



Coalición de Religiosos/os de la ONU por la Justicia Región América Latina y el Caribe

"I stand by what I have said:

justice, in spite of law and custom, in spite of money and alms;

humility, to be me, true me.

Freedom, to be a man. And poverty to be free.

Faith, Christian, to walk by night, and, above all, to walk by day.

And in any case, brothers, I stand by what I have said:

La Esperanza!"

(Casaldáliga)

A group of 16 religious women and 6 lay men and women met in Havana from 22 to 26 May, in a workshop convened by CONCUR, CLAR and JCoR, in order to listen, dialogue, share and discern our presence in this reality, from the proposal: "Towards systemic change and political incidence".

At dawn, like the women of the Dawn, we arrived with little clarity, but with a timid hope in the midst of the daily despair of Cuba. We welcomed the work proposal from the methodology: listening/dialogue, encounter/discernment and decision/overflow.

Listening/dialogue

"I stand by what I have said:

justice, in spite of law and custom, in spite of money and alms".





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Every morning we open ourselves to listen to the Word, to let it speak, sitting at the well with Jesus, overcoming the legalism of the dehumanising law, contemplating this creation that God gives us, recognising the daily Beatitudes. Allowing ourselves to be affected by the radiance of the Risen One, we dare to move the stone of the tomb and discover new life.

The Word led us to contemplate life, from narrative theology we listened to how the context affects us, in a long, deep, sincere and moving sharing, where the wounds and realities that surround us came to the surface.

We approached the framework offered by the JCoR and the Inspiring Horizon of CLAR. We returned to the challenges of the Ecclesial Assembly of Latin America and the Caribbean, and we let ourselves be encouraged by the dreams of the magisterium of Pope Francis, making our own the invitation to synodality as an attitude of life and ecclesial transformation.

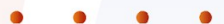
Encounter/discernment

*"Humility, to
be me, true me.
Freedom,
to be a man. And
poverty to be
free".*

We begin with a reflective exercise in which we feel the weight of the reality of the world, embrace it and let it pass through our hearts, sensitised by Naomi Shihab Nye's poem:

*"Before you can know goodness as the deepest thing inside you, you
must know sorrow as the other deepest thing,
you must wake up with grief,
you must speak to him until your voice catches the thread of all
sorrows and you are able to see the size of the cloth".*

In the light of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we discerned our Cuban reality. We analysed them in groups, discovering the echoes of the Gospel, the echoes of the charisms of our religious families, and we were able to recognise which ones we were already working on in our daily work.





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We position ourselves as artisans of justice, gathering the voices of the planet and of the island, in a climate of freedom and truth, underlining the different nuances of the current situation in Cuba.

Decision/overflow

*"Faith,
Christian, to walk by
night,
and, above all, to walk by day.
And in any case, brothers,
I stand by what I have
said:
Hope!"*

Like the disciples and the women in the Gospel, we live the moment of darkness and despair that precedes the light of the Resurrection, putting it in black and white, and structuring a description of reality. As complex as this Cuban situation has been, it has been to seek ways to influence its transformation.

At first we found it difficult to define the critical situation that would capture and summarise the reality analysed. We reached a consensus on the causes and effects that allowed us to continue advancing in the final project, concluding that we were united by the dream of a "Dignified life for the Cuban people". We decided together to develop, based on this dream, a path for the future of Cuba, through some simple and concrete actions.

We look at Jesus, who, before the crowd on the mountain, teaches us not to let ourselves be crushed by the weight of despair but to look from faith and proclaim: "Blessed are those who proclaim and live the truth... Blessed are those who are committed to the care of life... Blessed are those who believe in the power of the small... Blessed are those who embrace reality... for God will give them the embrace of his Kingdom here".

We are grateful for this opportunity provided by JCoR, CLAR, and CONCUR to renew our hope.

Listening again to "do whatever He tells you", we walk with Our Lady of Charity, open like her to the Word and the work of God.

Participants at the JCoR Workshop in Havana

