



Reflection On the Year of Consecrated Life March 2015

Call to Prayer: *We have not yet come to the Lord, but we have our neighbor with us. Carry him, then, when you walk, so that you may come to Him with whom you desire to stay. (St. Augustine)*

Hymn: *Center of My Life*

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Opening Prayer:

Trinity, whom I adore, changeless mystery,
God of infinite kindness, source of consecration,
Word of God, eternal Silence, love's embrace
Spirit of Love, consuming Fire, eternal passion--
Create in me the fire of evangelical love!
You are the *Center of My Life*.
Move me to vision and impetus.
Cause zeal to consume me.
Make me restless for your Kingdom come.
O Trinity of Love, I am your servant.
Amen.



Readings

(These readings are simply resources and guides to answer the questions posed by Pope Francis, p .4- 5)

(The following readings may be read in silence or in common, as you chose. The readings are from Scripture, our Rule of Life, Missionary Cenacle Meditations, and various documents on Religious Life)

Galatians 5: 13-14; 22-23

¹³ For you were called to freedom, [sisters]; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be **servants of one another** (emphasis added) ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, "You shall love your

neighbor as yourself. ²²...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. [Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)]

RULE OF LIFE, ARTICLE 9

The Cenacle spirit is a Christlike spirit of “faith working through love” (Gal.5-6). We are to confess in our hearts the mysteries of faith: the Trinity, the Incarnation and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. We aspire to a devotional knowledge of these mysteries, that is, a deeply personal and interior faith that is restless until it finds expression in good works; Our good works in turn nourish our life of faith and bear fruit in apostolic holiness.

MISSIONARY CENACLE MEDITATIONS

The Missionary Cenacle has a mission, and there are many sides to that mission, but what more beautiful side is there than this, that you, by zealous practices, by living up to the conditions of the Missionary Cenacle, are going to do your share to conserve the fire Jesus came to cast upon earth, that you will be that light that is to be placed on the mountain, that you will be the good odor of Christ, that you will be the salt of the earth...

Understand, I am speaking of the Cenacle spirit, for when I speak of the Cenacle spirit I speak of the Catholic spirit. If you have been trained for any purpose or made at all useful, it is that you might show forth that Christlike spirit, charity in good works. St. Paul puts it this way: “faith that worketh by charity.”(Gal. 5:6) This is a faith that is restless until it finds expression in good works; and if you have that spirit you are going to communicate it. Why? Because the Holy Spirit wants it communicated: it is His flame, the Pentecostal burning.

I wish that during this (meditation) you would, as it were, take your own temperature. How is that fire within me? Is it at white heat, is it intense, or is it a dull glow; or is it next to being extinguished? When the smith plunges the metal into the fire, if his fire be at its proper temperature, there is a fusion; but he might plunge that iron many times into the fire and it would be futile unless the fire was at white heat.

The Spirit of God wants to use you; you are His instruments. You are tools with which He is going to chisel out salvation for many souls. You are to work upon the lives of others. That you may cooperate with the designs of the Holy Spirit there must be that intense charity in your own hearts. It must be there. There is no reason why it should not be there. “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you.”(Mt. 7:7) There is nothing heaven is more anxious to bestow than a zealous charity, a Cenacle spirit.

Conference to Cenacle Family-Pentecost Meeting, May 31, 1924-MF 8477



***Perfectae Caritatis* DECREE ON THE ADAPTATION AND RENEWAL OF RELIGIOUS LIFE PROCLAIMED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI ON OCTOBER 28, 1965**

6. Let those who make profession of the evangelical counsels seek and love above all else God who has first loved us (cf. 1 John 4:10) and let them strive to foster in all circumstances a life hidden with Christ in God (cf. Col. 3:3). This love of God both excites and energizes that love of one's neighbor which contributes to the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church. This love, in addition, quickens and directs the actual practice of the evangelical counsels (6).

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN THE CHURCH'S TEACHING ON RELIGIOUS LIFE AS APPLIED TO INSTITUTES DEDICATED TO WORKS OF THE APOSTOLATE
SACRED CONGREGATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND FOR SECULAR INSTITUTES

37. The witness of religious who, in loyalty to the Church and to the tradition of their institute, strive courageously and with love for the defense of human rights and for the coming of the Kingdom in the social order can be a clear echo of the Gospel and the voice of the Church (cf. RHP 3). It is so, however, to the extent that it manifests publicly the transforming power of Christ in the Church and the vitality of the institute's charism to the people of our time. Finally, perseverance, which is a further gift of the God of the covenant, is the unspoken but eloquent witness of the religious to the faithful God whose love is without end.

Starting Afresh in Christ: A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO CONSECRATED LIFE IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM (2002)

9. Zeal for the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the salvation of brothers and sisters thus constitutes the best proof of a self-offering authentically lived by consecrated persons. That is why every new attempt at renewal can be seen as a new impetus for the evangelizing mission. ³³ With the help of ongoing formation consecrated persons learn to choose from among intense spiritual experiences which lead to courageous decisions.

VITA CONSECRATA

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION (1996)

84-85. In the history of the Church, alongside other Christians, there have been men and women consecrated to God who, through a special gift of the Holy Spirit, have carried out a genuinely prophetic ministry, speaking in the name of God to all, even to the Pastors of the Church. *True prophecy is born of God*, from friendship with him, from attentive listening to his word in the different circumstances of history. Prophets feel in their hearts a burning desire for the holiness of God and, having heard his word in the dialogue of prayer, they proclaim that word with their lives, with their lips and with their actions, becoming people who speak for God

against evil and sin. Prophetic witness requires the constant and passionate search for God's will, for self-giving, for unfailing communion in the Church, for the practice of spiritual discernment and love of the truth. It is also expressed through the denunciation of all that is contrary to the divine will and through the exploration of new ways to apply the Gospel in history, in expectation of the coming of God's Kingdom. In our world, where it often seems that the signs of God's presence have been lost from sight, a convincing prophetic witness on the part of consecrated persons is increasingly necessary.

REJOICE! A letter to consecrated men and women; A message from the teachings of Pope Francis

71. A missionary heart is a heart that has known the joy of Christ's Salvation and shares it as consolation: [This heart] realizes that it has to grow in its own understanding of the Gospel and in discerning the paths of the Holy Spirit, so it always does what good it can, even if in the process, its shoes get soiled by the mud of the street".

80. The restlessness of love is always an incentive to go towards the other, without waiting for the other to manifest his need. The restlessness of love gives us the gift of pastoral fruitfulness, and we must ask ourselves, each one of us: is my spiritual effectiveness healthy, is my apostolate fruitful? *Pope Francis I*

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

Do we feel the restlessness of love? Do we believe in love for God and others? Or are we unconcerned by this? Not in an abstract manner, not only in words, but the real brother we come across, the sister who is beside us! Are we moved by their needs or are we closed in on ourselves, in our communities which are often "comfortable communities"?

The restlessness of love is always an incentive to go towards the other, without waiting for the other to manifest his need. Is my spiritual effectiveness healthy? My apostolate fruitful?

An authentic faith always involves a profound desire to change the world. Do we have great vision and impetus? Are we daring? Do our dreams fly high? Does zeal consume us (cf. Psalm 68:10)? Or are we mediocre and satisfied with our "made in the lab" apostolic programs?

(Questions posed by Pope Francis in *A Letter to Consecrated Men and Women*)

Faith Sharing: (If possible)

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION:

RESPONSE: Wake up, wake up the world

Led by the Spirit of God, we pray:

By our lives as missionaries, called to “feel the restlessness of love,” may we... (R)

As we strive to defend human rights and proclaim the coming of the Kingdom, may we...
(R)

By our “zealous practices” may we...(R)

In witness of “the One who loved us first” may we serve the people of God faithfully in
prophetic ways and...(R)

By engaging in the first end of our congregation, namely to glorify the Triune God, may
we...(R)

By confessing the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation, may we...(R)

Because Christ is the center of our lives, may we...(R)

As we “go towards the other without waiting for the other to manifest his or her need,”
may we...(R)

As we exercise an authentic faith, profoundly desiring to think with the Church, and in
so doing, change the world, may we ...(R)

As we exercise great vision and impetus leading to effective transformation, may
we...(R)

As we make courageous decisions that sometimes bring discomfort, may we...(R)

As we grow in love for one another, for our congregation and our Family in the Church,
may we... (R)

In discerning the paths of the Holy Spirit, even if in the process, our shoes get soiled by
the mud of the street” may we...(R)

As we exhibit a love for the poor, especially the materially and spiritually abandoned,
may we...(R)

Prayer: God our Father, may our lives always give witness to the unconditional love
you have shown for us. In this year of celebrating our consecrated life, may we be
conscious that the profound sadness, manifest in our world, can only be healed by
profound joy, the joy given by the Spirit of God as the pledge of our consecration. May

the Light that is You become more visible because of the love we bear for You and one another. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing Hymn: *Wake the World with Dawning Joy* (Steven Warner)

1. Wake the world with dawning Joy! Wake it with your gladness! Work for Justice, live in peace, Claim the Word Courageous! Let us sing to God this new day, see the world in a different way. Let us wake the world, wake the world, with abiding words of faith.
2. Though the world is locked in sleep, Let us rise rejoicing! One in Christ his light to keep, Called to human kindness. Let us sing to God this new day, walk the world in a holy way, Let us wake the world, wake the world with uplifting words of hope.
3. Love the world with different eyes. God's own love incarnate! Leaving all to follow Christ: Sweet and endless mercy! Let us sing to God this new day, reach the world in miraculous ways, Let us wake the world, wake the world, with prophetic words of love.
4. Thunder now God's song of praise, wake to harp and dancing. Song to lift us all our days. Song of love and triumph! For the Bridegroom now awaits us, in the faces of all we meet. Now awake the world! Wake the world with unending words of joy.

(Text of Hymn is based on Pope Francis' words to Consecrated Religious of the World.) *Wake the World with Dawning Joy* <http://www.vocationnetwork.org/articles/show/455>
(for sheet music and audio) (based on the words of Pope Francis to the Consecrated Religious of the world....Commissioned by the National Religious Vocation Conference and Vision Vocation Guide in honor of the year for Consecrated Life)

