

In 1997, Pope John Paul II called for consecrated life to be promoted throughout the universal Church. He declared February 2, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, to be observed as *World Day for Consecrated Life (WDCL)*. In the United States, when February 2 is not on a Sunday, we celebrate on the Sunday after the Presentation. This year *WDCL* is observed on February 5, the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The celebration of *World Day for Consecrated Life* invites all the Church to reflect on the role of Consecrated Life within the Christian community. Those who choose to live a consecrated life do so for the sake of the gospel.

Some Christian women and men respond to God's call to become followers of Jesus through profession of vows and a life dedicated to prayer and service. They live out the consecrated life in different ways. Religious sisters, nuns, brothers, religious priests, and monks consecrate their lives through their profession of the evangelical vows and live as part of a community. Single lay people may choose to be consecrated virgins and make private vows to the local bishop as they live out their vocation in various walks of life. Secular institutes are another form of living the consecrated life as single people. Those who become followers of Jesus through the consecrated life bless the Church.

The USA Council of Serra International offers this resource to assist you in your local celebration of *World Day for Consecrated Life*. We hope this kit provide you with ideas to create a meaningful celebration in your parish, diocese, religious community or other church institution.

~~For the Sake of the Gospel~~



World Day for Consecrated Life
February 5, 2012

Year B

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- Job 7:1–4, 6–7
- Psalm 147:1–2, 3–4, 5–6
- 1 Corinthians 9:16–19, 22–23
- Mark 1:29–39

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Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts ___ Instrumental _____
___ *Make Your Home in Me*, PICARDY, Delores Dufner, WLP
___ *You Have Anointed Me*, Dameans, distributed by GIA
___ *Gather Your People*, Bob Hurd, OCP

Preface _____

Holy, Holy, Holy _____

Mystery of Faith _____

Great Amen _____

The Lord's Prayer _____

Lamb of God _____

Communion Processional ___ *God's Holy Mystery*, Paul Tate, WLP
___ *I Myself Am the Bread of Life*, Rory Cooney, NALR, GIA, OCP
___ *This Bread that We Share*, Dominic MacAller, OCP

Concluding Rites

Prayer after Communion _____

Blessing and Dismissal _____

Recessional Hymn ___ *Go, Be Justice*, Kevin Keil, WLP
___ *Come and Follow Me*, Tom Franzak, GIA
___ *Thanks Be to God*, Stephen Dean, OCP
___ *The Summons*, John Bell, Iona Community, GIA, WLP, OCP

~~For the Sake of the Gospel~~

World Day for Consecrated Life
February 5, 2012



HOMILY NOTES Year B

In today's two New Testament readings from 1 Corinthians and St. Mark's Gospel, we hear of two men who are "on a mission." For Paul, his mission is to be a "slave to all" in order that he "might win over as many [people] as possible" to the Gospel message. Jesus' mission was to accomplish what he was sent to do, namely "...to go on to the villages that I may preach there also." This mission gave both Paul and Jesus a sense of meaning, a sense of purpose in what they were about and an identity as to who they were in relationship to those whose lives they touched. Jesus says clearly "for this purpose I have come...to preach and drive out demons throughout the whole of Galilee". For Paul, it was his purpose in life to "become all things to all, to save at least some."

We are asked today to pray in solidarity with Catholic Christians throughout the world on this *World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life*. At a time when people lack a clear understanding of what "consecrated life" is all about, we need to turn to our scripture readings to rediscover the meaning and purpose of this life; a life in which "the characteristic features of Jesus – the chaste, poor and obedient one – are made constantly 'visible' in the midst of the world." (*Vita Consecrata*)

How are the features of Christ Jesus made visible in the world by people who have embraced the consecrated life? In order to best answer this question we must first identify the characteristic features of Jesus. At his baptism, the heavens opened up and a voice was heard saying "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased...hear him." Jesus was witness to his Father's great love of humankind. His life, death and resurrection were testimony to his obedience to the Father's call and to the prompting of the Spirit throughout his life. The attentiveness to this call and to the prompting of the Spirit took place when Jesus sought out periods of solitude and time for prayer. Amidst his busy days of ministering to the lame, the blind and the sick, Jesus often took time for prayer as we heard in today's Gospel message. "Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed." A deep sense of prayer and being connected with the Father was a characteristic feature of Jesus – an essential aspect of the consecrated life.

The second characteristic feature of Jesus was his desire to do the will of his Father. Jesus proclaimed, "I have not come to do my will but rather the will of him who sent me." God the Father willed that Jesus enter this world to show others the way to the Kingdom through his ministry, service, and love for them. The passion for doing God's will in ministry – through the sacraments,

education, social service, nursing, and the contemplative experience of the monastic life – is yet another essential aspect of the consecrated life. “Through the many charisms of spiritual and apostolic life bestowed on them by the Holy Spirit, they [consecrated men and women] have helped to make the mystery and mission of the Church shine forth, and in doing so have contributed to the renewal of society.” (*Vita Consecrata*)

In addition to taking time for prayer and embracing his mission, Jesus’ ministry was characterized by his desire to be with his disciples within the context of community. Except for the times that he went into solitude for prayer, Jesus performed his ministry in the presence of the apostles. He commissioned them to go out and preach in pairs as a support for one another. The experience of community is another characteristic feature of Jesus.

For those men and women who have committed themselves to the consecrated life, the desire for having a deeply prayerful and spiritual life rooted in Jesus Christ, a passionate love for ministry and a thirst for the support of a caring and nurturing community are essential aspects of their chosen vocation. If you know a person who has chosen to live the consecrated life, hopefully you have seen in their lives the features of Jesus Christ.

(The homilist may want to share at this time a story about their experience of ministering with or knowing someone in the consecrated life and how that person may have influenced them or touched their life in a meaningful manner.)

The Church continues to need consecrated individuals as part of the fabric of its faith community. There are several reasons for this – first, the consecrated person stands as a visible witness to the Gospel message of Jesus by their professing the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. Secondly, consecrated men and women work at making “real” the Kingdom of God here on earth through the charism of their founders and foundresses – they stand in relationship with the people of God and oftentimes become the face of God to the poor, disenfranchised, the abandoned, the weak, the sinner, and those who have lost a sense of hopefulness in their broken and fragmented world. Thirdly, consecrated persons serve as beacons of hope in an increasingly secular world, one in which doubt and confusion cloud over the light that comes from Jesus Christ Himself.

On this *World Day for Consecrated Life*, consider ways that you can meet or get to know someone who has embraced the consecrated life. Ask them why they have chosen this lifestyle and hear their story – how they have met Christ along the way and how they have been Christ to others...perhaps you may want to join them on their journey.



For the Sake of the Gospel

World Day for Consecrated Life
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GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Presider: Trusting in our Loving God, we offer our prayers of petition:

Response: **Lord, bless us with zeal for the gospel!** (*optional*)

- For Church and world leaders (*pause*)
May they lead with integrity, working together for peace and justice, we pray:
- For women and men who are living the consecrated life (*pause; add the names of those in the parish who are consecrated: especially for those serving in our parish: _____*)
May they live lives that give witness to the gospel of Jesus, we pray:
- For this faith community of N (*pause*)
May we be open to the call of the gospel and seek to be people of compassion, we pray:
- For the poor, the sick, and the marginalized (*pause*)
May they know healing and hope in their adversity, we pray:
- For the young who are searching for direction in their lives (*pause*)
May they find good counsel and encouragement, we pray:
- For those who have died, especially (*name people from the community, etc*) and for those who grieve their passing (*pause*)
May they experience the power of God's love in a new way, we pray:

Presider: Loving God, grant us strength as we seek to follow in the footsteps of Christ Jesus and to live according to his gospel. Amen.

Setting and Ritual

Dim lighting in gathering space. In church setting use Paschal candle. During Song of Light, light other candles around the room/church.

Music Selections (See suggestions from *Liturgy Planning Guide*)

- *I Want to Walk As a Child of the Light*, HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson, WLP, GIA, OCP
- *Christ, Be Our Light*, Bernadette Farrell, OCP, WLP, GIA
- *We Are the Light of the World*, GREIF, Vernacular Hymns, WLP
- *You Are the Light of the World*, Paul Tate, WLP
- *God of Day, God of Darkness*, BEACH SPRING, Text: Marty Haugen, GIA

Psalmody

Choose one or more psalm(s) to recite/sing: 141, 27, 91, 104

Reading (Choose one)

- *Luke 2:22-40* (Presentation)
- *Philippians 3:8-14* (Consecration of Virgins)
- *1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23* (5th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Reflection

Invite a man or woman who lives the consecrated life to choose one of the readings and reflect on the relationship of the gospel to living the consecrated life.

Canticle of Mary (*You may wish to bless the community with incense.*)

- *Mary's Song of Praise*, Alan Hommerding, WLP
- *Magnificat*, James Chepponis, GIA
- *Magnificat*, Bernadette Farrell, OCP

Intercessions

See General Intercessions

The USA Council of Serra International Vocations Committee is able to prepare and provide this planning kit to dioceses, parishes, schools, religious congregations, and Serra clubs at no cost through a generous grant from the Bishop Britt Vocation Fund. Should you want to insure our ability to continue this program at no cost please consider a gift to the Bishop Britt Vocation Fund. For more information please contact the USA Council of Serra International 1-888-777-6681 or email. ©2011 USA Council of Serra International

World Day for Consecrated Life
February 5, 2012



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year B

Prayer Service

For the Sake of the Gospel

Call to Prayer

Leader: Light and peace in Jesus Christ, our Lord!

All: Thanks be to God!

Leader: We begin our prayer in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen!

Thanksgiving for the Light

Gracious and ever-living God,
we give you thanks for sending us your son,
our Lord, Jesus Christ.
He is the Light of the World who makes us
children of light, and renews us in hope.
Light up our world with women and men
consecrated to a life of prayer and service.
We join our voices with all the saints and angels
in unending praise:

Song of Light

Psalmody

Reading

Reflection

Ritual Response

Magnificat

Intercessions

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace

Concluding Prayer

Loving God,

We rejoice in your gift of life to us.
You created us out of your abundant love.
Empower us to nurture this gift
with the grace of gospel living.

You sent us your son, our Lord Jesus
to show us the way to fullness of life.
Open us, through your Spirit,
and guide us on our journey to holiness.

Grace our Church with women and men
who respond wholeheartedly to your call
to the consecrated life for the sake of the gospel.

We praise you now and always, in union with Jesus
through the power of the Spirit. Amen.

Blessing

Concluding Song





Prayer for Vocations

Loving God,

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World Day for Consecrated Life
February 5, 2012



BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week Prior to WDCL

Since 1997 the universal Church celebrates *World Day for Consecrated Life* close to the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, February 2. Next Sunday we will observe this day with a special emphasis on the call to consecrated life in today's world. *(Add any other information about your observance.)*

Week of WDCL

This Sunday we celebrate *World Day for Consecrated Life*. We recognize and give thanks for those who have consecrated their lives to God and the Church through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Some join a religious congregation or a secular institute. Others remain single and make profession to God through the local bishop and are known as consecrated virgins. The consecrated life is one way that men and women live out their baptismal commitment as followers of Jesus. *(Add other information about your observance.)*

~~For the Sake of the Gospel~~

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February 5, 2012



RESOURCES

USA Council of Serra International: www.serraus.org

Center for the Study of Religious Life csrl@visioni.com

Horizon: Journal of the National Religious Vocation Conference www.nrvn.net

National Black Sisters Conference (NBSC) <http://nbsc68.tripod.com>

InFormation, a publication of the Religious Formation Conference www.relforcon.org

Origins

Starting Afresh from Christ: A Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium, July 4, 2002, Volume 32: Number 8 www.originsonline.com

Catholics on Call www.catholicsoncall.org

Vision Magazine (Free resource)

www.vocationguide.org (English) www.vocacioncatolica.com (Spanish)

Vita Consecrata: A Post Synod Exhortation by John Paul II (1996)

www.usccb.org Vita Consecrata

Vocation and Prayer Magazine www.rogationists.org/vocationsandprayer.html

Discerning a call to religious life: www.consecrated-life.org

United States Conference of Secular Institutes (USCSI) www.secularinstitutes.org

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) www.usccb.org

United States Association of Consecrated Virgins <http://consecratedvirgins.org>

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Diocese, Parishes, Schools, Serra Clubs:

- Invite members of institutes of consecrated life from your parish to serve as ministers for the Sunday liturgy.
- Invite members of institutes of consecrated life to speak to adults/children in religious education programs.
- Host a prayer service and reception (See *Prayer Service*).
- Offer a day of perpetual adoration dedicated to vocations to consecrated life.
- Encourage open houses throughout the diocese.
- Sponsor a vocation fair, walkathon, or rally highlighting institutes of consecrated life.
- Provide copies of vocation magazines, brochures, and flyers (contact your diocesan vocation office).
- Encourage vocation awareness through diaconate, lay ministry, parents' baptism programs, family ministries.
- Have a vocation section in parish bulletin, bulletin board, newsletters. Highlight stories of people who live the consecrated life, especially those who serve in the local parish or who entered from the parish.
- Work with local communicators to develop media coverage with stories, television & radio public service announcements about the consecrated life, inspirational e-movies.

Institutes of Consecrated Life:

- Invite friends, employees, benefactors, and families to join you for prayer, talk, a meal, or an open house. Share about your life and charism.
- Plan a simple prayer in which you share your vocation stories together. Renew your vows. Invite interested people to join you.
- Do a press release or share a story about your institute with the local press.
- Open your doors to college students for a place to study and pray.
- Sponsor a "holy hour" to pray for vocations.
- Host a "Come & See" experience or "Nun Run".
- Sponsor a summer camp and invite young people to participate and learn about your congregation.
- Create a congregation vocation website that is interactive: chat room, blog, podcast, invitation to conference call with other discerners.



World Day for Consecrated Life



~~For the Sake of the Gospel~~

Come join us!

Mark your Calendars!

World & National Annual Events	2012 Year B	2013 Year C	2014 Year A
National Vocation Awareness Week	January 9-14	January 7-13	January 13-19
World Day for Consecrated Life*	February 5	February 3	February 2
World Day of Prayer for Vocations**	April 29	April 21	May 11

*The US Bishops observe WDCL on February 2 when that date falls on a Sunday; if not it is observed on the Sunday after February 2.

**The Holy Father issues a pastoral letter each year for the celebration of World Day of Prayer for Vocations. This was unavailable at press time. It may be available at the Vatican Website closer to the date of the event (<http://www.vatican.va>).



USA Council of Serra International
Our mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the
priesthood and vowed religious life.

Pray! Invite! Encourage! Affirm! Vocations

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