Blog



The Union of International Superiors General has released the final video in a three-video series illustrating the work of Catholic sisters around the world. This video features scenes of sisters, such as the one pictured here, serving vulnerable communities. (Courtesy of UISG)



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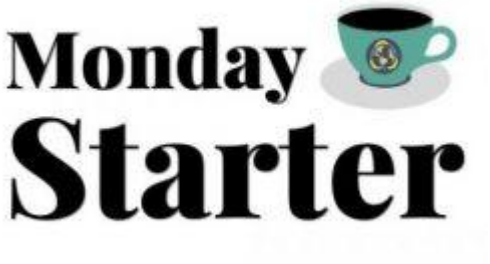
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September 26, 2022

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Editor's note: *Global Sisters Report's Monday Starter is a weekly feature from GSR staff writers that rounds up news from or about women religious that you may*

otherwise have missed.



The International Union of Superiors General has released the third and final installment in its campaign to celebrate Catholic sisters promoting justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

This video, "New Leaders: Supporting communities to care," is summarized in its closing statement: "Sisters embody a culture of care based on presence, encounter and service," according to the press announcement.

The announcement notes:

The approach of sisters to community engagement is rooted in three fundamental values, underpinning their unique contribution to global development:

> • Presence: Sisters live among the world's most vulnerable people, sharing their experiences, challenges and hopes.
>
> • Encounter: Sisters welcome difference in all its forms, striving to recognize and value each person in their full human dignity.
>
> • And service: Sisters are committed to promoting the empowerment of all people and the wellbeing of our common home, giving their time, their energies and even their lives in service of others.

"The foundational drive of most congregations of women religious has been one of care and nurture, especially where systems and structures have been weak in caring for the vulnerable," Sr. Mary John Kudiyiruppil, associate executive secretary at UISG, said in the press announcement. "My wish and prayer is that people see this video, draw inspiration for their lives, tap into their fundamental urge to care, and support persons and structures engaged in care-giving."

The video features sisters working for Solidarity with South Sudan, an intercongregational Catholic network and UISG initiative that trains educators, nurses, farmers and community leaders in the conflict-ridden country.

"Our projects are not involved in direct services, like staffing schools for the young or hospitals for the sick," Fr. David Gentry, mission promoter at Solidarity with South Sudan, said in the announcement. "Instead, we seek to educate and train the people of South Sudan to take on these roles for themselves, so they do not become dependent on 'charity' from afar, but rather come into possession of their own powers, in order to be agents of their own history."

The video also features Good Shepherd Sr. Niluka Perera, coordinator of the UISG initiative Catholic Care for Children International, which works directly with children in marginalized or under-resourced communities.

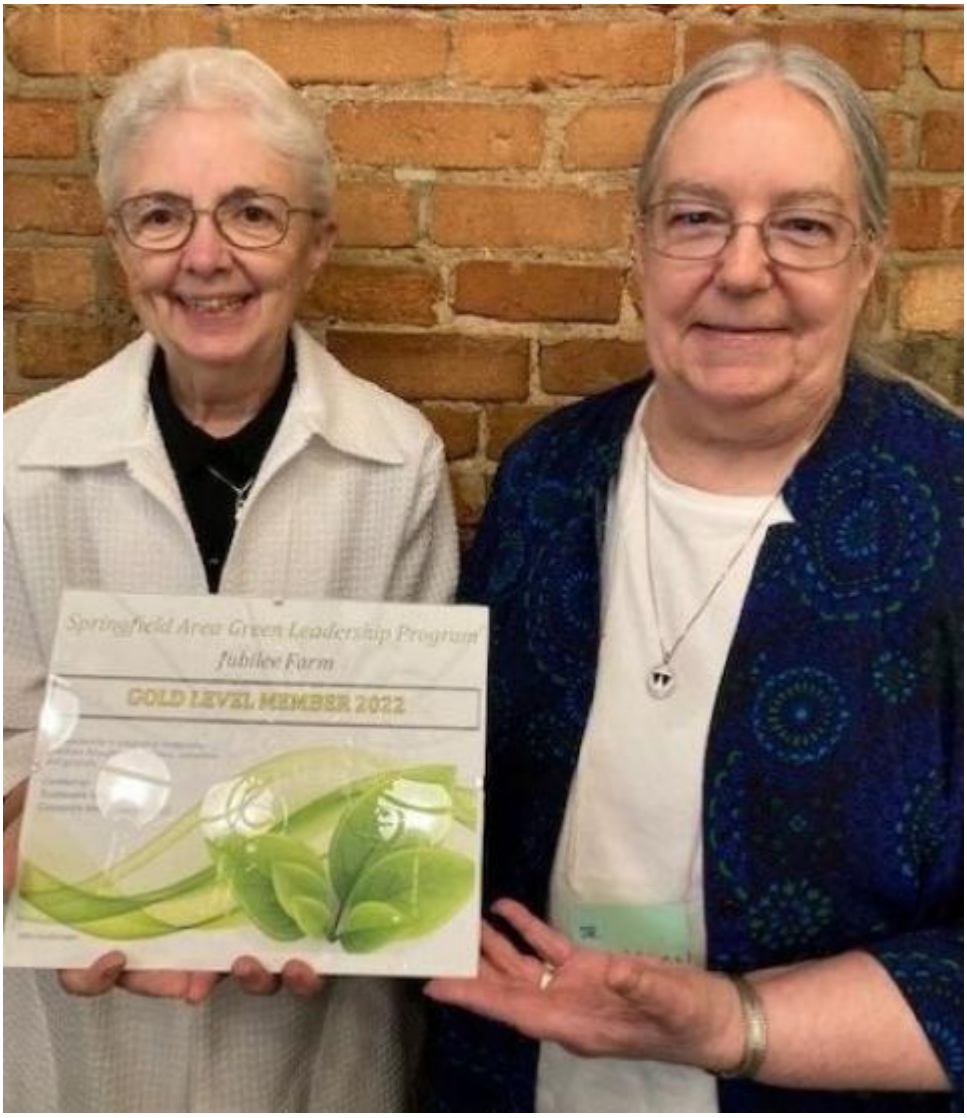
"The creation of the CCCI office at UISG is the result of Sister-led care reform in Uganda, Zambia and Kenya during the past few years," Perera said in the announcement. "We are called to dream big in order to find a better, more sustainable future for the children in our care; we are called to let go of old ways of responding to issues related to caring for children. For this, we need to open ourselves to the new with an open mind, open heart, and open will, nurturing new ways of thinking, being, and doing."

UISG will launch a new campaign, Sisters for the Environment, at the start of October.

Springfield Dominicans create climate plan

The Springfield Dominicans and their associates have a plan to address climate change.

Hundreds of religious congregations have taken up Pope Francis' call to protect the Earth in *Laudato Si*', and the sisters say this is just the first of series of plans they will put into action through 2023.



Rose Marie Riley and Sharon Zayac: Sr. Rose Marie Riley, left, and Sr. Sharon Zayac, both Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois, receive an honor for their work at Jubilee Farm from Sustainable Springfield, a grassroots organization that promotes and inspires sustainable solutions by local governments, the business community, and Springfield area citizens. (Courtesy of the Dominican Sisters of Springfield)

The plan has three goals:

- Recognize and interrupt economic injustices that harm Earth.
- Live simpler and consume less.
- Approach care for Earth through the lens of faith in a loving God.

"We recognize that no single person alone, or even a well-meaning group of persons like us, can heal the trauma Earth has experienced," Sr. Sharon Zayac, who leads

the committee behind the plan, said in a press release. "But unless we all do something, nothing will ever change. We are committing ourselves to be the change we wish to see. That's what this plan is about."

The plan is full of specific, practical steps the sisters and associates will take to meet their goals, such as eating less meat, using less plastic and purchasing hybrid or all-electric vehicles.

To foster a spiritual life in tune with the realities of climate change, the sisters will integrate prayers that reflect this awareness into their common times of prayer. Individuals are encouraged to reflect on creation and the holiness of nature as part of their spiritual practice.

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Intercongregational novitiate offers informational seminar

The InterCongregational Collaborative Novitiate in Chicago will host an online information session for community leaders, formators, and prospective participants interested in the novitiate.

The program is open to novices from any congregation and appears to be the first of its kind. Participants attend workshops and classes, have days of reflection, pray, and work with a spiritual director. The time novices spend with the program is considered part of the sending congregation's novitiate, providing a year of study and discernment as they prepare to live vowed religious life.

Officials say that as the program enters its second year, the novitiate has grown and expanded, and the co-directors are excited to share updates about their experiences and progress since the last information session.

The online sessions are from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Central Time Nov. 7 and Jan. 19 and require registration.

Those attending will learn more about the program, get a glimpse into the current year and new location, and receive updates for the 2023-2024 application process.

Webinar will examine 'The Economy of Francesco'

UISG will present a global webinar, "The Economy of Francesco: Bringing a Soul to the Economy," that will feature the testimonies of a Sept. 24 meeting in Assisi, Italy, titled "Pope Francis and young people from around the world for tomorrow's economy."



Pope Francis waves as he leaves his Sept. 21 general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. (CNS/Paul Haring)

The online webinar is 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Rome time, or 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Eastern U.S. time, on Sept. 24. Five sisters will represent UISG: Sr. Claudia Maria Mundo of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Philippa Mareri; Sr. Anu Anet Lepcha of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as the Loreto Sisters; Sr. Mariana Eva of the Congregatio Jesu sisters; and Sr. Nanadeinotuemi Mary Pabor and Sr. Khaisia Shivonje Juliana of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

Mundo's testimony was published before the event and can be found on the UISG website.