

# The Lamp

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United States Association of  
Consecrated Virgins

SERVING THE VOCATION OF CONSECRATED VIRGINITY

USACV  
www.consecratedvirgins.org

May 31, 2015 – Trinity Sunday

May 31, 2015, Feast of the Visitation

To the Members of the United States Association of Consecrated Virgins:

St. John Eudes in the 1600s encouraged a devotion to the heart of Christ. In fact, he talked about Jesus having three hearts.

There is first of all, the divine Heart of Christ. Now, of course, there is no such thing as a physical divine heart. God, as divine, has no body parts. However, it is a great symbol of the love which God has for us, as Scripture states: “God proved his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.” We often think about Jesus loving us because he died for us; but imagine offering up your only begotten one to death for someone else. We might be willing to die for someone but would we be willing to give our child to die for someone? That is the divine love, the love of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for all of us.

There is a second heart in Jesus. It is his spiritual heart, that is, the heart of his will, both his divine will and his human will, deeply united to live out true charity. This is his own specific sacrifice for us, the sacrifice of his own will for us, and the sacrifice of his life for us. This love is obvious to us. We see it in the scriptures. We see it whenever we look at a crucifix. But even though we see it a lot, we really do not understand it. Why would someone, anyone, let alone the Son of God go to such lengths for us—it is a love beyond our measures. We don’t deserve it. Our human love is always so conditioned; we are always looking for what is in it for me. Jesus’ love is a love which makes no sense. Why would you leave 99 sheep in the desert by themselves and go look for one lost sheep, for me? It makes no sense, but that is true love.



The third heart of Christ is his physical, fleshly heart, symbol of his human affections for us. This is an intense, passionate, fixed love which is expressed in Jesus’ concern, in the compassion he felt in his guts, his tenderness and tears. Jesus had passion. That passion was always focused on others, on that lost sheep, on that repentant sinner. His passionate heart is always pulsating for others, for their good. He really loves helping others. There is no other way to say it. He simply finds great joy, his life’s purpose, in being a man for others. He experiences a rapturous emotive love for us that we creatures will only experience in heaven.

I pray in this month of June that you will be visited by the Heart of Christ and that your meditation on the heart of your spouse may bear great fruit. Magnificat!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Earl Boyea, Bishop of Lansing

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***The Way of Perfection – for the Consecrated Virgin******By Magalis Aguilera and Judith Stegman***

"The one who sat on the throne said, *Behold, I make all things new*" (Rev.21:5a). This is the very meaning of our divine Lord's passion, death, and resurrection: "I make all things new." Those who accept martyrdom with joy – among them many virgins of the early Church – testify to the newness of this life in Christ as they unite themselves to the passion of the Lord as a gateway to life in his resurrection. Saint Augustine describes the two periods: "the one that now is, beset with the trials and troubles of this life, and the other yet to come, a life of everlasting serenity and joy." Both, Augustine explains, "are demonstrated for us in Christ our head. The Lord's passion depicts for us our present life and trials – shows how we must suffer and be afflicted and finally die. The Lord's resurrection and glorification show us the life that will be given to us in the future." (From a discourse on the psalms by Saint Augustine, Bishop, Fifth Week of Easter, Saturday, Office of Readings).

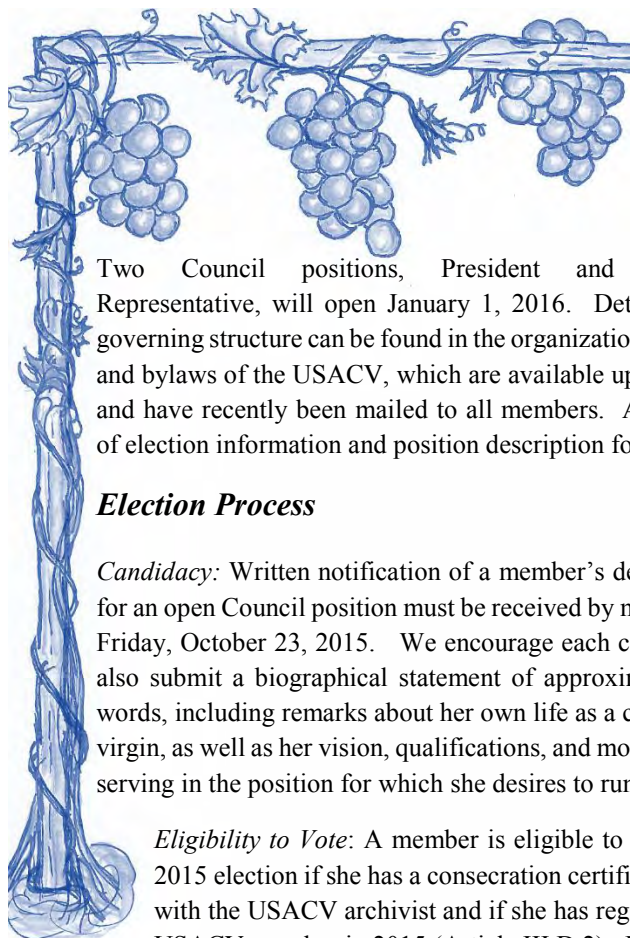
As she fulfills her vocation and mission in this passing world, the consecrated virgin also unites her daily living to the passion and resurrection of her Lord and Spouse. In so doing, she is not bound by the rule of the ancient monasteries of contemplative virgins, nor by the rule of life of modern religious institutes. Such rules of life are necessary to maintain the discipline and order of a common life, but this is not the life of the consecrated virgin. Each virgin determines her own daily arrangement of time in order that she might pray, suffer, and offer praise to her divine Spouse. Her prayer includes joining the liturgical and Eucharistic prayers of the whole Church as well as the personal joy of contemplation of her Spouse.

She begins her day in prayer and continues throughout her day to offer all the activities that come her way. In this way, her actions are the expression of her integral virginal being: that is, they come from a uniting of herself to the sufferings and death of her divine Spouse. In all of her daily duties, she offers praise to the Eternal Father that comes from the intimacy of life in her divine Spouse; with Him she lives in the joy of the resurrection so that her virginal vocation truly becomes an icon of the Church and a witness to the eternal life to come. "But see that your praise comes from your whole being; in other words, see that you praise God not with your lips and voice alone, but with your minds, your lives and all your actions" (Saint Augustine). Living fully her virginal consecration is the way of perfection for a consecrated virgin! "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). The way of perfection is delineated for us and is the stronghold of our vocation: we are to be witnesses of the virginal Church to come.

We do not walk without accompaniment in this way of perfection. The diocesan Bishop takes a particular concern for consecrated virgins in his diocese, and if possible, each virgin has an annual spiritual conversation with her spiritual father. Sometimes the Bishop may ask the virgin to also be in contact with his delegate for consecrated life – not in order to replace the visit he has with the virgin, but to supplement it. One aspect of her distinct call as an ecclesial woman is that the consecrated virgin shares with her Bishop, and his delegate, from the perspective of her distinct role as a virginal spouse of Jesus living in this particular local Church. Her role is distinct and profound, for her virginal vocation witnesses to the meaning of the Church as the bride of Christ, illuminating the Bishop's triple role as representative of Christ in the local Church. In his function of sanctification, the virgin's life mystically expresses a witness to the eschatological Church to come; in his function of teaching, the virgin embraces an ongoing process of formation towards spousal union with Jesus Christ; and in the expression of his governing authority, the virgin embraces the totality of the revelation of Jesus Christ as she responds faithfully to the authority He passed on to the Apostles and their successors in the Church.

The way of perfection for the consecrated virgin is a way of living testimony to the passion and resurrection of her Divine Spouse; it is a witness to the eternal life to come. If we do not cease to live our virginal vocation in witness to the eternal life to come, and if we do not cease to serve and to praise our Eternal Father with the integrity of our virginal beings, He will lead us deeply into the joy of His passion and resurrection: "Behold I make all things new!" Let us praise Him without ceasing, and turn again to the words of Saint Augustine: "You cease to praise God only when you swerve from justice and from what is pleasing to God. If you never turn aside from the good life, your tongue may be silent but your actions will cry aloud, and God will perceive your intentions; for as our ears hear each other's voice, so do God's ears hear our thoughts."





Two Council positions, President and At-Large Representative, will open January 1, 2016. Details of our governing structure can be found in the organizational statutes and bylaws of the USACV, which are available upon request and have recently been mailed to all members. A summary of election information and position description follows.

### ***Election Process***

**Candidacy:** Written notification of a member's desire to run for an open Council position must be received by midnight on Friday, October 23, 2015. We encourage each candidate to also submit a biographical statement of approximately 500 words, including remarks about her own life as a consecrated virgin, as well as her vision, qualifications, and motivation for serving in the position for which she desires to run.

**Eligibility to Vote:** A member is eligible to vote in the 2015 election if she has a consecration certificate on file with the USACV archivist and if she has registered as a USACV member in 2015 (Article III D 2). Ballots will be mailed in early November to those listed as registered members on October 31.

**Voting Process:** Ballots (and candidate biographies) will be mailed to all USACV members in early November 2015. Ballots will be due back to our Elections Team leader by Friday, December 4, 2016. Further details of the election process will be announced in the September issue of *The Lamp*.

**Election Results:** The position of President must be elected by a simple majority (over 50% of voting members). The At-Large Representative Council member seat will be won by the candidate receiving the most votes of the voting members. (Article VI F). "Voting members" refers to the number of valid ballots that are returned, not of total membership (see Article XI).

### ***Position Terms, Descriptions and Responsibilities***

#### **President**

Term: January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018.

Eligibility to run for office (Article III Section D3): Open to any current voting member who has been a voting member for the two previous years and has the necessary qualifications to carry out the responsibilities of President.

#### Duties (Article V Section B):

1. To convene and coordinate the meetings and activities of the Council.
2. To assure that members are kept advised of ongoing discussions and decisions of the Council.
3. To appoint ad hoc committees between annual meetings (Article VII, Section B). To assure the appointment and approval of standing and ad hoc committee members by the Council (Article VII, Section C).
4. To serve as liaison and act in the name of the Association with ecclesial and secular bodies, seeking consultation from Council and Association members whenever possible.
5. To be responsible for the editorial content of publications and other resource materials of the Association.
6. To communicate with and represent the Association to various ecclesiastical persons, institutions, and offices.
7. To be in regular communication with the Episcopal Moderator concerning the affairs of the Association, and to assist him with the preparation of his annual report to the USCCB regarding the status and activity of the USACV.

#### **At Large Representative**

Term: January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018

Eligibility to run for office (Article III Section D3): Open to any current voting member who has been a member or actively involved in the Association for the two previous years.

#### Duties (Article V Section A):

1. To collaborate with other Council members in the governance of the USACV in accord with the provisions of the organizational statutes, with particular focus on the ecclesial objectives (Article II) of the Association.
2. To make every effort to attend the annual membership meeting and the annual Council meeting held with the Episcopal Moderator. To participate in other Council meetings or discussions as needed.
3. If serving as the Council representative on a standing committee, to facilitate ongoing communication between the Council and the committee.
4. If elected as an At-Large Representative, to make every effort to accept an appointment as Vice President (Article V Section C) or Secretary (Article V, Section D), recognizing that some responsibilities of the offices may be delegated to others (Article IV, Section A).

#### **Vice President (appointed position)**

#### Duties (Article V Section C):

1. To serve as a member of the Council.
2. To assume the responsibilities of the President in her absence.
3. To collaborate with and assist the President.
4. To be responsible for maintaining an accurate and complete Association membership and mailing list, including maintenance of the records of dues-paying members.



## Secretary (appointed position)

1. To serve as a member of the Council.
2. To be responsible for the minutes of the Council and national membership meetings.
3. To be responsible for mailings to Association members as needed.
4. To be responsible for distribution of publications and resources for the Association as necessary.

## Other Notes (all positions)

Council members rely heavily on email to facilitate communication, since we are geographically in all parts of the United States.

The Association's budget currently covers accommodations and meals for Council members during the annual Council meeting with our Episcopal Moderator, but not travel expenses. Within budgetary constraints, some portion of travel expenses incurred by the President for attendance at meetings on behalf of the Association have been reimbursed by the Association.

**We invite potential candidates to discuss details of position duties with our current president, vice-president, and council members.**

### Current Council Members and Officers

Judith M. Stegman, President, 2013-2015; Diocese of Lansing.

Magalis Aguilera, Member-at-large, 2013-2015 (Appointed Vice-President through 2015); Archdiocese of Miami.

Margaret Flipp, Treasurer, 2014-2016, Archdiocese of San Francisco.

Mary Kay Lacke, Member-at-large, 2014-2016 (appointed Secretary through 2015) Diocese of Steubenville.

Marie Beccaloni, Member-at-large, 2015-2017, Archdiocese of Chicago.



### Announcements and Council News:

#### Upcoming Issues of "The Lamp"

September 8, 2015 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

December 12, 2015 Our Lady of Guadalupe

February 2, 2016 Feast of the Presentation and World Day of Consecrated Life

May 29, 2016 Feast of Corpus Christi

#### Consecrated Virgins "Family" Scrapbook – Vickie Hamilton

The first version of the scrapbook is finished with the exception of one page. It will be ready for the convocation this year. Any of the newly consecrated should feel free to send materials – programs, photos, holy cards, invitations, etc. I can easily add pages. Thanks to everyone who provided materials. I hope you are happy with the scrapbook. I am currently working on a second album that will have photos of the convocations over the years.

#### Formation Resource Development Team – Mary Kay Lacke


The second volume of the ORDO VIRGINUM series, on Discernment and Formation for the Vocation of Consecrated Virginity Lived in the World, is well on its way to being completed. At this time, we plan to have it in the hands of the publisher, Faith Catholic, by mid-summer, for a late fall 2015 or December 2015 publication date. We are most grateful to those who are writing, editing, and contributing formation experience and materials as resources for the writing process. The volume promises to be a spiritual and practical guide for bishops and virgins discerning and preparing for the vocation of consecrated virginity. Please continue to pray for this important work.

#### USACV Website – Elizabeth Lam

Elizabeth Lam reminds everyone that we are always happy to consider ideas to improve the USACV website. Please pass on links to news articles about the vocation and let us know if you want to lend a helping hand in keeping the site current. It is a volunteer activity and we are always in need of this assistance.

### Upcoming Events

2015 National Convocation of United States Consecrated Virgins  
August 12-16, 2015  
Mundelein Retreat and Conference Center  
Archdiocese of Chicago  
See article on page 8

 2015 National Information Conference the Vocation of Consecrated Virginity  
August 4-7, 2015  
St. Francis Retreat Center  
De Witt, Michigan  
Diocese of Lansing  
See article on page 5

Congregation for Consecrated Life Symposium, Rome, January 27-31  
See article on page 10



## From the President's Journal

By **Judith Stegman**

This issue of *The Lamp* touches upon many aspects of the lives of consecrated virgins at this juncture in history: Bishop Boyea begins by reminding us of the central focus of our lives as virgins – we live in union with the Heart of Christ, our Divine Spouse. Anniversary reflections, tributes to his Eminence Francis Cardinal George, and other reflections by virgins reveal the ways in which we pursue this union with the Heart of Jesus in our daily lives.

We enter into the summer months, months that are typically full for the USACV, with the August conferences – both the Information Conference and the Convocation for consecrated virgins. You'll also see announcements of five upcoming consecrations over the next several months: most of the women being consecrated have attended a previous Information Conference and are grateful for the solid foundation for the vocation that has been presented to them.

In recent weeks we have had what seems to be a surge in requests for information from dioceses and women about the Information Conference and resources on the vocation of consecrated virginity lived in the world. It is with the hope of better serving the diocesan bishops who have responsibility for this vocation that we strive to provide resources in line with the unchanging Tradition of the Church. My time is joyfully occupied these days with the writing of parts of our new text on discernment and formation for the vocation of consecrated virginity.

His Eminence Francis Cardinal George had a heartfelt love for the vocation of consecrated virginity lived in the world. His understanding of consecrated virginity as an ecclesial vocation was profound and has impacted the development of the vocation in the United States in a quiet but nonetheless significant way, perhaps especially in the lives and witness of the Chicago virgins who were consecrated under his watch. *Requiescat in pace!*

## Upcoming Consecrations

May 31, 2015, **Sheila Ryan**, 8 a.m., Saint Richard Church in Gibsonia, PA, Diocese of Pittsburgh, at the hands of the Most Reverend David A. Zubik. Contact Sheila at foxhillryan@gmail.com.

June 20, 2015, **Cara Buskmiller**, 5 p.m., Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Diocese of Dallas, at the hands of the Most Reverend Doug Deshotel, Auxiliary Bishop of Dallas. Contact Cara at cbuskmiller@gmail.com.

June 20, 2015, **Minette Sternke**, 1:30 p.m., Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Diocese of Peoria, at the hands of the Most Reverend Daniel R. Jenky. Reception to follow. Contact Minette at mksternke@gmail.com.

August 8, 2015, **Sophia Winiarski**, 11 a. m., St. Joseph Church in Bristol, CT, Archdiocese of Hartford, at the hands of the Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair. Contact Sophia at winijoy1@comcast.net.

August 15, 2015, **Jessica Hayes**, 10 a. m., Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Diocese of Ft. Wayne, at the hands of the Most Reverend Kevin C. Rhoades. Contact Jessica at hayesjessica@hotmail.com.

## Information Conference Announcement

By **Mary Kay Lacke**, *Formation Resource Development Team Leader*

The National Information Conference on the Vocation of Consecrated Virginity Lived in the World returns to DeWitt, MI., for 2015, after a very blessed 2014 Information Conference in Malvern, PA. The Conference will be held from Tuesday, August 4 to Friday, August 7 at the Bethany House of St. Francis Conference and Retreat Center. The Conference team is looking forward to serving those who attend the Conference.

In recent weeks, there have been numerous inquiries about the vocation of consecrated virginity lived in the world: women of all ages have been asking about the vocation. With every inquiry, we have been encouraging attendance at the Information Conference since it is a valuable tool in the discernment and formation process.

The deadline for registration and payment is July 5, 2015. Please encourage attendance by anyone you think would benefit from the Conference. Please make note that the cost per person for attendance at the entire Conference and residence at Bethany House is **\$295.00**. This includes the registration fee and room and board. Those persons interested in attending the conference can visit [www.consecratedvirgins.org](http://www.consecratedvirgins.org) for information and registration forms. A flyer advertising the Conference and a registration form are provided with this issue of *The Lamp*.

For questions concerning the Conference, please contact the Conference Coordinator, Theresa Marshall, Tel. 734-332-4648; email: marshallcv@gmail.com.



Consecrated virgins celebrating significant anniversaries are invited to offer a reflection on their years of living as a consecrated virgin. We are pleased to offer a few stories in this issue of *The Lamp*, and will offer more in future issues.

### 30 Years Consecrated

**Mary Irving, Diocese of Palm Beach, consecrated June 22, 1985**

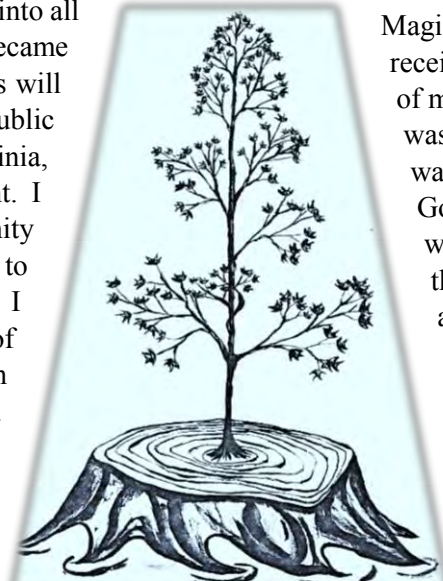
June 22, 1985 – the date of my consecration! It was the culmination of many years of searching. In God’s loving Providence, I was privileged to have a good Catholic elementary school education taught by Dominican Sisters. However, I did not want to be one of them. When I was about twelve, I told God I would be anything He wanted me to be but to please not let me be a nun. Later, in high school (a Catholic diocesan school taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph), I read Thomas Merton’s *Seven Storey Mountain*. That was the beginning of my quest. I wanted to be a nun! In hindsight, I realize that was a yearning to belong totally to God. The usual way for a girl to give herself to God in one’s teen years is to be a nun. I won’t go into all the trials that followed. But it soon became evident that convent life was NOT God’s will for me! I became a teacher. I taught in public and Catholic schools in New York, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Vermont. I taught grades one through community college. Nearly always there was that urge to give myself totally to God. But how? I wanted to take the traditional vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. I again checked out religious communities and secular institutes but for one reason or another, either I was uncomfortable with them or I was refused. (One community refused me because I said I would not follow the leadership if they chose to work for the ordination of women.)

In the meantime, I found myself having to defend the Catholic faith both from well-meaning priests and from Catholic school religion department heads who had “bought into” misinterpretations of Vatican II as expressed in the new religion textbooks. This was very difficult for me as I was always a rather diffident person who didn’t like to “make waves.” Like St. Paul it was only by the grace of God that with “fear and trepidation” I did so. I had to research genuine Catholic teaching the old-fashioned way.

(There was no internet.) I acquired Thomas Aquinas’ three volume *Summa Theologica*, Fr. John Hardon’s *The Catholic Catechism*, a book of papal encyclicals and many other books containing orthodox Catholic teaching.

And always there was the urge to belong totally to Jesus. Looking back, I realize I DID belong to Him! My efforts to defend the truth was a response of love – unfelt, but real. Then I heard about the Consecration of Virgins! I was then in my fifties. I requested the privilege of being consecrated from Bishop Anthony Mestice, an auxiliary bishop of New York City. He asked me why I wanted to be consecrated – why not just take private vows. I replied that acceptance by the Church was acceptance by Christ. He answered, “That’s good enough for me.”

And so I was consecrated on the Feast of St. Thomas More – the great martyr who said, “I die a faithful subject of the king but God’s first! (I had also taken a private vow of Poverty, simple lifestyle and detachment, and Obedience to the Holy Father, the Magisterium and God’s Will in my life). After receiving Jesus in Holy Communion at the Mass of my Consecration, I knew for certain that this was what He wanted me to do. The joy I felt was beyond description. I continue the work God gives me to do of defending the faith with the help of His grace. But more than that, each moment of my life is lived for Him and with Him. For I am His – totally His – and He is mine!



***A vocation, firmly rooted, will grow again, if it is cut down.***

### 25 Years Consecrated

**Aliceanne Sawyer, Diocese of Trenton, consecrated May 31, 1990**

*Eternal Father, you inspired the Virgin Mary, mother of your Son, to visit Elizabeth and assist her in her need. Keep us open to the working of your Spirit, and with Mary may we praise you forever. (Prayer of the Feast of the Visitation)*

I am delighted to be able to share this May 31 anniversary date with Sheila Ryan (being consecrated today) and Sharon Borgert (2012). Mary said “yes” with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that is how I try to live, although my stroke has caused me to slow down more every



day. I would like to share with you Msgr. Follo's meditation for Pentecost. (If you would like to read more of his meditations, let me know.)

*For the consecrated virgins to be witnesses of Christ it is essential that these women testify that virginity is the height of love. Their response to Christ through a life so passionately and totally offered, existentially testifies that in the full and undivided adherence to the predilection of Jesus we learn to love everything else and become like windows open on the eternal. The consecrated virgin testifies that it is possible to love Christ as the only reason and the only chance of fullness in existence. Virginity transforms the lives of those who choose it and the lives of others, so that the world is more human, namely Christian. Msgr. Follo*

My vocation story began in fourth grade with the visible dedication of the School Sisters of Saint Francis, followed by another order of Sisters teaching me in high school. The only thing that moved me throughout my teenage years was a desire to serve in my parish Church and to enter the convent. Although my health was not good, I was accepted and entered the SSSF.

My health did not improve, and while in the convent I was excused from heavy-duty work. After eight years, I felt I could no longer keep trying to make it work, and I left, thinking that I could better serve the Church as a lay person. It was a difficult time as I kept feeling that I had divorced Christ. I returned to finish college studies, but was still empty. After some years, I picked up an issue of *The Catholic Digest* and shouted with joy as I read an article about consecrated virgins living in the world. I called my Spiritual Director and met with him fifteen minutes later. But he and everyone else I approached knew nothing about this vocation. The USACV wasn't yet formed.

Some months later I came in contact with the Rule of St. Benedict and was attracted to the Oblate spirituality. As Providence would have it, soon after, the Delegate for Religious in our diocese was contacted by another woman about the vocation of consecrated virginity. I began making steps towards consecration, which included participating in the diocesan program *Christian Foundations in Ministry*.

Everything came together to prepare me for my Nuptials: my days in the religious community taught me about spiritual direction, meditation, and how to live with 90 very different women who shared a love for Christ. I was assured that there was not a conflict between being a Benedictine Oblate and a consecrated virgin, so I made my

oblation, and have found the support and spirituality to be most supportive and enriching. The diocesan training programs were also super during those days of Vatican II.



When Archbishop McCarrick asked what day I wanted for my consecration, I said loudly and clearly, "the Feast of the Visitation, even if I have to wait for a year." That mystery of the rosary had always indicated to me how Mary lived in the world, and how I needed to do so: by reaching out and serving Christ in others in the world. Over the years since consecration I have served as the Rosary Society president, and on many other parish and Church committees.

The activity has stemmed from my meditation on our love for Christ. Love for Christ must be first! Under His direction, we learn to share our lives as one act of love. Our souls must magnify our love, Jesus.

### *10 Years Consecrated*

***Betsy Lillis, Archdiocese of Denver, consecrated October 18, 2005.***

### ***Living the Consecrated Life Ten Years and Onward***

The day of my consecration was very happy and blest,  
I have tried to live my life as God wills.  
He has given me joy and then again put me to the test,  
New friends, new perspectives, and ills.

Yes, there were times of spiritual drought,  
Jesus, where are You – I cried.  
I would put my praying aside – then came the doubt,  
Then I would surrender all and feel Him at my side.

God does not promise an easy way,  
But He does promise to be faithful.  
His marvelous love is a gift each day,  
That I can give away to the doubtful.

Mary, please continue to help me,  
Your advice, "Do whatever He tells you."  
A good and faithful servant is what I want to be,  
For it will honor the Father, Your Son, and the Holy Spirit too!

Even though I think, I chose Him,  
It really was He who chose me.  
And when my eyes grow dark and dim,  
I pray He says, "Come, daughter, rest and repose."

The poem written above puts my life after consecration in a very short form. Let me expand on it in the text below.

I have felt very blest to be the spouse of Jesus. He has walked with me during my fight with cancer, which we won. I would offer up my pain and suffering to Him in reparation for my sins and those of the whole world. He would hear me, and my pain would ease. But He has chosen, at times, to hide from me. That's okay as it allows me to seek Him and find Him. What a beautiful blessing!

Looking back at the last ten years, I find God has been there at every moment in my life. And, by faith I know He is always here now. How, you might ask – well every day I try to find Him in people I meet, thanking Him for His creation of nature when I walk, feeling raindrops on my face and then seeing that rainbow of His promise to us. Hearing Him speak through a friend and then finding employment because of it. Talking with elders about their past and present, allowing myself to care. Feeling the loneliness for my family who lived far away then following His call to move to be with them.

Mary, what a wonderful Mother; each night I ask to sleep beneath her mantle and she graciously permits it and I sleep peacefully.

Here I am in the now, looking forward to the next ten years and beyond.



### *Reflection: The Cross as Signpost*

***Fran Powers, consecrated virgin, Archdiocese of New York***

The cross is seen everywhere: in lines of branches stacked, in flower petals displaying intersecting veins, in crisscrossed boughs dripping with soaking rain or morning dew. It is ubiquitous in natural forms. I have found the cross in cemeteries, in the alphabetic letter "t" crossed to form

words, in signposts and sturdily constructed road signs.

We are formed  
in the Cross of  
Christ; we are  
strengthened by  
the love of



Christ dying on the Cross for us, and we strengthen others by pointing to the truth and making peace as witnesses for Christ. Our lives as consecrated virgins, well lived, point others to Christ, much as a signpost keeps drivers on the right course. Through us as God's signposts, Christ speaks to the world.

### *Life Corner – Florence Sundberg*

When I heard that Congress was debating a bill called "The pain-capable unborn child protection act" I wondered how we have come to this --- to where we have to ascertain the opportune moment to terminate the life of a human baby in the womb of the mother. Another discussion in Congress concerned the care of the poor and disenfranchised. It is good to find ways to help the poor but I

recently heard a phrase: "You can't get any poorer than dead!" All the good programs in the world will not help the dead; will certainly not help a baby not allowed to be born. This is not to say that we should only focus on protecting the baby in the womb. There are those who criticized Mother Teresa of Calcutta because she only helped the dying but did not provide further for them once they got well and strong. She explained that God gave her that particular mission and He gave the follow-up mission to another and she could not do it all. Many create programs for the poor, more than those who are involved in protecting the life of the baby in the womb, and his mother. But the valiant men, women and children who stand in defense of life will be heard, are being heard. The cry, "Stop the killing!" grows stronger and louder as hearts awaken to the knowledge that we have lost generations of human beings since Roe vs. Wade. As we look around at a world that is falling to pieces, violence erupting throughout our planet, disease and death stalking our streets, we must remember that when God sends a new life, created in His image, that life is accompanied by a blessing and a gift for all mankind. And millions and millions of these blessings and gifts have been returned to God, broken and unwanted. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And Father, forgive those of us who do know what is being done, and instead of speaking out, remain silent.





## 2015 Convocation Announcement

Please join the United States consecrated virgins for our annual convocation to be held **August 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>** at the St. Mary of the Lake Conference Center in Mundelein, Illinois. In response to the suggestions from many virgins, this year we will explore the theme of *The Beauty of Following Christ: Celebrating the Distinct Vocation of Consecrated Virginity During the Year of Consecrated Life*. All consecrated virgins, including those from other countries, are warmly invited to attend. Those virgins who have attended an Information Conference and been accepted by their Bishops as candidates for the consecration are also invited to attend.



Our days together will include formal presentations by Bishop Boyea and consecrated virgins as we explore our selected theme. In addition to these talks, we will have panel discussions to allow those attending to share their personal experiences with other consecrated virgins. At the heart of our days together are specific times set aside for prayer, including Lauds, Holy Mass, Vespers, and Compline. In addition, the schedule includes time for Eucharistic Adoration and Confession. To round out the day, our evenings will serve as a time of fellowship as we engage in enjoyable recreational activities.



The 2015 convocation will also include a visit to Marytown – the National Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe. The Shrine is a ministry run by the Conventual Franciscans Friars of St. Bonaventure Province. At the center of Marytown is the Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, which has 24 hour Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.



During the convocation, virgins will also enjoy the serenity of the St. Mary of the Lake campus. Removed from the business of everyday life, the campus covers a span of 930 acres. The grounds contain many walking paths through beautiful wooded areas and around the tranquil waters of the lake.

Once again, we encourage all consecrated virgins and candidates who have attended an Information Conference to join us for this wonderful time of reflection, prayer, and fellowship at the 2015 convocation. We hope to see you all in August!

Registration forms for the 2015 convocation are available on the USACV website and are being sent with this newsletter to all consecrated virgins. The deadline for registration is July 12, 2015; payments are due by July 31, 2015. We look forward to seeing one another in August! We received wonderful news regarding a speaker for our 2015 Convocation: Father Michael Fuller, author of *THE VIRGIN MARTYRS: A Hagiographical and Mystagogical Interpretation*, has agreed to give a talk on the Virgin Martyrs in keeping with our theme for the Convocation on Friday, August 14, at 10:00 AM.

## ***Tributes to His Eminence Francis Eugene Cardinal George, Jan 16, 1937 to April 17, 2015***

*"We only take with us what we have given away." Cardinal George*

Cardinal George, O.M.I., the eighth Archbishop of Chicago, was deeply loved and respected for his leadership in the Roman Catholic Church. Perhaps not as well-known was his tremendous esteem for the vocation of consecrated virginity lived in the world. The Cardinal understood the vocation of consecrated virginity as an extension of himself within the diocesan Church: the virgins were to be those who showed forth the love of the Church for her Bridegroom, even as the priests would show the love of the Bridegroom for the Church. His Eminence welcomed and encouraged the vocation in the Archdiocese of Chicago, and consecrated many women during his tenure. We invited consecrated virgins to write tributes to His Eminence for this issue or the September issue of *The Lamp*.

### ***Francesca Riddick, consecrated at the hands of His Eminence Francis Cardinal George December 1, 2002***

I will be forever grateful to Cardinal George for the gift of my vocation. He was the first Bishop in Chicago to understand and welcome vocations to consecrated virginity in the Archdiocese and I became the first recipient of this extraordinary grace. I have fond memories of the few personal encounters I had with him and his warm and sincere interest in every aspect of my life. When we met, we would always converse a bit in French since he knew of the time I spent in France and seemed to enjoy conversing in that language. He always seemed sincerely interested in all that I brought to his attention and I felt secure in his paternal care for me. I don't think anyone else would be able to replace the unique role he played in my life. I do feel though that his care now extends to me from above and I know that I have a sure intercessor in heaven. May he rest in peace and continue to guide and shepherd us all on our journey to the heavenly Jerusalem.

### ***Diane Zervos, consecrated at the hands of His Eminence Francis Cardinal George June 28, 2008***

I was blessed to go to Cardinal George's wake, Mass of Christian Burial, and procession to the cemetery, All Saints, in Des Plaines, Illinois. It covered two days of sadness and joy, sadness knowing we'd lost not only a brilliant man, and one of the greatest intellects of our time, but a true shepherd as well. After the wake on Wednesday evening, I left with a sense of quiet joy, as it seemed I had caught a glimpse of the glory of the Church. I saw people from all walks and states of life come to pay their final

respects to our beloved Cardinal at Holy Name Cathedral. I ran into people I hadn't seen in twenty years or so, and the consecrated virgins were also there. The lines of people

just kept coming and coming; I had never seen anything like this in my entire life. Children laid their roses by his casket. We prayed the Rosary, the Litany of Loretto, and sang to the Mother of God.

On Thursday, as the funeral Mass ended, the same hymn was sung as had been the Entrance hymn during my consecration Mass: *O God, Beyond All Praising*. After this, we all sang the *Salve Regina* as our final farewell. It was truly glorious! I decided to board one of the buses that was going to the

cemetery, rather than drive my own car, and it turned out to be the best decision. The funeral procession went through the neighborhoods where Cardinal George had once lived, in Portage Park, and we passed St. Pascal's, the parish where he grew up. Throngs of men, women and children waved, and we waved back. All the streets were lined with the people he loved, and with policemen and firemen saluting. Workers held their hard hats against their chests. One elderly woman was on her knees on her front lawn. I prayed my Divine Mercy chaplet as we made our way to the cemetery. I will never forget the experience.

In the homily, Archbishop Sartain quoted Cardinal George: "We only take with us what we have given away." Dear Cardinal George, I pray it may all be returned to you, a hundred fold! Yes, I lost the shepherd who bestowed on me the amazing grace of consecration as a virgin living in the world, but as Archbishop Peter Sartain said in his homily, "We will greet him again one day." Let us carry on. We are his legacy. Continued on Page 12



***Sara Navarro, consecrated at the hands of His Eminence Francis Cardinal George, July 20, 2009 Thank you to Catholic New World and to photographer, Karen Callaway.***



# Rome 2016 Close of the Year of Consecrated Life

The Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) has announced the following schedule of events:

ROME, JANUARY 27 -31, 2016: INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM: *FOLLOWING THE GOSPEL: A PERMANENT FORM OF LIFE IN THE CHURCH, MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE, PROCESSES ALREADY IN PLACE.*

- Jan. 27 to Jan. 31, 2016 for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.
- Jan. 28 to Jan. 31 for Monastic Life.
- Jan. 29 to Jan. 31 for Secular Institutes.
- Jan. 29 to Jan. 31 for *Ordo Virginum*.

## EVENTS TO BE CELEBRATED IN COMMON:

- Jan. 30, 2016, 8:00 pm, Prayer Vigil in St. Peter's Basilica "Prophecy, Holiness and Martyrdom in the Human City."
- February 1, 2016: Audience with the Holy Father.
- February 2, 2016: Closing Eucharist of the Year of Consecrated Life.



*\*THE FOLLOWING IS NOT PART OF CICLSAL, RATHER ACCOMMODATIONS OPTIONS THROUGH THE USACV*  
**OPPORTUNITY FOR HOUSING IN ROME WITH CONSECRATED VIRGINS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD:**

- An international group of consecrated virgins has reserved a block of rooms at a religious house very close to St. Peter's Basilica, for six nights, from *Thursday, January 28 to Wednesday, February 3, 2016*. Single and double rooms are available. The number of rooms is limited, and priority will be given to those who sign up first.
- For details about location and cost of the housing, and in order to reserve a single or double room, please contact **Nicole Bettini**, at [nbettini78@gmail.com](mailto:nbettini78@gmail.com).

## NOTES ABOUT THIS HOUSING/GATHERING OPPORTUNITY IN ROME:

- Housing includes breakfast each day. We hope to also arrange a fixed-price option for one meal (lunch or dinner) at a restaurant near the residence.
- This housing/gathering opportunity for consecrated virgins is *not* a full pilgrimage to Rome. Virgins are responsible for arranging their own travel to and from Rome.
- As the year progresses and we learn more details from CICLSAL, we hope to also arrange visits to churches of interest to consecrated virgins (perhaps Saint Agnes in Agone and Saint Agatha dei Goti or Saint Mary Major); one festive meal together; and daily morning prayer by language group in the chapel of the residence.
- Updates will be posted in *Monday Morning Mail* and *The Lamp* during 2015. Please be sure to contact Nicole if you have an interest in housing.



***Ginnie Meyer, consecrated December 29, 2012, Archdiocese of Chicago***

I was very fortunate to meet with Cardinal George on numerous occasions. The first time that I met him was at an appointment that I had for acceptance as a consecrated virgin living in the world. Cardinal George had been at an all-day meeting before meeting with me. He was very late, for he was constantly being stopped by others as he made his way to the meeting room. I noticed that Cardinal George always took time to greet and to help others, and he always gave each person his full attention. I continued to see the Cardinal on various news programs; he was always kind, cheerful and forthright in his speech. He did a remarkable job keeping the rumors and facts straight among the press.

At my second meeting at his home, I saw a different Cardinal George. Being sick with cancer and in the comfort of his home, he was no longer in a business mode. He and I had a very good talk. I was excited that I was finally accepted to become consecrated but disappointed that his health would not permit him to perform my Ceremony.

A few weeks after my consecration ceremony, the Chicago consecrated virgins were invited to Cardinal George's home for tea. He was interested in what we had been doing for the Church and what our plans would be for the future. He was fun and loving and really made us feel that we are truly an important part of the Church.

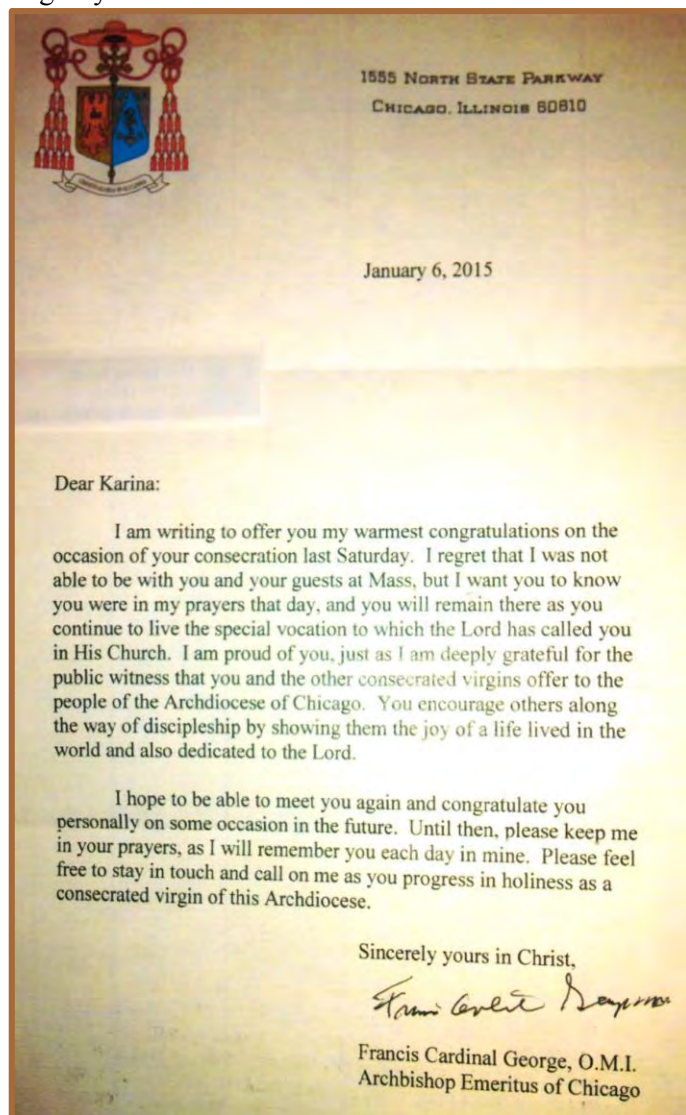
His death was such a great loss to me. I had so wanted to spend more time getting to know him. I did not have the necessary ticket to attend his funeral, and when I went to visiting hours at the Cathedral on Tuesday, after kneeling at the side of his casket, I went back to pray. *Please, God, if it is your will, could you find me a ticket so that I might attend the funeral of your servant, Cardinal George?* The next morning after Mass, the celebrant announced that he had extra tickets for the funeral. It was a beautiful and memorable experience. I will forever treasure the time I was able to have with Cardinal George.

***Karina Reyes, consecrated January 3, 2015, Archdiocese of Chicago***

Who was Francis Cardinal George? I was not as lucky as the other Chicago virgins who knew him a bit more. But what I can say about him is that he was a man with great love and respect for our Lord. The day of my interview with him is memorable. I was expecting him to question me about consecrated virginity or to quiz me about

who our first consecrated virgins were, and so on. He did not. The first thing he said to me was "thank you for hearing God's call and accepting it." Then he asked if we could pray, which we did. We spoke about his cancer and about how God gives us only what we can handle. Even though he was in pain that day, we spoke for about 40 minutes. He even joked a little about how much our Lord loved him.

One of the things that he said to me was "Karina, when you become consecrated, ask yourself what you can do, not for your community, but for the whole Archdiocese of Chicago, so that the vocation of consecration is known. Francis Cardinal George wanted the vocation of consecrated virginity to be known and to flourish. When our meeting ended, he told me to call his secretary if I needed anything. His Eminence made time for the virgins and supported them. A week after my consecration I received a personal letter (see image) from him that I will always treasure. May our Lord have him by his side. Thank you Francis Cardinal George for supporting the vocation of virginity.





*Rest in Peace, Cardinal George*

## *Praying with the Song of Songs*

**By Diane Christine Farr**

It can be said that during Jesus' passion and death, the Blessed Virgin Mary experienced the greatest sorrow due to the profound love for and knowledge she had of her Divine Son. Considering this, we may say also that she experienced the greatest joy at the Resurrection. As consecrated virgins, we look to her for guidance, for she wishes to share her sorrow and her joy with us. As brides of Christ pondering the mystical sense of the Song of Songs, we seek to come to a more perfect love and knowledge of our heavenly Bridegroom.

In the opening verses of the Song of Songs we read:

*O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine, your anointing oils are fragrant, your name is oil poured out; therefore the maidens love you. Draw me after you, let us make haste.* (Song 1:2-4a, Revised Standard Version)

How tender is that invitation when the virgin first hears the call of the Bridegroom, inviting her to the nuptials of infinite love! We know it is the primacy of God's grace working in us that enables us to recognize and respond to this call. The holy name of Jesus is the sweet fragrance of sublime purity that attracts us and enflames our desire. When Jesus draws us to Himself and we realize that we have a treasure of infinite value, it is our joy to see other virgins resolved to follow the divine Lamb. We rejoice that many holy virgins have gone before us interceding for our needs.

*I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valley.* (Song 2:1a)

Christ is this noble flower of exquisite beauty, radiating its splendor in the garden of our heart. In profound humility the bride of Christ contemplates the glory of His divinity and the majestic beauty of His sacred humanity as He leads her to a deeper knowledge of Himself. She must acquire His own sentiments. Her union with her most sweet Jesus reaches its highest peak when she embraces Him in Holy Communion.



*As an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste; He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.* (Song 3:3-4)

Through the grace of our consecration we have been united to the most perfect Bridegroom who has obtained the fruit of our vocation for us on the tree of the cross. With gratitude we sit under the shadow of His presence, allowing His gaze to reveal to us our imperfections and bestow the healing touch of His mercy. He desires that all aspects of our lives be in harmony with the Divine Will.

*O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely.* (Song 2:14)



The Church has traditionally seen this verse as referring to the Sacred Heart of Jesus pierced by a lance on the cross. The bride must make her permanent abode in this Heart, drawing from this treasury all her strength, as well as graces for herself and others. Jesus delights in the continual Song of love and praise He receives from His bride and He can work more fruitfully in her soul when she raises her heart to Him in undivided attention.

*I will seek him whom my soul loves. I sought him, but found him not.* (Song 3:2b)

Sometimes God plays hide and seek with the loving soul in order to strengthen her resolve to love Him for Himself alone, and not just for His gifts.

*Scarcely had I passed them when I found him whom my soul loves. I held him, and would not let him go.* (Song 3:4a)

We must learn to cling to God with absolute trust in all circumstances. With firm faith and fidelity we prefer God and His commandments to all other things.

*A garden locked is my sister, my bride, a garden locked, a fountain sealed.* (Song 4:12)

The catechism states: “Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2521) Every Christian woman is obliged to practice modesty, for it safeguards her dignity. While all Christians come under the authority of Christ, the consecrated virgin is meant to be His secret garden where He alone may walk and take His delight. In this, she imitates the Blessed Virgin Mary, the first garden enclosed. Her seraphic joy comes from the fact that the secret depths of her being are disclosed to Christ alone. Words cannot convey what passes between the divine Bridegroom and His bride.

*A garden fountain, a well of living water, and flowing streams from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind! Blow upon my garden, let its fragrance be wafted abroad.* (Song 4:15-16a)

This well of living water is the life-giving presence of the divine indwelling of the most Holy Trinity. God wishes to fashion for Himself a heaven in our souls by the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit. The fragrance of this work of

divine love is carried on the breath of the Spirit reaching into many hearts.

*My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to pasture his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. He pastures his flock among the lilies.* (Song 6:2-3)



Jesus, the Good Shepherd, pastures His flock among the lilies that he gathers to Himself. These are the virgins of His Heart who must be a light to the whole Church, revealing the love of the Bridegroom. First and foremost, their task is to be humble spouses of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are a sign of resurrected life and the Kingdom of Heaven. The more perfectly the bride gives herself to the beloved, the more completely will she be able to receive the gift of Himself, and to convey it to His flock, the Church.

*Who is that coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?* (Song 8:5a)

Life on this earth can seem like a wilderness with all of its difficulties and challenges. There are so many lessons in patience along the way. It pleases God when with absolute confidence we lean on His strength and His peace. The consecrated virgin unites her suffering to Christ's passion joining herself to His Paschal mystery.

Finally, let us ponder this last selection from the Song of Songs.

*The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle, or a young stag. Behold, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice. My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land."* (Song 2:8-12)

We see that God is eager to come to us – *leaping upon the mountains* – always watching and waiting for our response. We do not yet possess the face-to-face vision and so must perceive Him imperfectly, as it were, behind the wall of our human nature.

Continued on Page 16



## *In Memorium: Julia Theresa Taube – a Spouse of Christ and a Lamp for All*

**Julia Theresa Taube, RIP May 27, 2015**

**Mass of Christian Burial:**

**12 Noon Monday, June 1 at The Church of St. Paul, 1740  
Bunker Lake Blvd. NE, Ham Lake, MN.**

**Interment:**

**10 AM Tuesday at Resurrection Cemetery, Mendota  
Heights, MN.**

**Visitation:**

**4-8 PM Sunday at Mueller-Bies Funeral home-Roseville,  
2130 N. Dale St. at Co. Rd. B**

**11 AM-12 PM Monday at the Church**

**In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred.**



**Julia Theresa Taube**

Julia Taube was consecrated January 18, 2003 in the Archdiocese of Minneapolis-St. Paul. Diagnosed with cancer on May 27, 2014, she fought the good fight for the next year before going home to meet her Divine Spouse. She is survived by her sister Lorraine, and many nieces and nephews. Her obituary notes, "Julia spent most of her life in Pastoral Ministry. She served as Liturgical/Pastoral Care Coordinator at the Church of St. Paul in Ham Lake, before working at Pacem in Terris Retreat Center in Isanti; most recently, she was Pastoral Associate at Mary Mother of God Church in Burnsville."

### **Tributes and Memories from Consecrated Virgins**

**Magalis Aguilera, Archdiocese of Miami writes:**

When I learned that our sister Julia Taube's soul was going to meet our Divine Lord and Spouse, I immediately recalled in my heart a memory of days we shared together during a USACV Retreat-Gathering in 2000 in New Jersey, led by Cathy Leahy. Cathy had arranged for a group of us to visit the National Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Auriesville, New York, thanks

to its close connection with Saint Kateri Tekakwitha.

I shared the same room with Julia and at first it was difficult for me because I had never before shared a room with anyone. But it turned out to be a great experience because I came to know Julia as being so peaceful and gentle. I was so comfortable with her and since that time Julia has remained one of those special consecrated virgins who stays near, even though we have lived in different states. NOW FROM HEAVEN she will be even nearer to us, continuing to serve our vocation as she served it when her mortal presence was in the midst of us!

**Karen Bussey, Diocese of Lansing writes:**

Julia lovingly poured out all her energies and all her years working for the Church and seeking the Lord. She lived this way her whole life before her consecration at age 55, and she continued in it with the grace of the consecration until the end. At an Information Conference, reflecting on the Visitation, she shared with me in emotion and awe that like Elizabeth in her older years, she had at last found her vocation. She finished her victorious race after her tenth anniversary. Julia, your example urges me to keep running full out and strong in love until the end. Thank you, Father, for this holy friend.

**Loretta Matulich, Archdiocese, Portland, Oregon writes:**

Julia was always a most compassionate and understanding person. I experienced this gift of hers several times when we spoke together. May the most compassionate Heart of Jesus be her reward forever.

**Aliceanne Sawyer, Diocese of Trenton writes:**

I was blessed to have met Julia at one convocation. She was dedicated to her Divine Spouse, her ministry, the USACV and she stepped right up to design our *Lamp*. She was truly a Lamp for each one of us and for all she met. She will rest in the arms of our Spouse, our Father, our Mother, and our brother and sister Saints.

**Judith Stegman, Diocese of Lansing writes:**

Julia Taube was consecrated early in 2003. Just before I began my term as president in January 2004, she offered to lend a hand with our USACV newsletter. She designed a "new look" for *The Lamp* in early 2004, and she lovingly and generously prepared every issue through September of 2014. Julie's dedication to our vocation and her desire to serve our Lord Jesus Christ were evident in all that she did, and I will miss her. She runs to meet her Divine Spouse, and I expect that He is also running to meet Julia!



### Reflection on the Visitation by Mary Kay Lacke

Of course the angels accompanied Mary on her journey to Ain Karim – rejoicing with her in the glad news she bore – in the glad news she had just received from the Archangel Gabriel – in the glad news that she herself brought to the whole world! “Yes! Let it be done unto me according to your word! Yes! Let the Word be made flesh in me! Yes! Let the Mighty One bring forth the Savior of all the world through me! Holy is His name!” All heaven rejoiced as they hastened – Mary and the angels – up into the hills! All earth rejoiced as they greeted Elizabeth and baby John – as yet unnamed but already the prophet in his mother’s womb, dancing and leaping in his mother’s womb!

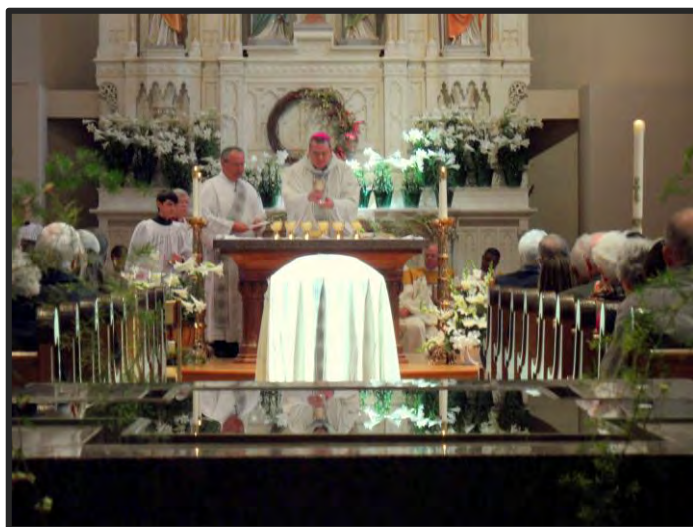
Rejoice, all ye heavens; rejoice all ye earth, because this day the Virgin Mary, spouse of the Holy Spirit, in humble obedience, bears the Savior of the Universe to Ain Karim!

### *Praying with the Song of Songs Continued*

In union with the whole Church, the consecrated virgin listens for the voice of her beloved in silent recollection and prayer, and she sees His glory reflected in the beauty of creation. The fruitfulness of her works of charity depend solely on the depth of her union with her Divine Spouse. She must surrender to the divine action at work in her soul in order that her transformation in Christ may be accomplished. Indeed, it is Christ who acts in the soul. The heart of the bride must reflect the compassionate and gentle Heart of her Bridegroom. If He calls her His “fair one,” it is only because He Himself has adorned her with

the delicate beauty of the grace of holy virginity. She must have unceasing gratitude to God for being permitted to share this mystery with Mary, the Queen of virgins. This is pure gift.

The bride herself is always longing for complete possession of her one love. When the winter of this life is past, with its trials and suffering, she will be attentive to hear the call of her Lord, welcoming her into the joys of His Kingdom, to the glory of everlasting springtime.



*The Catholic funeral liturgy affirms, in stunning words, music and symbols, our firm hope in the resurrection and in life everlasting with God in heaven. Here the baptismal garment becomes the pall draping the coffin.*

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SERVING THE VOCATION OF CONSECRATED VIRGINITY



**USACV**  
www.consecratedvirgins.org

**United States Association  
of Consecrated Virgins**  
300 West Ottawa Street  
Lansing, MI 48933-1577  
USA

**Email:**  
[info@consecratedvirgins.org](mailto:info@consecratedvirgins.org)  
[President@consecratedvirgins.org](mailto:President@consecratedvirgins.org)

**Fax: 253-270-5507**

[www.consecratedvirgins.org](http://www.consecratedvirgins.org)