

REPORT FOR PLENARY ASSEMBLY 2022



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Looking at the Context:

The words of Charles Dickens from a Tale of Two Cities seem to best describe these past years.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way..... ~ A Tale of Two Cities (Charles Dickens)

First the impact of Covid-19 on health and wellbeing and now the deadly war with Ukraine have changed our focus and created new horizons of different vulnerabilities in both the world and religious life.

Alongside these difficulty horizons, new ways of proceeding like “mutual help,” “collaboration” and “partnership” have become key within our congregations and our institutions. We have experienced great generosity both within our congregations and from organizations that believe in the human and evangelical witness of sisters. That is why today we can celebrate the fruits of our interconnectivity within religious life. Combining our riches and our fragility at the service of the Church has been an

extraordinary experience of inter-charismatic complementarity. It has brought us to sit at and share at many different tables to plant and nurture various seeds of hope. But first of all, let us look at our gatherings around the table.

First of all, at the TABLE of the EXECUTIVE BOARD, where we have gathering more than usual, either in person, or on line during these past three years. We have gathered to dialogue, to accompany each other, to vision from different perspectives and to pray for the wisdom needed to face our present reality. We have sought ways to promote the orientations which emerged from the 2019 Assembly and to answer the calls of the Church especially with the Delegates We have been learning at the table of Zoom which has provided us with the possibility of meeting together despite the challenge of different time zones and different languages.

At the second TABLE, we have the two Executive Boards of USG and UISG, who have met together twice a year to discuss the urgent issues facing both the Church and religious life. They have included the UISG Delegates in several of these reflections. In addition, the Presidents and General Secretaries often communicated in order to share conversations, opinions, positions and proposals. We can say that the joint online Assembly (of USG and UISG) (May 2021), which took place over three days, confirmed that the path of greater exchange is a path from which there is no return. With God's help we will continue this synodal journey together as male and female religious, seeing it as a joyful and hopeful opportunity.

Then there are the many other Tables including those of the JOINT UISG/USG Commissions where collaboration together has led to growth in different areas of the life and mission of USG and UISG. These Commissions focus on Care and Safeguarding, Dialogue, Education, Health and Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation. Their task is to support General Leaderships worldwide in these key areas of mission and ministry through offering workshops, seminars and conferences.

This interconnectivity and shared collaboration at many tables has extended to other institutions and entities within the Church, especially with Vatican Dicasteries and Pontifical Commissions. We have had a formal dialogue with Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) twice a year on important themes related to religious life. During the Covid-19 a task commission was formed to study the modalities of online chapters and councils. We have worked with the Migrants and Refugees Section on anti-trafficking and migration which increases during times of conflict. With the Dicastery for Integral Human Development there has been extensive collaboration on the creation of the Laudato Si Action Platform. We have had meetings with the Dicastery for the Evangelization of Peoples on matters of importance to missionary and diocesan congregations. We have collaborated with the Pontifical Council for Culture in the preparation for the Conference on Charism and Creativity which unfortunately takes place this week having been postponed from 2021.

We have had many collaborative partnership and relationships with Embassies to the Holy See, with international organisations like CARITAS, JRS, and San Egidio and with many Pontifical Universities in Rome and elsewhere and with the Discerning Leadership Programme established by the Jesuits at the request of Pope Francis.

More and more, we realize that through our contacts with the reality on the ground, through our interdependence as congregations, that we can bring our concerns about the needs of people and the planet to many different meetings and contexts. The prophetic nature of religious life, calls us as Superiors General/Congregational Leaders to mobilize ourselves as a global sisterhood. Our interdependence and our growing understanding of the importance of our intercultural prophetic witness, invite us to develop ways of building communion in diversity, in today's world.

Our experience of interconnectivity is leading us to deepen the relationship between our various charisms and to emphasise our shared witness through our commitment as religious for the sake of the Reign of God. For many years we have already had the experience of sharing together in God's mission, putting in common the gifts of the Holy Spirit, weaving them into the life of the Church. This experience of interdependence and interculturality is having a life-giving impact on the life of our communities.

In the light of Fratelli Tutti we feel called to a renewed interpretation of our relationship with the Church on the basis of the common vocation of the baptised and on the basis of our equal dignity as daughters and sons of God. On this basis we must continue to rethink our responsibility to build relationships that heal wounds, that promote safety, that prevent abuses and that develop a climate of cooperation and a culture of care.

Our Reality During these Past Three Years

During the two-year period from 2019-2021 for long periods the majority of the UISG staff worked from home while a small group of around 5 went to the office daily. Yet we were able to distribute almost \$2 million to needy congregations on every continent thanks to the generosity of many religious congregations gathered here and present online and the generosity of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the Conrad N. Hilton Fund for Sisters. We would like to thank you all for your support and generosity that helped so many local communities across the world. The gratitude expressed by so many communities of sisters who experienced this solidarity and generosity would warm your hearts.

We thank the Finance and Grant Office which worked tirelessly to see that the money was distributed to where it was most needed. This was not a small task and was not part of UISG's usual work but when such need is being experienced, the staff members wanted to ensure that sisters had money for protection and cleaning materials, for basic medical equipment and for food. During this same time UISG suffered the loss of almost \$700,000 due to the reduction in receipts from the annual dues due to postage difficulties, the closure of the restaurant and the request for rent reduction from the two other tenants. The GHR Foundation helped UISG to meet its immediate costs.

You have all shown great trust in UISG, to help meet the needs of congregations but also in helping UISG to continue to meet its worldwide mission. Once again, we are meeting the needs of the people of Ukraine by supporting the sisters working there and in neighbouring countries.

The mission of UISG went forward despite the many challenges posed by Covid-19. You will remember how well we responded by providing an incredible number of webinars each year aimed at supporting leaders of congregations and their members, practically, spiritually and inspirationally. Again, we owe a dept of gratitude to two religious' congregations in the US who first offered support funding for the installation of the technology to allow UISG to literally reach the end of the earth. Additional funding from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and GHR enabled us to build on the initial technological frame work so that now we can offer online events in multiple languages. The online sessions which were part of the first steps in this Assembly provided translation in XX languages.

Between 2019- 2021 we had at least 65,000 online participants. This number is an indication as often whole communities participated. The following table does not include all events organized.

	2019	2020	2021	Total
No. of Events	14	72	62	148
No. of Days	44	92	75	211
No. of Participants	5.615	43.563	15.670	64.848

*Please note this is only an overview it does not include all the events organized.

Since then there have been an additional XXXXX participants.

The topics offered were both inspirational and practical as we responded to many requests. Some of the webinars offered were as follows:

- Canonical Consultation Services Team - Power, Authority and the Good Institute
- Intercultural Workshops and Leadership in Intercultural Communities
- Communication Course for Justice and Peace Promoters
- Religious Life in Latin America and the Caribbean, in Europe and the USA
- Querida Amazonia and Integral Ecology
- Talitha Kum General Assembly
- Building Bridges and Reconciliation
- Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons
- Day of Worldwide Solidarity and Prayer in time of Covid-19
- Training on how to use Zoom and other technological tools
- Online Leadership Course
- CCCI "Transitioning from residential care for children to care within families
- Communication for Advocacy
- Synodality – a new way of being Church
- A wide variety of webinars offered by the Joint Commissions of UISG-USG

The presence of participants from across the globe and the different perspectives shared have given us a new sense of who are and who we can be as we pray, act and advocate on behalf of the world and its people.

We have mourned together, prayed together, reflected and planned the future together. We have listened to each other's searching and learnt from the perspective of continental Conferences. Despite this difficult time there have been many positive outcomes:

- We have been the building new relationships online across congregations, across cultures and across geographic boundaries
- We have been journeying together through our experience of vulnerability, fragility and a sense of powerlessness

- We are now supporting our sisters who are in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries who are welcoming refugees who are leaving their homeland in their millions. We decry this and other senseless wars and pray to the God of Peace to intervene and to soften the hearts of those who promote division and destruction.
- We are now reflecting together on how to nurture synodality within ourselves, our congregations and within the Universal Church.

All of these efforts would not have been possible except for the expertise of the Technical and Communication Departments at UISG. We can't thank them enough for their generosity and availability often at most unsociable hours. Together with a faithful group of translators they expanded the scope of UISG's work and influence. They helped us to truly become a global sisterhood.

Since our last Assembly in 2019 and its theme Sowers of Prophetic Hope – we have been

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sowing new seeds, nurturing growth and gathering fruits. These next sections will explore what is new and what is being nurtured.

A: Sowing New Seeds:

Alzheimer's Initiative:

With the help of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation the UISG in partnership with LCWR will shortly launch a new worldwide initiative to support Sisters living with Alzheimer's. The aim is to help leaders, communities and families and caregivers and to identify the needs specific to different parts of the world. These initial steps commenced some months ago when an international committee was formed. The Alzheimer's Initiative will be officially launched next Monday 9th May at 2.00 pm (Rome time) by Sr. Jane Wakahiu LSOSF during the delegates meeting. We invite you to register and to join us on that day.

Elderly Sisters:

More recently UISG and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation have launched a consultative process to determine the needs of aging sisters. With the title: Our Sisters, Our Future: Health and Spiritual Care for Aging. These aims to identify the needs of elderly sisters and to seek ways to respond appropriately with cultural sensitivity. Needs different in our different parts of the world and so we need the broadest possible participation in order to help the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to plan the best use of future funding. We have already had two webinars to begin to identify how to the support that congregations and their leaders. Shortly based on what has already emerged from the webinar, a survey will be circulated. We need a very good response rate and encourage you to participate.

Recently Pope Francis created the World Day of Grand-Parents. Saying that each of us must “take an active part in renewing and supporting our troubled societies” he said that the elderly, better than anyone else, can help to set up three of the pillars that support



“this new edifice,” which include dreams, memory and prayer. We know the treasure that the elderly in society have still to share when they are helped to live vibrant and active lives. Sadly, for some their dreams and their memory have faded but it is then that we need to support them all their days long, as best we can, accompany them in living their vocation until their Easter moment.

Sisters Advocating:

A third new initiative called “Sisters Advocating” is supported by the more recently established Global Sisters Fund. GSF aims to foster collaborative partnerships among different sectors of society to advance holistic, inclusive and sustainable human development. It is inspired by the moral leadership of Pope Francis. This initiative is supporting existing UISG ventures – Talitha Kum and Sowing Hope for the Planet by providing training and support to sisters in relation to advocacy and communications. It

also aims to help sisters to develop and strengthen networks dealing with health care. This is obviously a critical area in the wake of Covid-19 and sisters in many parts of the world have seen how crucial it is to be able to respond speedily and collaboratively to crises within the health sector. The aim of the initiative is expressed simply in the following statement: We are your Sisters. We are committed to advocating for you and together with you, sharing a journey of care for people and the environment. We believe in a world where everyone experiences a sense of human dignity. We build our mission on evidence from our work on the ground, inspired by our reflection on the Gospel message, the Church's social teaching and the leadership of Pope Francis.

Catholic Care for Children International (CCCI)

Just before Assembly 2019, the GHR Foundation hosted a two-day workshop on Catholic Care for Children – an African sister-led initiative which aims to help congregations to transition from institutional care for children to family-based or family-like care for children. The initiative began in Zambia and then spread to Uganda and Kenya. The International office opened just as Covid commenced and therefore what has happened in these intervening years has been nothing short of miraculous. You will hear more about this initiative on Friday but suffice to say that the movement has now spread to Sri Lanka, India, Malawi and South Africa. Sacred Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching and scientific research affirm that children grow best in families and therefore CCCI is committed to the global expansion of this movement. We have to learn from the lessons of the past and be leaders for systemic change in this area.

UISG Office for Care and Safeguarding and UISG/USG Joint Commission for Care and Safeguarding:

The UISG Office for Care and Safeguarding was established after Assembly 2019 and seeks to help congregations of women religious to develop policies and guidelines which are really operational. It has achieved an enormous amount in a short time. The Office also supports the UISG/USG Joint Commission whose members include female and male religious who have extensive experience, representatives of the Vatican Commission for Care and Safeguarding and other experts. The main work of the Commission has been to establish a global network of representatives of Religious Congregations (nominated by the Superiors General/Congregation Leader) who meet on a regular basis for updating in relation to canonical matters, best practice and reflection on various aspects of abuse and safeguarding which continue to emerge. We invite you to reflect and discern and nominate someone to join this worldwide network which is an important resource for you and for your leadership team. The various webinars presented in the past two years have been recently published in Italian and will be shortly available in English and Spanish. The topics presented are important ones for your reflection and consideration. The new area emerging is that of spiritual abuse and increasingly the topic is emerging in articles, publications and seminars. It is a topic that the Joint Commission will deal with in the coming year.

Theology of Religious Life and Theological Formation

During these past two years a group of 29 sister theologians have been meeting online, reflecting together on religious life and writing articles on religious life through the lens of their particular disciplines. The aim of the initiative has been to identify and nurture new voices from different cultural perspectives and experiences. The majority of the group will be meeting for a week in June next month to deepen their reflections. They have been led in this process by three theologians who themselves lead institutions or programs

focused on consecrated life. It is intended to identify a second cohort and to begin the process again in 2023.

Reflecting on what had been offered online during the Covid-19 period, it was felt that we needed to focus our presentations more on the nature of religious life itself – consecrated life, the vows, community life – and so future programs will concentrate on these areas.

New Website - New Branding

We hope that you like the new logo and the new website. Thanks to the committed work of the Communications Department, the Executive Board were presented with a range of options. This particular logo was chosen because of its life, vitality and diversity. It seemed to us to express in a creative way the passion for Christ and for humanity that religious women bring to their mission and ministry. We intend to use the private side of website more when communicating with members – therefore you need to know your code and your password – and we have prepared these cards to help you to remember. Here you will find the UISG Bulletin which we are now publishing online. We know that the articles are greatly valued and you will have access to them in all languages. The communications department reached out to you through the website, social media and newsletters. We are trying to streamline out communications so that there is a regular pattern which is not overwhelming.

B: Nurturing Growth and Gathering Fruits

So much has been nurtured and has nurtured us during these past years. Later in the week we will be presented with an overview on the Sowing Hope for the Planet initiative and Talitha Kum worldwide network. At this stage we want to acknowledge the extraordinary growth that has been nurtured in both.

Sowing Hope for the Planet

The Sowing Hope for the Planet website is an extraordinary kaleidoscope of resources, activities and events shared in multiple languages. The members of the Constellations have really taken to heart the commitment that we made together at the conclusion of Assembly 2029 when we promised *“to both personal and communal conversion” and that “we wish to move forward together in an orchestrated and coordinated response in Listening to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor as we go forth as instruments of hope in the heart of the world.”* The responses from your congregations have been extraordinary – let us continue on this journey, playing our part in the Laudato Si Action Platform.

Talitha Kum has reached several important milestones – it has celebrating its 10th anniversary, increased the number of networks in Africa, offered training to leaders and produced the Call to Action document which was approved by the Executive Board of UISG. You will hear more about this later in the week. Talitha Kum is now widely recognized by both the Church and the international NGO and Inter-Governmental agencies. Many Ambassadors to the Holy See are very active in supporting the work of Talitha Kum. The 4 main objectives of the Call to Action contain 4 significant words: CARE, HEAL, EMPOWER and RESTORE. These sum up the identity of this worldwide network which unites 60 national and regional networks and their sisters and collaborators. In contexts of war and environmental disasters, people are ever more at risk. It is appalling to hear of women fleeing the horrors of war in Ukraine, being tricked by the traffickers with promises of care. Having 60 national and regional networks worldwide is phenomenal and those thousands of sisters and their collaborators. Talitha Kum expresses its mission as follows

“We care for people wounded by exploitation and act against inequalities caused by economic and cultural systems.” We thank all the members of TK who do this work on all our behalf.

Formators Programme

UISG has been offering a programme for Formation Personnel during the past 4 years. The first programme was in person, the second was a mixture of in-person and online due to the Covid pandemic, the third program was online only and thankfully the current programme is in person. There are 46 attendees for this 5-month programme and over the years the following numbers have participated in the programme:

YEAR	PARTICIPANTS	CONGREGATIONS	COUNTRIES
2019	33	23	25
2020	44	33	25
2021	37	23	22
2022	45	30	22
TOTAL	159	109	94

There has been great appreciation expressed for this well-balanced programme with presenters coming from Rome and from overseas and with participants from over 20 different countries. It is delightful to see that the three past groups are all still connecting with and helping each other through their WhatsApp groups.

UISG Migrants Project

The initiative in Sicily began in 2015 during the first phase of the refugee crisis in Europe as thousands of migrants crossed the Mediterranean Sea in fragile boats escaping wars, conflicts and poverty. This project marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of UISG on the 8th December 1965, during the final session of the Vatican Council. The migrants were and still are seeking new opportunities for themselves and their families. Under the able leadership of Sr. Elisabetta Flick – who sadly died during the early period of the Covid pandemic – communities were established in Ramacca, Agrigento and Caltanissetta and more recently in Lampedusa. In total 29 sisters have served in Sicily during the past 7 years and we are so grateful for their dedicated and generous service. However the migrants, who cross the Mediterranean, are no longer brought to Sicily from Lampedusa and elsewhere. Instead they are being transferred to other locations in Italy. Therefore one by one the UISG communities in Sicily have completed their mission. From September onwards only the community in Lampedusa will remain. The focus of the Migrants Project is now on working at the international level, networking sisters and offering ongoing formation to sisters who are working with migrants in different parts of the world.

Solidarity with South Sudan

UISG, as one of the founders with USG of this important inter-congregational initiative in South Sudan, continues to offer support in different ways. From its small beginnings in 2009 Solidarity with South Sudan has continued to expand in order to meet the educational, pastoral and agricultural needs of the people. The focus is on capacity

building so that the South Sudanese themselves can become agents of change within their own country which in such desperate need of peacebuilders and reconcilers. From the start many female congregations have provided personnel and financial resources for the growth and development of this new paradigm of religious life.

We have haven't mention by name all the UISG staff members who actively support the various initiatives mentioned above. We extend to them our gratitude for their extraordinary service and support which helps you as leaders of female religious life to respond collaboratively to the needs of today.

The Challenges Ahead

A: Our Synodal Journey. The Synod on Synodality is the call to collaborate in the renewal of the Church and in the renewal of our Institutes and of our lives. What is the response of the local churches that we are part of? What are the concrete implications for religious life in the discernment and decision - making processes in the Church?

What does synodality mean for new ways of exercising authority so that we can develop the culture of care, of service, of respect. This would require a new understanding of the evangelical councils. Obedience would be seen as the practise of discernment and a commitment to putting the will of God at the centre of our personal life, our leadership, the life of our communities and of our congregations. Evangelical poverty would emphasise the call to share and to being a radical alternative to the culture of consumerism, greed, and exploitation of resources. Poverty would challenge us to share the life of those who have less. Consecrated chastity would call forth the capacity to be the yeast of fraternity in forming communities which are inclusive and which create new networks of relationships within the Church and religious life. We must question afresh ourselves on these various perspectives.

Can the process of the synodality propose changes in the ways of conducting the "at limina" visits; this is an important encounter between the local and the universal Church.

Therefore religious should participate in in the visit itself and in the preparation of the diocesan reports and when providing feedback after the visits to the different Dicasteries and the meeting with the Holy Father.

Our experience of participation in the Amazonia Synod was a good one. There have been various experience of dialogue and collaboration in the this current Synodal process

- We are joining the consultation and participating in the listening meetings and contributing in the local church.
- We are participating in drawing up processes and in using the methodology suggested by the Office of the Synod
- We are taking care to try and listen to everyone. We are often on the peripheries of life, in society and in the church and we will be there to help and facilitate the participation of all voices in the synodal process.
- We are taking advantage of this opportunity of the call to the synodal process to renew the life of our congregations, because synodality is not only a methodology, but it is also the practice of discernment in order to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit today.

Through the renewal of each congregation, through the experience of synodal listening and sharing, we can enrich the synodal journey of the local communities of the Church.

We have been called to place our particular charisms and traditions, at the service of the synodal process because synodal journeys are imprinted in our way of life as religious. Transitions and transformation in the light and process of synodal journeys have inspired our congregations. This has enabled more consultative processes to emerge and has provided spaces and projects of renewal.

On this synodal journey the main protagonist is the Holy Spirit. When we become aware of this, we discover that we must listen to the Spirit and tune into the Spirit's deepest aspirations, letting ourselves be enlightened in simplicity and poverty of heart. because only the Spirit works wonders. Pope Francis regularly repeats that the Synod is not a convention, in which we share our ways of thinking but a process where we listen to the Holy Spirit with an attitude of deep faith and discernment.

The UISG has already had concrete experience of participation in the processes of

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preparation for and celebration of the recent Synods of Bishops. We have a very rich experience on which to reflect and to illuminate the new challenges that are being presented to us. We hope to find ways to do that together as leaders.

In July 2021, the secretariat of the Synod organized the short seminar where various charismatic traditions were present. Congregations of religious life and various ecclesial movements spoke about their historical experiences of synodality. They described the possible tools or instruments that could be useful for synodal processes in local churches. We realized the riches that exist within religious congregations. At the end of those sessions there were some who said how practical and inspiring it would be to discover in each local church what is the contribution of each specific charism and congregational tradition to the synodal path of the church.

B: Dealing with Vulnerability and fragility

Leadership and authority: At UISG we have worked to accompany and form leaders for contemporary religious life. At the same time, we realize that there much to reflect on and to change in our practices. We have understood that the call of Jesus is to exercise “a non-dominant leadership” because He says: there is only one master. This time of Covid has given us the opportunity to reflect on the care and the accompaniment needed in our service of leadership.

We have been called to promote a more circular and inclusive way of exercising the service of authority. This change of paradigm calls for a new model of care and communion

Let me offer two images:

- Firstly, the service of authority is similar to the role of the “sherpas” in the Himalayas that guide the climbers, providing support on the road they have already walked



many times; they are able to carry the burdens of others; however, they will be not be acclaimed as heroes in the newspaper articles which applaud those who have reached the summit.

- Secondly let us think about a boat. We realise how important it is to take care of the team that steers the boat. But let us not forget to take care of the sails, making sure that that they are open, ready to expand to the direction in which the wind is blowing ... for the sake of the mission.

My deepest wish is that all women religious will joyfully live their love and service of humanity! With regard to questions about our mission in the world – so many times our identity and the charism are associated with *doing*, rather than with *being*. We are being called to restore the charismatic identity of the religious life as a gift for the life of the Church.

Vulnerability

As we focus on the theme of vulnerability, we are indeed aware of its different forms. For example, we touch the vulnerability of congregations and provinces that are coming to completion. The general diminishment of vocations is preoccupying many in the Church. The experiences of congregations facing the merging of charisms and institutes speaks reflects a new reality. From all these phenomena there is a need to interpret cycles of growth and diminishment in the light of the graced history of religious life and to read the history of religious life in the light of the Spirit's call to the Church. It is important to reflect on these new experiences and to share about them with each other. UISG provides a space where together we can exchange our experiences, our wisdom and our inspiration.

These changes require wisdom in managing transition and transformation – a transition from the founding culture with openness towards new cultures and new configurations. This transformation requires imagination in creating new ways of forming communities, of providing institutional support, and of searching for new ways of sharing the service of the authority. We need to search for and create a new vocabulary as we are invited to do in the document *New Vine in New Wineskins*.

Our vulnerability is connected to the role of women in the Church. How often it happens that those who should do so, do not care “for the needs of every man and woman, young and old with the care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan” (cf. *Fratelli Tutti* 79.) We must review our systems and structures to see if there is something within, where abuses may occur? When we speak about vulnerability what does the radicality of religious life ask of us today?

The time in which we are living is bringing us to a deeper realization of our vulnerability; a sign of the human condition that we share with everyone. As the Spanish philosopher J.M. Esquirol has said: vulnerability is part of our human condition. Paradoxically, experiencing vulnerability provides us with an opportunity to become more human. It is not about exalting pain or suffering, instead it is about acknowledging a way of being human that bends, that leans with respect towards one's neighbour, just as the celestial vault bends over the earth; a way of life that knows how to stoop-over and accompany, to wait and give shelter.”¹ These ideas will occupy our hearts and minds in these coming days.

But there is a more radical vulnerability to which we are called. The human person made in the image and likeness of God who is Trinity, has three infinite abysses, or depths which are in reality three unfathomable capacities for infinity. These three include an active disposition for fullness, an awareness of one's radical poverty and the isolation of not knowing and finally the insatiable hunger for his love. Only the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit can fill this triple abyss completely and forever. To be and to live with the Father, to know with the Son and to love with the Holy Spirit. Only in living together, in common union can we be filled with the fullness of God.

Finally let us remember that something new is happening. The 2005 Congress on Religious Life “Passion for Christ, Passion for Humanity” recognized that Consecrated life was involved in the process of globalization when it said “Our charisms are rooted in new religious and cultural places and contexts. These differences convert our institutes into transnational communities that enjoy the same global identity.”² The globalization nature of the pandemic became an opportunity that helped us to recognize “the unity in the diversity of the world so loved by God.”³ It has fostered a global sensitivity in us that has opened us up “to real possibilities for an inculturation and contextualization of our charisms and for closer collaboration with other congregations and with other

forms of Christian and human living.”⁴ Now more than ever we recognize the pluralism and diversity that consecrated life now embraces. We see that individual charisms are “recognized, freed and are put at the service of the others.”⁵ Our consecrated life which can hold differences of gender, age, culture, rites and sensitivities can be a prophetic sign to the world and help us all to gain a better understanding of pluralism by illuminating it with the wisdom of the Gospel.

The inspirational words of the document, are as relevant today, as they were when written in 2005. Again, we can acknowledge that while our forms of consecrated life are in a time of transition, we know that we experience a passionate love for Christ and a compassion for our brothers and sisters, that leads us forward together.

We express our gratitude to God for all the times that we have been able to mutually accompany one another during this three year journey...to each one of you who feels part of this experience of shared vocation and mission within UISG,

- 1 Humano más humano. Una antropología de la herida infinita, Barcelona, Acantilado, 2021
- 2 Passion for Christ, Passion for Humanity, Scritto da Congresso 2004 Vita Consacrata Publica to: Gen 27, 2006 #20.
- 3 Ibid., # 21.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid., #34