



Women Religious in the Austrian Church

2.800 women religious, in 106 religious congregations, in about 300 places

Problems: Majority is old, not in active, external ministry any more, but still in responsibility in internal services. There is a great diversity of concepts regarding women, church, spirituality, politics, ...

Ressources and potentials:

- Since the beginning, women religious are used to **take over responsibility** - considering their engagement as a contribution not just for the wellbeing of individuals, but also for the transformation of church and society. They are also willing to take on responsibility for the church in present times.
- During the Corona-period, when women religious could not celebrate Eucharist, they painfully felt, how much they depend on priests. Some of them created their own **liturgy**.
- The younger ones are highly qualified, many of them are in **leadership positions** in education, in health care, in dioceses, ... They are initiative in ecological, in social, in pastoral, in media, in migration projects; they are competent in spiritual conversation and in spiritual guidance, ...

Women Religious in the Process of Synodality

Ready for responsibility: Women religious know about women's intelligence and capacity, perseverance and creativity. They acknowledge the changes in women's responsible positions in the church during the past decades, but they believe: There is much more to it than that, based on solid theological reasons. Therefore – looking at the Synod - they are passionately expecting:

- **Ordination of women** (on all levels) is seen as one of the striking points for credibility and renewal of the church.
- **Leadership in the church** on all levels: The future of the church will depend on the positions, that women will be able to take on. The church needs women's faith, their professionalism and their approaches to life and faith.
- **Participation in the Synod**, both in a sufficient number as well as in an appropriate way, so that a real dialogue of equals can take place. The Synod is supposed to provide sharing of experiences, of ideas, of knowledge of women; it needs conversation with women, not just about women.

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im Austausch mit hochrangigen Vertreterinnen der röm.-kath. Kurie im Vatikan

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