

## ***Consecrated women, artisans of the future***

*Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the temple*  
XXVII World Day of Consecrated Life

*Our eyes "have seen your salvation,  
which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." (Lk 2: 30-32)*

Dear Sisters,

Today, on the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, we are celebrating the XXVII World Day of Consecrated Life. It is a very meaningful day for all of us religious women – a day in which we are invited to express our gratitude to God for the gift of consecrated life. We also remember the Encounter which has transformed our life, opening it up with tenderness to new horizons and to the generative gift of self. It is an opportunity to renew our commitment to live with passion - with the diversity of charisms and ministries - the *commandment of love for God which urges us "to be a fire that kindles other fires"*. The day is a celebration of the beauty of consecrated life, a memory of the gratuitous gift of God who has chosen us and has sent us to be "*salt of the earth and light of the world*". By embracing Jesus' lifestyle, supported by His Spirit - Fire and Life - we choose to make his feelings, his choices our own so as to reach to every person, especially the little ones and those who live in poverty and in situations of extreme vulnerability.

In the Middle East, today's feast is called *The Feast of the Encounter: Jesus comes to meet humanity, as it strives to reach Him*. Simeon and Anna represent *the longing and the prophecy*. Jesus is *the newness and the fulfilment*.

We, consecrated women, are *called to be artisans of communion in order to proclaim the joy of the Gospel and to live the "mystique of the encounter"*. In fact, at the origin of our vocation there is a loving encounter with Jesus who set our hearts on fire and enchanted us with his beauty. *In love with Christ, we have found everything in Him; by welcoming him with open arms, like Simeon, we too have become prophetic witnesses of redemptive love*. Since that encounter, our lives are in perpetual transfiguration, so as to make room for God, ready to weave new, authentic, more human relationships which are, therefore, prophetic.

With Jesus, *who makes all things new*, we walk in this world with a constant commitment to foster that change which finds its profound motivation in the Gospel, a transformation that we all hope for. We want to become a space in which everyone finds hospitality and welcome. Overcoming all forms of individualism, we want to place the dignity and uniqueness of every person at the center of our lives.

We live in a time marked by conflicts, intolerance, polarizations, and new forms of poverty which dehumanize us as human beings, and we are embracing, with renewed awareness, in the context of the Church, the call to live our synodal vocation more intensely.

God calls us to make our presence visible and, together, to give 'voice' and concreteness to the gift of our lives, so that the light of Hope continues to shine in human history.

**Therefore, on the day dedicated to consecrated life,  
we wish to confirm our desire to embrace the future together  
to be a prophetic presence that lives and bears witness to the Gospel of Love.  
As we learn to become brothers and sisters, walking together, we enlarge the space of our tent,  
to welcome everyone. We are being led by the Spirit to new lands, where God awaits us.**

**We want** to continue to announce the Gospel of welcoming, solidarity and sharing in concrete, simple and daily gestures, which reveal the beauty and greatness of the dignity of every human person.

**We believe** that transformation takes place in a life given to God which becomes a compassionate, sensitive presence focused on care for persons, nature and the universe, through an integral accompaniment in defense of life.

**We are convinced** that prophecy resides in the word ‘together’ understood as transformation and as “growth of the we” which changes history and makes the Kingdom of God visible.

**We commit ourselves** so that every reality we inhabit can become a creative space of new relationships and the integration of diversities, so that the light of salvation may shine on all and “*all may have life and have it in abundance*” (Jn. 10:10).

Thank you consecrated women, thank you artisans of the future, thank you for your ‘yes’ and for your commitment to the service of life.

Sr Nadia Coppa, ASC

UISG President

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