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CNS documentary service

Solidarity for Life on the Periphery

Sister Sujita, SND

Addressing the assembly of the International Union of Superiors General May 10 in Rome, Notre Dame Sister Mary Sujita, the first Indian superior general of her order, told the sisters that prayer, sustained by "divine intimacy is the fundamental requirement for engaging with one another in solidarity and moving to the peripheries with the heart and mind of Jesus." Echoing a call made throughout the triennial meeting of superiors, who represent nearly 500,000 sisters around the world, Sister Sujita insisted women religious today are called to "cross over the tightly held, comfortable boundaries of our religious life and move to the peripheries." Such a move and such ministry, she said, cannot be a matter of talk alone, which might give the

"We see in Jesus that solidarity is not about what we do but rather how we live. ... It is all about relationships."

religious "a good feeling about doing God's mission even when we are busy doing our own mission of conserving the past, protecting our institutions or legitimizing the present." Religious, like all Christians, can be tempted to seek a "comfortable life," but following Jesus, she said, means giving totally of oneself, sacrificing for the good of others and living alongside them in their struggles. "The future of religious life will be decided on the peripheries where Christ is in agony," Sister Sujita said. "To minister for and with the poor, we need to move away from our privileged position of power, control and security, and displace ourselves existentially toward the peripheries." Sister Sujita's speech follows.

I am amazed that the UISG (International Union of Superiors General) ever thought of inviting a simple village sister like me to address this august assembly. I stand here as a voice from the periphery. "Global Solidarity for Life" with those on the margins is a theme very dear to my heart and, indeed, to the heart of every religious. I congratulate the UISG leadership for their continued focus on this most important agenda for our discipleship and mission today.

I believe that the poor will continue to lead us to the heart of our mission, to where we belong and, indeed, to the very heart of God. Today I would like to offer some simple reflections that flow mainly from my many years of lived experience among one of the most marginalized groups of people

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