



ORDO FRATRUM MINORUM

MINISTER GENERALIS

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To the President of the Federation of the Poor Clare Sisters of Aránzazu

And for information:

To the Coordinator and the Presidents of the Federations of Spain and Portugal

To the Archbishop of Burgos

To the Minister Provincial of Aránzazu

Rome, 24 June 2024

Dear President and all Sisters,

May the Lord give you His peace!

After the days of waiting and patience that the Archbishop of Burgos has shown towards the Monastery of Belorado, the declaration of excommunication *latae sententiae* to the ten sisters was served.

It is a very sad time and I feel the gravity and weight of it. I share in your bewilderment and sorrow, and I feel that for all our Order it is a moment that obliges us to pray and reflect. In the first place, with prayer we want to accompany these Sisters who have chosen to leave the Catholic Church, who have fallen into a distorted and gravely misleading reading of the last seventy years of the Church's life. In the history of the Church, every time a small group has isolated itself, it has become a sect and thus lost the larger breath of the Catholic Church.

The reflection is to take care of ourselves, especially the weakest members and those who risk remaining isolated, guaranteeing a solid formation and the bond of fraternity. We see that nostalgic and traditionalist tendencies are present in our Church, as well as others of a different kind, and this asks us to strengthen our bonds and to take care of unity. This is why the Federations are important, so that each Monastery can feel the presence and accompaniment of the whole larger family.

Now the ten sisters are no longer Poor Clares or religious and it would be appropriate for them to divest themselves of the habit of St. Francis and St. Clare, but I do not think they will do so. We must make it clear to everyone that they are no longer Poor Clares, even though the doors of our hearts and our families always remain open to them. I hope that the necessary corporal and spiritual care will be guaranteed for the elderly Sisters who remain.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to greet you, to remain united in the bond of charity and obedience to the Gospel, as I invoke upon all of you the blessing of St Francis.

Fraternal greetings,



Fr. Massimo Fusarelli OFM

Br Massimo Fusarelli, OFM
Minister General

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