Women and Men Religious from Around the World Gather in Rome for an Unarmed and Disarming Peace

In a world where wars continue to cause suffering and millions of people live in uncertainty and fear. It is urgent to ask ourselves how peace can be built, where to begin, and what contribution each of us can make.

These questions lie at the heart of the **Joint Assembly of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG)* and the Union of Superiors General (USG)****, which will take place **from 25 to 27 November 2026 at the Fraterna Domus in Sacrofano, near Rome**, with the theme *"Walking Together Towards an Unarmed and Disarming Peace."*

Over three days, women and men Superiors General from different parts of the world will explore how consecrated life can become a stronger force for peace—not merely through words, but through concrete action, solidarity with the most vulnerable, and the courage to build bridges where conflict and division prevail.

Peace Begins with Us, Too

The theme of the Assembly echoes **Pope Leo XIV's invitation to build an unarmed and disarming peace**: a peace that does not rely on force or fear, but seeks paths of encounter, dialogue, and reconciliation.

For many religious congregations, this reflection is far from abstract. Women and men religious live and work in countries affected by war, accompany people forced to leave their homes, care for those who suffer, and strive every day to keep hope alive even in the most difficult circumstances.

"Peace does not begin when weapons fall silent, but when we learn to recognize one another once again as brothers and sisters," says **Sr. Oonah O'Shea, NDS, UISG President**. "As consecrated women and men, we are called to be present

where the wounds of the world are deepest. This Assembly is an opportunity to bring together our experiences and charisms and to seek new ways of building peace."

Fr. Arturo Sosa, SJ, USG President, also emphasizes the need for personal and communal conversion as a first step towards peace: "The question we must ask ourselves is not how we can disarm the world, but rather what the Lord needs to disarm within us". He adds: "A peace that disarms is not simply the absence of weapons. It is the presence of relationships in which people no longer need to live in fear, defend themselves, or regard others as enemies."

This is an invitation to build peace through closeness, encounters, and reconciliation, beginning within religious communities and extending it to the places where they carry out their mission.

Meeting with Pope Leo XIV and Testimonies from Around the World

One of the central moments of the Assembly will be **the audience with Pope Leo XIV on Thursday, 26 November, at 10:00 a.m. in the Synod Hall at the Vatican**. The programme includes an address by the Holy Father, followed by a dialogue with participants focusing on the contribution of consecrated life to peace-building.

Throughout the three days, the programme will feature reflections, testimonies, and opportunities for dialogue. On **25 November**, **Sr. Teresia Wamuyu Wachira, CJ**, Co-President of Pax Christi International, will speak about the prophetic witness of religious in a wounded world. In the afternoon, **Sr. Sheila Kinsey, FCJM**, Coordinator of *Integrity for Nonviolence*, will offer a reflection on how to put nonviolence into practice in mission and everyday life.

On **26 November**, following the audience with the Pope, **Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, OFM, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem**, will address the Assembly. His experience in the Holy Land, where the consequences of war have profoundly affected the lives of individuals and communities, will bring particular depth and relevance to the reflection on a peace capable of opening new paths even when everything seems to divide us.

** **The International Union of Superiors General (UISG)** brings together the Superiors General of women's institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life of pontifical and diocesan right, present in nearly 100 countries. Founded in 1965, UISG promotes dialogue, formation, and collaboration among women's religious congregations, in accordance with the guidance of the Holy See and in service of the Church's mission throughout the world.*

*** **The Union of Superiors General (USG)** is an international organization that brings together the Superiors General of men's religious institutes. USG fosters dialogue, collaboration, and shared reflection on the challenges facing consecrated life and the Church's mission, promoting an evangelical presence in service of humanity.*

Source: UISG – USG.