
Luxembourg: woman to lead reflections for the Octave of the Mother of God for the first time. “A sign of hope for the local Church”

Card. Jean-Claude Hollerich instructed a woman, Milly Hellers (pictured), to deliver the sermons for the traditional Octave of the Mother of God, which begins tomorrow, 24 April, in the Archdiocese of Luxembourg. Hellers, who is a pastoral assistant at the parish of Kordall Sainte-Barbe, will have the task of leading the reflections on the theme of the 2021 Octave “Suddenly everything was different...”. The Cardinal’s decision to appoint a woman is unprecedented, and “it is a sign of hope for the local Church”, said Renée Schmit, chair of the Diocesan Committee for the Octave, “mainly because the service of preaching by the laity and thus also by women is permitted by Canon Law outside the Eucharistic celebration”. The sermons will be delivered every day, until 8 May, at 4pm in the afternoon, in the Cathedral, which is home to the miraculous image of the Comforter of the Afflicted, the patron saint of the Archdiocese. Throughout the day, there will be celebrations and moments of prayer organised by various parish groups, language communities, movements, and active actors of the Archdiocese. In recent years, the celebrations have marked the culmination of a real pilgrimage made by different groups to the Cathedral. Since restrictive measures are still in place, only 100 attendees will be allowed at every celebration. The service, however, will be streamed. The Octave will end on Sunday, 9 May, with a Mass and the consecration of the Archdiocese to Mary. The programme for the Octave also includes an interfaith panel discussion (on 28 April) on the theme “A successful life: what do the world’s religions say?” with the participation of Card. Hollerich; Christian Krieger, president of the Conference of European Churches; Alain Nacache, Chief Rabbi of Luxembourg; and Rabie Fares, head of worship of the Muslim Community in Luxembourg.

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