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AMOR conference statement

by NCR Staff

Statement of AMOR XVI

"The Mystic-Prophetic Dimension of Religious Life"

... a mystic is a prophet in contemplation ... a prophet is a mystic in action

We, 75 women religious representatives of different conferences of women religious across 11 countries of the Asia-Oceania region, came together Nov. 10-17 at the St. Scholastica's Center of Spirituality in Tagaytay, Philippines, for AMOR XVI (Asia-Oceania Meeting of Religious). The meeting focused on the theme "The Mystic-Prophetic Dimension of Religious Life." A mystic is a prophet in contemplation; a prophet is a mystic in action. It is the very essence of our religious life.

We came together at the tail end of the super Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Typhoon Yolanda) that brought much pain, suffering and death to the people of the Visayas islands (especially Leyte and Samar). We were here, knowing what was happening to the people in the islands. Some of the religious present here know people directly affected by the typhoon. Two of the participants had to leave immediately because disaster struck their community. There were also feelings of unease to know that the typhoon was approaching Vietnam and mainland China. It was under such circumstances that the meeting was held. Yet participants were reminded over and over again in the theme song: "Amor to the people, we will share the love of God. There is hope to give to the people through Jesus Christ."

His Eminence Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle in his homily during the opening Mass reminded the sisters that religious need to abide in the Lord and offer hospitality to each other and abide with each other. Called to be prophets and mystics, what do religious see, hear and touch? In turn, do we allow ourselves to be touched?

An exposure program was organized to some homes, parish communities, and an ecological farm, and participants had the opportunity to understand the situation of the local people and the services offered by the congregations to improve the lives of the poor, abandoned and abused. It was an inspiring experience.

The participants received input from several speakers covering the theological and biblical foundations on the theme "Mystic-Prophetic Dimension of Religious Life," testimonies on the cost of telling the truth, environmental advocacy, and against human trafficking. There were sharings on global and local realities.

We are challenged:

- to deepen our contemplative life like mystics and allow our prayers to sharpen our senses to the global realities and, like prophets, reach out to the people of God.
- to deepen our awareness of and commitment to social issues, especially those affecting the environment, women and children in Asia and Oceania.
- to revision the goals of AMOR to rekindle the fire of its original spirit and passion and to urge the women religious to come together as one in service to God's people.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to gather and exchange information with members to awaken ourselves to the changes and actual realities happening in Asia and Oceania by:

- taking up the offer of the *National Catholic Reporter* to contribute stories for publication online and in print as a venue for hearing the voice of women religious in Asia/Oceania.
- creating our own AMOR website.
- making better use of social media.
- increase understanding of the complexities and intricacies of the issues faced by our countries, e.g., rampant corruption, human trafficking, violence against women and children, and climate change and other environmental issues by organizing fora, symposia, reflection circles, etc.
- continue to strengthen our collaborative efforts and networking among the religious congregations as well as with governments, nongovernmental organizations, civil society, and members of other religions.

Called to be mystics in action and prophets in contemplation, we go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit with our prayers, daring to speak the truth and responding with courage to challenges that require our action so we can be hope for the people of God.

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