

May 16 Day 5

Dominican Sisters International (DSI) Ninth General Assembly, 12-17 May, 2019

## **DSI DAY 5: Quilting: A Day of Renewal and Election**

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*Anne Lythgoe, OP*

ROME – May 16, 2019 – Day 5 of the DSI Ninth General Assembly began in the context of its theme: *Quilting Threads of Collaboration: Spaces of Encounter, Renewal and Hope,*” After praying in language groups, the sisters met in Continental groups and then gathered to hear some concluding remarks from the keynote speaker, Sr. Teresa Maya, CCVI, past-president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR).

Teresa thanked the group for sharing their conversations from yesterday and she celebrated the distinctive Dominican Call that she experienced with us. “Your love of your Dominican charism is very deep,” she said. This love of charism leads you to work for peace, to be practical and collaborative in your efforts. The Dominican style of encuentro is *Disputatio*, a common search for the truth rooted in humility and a willingness to see differences among people. What you are doing will be a model for the rest of us.

She was particularly struck by the feminine nature of our preaching charism and that “the women of the world need to listen to you in all the ways you preach.” Teresa encouraged the group to live out of the mystery of our call and act with courage in taking steps that will help us build the bridges that the world needs. The leadership task is to strengthen and encourage younger members, who are looking for an intercontinental experience of formation. “Look for sisters who can cross the border, find them, send them. Don’t be afraid to do this. Don’t be afraid of their dreams.”

Teresa encouraged the group to ease the process of cultivating communications skills. The use of technology is essential, but there is a cost of time, effort, resources, and availability. What kind of technological structure will help you? More than a particular method, the content of your message is most important. How do you create the networks of communication across congregations that will help DSI develop effective spaces of encounter? What is the technological structure will help you?

Finally, go back to the idea that quilting requires collaboration, teamwork, and time. The energy of the charism is collaboration, something happens when you meet. Bring your piece of cloth and welcome difference. Remember, that in Amish culture, every quilt has some imperfections. Do not be afraid of making mistakes, there will be failures. Make space for the Lord so we can hear God’s voice.

The members expressed their gratitude to Teresa with very enthusiastic applause.

Later in the day, the assembly elected Margaret Mayce, OP, as the new International Coordinator. Margaret presently serves as the NGO UN Representative in New York City, NY. The assembly also affirmed the DSI Continental Coordinators: Bernadette Kiley, OP (Asia-Pacific), Sr. Venentia Velephi Muthembu, OP (Africa), Gene Poore, OP (North America), Noemi Zambrano, OP (Latin America and the Caribbean), Pilar deBarrios, OP (Europe).

The assembly also affirmed the work being done to establish the legal corporation Dominican Sisters International Corporation (DSIC) in Italy.

The assembly of DSI unanimously approved a resolution so that the congregations, whose generalates are in the Middle East, would move to the European region from the Asia-Pacific region. It also approved a proposal, to explore over the next three years, the possibility of creating an Executive Secretary role, much like the structure of UISG.

Later in the day, Master of the Order, fr. Bruno Cadore, joined the assembly for a talk: "*Collaboration through Vocation*" which he presented in French. He engaged the members in some discussion. The evening included the celebration of Eucharist with fr. Bruno and a festive celebration with the Scalabrini Singers, a local group of young sisters and dancers, who wove theme of human trafficking into their presentation.

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**Dominican Sisters International** is an International Movement of Dominican Sisters of Apostolic Life founded in Rome in May 1995 primarily to unite Congregations of Dominican Sisters of Apostolic Life worldwide in their preaching mission. For more information visit the website: [www.dsiop.org](http://www.dsiop.org).