

## The 51<sup>st</sup> Assembly of the Croatian Religious Conference HRK

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The 51st Plenary Assembly of the Croatian Religious Conference was held on 16 and 17 October 2019 in Zagreb. As in the previous two years, the first part of the Assembly took place in communion with the Conference of Major Superiors of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A representative of KORUS (Conference of Religious Institutes of Slovenia), Fr. Igor Salmić OFMConv, was also invited.

About fifty major superiors reflected on the theme "Baptized and sent: the Church of Christ in mission in the world" during the two days. Sr. Ana Marija Antolović, President of HRK, explained that the choice of the theme for this year's Assembly was inspired by Pope Francis' decision to designate the month of October as "an extraordinary time of missionary activity to commemorate the centenary of the apostolic letter of Pope Benedict XV". For their common reflection on the missionary dimension of the Church's mission, the participants in the Assembly were introduced by Fr. Srećko Rimac, member of the Conference's Council and Provincial Minister of the Carmelite Fathers.

Afterwards, the participants had the opportunity to discover the practice of the missionary apostolate of the different religious communities. The sisters of the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul presented their work in the Solomon Islands; the sisters of the Religious Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love introduced into their work in Uganda; the Franciscan Sisters spoke about their work in Bolivia. The participants took a joint decision on the financial assistance that Croatian religious men and women will regularly send to the missions.

Bishop Giorgio Lingua, Apostolic Nuncio to the Republic of Croatia, joined the participants. The Nuncio said he was happy he could respond to the HRK's call to preside at the Eucharist during the Assembly. He promised to accompany religious communities through prayer.

This was followed by a presentation of the plan and content of the School of formators, followed by work on the development of the *HRK Guidelines for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Groups* and a plan for future training seminars in economics.

Religious tourism was the topic of the member of the Croatian Bishops' Conference (HBK) Committee for Pastoral Tourism, Rev. Tomislav Korov. He informed religious men and women about the work of the Committee on Religious Tourism and the elaboration of the *Guidelines for the Development of Religious Tourism in Croatia*. He stressed the importance of the Guidelines for the future development of religious tourism.

On the second day of the Assembly, the President of the Conference presented an annual report on the activities and the Committee leaders presented the activities of the individual committees. A draft *HRK Regulation* was also presented, revised and adopted.

The participants then discussed various current topics, such as the theme of the Religious Days in 2020, the future meeting of religious men and women with the bishops of the HBK, etc.

Before the end of the Assembly, the Christian Business Club was presented, whose members want to build a community of people who apply biblical principles in business, testify through their lives to their faith in Christ and want to be the driving force for positive change in society.

The Assembly ended with the Eucharistic celebration in the convent chapel presided over by Fr. Slavko Slišković OP, Provincial Minister of the Dominican Fathers and Vice-President of HRK, in concelebration with the various major superiors.