

Congregation
for Institutes of Consecrated Life
and Societies of Apostolic Life

Prot n. DD 1704⁻¹/2006

DECREE

The religious institute of diocesan right the *Trinitarians of Mary*, was founded by Sister Lilian Díaz Ahumada in the Archdiocese of Tijuana (Mexico) in the early 1990s. Later, due to difficulties with the Ordinary, the see was transferred to the Archdiocese of Guadalajara where, on January 22, 2010, a few months after its arrival, the group was erected by Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iñiguez, first as a public Association of the faithful and then, by the decree of May 31 of the same year, as a religious institute of diocesan right, without prior consultation with the Apostolic See, according to canon 579 of the Code of Canon Law.

This Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, upon learning of the hasty approval, by letters of July 12, 2012 and November 29 of the same year, requested His Eminence the Archbishop of Guadalajara to appoint a Religious Assistant to accompany the Institute. Furthermore, taking into account some problematic aspects linked to the figure of the Foundress and the nature of the Institute, the request of this Dicastery urged H.E.R.H. to follow with special attention the development of the Institute and to invite him to examine the Constitutions with particular care, suggesting that they be approved *ad experimentum* before reaching the definitive approval.

Subsequently, the Archbishops of San Diego and Los Angeles, in the United States of America, where there are communities of the Institute, some Parents of members of the Institute, and some former religious, and the legal guardians of the priests received, have formulated accusations to the Apostolic See in particular on: formation; the mode of vocation ministry; the behavior of the Foundress and her style of governance; the internal discipline of the group, the specific charism and its nature and the administration of goods. Since this is an Institute of diocesan right, this Dicastery has always asked the authors to address themselves to the competent Bishop, so that he may evaluate the situation and take the necessary measures.

Considering the gravity of the acts and the repetition of the accusations some time later, this Dicastery, in a letter dated February 28, 2017, took steps to directly request the new Archbishop of Guadalajara, Card.

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José Francisco Robles Ortega, to convoke a canonical visitation of the *Trinitarians of Mary*, in agreement with the other Bishops where the Institute lives and carries out its apostolate, to acquire a broader and deeper knowledge of the reality of the religious Family, to verify the veracity of the accusations, in particular regarding the person of the Foundress and her style of government, the

internal discipline, the initial and ongoing formation, the effective freedom of the members, the administration of goods and the treatment of the retired priests welcomed by the Institution.

In the meantime, the Archbishop of Tijuana, H.E. Bishop Francisco Moreno Barron, had also opened a penal investigation against the Foundress.

In the light of the numerous testimonies that continued to arrive at the Apostolic See, considering that it is the duty of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life to promote and regulate the practice of the evangelical counsels and to supervise the life of the Institutes with regard to formation, religious discipline, the apostolate and government (cf. *PB* 108 §1), and having carefully examined the acts and information received, on April 4, 2018 this Dicastery for Consecrated Life made the decision to proceed directly to the appointment of an Apostolic Commissary for the religious Institute of diocesan right *Trinitarians of Mary*, granting the appointment to Rev. Sr. Maria de Jesús Caldera Victorio, of the Institute of Marian Missionaries.

The Commissary was also charged with the task of reporting to the Dicastery “especially on the state of the communities visited and the life of fraternal communion; the style of government of the Superior General and the decisions taken by the latter even with the consent of her Council, initial and ongoing formation, vocation ministry, apostolic works and activities, as well as their management, economic-financial administration” (Decree of Commissariat, April 4, 2018).

The Commissioner, in accordance with the mandate received, has delved into the following questions:

- the authenticity and reliability of the charism;
- the style of government, in particular the work of the foundress;
- fraternal life in common and the internal discipline of the group;
- the pastoral care of vocations; the initial and ongoing formation of the members;
- freedom of conscience

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- the management of apostolic works and temporal goods.

The Apostolic Commissary has met with the foundress, Sr. Lilian Díaz Ahumada, and has attempted to meet with the religious and communities both in Mexico and in the United States of America, meeting with strong opposition and obstinate disobedience on the part of the foundress and her members. In many cases she was not allowed to enter the houses of the Institute, and even went to the civil courts to obtain a "restraining order" against her in the United States of America.

The Sister Commissary also heard from several former members of the Institute and others connected with the Institution, and kept this Dicastery constantly up to date with extensive reports on her work and the difficulties she faced, in addition to sending numerous documents and testimonies.

On December 21, 2021, Sr. Caldera Victorio delivered the IV Report, the *Result of the investigations carried out*, in which she once again attested to an irremediable situation, due in particular to the ungovernability of the Institute because of the lack of collaboration of the Foundress and of the members, and to the total dependence of the members on the Foundress.

The Report and the other testimonies received by this Dicastery from persons authorized and knowledgeable of the internal situation of the Institute have confirmed the grave accusations presented over the years to the Apostolic See, serializing the charismatic incoherence, the despotic style of governance, the personality and obstinate disobedience of the Foundress and of the members, the self-referentiality, the absence of serious formative paths, the lack of transparency in the management of the works and in the use of the funds.

Therefore:

- having seen the conclusions of the Commissariat and the opinion of the Apostolic Commissariat;
- having taken note of the lack of originality and reliability of the charism of the foundation;
- having considered the serious institutional deficiencies, especially in the area of governance;
- having evaluated the persistent disobedience of the Foundress and Superior General and of the members;

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- having heard, as far as possible, through the Apostolic Commissary and the persons concerned;
- having considered the absence of a well-founded hope that the Institute can develop and progress due to its demonstrated charismatic and institutional inconsistencies;
- having found all attempts unsuccessful and having carefully examined the possible solutions, and considering the need to proceed with urgency to safeguard the good of the persons, in the interest of the People of God and for the protection of consecrated life, and finally to avoid further damage;
- having consulted the Cardinal Archbishop of Guadalajara, His Eminence the Most Reverend Jose Francisco Robles Ortega;
- after obtaining the opinion of the Ordinary Congress, on April 26, 2022;

this Dicastery, in accordance with can. 584 of the Code of Canon Law, has decided to suppress and

decree the SUPPRESSION
of the religious Institute of diocesan right
Trinitarians of Mary
with its principal see in the Archdiocese of Guadalajara (Mexico).

Taking into account the complexity and delicacy of the matter, so that all may be accomplished with justice and charity, in order to carry out the decision taken, the same Dicastery

appoints
the Rev. Sr. Maria de Jesus CALDERA VICTORIO
of the *Institute of the Marian Missionaries*
PONTIFICAL DELEGATE

and the Rev. Fr. Hector Emilio NAVA SANCHEZ,
Judicial Vicar of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Tijuana
ASSOCIATE of the Pontifical Delegate

after having been granted all the necessary and opportune faculties for the fulfillment of the task received.

The Delegate, after being in contact with the Archbishop of Guadalajara, will notify the content of this Decree to the Foundress and to all the members, as well as to all the affected Diocesan Ordinaries.

She will also take care:

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1. To inform the members that the vows, both temporary and perpetual, made in the Institute cease at the moment of the execution of the present decree;
2. to determine, with justice and equity, the destination of the assets belonging to the Institute, in accordance with the requirements of universal and proper law, taking into account the will of the donors, helping, when possible and according to the needs, the members to reintegrate into ordinary life
3. to safeguard the possible obligations assumed by the Institute and the rights acquired by other persons, observing the pertinent canonical norms.

In carrying out her task, the Reverend Delegate may be assisted by experts of her confidence, entrusting to them such tasks and faculties as she deems appropriate, and informing this Dicastery accordingly.

The execution of this Decree should be carried out within a period of three months from the date thereof, so that everything is carried out correctly and with the necessary attention to the good of the interested parties.

Finally, this Dicastery prohibits the Rev. Sr. Lilian Díaz Ahumada to give life to new Associations of the faithful founded with a view to becoming Institutes of Religious Life or Societies of Apostolic Life.

The Delegate will be responsible for informing this Dicastery in writing of the implementation of this Decree and of the fulfillments indicated above.

These provisions have been specifically approved by the Holy Father on May 11, 2022.
Nothing to the contrary notwithstanding.

Vatican City, 13 May 2022.

João Braz Card. De Aviz
Prefect

+ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.
Secretary Archbishop