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General Superior

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°65 – OCTOBER 20TH 2019

Our commitment can make the world better:

Promoting migrant's rights I

Dear Sisters,

The phenomenon of migration is not new to the world. The ability to move from one place to another has always allowed individuals, families and groups to leave their place of origin to go and live in another part of the planet. The reasons, almost always, have been economic and social: to seek a better life. There are those who have migrated to "try their luck" at work, and there are those who have done so by fleeing violence, persecution or fear. Some traveling alone to send money to their families or join them in the future, and others traveling with their families. All, with the dream of having a better life, have left land, customs, and roots, with hearts full of hope. The history of humanity has been written with multiple migratory flows in all directions and we must not forget that many societies advanced in their growth thanks to what the cultural exchange produced.

Today, migration has become a global phenomenon and has special characteristics that allow us to speak of a "migratory crisis". Official figures indicate that today there would be more than 270 million migrants in the world. The result? Resistance and rejection have grown, racist and xenophobic feelings have spread, and many think that the solution lies in building walls, closing borders and routes of displacement.

It is not surprising that the majority of immigrants are arriving in the more developed countries of Europe, the USA and Canada. However, and given that the phenomenon has become widespread, there are many countries that at the moment are "receiving" people of other nationalities, cultures, and religion.

["Receiving" is a generous word, if we look at what migrants experience in different countries. Pope Francis has rightly said that migrants and refugees "today are a symbol of all those discarded from a globalized society"].

We are certainly not called to seek concrete solutions to the problem of migration. This is the task of governments, authorities, those who make laws, ... But we are called to welcome, accompany and integrate, from the possibilities we have, those people from our environment who have come from outside. Yes, we are called to have clear positions in the face of anti-immigrant feelings, and not to fall into the game of those who sow fear against migrants and criminalize them, making them responsible for the evils of society. We are called to sit down with them and listen to their stories, to be sensitive to what they are experiencing and what they have experienced, to be their sisters, close to them and in solidarity…

Our Apostolic Plan of the Congregation does not allow us to forget that migrants "in transit from one country to another, are often mistreated, and are frequently denied entry or stay, leaving them in the most absolute helplessness" (PAC p. 9). That is why they are a priority in our pastoral concern.

During this month in which the Church is celebrating an extraordinary missionary month, any new effort to go out to meet people in need can be a valuable act in renewing our missionary spirit. We can make every migrant we meet on the road feel that Jesus Christ lives in the country where he or she has arrived.

Affectionately,