

Who are we?



The International Union of Superiors General -
UISG provides a place for **female Superiors General** to meet in an ecclesial setting.

With a worldwide membership, we aim to **build bridges and develop networks** in order to create different ways for religious sisters to **communicate** across geographical distances, different languages and cultures in order to be in communion with one another and build a **global community** together.

We provide a **space and forum for our members to pool experiences, exchange information, mentor and encourage one another**, as leaders in their congregations, in the larger society and in the Church.

The aims of UISG

- To provide an international forum where Superiors General can share experiences, exchange information and mentor one another in their role as leaders.
- To encourage the leaders of religious congregations to foster dialogue and collaboration within both the Church and larger society.
- To offers regular programs, meetings and publications to assist members in their leadership of religious congregations.
- To communicate with the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and other significant Church and social organizations on matters concerning religious life.
- To foster networking and solidarity among women religious across the world.

VISION

That UISG will be a vibrant international organization, speaking with a **prophetic voice within the Church and the world**. We will communicate effectively in order to support and offer hope to religious women. We will collaborate as a global community responding together to critical issues in today's world.

MISSION

Through all our actions at different levels and in our service of congregational leaders we aim to **promote a broader and deeper understanding of women's religious life** in all its diversity and complexity. We will highlight the richness of the various charisms which inspire congregations. We will demonstrate the

diversity which flourishes in the members of religious congregations including differences in cultural backgrounds, points of view, experiences and skills. We will share stories of the care and tenderness that sisters provide to those around them on a daily basis, often in very demanding contexts.

Besides offering a platform for exchange, the UISG actively assists its members in their growth and development by **offering a variety of publications and also programs, workshops, meetings (both in-person and online)**. We work with experts in different fields, both religious and lay, valuing and learning from their different experiences, knowledge and perspectives.

HISTORY

"You have not only a glorious history to remember and to recount, but also a great history still to be accomplished."

(V.C. 110).

The International Union of Superiors General was canonically **established in 1965**, inspired by **Vatican Council II**, in order to promote **deeper collaboration between women's congregations of Apostolic Religious Life**. Currently the UISG is composed of **1903 Superiors General** worldwide organized within **36 regional constellations**.

The history of the UISG began in 1951, when **Pope Pius XII** called an extraordinary meeting of Superiors General who had their generalate houses in Rome. The purpose of this meeting was to initiate a national council of religious. As a result of this meeting the sisters based in Rome continued to meet on a regular basis.

The first visible fruit of those encounters was the establishment of **Regina Mundi** - the Pontifical Institution which allowed Women Religious to study theology in Rome.

The organization that subsequently emerged, called the International Union of Superiors General was **officially approved by the Vatican Council on its final day, December 8, 1965**. The aim of UISG was to create ways for women religious to be in dialogue with one another, with the Church authorities and with global organizations.

Between **March 1st and 12th 1967**, 104 Superiors General representing 65 countries gathered in Rome for the **first International UISG General Assembly** with the theme « The Church View of Religious Life Today ». Since then, the UISG members has held **22 Plenary Assemblies** to reflect and discuss together on how the Union can respond best to the signs of the times. Even difficult circumstances, such as the current pandemic, do not prevent this meeting taking place.

Over the years, the Union has continued to grow and develop. Just as in the beginning, we are tireless in looking for ways to enable leaders of religious congregations to be a prophetic voice and witness in the Church and the world.

STRUCTURE

The structure of UISG has been developed in order to respond effectively to our mission as religious sisters and to facilitate communication, exchange and mutual support between the members.

The Superiors General are divided into groups called **CONSTELLATIONS**. Currently the Union consists of **36 Constellations**, present on all continents. These groups meet regularly and review together how to

best implement the vision and mission of the Union in their areas. Each Constellation chooses its delegate(s), who, together with the members of the UISG Executive Board, form the Council of Delegates.

THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES. The Council is a **body of discernment and deliberation** and takes important decisions for the orientation of the work of the UISG. Currently it is composed by **52 members**, who meet periodically.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD is the **body responsible for taking ordinary decisions** on behalf of the Union and for the implementation of the resolutions and orientations of the Council of Delegates. It is composed of a President and other Members elected by the Council of Delegates.

THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY is appointed by the Executive Board for a mandate of three years, which is renewable. She participates in all meetings of the Board and **represents the Union in daily circumstances**. She is also responsible for the day-to-day administration and running of the UISG headquarters in Rome.

The current Executive Secretary is **Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM**

The UISG Staff, in collaboration with the Executive Secretary, provides various services for the members and others within religious life and carries out the ordinary work of the organization.

The **Plenary Assembly** is one of the most important events in the Union's life and is reserved exclusively for its members, the Superiors General of Religious Congregations.

Gathering every three years, the **PLENARY ASSEMBLY** is the body which engages in consultation, animation and reflection at an international level. Participation is open to all those who are members of the Union.

MEMBERS

The members are the Superiors General who freely decide to be part of our organization. The membership of UISG, while expressing the diversity of charisms and cultures, promote the common identity of those who follow Christ in the Apostolic Religious Life in order to proclaim the Kingdom.

The **members currently number 1903** leaders who in turn represent the same number of Congregations.

Their Generalates are located as follow:

- Africa (166)
- Asia (184)
- Europe (1046)
- Americas (479)
- Oceania (28)