
Austria: Kristina Edlinger-Ploder first woman vice-president of Caritas. “Helping people to help themselves”

For the first time, Caritas Austria has a female vice-president. Under Caritas president Mgr. Michael Landau, an enlarged four-member presidency board was set up as part of an internal reform, and for the first time a woman, Kristina Edlinger-Ploder, was elected as vice-president and will take office tomorrow, 1 July. Kristina Edlinger-Ploder has worked for Caritas for over 20 years in different capacities. Since 2016, she has been president of the Foundation Council of Caritas Styria. Also appointed with her were the two directors of Caritas Vorarlberg – Walter Schmolly – and Caritas Salzburg – Johannes Dines. “I am honoured to have the approval of the general assembly of Caritas and of all the diocesan organisations that have entrusted me with the role of vice-president”, Edlinger-Ploder said. Caritas acts as a “solid rock”, as a partner for the needy, but it is also innovative in responding to the challenges of our time, Edlinger-Ploder stressed. She then said about her approach: “Above all, I support the principle of ‘helping people to help themselves’”. Mgr. Landau stressed that “an organization cannot live 100 years without changing”, referring to the overhauling of Caritas Austria in the year marking the centenary of its foundation. For Landau, the pandemic has made it even more urgent to take action in the areas of poverty, unemployment, hospice care.

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