WOMEN RELIGIOUS ON THE FRONTLINES

JUNE 23, 2020
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM

U.S. Embassy to the Holy See

British Embassy
Holy See

Program

11:00 am **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Callista L. Gingrich
U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See

11:05 am **Panel Discussion**
Women Religious on the Frontlines

Sally Axworthy
British Ambassador to the Holy See
Moderator

Sister Stan Therese Mario Mumuni
Superior General
Marian Sisters for Eucharistic Love

Sister Imelda Poole
President
RENATE

Sister Alicia Vacas
Provincial Superior
Comboni Sisters in Jerusalem

11:30 am **Moderated Q&A**

11:50 am **Closing Remarks**
Sister Jolanda Kafka
President
International Union of Superiors General

Callista L. Gingrich
U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See

Callista L. Gingrich is the U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on October 16, 2017, sworn in by President Trump and Vice President Pence on October 24, 2017, and credentialed by Pope Francis on December 22, 2017. Ambassador Gingrich is a *New York Times* bestselling author and former President and CEO of Gingrich Productions, a multimedia production and consulting company. She is the author of the "Ellis the Elephant" children's American history series and co-author of "Rediscovering God in America." Mrs. Gingrich is also the producer of several historical documentary films including, "Nine Days that Changed the World" and "Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous with Destiny." In 2018 Ambassador Gingrich was awarded an honorary doctorate from Ave Maria School of Law in Naples, Florida. Previously, Mrs. Gingrich served as a congressional aide in the U.S. House of Representatives and as the President of The Gingrich Foundation. She is married to former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and 2012 presidential candidate Newt Gingrich.

Sally Axworthy
British Ambassador to the Holy See

Mrs. Sally Axworthy MBE took up her appointment as Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Holy See in September 2016. Since February 2019, she has been a member of the "Consulta Femminile" of the Pontifical Council for Culture. Mrs. Axworthy's previous roles with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office include time as Joint Head of the North Africa Department; Head of the Somalia Unit; and Director of Corporate Services in India. She has also served in Germany, Ukraine and Russia. Mrs. Axworthy's interests include historic buildings, rural life, running, walking, and sewing. When in the UK, she and her four children live in Cornwall.

Speakers

Sister Jolanda Kafka

President
International Union of Superiors General

Sister Jolanda Maria Kafka is a native of Poland and a member of the Claretian Missionary Sisters. Sister Jolanda was elected president of the Executive Board of UISG on May 14, 2019. Sister Jolanda's background was in education and religious training in the congregation prior to accepting a leadership role within UISG. Sister Jolanda studied at the Institute for Consecrated Life at the Pontifical Lateran University. Prior to studying in Rome, Sister Jolanda received a degree in dogmatic theology from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland. Sister Jolanda is ministering in her missionary order as Superior General of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate – Claretian Missionaries.

Panelists

Sister Stan Terese Mario Mumuni

Superior General
Marian Sisters for Eucharistic Love

Sister Stan Terese Mario Mumuni, a native of Bawku, Ghana, took her vows as a Sister in July 1997. She spent the first 15 years of her missionary work in Nigeria but followed God's call to return to a conflict zone in northern Ghana to help children born with birth defects, who were being killed and accused of witchcraft. In 2009, with the local Bishop's blessing but no funding, she opened an orphanage to rescue the innocent victims who were rejected by their families and communities. She later founded the congregation Marian Sister of Eucharistic Love (MASEL), dedicated to changing hearts and saving souls. To date, Sr Stan's mission has saved the lives of more than 100 children.

Sister Imelda Poole

President
RENATE

Sister Imelda Poole MBE, a native of Great Britain, is a sister of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM). After many years in the field of Education and grassroots mission in the UK, her ministry moved to Albania where the Archbishop of Tirana invited the Congregation to work in the mission against Human Trafficking. This led to her co-founding an NGO called Mary Ward Loreto (MWL) which addresses the root causes of trafficking, including poverty and is involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking. Sister Imelda currently serves as the President of Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation (RENATE). RENATE has grown from a handful of sisters into a leading NGO combatting human trafficking in 31 European countries. It regularly convenes in different European nations to support work across borders in partnership with the many members of RENATE.

Sister Alicia Vacas

Provincial Superior
Comboni Sisters in Jerusalem

Sister Alicia Vacas, a native of Spain, currently serves as the Regional Leader for the Comboni Sisters in the Middle East, (including the communities of the Comboni Sisters in Turkey, Jordan, Israel/Palestine, the Gulf, and Sri Lanka). She lives in Jerusalem, Israel. The Comboni Sisters are present in 35 countries and have been providing frontline healthcare assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sr. Alicia was called to serve as a nurse during the peak of the crisis in Bergamo, Italy, where 10 of the 55 sisters in her community house perished. After working on the frontlines in northern Italy, Sr. Alicia recently returned to Israel. Her convent, situated near the separation wall between Israel and the Palestinian territories, was founded in 1966 and serves as both a spiritual retreat center and the St. Mary's Kindergarten. This community serves the Bedouin population in the desert of Juda (West Bank) and works with asylum seekers and human trafficking victims in Israel.

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