



"Being Brother Today"

Prayer to celebrate the year of Consecrated Life

Motivation

Hymn: Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

Looking to the past with gratitude

All our Institutes are heirs to a history rich in charisms. At their origins we see the hand of God who, in his Spirit, calls certain individuals to follow Christ more closely, to translate the Gospel into a particular way of life, to read the signs of the times with the eyes of faith and to respond creatively to the needs of the Church.



Presentation of symbols

Time of listening the Word of God:

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has visited and brought redemption to his people. He has raised up a horn for our salvation within the house of David his servant, even as he promised through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old: salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to show mercy to our fathers and to be mindful of his holy covenant. (Lc 1:68-72)

Testimony

Hymn: Benedictus qui venit, benedictus qui venit, in nomine, in nomine, in nomine Domini.



Living the present with passion

Living the present with passion means becoming "experts in communion", "witnesses and architects of the 'plan for unity' which is the crowning point of human history in God's design". In a polarized society, where different cultures experience difficulty in living alongside one another, where the powerless encounter oppression, where inequality abounds, we are called to offer a concrete model of community which, by acknowledging the dignity of each person and sharing our respective gifts, makes it possible to live as brothers and sisters.

So, be men and women of communion! Have the courage to be present in the midst of conflict and tension, as a credible sign of the presence of the Spirit who inspires in human hearts a passion for all to be one (cf. Jn 17:21).

Presentation of symbols

Time of listening the Word of God:

As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be your servant.

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Mt. 23:8–12)

Fraternal sharing: How do these words of Pope Francis and the Gospel find an echo in your heart?

Hymn: Ubi caritas et amor. Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est.

Embracing the future with hope

This hope is not based on statistics or accomplishments, but on the One in whom we have put our trust (cf. 2 *Tim* 1:2), the One for whom “nothing is impossible” (*Lk* 1:37). This is the hope which does not disappoint; it is the hope which enables consecrated life to keep writing its great history well into the future. It is to that future that we must always look, conscious that the Holy Spirit spurs us on so that he can still do great things with us.



Presentation of symbols

Time of listening: the Word of God

No one patches an old cloak with a piece of new cloth, for its fullness pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse. People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved." (Mt 9:16–17)

Intercessions

We respond with the second part of each intercession, which is in bold.

1. From our condition as consecrated religious, the Church reminds us: “*The term ‘brother’ suggests a rich spirituality. These Religious are called to be brothers of Christ, deeply united with him, ‘the firstborn among many brothers’;*” –**Lord, we ask you to help us to seek you in prayer so that we may live trusting and devoted to you and focused on your love.**
2. From our community life we want to grow to live as “*brothers to one another, in mutual love and working together in the Church in the same service of what is good;*” –**Lord, we ask you help us to care for our fraternity in our communities and to be able to offer them as the best fruits in the construction of the Kingdom.**
3. From our commitment to the mission of our Congregation, we seek to reach the ideal of being: “*brothers to everyone, in their witness to Christ’s love for all, especially the lowliest, the neediest; brothers for a greater brotherhood in the Church;*” –**Lord, we ask you to purify and convert our hearts to be able to love everyone in humility and service.**
4. From our specific tasks, “*Religious Brothers provide valuable services of various kinds, inside or outside the community, participating in this way in the mission of proclaiming the Gospel and bearing witness to it with charity in everyday life;*” –**Lord, we ask you**

to make our apostolate germinate and grow for the benefit of your people and the values of your Kingdom.

5. From our wish to be in communion with the whole Church, offering what is characteristic of us, *“Religious Brothers are an effective reminder to Religious Priests themselves of the fundamental dimension of brotherhood in Christ, to be lived among themselves and with every man and woman, and they proclaim to all the Lord's words: ‘And you are all brothers’ (Mt 23:8);”* –**Lord, we ask you that our testimony may contribute to building up a more fraternal and welcoming Church.**
6. With the desire to continue stirring up vocations to this kind of consecrated life, *“We cannot think in religious life in the Church without the presence of this particular lay vocation, open still today to many Christians who may consecrate, for this, to the following of Christ and the service of humanity”* (St John Paul II); –**Lord, we ask you to call new young people to become Brothers in our Congregations.**

Our Father and Peace

Prayer to Mary

(Holy Father, Saint Peter's Square, 31 May 2013)

Hymn: Magnificat, Magnificat, Magnificat anima mea Dominum.
Magnificat, Magnificat, Magnificat anima mea.

Mary, woman of listening, open our ears; grant us to know how to listen to the word of your Son Jesus among the thousands of words of this world; grant that we may listen to the reality in which we live, to every person we encounter, especially those who are poor, in need, in hardship.

Mary, woman of decision, illuminate our minds and our hearts, so that we may obey, unhesitatingly, the word of your Son, Jesus; give us the courage to decide, not to let ourselves be dragged along, letting others direct our life.

Mary, woman of action, obtain that our hands and feet move “with haste” toward others, to bring them the charity and love of your Son Jesus, to bring the light of the Gospel to the world, as you did.

Hymn: Magnificat, Magnificat, Magnificat anima mea Dominum.
Magnificat, Magnificat, Magnificat anima mea.

