



Webinar: Interpreting the statistics of consecrated life in Canada

Held on April 20, 2022

PLENARY REPORT

Questions discussed in small groups:

- *What considerations do these questions invite us to make regarding the future of consecrated life in Canada?*
- *What topics do you think should be prioritized for the coming year?*

REFLECTIONS SHARED DURING THE PLENARY

- Our "being together as a community" (generations living together, working on the continuity between legacy and the future; apostolic orientations for the youngest, and benevolence towards the older sisters).
- The difference between mission and apostolate (mission always lasts, but the form of apostolate can change).
- In the midst of an important change of mentality, there is the challenge of mutual trust.
- We can no longer deny the situation, for it prevents us from moving forward. Realism does not mean that there is no more mission.
- The visibility of consecrated life is an issue raised by lay people.
- How can we understand the departures of the younger religious who had entered the community?
- What is emerging and how can we see it?
- To be partners in the mission, within society, collaborating while being aware of our differences.
- Formation of new members: where does it happen effectively? How do we train members regarding the meaning of community life, and for the apostolate to the poor?

- Our image in the media: residential schools, abuse. How can we work to present a more positive image and reality of consecrated life?
- Ensuring the continuation of our charisms through endowments to institutions, lay or otherwise.
- With the decrease of consecrated persons in Canada, and members coming from abroad: congregations need to think about restructuring in line with the fact that the future is elsewhere (i.e. Southern hemisphere).
- Rethinking the way of living the meaning of our respective charisms today, and thinking about an inter-congregational life; a project of communion for the mission, creating an intercultural synergy.
- The challenge of administrative succession: it will be necessary to encourage consecrated persons to accept that lay people take on responsibilities at this level.
- Consecrated life goes beyond the temporal mission: the spiritual mission remains and is real, we must not forget it.
- The mission and the transmission of the charism continue in daily life with lay people.
- Concern: we are far from young people, they no longer enter religious life, why is this?
- Many questions are not new, but how do we accompany these transitions?
- The works are still numerous... how can we discern what to let go of?
- How to hold together the various aspects of mission: intergenerational, intercultural, inter "consecrated and lay".
- The Church does not have a mission. The mission has a Church. We must relearn this.
- The perception of young people about consecrated life: what is our witness? How can young women see themselves in religious life when this Church does not make a full place for women (especially in ordained ministries)?
- The connection of congregations with community organizations, and the social legacy of congregations.
- For councils and boards: to honor the dimension of spiritual animation and that of management in order to ensure both in a balance, even if it means rethinking the structures.
- Brothers and sisters from abroad, who come here for apostolate: how to integrate, support and develop this dimension?
- Archives of congregations: let the CRC help to see clearly for the future.
- CRC, ATTIR, ATRI, CRS and other organizations: how to foster collaboration? Can the CRC coordinate all existing services and organizations for consecrated life, do research, and create a clearing house?
- The CRC plays an important role in the spiritual "animation" of its members, and this should continue (virtual and face-to-face). We come here to be nourished, in order to serve our local communities. The CRC can also help us find resources for animation/facilitation.
- The CRC (the team and the network) can help us discern the transformation that is taking place: the links between consecrated persons and laity, the desire to simplify structures that are too heavy for the next generation. Something new is emerging.
- It is time to consider associates as much more than "companions in prayer". What can we imagine in terms of rapprochement, formation, etc.?
- How can our archives help tell our stories? Use social media as a public treasure.
- Continue to provide information and reflections on governance and leadership models.
- The future of consecrated life is not just the business of consecrated life, but the responsibility of the whole Church, and this is where we need to take this reflection. What does mission look like at a time when the Church and religious life no longer have the same presence and visibility in society as

in the past? Mission and vocation promotion must be reflected upon in the context of an ongoing transformation.

- How do we think about and manage the transfer of our assets to the countries of the South?
- Embracing our vulnerabilities: naming, sharing, moving forward, reconnecting with a renewed sense of our consecrated life today.
- Spirit of partnership with the laity for the sustainability of the mission.
- How can the CRC consolidate the visibility of the common charism of consecrated life? How will the CRC support the elderly and the young?