In 1997, John Paul II called for consecrated life to be promoted throughout the universal Church. He declared February 2, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, to be observed as World Day for Consecrated Life (WDCL). In the United States, when February 2 is not on a Sunday, we celebrate on the Sunday after the Presentation. This year WDCL is observed on February 5, the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

The readings for this Sunday focus on the themes central to our Christian life. The celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life invites all the Church to reflect on the role of Consecrated Life within the Christian community. Those who choose to live a consecrated life give public, intentional witness to the universal call to a life of holiness.

Some Christian women and men respond to God’s call to become followers of Jesus through profession of vows and a life dedicated to prayer and service. They live out the consecrated life in different ways. Religious sisters, nuns, brothers, religious priests, and monks consecrate their lives through their profession of the evangelical vows and live as part of a community. Single lay people may choose to be consecrated virgins and make private vows to the local bishop as they live out their vocation in various walks of life. Secular institutes are another form of living the consecrated life as single people. Those who become followers of Jesus through the consecrated life bless the Church.

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LITURGY PLANNING GUIDE
Year A

Introductory Rites

Procesional Hymn
_ I Come with Joy, LAND OF REST, WLP, GIA
_ Jesus, Lead the Way, ROCHELLE, GIA
_ Those Who See Light, E. Donald Osuna, OCP

Penitential Rite
A sprinkling rite is recommended.

Sprinkling Rite
_ Gloria
_ Waters of Life, FINLANDIA, WLP
_ Let Justice Roll Like a River, Marty Haugen, GIA
_ Renew Us (refrain), IN BABELONE, OCP

Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading
Isaiah 58:7-10

Psalm Response
Psalm 112:4-9: The just man is a light in darkness to the upright (Strickland) (LPGA)

Second Reading
1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Gospel Acclamation
John 8:12

Gospel
Matthew 5:13-16

Homily
See Homily Notes

General Intercessions
See General Intercessions

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## Liturgy of the Eucharist

### Preparation of the Gifts

- Instrumental
- **Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service**, Text: Albert E. Bayly, Melodies vary, WLP, GIA, OCP
- **Sing of Mary**, Roland F. Palmer, OCP
- **Blest Are Those Who Love You**, Marty Haugen, GIA, WLP

### Preface


### Holy, Holy, Holy


### Memorial Acclamation


### Great Amen


### The Lord’s Prayer


### Lamb of God


### Communion Processional

- **When We Are Living/Pues Si Vivimos**
  
  Text: Roberto Escamilla, Elise Eslinger & George Lockwood,
  Tune: Traditional Latin-American, WLP
- **We Are the Light of the World**, Jean A. Greif,
  Vernacular Hymns Publ. Co., WLP, GIA, OCP
- **Blessed Are They**, D. Haas & M. Joncas, WLP, GIA, OCP
  Text: Claudia Foltz and Armand Nigro, OCP
- **Bread for the World**, Bernadette Farrell, OCP

### Concluding Rites

### Prayer after Communion


### Blessing and Dismissal


### Recessional Hymn

- **Christ Be Our Light**, Bernadette Farrell, OCP
- **O God, Our Help In Ages Past**, William Croft, OCP
John Paul II instituted World Day for Consecrated Life to be celebrated in conjunction with the Feast of the Presentation. This year the Church celebrates this event on the first Sunday of February. The spirit of the Feast itself colors our call to consider consecrated life in the Church. This is especially true in light of today’s Liturgy of the Word. Exegetical highlights of the readings provide speaking points that can be developed on vocation, mission, and ministry of consecrated life.

The first reading from the Old Testament book of the prophet Isaiah was written at a time when the people of Israel were returning from exile. Isaiah explains that the faithful and God were disconnected, in addition, the faithful were disconnected from one another. Isaiah calls the people of Israel to reach out to the poor and the needy in their midst. This call to show care and concern for others leads the faithful to full light within which God hears their prayer and the “LORD will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am!” Isaiah points out to each of us that we can become a light to others.

In the second reading from the Letter to the Corinthians Paul reminds us that he, Paul, is not a learned man who overcame his fear and presumed weakness, but explains that he is empowered by the Spirit to share Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, while we may not feel we have the capacity to choose the right words or do the right things but like Paul, we can try to ask, “How does God want me to share his story with others?” Our faith is more than what we believe and how we live our lives because of who we are, “Beloved children of God”. Each of us uniquely brings the presence of God in a way that has not been experienced before and nor will be experienced again in the same way.

In the Matthew’s Gospel Jesus calls each of us to be the “salt of the earth and light for the world”. Jesus uses images of salt and light that are all too familiar to us and often we take them for granted today. Today we pass the salt without a second thought and reach into a darkened room to flip on the switch filling a room with light. However, what if the salt loses its flavor and lights
the fail to turn on, what do we do? Jesus effectively tells his disciples they cannot become flavorless and must not hide their light beneath a basket.

Like the disciples, we need to be committed to the Kingdom when we feed the hungry. When we clothe the naked, when we console those who mourn we show ourselves as salt and light for the world. When we do these things as a community of faith, our light shines for others fulfilling our purpose and we discover that God did indeed choose each one of us to be the light in the darkness.

With these themes available from the Word and the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life several talking points could direct the homilist.

“You are the salt of the earth.” Salt preserves flavor and protects from corruption. In a world where so many live amid injustice, the women and men committed in consecrated life seek to “be salt” to live their lives and undergo formation to remind and challenge the world that justice is not only possible, but must be the norm for all peoples. Biblical justice is right relationship with all people.

Religious offer a lifestyle based on relationships, not on material wealth or status. Their commitment to poverty, their sacrifice to the Lord, draws people into greater relationship and interdependence, but first they must rest not in human wisdom but on the power of God.”

The consecrated life is also based on biblical justice and religious foster this way of life with those who live in systems that cheat them of their basic human needs. Some in consecrated life are called to change these systems; others, to provide compassion and relief for those in such systems; and all pray for an end to such injustice and for the vulnerable people affected by it.

“…so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.” By their profession of the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, those in the consecrated life commit themselves to share in the life of Jesus. The challenges and difficulties of religious unite them to God with the cross of Christ. When the consecrated life is lived lovingly, the power of the devil is destroyed. Jesus is the model of mutual care, joyful prayer, and generous, selfless service. Detachment from the things of the world and attachment to the values of Jesus Christ, and him crucified” mark the personality of the vocation to the consecrated life.

“...that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father...” Attendance at Sunday Mass, prayer in the home, service to those in need, Christian example all strong building blocks for vocations to the consecrated life. It’s difficult in today’s culture to combat the negative forces at work in our lives.

Today’s media bombards us with a false notion of success. Jesus did not preach success, yet he challenged his disciples to promote the reign of God where holiness and fidelity, not wealth, success and status, would be the grounding values. Pope Francis continually reminds us of the primacy of the poor and their human dignity that comes from their creation by and relationship with God. The consecrated life today trumpets the beauty and fidelity of a life, not its success. Every baptized person is called to holiness by living her/his Christian vocation with Jesus as a
model. With fidelity to these vocations, the Christian people illumine the world with justice, peace, and love to bring Christ to the entire world.

In our time fewer people choose this life. On the whole people are not inviting men and women to brighten our world in the consecrated life. All Christians, regardless of their own vocation, can serve as inviters. When someone spots a sense of humor that could preach the gospel with delight and conviction, he could be called forth. We only need to look to Pope Francis for guidance and direction. In Evangelii Gaudium we have the perfect roadmap to live a life of The Joy of the Gospel. If a person has a conviction to defend the rights of the poor and marginalized, her/his voice and strength can be channeled to ministry. If one’s gentleness is comforting, he/she could be encouraged to teach and evangelize. Who will invite the next generation of lights who shall become our sisters, priests, brothers, consecrated virgins?

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GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Presider: Jesus calls each of us to follow and encourages us not to be afraid. With confidence in God’s grace we seek God’s help.

For our world, may all leaders and organizations work together for greater justice. May these efforts lead to lasting peace, we pray.

For our Church, may we realize that God calls all of us to holiness. May we allow God to transform our unworthiness into goodness, we pray.

For those who are called to the consecrated life, may they be faithful witnesses of God’s love. May others be inspired to live their baptismal commitment by professing the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, we pray.

For our families and for this Christian community, may we respond to the needs of those close to us. May gratitude and generosity abound, we pray.

For those who have died (especially . . .), may they sing God’s praises with the angels. May their spirit abide with us, we pray.

Presider: Loving God, we trust in your love and compassion for your people. Hear our prayers and grace us with your blessings. We seek to do your will through the power of your Spirit, now and always. Amen.
Setting and Ritual
Dim lighting in gathering space. In church setting use Paschal candle. During opening hymn light other candles around the room/church.

Music Selections (See suggestions from Liturgy Planning Guide)
- City of God, Daniel Schutte, OCP, WLP, GIA
- The Spirit of God, Lucien Deiss, WLP
- Take, O Take Me As I Am, John Bell, GIA, WLP
- Beatitudes, Darryl Ducote, Damean Music, OCP

Opening Prayer
Refer to the Sacramentary: Feast of the Presentation, Common of Virgins or Consecration to a Life of Virginity; Leader offers a spontaneous prayer or invites participants to pray the “Hail Mary.”

Litany of Saints
Choose saints that were consecrated virgins; you may want to include names of those particular to your community. There are many sung versions.

Reading (Choose one)
- Luke 2:22-40 (Presentation)
- Acts 4:32-35 (Consecration of Virgins)
- Matthew 5:13-16 (5th Sunday in O.T.)

Reflection
Invite someone who lives the consecrated life to choose one of the readings and reflect on “blessedness” in the consecrated life.

Canticle of Mary (You may wish to bless the community with incense.)
- Mary’s Song of Praise, Alan Hommerding, WLP
- Magnificat, James Chepponis, GIA
- Magnificat, Bernadette Farrell, OCP

Concluding Blessing
Numbers 6:24-26, Ephesians 3:14-21, or solemn blessing from Mass for Consecrated Virgins; compose your own blessing.
Call to Prayer

Leader: Gathered as God’s people . . .
All:  We come to give thanks and praise.

Leader: Mindful of our need for God . . .
All:  We unite our prayer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Song

Opening Prayer

Litany of Saints

Reading

Reflection

Magnificat

Vocation Prayer

Leader:  Let us pray: Faithful God,

Side 1:  We celebrate your fidelity and love for your Church.

Side 2:  Mary accepted this covenant, offering herself as your blessed handmaid. You entrusted her with your Son, Jesus, and in turn she became our mother too. Like Jesus and Mary, bless us with a trusting spirit that we might serve you faithfully.

Side 1:  Inspire men and women to dedicate their lives to you through the consecrated life. Help us to invite, encourage and support men and women to serve the Church.

Side 2:  Blessed are we as we seek to live our lives in holiness and integrity.

All:  We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus and his Blessed Mother in union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Sign of Peace

Blessing & Concluding Song
Prayer for Vocations

Faithful God,
We celebrate your fidelity and love for your Church. You bless us and call us into a covenant with you, with Jesus, and with the Holy Spirit.
Mary accepted this covenant, offering herself as your blessed handmaid. You entrusted her with your Son, Jesus, and in turn she became our mother too. Like Jesus and Mary, bless us with a trusting spirit that we might serve you faithfully.
Inspire men and women to dedicate their lives to you through the consecrated life. Help us to invite, encourage and support men and women to serve the Church. Blessed are we as we seek to live our lives in holiness and integrity.
We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus and his Blessed Mother in union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.
BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week Prior to WDCL

Since 1997 the universal Church celebrates World Day for Consecrated Life close to the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, February 2. Next Sunday we will observe this day with a special emphasis on the call to consecrated life in today’s world. (Add any other information about your observance.)

Week of WDCL

This Sunday we celebrate World Day for Consecrated Life. We recognize and give thanks for those who have consecrated their lives to God and the Church through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Some join a religious congregation or a secular institute. Others remain single and make profession to God through the local bishop and are known as consecrated virgins. The consecrated life is one way that men and women live out their baptismal commitment as followers of Jesus. (Add other information about your observance.)
RESOURCES

Many other resources available

Center for the Study of Religious Life  csrl@visioni.com

Horizon: Journal of the National Religious Vocation Conference  www.nrvc.net

National Black Sisters Conference (NBSC)  http://nbsc68.tripod.com

Information, a publication of the Religious Formation Conference  www.relforcon.org

Origins

Vision Magazine (Free resource)
www.visionguide.org (English)
www.vocacioncatolica.com (Spanish)

Vita Consecrata: A Post Synod Exhortation by John Paul II (1996)
www.usccb.org SEARCH: Vita Consecrata

Vocation and Prayer Magazine  MagazinVOC.aol.com

United States Conference of Secular Institutes (USCSI)  www.secularinstitutes.org

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)  www.usccb.org

United States Association of Consecrated Virgins  http://consecratedvirgins.org

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SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Diocese, Parishes, Schools, Serra Clubs:

- Invite members of institutes of consecrated life from your parish to serve as ministers for the Sunday liturgy.
- Invite members of institutes of consecrated life to speak to adults/children in religious education programs.
- Host a prayer service and reception (See Prayer Service).
- Offer a day of perpetual adoration dedicated to vocations to consecrated life.
- Encourage open houses throughout the diocese.
- Sponsor a vocation fair, walkathon, or rally highlighting institutes of consecrated life.
- Provide copies of vocation magazines, brochures, and flyers.
- Encourage vocation awareness through diaconate, lay ministry, parents’ baptism programs, family ministries.
- Have a vocation section in parish bulletin, bulletin board, newsletters. Highlight stories of people who live the consecrated life, especially those who serve in the local parish or who entered from the parish.

Institutes of Consecrated Life:

- Invite friends, employees, benefactors, and families to join you for prayer, talk, a meal, or an open house. Share about your life and charism.
- Plan a simple prayer in which you share your vocation stories together. Renew your vows. Invite interested people to join you.
- Do a press release or share a story about your institute with the local press.
- Open your doors to college students for a place to study and pray.
- Sponsor a “holy hour” to pray for vocations.
- Host a “Come & See” experience. Invite members of institutes of consecrated life from your parish to serve as ministers for the Sunday liturgy.
- Invite members of institutes of consecrated life to speak to adults/children in religious education programs.
- Host a prayer service and reception (See Prayer Service).
- Offer a day of perpetual adoration dedicated to vocations to consecrated life.
World Day for Consecrated Life
February 5, 2017

Come join us!

Blessed
World & National Annual Events

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<td>National Vocation Awareness Week</td>
<td>November 5-11</td>
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<td>World Day for Consecrated Life*</td>
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<td>World Day of Prayer for Vocations**</td>
<td>May 7</td>
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*The US Bishops observe WDCL on February 2 when that date falls on a Sunday; if not it is observed on the Sunday after February 2.

**The Holy Father issues a pastoral letter each year for the celebration of World Day of Prayer for Vocations. This was unavailable at press time. It may be available at the Vatican Website closer to the date of the event (http://www.vatican.va).

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USA Council of Serra International

Our mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the priesthood and vowed religious life.

Pray! Invite! Encourage! Affirm! Vocations

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