

THE NEW WINE

bringing Our Lord's personal love to people, *one person at a time*

A time to "Take Care of Vocations"

a message from Most Rev. Luigi Bonazzi, Apostolic Nuncio to Canada

Pope Francis will open the Year for Consecrated Life on November 30, 2014. We can ask, why this initiative and not another? If we could see into the heart of Pope Francis – who has the heart of a son of St. Ignatius of Loyola – it would be easy to answer. Trying to guess the reason, I like to think that Pope Francis has promoted the Year for Consecrated Life because his reasoning is like that of St. Teresa of Avila, who said: "What would the world be like without the Religious?" (Vita Consecrata, 105)

Consecrated Life, in fact, belongs, in an intimate way, to the life, holiness and mission of the Church (VC, 3), to which it offers a specific contribution through the witness of a life given to God and to one's brothers and sisters.

This is why we suffer when we think of the present situation in Canada. As we know, at the beginning of the 1960s, the Church in Canada had over 60,000 men and women in religious life, but today that number has dropped to little more than 15,000. The median age is 80 years and vocations are scarce; the lack of vocations causes us suffering.



2015: Archbishop Prendergast gathers consecrated men and women of Ottawa to celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life

fundamental importance for the community of believers and for all of humanity; (JPII, Message for the XXI World Day for Vocations)" a problem which is "located in the heart of the Church itself; in fact, its future, its development and universal mission of salvation depend on its solution. (JPII, Message for the XXII World Day for

Vocations)" This is why the Church suffers, just like a couple who wish to have children but are unable. But we do not suffer like people who are resigned and have lost hope. No! We do not enclose ourselves in fatalistic-discouragement, nor do we just stop at complaining. On the contrary, comforted by faith, we renew our commitment to throw, in the name of Jesus, the nets of the Gospel-of-vocations (Lk 5:1-11).

The miraculous catch of fish, which Peter and his companions experienced with immense joy and surprise – by obeying Jesus' words inviting them to "throw out the nets" again (Lk 5:4) – assures us that the fish were there, even if during the night of trial it seemed that they were absent. **By throwing the nets out again, on the word of Jesus, the catch is abundant.**

Dear religious men and women: in this year dedicated to Consecrated Life, I invite you to throw out the nets with confidence, trusting the word that Jesus addresses to each of you: "be vocation-promoters," "take vocations to heart." ...cont'd

We are well aware that the lack of vocations to religious life – priestly and brothers and sisters – is one of "vital and



Five concrete actions:

What does “to take care of vocations” mean? It means “giving them some thought”, namely, keeping vocations present in your mind and heart and investing all of your personal resources for this purpose: spiritual, affective and behaviour. I would like to propose, in particular, five courses of action:

1. To take care means: to put our trust in the power of prayer.
2. To take care means: to manifest Jesus.
3. To take care means: to speak openly of the vocation to consecrated life and to ministerial priesthood, and to call courageously.
4. To take care of means: to devote oneself with generosity to spiritual direction.
5. To take care means: propose paths of communion.

God is Good

By Sr. Monique Bisson, SC



L to R: Sr. Monique, Penelope, Melissa, Carmen

When I was assigned as Formator of our Applicancy program, something just lit up in me. I felt a peace in my heart that knew Our Lord was blessing me with what I was made to do – to impart to others something I believe,

understand, and live whole-heartedly. I give praise to God because I’ve grown in my love of my call as a Servant. But even more so, I give praise because I am privileged to witness the little fledglings grow in love and desire to serve the Lord and His Church.

I can’t deny how grateful I was that the Lord started me with a roster of one applicant! 😊 It allowed me to ease into my role and to organize the formation program. It also didn’t hurt that Penelope, my first applicant ‘trainee’, is such a go-getter. She is always in a position of wanting to learn. Last year, for our large group formation we watched Fr. Robert Barron’s Catholicism series. With every new episode, she responded like a 3-year-old on Christmas morning opening her presents, with wonder and awe, taking in all the beauty of the Catholic faith!

This year, we started again with one new applicant, Melissa Monette. I thought, “Wow, God is good, He is continuing to go gentle on me.” But the Lord knew what was to come and what I could handle. Carmen Audette from B.C. came for a ‘come and see’ and eventually was accepted into the Applicancy program.

Juggling two applicants in the 1st year program and one applicant in the 2nd year program has kept me on my toes. I’m reminded of a little tutorial we received from Fr. Terry on the physical skill of Juggling. It’s a step-by-step process. He taught us to juggle with two balls at first then when we were comfortable with the two, we could add another. Sounds like what God did with me! I’ve learnt that a lot of planning is required to run two programs at the same time. I can feel scattered when I don’t have my days planned but so much peace comes with an organized agenda for the week. The Applicants are always ready Monday morning to take note of how we are going to ‘juggle’ our week!

I continue to humbly give thanks to Our Lord for my role as formator. I see through the fruit born in each applicant that I am doing what I am meant to be doing. How? Through the authenticity of their bonds of sisterly care for one another, the attentiveness that they have for the needs of others, and the desire to dive more intimately in their relationship with the Lord. Nothing can be more satisfying (for a formator) than to see them strive for holiness. And in their constant striving I see that they too will discover, God willing, what it truly means to be a Servant.



Consecrated Life... What a Wonderful Adventure!

By S. Yvette Papillon, i.j.a.

Superior General, Les Sœurs de l'Institut Jeanne d'Arc

As you know, Pope Francis has declared 2015 the Year of Consecrated Life. In the Apostolic letter that he addressed to all religious, we have been invited to reflect on the past, the present, and the future of consecrated life, for it is a life-long adventure. For me, the adventure started with a “knock on the door”, the door of my heart. Jesus whispered: “Would you allow me to come in? I need your permission”, then “come, follow Me!” It took a few years for me to say “yes”, for even though the invitation was a whisper, it was very insistent!

After 53 years on the road of religious life, following Jesus, I am moved by what God was able to do with me. Pope Francis said that during the Year of Consecrated Life, we are invited to *see the past with gratitude*, because Consecrated Life is a gift from God. My Congregation's motto “En avant, Dieu fait ma route” (Forward, God leads me) has inspired its members for 95 years. But to walk with the assurance that God's presence will never fail requires nourishment: daily encounters with God through His Word and the Bread of Life.

This wonderful adventure does not subsist in an individual manner, but with others in fraternal communion (community life). To wonder and

appreciate the talents and gifts of each other, to feel responsible for the quality of life of the local community, to offer support, encouragement, and joy; all of this plays an integral part in religious life.

Yet, if we are together and forming community, is it not for a common mission? Les Sœurs de l'Institut Jeanne d'Arc have received from God the charism of welcoming, which takes its shape in the form of hospitality. Each morning, we say this prayer which our foundress bequeathed us, “Blessed are those who come to us in the name of the Lord.” In response to this request for grace, we commit ourselves “to be salt of the earth”, so that we can be for each person, the flavour of the Gospel for today. Despite ageing and the decreasing number of sisters, we are still striving to respond to the second invitation of Pope Francis, *to live the present with passion*. Here, I will insert a small parenthesis. One of our sisters passed away on December 1st, 2014 at the age of 95 - I want to age like her! Despite almost complete blindness and very limited hearing, she had the warmest smile, and a great joy that probably found its source in her relationship

with God. To be present to others also brought her happiness. Even in her great age, she remained interested in current events as well as history. Her “VictorReader”, a



Clockwise: Melissa, S. Thérèse, S. Denise, Penelope, S. Yvette, S. Simone

digital talking book device supplied by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, nourished her desire for learning on a daily basis. Being in her presence, you couldn't help but witness her enthusiasm. What a beautiful example of a woman, passionate for life and full of joy!

Another primary aspect of the consecrated life is the vows. Individually, and communally, we live the consecrated life in the Church, through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The vows are the base of a style of life that liberates the heart... free from riches (vow of poverty), free from exclusive or possessive relationships (vow of chastity), free from personal control (vow of obedience), so as **TO LOVE WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART.**

Embrace the future with hope; this is the third invitation from Pope Francis in this Year of Consecrated Life. Yes, but how? A thought from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry that can guide and reassure us: “Everything opens onto something vaster than us. Everything becomes a road, a path, an [open] window for something other than ourselves...”

Will there be other marvellous adventures on our road? The Holy Spirit is a quiet Master...

EN AVANT, DIEU FAIT MA ROUTE !



Franciscans of Halifax, Les Sœurs de l'Institut Jeanne d'Arc, & Servants of the Cross gather for a meal

Support Your Sisters



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VOCATION FAIR BREAKFAST

GATHERING MEN AND WOMEN FOR THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE



On Sat. Feb 14 (Valentine's Day), we gathered men and women from the Ottawa diocese so that they may learn more about the consecrated life and the different communities of the diocese. The day started with Mass, a 'classic' Servants breakfast, a heart-hitting talk by Fr. Denis Lemieux, Madonna House, and a fun activity (that resembled 'speed-dating') which gave them a chance to visit all the communities present. Overall a blessed day. As seeds were planted, we hope and pray that many, 'thousands' (as Fr. Denis challenged the crowd) would respond open-heartedly to the call of consecrated life.



1. MCs: Chantal and Fr. Geoffrey |
2. Holy Mass: St. George's Parish |
3. Video Greetings: from Archbishop Prendergast | 4. Delicious Banquet: Melissa is joined by Ruben and ladies from Blessed Sacrament Parish | 5. Keynote Speaker: Fr. Denis Lemieux, MH | 6. Vocations Booth: Antonine Sisters | 7. Three Communities: Antonine Sisters, Sisters of Charity, Servants of the Cross |

8. "Speed Dating": Women visit with Servants of the Cross for 5 minutes, then move to the next booth | 9. Vocations Booth: Companions of the Cross

You Are Loved

Dear Sisters in Christ,

You are invited
to our
Women of the
Cross Retreat



June 19-21, 2015

Hosted on a personal island at
Charleston Lake, ON

The retreat focuses on the building of
women's identity through a detailed
examination of the story of the
Samaritan Woman

Call 613-729-8710 to register.
Space is limited!

Carmen's Wish List



We typically throw a Sister Shower for new applicants. Carmen was officially accepted in November 2014. If you are able, help us welcome Carmen into the community, with a gift of any of the following items:

- Free & Gentle TIDE detergent
- Gifts Cards from:
 - Walmart
 - Shopper's Drug Mart
 - Kardish Health Store

Starting 2015

Seek 2015 : Nashville, TN



CCO Rise Up : Calgary, AB



Applicants are ready : Ottawa, ON



Arrival in Lafayette, LA



Charismatic Women's Retreat : Lafayette, LA



Host Families : Houston, TX



Vocations Testimony : Houston, TX



CC Brothers : Detroit, MI



on the road

Please pray for our
Lay Assoc. Mission Trips to:
DETROIT | HALIFAX
OTTAWA



SERVANTS OF THE CROSS

Women of the Cross Ministry: *Chillin' With the Sisters*
A night of Adoration, Praise and Worship, Fellowship and Supper
MARCH 7 | MAY 2



*Radiate the Love
of Christ*



For vocation inquiries, please call Sr Anna 613-729-8710

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