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Seattle grassroots group readies for Sunday \"flower march\"

by Alice Popovici

Hundreds of people are expected to gather in Seattle on Sunday for a \"flower march\" to support Catholic sisters, according to Gretchen Gundrum, spokeswoman for the grassroots organization *I Stand with the Sisters*. The march begins at 12:30 p.m. at Louisa Boren Park.

\"We're encouraging people to bring flowers to represent all the sisters that have impacted their lives,\" Gundrum said. \"We're hoping that we get a large crowd to make a statement.\"

Here's more from the organization's press release:

The Flower March comes on the heels of the LCWR's annual assembly, where they will address the Vatican's mandate to reform its statues, programs and affiliations to conform more closely to the teachings and discipline of the Catholic church. Many across the U.S. are incensed by the attack on the women religious and will gather on August 12 --each with a flower to represent a sister who has touched their lives--to draw attention to this grave inequity in the Catholic church.

In a letter to the *I Stand with the Sisters* organization, the executive director of the LCWR, Sr. Janet Mock CSJ, said, \"No words can properly express our gratitude. Your support fortifies us during this time of prayer and conversation as we discern our next steps in response to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith's Doctrinal Assessment. We are inspired by the courageous men and women who have gone before us, who saw their obstacles as blessings as they proceeded in carrying out the Word of God. All of you at *I Stand with the Sisters* are such an encouragement to us. Please pray for us and the leaders of our church, that through dialogue and collaboration, we can together better serve the people of God and all those in need.\"

In response, *I Stand with the Sisters* spokesperson Gretchen Gundrum added, "We are honored to be supporting Sr. Mock and all the LCWR in such a public way. This movement has touched the Catholic laity all over the world as we have spread a message of solidarity through our I Stand With The Sisters buttons and our inaugural Flower March next weekend. At *I Stand With The Sisters*, we dream of a Church of the future that more deeply resonates with all its people, listens carefully to the diverse voices of the faith-filled, and seeks to do justice and service, rather than exert power over its members. The foundation of our lives is the Jesus of the Gospels. We live out of the Vatican II conviction that we are the church," Gundrum replied.

The Flower March hopes to draw from parishes and supportive communities in the greater Seattle area and beyond, winding its way 2.4 miles from Capitol Hill, down Madison Street--a major Seattle thoroughfare--ending near St. James Cathedral, the symbolic seat of power of the Seattle Archdiocese. Following a brief ceremony, all flowers will be laid there as a show of support and love for the LCWR's members who are currently under scrutiny by the Vatican.

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