

USCCB Chairman announces observance of “Days with Religious” for 2015 Year of Consecrated Life

***Observance of “Days with Religious” will focus on prayer, service, community
Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Consecrated Life for renewal, remembrance, hope
National conferences of religious orders to actively participate***

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WASHINGTON—As the Catholic Church prepares to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations is promoting “Days with Religious” initiatives and resources to help families learn about the consecrated life of religious men and women. Activities will focus on sharing experiences of prayer, service and community life with those living a consecrated life.

“Our brothers and sisters in Christ living consecrated lives make great contributions to our society through a vast number of ministries,” said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, president of USCCB. “They teach in our schools, take care of the poor and the sick and bring compassion and the love of Christ to those shunned by society; others lead lives of prayer in contemplation for the world.”

Pope Francis proclaimed 2015 a Year of Consecrated Life, starting on the First Sunday of Advent, the weekend of November 29, 2014, and ending on February 2, 2016, the World Day of Consecrated life. The year also marks the 50th anniversary of *Perfectae Caritatis*, a decree on religious life, and *Lumen Gentium*, the Second Vatican Council’s constitution on the Church. Its purpose, as stated by the Vatican is to “make a grateful remembrance of the recent past” while embracing “the future with hope.”

“The ‘Days with Religious’ activities will represent great opportunities for families and adults to look at the many ways men and women serve Christ and the Church while answering the call to live in consecrated life,” said Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Raleigh, North Carolina, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

Catholics are invited to join activities that will be promoted in collaboration with the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, (CMSWR), the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM).

The events planned are as follows:

- February 8, 2015: Religious Open House. Events will be coordinated to also celebrate the World Meeting of Families to take place in Philadelphia and will include tours, open houses, receptions, family activities, and presentations on the history of religious communities at convents, abbeys, monasteries and religious houses.

- Summer 2015: Day of Mission and Service with Religious. Events will include joining religious in their apostolates or special service projects, such as assisting the elderly, ministering to the poor and homeless, and caring for the less fortunate.
- September 13, 2015: Day of Prayer with Religious. Events will include vespers, rosary or holy hours in convents, monasteries, religious houses, parishes and churches.

Prayers intentions, prayer cards, a video on consecrated life and other resources are available at: www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/consecrated-life/year-of-consecrated-life/index.cfm

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MEDIA CONTACT

Norma Montenegro Flynn

O: 202-541-3202

M: 703-717-2941

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