

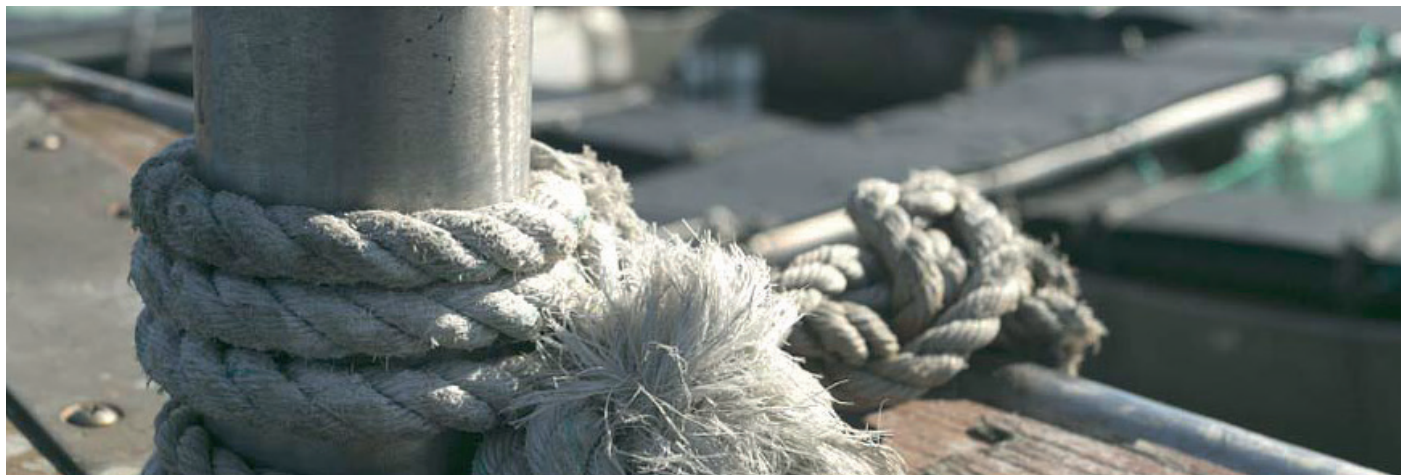


# Migrants Project

## INTERNATIONAL DESK

Sr. Florence de la Villéon

rete.migranti@uisg.org - www.uisg.org



“The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.” (Gaudium et Spes #1).

The migration of peoples is a reality that continues to grow and the challenges of integration are multiplying. In order to respond to this globalization and to the magnitude of this phenomenon that increases, we need to organize a world-wide response that promotes charity, hospitality and generosity. We must make our world more human and more sensitive to the suffering of people on the move. It is necessary to respond to the globalization of migration by the globalization of charity and of mutual assistance we must make the life of migrants more human.

The women religious, called and sent by Christ for his mission, wish to respond with love, passion and compassion to the needs of those who arrive among us and who suffer as refugees and migrants. They wish to respond to their calls with the richness of our different charisms, cultures and spirituality. God, who constantly loves us, is close to our brothers and sisters who live today on the roads of exile or foreign lands, and suffer. He invites us to join them in a spirit of welcome and sharing.

In faith and love, they are ready to go to them, to be with them, companions on the paths of life. They are sent to build bridges between

civilizations, between cultures, between local people and migrants.

Thanks to the diversity of their charisms, they can witness that unity is possible between them, as a prophetic sign in today's world.

In this spirit and in the spirit of the values of the Gospel, the members of the UISG and its Executive Council wished to build a global solidarity among the religious in order to answer to these new plights. The first step was the creation of an inter-congregational and international community in Sicily, in December 2015, composed of 10 sisters based initially in two locations Agrigento and Ramacca. There is now a third community in the diocese of Caltanissetta. The sisters work directly with the migrants in the streets and in the welcome centers.

In order to extend the initial aim of the project and to develop solidarity with the migrants, UISG wishes to create a service of mutual support and solidarity among the religious working with migrants. This will be carried out in collaboration with religious communities already working on the ground and with local dioceses, church agencies, and NGOs who are responding to the plight of migrants.

# DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK TO SUPPORT RELIGIOUS WORKING WITH MIGRANTS

UISG wants gradually establish an international network connecting congregations that work in the field of migration in order:

- To share information about migrants, refugees, displaced peoples...
- To develop reflection processes on the phenomenon of migration and to explore the implication for formation and education within religious congregations.
- To discover and to get to know what is already in place: the responses already implemented by congregations
- To listen to people working directly with migrants, to learn from them especially from their experiences of in the field; to work hand in hand with them and to offer mutual support.
- To link sisters working in sending countries with those involved in countries of arrival.
- To pool and offer resources (documents, speakers, funding agencies ...)
- To start a small platform in order to offer formation and advice through resource persons already identified
- To raise awareness among congregations and their institutions (schools, hospitals, pastoral centers, etc...), about the need to take into consideration the growing multicultural dimension of our contemporary globalized world
- To encourage and coordinate reflection on these new challenges and responses.
- To stimulate the creation of new inter-congregational projects in different parts of the world at the service of migrants.
- To strengthen cooperation with international, civil and religious, organizations and educational institutions working in the field of migration.

This network will aim to provide mutual support for religious, at an international level. It will be at the service of the congregations that wish to avail of it. It will help hopefully to answer the new challenges of migration in the 21st century.

It will also be a network of encouragement and support for religious congregations working with migrants.

It will accompany and encourage those congregations who would like to enter thus ministry.



“You have... a great history still to be accomplished! Look to the future, where the Spirit is sending you in order to do even greater things”.

Apostolic letter of Pope Francis to all consecrated people, nov.2014