

**Statement of the Board of Directors  
International Union of Superiors General  
concerning the  
Apostolic Visitation of Women Religious in the United States**

Superiors General whose congregations have generalates, provincialates, and centers of initial formation in the United States have recently been informed of an Apostolic Visitation of apostolic congregations of women religious in that country. The purpose of the Visitation is to “look into the quality of life of apostolic Congregations of women religious in the United States.”

The first phase of the Visitation has now begun. We encourage our members, whose congregations will be engaged in this process, to cooperate fully throughout its different phases with those who will carry it out. We pray that the Visitation will facilitate mutual understanding among all parties involved and illuminate both the vitality and the challenges of religious life in the United States.

We recognize that the Apostolic Visitation calls our sisters in the United States in particular to reflect on their recent history and present experience, their concerns and their hopes for the future of apostolic religious life in their country. From our perspective as Board of Directors of the International Union of Superiors General, whose membership comprises nearly 2000 leaders of congregations of apostolic women religious, we affirm unequivocally our support for our sisters in the United States. Their response to the mandates of the Second Vatican Council, particularly as stated in *Perfectae Caritatis*, has been a great gift not only to the pluralistic society in which they live but also to the universal Church. Our desire is to assist them in facing the challenges which we share.

Many of us are Superiors General of international congregations. The diversity of religious life that exists in the Church exists also within our congregations. After decades of cross-cultural dialogue and searching together for God’s will in General Chapters, the unity of vision and purpose we now experience is indivisible. Therefore, as leaders, we are confident that our members all over the world join us in our prayers for success and blessing on the Apostolic Visitation of our sisters in the United States.

Mindful that the mystery of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth celebrates the meeting of two women, who spoke joyfully, humbly, and confidently of the great things God had done in their lives and would do for others through their YES, we express our loving fidelity to the Church and our solidarity with our sisters in the United States as the Apostolic Visitation begins. May the example of Mary and Elizabeth inspire our sisters in that country to share their story with confidence, humility, and joy.

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