

Solidarity with Sisters

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July 31, 2013

His Eminence Cardinal João Braz de Aviz
The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
Piazza Pio XII, 3
00193 Rome

Dear Cardinal Braz de Aviz:

It gives us great hope as we see your warmth, honesty, and openness at work in the Vatican and with religious orders! We thank you, and wish you many blessings in your work.

Solidarity with Sisters is a group of lay Catholics who are inspired by the powerful faith and ministries of Catholic sisters. We are also impressed and inspired by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), and the model of leadership rooted in faith that they promote to their member congregations. We have also been inspired by the manner in which the LCWR has responded to the 2012 mandate issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Their response has taught us much about faith, love, prayer, and communal discernment.

We write today to ask your help in giving the enclosed letter to Pope Francis. We want to share with him our conviction that LCWR *is a natural ally in his efforts* to help the Church live the gospel with faith, hope, and love, and in solidarity with marginalized people. We fear that Pope Francis and some others in Rome mistrust the faithfulness of LCWR. We fear that they are distracted by a few words taken out of context from the many speeches given at LCWR Assemblies over the past 50 years. We fear that suspicion about LCWR is due to misunderstanding and lack of knowledge, and undermines the Church's mission to bring the light of Christ to the world.

In the words and actions of Pope Francis, we see the same spirit that we value in the words and actions of Catholic sisters here in the United States. Trust in LCWR's sisters is deeper and more widespread than trust in the hierarchy. We are asking the Pope to engage with LCWR to help bring the Church back to its central mission of bringing the hope, joy, peace, and radiant presence of Jesus Christ to all people throughout the world.

We ask you to please give the enclosed letter to Pope Francis. We will continue to pray for him and for you, with gratitude and hope.

Sincerely,
The Coordinating Committee of Solidarity with Sisters

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