



The Holy See

**VIDEO-MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE VIGIL OF PRAYER AT ST MARY MAJOR
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE**

Saturday, 29 November 2014 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Though physically far away, in service to the universal Church, I feel closely united to all consecrated men and women at the start of this Year which I wanted to be dedicated to consecrated life.

I greet with affection all the members of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and all those present here in the Basilica of St Mary Major, under the tender gaze of the Blessed Virgin *Salus Populi Romani*, for this Prayer Vigil. With you I also greet all the consecrated men and women living and working throughout the world.

On this occasion, my first words are those of gratitude to the Lord for the precious gift of consecrated life to the Church and to the world. May this Year of Consecrated Life be an occasion for all members of the People of God to thank the Lord, from whom every good thing comes, for the gift of consecrated life, enhancing its value fittingly. Dear consecrated brothers and sisters, my gratitude goes likewise to you for what you are and what you do in the Church and in the world: may this be an “intense time” to celebrate with the whole Church the gift of your vocation and to renew your prophetic mission.

I repeat to you today too, what I have already said to you several times before: “Wake up the world! Wake up the world!”. How?

Put Christ at the centre of your existence. This being the fundamental norm of your life — “the following of Christ set forth in the Gospels” (*Perfectae Caritatis*, n. 2), consecrated life essentially consists in personal adherence to Him. Dear consecrated men and women, seek Christ

constantly, seek his Face, set Him at the centre of your life in order to be transformed into “a living memorial of Jesus’ way of living and acting as the Incarnate Word in relation to the Father and in relation to the brethren” (*Vita Consecrata*, n. 22). Like the Apostle Paul, let yourselves be conquered by Him, take on his mind and his way of life (cf. *ibid*, n. 18); let yourselves be touched by his hand, led by his voice, sustained by his grace (cf. *ibid*, n. 40).

It is not easy to let yourself be touched by his hand, led by his voice, sustained by his grace.

And with Christ, always start from the Gospel! Take it on as your way of life and translate it into daily actions marked by simplicity and coherence, thus overcoming the temptation to transform it into an ideology. The Gospel will keep your life and mission “young”, and render it current and attractive. May the Gospel be the solid ground on which you can proceed courageously. Called to be “living exegeses” of the Gospel, let it, dear consecrated ones, be the foundation and the ultimate reference point of your life and mission.

Leave your nest and head for the margins of humanity today! To do this, let Christ meet you. The encounter with Him will inspire you to encounter others and will lead you toward the neediest, the poorest. Reach all the peripheries that are in need of the light of the Gospel (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 20). Live on the frontiers. This will ask of you vigilance to discern the novelties of the Spirit; lucidity in recognizing the complexity of the new frontiers; discernment in identifying the limits and the appropriate manner to proceed; and immersion in reality, “touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others” (*ibid*, n. 24).

Dear brothers and sisters: many challenges lie before you, but these exist to be overcome. “Let us be realists, but without losing our joy, our boldness and our hope-filled commitment. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary vigour!” (*ibid*, n. 109).

May Mary, woman in contemplation of the mystery of God in the world and in history, woman diligent in her haste to help others (cf. Lk 1:39) and hence, the model of every missionary disciple, accompany us in this Year of Consecrated Life which we place under her maternal gaze.

To all you participants in the Prayer Vigil at St Mary Major and to all consecrated men and women, I impart my heartfelt Blessing, and I ask you to please pray for me.

May the Lord bless you and Our Lady protect you.