

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

Why is God doing this? In so many words, a number of people have raised this kind of question. Yet, we do not believe that God causes evils. Rather, we believe that he may, by his permissive will, allow evils. He always does so, however, because he knows good can be drawn from them. That is really the key to understanding the Lord’s death on the Cross. He prayed that the cup may pass. It did not. Instead, the Father drew the glory and the blessing of the Resurrection and our Salvation from that gift of his Son’s death.

Therefore, it becomes our duty to seek to discern what good God seeks to draw from our current situation. One, certainly, is the strengthening of the blessing of the domestic church, the family. Walking in the neighborhood, I have seen many parents, especially dads, out playing with their children. I know there is a lot more communication going on in families than was the case before. If that is infused with wisdom from above, what a blessing it will be.

Another good, is the hungering for the Eucharist, which I know has affected many of you. I pray that this leads us, as we resume participation in Mass, to be even better prepared to receive and then become our Lord as we walk up the Communion line.

There are many more possible goods to be achieved. May we all be challenged to seek out, to discern, what God might have in store particularly for me as I walk through these days and weeks and months.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Earl Boyea, Bishop of Lansing

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Something Ancient, Something New

By Dr. Magalis Aguilera, Psy.D. and
Dr. Judith M. Stegman, JCD

To celebrate their golden anniversary, a Catholic couple gives thanks to the Lord for the blessing of their marriage by going to the Cross of our Divine Lord Jesus Christ during the bloodless sacrifice of the Eucharistic celebration. The consecrated virgin stands before the Cross of her Divine Spouse, always, during the daily Eucharistic celebration and in adoration to honor the love of her Divine Spouse given in her virginal vocation. We stand in celebration of the golden anniversary of the restoration of the rite of consecration for virgins living in the world, and throughout the world every single virgin stands before the Cross of the Spouse giving thanks for His mystical espousal to her.

This anniversary is a joyful time because Mother Church restored to light a precious rite in which the Spouse calls out to his beloved virgins. She hears His voice as in the Song of Songs: “I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night” (Song of Songs 5:2). The voice of the Spouse sounds in order to prepare His Eternal Feast, and Our Most Blessed Mother and Queen, Mary of Nazareth, stands before the Cross of her divine Son. This is the true mystical meaning of our virginal vocation: we stand before the Cross in the Eucharistic presence of the Spouse, to listen to His voice.

The Gospel of Saint John paints a picture of the last moments of our Divine Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross: “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, ‘Dear woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour, the disciple took her into his home” (Jn. 19:26-27). From that day forward, the Church of Our Divine Lord Jesus Christ had a Mother—a Virgin Mother, a Mother who is the Queen of Virgins and who protects with her unique intercession the Spouse of her Son, the Church.

Consecrated virgins in all parts of the world continue to celebrate in their hearts the fifty-year anniversary of the renovation of The Rite of Consecration of Virgins. This rite transforms the virgin into a sacred woman, an icon of the Church witnessing to the eternal wedding feast. “Loving

Father chaste bodies are your temple; you delight in sinless hearts . . . Those who choose chastity have looked upon the face of Christ, its origin and inspiration. They give themselves wholly to Christ, the Son of the ever-Virgin Mary, and the heavenly Bridegroom of those who in his honor dedicate themselves to lasting virginity” (Prayer of consecration in the rite of consecration of virgins, n. 24).

Ever since the time when the side of Jesus Christ was opened on the Cross, the Virgin Mother has witnessed her Son’s spousal covenant with His Church: “But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water” (Jn. 19:30). The blood and water are symbols of His Church which holds the deposit of the sacraments of redemption: baptism with the symbol of water, and blood as the sacrificial offering on the cross, perpetuated in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the altar by Jesus Christ, the Spouse.

His sacrifice on the Cross is the meaning and stronghold of the call to that “new grace” which is poured out upon the virginal woman by the Bishop of the Church during the consecratory prayer. The virgin is called to receive “eternal coins” from Him, as Saint Leandro wrote to his sister Florentina on the day of her consecration: “Your spouse gave to you as “arras” or wedding coins his blood and with his blood he redeemed you, with his blood in such a manner he joined you to himself in a nuptial link so that you might receive the spousal gifts in your integral virginity and keep it intact, not as a married woman who has received the wedding coins but given up her virginity (Saint Leandro, Bishop, in Francisco Vizmanos, *Las virgenes cristianas de la Iglesia primitiva*, 926).

The ancient Church was built up by virgins and martyrs who were called to follow the Lamb of God by dedicating “themselves to lasting virginity,” and defeating the power of the devil with their integral chastity: body, soul, and spirit, and the giving up of their body to martyrdom for love of the Spouse.

As happened with the Gospels, the life of virginity was expressed by the witness of virgins, and their words were quoted by others after their deaths. Time passed from the days of the virgins in the early Church. In the midst of the world’s instability and for protection of the virgins, the virginal vocation became established in monasteries; later

still with the changes in economy brought about by the Industrial Revolution, the virginal vocation was lived not only in monasteries, but also in religious congregations.

The original virginal vocation, lived by women in their own situations outside of communal life, was in a sense put on hold for ten centuries. We did not know the meaning of why there was this long time that the “eternal train or eternal spacecraft” of our rite of consecration was held, without tickets to go onboard. But we have a profound work written by one consecrated virgin and co-author of this column who dedicated several years to becoming prepared as a canon lawyer for His glory in our vocation, and, offering sacrifices in her daily living arrangement, she was illuminated by the Holy Spirit. With her investigations for the doctoral dissertation, she illustrated the treasures of our vocation and rite of consecration. The rite may not have been officially in use for virgins living in the world for many centuries, but the Holy Spirit did not permit the consecration to stop. Following are excerpts from the segment of her work that focuses on 1917 to 1970, the period of time that witnessed the restoration of the ancient *Ordo virginum*:

After WWI: New Requests for Consecration of Women Living in the World

The consecration of virgins living isolated lives in the world probably never fully disappeared. With a growth in the liturgical movement and a revival of patristic studies, an awareness of the inherent good of virginal consecration became more widespread among women living in the world in the early twentieth century. After the end of World War I, women began to express a desire to receive the consecration of virgins while remaining in their own environments and continuing their own apostolates. Requests came to the Sacred Congregation for Religious, especially from women and their bishops in France and Belgium. A plenary assembly of the Sacred Congregation examined the following doubt: ‘Is it advisable to grant the faculty of giving to women living in the world the blessing and consecration of virgins?’ The answer came, ‘In the negative, let no novelties be introduced,’ and was approved by the Holy Father during an audience on March 1, 1927. (Judith M. Stegman, *“Mystically Espoused to*

Christ, the Son of God (c. 604 §1)”: The Basis for Proposing Juridic Principles to Guide the Development of Norms for the Ordo virginum (Washington D.C., 2019; ProQuest Number 22623763, Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC, 2019) 110-111).

Explanations for the 1927 Denial

The reason for the denial is not stated in the decision itself. Soon afterwards, however, the *Commentarium pro Religiosis* published, along with the decision, the text ‘*Annotationes*’ by Philippus Maroto, explaining why the Holy See had judged it inopportune to admit to the consecration women living outside of a monastery. The reasons he gave for the congregation’s 1927 denial stem primarily from concern about three serious effects of consecration: constitution as a ‘sacred person’ in the Church; mystical espousal to Christ; and dedication to the service of the Church. Each of these three juridical effects of consecration in the *Ordo virginum* are later affirmed in canon 604 of the 1983 Code. Why in 1927 were these effects deemed reasons for denial of the consecration to virgins living in the world?

In the first place, Maroto affirmed that the bishop’s consecration of a virgin, since the earliest days of the Church, had placed her in a new sacred state in the Church. Over time and in particular in the centuries prior to the 1927 decision, this sacred state had been regulated in the Church through the monastic life. Opening the consecration once again to women living in the world would necessarily put those women in a new sacred state in the Church, but a state that would be regulated directly by diocesan bishops, and not through the protection of the monastery. Such a state was unknown in the modern Church.

Secondly, Maroto observed that throughout ecclesial history, the rite of consecration placed a virgin in an inviolable mystical espousal to Christ. It would therefore be contradictory to argue that the consecration of a virgin living in the world could be likened merely to a private and simple vow, rather than being on par with a solemn vow that would invalidate a subsequent marriage. The

1917 Code of Canon Law had established that a diriment impediment to marriage was created through solemn vows of profession in a religious order, but not through simple vows of profession in a religious congregation. If the consecration of virgins was re-opened to women living outside of a religious order, it would only be logical that the consecration would create a diriment impediment, and yet such an impediment was not recognized in the 1917 Code.

Thirdly, Maroto considered that the rite of consecration dedicated a virgin to wearing special clothing and the veil of consecration continuously; he asked if people in society would accept this custom of virgins living in their midst. He considered also the risks to purity for solemnly consecrated virgins who would live in private homes and be free to associate with any sort of person they pleased. Marie-Paul Dion labelled this third effect of consecration, and thus the third reason Maroto gave for denying the consecration to women living in the world in 1927, as the effect of the consecrated virgin being ‘dedicated to the service of the Church.’ How would it be possible for a woman to live this consecrated state in the midst of the secular world, rather than in the common monastic life which by its nature was dedicated to the service of the Church?

Each of these three effects of consecration, delineated as reasons for the 1927 denial of the consecration to virgins living in the world, was later affirmed and even highlighted as a consequence of consecration in the 1970 restored rite of consecration. The solemn rite ‘constitute[es] the candidate a sacred person’; the virgin accepts ‘solemn consecration as a bride of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God’; and she is ‘bound to the service of Christ and of His Body, the Church.’ (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 111-113).

The Rite of Consecration: Pre-Conciliar Period to 1970 Revisions

Requests for permission to consecrate women living in the world did not stop with the 1927 decision. In May 1930, the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyon implored the Congregation for Consecrated Life for the privilege of the ‘*consecratio virginum*’; in 1948 a

similar request was presented by the Bishop of Passau. Although the rite of consecration in the Roman Pontifical referred only to the consecration of nuns and its use for women in the world had been denied by the Sacred Congregation, the ancient custom of choosing and consecrating virgins in the world had never been forbidden by a general ecclesial law. Thus it was that requests for permission to bestow the consecration on women in the world continued. (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 115-116).

Joachim Nabuco’s 1945 commentary on the Roman Pontifical indicated requirements for the consecration of virgins that were in force at the time: those eligible for consecration included ‘only virgin nuns of monastic orders and canonesses regular,’ and ‘in order for a nun to be solemnly consecrated there must exist *carnis integritate* and a *propositum* to observe virginity perpetually.’ (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 116).

The Apostolic Constitution *Sponsa Christi*, promulgated in November 1950 by Pope Pius XII, declared: ‘the ancient formulae for the consecration of virgins, which are in the Roman Pontifical, are reserved to nuns.’ The text could be read as a reiteration of the 1927 denial of the consecration to women living in the world, or it could be read as simple finding of the fact that the formula in the Roman Pontifical is reserved for nuns. (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 116-117).

On March 25, 1954, Pope Pius XII issued the encyclical *Sacra virginitas*, reasserting that ‘holy virginity and that perfect chastity which is consecrated to the service of God is without doubt among the most precious treasures which the Founder of the Church has left in heritage to the society which He established.’ The Pontificale Romanum of 1962, in force for the Roman Church at the time of the Second Vatican Council, presented the Rite of consecration of virgins in the same form as it was in the Pontificale Romanum Summorum Pontificum of Benedict XIV and Leo XIII (1895). (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 118).

1970 Revision of the Rite of Consecration

A single sentence of the 1963 Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of the Second Vatican Council called for revision of the rite of consecration of virgins found in the Roman Pontifical. Instructions on the implementation of that constitution did not give further details. *Sacrosanctum concilium* called for sacramentals, such as the consecration of virgins, to be revised according to ‘the primary principle of enabling the faithful to participate intelligently, actively, and easily,’ and in consideration of ‘the circumstances of our times.’ In regard to the revision of the rite of consecration of virgins, the council fathers expressed some caution about the need ‘to be true to old tradition and in order not to exclude special, healthy development.’ (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 119).

Praenotanda to the 1970 revised rite of consecration assert three requirements for those who may be consecrated; the three requirements reflect the three fundamental criteria that were established by custom in the first millennium and by law in the second millennium of the Church. The first criterion addresses the requirement of chastity in a candidate, correlating to the requisite *propositum virginitatis* and *carnis integritate* of previous centuries. The second admission criterion for virgins living in the world reflects the minimum age and probationary requirements insisted upon by bishops since the early Church: ‘that by their age, prudence, and universally approved character they give assurance of perseverance in a life of chastity dedicated to the service of the Church and of their neighbor.’ The third criterion states that the virgin is to be admitted to the consecration by the diocesan bishop, a criterion that reflects the honored place that this consecration has held in all the Church throughout the centuries. (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 121)

Promulgation of the Revised Rite of Consecration

On May 31, 1970, the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, under the authority of Pope Paul VI, decreed the promulgation of the new rite, which provided for the consecration of nuns as well as women living in the world. The new rite was to be effective January 6, 1971. ‘Thus the consecration

became accessible no longer to only a few monastic orders (Carthusians and Benedictines) but also to all nuns with solemn vows and to women virgins living in the world.’ (quoting Diane Desautels, 1990). The restored rite contained many ancient elements, including, most prominently, the text of the consecratory prayer itself (dating back to the Leonian Sacramentary of the fifth century) and the antiphon attributed to the virgin Saint Agnes at her martyrdom, ‘I am espoused to Him whom the Angels serve; sun and moon stand in wonder at his glory.’

In 1971, the Congregation for Divine Worship responded to a series of fundamental questions concerning the new “*Ordinem Consecrationis Virginum*” that dealt primarily with the nature and effect of the Rite of Consecration to a Life of Virginity as compared to the Rite of Religious Profession. The decree, the *Praenotanda* to the Rite of Consecration, and the new Rite itself made clear that in revising the Rite of Consecration and opening it again to virgins living in the world, the Church displayed concern for the long-standing history and theology of the vocation of consecrated virginity.’ (Stegman, JCD dissertation, 125-126).

What is the product of this long waiting time for the renovation of the Rite of Consecration? The Holy Spirit did not stop illuminating the virginal vocation. The Vatican’s *Annuario Pontificio*, which ordinarily catalogs ecclesiastical statistics, does not yet track the vocation of consecrated virginity lived in the world. But we do have educated estimates of the current number of consecrated virgins in various countries of the world, based upon information that was presented January 30, 2016 at a gathering of the *Ordo virginum* in Rome for the close of the Year of Consecrated Life:

In the world: approximately 4,000 consecrated virgins. This is a great choir of virgins that only the Holy Spirit could raise up. The virginal vocation is a calling from the Eternal Father and is an icon of His Son’s Church in the midst of the world. The Church confirms the virginal vocation in a woman through the Rite of Consecration to a Life of Virginity, and since 1970, the Church has once again opened this spousal vocation to women living in the world.

By Dr. Judith M. Stegman, JCD
Diocese of Lansing (MI)

Our February issue of “The Lamp” spoke with anticipation and joy about the planned gathering in Rome to be held May 31, 2020. How things suddenly changed! What a troubling time in our country, our world, and our Church. We live on this earth as those who are simply passing through, and our hope is truly in the eternal life where there will be no tears, or pain, or death. Jesus Christ, our Divine Spouse, is the way, the truth, and the life that guides us through the troubles and uncertainties of this world. We keep in prayer for all those who are disengaged, affected by the virus in any way, and at risk.

During these pandemic weeks, various consecrated virgins have taken the opportunity in the context of *Monday Morning Mail* to share words of hope and personal experience about these unique times, and to encourage one another in prayer and in our walks with Jesus as His brides. *Monday Morning Mail* is a biweekly e-newsletter circulated among members of the USACV. It was uplifting to read the words of the virgins – suffering over an inability to receive their Divine Spouse in the Eucharist, and yet deepening in spousal love as He called each to serve and love Him even more intimately under the circumstances.

Personally, I spent the last nine or ten weeks at my parents’ home in Cincinnati helping Dad out with care for my mom. I just this week returned to Michigan to make final preparations for the sale of my home, to pack, and then to move to Miami to begin in earnest the next phase of work for the USACV and International Resource Center for *the Ordo virginum*. The Lord has blessed us with a great set of consecrated virgins serving on the leadership teams of the USACV and IRC, and I very much look forward to this new phase of life with my Divine Spouse.

Upcoming Issues of The Lamp:

September 8, 2020 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin

December 12, 2020 Feast of Our Lady of
Guadalupe

February 2, 2021 Feast of the Presentation and
World Day for Consecrated Life

May 31, 2021 Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Available:

Please check out our online USACV store for the following hot items at secure.consecratedvirgins.org:

- Recordings from the 2019 United States Convocation of Consecrated Virgins (DVD and CD) on *Ecclesia sponsae imago*.
- Recordings from the 2019 Information Conference on the Vocation of Consecrated Virgins Lived in the World.
- Vocation Tree materials.

Postponement of 2021 Holy Land Pilgrimage

Consecrated virgins of France have announced that due to the coronavirus crisis, the planned *Ordo virginum* Jubilee pilgrimage to Israel, “Jubilate 2021,” has been postponed. They write: “The Apostolic Administrator in Jerusalem, however, confirmed his will that this pilgrimage should be organized as soon as possible. We are waiting for the new Jubilee date in Rome in order to plan the event in the Holy Land accordingly.”

Membership Reminder:

From [Francesca Riddick](#), membership chair of the USACV: 2020 Member and Friend registration forms are available now on the USACV website. Invitations to 2020 new membership and membership renewals will be sent soon. Thank you for showing your support for the ongoing work of the USACV-IRC.

Consecration Announcements

Consecration Announcements:

The USACV invites dioceses and candidates for consecration to send announcements of upcoming consecrations, so that we can publish these in *The Lamp* and in a bi-weekly e-newsletter that is circulated among the consecrated virgin members of the USACV. Of course, after a consecration, we are also pleased to publish the announcement and photo(s) in *The Lamp*.

February 22, 2020 — Kristin Niedbala, Diocese of Houma-Thibodeaux (LA), at the hands of The Most Reverend Shelton J. Fabre.

May 24, 2020 — Skyla Chamard and Miriam Marston, Archdiocese of Portland (OR), at the hands of The Most Reverend Alexander Sample.

May 30, 2020 — Catherine Howard, Diocese of Tulsa (OK), at the hands of The Most Reverend David Konderla.

A Note from the Archivist

Anne Gishpert, USACV-IRC archivist, reminds consecrated virgins who have not done so to please send her a copy of your consecration certificate (providing this copy also enables United States virgins to be full voting members of the USACV). Anne also keeps the USACV "family" albums, which include mementos from consecrations. You are warmly invited to send Anne the program, invitation, holy cards, photos, or other items from your consecration. Anne especially asks those consecrated in 2018, 2019, and 2020 to send these so that she can update our albums. The "family" albums travel each year to our convocation and information conference, and always bring smiles and memories.

Upcoming Consecrations

United States:

June 27, 2020 — Judy Kvasnicka, at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Diocese of Salina (KA), at the hands of The Most Reverend Gerald Vincke. All are warmly invited to attend.

August 2, 2020 — Margaret Gisburne, at Holy Ghost Parish in Wood Dale, Diocese of Joliet (IL), at the hands of The Most Reverend Daniel Conlon. All are warmly invited to attend.

August 22, 2020 — Claire Halbur and Kimberly Zeeman, at the Cathedral of Saints Simon and Jude, Diocese of Phoenix (AZ), at the hands of The Most Reverend Thomas Olmsted. All are warmly invited to attend.

November 21, 2020 — Angela McCormick, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Diocese of Portland (ME), at the hands of The Most Reverend Robert Deeley. All are warmly invited to attend.

December 8, 2020 — Ruella Ricaza, at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Dublin, Diocese of Savannah (GA), at the hands of The Most Reverend Gregory J. Hartmayer. All are warmly invited to attend.

February 11, 2021 — Simi Sahu, at Emmauel Catholic Church in Delray Beach, Diocese of Palm Beach (FL), at the hands of The Most Reverend Gerald M. Barbarito. All are warmly invited to attend. (Delayed from March 2020 due to the pandemic.)



By Diane Christine Farr
Diocese of Rochester (NY)

In seeking to know truth, we come to the reality that truth is a person, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All that is true comes from Him.

We read in the epistle to the Ephesians 3:16-19, “According to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his spirit in the inner man and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith that you being rooted and grounded in him may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depths and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

These are powerful verses for the consecrated virgin to ponder as we consider the profound communion we are called to have with Jesus Christ our Bridegroom. It is through the gift of contemplative prayer that we enter the depths of His most Sacred Heart and come to know him more intimately. His Heart contains the highest knowledge and greatest love that we can aspire to attain. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal to us our Bridegroom in all His majesty and beauty. Quality time spent in attentive silence in God’s presence is absolutely necessary in order that this work be carried out. The bride will come to share in the heart rending sorrows and the heavenly joys that flow from the heart of her beloved Jesus. She understands that she is bound to His heart by a perennial bond of virginity. This priceless treasure has no equal for her as our Lord wishes to take complete possession of His consecrated virgin. As consecrated virgins, we understand that our vocation is a tremendous gift of God’s mercy. This spousal love that we have for Jesus must be appreciated and cultivated with the greatest care. We must be faithful to times of prayerful silence whether we perceive God’s presence or not. We must recognize within ourselves secret self-esteem oppressions and disturbances. We allow God to remove these hinderances to the work of His grace and fill the voids in our souls with His divine love. The life of the most Holy Trinity is reproduced in our souls allowing the Divine Will to reign in us. There is perfect order harmony, unity and peace existing among the three divine persons. These characteristics must also be found in our souls.

The Eternal Father has chosen us as brides of his Beloved Son. We are called to listen to His Son in a unique way that we may bring Jesus to everyone. Praying with Sacred scripture is very helpful especially in the form of *lectio divina*. Pondering the meaning of the beatitudes and the implications of the fruits of the Holy Spirit can be very enlightening. The way we know if we are growing in a prayerful disposition can be measured by the way we treat other people and are open to their needs. A prayerful heart becomes a paradise for Jesus where he may communicate the sentiments of his own heart. The bride of Christ unites her prayer with His prayer, offering it to the Eternal Father. Our Lord conveys to His consecrated virgins the meaning of His many interior sufferings and thus we come to a deeper understanding of the horror of sin. This also enables us to comprehend the value and dignity of each person created in the image of God.

Christ wishes to become the life of each soul, raising it to share in His own Divine Life. Each soul is a universe in which he desires to establish the reign of his Kingdom. Jesus’ greatest torment was the

abandonment of those whom He loved. His brides endeavor to remain closely united with him and keeping him company in all circumstances. We do this in union with the Blessed Virgin Mary asking for her dispositions. We also keep Jesus company when we reach out to others.

The greatest gift that Christ the Bridegroom communicates to His consecrated virgins is the gift of Himself. This finds its sweetest expression in this life in Holy Communion. In giving Himself, He also communicates to us the gift of holy virginity a flower coming forth from the depth of His Heart.

We receive this gift with joy as we embrace our risen Lord. Adorned with this grace of virginity and clothed in divine love, we offer our entire being to God in praise and adoration. We pour forth the fragrance of our virginal love in homage and thanksgiving to our Savior and holy Spouse. We are all very much aware that the challenges and sufferings of this life can be overwhelming. We are all in need of the healing

rays of the light of Christ. They will transform us reaching deep into our souls. Our prayer should be that we be invested in the supreme light of the Devine Will. This light will illuminate our path on this earthly pilgrimage. In giving Himself to us our Lord desires to give us the gift of His own divine strength for without Him we can do nothing. He also wishes to endow us with his own wisdom, goodness, beauty and indeed His very sanctity. The first gift Jesus gave after His resurrection was the gift of his peace. As His brides we must be grounded in his peace so that we may convey it to others. We cling to him with perfect confidence and trust while awaiting the vision of His glory. This is illustrated by the final paragraph of the prayer for the consecration of virgins. “Be yourself, their glory, their joy, their whole desire. Be their comfort in sorrow, their wisdom in perplexity, their protection in the midst of injustice, their patience in adversity, their riches in poverty, their food in fasting, their remedy in time of sickness. They have chosen you above all things. May they find all things in possessing You.”

Anniversary Reflections

Consecrated virgins who celebrate significant anniversaries during 2020 are invited to submit an anniversary reflection for *The Lamp*. These anniversary reflections are popular among our readers as they convey a personal look at life lived as a bride of Christ in the *Ordo virginum*.



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Upcoming Events

**Information Conference on the Vocation of
Consecrated Virginity Lived in the World**
Sponsored by the USACV-IRC
November 6 to November 7, 2020
Live Virtual Conference
See article, page 10.

Save the Date

United States Convocation of Consecrated Virgins
Sponsored by the USACV
July 2 to July 6, 2021
Enders Island, Connecticut
More Information to Follow.

2020 Information Conference

2020 Information Conference on the Vocation of Consecrated Virgins Lived in the World

ANNOUNCEMENT – CHANGE IN VENUE

May God be praised! Due to Covid-19 restrictions, it is not possible for the USACV-IRC to sponsor our annual in-person information Conference during the summer of 2020. We do plan to hold an in-person conference during the summer of 2021. Rather than miss a year, however, and due to many requests at this time to learn about the life of the virgin bride of Christ:

We are pleased to announce an intensive two-day live virtual Information Conference on the Vocation of Consecrated Virgins to be held in fall 2020. Recognizing that an online conference cannot be the same as an in-person conference, this live virtual conference will not attempt to replicate the full experience of our traditional three-day conference. Rather, the fall 2020 Live Virtual Conference will focus on presenting in-depth informational talks about essential aspects of the vocation of consecrated virgins, delivered by consecrated virgins with particular expertise.

There are advantages to a two-day conference! Participants will not incur additional time and expense for travel. They will need to take only a Friday and Saturday away from work or studies to invest in this vocational program.

SAVE THE DATE

Dates:

Friday and Saturday, November 6 and 7, 2020.

Time:

A detailed program will follow. The tentative plan is for each day to begin at 11:00am ET (10am CT; 9am MT; 8am PT) and include five presentations, scheduled two hours apart. Each talk will be followed by Q&A with the speaker and an approximate half hour break before the next conference. The last presentation of each day will end at 8:00pm ET (7pm CT; 6pm MT; 5pm PT).

An optional evening session is also planned for each day, to be held from 9-10pm ET (8-9pm CT; 7-8pm MT; 6-7pm PT). Friday evening will feature testimonials from consecrated virgins and Saturday evening is planned to include a final Q&A session with multiple presenters available to respond to questions.

Program:

Presentation topics, subject to change:

- Overview of Vocations in the Catholic Church; how the *Ordo virginum* fits in
- Historical Aspects of the Consecration of Virgins; virgin saints
- Ecclesial Identification of the *Ordo virginum*; canon 604 of the Code of Canon Law
- The Liturgical Rite of Consecration and the Marian Dimension of the Vocation
- Praying the Liturgy of the Hours, the Prayer of the Church
- Mystically Espoused to Christ, the Son of God

- Living in the World; relationship with the Diocesan Bishop and diocese
- Prerequisites for admission; stages of preparation / formation
- Psychological Maturity for Living the Virginal Vocation
- Practical next steps for discerners, applicants, candidates

Presenters:

The Most Reverend Earl Boyea, Bishop of Lansing and Episcopal Moderator for the USACV; consecrated virgins: Mary Kay Lacke, MTh (Conference Director); Dr. Magalis Aguilera, Psy.D.; Dr. Judith M. Stegman, JCD; Karen Bussey, MSW; Emily Byers, MTh; Amanda Schrauth, MACE; Maria Luisa Meza, MAEd.

Who is invited:

- Anyone with a serious interest in learning about the vocation of consecrated virginity lived in the world is invited to attend.
- Diocesan delegates for consecrated life or other diocesan personnel involved in the preparation of virgins for consecration are warmly invited to attend and encouraged to arrange to participate together with aspirants, applicants, and candidates in your diocese.
- Aspirants, applicants, and candidates for consecration are encouraged to attend.
- Consecrated virgins seeking to deepen in their vocation and to assist those preparation for consecration are also warmly invited to attend.

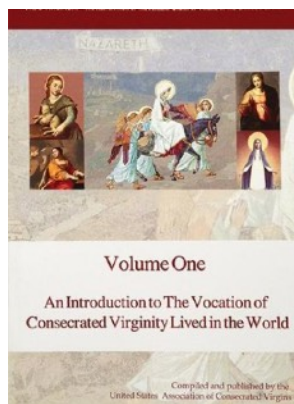
Registration:

Participants must register in advance to attend the full conference. Registration forms and cost will be announced in the coming months.

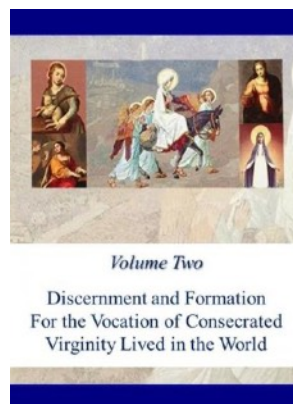
To pre-register or express interest in attending, please contact info@consecratedvirgins.org.

Questions? Please contact info@consecratedvirgins.org.

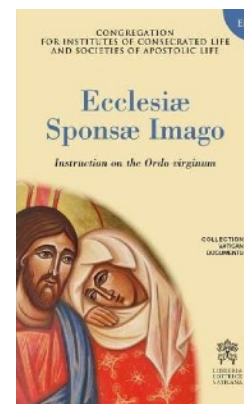
Key resources for the Information Conference (available in [our online store](#)):



<https://bit.ly/USACV1>



<https://bit.ly/USACV2>



<https://bit.ly/USACV-ESI>

USACV and International Resource Center
for the *Ordo Virginum*
Leadership Team Members and Officers

USACV Leadership Team

Emily Byers (2018)-2020; Secretary of the USACV-IRC;
Diocese of Lafayette (LA). (*USACV Online Presence*).

Francesca Riddick 2019-2021; Diocese of Joliet (IL).
(*USACV Membership and eTapestry*).

Amanda Schrauth 2019-2021; Diocese of Great Falls-
Billings (MT). (*Publication of "The Lamp"*).

Joani McCann 2019-2021; Archdiocese of Boston (MA).
(*Convocation Liaison*).

Elizabeth Lam 2020-2022; Diocese of Oakland (CA).
(*Member at Large*).

IRC Leadership Team

Magalis Aguilera; USA, Archdiocese of Miami (FL).

Judith Stegman, President of the USACV-IRC 2019-2025,
Treasurer 2019-2020; USA, Diocese of Lansing (MI).

Maria Luisa Meza; EL SALVADOR, Diocese of Santa Ana/
San Miguel.

Maria Luisa Oefele; GERMANY, Diocese of Regensburg.

Renu Rita Silvano; INDIA, Archdiocese of Bombay.

Other USACV-IRC Services, among others

Mary Kay Lacke; Information Conference director.

Theresa Marshall; Information Conference coordinator.

Margaret Flipp; assistant treasurer.

Anne Gishpert; archivist.

Florence Sundberg; prayer chain coordinator.

SERVING THE VOCATION OF CONSECRATED VIRGINITY



Life Corner

By Florence Sundberg

Diocese of Hartford (CT)

Tragically the numbers of abortions performed during this pandemic have increased. Abortuaries remained open and abortionists continued to terminate the lives of babies in the womb even while Churches were shut down. It was considered essential that the killing of human babies would continue...why? How can human beings consider the extermination of their own species essential? Someone remarked that there was no 'shelter-in-place for the unborn'; the safest place for a baby should be in the womb of the mother but sadly it is not. Hospitals put off vital procedures like heart surgeries while abortions continued unabated.

Links to videos showing how to perform your own abortion at home were posted. And I kept wondering why there was such an urgency to kill babies in the womb? I don't know the answer. I do remember that St. P. John Paul II declared that the reason for so many abortions is that we have lost the sense of the sacredness of human life. I said once that I believe we have lost the sense of the sacred altogether. Let us pray for the true sense of brotherhood in Christ where we will all know we are one body in Christ, each responsible for the other.

Virtual Choir of Consecrated Virgins

In honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Promulgation of the Revised Rite of Consecrated Virgins on May 31, 2020, the USACV-IRC facilitated and coordinated a virtual choir of consecrated virgins from around the world singing the *Regina Caeli*. The video was uploaded to the USACV-IRC YouTube channel and may be viewed here <https://bit.ly/ReginaCaeli>. Please subscribe to the YouTube channel to receive notifications of future videos.

