed ourselves to be challenged by the basic questions: Where do we see God at work in the world? Who is the man or woman of today and in what way does he or she experience the need for God? What does God want from us? Where is he leading us? What is he calling us to through the reading of the "signs of the times"? How does he want us to go out to meet people in order to make his Kingdom present as consecrated persons and as the Regnum Christi family? It was a time of shared dreams and deep desires, of "highlights" that allowed us to sketch a perspective which remained with us throughout the Assembly.

#### **D. EXPERIENCES, SPIRIT AND DYNAMIC OF THE ASSEMBLY**

I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.  
(John 14:6)

21. We want to emphasize that, together with a methodology and a program, the Assembly was steeped in the spirit of discernment at its foundation. Some elements of this spirit include the contemplation of Christ; an openness to reality and to truth in facing all the issues; listening to the Holy Spirit through others and in one's own heart where God speaks to us through our deepest desires.

22. As we considered the various themes, we looked at Christ in his diverse mysteries: the mystery of his Incarnation; his obedience and filial trust in the Father; his way of living poverty, of going out to meet people, of relating to people... Christ presents himself to us as the Way and the values of the Kingdom as the criterion to follow. We tried to keep our eyes fixed on him and, at the same time, have a living awareness both of the gifts received and of our own miseries, wounds and frailties. Through this process the interior was ordered and the burning desire to follow Him and make His Kingdom present was awakened. At the same time, it strengthened the vital certainty that He is the protagonist, that we do not announce ourselves, and therefore, we want to go out to meet our brothers and sisters from our own vulnerability.

23. When it came time to build a vision that would give scope to the Assembly's ongoing work, we not only studied the priorities suggested by the territorial assemblies for the following years, but also exercised "listening" to our deepest desires, desiring to glimpse the "dream" of God for us, starting from our own dreams and desires:

- We dream of Christ being known and loved in the world; for many people to experience his love, which is capable of transforming lives. Therefore, we dream of bringing the Good News of the Gospel to the people with whom we are in contact, finding creative and meaningful ways to announce the message of salvation to them.

- We dream of Consecrated Women giving life to others; Consecrated Women who are free, joyful and living the fullness of our identity as lay consecrated women in Regnum Christi; mature, solid, and displaying the gift that each one is, their gifts, their talents, their personal mission and their vulnerability; we want to live a humble and prophetic leadership.
- We dream of communities of Consecrated Women who are fully alive and life-giving; living deep fraternal relationships; immersed in the reality of the world, capable of meeting and responding to the present reality of people; carrying out meaningful evangelizing action. We dream of a fully alive and life-giving Regnum Christi as an evangelizing spiritual family; building bridges of communion and deeply committed to our common mission.
- We dream of living in coherence with the values of the Gospel, being women of the Spirit who live in the freedom and responsibility of the children of God. We dream of an experience of authority following the example of Christ, who "came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28); who, being Master and Lord, washes the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper and gives us the command to do the same. (Jn 13:15)
- We dream of a Society of Apostolic Life that takes on its own autonomy with enthusiasm and responsibility, including the economic dimension, in which all of us, in a co-responsible way, develop a plan of sustainability that allows us to live our vocation and mission fully and to project ourselves.
- We dream of new vocations that experience the attraction of this lifestyle and charism and share the desire that Christ reign in hearts and in society.

## **E. METHODOLOGY OF THE ASSEMBLY'S WORK**

24. The Assembly's methodology included plenary meetings, working groups and the possibility of forming committees to deal with various topics.
25. The working groups were constituted at random. The first meetings by working groups were devoted to studying the contributions from the territorial assemblies as well as individual contributions on the themes of reflection that the exiting government proposed to the Society.
26. The Central Commission proposed the formation of several commissions which the delegates freely joined. The commissions had the purpose of helping the Assembly to face the themes from our present reality and from

the Gospel. According to the nature, scope and complexity of the themes, the commissions prepared work guides, surveys, draft documents, and prayer material. They were also in charge of gathering the contributions and feelings of the Assembly, in an orderly and clear way.

27. Both the working groups and the commissions could suggest possible work for the upcoming government, which were voted on at the end of the Assembly.

## **F. TOPICS DISCUSSED AT THE ASSEMBLY**

28. In her letter dated November 20, 2019 (Prot DG CRC 2278/2019), Gloria Rodriguez informed the Society that the purposes of the 2020 Ordinary General Assembly would be, in addition to the election of the new general government: to review and approve proposed amendments to the Constitutions and Rule; to discuss and propose a path for the sustainability of our institute; to review the most important issues of the Society; to issue guidelines and directives for the new six-year term of government.
29. The most important matters of the Society were narrowed down to the following: to deepen our understanding of the mission of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and the various themes that derive from it; to discern and define the projection of the Society; to approve the proposal on the patrimony and the government of the works in relation to the other federated institutes; to ratify the means of spiritual growth of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi; to discern and define the next steps to continue discernment about the living of poverty; to offer a perspective and principles of discernment on the care of our elderly and infirm parents.
30. On receiving the report of the outgoing government, the Assembly considered it imperative to address new issues, so other commissions were also formed to cover: sexual abuse, the exercise of authority in the Society, an institutional pronouncement on the Founder, the institutional culture, and the possibility of reopening the discernment of contemplative life within Regnum Christi for the Consecrated Women who expressed interest. Later on, commissions were also formed for sustainability and for reconciliation with persons who were consecrated or members in our Precandidacy.
31. In undertaking the task of voting on amendments to the proper law on the proposed themes - numbers related to mission, poverty and means of spiritual growth, as well as adaptations for our canonical establishment as a Society of Apostolic Life and for the Constitution of the Federation, and

some other themes that emerged during the course of the Assembly - we saw the need for a comprehensive revision of the proper law to take place in upcoming years in order to ensure internal consistency between the Constitutions, the Rule of Life, the Ratio Institutionis, and the other secondary documents. We realized that there were changes that we should not postpone. At the same time, to attempt to carry out this task exceeded the possibilities of this Assembly and therefore, would remain pending for 2026 General Assembly.

32. Formation, in its various dimensions and stages, is a transversal theme, to which we must give great importance in the upcoming years in order to continue advancing, unfolding, and developing our own vocation and charism:

- We must consolidate formation in the initial stages through follow-up, accompaniment, and evaluation of the options made in order to create an itinerary that lays foundations for a full development of our own vocation.
- We see the importance, as suggested in the report of the outgoing government, in the enlightenment of all consecrated women on a deep and renewed anthropological foundation, which will allow us to enter into a relationship, with God, the world and man from a perspective of truth; and a worldview from which to project our evangelizing mission.
- We must also promote formation that allows for the development of the personal mission of each Consecrated Women at the service of Regnum Christi and the Church, taking on the implications that this entails with responsibility.
- We want to continue consolidating the attitude of "*docibilitas*" in each one of us: an interior disposition of ongoing formation, which allows us to discover God's action in life as it is presented, with all its circumstances and encounters; which leads us to live collaborating actively in the process of being shaped by Him in reality, which is where God acts and makes Himself present.

## **G. SCOPE, POSSIBILITIES, LIGHTS AND ORIENTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

See, I am doing something new.  
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
(Isaiah 43:19)

33. Lights and orientations for the future have emerged as fruits of the Assembly's experience as described in this communiqué, of the Holy Father's address to the three federated institutes, and of the topics discussed. From these, the new government will be able to draft its

program and elaborate a strategic plan that will help to promote both the development of the personal mission of each Consecrated Woman and the institutional apostolic projection, together with the other priorities that they will have to address.

34. Discernment and co-responsibility seem to us to be key to the development of our Society in the coming years. We are confident that the harmony we have experienced during these days with regard to the basic principles is a fruit of listening to the Holy Spirit and that He himself will continue to guide us all. We hope that each one of us can carry out the interior process that will allow us to make this vision our own and, at the same time, enrich it with our personal and irreplaceable contribution.

## H. CONCLUSION

I have come that they may have life  
and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

35. The letter with which Gloria convoked the delegates concluded by transcribing some words from the homily of Bishop Rodríguez Carballo at the Mass for the Canonical Establishment of our Society: *"We are asked to be open to the world. We are not consecrated for ourselves, we are consecrated to build the Kingdom of God here and now so that all may have life and life in abundance. And all this with a great sense of belonging."*<sup>2</sup>
36. At the end of our Assembly, the experience of the encounter with Christ generates new life in us and sets ablaze the desire to give life and life in abundance. We want the gift of life that we have received in seed at baptism to be unleashed. We are astonished, once again, before our God who bursts into our lives and who comes to meet us by becoming one of us through the mystery of the Incarnation. We are moved by the mystery that He desires to entrust us with a responsibility as members of His Mystical Body to continue going out to meet each person and to carry out His plan of salvation. We are overwhelmed when we hear the echo of his personal call to follow him, to be his own and to share his mission as consecrated lay women of Regnum Christi.

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<sup>2</sup> Extract from the homily of Monsignor José Rodríguez Carballo on November 27, 2018, at the Mass to present the decree of canonical establishment of the Society of Apostolic Life Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi

37. We want to respond to this experience, like Mary, and renew our "Fiat":  
"Be it done unto me according to thy word" and proclaim with one voice,  
"Christ our King, thy Kingdom come!"

# Theme I.

## Mission

The kingdom of heaven  
is like a mustard seed.  
(Matthew 13:31)

### A. INTRODUCTION

38. From the beginning of the Assembly, the desire to understand, live and unleash our mission according to the spirit of the Kingdom resonated with great force: like that lush tree of which the Gospel speaks, which begins as a single seed that lays down its roots in the depths of the earth and grows organically. It was evident that, addressing the theme of mission in our Assembly gave us life. It especially united us with all our sisters around the world because it has been a theme discussed by all of us lately.
39. The reflection process on the mission had its starting point in the mandate given by the 2013 General Assembly to the General Government. As a result, a committee was formed in 2015 - 2016 along with reflection teams involving more than 100 Consecrated Women worldwide. Subsequently, the government communiqué of 15 August 2016 (Prot DG CRC 1075/2016) provided key concepts and insights regarding our identity in mission. The discernment process of Regnum Christi within its respective Assemblies in 2018 also shed important light. Finally, our canonical establishment as a Society of Apostolic Life confirmed essential elements regarding our identity as lay Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and provided us with a horizon in the living out of our mission.
40. The considerations that informed the reflection throughout these years and which were expressed in the working document on mission for this Assembly, enabled us to enter into dialogue based on a common understanding of the following aspects: the Trinity as the source and purpose of our mission; the mission of the Church and, within it, that of Regnum Christi, as the prolongation of Jesus Christ's mission; unity of life; the distinction between mission and apostolate. It also enabled us to realize that there are other elements that require further reflection and clarification.
41. The various themes that emerge from the mission, although they are presented under different headings, form an organic whole which cannot be dissociated in our lives. It is important to consider them in their totality

and see how they interrelate with each other. In light of the charism, of Christ's mystery that makes his Kingdom present in people's hearts and in society, everything is integrated and finds its meaning.

42. In order to represent the work of the Assembly regarding the theme of mission, we present within each section:
1. the concepts that have been validated in these days
  2. the elements that have provided light
  3. those elements that need to be matured
  4. the path we feel called to take.

## **B. APOSTOLIC PROJECTION**

Go into the whole world and  
proclaim the gospel to every creature  
(Mark 16:15)

### **Validated concepts**

43. On the basis of the document on mission, we validated our understanding of apostolic projection and the place it occupies within the global projection of our Society of Apostolic Life.
44. The global projection of our Society is understood as a medium- and long-term plan that takes into account the different elements of our institution (mission, formation, sustainability, organization, etc.). Apostolic projection is inserted within this global projection, and it springs from discernment about the scope and unfolding of our mission and the way of living it in various apostolic activities. Apostolic projection includes and integrates the discernment of the personal mission of the consecrated women, which will be developed further on.
45. Consecrated Women share the mission of Regnum Christi: we seek to make present the mystery of Christ who goes out to people, he reveals the love of his heart to them, gathers them together and forms them as apostles and Christian leaders, he sends them out and accompanies them as they collaborate with him in the evangelization of people and society.<sup>3</sup> We know that we are co-responsible for the development and projection of the mission of Regnum Christi and therefore we feel called to understand our mission and to project our apostolic action both in and from Regnum Christi.
46. With regard to this projection, there was widespread consensus on the need to begin with a prayerful and attentive reading of the realities of the

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<sup>3</sup> Statutes of Regnum Christi Federation #8

world we live in. It is essential to have a deep knowledge of what is happening in the ecclesial, social and cultural spheres in order to discern where and how the Lord wants us to collaborate with him to make his Kingdom present. We feel called to adjust our apostolic activity to the circumstances of the world around us, in order to respond to the signs of the times.

47. We are aware that resources are essential for the development, flourishing and continuity of our mission to proclaim the Gospel. Therefore, sustainability is one of the elements that must be considered in the discernment of our mission. Economic sustainability is not the responsibility of a few, nor is it the exclusive responsibility of those who provide a service of authority, administration or lead an apostolic work. We are all co-responsible for our communities' economic sustainability and for the future of the projects and apostolic works that we undertake for the good of the mission.

### **Elements that have shed light**

48. At all times, we kept in mind the different entities that make up Regnum Christi and once again reiterated our desire to actively commit to serving in the evangelizing mission of the spiritual family, together with the other vocations that form part of this family.
49. In a special way, we feel called to renew our commitment to the laity. Together with them, we want to journey with and deepen in the lay vocation. On various occasions, mention was made of the timeliness and advantage of creating networks to "imbue the social and cultural environments with a Christian spirit and to promote specific initiatives to this end".<sup>4</sup> This is both a theme that shed some light and one that we need to continue maturing among ourselves and in Regnum Christi in general.
50. Within the apostolic projection of our Society of Apostolic Life, we feel called to discover, with creativity, new ways of living the mission in our works and sections and to consider new places to go or new fields to open. Regnum Christi is not a structure. It is a charism, a spiritual family and an apostolic body that sets us in motion and commits us. Regnum Christi is its people, not just its works and sections; and the world is the field to which we are sent to evangelize.

### **Aspects or themes that need to be matured**

51. When speaking of the different contexts and environments of the world in which we live today, we have seen clearly that we feel called to bring the

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<sup>4</sup> Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation #49

charism of Regnum Christi "further," in other words, to see what ways the Lord is sending us to those realities and people - inside or outside our works and sections - who do not know Christ, who haven't yet heard the proclamation of the Good News of the Kingdom, or who don't know all of its beauty and attraction.

52. An area which we all deeply resonated with and feel called to explore in depth, is working with the most underprivileged. This theme was addressed when we spoke of mission and our vow of poverty. We need to continue reflecting on the way we reach out to the poor, not only to be bearers of the Gospel, but also to be evangelized by them.
53. Reviewing some numbers from our proper law, it became clear that we need to understand the topic of leadership better and more deeply: both the development of our own leadership, and our work of evangelization with those who have a particular responsibility in diverse social settings. We value the way in which the Federation's Statutes address this theme and we feel called to ask ourselves how we are called to live what is expressed in n. 33 of the Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation.
54. We also recognized that we need to continue developing the social dimension of our mission. We want to broaden our understanding of the way in which, from our lay consecration, we are called to "make Christ's Kingdom present in society." We spoke of the need to integrate evangelization with social commitment, because the Gospel is called to order temporal reality. We need to grow in the assimilation and living out of the social doctrine of the Church.
55. We are aware that our sustainability must usually come from remuneration for the apostolic activity carried out, net profits from our works, works that generate revenue, donations and fundraising, among others. It will be a challenge to work together with the Federation to find means of remuneration for those who carry out their apostolate in Regnum Christi and ECYD sections, and to ensure that the need for support does not compromise our presence there. We clearly want to maintain the sense of gratuity in our self-giving.

### **The path we feel called to follow**

56. The projection of the apostolic activity of our Society presupposes the action and primacy of grace with which we actively seek to collaborate, making us all co-responsible. In this sense, we place our human capacity at the service of the mission to project what will correspond to the concrete needs of evangelization of the Church and the world, taking into account the reality of the Society. At the same time, we recognize that we are collaborators of the action of God who loves and seeks man, offering eternal salvation.

57. The road ahead of carrying out this apostolic projection must not be rushed. The process must be lived in a way that fosters the active participation of all the consecrated women, the communities and the Regnum Christi localities where they are inserted. We do not want a projection that will narrow the scope or standardize the apostolic activity of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, but rather that will offer broad strategic trajectories and criteria of discernment for decision making.
58. As an exercise in visualization, some fields that we considered relevant because of the impact they can have within the context of today's world are: education as an indispensable area; pastoral work with children, adolescents and young adults, especially at the university level; marriage and family; formation and accompaniment; women; arts and beauty; pastoral work with vocations; formation of consecrated men and women; culture and academia.
59. Regarding the process of apostolic assignment, we realized that it needs to be reformulated and adjusted in accord with the path we are undertaking in the understanding of our mission and the development of one's personal mission and apostolic activity. It is fundamental that each Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi continue to grow in her personal knowledge and understanding of the reality of our Society and Regnum Christi in order to be a protagonist in the discernment process. Stability, responsibility, dialogue, participation, communication of needs and priorities, discernment, availability and specialization are elements to be taken into account in this process.

## C. WAY OF BEING IN THE WORLD

And the Word was made flesh,  
and dwelt among us.  
(John 1:14)

### Validated concepts

60. Many concurred that our way of being in the world is marked by our identity as lay Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi. Our identity integrates our consecration, the lay state and the charism of Regnum Christi in an inseparable way. These elements constitute a style of life and a way of being present in and relating to the world.
61. We want to look at the world as a place of encounter with God and with our brothers and sisters, aware of the thirst of God for man and the thirst of man for God. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." (Jn 3:16)

### Elements that have shed light

62. In particular, the mystery of the Incarnation illuminated the reflection on our way of being in the world as its foundation and inspiration. We feel

called to live the life that Jesus lived, to "incarnate" his way of life: to "make our own" his way of looking, of welcoming, of speaking, of listening, of loving. He wanted to establish his dwelling among us<sup>5</sup> and He wants to go among men doing good.

63. We recognized that, throughout our history, certain elements led to an inadequate view of the world and to a relationship that distanced us from it. Among these, the excessive norms that used to govern us, stand out. We feel called to mature our relationship with the world, to recognize what has distanced us, to seek to renew our way of looking at it and to order our praxis to live within it in a way that is more in conformity with the Gospel and our identity.

64. Expressions present in our Constitutions, such as: "the Kingdom of Christ in society," "to be a sign of the Kingdom in temporal realities," "to be a memorial of Christ's way of living and acting in the world," "to be an ever present response to the needs of the world and of the Church," "to be inserted in temporal realities and in the various social spheres," are a source of light for better understanding and discerning how we are called to live in the world, to be present in it and to establish relationships.

### **Aspects or themes that need to be matured**

65. On examining in depth the various aspects of our identity, we recognized that throughout our history, the lay dimension has not been sufficiently reinforced or expressed. In the coming years, we are tasked with exploring in greater depth the meaning of the lay aspect of our consecration in order to reach a common understanding that can shed light and order various aspects in the praxis of our life. This will require a theological deepening of our vocation, within the framework of ecclesiology of communion, in order to have a better understanding of the vocation to lay consecration, and the theology and spirituality of the Kingdom.

### **The path we feel called to follow**

66. We want to be signs of the Kingdom in the midst of the world through a deeply evangelical life that announces prophetically and serves with humility; that participates in people's lives in a simple way, bringing a vision of genuine hope to the world. We recognize in the living out of our vows, especially the vow of chastity, a privileged way of making the

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Gaudium et Spes #22. "The Son of God by his incarnation has united himself, in a certain way, with every man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind, he acted with a human will, he loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, he truly became one of us, similar to us in everything except sin".

Kingdom of Christ present in the midst of the world, by living from a belonging that shapes our whole being.

67. We want to "become all things to all people." (1 Cor 9: 22) We want to be where man and woman are today, being competent to enter into dialogue with them, learning to encounter them, approaching both the non-believer and believer, those who are hesitant and those who doubt. We recognize that there is still a way to go in this area of connecting with the men and women of today.
68. In order to bring the Gospel to the various sectors of society we have to know them, to learn to relate to the people who live in them, to understand the language that it is spoken, their concerns, joys, fears and hopes. To know the ways in which culture, thought, currents and social movements develop. To grow in a true inculturation in the places where we live and work.

## **D. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSONAL MISSION**

As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another  
as good stewards of God's varied grace.  
(1Peter 4:10)

### **Concepts we have validated**

69. The personal mission of each Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi is a gift which is rooted in the order of being and is expressed in her actions. Each one has a mission that integrates her natural gifts, talents, charisms, desires, personal history and frailties. Each has been given a specific way in which Christ is made present in her and, through her, in the world. The contribution of each Consecrated Woman is important to the whole and to the common mission. We are all called, like living stones, to build up the Body of Christ<sup>6</sup>.
70. Personal mission is not reduced to a process of assigning an apostolate or defining a field of apostolic activity. Nor is it reduced to a personal study plan or individual discernment that does not take into account the common mission and one's co-responsibility for carrying out Regnum Christi's mission.
71. The specificity that each one brings is a gift for the Society of Apostolic Life, for Regnum Christi and for the world. We want to welcome this "gift," recognize it, accompany it, and provide all the means at our disposal so that it may flourish. We are aware that the personal mission and its

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. 1 Pt 2:5: "You too, as living stones, should enter into the building of a spiritual edifice, for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, accepted by God through Jesus Christ."

apostolic pathway is developed and enriched throughout life. It is not something static but a dynamic process, which requires discernment and correspondence to grace and to the possibilities that life itself presents. It can be expressed in various apostolic activities and be concretized within a path of specialization.

### **Aspects or themes that need to be matured**

72. A common understanding of the meaning of the development of personal mission and its implementation still needs to be matured. Although there is light on this subject, we recognize that our understanding of it is still not completely clear and that frequently we use the same term to refer to different realities.
73. We want to delve deeper into the formation for personal and institutional discernment, since a good discernment and articulation of the personal mission is necessary for the development of our Society of Apostolic Life and Regnum Christi.
74. Throughout the process of discernment prior to the assignment of an apostolate, we must further mature the way in which communication and dialogue between Consecrated Women and the authorities of our Society and of Regnum Christi, in general, takes place.
75. We believe that it is necessary to take steps towards the practice of continuous performance evaluation of our apostolic activity on a personal level, and to seek feedback from those who know us closely or who work with us in the apostolate. We recognize that we lack personal knowledge in the apostolic field, among other reasons, because feedback on the performance of our apostolic activity has not been a common practice in our institutional culture.

### **The path we feel called to follow**

76. We recognize that the area of personal mission development is new to us and one that we must continue to encourage. It is a path that we want to travel with creativity, while continuing to deepen our identity. Fostering the development of the personal mission was an element of the global strategic plan (2017-2023) and in recent years we had different tools at our disposal for self-knowledge. We want to continue this effort in the next six years.

## **E. FORMATION FOR THE MISSION**

Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone  
who asks you for a reason for your hope.  
(1 Peter 3:15)

## Concepts we have validated

77. In addressing the theme of formation, we noted that it is always in function of the mission. We recognize the need to be prepared to enter into dialogue with the people of today, to ensure that every Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi has adequate and specialized training to carry out her apostolate. We are aware that the formative process lasts a lifetime and, at the same time, it is different at each stage. In this sense, we consider the attitude of *docibilitas* to be fundamental to allowing life to conform us to Christ.
78. Along our formative journey we need to acquire a growing knowledge of God, the world and man. We recognize the need to learn Christ's ways of seeing things and to unlearn ways of seeing that are inadequate and incompatible with the principles of the Gospel.
79. We understand that our formation for the mission includes academic studies, the formation of necessary skills as well as the reflection and interiorization of what we have learned from the experiences that life offers us.

## The path we feel called to follow

### *Initial formation*

80. In recent years we took institutional steps towards a robust formation for the mission. The studies of the baccalaureate in theology at San Dámaso Ecclesiastical University (Madrid, Spain) were chosen as the foundation for the period of study for the Consecrated Women in temporary vows. We validate that this option, which gives philosophical-theological foundations, is adequate to respond to the challenge of evangelizing in today's world. It will be necessary to continue evaluating the appropriateness of this option, according to the experience of the Consecrated Women. We have not done this long enough to be able to make this evaluation yet.
81. In the initial stage, it is essential that formation favors the integration and the maturing of the person, giving the necessary space for life circumstances to contribute to this process. For this reason, it is important that directors of this stage make this style of formation their own and promote it.
82. During the initial stages of formation, it is necessary to supplement theological studies with courses, seminars or other means, in fields that equip us for our apostolic activity (i.e. theology of the body and affectivity, accompaniment, developmental psychology, pedagogy, current affairs, marriage and family, etc.).

83. It is essential that we have communities capable of receiving Consecrated Women in temporary vows for apostolic work. The community has an important role in the accompaniment of these Consecrated Women. The task of accompaniment is not only that of the director, but also of the other people who walk with them.

#### *Permanent formation*

84. We understand permanent formation as the life-long process of transformation into Christ.

85. Throughout this six-year period many Consecrated Women have completed specialized studies. We consider it important to continue supporting formation that contributes to the development of the personal mission of each Consecrated Woman, and that can address formation deficiencies and contribute to the developing of the mission. It is also relevant to validate the experience that many Consecrated Women have acquired in certain fields of mission, even if they do not have special academic training.

86. Finally, due to the relational character of our mission, we consider it necessary to provide formation in the areas of affectivity and sexuality in order to help us to establish free and profound relationships.

## **F. COMMUNITY IN MISSION**

That they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you,  
that they also may be in us,  
that the world may believe that you sent me.  
(John 17:20)

### **Concepts we have validated**

87. The community is summoned by Christ, lives centered on Him and is animated by the Holy Spirit, who creates communion and configures us as apostles. We must welcome and nurture the gift of community by loving and serving one another.

88. We are a community because we all share the same vocation. We are both called and sent by the Lord to participate in one sole mission (his), which is expressed in a concrete way in Regnum Christi.

### **Elements that have shed light**

89. Each community of Consecrated Women possesses its own identity which is formed and shaped by the personal gift and mission of its

members and by the particular context in which they live. We could say that each community has its own 'character'. The community's *raison d'être* guides its dynamism.

### **Aspects or themes that need to be matured**

90. To review and adapt community life in order to favor and stimulate the living out of the mission, that is not reduced to apostolic activity, and yet implies it. To ask ourselves what fraternal life in common means for the concrete reality of our communities.

### **The path we feel called to follow**

91. We envision communities that are fully alive and life-giving. We feel called to grow in accepting each other as a gift, valuing diversity; to grow in our relationships with each other, to make them a path of human growth and a reflection of evangelical life. To learn to accompany each other as community, promoting - and, when necessary, healing - the esteem and appreciation of one another as an essential component to build a community in mission.
92. We want to share the responsibility for building the community, aware that the vitality of our evangelization also springs from it. To build community requires personal commitment, an attitude of self-giving and the participation of everyone in the project and mission of the community. It implies a mutual interest in each other's path to holiness. The community project is a privileged means to configure the community "in mission", it should look at the world and discern how the Consecrated Women who form the community are called to serve in their locality and specific mission.

## **G. DISTINCTIVE ELEMENTS OF OUR MISSION: AVAILABILITY AND INTERNATIONALITY**

93. We recognize that availability and internationality are two elements proper to our vocation which express characteristics of the charism that permeate our life. These are not static elements, rather they may be expressed in various ways according to the demands of the mission, times and circumstances in which our apostolic activity takes place. The specific expression of these elements must be pondered in relation to the other elements of our identity.

### **Internationality**

94. There is immense value in the fact that our communities are composed of diverse nationalities. Our experience of living in international communities

teaches us to welcome diversity, to remain open, to welcome the good in others and to expand our hearts. We recognize the evangelizing impact that an international community has. In the formation of the communities and in the projection of the Society it will be valuable to consider this aspect as something desirable, recognizing at the same time that it will not always be possible to put it into practice.

95. In this regard, we believe that internationality goes beyond how the communities are configured. It aims to be a reflection of the universality of the Kingdom. Christ gathers a diverse group of apostles and sends them out into the world with a missionary mandate. (Mk 16:15) Therefore, we want to discover ample and creative ways to establish and express internationality and interculturalism. Some examples could be: to seek ways of communication and collaboration between communities and territories for projects of evangelization; to share resources and maximize the strengths of others; to be enriched by the exchange of experiences, formation opportunities, activities, etc.; to form networks or to develop common projects through inter-territorial meetings, commissions and reflections.

96. We recognize the value of being able to get to know cultures different from one's own and leaving one's country of origin. We are also faced with the challenge of inculturation, understood as the appreciation, acceptance and respect of diverse cultures, understanding their history, values, traditions and ways of expressing their beliefs, seeking, like St. Paul, to "become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some." (1 Cor 9: 22)

## Availability

97. Our beginning point in terms of availability was what is expressed in our proper law and the experience we have had over the years. Our reflection led us to a clearer, broader and more mature understanding of this dimension. We understand that our availability stems from the desire to live like Christ, sent by the Father, (Jn 5:19) who calls and sends us in his name; who accompanies and supports us in the mission that he entrusts to us.

98. It is an underlying attitude that permeates our whole life and implies a dynamic of receptivity, listening and acceptance. It is a dynamic process of initiative and creativity, of proposal and apostolic impulse, which leads us to commit ourselves, to form ourselves and to offer to serve in certain areas of mission, places or responsibilities. Availability can imply both changing places and apostolates more or less frequently as well as remaining for long periods in a certain mission. It may imply working in a field of expertise even for life, or having to give it up in order to serve in a manner requested by the competent authority. It represents a way of living

the mission of making Christ's Kingdom present, as expressed in our specific promises.

## CONCLUSION

99. “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the holy Spirit.’” (Jn 20:21-22) Impelled by the breath of the Spirit, the Giver of life, we are sent to live our mission as signs of the Kingdom in the midst of the world through a profoundly evangelical life that prophetically announces the Good News and serves with humility. The next few years will be a significant time to implement what we have learned regarding the unfolding of our mission and to continue maturing the related themes. We are enthusiastic about the horizon that is set before us to continue giving ourselves from where each one is, and in this way to continue collaborating with the Lord to make his Kingdom present. Consecrated Women who are fully alive and life-giving. Apostles who are fully alive and life-giving.

## Theme II.

# Means of spiritual growth

Come, says my heart, "seek his face";  
your face, Lord, do I seek!  
Do not hide your face from me.  
(Psalm 27:8-9)

100. We, the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, feel called to be passionate seekers for God in the world He loves. We want to be his witnesses. Therefore, it is important to remain attentive and marvel at his presence in our own lives and in the world.
101. The spiritual life is a dynamic and abundant path which embraces our whole life. It is a path where we learn to be led by the Spirit to encounter God every day. To be found by him who invites us to his intimacy. His grace is offered to us freely and in many ways. Through it, the Lord teaches us to live by the criteria of the Gospel which transforms us little by little.
102. We feel the call to deep intimacy with God, seeking to encounter Him and dwell in His presence. On our journey through the world, we need intervals where we can return to God, renew our love, regain our strength, find light to carry on the mission and receive grace to renew our relationships. "Are there moments when you place yourself quietly his presence, when you calmly spend time with him, when you bask in his gaze? Do you let his fire inflame your heart? Unless you let him warm you more and more with his love and tenderness, you will not catch fire. How then will you be able to set the hearts of others on fire by your words and witness? If, gazing on the face of Christ you feel unable to let yourself be healed and transformed, then enter into the Lord's heart, enter into his wounds, for that is the abode of divine mercy." <sup>7</sup>
103. The means of spiritual growth are one of the components<sup>8</sup> of this search for God. This search is an existential priority which, if it does not affect our choices of time and space, runs the risk of becoming empty. In our Society of Apostolic Life, we recognize the value of certain means of spiritual life recommended by the Church that have borne much fruit over the centuries. Some have been part of our practice since the beginning,

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<sup>7</sup> Gaudete et Exsultate, #151

<sup>8</sup> Vita Consecratata #93 We may say that the spiritual life, understood as life in Christ or life according to the Spirit, presents itself as a path of increasing faithfulness, on which the consecrated person is guided by the Spirit and configured by him to Christ, in full communion of love and service in the Church. All these elements, which take shape in the different forms of the consecrated life, give rise to a specific spirituality, that is, a concrete programme of relations with God and one's surroundings, marked by specific spiritual emphases and choices of apostolate, which accentuate and re-present one or another aspect of the one mystery of Christ.

others have been introduced in these years of spiritual renewal. Both are means to help us live united to God, enabling us to be transformed by his Word in the midst of an apostolic life.

104. The previous General Government sent out a survey on the means of spiritual growth to ratify the ones that were proposed *ad experimentum* until the ordinary General Assembly of 2020. This survey was answered by 315 Consecrated Women (61% of the Society). Overall, it reflects that we give priority to the spiritual life in our lives. There is a desire to grow in intimacy with God and to give him the central place in our lives. However, it expresses the natural tension generated by the need to combine this reality with our strong apostolic commitment.
105. A firm conviction among us is the need to dedicate quality time to personal prayer. The ability and freedom to dedicate a full hour to personal prayer, as deemed appropriate to the different daily circumstances, has been positively valued. The centrality of the Eucharist in our lives, both in the celebration of the Eucharist and in adoration, and having greater time for personal prayer and less preaching in retreats and spiritual exercises, have undoubtedly helped to reinforce this conviction. In proposing the means of spiritual growth in 2016, we sought to encourage this consolidation, we sought to make clear what is essential and to order the means by considering their objective value – for instance, those that are liturgical - and those that have a subjective value of personal response to God, inspired by popular piety. This has allowed us to choose, taking into account our need for a deep prayer life, our identity as consecrated lay women and the tension of having the time available to harmonize prayer and apostolate in our lives.
106. It is evident from the survey responses that there is an appreciation of spiritual reading and the examen prayer, while at the same time a recognition of the difficulty in living them. The liturgy of the hours has been a practice introduced in recent years and, in general, has enriched the spiritual life of the Consecrated Women, and it seems appropriate to continue living it as we have done up to now. The survey also showed the importance of learning how to combine personal and community prayer, and the need to deepen the latter. We would like to offer some suggestions on how to make the most of these means and deepen their meaning for the spiritual and community life.

## A. SPIRITUAL READING

Make known to me your ways, Lord; teach me your paths.  
Guide me by your fidelity and teach me,  
for you are God, my savior, for you I wait all the day long.  
(Psalm 25:4-5)

107. Given the fact that we Consecrated Women value spiritual reading, but find it difficult to spend time on it as revealed in the survey, we want to renew our commitment to give it a place in our lives by finding the time to do it. We want to recall that it consists of reading done in the Spirit, a spiritual activity that benefits the soul, that has as its subject books by well-known spiritual authors and whose purpose is to form and nourish the person who does it. It consists of classic resources to maintain and enrich the spiritual life "since the spiritual nourishment of spiritual reading is as necessary for the soul as the material nourishment for the body."<sup>9</sup> (St. Teresa of Jesus)
108. Aware that "the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart" (Heb 4:12-13), we believe that Sacred Scripture is the source and treasure of the spiritual life. To know the Scriptures is to know Christ. It is to draw near to his mystery, to learn to know him and to recognize him as the disciples of Emmaus who had the experience of hearts that burned when they listened to Jesus while he explained the Scriptures to them.
109. Among the spiritual books that were suggested for spiritual reading in the 2016 government communiqué on the means of spiritual life, in addition to Sacred Scripture, some suggestions stood out: the most popular writings of the Fathers of the Church, the Magisterium of the Church in the spiritual field, masters of the spiritual life and other classical and contemporary books that combine biblical and theological depth, spiritual meaning, and the appropriateness of the topics and language for our times.

## B. EXAMEN PRAYER

Return, return to your heart (...)  
You will see that you were made by God,  
because the image of God is in your heart.  
(St. Augustine)

110. The examen prayer is an interior search, in dialogue with God, to learn to view ourselves with his eyes and to encounter his love and mercy. We seek, in this way, the conversion of our soul and the discernment of his will. The examen that we do at the end of the day with Compline helps us to gather up what we lived during our day's journey, to give thanks for what we have received, to remember the feelings we felt, the thoughts that emerged, and the actions and motions that led us, in order to discern through all this, God's presence in our day and to follow the path that He marks out for us.

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<sup>9</sup> Encyclopedia theological dictionary. J. Spanish. Bible: E. Ancilli, Spiritual Reading, in DE, 11. 471-472; J Sudbreck, Spiritual Reading, AA. VV, Spiritual Reading in SM, 1V 214-217. Christian reading and spiritual life, in Review of Spirituality 31 (1972), monograph on the subject.

111. Aware that spiritual retreats are precious moments to dwell on and recognize what the Spirit is doing in us, the newly approved Rule prescribes: "Look for a time to make the examen on retreat days, spiritual exercises or renewal retreats." We have traditionally used the format of the practical exam, however, we want to maintain the value that prayer of examen brings, but adapt its form. For this reason, each Consecrated Woman is invited to identify, with the help of her spiritual director, the most useful way to make a prayerful rereading of her life in order to keep our lamps burning. (cf. Lk 12:35)

## C. LITURGY OF THE HOURS

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.  
For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.  
(1 Corinthians 12:12-13)

112. Praying the liturgy of the hours helps us to be configured to Christ and thus to see as he sees, think as he thinks, pray as he prays, speak as he speaks and love as he loves. Because "He is present in His word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings, for he promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."<sup>10</sup> (Matt. 18:20) Through it our spirituality is strengthened, it is made more Trinitarian, Christocentric, ecclesial and human. It unites and associates us with the Church in praise and in the universal prayer of petition of the faithful. The word of God nourishes and energizes us to build community and generates hope, it broadens our horizons and expands our hearts.
113. As Consecrated Women we live immersed in the world and fully dedicated to the apostolate in very different circumstances, we have not considered it appropriate to prescribe praying the liturgy of the hours as a community.<sup>11</sup> Recognizing the richness and value of participating in the prayer of the Church belonging to all the baptized, we leave it up to each community to discern how to live it according to its own apostolic reality. We invite you to continue discovering its richness, and to look for creative ways to keep benefiting from this means of spiritual growth.

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<sup>10</sup> *Sacrosanctum Consilium*, 7.

<sup>11</sup> CCC, #1174

## D. COMMUNITY PRAYER

All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer,  
together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus,  
and his brothers.  
(Acts 1:14)

114. Every community of consecrated persons is born of divine initiative. We acknowledge that growing in fraternity is not the result of a human project but of the Trinity who calls his children to communicate to them their life of communion.<sup>12</sup> We share the conviction that community prayer is nourishment that promotes community life, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them," (Mt 18:20) and it is closely related to personal prayer.
115. Times devoted to share spiritual goods such as *Lectio Divina*, Encounter with Christ, Eucharistic Hour and other spiritual activities, help to configure the community, not only as an apostolic body but also as a community of apostles gathered around Jesus. Through the Word, silence and worship, the Holy Spirit purifies and inflames our hearts. A community that prays together fosters the awakening of fraternity and strengthens its human and spiritual bonds. In the measure that a community sincerely and creatively strives for the essential, its members will feel called to go beyond their own interests and become more united.
116. Considering the diversity of rhythms and schedules in our communities, as well as the creative dynamism which this search for God implies, we invite each community to value, discern and dialogue about the moments that will be done together for their common spiritual nourishment. A privileged moment to do this is when the community project is developed. In the atmosphere of discernment proper to this time, agreement can be reached on the means that most help the community and that are possible in its specific reality.
117. In the past, we have had a list of means of spiritual growth with a description of times and ways of living them. The Assembly has found it advantageous to simplify this list, allowing each Consecrated Woman and each community to discern the modality most helpful in the search for union with God and in the living out of the mission, taking into account the stage of life, personal spiritual needs and circumstances. The means proposed in the proper law present a minimum for the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi. Starting from this basis, the personal and community spiritual life can expand.
118. We recognize that as a Society we have the beautiful task of continuing to develop our spirituality. We are aware that within a rich and ever more mature spirituality, we will find greater meaning in our present means,

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<sup>12</sup> Fraternal Life in Community, (02-02-1994), #2.

and new expressions will emerge which will enrich our personal and community lives. Therefore, it is important that our formation efforts also take into account this reality.

119. We conclude by echoing the words of Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*: "Finally, though it may seem obvious, we should remember that holiness consists in a habitual openness to the transcendent, expressed in prayer and adoration. The saints are distinguished by a spirit of prayer and a need for communion with God. They find an exclusive concern with this world to be narrow and stifling, and, amid their own concerns and commitments, they long for God, losing themselves in praise and contemplation of the Lord. I do not believe in holiness without prayer, even though that prayer need not be lengthy or involve intense emotions."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Gaudete et Exsultate*, #147.

## Theme III.

# Care for elderly and infirm parents

Honor your father and your mother.  
(Exodus 20:12)

Then Peter said, "We have given up our possessions and followed you." He said to them, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God who will not receive [back] an overabundant return in this present age and eternal life in the age to come."  
(Luke 18:28-30)

120. We addressed this topic as an Assembly, taking into account the reflection that the general government invited us to have about the care of our elderly or infirm parents, in light of Holy Scripture, and based on the contributions that were sent in by the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi.
121. During the last six years, a growing number of permissions and proposals have reached the General Government from Consecrated Women asking to care for their elderly or infirm parents. We have sought out ways to address these needs. Some Consecrated Women already have a mission in their home country or city; others are spending more time with their parents, or are living outside the community to devote themselves to caring for their parents full time.
122. With the desire to respond to these requests, as well as being aware of the implications this has for the personal, community and apostolic life of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, we have sought parameters to shed light on the discernment of this topic. We offer you the fruit of our reflections which are the beginning of a journey of learning we are all travelling together.
123. Both in the contributions of the territorial Assemblies and in the General Assembly we have confirmed that we want to live a positive and natural relationship with our own family, not rooted in a separation, but springing from a specific apostolic vocation that entails demands and sacrifices. With deep gratitude, we acknowledge all the gifts we have received from our parents and, as daughters, we know we are co-responsible for supporting them in difficult times. At the same time, we are aware of the commitments made by our vocation and mission. The tension that we experience in combining both realities seems to us to be a natural part of life that we must learn to integrate.
124. Every family situation is very different. That is why we consider that the path of personal discernment is the way to approach these situations. We believe that when this happens, each one of us will have to ask the

Lord: what is the nature of the need that my family presents? What possible solutions do I find with the other members of the family? What are you inviting me to in these circumstances? How can I support my family at this time? And to ponder, what implications does this have for my personal life, my community life and my apostolic activity?

125. We invite those who live these situations to face them from a place of deep interior freedom and realism, as well as to consider, in their personal discernment: their concrete situation, that of their family, the opinion of their director, the implications this has in the different areas of their life and the various alternatives to meet the needs.
126. The communities have a significant role in relation to the Consecrated Women who are living these situations, and it is important that they are creative and realistic in the way they assume the consequences and implications that this can generate. The Consecrated Woman, for her part, understands what the community can offer her. The closeness and fraternal love that is offered to a sister in these circumstances and the recognition and contribution that she makes in her reality, are unique occasions to grow in humanity, to welcome weakness and to integrate it as part of life.
127. It is recommended that in the initial formation stages, each Consecrated Woman speaks with her own family about the understanding that we have as a Society in this respect.
128. Another important aspect is to gather experiences and teachings lived among us, and within other institutions, in order to have a greater variety of means and ways to support our families in these moments.
129. We want to show solidarity with all those Consecrated Women who have always lived far from their families and with those who have had to assume apostolic responsibilities that have prevented them from visiting them frequently or accompanying them in difficult moments. We understand that the norms we lived in relation to our families in the past have sometimes been the cause of deep wounds and great sacrifices for them and for us, as well as for our siblings and extended family. We know that behind all this there has been much love and a desire for fidelity to the Lord, and we ask Him to transform this offering into a source of life for all.
130. We ask God that the same experience of hope, joy and life that the delegates had in speaking about this topic, reach all Consecrated Women and their families.

## Theme IV.

# Poverty

131. One of the general objectives that we had as an Assembly was to begin to delve into the theme of poverty, to make the necessary adjustments in our proper law, as well as to discern and define the next steps to continue on a path of discernment in the living of this as a Society of Apostolic Life.

### A. IN LIGHT OF THE MYSTERY OF THE POOR JESUS CHRIST

132. We began the discernment and deepening of our understanding of our vow by contemplating the poverty of Christ, his dedication to the mission and his relationship with others and with material goods. Looking at him, his way of living poverty and his dedication to people, attuned our hearts. We share some of the aspects that many resonated with and the perspectives that allow us to continue explore our living of poverty.

#### Christ and the mystery of His Incarnation

133. Contemplating this mystery, we marvel that Christ wanted to become one of us and live like us: He wanted to welcome and share our human condition, "being rich he became poor in order to enrich us with his poverty." (2 Cor 8:9) By accepting life, people and what the Father provides, he shows us a way of living poverty.

#### The poor Christ as a "gift that is given"

134. Christ's life was an exodus, he never settled in one place; and as we contemplate the totality of his self-giving, we feel called to constantly return to this invitation to step out of our comfort zone. This implies entering into the logic of the gift. From this perspective, we understand that Christ's poverty is not limited to material poverty, but is expressed especially in the free and gratuitous gift of self.

#### Jesus Christ who trusts in his Father

135. Poverty is also letting God be God. Christ was in the heart of the Father, in his Will, in his mission. He trusted in the Father and lived abandoned to Him. When we contemplate this dimension of Christ's poverty, we feel invited to live the present moment and to embrace our condition as creatures deeply in need of Him. Like him, we want to live trusting in

God, in his providence, placing in him all our security: "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Mt 6:33)

### **Jesus Christ who becomes all things to all people**

136. Christ lived his relationships with people with freedom of spirit. He is accessible to all, without making distinctions, making every relationship a salvific encounter. He values others, and his freedom of heart allows him to adapt himself to every person and circumstance.

### **Jesus Christ and His relationship to material goods**

137. Christ lived his relationship with material goods freely with a pure heart. The ideal he proposes to us is to live detached from goods, to rectify the heart to give created things their rightful place. Jesus' radicalism is not characterized by the amount of renunciation but by the totality of belonging, and we see this reflected in how he lived polarized by the mission and centered on pleasing the Father.

## **B. LIGHTS ABOUT SOME PARTICULAR EXPRESSIONS OF THE LIVING OUT OF OUR POVERTY**

138. We could say that this way of contemplating the mystery of Christ is already, in some way, an expression of our charism, since it reveals to us the particular beauty that attracts us to his Person. Taking a further step and listening to our own experience, we wanted to delve into the charismatic expressions of our poverty and how we feel called to live it as Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, aware that it is a theme to explore further.
139. We understand that our poverty is made up of self-giving, of willingness to go out to meet others and share our personal gifts, talents and charisms, putting them at the service of others; of the use of material goods to the extent that they make the Kingdom present; of the capacity to enjoy and be amazed by the simple things in life; of gratitude for what is given to us.
140. We recognized the trait, so characteristic of us, of the awareness of the gift of time. It is a gift that has been given to us by God to give him glory and to carry out the mission of making the Kingdom present. For this reason, we seek to order our life towards this end, giving it meaning and making good use of time with a view to eternity.

141. We also see the sobriety, simplicity and dignity with which we live on a personal and community level as a characteristic of our poverty. We used to use the term austerity, but we believe that sobriety best expresses the qualities of order, decorum, cleanliness, harmony and good taste that we seek to have in our homes and places of work. Moreover, it is a term that is better understood in different cultures.
142. Finally, we came to the common intuition that we are called to live poverty by recognizing and accepting our limits and our fragile human condition. To be poor is to recognize one's own vulnerability and to know how to live from that perspective, allowing God to take our littleness and act through it.

### **C. A LAW THAT SAFEGUARDS LOVE: SOME CONCRETE EXPRESSIONS OF THE LIVING OF OUR POVERTY REFLECTED IN OUR PROPER LAW**

143. Based on these reflections and as a result of a deeper understanding of our identity, mission and way of being in the world, while the discernment continues, we offer some options on how to live this evangelical counsel, which have been reflected in the Constitutions that will be presented to the Holy See for approval, and in the Rule of Life.

#### **Our relationship with goods**

144. For members of Societies of Apostolic Life who profess the evangelical counsels, numbers 600 and 741.2 of the canon of canon law offer a reference point in their relationship to goods, leaving to their own law the concrete expression of these universal norms. For this reason, we address both the issue of the capacity to acquire, possess, administer and dispose of goods, as well as that of dependence on and limitation in their use.
145. We considered the importance of personal discernment, for it is in the depths of the heart that the spirit of poverty matures and is verified, where the capacity to moderate oneself, to use things wisely and to make use of them to the extent that they serve our end, without subjugating ourselves to them.
146. Options and applications:
- *Personal patrimony*: we accept what universal law allows - the ability to acquire, possess and administer our own goods (cf. can. 741.2). The new number of our Constitutions says: "Every Consecrated Woman retains the ownership of her goods and the capacity to acquire, possess, administer and dispose of them." We understand this as referring to personal

patrimony. Whenever one wishes to use and dispose of the profits for one's own support or for personal purposes, she depends on the director.

- *Personal budget:* this seemed to us to be a suitable means of living our vow and keeping alive the spirit of poverty. Preparing it requires a mature discernment of one's own needs and allows for the responsible administration of goods. Moreover, it is an ordinary way of living our dependence, since it is submitted for the approval of the director and we are accountable for it.
- *Donations:* we have opted for dialogue with the director for the use and transfer of the gifts and donations received, always respecting the intention of the donor. It involves the exercise of personal discernment, where dialogue with the director can help to consider different elements to decide on the best use of the goods. It is a topic that still needs to mature.
- *Goods for the Society:* Whatever a Consecrated Woman receives, earns or obtains by reason of the Society, she acquires for the Society. This includes both what she obtains through her apostolic activity (remuneration, salaries, stipends, etc.) and what she receives for being a member of the Society.
- We do not consider it appropriate to include the concept "in her own name" since it is a term that universal law does not use in reference to the members of the Societies of Apostolic Life. We thought that what is specified about personal goods (patrimony) and what is obtained in the name of the Society was sufficient.

147. Our past experience of poverty, - even though it sought inner detachment - emphasized more external aspects such as material renunciation, formal dependence, control and uniformity by regulations. Today we have before us a path of maturity, freedom and responsibility which we are eager to traverse.

## **Sustainability and co-responsibility**

148. We are committed to the sustainability of our communities, of the Society and the development of the Federation, so we all feel co-responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient sources of income. We believe that the apostolic work that we carry out must be remunerated and provide, together with other means of income (the net profits from our works, works that generate revenue, fundraising, etc.), the resources necessary for our sustenance, maintaining the sense of gratuitousness in our self-giving, knowing that this not only does not diminish but also strengthens our apostolic work. The Society may choose to take on certain apostolates that are not remunerated but which it considers important for the accomplishment of the mission.

149. We live the common law of work and we recognize a fundamental value in work that contributes to the development and maturity of the person and to the perfection of the vocation to which he or she has been called. At the same time, it leads us to collaborate with God in a generous way, to make the world more just, true and fraternal.
150. We have chosen the communion of goods as a principle in living our poverty. In the communities, goods are shared, not only material but also spiritual; there is a co-responsibility in building up the community by contributing one's own gifts, talents and goods. We share the same standard of living, seeking a simple lifestyle and choosing the common good. We need to continue to explore and enlighten the concrete way of living this reality and we recognize that there are different ways of understanding it.
151. We are co-responsible for the support of the Society and the Society ensures that we have the necessary means to lead a life that enables us to achieve the goal of our vocation.

## D. NEXT STEPS

### **An open challenge: support and relationship with the most underprivileged**

152. We have addressed this issue and we see with strength and clarity the need for a more real and meaningful commitment to the poor and a renewed focus on them. However, we did not succeed in exploring this topic as much as we would have liked, nor did we manage to find concrete ways of doing so.
153. We experience deeply the call that the Lord makes to us and we make our own the invitation of Pope Francis to be close to the poor, "to touch his flesh and to be personally committed in offering a service that is an authentic form of evangelization... The option for those who are least, those whom society discards is a priority that Christ's followers are called to pursue"<sup>14</sup> We want to look for spaces for real contact, to actually approach them and to see their faces. It is necessary to avoid simple assistance, to go beyond material help and to offer them "our hands, to be lifted up; our hearts, to feel anew the warmth of affection; our presence, to overcome loneliness."<sup>15</sup> To remain open to learn and to allow ourselves to be evangelized by them.
154. Our proper law already provides for support to the poor (cf. CCRC, 147 and Rules of Administration, 70). The challenge remains to explore this and discern how to live it, as well as to renew our way of seeing and relating to the poor and of drawing near to them. Jesus Christ showed

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<sup>14</sup> Message of Pope Francis, III World Day of the Poor, November 17, 2019

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

a special preference for them; we want to listen to what the Holy Spirit is raising up in our hearts to imitate him better in this aspect of his life and to make his attitudes our own as well.

**Path of discernment for the next six years:  
Enlighten, form, communicate, discern, and accompany**

155. Since poverty is a topic of crucial importance, it seems opportune to us that all Consecrated Women participate in this discernment, so that it springs from the life of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and their communities; enlightened by the development of the personal mission of each Consecrated Woman, and by the co-responsibility at many levels and in different fields and by the new challenges that we face as a result of our economic autonomy. A community discernment that is dynamic, part of daily life, but with milestones that allow us to stop and listen to God who is speaking to us through the facts. We want to discern how to live the vow of poverty based on our identity as consecrated women, laywomen, and members of Regnum Christi, taking into account our mission in the world.
156. Without attempting to be exhaustive, and leaving space for the general government to discern the themes it considers most appropriate to include in each area, we want to illustrate with broad brushstrokes what came out of the discussions in the Assembly hall - what four actions we propose to keep working on in the theme of poverty.
157. To enlighten and to form: there are concepts that, to date, are not clear or where there is not convergence among Consecrated Women and where there is no common understanding, which was also evident in the Assembly. Some of them are dependence; dialogue with the director; freedom; our relationship with work as Consecrated Women and members of a Society of Apostolic Life; personal patrimony; the communion of goods, among others. We need formation in order to arrive at a more comprehensive and deep understanding of them. Also, in other parts of this communiqué we have spoken about the need for formation on topics that give light to our living of poverty and our following of the poor Christ, as consecrated lay women of Regnum Christi in the 21st century. Among these themes, we highlight: a deeper understanding of the theology of the People of God and the specificity of the lay vocation in the framework of the ecclesiology of communion; the social doctrine of the Church and administrative issues.
158. Communicate: since this discernment affects everyone, it is important that no territory be isolated or have difficulty in accessing the formation required for this journey. The Assembly underlined the importance of recognizing the past practices that were incorrect in the area of poverty, in order to replace them with practices more in line with our style of life. In order to be co-responsible for sustaining our communities and our Society, we see the need of regularly communicating the economic and

financial status and the progress of the sustainability plan, helping us to understand where there is clarity and where there is not, and the challenges we have to face together.

159. Discern: together with the aspects mentioned above, we consider it opportune to continue a journey of discernment about our poverty to help us discover the values we find in it, the charismatic elements that determine our style of living it, how to be meaningful through our way of being in the world, among others. As well, it is necessary to discern the practical applications of poverty in our lives at the personal, community, institutional and apostolic levels. We want to offer the fruit of this discernment to the Assembly of 2026.
160. Accompany: in this process we are called to accompany each other. Since it is a dynamic process, it is important to keep in mind that we are already immersed in a cultural change that implies living from an attitude of openness that fosters freedom, responsibility, autonomy, maturity, and where individuals and communities make free and responsible choices, enlightened and encouraged by a mature understanding of the values that values that are at the heart of our vocation. In this context, we will seek the voice of God to show us the choices that we will have to make in the area of poverty. It will be important to accompany the territorial directors, administrators and community directors so that we can take the steps outlined above and do so with a renewed spirit that will touch all the aspects of our life. The directors should also accompany the Consecrated Women so they can each live their commitment to Christ and to the Society with joy and maturity, without fears and unfounded insecurities about their livelihood and future.

## CONCLUSION

161. We have adjusted our proper law, and there is room to continue going deeper in this theme. We invite all Consecrated Women to join in and commit themselves to this second stage of discernment, and we ask Mary to lead us to a full experience of poverty as a path of openness to God and to others, a source of joy and inner freedom (cf. CCRC, 21,2).
162. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:3). The contemplation, imitation and following of the poor Christ gives us life. We want to be poor; we want to have him as our only treasure (cf. CCRC 21,1). We want to make responsible and mature choices for poverty. "Since there is a poverty that we must accept, that of our being, and, on the other hand, a poverty that we must seek, the material, from the things of this world in order to be free and to be able to love."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Pope Francis, General Audience February 5, 2020

## Theme V.

# Sustainability of the Society

163. The Extraordinary General Assembly of 2018 saw the need to include in the objectives for this 2020 Assembly the discussion and proposal of a sustainable path for our Society of Apostolic Life.
164. This topic was discussed within the context of work with the other federated institutions concerning the patrimony of the Society and the governance of the works, as well as the mission and living of our vow of poverty.
165. We understand sustainability as a growth model that meets the current needs of the Society in all areas, while guaranteeing its stability over time.<sup>17</sup>
166. We are aware that our greatest treasure is people, and for this reason we wish to ensure that each Consecrated Woman is cared for and developed in an integral way as well as our mission. We appreciate that apostolate is not isolated from the economy, but rather economy is intrinsically linked and at the service of the apostolate, mission and charism.
167. In the course of the Assembly, we became aware of the overall situation of the Society in this area. We identified and defined our role in governance, leadership and management of the apostolic works of Regnum Christi. We reiterated, through a mandate to the general government, the need to count on a short-term and long-term plan of sustainability.
168. Considering the steps already taken towards our financial autonomy, and in order to make further progress, it is of particular importance that this plan consider:
- 1<sup>o</sup> continuing to organize our financial situation at all levels (community, territorial and general), in order to have clarity about both the real costs of autonomous government and the current and future sources of income;
  - 2<sup>o</sup> the financial responsibility that we, together with the other federated institutions, have over the Regnum Christi Federation;
  - 3<sup>o</sup> the challenge of finding ways to remunerate the Consecrated Women who carry out their apostolate in the sections of Regnum Christi and ECYD;
  - 4<sup>o</sup> the need for greater administrative training for all Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, and specific training for those who will hold government or administrative positions.

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<sup>17</sup> Reglamento of Administration of the Society of Apostolic Life, #37

169. This path of sustainability calls for the participation of each and every one, as we have affirmed in our own proper law: "Each Consecrated Woman is co-responsible for the support of her community and the development of the Society and the Regnum Christi Federation." To achieve this, we consider it necessary to promote greater communication and transparency with all Consecrated Women on these issues.

## Theme VI.

# Patrimony of the Society and government of the works

170. Within the framework of the General Assemblies of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, the Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi, and the General Chapter of the Legion of Christ, the three institutes agreed on the general principles for governing the works of the apostolate and the patrimony of the Society.
171. This is a step further on the path begun in 2018 with the constitution of the two Societies of Apostolic Life and the Regnum Christi Federation. The work was carried out in accordance with principles to ensure the autonomy and the canonical government of the federated institutes and of the Federation itself; to promote its continuity and ensure a suitable transition; to give priority to the good of Regnum Christi, of the works of the apostolate and of the common mission.
172. We, the federated institutes, are aware of our co-responsibility, together with the lay members, for the Regnum Christi Federation. We wish it to flourish, in accordance with its Statutes, as an expression of its common spirituality and mission (cf. SFRC 6), to fulfil its purposes (cf. SFRC 4) and to operate under the authority of its own governing bodies (cf. SFRC 76-93). In turn, we are committed to our role in the Federation and together we will strive to ensure its continuity and the novelty that this canonical configuration also entails in relation to its patrimony, sustenance and operation.
173. Likewise, we wish to give priority to the promotion of the apostolic works, particularly educational works, ensuring their proper functioning, everyone's participation and favoring the best governance, direction and management for the benefit of evangelization.
174. We started a journey that each territory will have to continue, taking into account the current reality of its works and apostolates. We need to understand that this new reality and its implementation will require, above all, a change of culture (schemes, expectations, ways of operating...), flexibility, patience, humility to accept new things, and everyone's collaboration. The spirit of communion and our commitment to the mission is also reflected here.

## Theme VII.

# Institutional position with regard to the person of the Founder

175. Gathered as the supreme body of the Society of Apostolic Life of the "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi," after having been canonically established on November 25, 2018, the delegates wish to officially state our institutional position regarding the person of our Founder, Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado.

176. We make our own the statement made by the Holy See in the Communiqué of May 1, 2010,<sup>18</sup> as well as the words that Pope Francis addressed to us during this Assembly:

*"The criminal behavior of your founder, Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado, which emerged in all its gravity, produced a deep crisis in the whole of Regnum Christi, both as an institution and individually. While, on the one hand, it cannot be denied that he was the "historical" founder of the entire reality that you represent, on the other hand, he cannot be considered as an example of holiness to be imitated. He made himself the point of reference, through a false image that he created with his double life. Moreover, his long-centralized government had, to some extent, tainted the charism that the Holy Spirit had originally given to the Church; and this was reflected in its norms, as well as in the practice of government and obedience, and in its style of life."<sup>19</sup>*

177. As a Society of Apostolic Life, we categorically reject the criminal and gravely immoral acts of Fr. Marcial Maciel.

178. We affirm that the charism which we have received as a Society is a gift that the Holy Spirit has given the Church. The charism belongs to the Spirit and it is the Spirit who continues to give it life. We therefore acknowledge Fr. Marcial Maciel as our historical founder, but not as our spiritual founder,<sup>20</sup> since he did not incarnate the charism.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> "After having known the truth about his life, it became clear that the conduct of Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado, L.C. has caused serious consequences in the life and structure of the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ. Such consequences call for a journey of profound renewal". (Communiqué of the Holy See on the Apostolic Visit to the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ. 1 May 2010).

<sup>19</sup> Speech of the Holy Father Pope Francis to the participants in the General Chapter of the Legionaries of Christ, and the General Assemblies of the Consecrated Women and the Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi. 29th February 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Gianfranco Ghirlanda, S.J., Conference given to the Ordinary General Assembly of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, 28 January 2020

<sup>21</sup> Gianfranco Ghirlanda, S.J., "Charism of the Institute and its Proper Law", March 31, 2011, Anthology of texts of the Pontifical Delegate and his councilors for the Congregation of the Legionaries of Christ and members of the Regnum Christi Movement, #323.

179. Over the course of time, we are coming to a clearer understanding of the scope of the implications of his life and actions on our institutional culture. It is with deep sorrow that we acknowledge the impact and consequences this has had. We ask forgiveness for the damage that this has caused to the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, to those who are no longer with us and to those who have been affected in any way.
180. As Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi we commit to continue exploring our history and its consequences, in order to continue building our lives on the truth, and to continue our renewal and conversion according to Gospel values. We entrust ourselves to God who 'makes all things new.' (Rev 21:5)

## Theme VIII.

# On sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable persons

181. From the outset of the Assembly, and although it was not one of the designated topics to be discussed, the need to address, in truth and depth, the reality of sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults emerged. This issue was broached in plenary meetings and, additionally, an internal commission was created which, throughout these weeks, delved deeper into the matter, generating analyses, documents and proposals that were discussed in plenary meetings and in work teams.
182. This commission proposed to shed light on the discernment of this theme, taking up again the contemplation of the passage of the Good Samaritan - which we had meditated on during the retreat preceding the Assembly - so that by taking the motions of those days we could connect with the affections, feelings, certainties, which the theme raised for us. In this way we prepared our hearts to listen attentively to how the Spirit was moving within us: what was the Lord inviting us to personally, as a community, as an assembly, and as a spiritual family.
183. As consecrated women with a specific vocation and mission within our Church, following the example of Jesus, we feel called to permeate our daily realities with greater compassion, care, and empathy. Drawing near to the depths of the pain of our brothers and sisters has marshaled in each one of us, as a gift to be given, the commitment to welcome and protect the victims of sexual abuse, particularly those who have suffered it within our spiritual family.
184. General guidelines have been drawn up for this type of crime, the application of which will have to be adapted to the concrete reality, by means of codes of conduct and procedures established territorially. These guidelines have been set out in Decree I of this communiqué.
185. The Assembly spent some time reflecting on the internal culture that could and might favor abuses or cover-ups. Based on the report of the government, we have begun a diagnosis, analyzing the exercise of authority and its impact on the way we conduct ourselves and relate to one another. It seems to us that continuing this analysis will be a starting point that will contribute to bringing truth to our history and projecting a different future.
186. We think that each one of us should make an examination of our affective-sexual development and maturity and the implication that this aspect has on our pastoral work.

187. Along the same lines, and as a contribution to prevention, the Assembly has asked the General Government to set up a study commission to address the issue of inappropriate behavior and the crossing of boundaries in the sexual and affective areas that do not constitute a crime.
188. Given the reports and communications on cases of sexual abuse of minors issued by the Legionaries of Christ, and recognizing that this topic was addressed by their General Chapter, the Assembly sent a letter to the Chapter Fathers (cf. Appendix II). In this letter we shared with them our shock and sorrow at the publicly known facts and the enormous damage this has caused the victims. It raised the question of the impact that these facts and the way that they are addressed and communicated have on our entire spiritual family, the Church and society. And finally, it proposed a path and suggestions so that together we can build a working plan that will allow us to face this problem, and to do so from the truth and a sincere commitment to the victims. On February 24<sup>th</sup> we received the response from the General Chapter. Both letters are the beginning of a conversation. The specific way of proceeding still needs to be agreed upon. (cf. Appendix III)
189. Those of us participating in this Assembly have the full certainty that Christ will accompany us on this journey of purification and that the Gospel must permeate and challenge all our actions and motivations.

# Theme IX.

## On the exercise of authority

### A. INTRODUCTION

190. In the first days of the Assembly we were presented with the Report of the General Government for the six-year period 2014-2019. When we reached the fifth part: "Some aspects of the exercise of authority in our history as Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi," we saw that it was advantageous to delve deeper into this topic because of its special relevance. We approached it in a climate of discernment, reflection and mutual listening, and we were able to see more clearly how deviations in this area have influenced the living out of our vocation and mission. While it is true that we have lived this area with generosity and a desire to please God, we acknowledged with sorrow the impact that the inadequate exercise of authority has had on our personal, community and apostolic life.

191. We recognize that we have made progress in carrying out the changes that the Church asked of us as a result of the 2011 apostolic visitation: the separation of internal and external forum, consultations for the appointment of local and territorial directors, the appointment of councils that moderate authority and the rotation of persons in positions of government. However, there are still steps to be taken and certain inertias to be corrected in order to achieve a healthy and mature experience of authority and obedience.

192. We have adopted the content of the fifth part of the report of the outgoing general government and we are convinced that the recognition made in it about our past, the clarity it throws on the traces still left in the present, the steps taken and what still remains to be done, can be an open door that gives us light on how to live an evangelical journey of growing freedom, maturity and personal responsibility because "the truth will set you free." (John 8:31) For this reason, we present some extracts from the report, and we invite each Consecrated Woman to read it prayerfully and serenely, with the hope that it will aid personal reflection on this journey of renewal, conversion and purification that we want to continue to make as a Society.

### B. FIFTH PART OF THE REPORT ON GOVERNMENT "SOME ASPECTS OF THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY IN OUR HISTORY AS CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI" (EXTRACTS)

193. *The life of the Founder and his style of exercising authority formed in the institution a culture that fostered a strongly vertical system in which a type of obedience and dependence was valued that is not proper to a mature adult, a system where criticism and diversity of opinion were not accepted and those who did so were marginalized or labeled. This system put people in a vulnerable position, where their natural rights and even the sanctity of their conscience could be violated in the name of obedience. In one way or another, this has influenced every generation, since the directors were trained to exercise a style of authority that was not always correct and, in spite of the effort made in the years of renewal, we must not forget that each of the Consecrated Women, and therefore the directors as well, have been gaining awareness of and making steps at a varying pace, on the subject of the service of authority and obedience. Nevertheless, it is important to consider that not everything that is expressed here has been done by every person in authority nor that all the Consecrated Women have gone through these circumstances. It is necessary to recognize and thank the dedication and service of many Consecrated Women in authority throughout these 50 years, where they sought the good of those entrusted to them. What is noted in this section are the deviations that we have committed in one way or another, to try to manifest what we need to continue to work on.*

194. *The experience of each of us in this field is distinct. While we have all lived in an institutional culture where grave errors were made in the exercise of authority, some have experienced situations of abuse of authority and conscience.<sup>22</sup> It is therefore necessary to differentiate errors and deviations in the exercise of authority from what is an abuse, so as not to include everything in the same category.*

## Presupposition

195. *The foundation of our obedience is filial, therefore, linked to the truth that being children makes us free, to grow in the love of the Father who affirms our good. The freedom that Christ has come to bring us is not a lack of any obligation or demand towards our actions. We live in obedience to God because we freely want to respond to his love, in identification with Christ through the Holy Spirit. In the Christian obedience of consecrated persons, there is an ecclesial mediation,*

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<sup>22</sup> Note from the Assembly: We recognize that there is not yet a clear or definitive definition of what constitutes an abuse of authority or conscience. We use this term in the context in which it is used in the following two conferences:

- Lecture by Dr. Isabelle Chartier-Siben to the Conference of Religious of France, 9

December 2019: <https://www.viereligieuse.fr/Dans-un-contexte-religieux-l-emprise-correspond-a-une-alienation-mentale>

- Considerazioni a proposito dell'abuso spirituale, o di coscienza. Incontro con i Direttori Spirituali dei Collegi e Convitti a Roma. Congregazione per il Clero. Rome, February 7, 2020.

*which must correspond to this "glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom 8:21). We recognize our need for conversion and purification so that our understanding and practice of authority honors this condition as daughters of God.*

## **The past**

- 196. There was an institutional culture that favored homogeneity in various fields, where submission to authority was valued, and an attempt was made to instill a way of thinking and feeling according to the directives and desires of the person in authority. This permeated personal, community and apostolic life, marking a way of being and of interacting.*
- 197. There was a climate of pronounced adherence to authority and to the way we would do things which lacked a critical sense towards the institution and all who formed a part of it, particularly those in authority, who were idealized, closing our eyes to their mistakes, or at the very least, trying to excuse them. This was protected by the promise not to criticize and to warn the director if anyone did. This meant creating a close circle around the authority figure and the environment became more closed in on itself, and therefore people became vulnerable.*
- 198. Divergence, questioning and a critical spirit were rejected because they were considered as threats to "the monolithic unity and esprit de corps".*
- 199. There was no separation between the extra-sacramental internal forum and external forum, so all the aspects of one's personal life were subject to authority. In addition, trust and total openness with authority was encouraged and valued as a way to be known and helped, and it was frowned upon when someone didn't do so. Naturally, people who needed to feel understood, loved and valued wanted strong ties with the authority figure (the only people with whom they could have deeper ties), with the risk that this would be fertile ground for abuses of authority and conscience.*
- 200. This dependence on authority in the various spheres of life undermined personal autonomy and freedom, which in many cases was disregarded: the person came to judge and value herself according to the judgment and value that authority had of her; the management and decisions of life itself required the approval of authority in even trifling matters. Indiscriminate docility to authority was erroneously considered to be true obedience, favoring infantilism in people.*
- 201. Authority, on many occasions, seemed to have the right to interpret what God was asking of the person, judging their intentions and their actions, probing their conscience without respecting the right to privacy and discretion, making judgments about the person and consequently*

*replacing their conscience. This significantly affected the concept that the person had of herself, her capacity to assume a free and personal way of being facing God in regard to the judgments and decisions about one's own life, limiting the possibility of personal discernment.*

*202. In the human and psychological realm, authority had the prerogative of demanding that the person be accompanied and have psychological or psychiatric evaluations, determining the professionals who would provide the assistance, accessing the information and evaluations without asking for the person's consent.*

*203. This type of obedience was motivated in many different ways, generating a great and sincere desire to please God, at the same time identifying authority with the will of God in even the smallest details, in the preferences and suggestions of authority, beyond what was strictly required by consecrated obedience. Obedience of judgment was also encouraged as part of the same promise of obedience, without distinguishing it from the true matter of the vow. The mixture between the motivation to please God and a meticulous obedience generated confusion and different types of deformation of consciences, depending on the culture and age.*

*204. The area of interpersonal relationships was reduced by norms or ways of life that somehow limited and controlled dealings with various types of people. Relationships with one's own family were greatly affected, weakening family ties; relationships with outsiders were lived with caution, always seeking an apostolic goal; fraternal relationships were to be marked by charity towards everyone, and any close and deep relationship was avoided, as it was automatically considered a risk in the area of chastity or universality of dealings with others. In the precandidacy and formation center, classes were held at home, outings were organized determining who went with whom, etc. There was, generally speaking, a lot of control. All of this meant people lived in more sheltered environments and with fewer ties, relationships or support networks making them more vulnerable and dependent on the institution, and therefore on its authority.*

*205. Vocational and formative processes were more oriented towards the acquisition of traits of an ideal woman and the achievement of group objectives, without taking sufficient account of the situations and processes of each person according to their age, origin, way of being, affectivity, sensitivity, etc. There was a rather egalitarian idea of the type of mission that they were being formed for, with little interest in the apostolic service that each one could exercise in her own personal journey.*

*206. At times, people with skills in the field of human relationships were placed in positions of authority who, in some cases because of their affective immaturity or other personal motives, tended to manipulate*

people or sought to surround themselves with some who "were their favorites" or were useful in helping them with required service.

207. There was a tendency to seek out certain profiles of people to appoint them to authority; they were often young and tended to remain in the position without adequate rotation of persons. This, associated with certain privileges (perhaps minimal, but significant in the very regulated and dependent life that was lived; they had more freedom, more personal space, etc.) made it difficult in many cases for them to put themselves in the shoes of the Consecrated Women whom they governed and to empathize with their situations.

208. The pace of life used to be very loaded; even free time was scheduled. This did not give the person the space or time needed to think, to be alone with oneself, to question things, to form her own opinion and to have deep relationships with others. Not living in this way could generate a feeling of guilt for "not taking advantage of one's time."

### Report from the 2011 Apostolic Visitation

209. The report from the Apostolic Visitation in 2011 mentions:

- The fact that the directors were so young, and with little experience of consecrated life, meant that they sometimes applied the norms with a lack of certainty, without real knowledge of each individual, and without a hierarchy among the many norms they had.
- To purify the concept of the vow of obedience, offering room for personal freedom, and respect for the conscience of each person, in order to encourage responsible obedience and allow for a fraternal life where transparent fraternal interaction can take place.

### Work done over the years

210. Following the intervention of the Pontifical Delegate, various efforts have been made to promote awareness of those institutional areas that needed to be changed in the field of the service of authority and obedience. This is a core element in the institutional culture, which had already been called for in the Holy See's Communiqué to the Legion of Christ of 1 May 2010. It is noted that steps have been taken, but it is still not enough. It is necessary to continue to deepen the understanding of the human person from an accurate Christian anthropology, as well as in the vow of obedience and the service of authority. This needs to happen through a formation that sheds light on fundamental principles, the aspects that need to be addressed and the horizon which we all need to walk towards together in a spirit of co-responsibility.

211. Having consulted men and women of the Church who have been clarifying these concepts, there has been a growing awareness of the

*need to clarify for all the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi what the vow of obedience implies in its canonical and charismatic aspects, helping them to better understand where it is lived and applied and where it is not. The aim is to convey this from the first stages of formation, and to use the renewal courses to reinforce this understanding and to purify past errors.*

- 212. We have sought to offer formation in the service of authority in order to identify the errors of the past and to renew the way in which this service is lived out. We have sought to address: the dignity and respect of the person, her conscience, freedom and the capacity to respond with maturity and autonomy before God, to recognize her capacity to seek and know the truth, her freedom of expression, her appreciation of critical thinking, her interpersonal relationships in various settings, safeguarding the separation of forums, decision making based on principles exercised in personal discernment and not according to a control exercised by authority, etc.*
- 213. Renewal and rotation of people in positions of authority is happening by appointing directors at all levels, with various profiles. An attempt has been made to eliminate a stereotype of persons in authority by encouraging the mentality that this is a service, rather than an honor, in which everyone's availability is needed. In spite of this, sometimes it has been the communities themselves who prefer a person with more experience, as director, instead of accepting the proposal of new people who are willing. At other times, it has been difficult to find Consecrated Women who are willing to take on a role of authority, above all as directors of communities, because of the demands that are made on authority as a result of how this position was lived in the past, because of the tensions that arise today in a time when many changes are taking place at the same time, with the consequent insecurity and loss of confidence due to the demise of the parameters used in the past, and the lack of assimilation of the principles that should lead and enlighten us.*
- 214. The communities currently conduct consultations for the appointment of their local and territorial directors. Each director exercises a moderated authority and is supported by a council.*
- 215. The precandidacies were closed, among other reasons, because over the years important deficiencies were noted in the formation processes of some of the Consecrated Women who came from these centers, which did not favor their maturation. Having a closed environment did not favor the integration of the experiences proper to adolescence, regarding their formation of identity, affective maturation, etc.*
- 216. We have opened ourselves up to academic environments outside our own. Many Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi are studying for degrees and doctorates in civil and ecclesiastical institutions outside*

*Regnum Christi and they bring back the richness that they receive. The studies of the Consecrated Women in formation are no longer internal but are carried out in an ecclesiastical university, thus fostering a deep philosophical and theological formation which helps them to acquire a solid foundation, to form critical thinking, to broaden their personal relationships, to experience diversity and to be enriched by it.*

## **Current situation**

- 217. In personal and community life, although steps have been taken, today we still see the traces of the wounds, errors and confusion which we have lived in this area of service of authority and obedience. It is necessary to attend to them by means of formative activities that enlighten and shift the institutional paradigms.*
- 218. The wounds suffered by the system in which we lived, as well as the fears that accompany them, are manifested in different ways according to the different types of people, the experiences they had, the age at which they occurred, their duration and the range of these experiences. Some of the consequences are: depression or sadness, insecurity and low self-esteem, anxiety, immaturity in taking charge of one's own life, distrust of authority, a tendency to protect oneself and sometimes to overreact by stressing one's autonomy and individuality, anger at the actions of authority and harsh judgements about the way people are.*
- 219. It is clear amongst the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi that each one must be responsible for her own personal life and that all are called to take co-responsibility for developing the community, without expecting almost everything to depend on authority. Often, however, all kinds of problems are deferred to the one in authority, or authority is blamed for things that are rather the actions or limitations of other people.*
- 220. In theory, we have come to understand that many people will have to exercise this service at some point, and that the director cannot be expected to do so perfectly. However, in many cases there continue to be high expectations of authority. It also happens that, when a new person is appointed director, the community or the director herself soon asks for a change.*
- 221. Some directors are afraid to exercise the service of authority because they do not want to fall into the errors of the past, they hold back, or they do not know how to offer the service which they were entrusted with. The vast majority are becoming aware and changing at different rates. It is not clear what is and what is not the responsibility of the director, there are different expectations and viewpoints in the same community, which makes it difficult for the director to know how to proceed with each person.*

222. *Dialogue with the one in authority is more common than before. There has been an advance towards mutual acceptance and listening, openness to diverse and sometimes divergent points of view, there is growing freedom to present and express one's own point of view to authority, but it is still necessary to encourage this and to continue to take steps in mature and respectful dialogue.*
223. *The separation of forums has been understood and appreciated and it is a common practice among Consecrated Women to have spiritual direction with a person who has no authority over them and who, in many cases, is not part of Regnum Christi.*
224. *Today it is more common than ever for people in authority to seek to protect and safeguard the individuality and freedom of each person to act according to her conscience and before God. Three points that we have worked on particularly attentively are:*
- 1<sup>o</sup> *Living according to principles: we have gone from living in a thoroughly regulated system to living according to principles that guide each person in the different circumstances of her life according to her condition as a Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi.*
  - 2<sup>o</sup> *Personal responsibility: each Consecrated Woman is ultimately responsible for the decisions she makes. When she experiences difficulty in obeying some indication, she has the freedom to express her disagreement, and in a climate of dialogue with the one in authority, seek together what God may be asking of her in that circumstance.*
  - 3<sup>o</sup> *Graduality: During the years of initial formation the formators have the task of accompanying more closely those who are learning what it means to be consecrated within Regnum Christi. In the measure that she assimilates the style of consecration to which she is called, each Consecrated Woman who has freely embraced this form of life, takes on the living of the proper law by applying principles to their various circumstances with maturity, rendering less necessary the close accompaniment of the formators.*

### **Remaining tasks**

225. *In this section, tasks concerning the exercise of authority and the relationship with authority are outlined, but it will be important, at the same time, to continue to work on how to live out the vow of obedience.*
226. *Since the apostolic visitation, there have been developments in the awareness of the true role of authority in the life of a consecrated woman. The Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi have walked a*

*path of growing personal freedom and responsibility in living out their vocation, but the weight of a history of almost 50 years, where the paradigm of authority was very different, cannot be disregarded.*

*227. It is necessary to understand that a cultural change of this magnitude touches the deepest part of individuals and their lived experiences. The wounds in this area make the journey difficult but not impossible. It is necessary to continue helping to heal these wounds.*

*228. Among the tasks that remain to be done, we highlight the following:*

*1º To walk together with the Church on the path of a new and deeper understanding of the essence of consecration, especially the concepts of obedience and authority.*

*2º Those in authority must continue to take into account that there will be people living under their jurisdiction with different wounds, difficulties in trust, and with more difficulty in obeying. They also need to recognize that they will have people who have difficulty in changing their paradigm and who will continue to depend excessively on them. The challenge will be to continue to walk with everyone in this paradigm shift, as one encounters these differences in a community.*

*3º Those who exercise authority need to be aware of the errors and deviations which they can fall into, fruit of the institutional mentality lived in the past and which continues to affect us today. Only in this way can they humbly watch out for them, recognize them and ask for forgiveness when they fall into them. We embrace this as a path of personal and institutional purification.*

*4º It continues to be important to explore the principles that guide the exercise of authority, as a priority area of ongoing formation. Likewise, to continue to fathom a correct Christian anthropology that allows us to view people as God sees them and to act accordingly, valuing and safeguarding the treasure of human freedom and believing in their capacity to adhere and respond to the good and the truth.*

*5º Continue to exercise authority and obedience lived out with a profound respect for freedom and the individuality of each person, respecting the individual's relationship with God.*

*6º Continue to foster adult relationships among the members of the Society, among directors and members, among sisters, with the chaplains, in our apostolic work, etc. Recognize the important role that friendship has in the Christian life and in the life of holiness; both friendships among Consecrated Women and other human and Christian friendships that enrich one's own journey. To seek to form the affective side of friendship and to strengthen it in a community life that involves participation.*

*7º Continue to take steps to grow in direct and simple interpersonal communication. There is still a long way to go, often there is a*

*communication that is strained between people due to partial and indirect perceptions.*

8° *Learn to discern with freedom, recognizing the malaises of the past that may condition us.*

## C. THE HORIZON

229. As an Assembly, we are aware that, in continuity with the path of conversion undertaken in this area, we must focus on the mystery of Christ, what he tells us about the exercise of authority, and, above all, contemplate how he wanted to exercise it, ordered around the values of the Kingdom. "The son of man has not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mt 20:28) Though Master and Lord, we see him at the Last Supper washing the feet of his disciples and giving us the command to do the same. (cf. Jn 13:15) Authority belongs to Christ, and therefore those who are called to this service must be aware that they are only mediators, like John the Baptist who pointed towards the Lamb, (cf. Jn 1:29) or like Mary, who invites us to listen to Jesus and do whatever he tells us. (cf. Jn 2:5)

230. We need to deepen the understanding of authority at the service of the community and at the service of the Kingdom in a mutual search for the will of God. Authority is placed at the service of the person, carries out a work of spiritual encouragement of the community and strengthens the fraternity lived centered on Christ who sends us on mission. The community, united together, discerns the paths which the Spirit is guiding it on, and authority harmonizes this listening of everyone and invites them to deal with the diversity, in order to make the final decisions that are reserved to them. This is an ongoing challenge, and we are enthusiastic to continue advancing in this direction, by promoting spaces of personal and community freedom, and an exercise of authority which, in respecting this freedom, helps to combine the well-being of individuals with the common good.

231. We see the growing co-responsibility among us in building our communities as a horizon, because "the community is what its members make it."<sup>23</sup> If in the past more weight was given to the authority figure and almost everything depended on her, today we want to continue to move forward and encourage the contribution and commitment of each one, interdependence and collaboration. We want this to be reflected "in a testimony of fraternal communion that is attractive and resplendent. May all people appreciate how we take care of each other, how we encourage each other and how we accompany each other,"<sup>24</sup> both in our fraternal life and in the development of the mission that the Lord is

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<sup>23</sup> New Wine, new wineskins, #24

<sup>24</sup> Evangelii Gaudium, #99

calling us to. Authority is exercised at the service of the mission by encouraging participation and open and sincere dialogue.

232. Renewal also requires that we go deeper in the living out of our vow of obedience as a search for union with God and a free response to his love, as daughters in the hands of the Father. It is an obedience which accepts the will of God as the only criteria of life, discerned and interpreted through multiple means (our own conscience, the Word of God, the magisterium of the Church, the signs of the times, our own community, our proper law and, in a special way, our legitimate directors). It is necessary that each Consecrated Woman grow in the art of discernment in order to listen to the movements of the Spirit, since "true obedience demands that each one manifest his or her own conviction after having matured it in discernment."<sup>25</sup> Thus, obedience can be a path of growth and freedom for the person.
233. We are aware that the way in which we have lived authority has also affected our exercise of authority in the area of apostolate, as well as our way of relating to others in pastoral activity. Keeping our eyes on Christ will encourage us to focus on people, respecting their space for freedom and discernment, their own rhythm, timing, possibilities and ways of being, and rejecting all forms of superiority. It will allow us to be receptive to all people and be ready to walk by their side, fostering open and attentive listening, and seeking frank dialogue in resolving conflicts. It is a new opportunity for recognition that leads us to live our evangelizing mission with humble and prophetic leadership.
234. Making the conclusions of the report of the government for the six-year period 2014-2019 our own and recognizing as an Assembly our need to continue to walk a path of evangelical conversion in the exercise of authority, we have asked our new government to direct its efforts towards the path of formation which requires renewal in this area, towards pastoral accompaniment of the current directors and those who have been affected by the inadequate exercise of authority, and towards the elaboration of documents which will guide and provide frameworks to avoid abuses.

## CONCLUSION

235. "Accepting the successes, as well as the personal and communal limitations, far from being just one more news item, becomes the initial kickoff of every authentic process of conversion and transformation. Let us never forget that the risen Jesus presents himself to his own with his wounds. Moreover, it is precisely from his wounds that Thomas can confess his faith. We are invited to not dissemble, hide, or cover over our wounds. A wounded Church is able to comprehend and be moved

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<sup>25</sup> New Wine, new wineskins, #24

by the wounds of today's world, make them its own, suffer them, accompany them and move to heal them. A wounded Church does not put itself at the center, does not think it is perfect, does not seek to cover up and conceal its evil, but places there the only one who can heal the wounds and he has a name: Jesus Christ."<sup>26</sup>

236. Today we thank the Lord for giving us the light to see our wounds more clearly and also be able to respond to them. Hand in hand with Him, we can continue to face the open challenges that we still have, continue to learn and reflect on the role of the directors in the communities, value their service, exercise personal, community and pastoral discernment with freedom and maturity, etc. This gives light to see more clearly the consequences and damage that this has caused in many lives. We want to ask forgiveness to all those people who have been hurt by our way of exercising authority.
237. We look to the future with hope because we are confident that this is a good time for personal, community, pastoral and institutional conversion and that the adequate exercise of the service of authority and obedience will be one of the key elements of our journey of renewal in the different aspects of our vocation and mission. It will be an evangelical and evangelizing process that will lead us to a greater fulfillment in living our consecration.

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<sup>26</sup> Pope Francis' letter to the Church in Chile, May 31, 2018. #6

## Theme X.

# Reconciliation and healing: our relationship with those who were consecrated or members of the Precandidacy

238. In our desire to live in truth before God, in justice and humility, we seek to make a first institutional effort to address our relationship with those who were consecrated or members of the precandidacy who, throughout our history, at some point formed part of our communities.
239. We want to recognize with pain that various aspects of the internal culture that we lived, a reflection of the double life that the founder led, generated a system marked by criteria and practices of life that were anti-Gospel or outside of the ecclesial dispositions. This caused damage and injuries to some Consecrated Women and to others who were consecrated and members of precandidacies. We want to ask forgiveness from each of them. We are convinced that, if we take steps to recognize and give a name to what we experienced, it will be easier to prevent and avoid falling into the same deviations. We want to live this as a Society, because all of us, in one way or another, have been affected and have affected others.
240. We understand that human life is full of errors and even sins and corruption, but a true evangelical spirit seeks to bring about, once light has been shed, a sincere conversion, a request for forgiveness and an offer of our forgiveness as well, and as far as possible, to make reparation, by beginning a journey of reconciliation.
241. It is our desire to share with them the ability we have today to recognize the main distorted aspects of our institutional culture and to contemplate the damage they have caused. Aware of what they may have suffered as a result of this culture, we hope that this explicit and institutional recognition, in addition to being personal, may be a gesture that contributes to the healing of the wound caused. We wish to approach, as much as possible, these people who for so long gave their lives to God with us and may have been seriously harmed on the psychological, human or spiritual level, experiencing loneliness and even sometimes losing their faith. The good that we have been able to do in all these years does not replace the need to repair the evil caused.
242. We want to foster a culture in which, in a spirit of the Gospel and deep humility, we become aware that we must all ask forgiveness for something as well as forgive; it is part of our Christian life and even more

so of the acknowledgement of our poverty and limitation. We can look at the example that the Church gives us, when on numerous occasions she has asked forgiveness for many errors in the past and in the present.

243. We ask the Lord to enter into our hearts and help us to live a true evangelical path: "If, therefore, when you offer your gift at the altar, you remember that one of your brothers has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go first to be reconciled with your brother, and then come back and present your gift." (Matthew 5:23-24)
244. We have asked the general government to set in motion a process which will enable us to achieve this desire. We invite everyone to join in prayer for this intention and to ask the Lord to accompany us with his grace, looking to the future with Christian hope.

## Theme XI.

# About a possible branch of contemplative life in Regnum Christi

245. In 2016, the outgoing government closed the discernment on a possible branch of contemplative life (cf. Prot. DG CRC 1345/2016). However, as their report states, the same government explained the reasons why it was proposing to the Assembly to give the new government the possibility of reopening the process: "considering the background and the historical journey of this theme, the reception and obedience on the part of the Consecrated Women involved to the indications of authority, the perseverance over time of this restlessness in several of them, the clarity with which they express their feeling called to a contemplative life in Regnum Christi and the uneasiness that the manner in which the discernment was carried out caused in several of them". (Government Report 2014-2019, p. 80)
246. The Assembly also received a formal communication (November 14, 2019), signed by nine Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi who continue to experience the need to discern the call to a possible contemplative life within Regnum Christi. In this letter they ask to resume this dialogue with the new General Government.
247. The Assembly spent some time considering this topic. The delegates, in a spirit of discernment, exchanged views on the subject, seeking mutual enlightenment. The Assembly accepted the request and left it to the General Government to reopen the process of discernment at the time and in the manner it sees fit during this next six-year period.

# DECREES

# Decree I.

## Guidelines from the 2020 Ordinary General Assembly in relation to the crime of sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable persons

Act of government DG CRC 010/2020  
Class. II.5.2

### **DECREE**

The Ordinary General Assembly of the Society of Apostolic Life the "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi,"

- considering the norms of the Code of Canon Law and specific documents on the abuse of minors and vulnerable persons issued by the Holy See;
- considering that the Ordinary General Assembly of the Society of Apostolic Life "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi" has defined principles, guidelines and norms for the protection of minors and vulnerable adults;
- with the approval of the absolute majority of the General Assembly;

### *PROMULGATES*

The document "Guidelines in relation to the crime of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons"

This document is valid while the definitive protocols of action for the Society of Apostolic Life of the "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi" are being drawn up and implemented. The principles, guidelines and norms will govern the decisions that are taken from the date of promulgation of this decree.

Given in Rome, Via Corrado Barbagallo 20, March 7, 2020

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Nancy Nohrden  
President of the General Assembly

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Lourdes Santos  
Secretary of the General Assembly

Thy Kingdom Come!

## **GUIDELINES IN RELATION TO THE CRIME OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS AND VULNERABLE PERSONS**

Given the seriousness of the theme of sexual abuse in the current ecclesial context<sup>27</sup> and the institutional situation of the Society of Apostolic Life "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi," it is necessary to reflect and make a first pronouncement on this subject.

As part of the Regnum Christi spiritual family, the Society is intimately linked to it and shares a common mission, so that all of its actions implicate and profoundly affect everyone, both in the intimacy of their conscience and in community action. For this reason, we believe that the theme of sexual abuse should be worked on together with the other vocations in Regnum Christi.

The present document offers guidelines for a greater awareness of the seriousness of these acts and of the profound pain they cause. In addition to being useful as a basis for approaching this reality, they are intended to be a support for reviewing institutional and everyday practices, and to help in building a healthy culture.

It is important to distinguish between sexual abuse that constitutes a crime and other abuses that may not. In these guidelines we are considering only the former.

### ***PRINCIPLES***

1. In approaching this reality, pursuing fidelity to Christ and his Gospel must be guide and inspiration for the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi to act at all times with respect for the dignity of the person as the primary good to be safeguarded.
2. The sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons is a crime, which must be dealt with as such and is not justifiable under any circumstance. Additionally, we must consider that when the sexual abuse of minors takes place in the context of the abuse of conscience and of power, it adds to the gravity of the crime.
3. When faced with a situation of sexual abuse, the Society must focus on giving priority to providing support and protection to the victim; it must seek full reparation for the harm caused and have all the means at its disposal to prevent further harm to the victim or other vulnerable persons.
4. The Society is committed to being proactive and transparent in communicating this issue. It is a crime to withhold evidence or silence information that allows this type of sexual abuse to continue or that hinders the pursuit of truth and justice.
5. Collaboration with the civil and ecclesiastical authorities is an obligation on the part of the Society and of each Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi.

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<sup>27</sup> Letter of Pope Francis to the pilgrim people of God in Chile, May 31, 2018

## **DISPOSITIONS**

1. The Society undertakes the commitment and determination to obtain truth, justice and reparation for the present, the past and the future. Therefore, in the face of any accusation of sexual abuse committed by a Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi, it commits itself to initiate a preliminary investigation.<sup>28</sup> This will be carried out by an external investigator who meets the criteria of impartiality, objectivity and respect for human dignity. The abovementioned is without prejudice to compliance with the obligations deriving from the criminal legislation of the country in which the events occurred, particularly the obligation to inform the competent authority so that it may investigate, clarify the facts and determine responsibility.
2. A Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi who receives or has information about possible sexual abuse of a minor or a vulnerable person has the obligation to inform their major directors<sup>29</sup> and the competent ecclesiastical and civil authority, without delay, as required by the legislation and the code of conduct or manual of safe environments of the territory.<sup>30</sup>
3. If it is certain that a Consecrated Woman of Regnum Christi has committed a crime, the General Director shall immediately inform the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. (CIVCSVA)
4. The person under investigation is presumed to be innocent.<sup>31</sup>
5. Once the preliminary investigation is completed, if there is certainty of the crime at the civil or ecclesiastical level, the Society commits itself to:
  - a. make known, in the appropriate forums, the identity of those responsible for such abuses, as well as the sanctions and restrictions established, in accordance with the legislation of each country in this area. Communicating truthfully and adequately is a requirement for building mature and trusting relationships in the communities within which we carry out our mission.
  - b. impose the following restrictions on the Consecrated Woman who has committed the crime: she may no longer be assigned to any pastoral activity with persons, nor may she hold positions of authority.
6. It is the responsibility of the Society to avoid any malice toward the person and dignity of those who have committed the crime, and to create the venues and spaces for them to become aware of the damage caused, to purify and to seek reconciliation.

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<sup>28</sup> Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter *Vos estis lux mundi*, 7 May 2019, art. 10 §1

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, Art. 3 §1; Art. 19 - Compliance with state laws. These regulations apply without prejudice to the rights and obligations established in each place by state laws, in particular those concerning possible obligations to inform the competent civil authorities.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. <https://consagradasrc.org/ambientes-seguros/>

<sup>31</sup> Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter *Vos estis lux mundi*, 7 May 2019, art. 12, § 7

7. The Society confirms the importance of ensuring the necessary professional attention, adequate accompaniment and compliance with the restrictions that have been imposed on the Consecrated Woman who is guilty of the crime of sexual abuse.

## Decree II.

### Tasks and recommendations

Act of Government DG CRC 011/2020  
Class. II.5.3

#### **DECREE**

The Ordinary General Assembly of the Society of Apostolic Life the "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi",

- in accordance with n. 71 §1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Ordinary General Assembly of 2020
- in accordance with n. 99 §2 of the Constitutions of the Society of Apostolic Life and n. 20 §6 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of 2020;

#### **MANDATES**

To the General Government of the Society, for the six-year period 2020-2026, the following:

1. To develop a strategic plan at the global level, including the apostolic projection and sustainability of the Society of Apostolic Life, the "Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi."
2. To continue promoting the process of renewal of the Society, leading to a cultural change by way of a solid formation.
3. The deepening and renewal of the exercise of authority and the living of obedience.
4. To promote a formative and discerning process that will lead to a review of the Society's normative corpus (Constitutions, Rules of Life, Ratio Institutionis, etc.).
5. Develop, implement and communicate safe environment policies and procedures, and procedures for action in cases of abuse of authority and/or conscience.
6. To follow up on the second stage of discernment of poverty according to the guidelines of the General Assembly's communiqué on poverty.
7. To reopen the discernment of a contemplative branch within Regnum Christi, involving the Consecrated Women who continue to express this concern.

Given in Rome, Via Corrado Barbagallo 20, March 6, 2020

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Nancy Nohrden  
President of the General  
Assembly

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Lourdes Santos Fernández  
Secretary of the General Assembly

# MESSAGES

# MESSAGE OF THE 2020 ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI TO THE MEMBERS OF REGNUM CHRISTI

Rome, 7 March 2020

I have come that they may have life  
and have it to the full.  
(John 10:10)

To the Legionaries of Christ,  
Lay Consecrated Men and Lay Members of Regnum Christi

Dearest members of Regnum Christi,

With immense gratitude to God we have concluded our ordinary General Assembly. We wish to share with you the experiences we lived, the graces we received and the confirmation of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit during these weeks of prayer, reflection and discernment.

We wish to thank all of you, Lay Members of Regnum Christi, Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi and Legionaries of Christ, who have accompanied and supported us with your prayers, especially during this time.

The second ordinary General Assembly of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, and the first one since our establishment as a Society of Apostolic Life, was held in Rome from January 18 to March 6, 2020. Forty-five delegates from nine nationalities participated, representing the nine territories, the General Government and its delegations, and included as well as two representatives from the Consecrated Women in temporary vows.

One of the goals of this Assembly was the election of the new General Government. On February 11, the day on which we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, we held the election. Nancy Nohrden was elected general director and Elena Bartolomé was elected first councilor and vicar general. In addition, four other general councilors were elected: Eugenia Álvarez, África Pemán, Viviana Limón and Jacinta Curran.

As an Assembly, we wish to express our deep gratitude, first of all, to the Holy Father for watching over Regnum Christi and, specifically, for the message he addressed to

the assemblies of the Consecrated Women and Lay Consecrated Men of Regnum Christi, and to the Legion's Chapter. It is a rich message where the Pope offers us his reflection on the steps taken so far on our journey of renewal, as well as insights and guidelines for the next ones, because our journey continues. We also thank Fr. Gianfranco Ghirlanda, SJ, who, at the Pope's request, has accompanied us in a committed and very valuable way during this period of time.

We are especially grateful to Gloria Rodríguez who, together with her councilors, the general administrator and other members of her team, has so wisely led us during the six-year period which just ended. We would also like to thank Jorge López and Fr. Eduardo Robles Gil, L.C. and their councilors, who have also completed their period of service and dedication in the government of their respective branches (federated institutes).

A special characteristic that has marked the experience of the work of the Assembly has been the attitude of discernment. This has allowed us to listen and express ourselves freely, in a climate of trust, commitment and maturity. We addressed the issues planned for this Assembly: to review and approve modifications to the Constitutions and Rule of Life; to deepen the understanding of the mission of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and the various themes surrounding it; to discern and define the projection of the Society; to approve the proposal of the patrimony and governance of the apostolic works in relation to the other federated institutes; to discuss and propose a path for our sustainability; to define the next steps to continue our discernment about the living out of the vow of poverty; to provide a panorama and principles of discernment for the relationship with our families, specifically on the way to care for our elderly and infirm parents.

From the beginning of the Assembly, the desire to understand, live and allow our mission to unfold according to the logic of the Kingdom resonated deeply. We reaffirm that the mission of the Consecrated Women, like that of Regnum Christi, is to make present the mystery of Christ, who goes out to meet people in the concrete realities of their lives, he reveals to them the love of his heart, gathers them together and forms them as apostles and Christian leaders. He then sends them out, accompanying them as they collaborate in the evangelization of men and women and of society. We want to commit ourselves actively to the service of the evangelizing mission of Regnum Christi together with all the vocations that make up this spiritual family and apostolic body. In a special way, we feel called to renew our commitment to the lay members: we want to walk together with you and explore the richness of the lay vocation.

There was vigorous consonance in recognizing that our identity integrates our consecration, the lay state and the charism of Regnum Christi in an inseparable way. These three elements constitute a style of life and a way of being present in and of relating to the world. The letter with which Gloria summoned us to the Assembly resonated with us. She concluded it by quoting some words from the homily of Bishop Rodríguez Carballo at the Mass of the canonical establishment of our Society: "We are asked to be open to the world. We are not consecrated for ourselves, we are

consecrated to build the Kingdom of God here and now so that all may have life and life to the full. And all this with a deep sense of belonging."

Formation, in its various dimensions and stages, is a transversal theme, which in the upcoming years we must give importance to, in order to continue developing our vocation and mission according to the charism. We believe it is important to have a solid philosophical and anthropological foundation that will allow us to have a renewed worldview in our evangelizing mission. At the same time, we see the need to explore areas such as the ecclesiology of communion, the theology of baptism and the specific nature of the lay vocation in the Church.

During the Assembly we recognized the need to address additional topics so we set up the following commissions on: sexual abuse; the exercise of authority in the Society; giving an institutional pronouncement on the Founder; the institutional culture; and the prospect of reopening the discernment of a contemplative branch of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi. Commissions were also formed for our sustainability and for reconciliation with women who have left consecrated life in Regnum Christi.

The Assembly took place in an ecclesial and institutional context in which the theme of abuses of power, of conscience and of sexuality deeply troubled us, moved us profoundly and challenged us to act. In addressing this reality, we are determined to journey on a path of deep conversion and courageous action to prevent, denounce, heal and repair the evil caused. We reiterate our desire and request that together as a charismatic family, we approach our historical and present circumstances, reviewing our institutional culture, and do so with justice, transparency and truth, looking to the future with peace, responsibility and hope in the face of the precious mission that the Lord has entrusted to us.

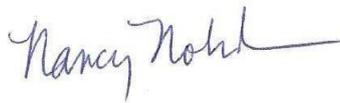
In recent times, we have come to understand the nature and scope of our identity as a Society of Apostolic Life, which entails an autonomy of life, governance and finances. The latter implies, among other things, drawing up a plan of sustainability that allows for our growth and long-term stability, beginning with an understanding of the global situation of the Society. We are optimistic about the implementation of the Federation and the steps that the governing bodies have to take in the following years. We also take ownership for our role in the governance, direction and management of the apostolic works of Regnum Christi.

In continuity with the phrase from Scripture "*I will put my spirit in you and you shall live,*" (Ez 37:14) which has accompanied us throughout our jubilee, the call to be Consecrated Women who are fully alive and life-giving has resonated deeply in us, in communities that are fully alive and in a Regnum Christi that is life-giving "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." (Jn 10:10) We feel called to live with growing maturity and inner freedom in order to serve the Lord and our brothers and sisters; to renew our commitment to developing Regnum Christi's mission, placing the gifts and talents of each one at its service. We seek to be women who are attentive to the signs of the times with a spirit of discernment. We want to encounter the people of today and respond to their needs, touching the reality of their

lives, offering an evangelizing contribution in and from Regnum Christi, seeking communion among all vocations and committing ourselves to the common mission.

We want to respond to this experience like Mary and renew our "Fiat": "Be it done unto me according to your word" and to proclaim with one voice, "Christ our King, Thy Kingdom come!"

In the name of the delegates of the ordinary General Assembly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Nohrden". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a long horizontal flourish at the end.

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Nancy Nohrden  
President of the General Assembly

# APPENDICES

# Appendix I.

## CONFERENCE OF FR. GIANFRANCO GHIRLANDA, S.J., TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI

January 28, 2020

### 1. Regnum Christi in recent years

The first important aspect about Regnum Christi in recent years has been the realization that you Consecrated Women, as well as the Lay Consecrated Men, were able to take on independence from the Legionaries by exercising the capacity to govern yourselves both in your internal and apostolic life. All this has been reflected in an autonomy of life, governance and also economy.

In the beginning, I remember there was fear on your part, like, I might say, adolescents who didn't know how they could manage themselves. However, the new perspective came gradually, and you demonstrated that not only was this possible, but it had to be implemented. You gave yourselves your own statutes. You did not receive them from the Legionaries.

I believe that it has been a way of becoming aware of your dignity and of advancing in maturity, both naturally and supernaturally. You have learned not only to obey the Legionaries, but to relate with them in order to achieve together the goals of apostolic action. Certainly, the Legionaries have had their own journey of maturation and a change of mentality, which has made your journey possible.

In pursuing the canonical configuration of Regnum Christi, there have been both external and internal tensions, but you have been able to deal with them. There will probably be more, and you will be able to deal with them too.

Another important moment was when, in order to establish the Federation, the idea of the Society of Apostolic Life was proposed to you. The fact that you accepted it showed that your reference was the essential and not the names of things. In fact, you realized that changing the canonical figure was not going to change what you were already living.

Furthermore, although there was clarity in the meetings in proposing your point of view, I did not see stubbornness in doing so, in fact, in some things that you initially considered fundamental, you eventually conceded. Common sense prevailed. In fact, a separation from the Legion would not have made sense, since it cannot be denied that you were born in close relationship to them. This is part of your charism, but your total dependence on the Legion was not part of the charism.

At first the canonical form of the Federation was not well understood because it was something new. Little by little the understanding has grown that it was the only way that would guarantee unity and autonomy.

I do not want, though, to insist on the aspect of the tensions which have been observed and perhaps are still present, because for me it was very indicative that the tensions have not stopped you, and at the time of the vote on the Federation's Statutes, the Assembly approved it unanimously.

I believe that the new government, receiving the legacy of all the positive things that the current one has done, will have to face the challenge of implementing the objectives of the Federation and integrating them into the life of the Society.

You are aware of the difficulties that joint planning can entail, while respecting the decision-making autonomy of each federated reality. I believe that you are experiencing this. However, it is experience that makes you find means of implementation, in trusting openness, first of all, to the action of the Spirit who always desires and builds unity, but also trusting the Legionaries and the Lay Consecrated Men, and especially trusting yourselves.

This is the challenge for all of Regnum Christi, not only for you, but for the Legionaries, the Lay Consecrated Men, and even the Lay Members who unite to the Federation.

The new government, faced with the tensions that are likely to arise, especially in defining the concrete questions that remain open, should not be afraid of the dialectic of opinions that will be developed and that will have to be developed both in the collegial bodies of the Federation and within the council of the general director. It is necessary that all possible data be gathered in order that each one individually, first, and then all together, may discern God's will in personal and common prayer.

I believe that, with the experience you have had in previous years, the new government has the means to do so.

You should be aware that the new government may make mistakes, but this is part of our being human and we should not be afraid of it. The important thing is to admit your own mistakes and try to correct them.

## **2. Recommendations for the work of the Assembly**

The Assembly has several aspects to deal with, but certainly as it is an elective Assembly, it is precisely the election of the new government that is the most important task.

The Assembly is undoubtedly the supreme governing body, but it is the general director, assisted by her council, who has the daily and ordinary government of all the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, carrying out what the Assembly

establishes and the mandates it receives from it. So it is up to her and her councilors to give concrete direction to the Society.

As Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi you have embarked, under the leadership of the Church, on a journey of becoming aware of your concrete reality.

First of all, you realized that the charism, in its essence, is a gift of the Spirit given to the Church. You have grasped the correct perspective that Fr. Maciel has been an instrument of the Spirit so that this charism is shared by others in order to live and develop it in the Church. You have thus entered into the perspective that the charism belongs to the Spirit who continues to nourish it in the Church through you. This understanding was of fundamental importance because it allowed you to clarify, in the first place, your identity, trying to rediscover it not in reference to the person of Fr. Maciel nor the Legion, but in relation to what you have lived for decades and what you desire to continue living.

This allowed you to distance yourselves from Fr. Maciel, considering him, yes, the historical founder of Regnum Christi, but not being able to consider him the spiritual founder, since you cannot accept him as a spiritual model. This gives you the opportunity to build an authentic spirituality based on your life.

The General Assembly is called to consolidate this awareness, which responds to the teaching and the will of the Church. It would unfortunately be a cause of real division, both in your Society and in the Federation, to return to the figure of Father Maciel to seek in him and in his writings the delineation of the charism and spirituality of Regnum Christi.

The new government, therefore, must be made up of Consecrated Women who are convinced of the goodness of this perspective for Regnum Christi and the Church, and thus be capable of finding the means to consolidate it.

In summary, it seems to me that I can say that the election, not only of the general director, but also of the councilors, must rest on the people who have this vision, so that they are able to advance on the path or paths taken by the outgoing government and also know how to identify other aspects that must be put into the same dynamic of renewal.

People with a vision, who know, however, how to carry it out wisely and prudently to avoid the mistakes which other Institutes or Societies have fallen into in the past. Women, therefore, who are capable of a spiritual discernment that will help them to distinguish between the fear of failure and prudence. The fear of making mistakes does not come from the good spirit because it causes agitation in the soul and blocks decision and action, which is precisely what the evil one wants. Prudence comes from the good spirit because it is a cardinal virtue and, at the moment of choice, it shows whether the evil one is present under the appearance of an angel of light, then (prudence) supports discernment and leads to the decision according to God's will and, consequently, to action.

I would like to emphasize the ban on propaganda for yourselves or for others in the election process, because this takes away freedom, conditioning others. Propaganda is forbidden both for promoting one person and for opposing another.

It is not forbidden to ask discreetly about the qualities of those who might seem suitable. "Discreetly" means that the information must be gathered individually, i.e. by conducting personal interviews, aimed at gathering information in order to be able to vote more conscientiously. It would be injudicious if a Consecrated Woman, a member of the Assembly, were to ask others for information about a person, but, instead, rather than listen to their opinions, she expresses her opinion, highlighting the abilities or defects of the person in question. This would really be propaganda, even if indirect, for or against. Similarly, it would be propaganda if meetings were held between consecrated members of the Assembly to discuss together whom to elect or not. It would be good to impose sanctions against those who violate the ban on propaganda, such as the loss of active and passive voice.

The election, then, must be the result of a discernment carried out first of all in personal prayer supported by the prayer of the whole Assembly. The information that could be obtained would only be the input that must be collected in each discernment.

In conclusion, I am convinced that the Lord, as He has accompanied you throughout the years, will also accompany the discernment that you will have to make during these days and will bless those who will be chosen as your general director and your councilors.

### **3. Canon 741**

Canon 741 §2 states: "According to the rule of proper law, the members are also capable of acquiring, possessing, administering and disposing of temporal goods, but whatever they acquire by reason of the society belongs to the society."

This canon allows members of Societies not only to possess personal goods, like it allows religious institutes of simple vows (can. 668), but also to administer and dispose of them.

This does not mean that one's own proper law cannot establish that the rules of religious institutes of simple vows be followed, that is, that the members have only ownership, but not use of, and renounce administration. The advantage of renouncing the administration of goods, especially if they are considerable, is that people are freed from a task that could alienate them from the apostolate.

In addition, the law must make provisions for the will that everyone must make before perpetual commitments (vows).

Obviously, even if the administration and use of property is maintained, this must be done in accordance with the determinations of the proper law. For example, the proper law could establish that each year, each member who has material goods

gives a certain percentage of the proceeds of these goods to the Society, in order to meet the needs of the community and the apostolic works or activities, the costs of the formation of Consecrated Women and for older Consecrated Women.

Differences in personal lifestyles should be avoided in communities. To give an example: if a Consecrated Woman has her own assets, she could afford frequent family trips; another who has no assets can only rarely make them and has to find benefactors or ask the community for help. The same can be said with regard to clothing or other personal things. This is clearly wrong. Another example: a Consecrated Woman who has goods can help another who has no goods with her personal needs. This, however, can generate a relationship of dependence between the consecrated woman who has benefited and her benefactor, due to gratitude for the help received. This is also wrong.

You have to find a system and determine it in your proper law, so that there is a common standard of living and no differences or dependencies are created.

With regard to travel, for example, it should be established that permission from the superior is always required for this to be done. In order to avoid creating dependencies in the community, a common fund could be created, which each one contributes to according to the generosity of her heart and the real possibilities she has, but no one knows the contribution of the others, so that those in need can receive help from this common fund, in agreement with the superior. These are only examples that can be applied to similar solutions.

The canon then says that "whatever they acquire by reason of the society belongs to the society." Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether a person receives money for themselves or for the Society, because it is given "by reason of the Society". It is better to ask the donor's wishes when they make the donation. But sometimes the donor does not understand such subtle distinctions. It is clear that, if a donation or a stipend is received for a service rendered as a member of the Society of Apostolic Life exercising an apostolate proper to the Society, it generally goes to the Society, if the proper law does not establish otherwise.

Rome, January 28, 2020

Gianfranco Ghirlanda, S.J.

## Appendix II.

### LETTER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI TO THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE LEGION OF CHRIST

Thy Kingdom Come!

Castel di Guido, 21 February 2020

Dear Chapter Fathers:

We come to you with the desire to share our view of our mutual concern regarding the issue of sexual abuse committed against minors and vulnerable persons. This is a problem that has dragged on for decades in our spiritual family, as is evident from the attention that has been given to it both in the Chapter and in our Assembly.

We, like you, have sought to confront this situation with truth and, with a sincere desire to be able to grasp the full extent of the damage caused. Steps have been taken to repair and compensate the many victims and people who have been affected by the scandal it entails, but, more than anything, we have tried to do everything in our power to ensure that these grave situations do not recur. We recognize that what has been done so far has been insufficient and has been a source of great pain and suffering for many Legionaries, as it has been for us, your sisters and for the whole Regnum Christi.

We were comforted by the approach that the General Chapter made to this theme, not from a purely intellectual analysis, but by touching the pain of the concrete victims who have suffered it. This is the path that Jesus Christ has taught us: to reach out, touch the wounds, and go beyond what is marked by the "Sabbath and the law" for the good of those who suffer and need to be healed.

Experience shows us that this theme transcends the autonomy of the federated institutes. We are part of the same family (including a good number of the victims). We share a mission and apostolic works, so all our actions involve us and affect us deeply, both in the depths of our consciences and in our action as a community. This observation leads us to the necessity of having some common principles and basic procedures when facing and communicating this issue. In this way, we can re-establish trust, both within and outside our charismatic family, and give witness that the proclamation of the Kingdom takes place among the least and most vulnerable.

Our intention is not to propose a work plan unilaterally, but to build it together. We share with you some proposals:

1. In order to generate confidence and support for developing this common project, we see the need for the general and territorial governments of the federated institutes to be transparent about their reality and the current situation of complaints received, investigations in progress and restrictions imposed. Committing ourselves together, helps us to take profound steps to change our mentality, culture and action; it commits us to offer support among the branches (institutes) and marks a horizon to walk towards in this very sensitive historical moment.

2. In this period of purification we need, with a contrite and humble heart, not only to recognize our grave errors and ask for forgiveness, but also to seek primarily to repair the damage caused, to acknowledge our victims and to prevent further occurrences of this type of crime. We suggest the implementation of a joint commission, which would meet with the victims of sexual abuse and develop with them initiatives to repair the damage caused.

3. In those works, sections and activities where consecrated men and women and Legionaries are present, we believe that it is fundamental that there be more rigorous and transparent procedures. The director, as the person responsible for the safety of minors, must be able to assume due personal responsibility. For example, as has already been done in some territories, we ask that every priest and consecrated man or woman who works with minors submit to the necessary procedures to prove his or her suitability to do so, carried out by expert and independent personnel.

4. We are aware that the exercise of authority has had an impact on our lives through the mechanisms that may have facilitated these dynamics of abuse and silence. We believe that we must face a thorough diagnosis of our internal culture, so that we can make deep changes, open to the Spirit, rooted in the Gospel and a correct anthropology.

We reiterate our desire and request to approach our history and our present together as a charismatic family; to do so with justice, transparency and truth, and to look to the future with peace, responsibility and hope in the face of the beautiful mission that the Lord has entrusted to us.

We unite in prayer and sacrifice so that the Holy Spirit may continue to illuminate our journey in following the Lord and making HIS KINGDOM present.

Your Consecrated Sisters.

# Appendix III. LETTER OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE LEGION OF CHRIST TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CONSECRATED WOMEN OF REGNUM CHRISTI

DG-LC 1105-2020  
Class I.4.5

Thy Kingdom Come!

24 February 2020

To the Delegates of the Ordinary General Assembly  
of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi

Dear sisters in Jesus Christ:

We thank you for the letter you were kind enough to send us on February 21, in which you share with us your concern regarding the issue of the sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons. As you very well express, it is a mutual concern and a problem that affects our entire spiritual family. And we are aware that most of the abuse has been committed by our brother Legionaries; we are deeply pained for the victims and for all the people who have suffered because of us, among whom you find yourselves and all those who are part of our spiritual family.

Since the beginning of the Chapter we have faced this issue. We can say that, to a great extent, this situation has marked our Chapter and has led us to make a profound examination of conscience before God; to ask for forgiveness and, above all, to bring this down to our personal life and as an institution, with a sincere desire for an authentic conversion of heart that will lead to concrete works.

Pope Francis gave a beautiful homily on May 22, 2015, during his morning Mass in the chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. In it he made a simple and profound meditation on the three gazes of Christ towards Peter: the gaze of the call, the gaze of conversion and the gaze of the mission. And the Pope invited us all to ask ourselves: "How does Jesus look on me today?" During these days we have experienced in prayer, moments of reflection and in the chapter hall, a gaze similar to that of Christ towards Peter after his triple denial: a gaze that caused Peter to weep bitterly; but as the Pope says, it is "a gaze that changes the heart and it is a change of conversion to love."

As you mention in your letter, we have approached this issue from the heart; and we know that our personal renewal and as an institution will only be credible if

we are authentic shepherds of souls who protect them, heal them and live truth and justice in love.

We have dedicated many hours to this theme; we have sought to listen to God and make the resolutions He wants. We have also listened to Him through the victims, through our brother Legionaries, Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi and Lay Consecrated Men and through the Church.

We are very grateful to you for the proposals shared with us and we welcome them with open and grateful hearts. Yes, we want to work together with you and our charismatic family, sharing the desire and petition that you share with us in your letter, to "approach our history and our present together as a charismatic family; to do so with justice, transparency and truth, and to look to the future with peace, responsibility and hope in the face of the precious mission that the Lord has entrusted to us."

God willing, next Wednesday, February 26, we will publish the results of the Chapter on this theme. If you wish and if your calendar permits, we can send Fathers Michael Brisson, Sylvester Heereman and Hernán Jiménez to present our results and listen to you.

The Chapter has entrusted the new government with the task of analyzing the best way to work in autonomy and collaboration in this area, especially in the area of the Federation and the educational works where we collaborate closely. We hereby place the fruit of this task in the hands of God and Mary.

In the name of the Chapter fathers, your brother in Christ,

John Connor, L.C.  
President of the General Chapter

**Through the Kingdom of Christ  
to the Glory of God**