Programme

Wednesday 6 March 2024
9.30am - 5pm CET

Aula della Congregazione, Jesuit Curia
Borgo Santo Spirito 4 - 00193 Rome
Morning

09:15  Registration & arrival

09:30-10:30  **Opening session: Women as builders of hope**

Welcome and housekeeping: Giulia Isabel Cirillo (Moderator)
Welcome: Rev. Father Arturo Sosa Abascal SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus
Welcome: H.E. Chiara Porro, Australian Ambassador to the Holy See

Opening remarks: Sister Patricia Murray, ibvm, Executive Secretary, International Union of Superiors General
Opening remarks: Kirsty Robertson, CEO of Caritas Australia and Vice President Caritas Internationalis (video message)

10:30-11:00  Coffee break

11:00-12:30  **Session 1: Women’s empowerment in the Catholic Church**

*This session will explore the role and contribution of lay and religious women in the Catholic Church, including in the synodal process and in leadership positions at the Vatican and beyond.*

Sister Nathalie Becquart xmcj, Under-Secretary, General Secretariat of the Synod
Cristiane Murray, Deputy Director, Holy See Press Office
Patricia Adèle Félicité, Secretary General, Caritas Île Maurice
Professor Maeve Heaney, Director, Xavier Centre of Theology, Australian Catholic University

Q&A

12:30  Media point

12:30-13:45  Buffet lunch
14:00-15:15 **Session 2: Women leaders: Education, economic empowerment and developing skills - Success stories**

*Women's participation in dialogue, peace-building and decision-making is essential in effectively tackling the many global challenges we face, from conflict to climate change. This session will look at success stories of women’s’ empowerment, be it through education programmes, basic healthcare, innovative economic initiatives or rebuilding lives and developing the skills of vulnerable women.*

**Sister Maria Nirmalini AC**, National President, Conference of Religious India (weblink)

**Sister Espérance Bamiryio**, former Director of the Catholic Health Training Institute, Wau, South Sudan

**Sister Ruperta Palacios Silva**, Carmelite Missionary of Santa Teresa, Mexico; Secretary of the Afro-Mexican Pastoral, Cáritas Mexicana

Q&A

15:15 Media point

15:15-15:45 Coffee break

15:45-16:50 **Session 3: Women’s empowerment: how can faith and governments actors can increase collaboration?”**

*This session will look at how the Catholic Church, faith-based organisations and governments can work in greater partnership on the shared agenda to empower women and girls.*

**Sister Helen Alford OP**, President, Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences; Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas

**Alistair Dutton**, General Secretary, Caritas Internationalis

**Elisa Chavez**, Human Rights Adviser, Stefanus Alliance International

Q&A

16:50 **Conclusions: H.E. Christopher Trott**, British Ambassador to the Holy See

17:00 Conference ends
Women Leaders

6 March 2024
International Women's Day Conference
Towards a brighter future

British Embassy
Holy See

Caritas Internationalis

Australian Embassy
Holy See