



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

FOR THE OPENING OF THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE Sunday, 30 November

2014 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Consecrated Sisters and Dear Consecrated Brothers,

It is with great joy that I address you on such a meaningful occasion as the Eucharistic Celebration for the opening of the Year of Consecrated Life. I would have liked so much to be present among you personally, as I had assured you, but the will of God has provided otherwise.

In convoking this Year of Consecrated Life, 50 years after the promulgation of the Conciliar Decree *Perfectae Caritatis* on the renewal of religious life, I wanted first of all to propose again to the Church as a whole the beauty and value of this special form of *sequela Christi*, represented by all of you who have chosen to leave everything to imitate Christ more closely through the profession of the evangelical counsels. Through a multiplicity of initiatives that will be implemented in the coming months here in Rome as in every part of the world, your luminous witness to life will be like a light placed in a candelabra to give light and warmth to all the People of God. Thus I also renew to you who are present here the urgent call that I addressed one year ago to the Superiors General: wake up the world, illuminate it with your prophetic and countercultural witness!

How can you implement this call in your life, not only in this special Year dedicated to you, but always? I shall provide you with three programmatic attitudes.

By being joyful! Show everyone that you follow Christ and put his Gospel into practice, filling your heart with happiness. Infect those who are near you with this joy; and then many people will ask you for the reason and feel the desire to share with you your splendid and enthusing Gospel adventure.

By being brave! Those who feel loved by the Lord know how to place full trust in Him, as your Founders and Foundresses did, opening new ways of service to the Kingdom of God. With the power of the Holy Spirit that accompanies you, go out into the streets of the world and show the innovative power of the Gospel which, when put into practice, works wonders today too and can answer to all the questions of mankind.

By being men and women of communion! Firmly rooted in personal communion with God, whom you have chosen as the *porro unum* [good portion] (cf. Lk 10:42) of your existence, be tireless builders of fraternity, above all practicing among yourselves the Gospel law of mutual love, and then with all, especially the poorest. Demonstrate that universal fraternity is not a utopia but Jesus' very dream for the whole of humanity.

Dear consecrated women and men, thank you for coming here today to mark the solemn opening of the Year of Consecrated Life. I also thank Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, who is presiding at the Eucharist celebration on my behalf. Likewise I wish to express my gratitude to Archbishop José Carballo and to all the members of the Dicastery, who are working generously for the successful outcome of the events planned for this Year.

I entrust to the Virgin Mary, beloved daughter of the Father, cloaked by the Holy Spirit in all the gifts of grace and your supreme model, the Year of Consecrated Life which starts today. I accompany you with my prayers and willingly bestow upon you present here my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 30 November 2014.

FRANCIS