



# The Holy See

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## ***ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CERTAIN WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES***

*Clementine Hall  
Monday, 30 June 2025*

**[[Multimedia](#)]**

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In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Peace be with you!

*Dear Sisters, good morning and welcome!*

I am pleased to meet with you. For some of you it is the occasion of your General Chapter, others are here for your Jubilee pilgrimage. In both cases, you have come to the tomb of Peter in order to renew your love for the Lord and your fidelity to the Church.

You belong to Congregations that were founded at different times and in distinct circumstances: Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great; Daughters of Divine Charity; Augustinian Sisters of Amparo; Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Hearts. Yet your histories share a common thread that can be seen in the light of such great historical witnesses to the spiritual life as Augustine, Basil and Francis, whose asceticism, courage and holiness of life inspired your founders to foster new ways of serving others. This is evident especially in your care for the weakest: children, poor girls and boys, orphans, migrants, and more recently for the elderly and the sick as well as many other ministries of charity.

Your response to the challenges of the past and the vitality of your present make clear that fidelity to the ancient wisdom of the Gospel is the best way forward for those who, led by the Holy Spirit,

undertake new paths of self-giving, dedicated to loving God and neighbor and listening attentively to the signs of the times (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 4; 11).

With this in mind, the *Second Vatican Council*, referring to religious institutes dedicated to works of charity, emphasized how important it is that in them “the entire religious life of the members should be imbued with an apostolic spirit, and all their apostolic activity with a religious spirit,” so that they “may first answer their call to follow Christ and to serve Christ himself in his members... in intimate union with him” (Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 8).

Saint Augustine, speaking of the primacy of God in the Christian life, affirms that, “God is your everything. If you are hungry, God is your bread; if you are thirsty, God is your water; if you are in darkness, God is your light that never fades; if you are naked, God is your everlasting garment” (*In Ioannis Evangelium*, 13, 5). Indeed, we would do well to ask ourselves: to what extent are these words true for me? How much does the Lord satisfy my thirst for life, love or light? These are important questions. Moreover, this rootedness in Christ is what led those who went before us – men and women like us, with gifts and limitations like ours – to do things they perhaps never thought they could achieve. This rootedness enabled them to sow seeds of goodness that, enduring throughout the centuries and across continents, have now reached practically the entire world, as your presence here demonstrates.

As I mentioned, some of you are engaged in your General Chapters, others are here for the Jubilee. In any case, you are faced with important choices that will determine your future, that of your sisters and of the Church herself. For this reason, it seems most appropriate to conclude by reiterating, for all of us, the beautiful hope expressed by Saint Paul in addressing the Christians of Ephesus: I pray that “Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (*Eph* 3:17-19). Thank you for your work and your fidelity. May the Blessed Virgin Mary accompany you. And I give you my blessing.