



Sr. Nina Krapić, deputy director of the Holy See Press Office, right, speaks to Sr. Jane Wakahiu, associate vice president of the Catholic Sisters Initiative at the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. Both were speakers at the SIGNIS World Congress in Kigali, Rwanda, Aug. 1-8, 2026. (Courtesy of Sr. Rocio Garcia)



by Chris Herlinger

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cherlinger@ncronline.org

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Catholic sisters have a vital and even prophetic role in a changing, challenging and unstable media environment in which respect for truth and factual reporting and communications are becoming increasingly elusive.

That was a key conclusion of the Aug. 1-8 [SIGNIS World Congress](#), an event organized by the World Catholic Association for Communication and held in Kigali, Rwanda — the first time the group held its assembly in an African country.

The [assembly](#) gathered some 300 participants, with about 4 dozen sisters, to affirm Catholic values in the media and to reflect on the role religious can play in a world of AI-generated images, information and untruths.

"The current media environment is flooded with AI-generated content, a hyperproduction of content that is filled with misinformation and disinformation," Sr. Nina Krapić, the deputy director of the Holy See Press Office, said in an Aug. 6 plenary address.

That is leading to what Krapić, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of Zagreb, termed "news avoidance," as well as growing distrust of the media and a lack of human-centered stories which affirm dignity and hope.

Krapić affirmed Pope Leo XIV's message during the 60th World Day of Social Communications, held on Jan. 24, in which the pontiff argued that the world needs "faces and voices to speak for people again. We need to cherish the gift of communication as the deepest truth of humanity, to which all technological innovation should also be oriented."

Catholic communicators should "advocate for the use of technology and AI with wisdom and respect for human dignity" — and founded on the idea that "man was created in God's image," said assembly delegate Sr. Lucy Stephen Sungu, a radio journalist in Manyara, Tanzania, and a member of the Congregation of the Servants of Good News based in Tanzania's Mbulu Diocese.

Another speaker, Marijana Grbeša Zenzerovic, a professor at the University of Zagreb and a frequent collaborator with the Vatican's Dicastery for Communication,

termed the current environment "a hybrid communication system, in which social media coexist with mainstream media, influencers and so-called 'newsfluencers' with professional journalists."

As a result, Zenzerovic told Global Sisters Report, "It is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish reality from manipulated reality, particularly with the rapid rise of AI."

Leo's recent encyclical as a backdrop

A backdrop for the assembly was Leo's recent encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* which Zenzerovic said "provides strong encouragement" for those concerned about the current "hybrid" communications and media environment.

At the same time, she said, the encyclical "also places a responsibility on everyone within the church to become actively involved in their communities, raising awareness and educating people of all generations — from young people to the elderly — about the challenges posed by this latest technological revolution, which has the potential to fundamentally transform our civilization."

She added: "Pope Leo's encyclical should also be understood as an appeal to all stakeholders, including digital platforms, to recognize and assume their responsibility in shaping the future of humanity."

In an interview with Global Sisters Report, Sungu raised similar concerns, and affirmed the need for sisters to take a more prominent role in media and communications, saying it is important to work in media and adhere "to the Holy Spirit in order to change peoples' life positively, and to respect their dignity in this digital era."

In promoting "peace, justice and reconciliation to God's people through digital communication," she added, it is also important to promote reliable and sound journalistic and media practices.

If, as Sungu and others said, sisters should take a more prominent role in journalism and communications, it is also important that sisters themselves reflect and respond to perceptions of sisters in popular representations, Krapić argued.

"The public narrative about Catholic sisters is still largely trapped within entertainment," she noted, saying that "mainstream media has, in many ways, handed over the story of sisters to popular culture," with films about sisters shaping the collective imagination, and with media coverage focusing "on what is entertaining: unusual stories, scandals, or, more recently, sister influencers."

Rarely, Krapić said, "do we see stories about the real lives of sisters and the extraordinary work they do every day." But even sister-created communications can "reproduce the same pattern. The most viral accounts of Catholic sisters are frequently those showing sisters entertaining."

"Millions of people have seen sisters dancing, singing, participating in social media trends, or playing music," she said.

There is nothing wrong with such fun, Krapić said. But when such images become "the dominant narrative we have a problem," she said, "and we have to ask ourselves a difficult question of why? Why don't we show our life the way it really is? Are we ourselves aware of the richness of our life and all the fruits that communication of that life can produce?"

That is important, Krapić said, because sisters are not only pillars of the institutional church, they "are pillars of society itself."

Noting the role of sisters in the country hosting the assembly, she said that in "Rwanda alone, there are about 4,000 sisters. If sisters stopped working for just 24 hours, many communities in the world would experience a serious social and spiritual crisis."

Important to affirm that Catholic sisters 'are everywhere'

Krapić also asked assembly delegates to imagine the life of one congregation in just a single day.

"Some sisters are in hospitals. Others are in hospices accompanying people in their final hours. Others are teaching in schools and universities. Some are working in urban slums. Some educate fathers in remote villages about parenting. Others accompany migrants and refugees. Others work every day to prevent human trafficking."

Krapić added: "Some collaborate with governments and international institutions," with some noting that some "advocate for human dignity all the way to the United Nations."

"Sisters are everywhere. I would even dare to say that religious life represents one of the most extraordinary human networks in the world."

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Krapić also touted an initiative called the [Pentecost Project](#), also known as the Sisters Project, which is "aimed at building a dynamic global network of sisters' voices" within the Vatican media, while also, the project says, "demonstrating how sisters are contributing to the church's work."

The project has three pillars, she said: publishing stories written by and about Catholic sisters; communications-themed training opportunities for sisters; and providing a free subscription to L'Osservatore Romano for sisters.

Another sister who affirmed the need for Catholic sisters to have a place at the global communications table was Sr. Jane Wakahiu, the associate vice president of the Catholic Sisters Initiative at the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. (The foundation is one of the major funders of Global Sisters Report.)

During the Aug. 6 plenary, Wakahiu focused on the need for "storytelling and amplifying the voices of Catholic sisters in the public square as a Gospel imperative," affirming communication as, among other things, a way to provide hope and to affirm the humanity of those at the margins of society.

"The stories we choose to tell matter," Wakahiu told delegates. "Too often, the public square is shaped primarily by stories of crisis, conflict and failure. Communication has an important responsibility to illuminate injustice, expose corruption and give voice to those who suffer. We should never diminish that responsibility."

But, she added, if those are the only stories that are told "we leave the world with an incomplete picture."

"Our task is not to deny the darkness," argued Wakahiu, a member of the Institute of the Little Sisters of St. Francis, Kenya. "Our task is to reveal the light that continues to shine within it. This is precisely where Catholic sisters have something unique to offer."

Combating the strong current stream of AI-generated misinformation will be a challenge, Wakahiu told GSR at the conclusion of the assembly.

"But communicators have to remain prophetic."