

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°73 – JULY 20TH, 2020



Youth and Vocation Ministry Experiences... Challenges...

Dear Sisters,

Who could doubt that imagination and creativity are inexhaustible? By accompanying groups of young people, I have always been able to confirm this important and heartening truth...

Youth and Vocation Ministry in our apostolates and ministries has found ways of working through the Internet during this time of pandemic. This has made it possible to create spaces for evangelization, prayer and accompaniment for many young people. The testimony of several of them, as we will see in this INFO, gives an account of how important it has been, during the quarantine, to experience the closeness of their friends, of the counsellors who accompany them, sisters, brothers and laity, and to have meetings and gatherings that have helped them to live through this period. This is how one of them expresses it: “These initiatives have given me a tranquillity and a support group in the face of the various problems, which we may be experiencing due to the confinement”. And for many of us it has been very pleasant to discover on Facebook spaces led by the same young people from our ministries, as a presence of Youth in the Church in times of crisis.

We certainly did not think about the pandemic during the Chapter when we said that we had to “seek new areas and ways to evangelize young people”. And it is significant to note that, in spite of the difficulties proper to this time, the web pages, zoom and Facebook, have been new spaces and ways of keeping alive youth ministry, contact, relationship with young people, supporting them in the living out of their faith.

Youth ministry is not exactly a priority in our Plan of Congregation. But, in fact, it is more than that. It is a constant challenge to the SS.CC. mission. It is inscribed in the initial concern of our Founders for education and for founding schools, but above all it is engraved in our commitment to the Church and to humanity.

In his Apostolic Exhortation CHRISTUS VIVIT, Pope Francis warns us of the danger of the Church losing her enthusiasm and giving in to false human securities, and says “*Young people can help keep her young. They can stop her from becoming corrupt; they can keep her moving forward ... help her to be poorer and to bear better witness, ... to fight for justice and humbly to let herself be challenged*” (CV 37). The role of young people in the Church, in the world and in every institution will always be to ensure that it is renewed by adapting to the times, so that it can endure.

And we must not forget that pastoral concern for youth is not just another option. It is an evangelical mandate because young people are always a bit vulnerable. Of course, some more than others, when they are fragile and helpless, live in poverty, or are victims of injustice, abandonment, or lack of opportunities. But every young person is a person on the way to maturity, who requires support, accompaniment, backing. And in return, they can contribute with their audacity, generosity and courage. Is that not why David, Jeremiah and Mary of Nazareth were chosen?

Affectionately