Sr. Mary Teresa Barron, OLA

Congregational Leader, Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles
President of the Pontifical Mission Societies

Sr. Mary Teresa Barron, OLA, has dedicated her religious life to mission in the Church. A member of the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles since 1992, she has served in Nigeria, Tanzania, Ireland and at the international level, accompanying the Congregation in its missionary commitment across different cultures and contexts.

Born in Donegal, Ireland, on **7 November 1968**, Sr. Mary Teresa entered the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles in **January 1992**. She made her first religious profession in **March 1995** and her perpetual vows in **July 2001**.

Her missionary journey has been marked by pastoral ministry, education, healthcare-related initiatives, women's empowerment, missionary animation and leadership within the Congregation and the wider Church.

A New Mission of Service to the Universal Church

Sr. Mary Teresa's appointment to serve as **Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization, with the office of President of the Pontifical Mission Societies**, represents a new chapter in her long journey of missionary service.

Her experience of mission, international leadership and collaboration places her at the service of the Church's missionary responsibility in a particularly significant way.

For the OLA Sisters, this new responsibility is also a moment of gratitude. It reflects the missionary heritage of a Congregation whose members have served across cultures and continents for almost 150 years.

Her Missionary Journey

Mission in Tanzania

One of the significant periods of Sr. Mary's missionary experience was her service in the **Diocese of Shinyanga, Tanzania**.

From **1995 to June 2001**, she served in the parish of **Mwamapalala**, where she taught English and Religious Education in a diocesan secondary school. She also coordinated catechetical instruction in the parish and surrounding primary schools, supported women's empowerment initiatives and founded and coordinated a Taizé prayer group.

From **2003 to 2004**, she served in **Bugisi Parish**, where her ministry included coordinating an HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention project in local villages and facilitating the introduction of testing at the local Catholic Health Centre. She also participated in the

administration of a Homecraft Training Centre focused on the promotion and empowerment of women and engaged in pastoral ministry within the rural parish.

These experiences formed an important part of her understanding of mission as a ministry of accompaniment, human development, faith formation and service.

Leadership in the OLA Congregation

Sr. Mary Teresa has held several positions of responsibility within the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles.

Congregational Leader

July 2018 – Present

As Congregational Leader, she coordinates the leadership and general administration of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles.

Under the motto:

“One heart, one mission, witnessing to God's love in the world.”

she has accompanied an international and intergenerational Congregation of more than 600 members present in 21 countries, with a particular focus on deepening inclusion, strengthening collaboration and making the Congregation's participation in the *Missio Dei* more fruitful.

General Councillor

July 2013 – July 2018

As General Councillor, she had particular responsibilities for **Safeguarding of Children, Finance and the evaluation of missionary activities** throughout the Congregation.

Provincial Councillor – Ireland

August 2008 – July 2013

She was responsible for **Safeguarding of Children, Missionary and Vocation Animation, and fundraising for overseas mission projects**.

Mission Alive – Irish Missionary Union

April 2005 – June 2007

As Co-Coordinator of *Mission Alive*, she contributed to missionary animation in schools and parishes through the development of resources and the organisation of formation programmes, with particular emphasis on promoting October as Mission Month.

Leadership in the Wider Church

Sr. Mary Teresa has also contributed to international organisations dedicated to religious life and mission.

International Union of Superiors General – UISG

- **2023–2025:** President
- **2022–2023:** Vice-President
- **2019–2022:** Member of the Executive Council

SEDOS – Rome

SEDOS is a forum bringing together Catholic Institutes of Consecrated Life in Rome to deepen understanding of global mission and encourage ongoing reflection on the missionary calling of the Church today.

- **2022–2025:** President of SEDOS
- **2019–2022:** Vice-President of SEDOS Curriculum Vitae Mary T Barron …

These responsibilities have given Sr. Mary Teresa extensive experience of international collaboration, missionary reflection and leadership within the Church.

Academic Formation

Sr. Mary Teresa's academic formation brings together health, theology and international development:

- **2012** – Master in Public Health Administration, Institute of Public Administration, Dublin, Ireland
- **2005** – Master in International Development, Kimmage Institute, Dublin, Ireland
- **2003** – Diploma in Theology, Kimmage Institute of Theology
- **1990** – BSc in Speech and Language Therapy, University of Ulster, Jordanstown, Belfast

Languages

Sr. Mary Teresa speaks:

- **English** – Advanced
- **French** – Advanced
- **Italian** – Intermediate
- **Kiswahili** – Intermediate

A Life Rooted in Mission

From rural Tanzania to international leadership in Rome, Sr. Mary Teresa's journey has been shaped by a consistent commitment to mission and service.

Her experience embraces **pastoral ministry, missionary animation, education, healthcare, women's empowerment, safeguarding, administration, international leadership and collaboration**.