The Holy See

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO CONSECRATED PEOPLE GATHERED IN THE BASILICA OF S. MARIA MAGGIORE
ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE

Dear consecrated men and women!

I greet you affectionately on the occasion of World Day for Consecrated Life, as you are gathered for the Eucharistic celebration in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major. And at this moment I would like to embrace all consecrated brothers and sisters in every part of the world.

The theme of this year's Day is "Brothers and sisters for the mission". When you listen to this message of mine, I will be on mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I know that I will be accompanied by your prayer. In turn, I assure you of mine for the mission of each one of you and your communities. All together we are members of the Church, and the Church has been on a mission since the first day, sent by the Risen Lord, and will be until the end, with the strength of his Spirit. And in the People of God, sent to bring the Gospel to all humanity, you consecrated persons have a specific role, that derives from the particular gift you have received: a gift that gives your witness a special character and value, for the very fact that you are fully dedicated to God and to his Kingdom, in poverty, virginity and obedience. If each person is a mission in the Church, then each and every one of you is a mission with a grace of your own, as a consecrated person.

Beyond this fundamental gift, your mission is enriched by the charisms of your institutes and societies, the charisms of your founders. In their remarkable variety, they are all given for the edification of the Church and for her mission. All charisms are for the mission, and they are precisely so with the incalculable richness of their variety; so that the Church may bear witness to and proclaim the Gospel to everyone and in every situation.

Today we celebrate the feast of the encounter: may the Virgin Mary obtain for us the grace that our life as consecrated persons always be a feast of the encounter with Christ; and in this way, like her, we will be able to bring the light of his love to everyone: his light, not ours! Bring him, not ourselves!

Dear friends, I am close to you and I thank you for what you are and for what you do. I pray for you, and I encourage you to continue in your prophetic mission. I bless you from my heart, and I entrust you to Mary *Salus Populi Romani*. Please, do not forget to pray for me.

FRANCIS

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