

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°79 — APRIL 1ST, 2021

Secular Branch



Sacred Hearts Spiritual Family

Dear Sisters,

With this INFO, we are closing a cycle in which we presented and commented on all the themes of the last General Chapter. This certainly helped us to know better what we are experiencing in each Zone, Territory and Sector, taking into account the main challenges that our Congregation is facing now.

To look at our "Spiritual Family", of sisters, brothers, lay women and men, is a pressing call of today's Church, which the Chapter took up with special attention. At this moment in our history, making visible the life of the Sacred Hearts Secular Branch is a much needed challenge for all of us.

The pandemic that we are living through, with all that it brings in human suffering, urges us to listen to the voice of the Spirit, as Pope Francis has clearly invited us to do in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*: to act together, to rekindle in everyone "a worldwide inspiration to fraternity" (FT n.8), to dream together (n.9) so that "in the face of various and current forms of excluding or ignoring others, we may be able to react with a new dream of fraternity and social friendship" (n.6). The task of fraternity must be built among everyone and with everyone, "side by side".

Today we speak of shared mission when we embrace together the spiritual legacy of a religious family and take on its mission together. Awareness of this shared mission between religious life and the associated laity is growing in many congregations and religious families. It is about sharing the mission of Jesus Christ from the specifics of each vocation and state of life. And this diversity that complements each other is undoubtedly required to live that dream of fraternity and social friendship of which the Pope speaks. We have, for this, many things ahead of us that require an evangelical

spirit, attention to the signs of the times and sincere and unselfish dialogue, always seeking to be faithful to the mission that has been entrusted to us.

We are reminded in this INFO that there are many lay people accompanying sisters and brothers since the birth of the Congregation. Our founders had the intuition that the spirituality, or charism, was not the property of the nascent religious community but the property of the Church to be lived together with the laity as the Spirit manifested it. This collaboration between religious brothers and sisters, and lay men and women of the Secular Branch will be expressed in the following pages, in which we not only speak of numbers, but also of concrete testimonies, of the organisation of the ss.cc. lay communities, of mutual accompaniment, of the commitments undertaken and the challenges ahead, etc.

The decisions and priorities of the last General Chapter allow us to recognise ourselves in the magisterium of Pope Francis, who strongly encourages the participation of the laity in the transformation of the temporal world. The spirituality of the Sacred Hearts, which animates our religious life, also animates the Christian life of families, of lay men and women, young and old, called to contemplate, live, and proclaim the healing love of God in their lay life.

We need to continue to strengthen the Spiritual Family of the Sacred Hearts to carry out our shared mission, aware that the charism is a gift of the Spirit, "who blows where he wills and how he wills", and with the conviction that this leads to mutual enrichment in Life and Mission.

HAPPY EASTER