

PROVINCE NEWS



Pope Francis appoints Sister Brigid Lawlor to consulting role at the Vatican

By Jeanette McDermott, PMNA Communications Coordinator

Pope Francis has appointed Sister Brigid Lawlor to a role at the Vatican office for religious. The appointment named her a Consultor for the Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL).

The Vatican office has jurisdiction over all aspects of institutes of consecrated life (vowed religious) and societies of apostolic life (societies of men or women who live in common without vows). Responsibility includes governance, discipline, studies, and goods.

Sister Brigid's experience with CICLSAL

Sister Brigid already had a position at CICLSAL as a Religious Assistant. In that role, she helped other religious congregations with specific issues that required assistance.

"I had been vetted by CICLSAL after I finished my term as Congregational Leader in 2016," Sr. Brigid said.

"They were familiar with our work on the reunification of Our Lady of Charity (OLC) and Sisters of the Good Shepherd (RGS). They also were familiar with the 12-year relationship I had with CICLSAL personnel when I was in leadership in Rome," she said.



Brigid Lawlor, OICGS

As a Consultor to the Pope, Sister Brigid said she will provide advice to Pope Francis on the basis of need.

In light of her background, she anticipates being asked to advise him on Justice issues, particularly poverty, human trafficking, immigration, and possibly racism. She believes he might also call on her to advise him in matters regarding women religious.

In terms of the actual work to be assigned, Sr. Brigid said it will be based on theme and the time when a response is needed. She doesn't believe the appointment has a certain time limit for serving.

Sister Brigid attended a Zoom orientation for new appointees on April 15. The new Consultors met with the CICLSAL staff, the majority of whom are Cardinals. They are different people than those she worked with as Religious Assistant. She also met people who are already consultants.

Good sign for women in the Church

When asked how she felt about being selected for the appointment, Sr. Brigid said, "It is an honor to have been selected. It is also a good opportunity to continue to make known the Good Shepherd mission in the Church, as well as the mission of others."

With a bit of humor, she continued, "Depending on what I am consulted about, I may have to do some consulting and research myself."

Sister Brigid is aware of the challenge that faces her and said, "I will be extremely grateful for your prayers as I move into this appointed position."

The majority of past appointees have been men. Sister Brigid said, "Seeing more women being appointed as Consultors is a good sign that things are slowly changing in the Church."

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20 Consultors appointed

Pope Francis appointed 20 new Consultors from around the world to CICLSAL. The Congregation is headed by Brazilian Cardinal João Braz de Aviz. CICLSAL is located in front of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life dates back to May 27, 1586, when Pope Sixtus V founded it. To learn the history of the Congregation and to gain a deeper understanding of its purpose, visit <https://bit.ly/3wBoo0e>



Brigidam is one translator's view of how the name Brigid was spelled in ancient Latin.

It's spring!

Spring has burst forth all over. For Lizzie Cody, Director of the Office of Mission Effectiveness, spring has been especially lively. She said, "It's like a wildlife refuge in my yard! My dad took pictures of the owl we see. Baby and Mama Deer had their nest across the street from me and are often in my front yard visiting. Mama Deer especially enjoys a breakfast of my garden hostas and maple leaves. We have also been keeping an eye on eight new baby ducklings at