Dear sisters in Christ,

Such a crescendo of activity in these last days before we leave for Rome, and so many opportunities to witness the providential care of our Beloved Spouse! I didn’t even ask Archbishop Burke to prepare a letter for this issue of “The Lamp,” knowing his level of involvement in the preparations. We should be back to normal with our June issue.

Email recipients of “The Lamp” responded generously to our invitation for charitable donations to help sponsor consecrated virgins traveling to Rome from financially distressed countries. I’d like to extend a word of thanks to all the priests, consecrated, and lay friends whose gifts will enable virgins from 52 different countries to be represented at our gathering in Rome.

Enclosed with this issue of “The Lamp” is the Congress-Pilgrimage press release information being sent to media outlets throughout the world. You are invited to pass the information along to your local contacts at diocesan or secular newspapers, radio or television stations. Printed proceedings of the Congress will be available for sale at a later date, after the Congress is completed and all texts have been translated.

During the Congress, Archbishop Burke will give a conference on the Rite of Consecration. I’m happy to have been invited to speak on “Virginal, Feminine, Spousal Love for Christ,” a topic we first introduced at our 2007 U.S. Informational Conference. Elizabeth Lee will participate in a round table discussion on the relationship of the consecrated virgin to the diocesan Bishop. Magalis Aguilera will give her unique testimony as a Cuban-American consecrated virgin. Magalis will also coordinate the U.S. display table. Mary Kay Lacke has prepared and will deliver our country report on the state of the vocation as lived in the U.S. at the present time. Mary Kay has also been assisting with translations of French texts to English.

Please keep us in your prayers, and be assured that those of us headed to Rome will remember each of you in prayer!

In the love of Christ Jesus, our Beloved,

Judith Stegman
Judith Stegman
President
“Let us as consecrated virgins consider and deepen our understanding of the unique mystery of the Church, which we represent and live out through our virginal consecration. We are called to reflect and witness to others the bridal love of the Church for Jesus Christ her Bridegroom.”

“We are truly wedded to Christ and strive to live a life of intimate union with Him. Therefore His interests and desires become our own. We don’t work for Him, but with Him in a communion of love that seeks always to do His Father’s will. St. Augustine speaks of the whole Church as the virgin bride of Christ. He notes, however, that this mystery is more fully represented by those members of the Church who are consecrated to lives of perpetual virginity.”

“CCC #773: ‘The Church’s structure is totally ordered to the holiness of Christ’s members. And holiness is measured according to the great mystery in which the Bride responds with the gift of love to the gift of the Bridegroom. Mary goes before us all in the holiness that is the Church’s mystery as the bride without spot or wrinkle. This is why the Marian dimension of the Church precedes the Petrine.’”

“The rite of consecration speaks of how Christ by His Paschal Mystery brought His Church into being. It says, ‘He desired it to be a virgin, a bride and a mother: a virgin to keep the faith whole and entire; a bride to be one with Him forever; and a mother to raise up the family of the Church.’”

“Genuine and lasting virginity, bridal love and spiritual motherhood are interconnected in the spirituality of the consecrated virgin. In our intimacy with Jesus the sacredness of holy virginity is impressed upon our hearts, and His divine gaze draws us irresistibly. We have preserved our virginity in body and soul, worshiping Christ with our whole being in anticipation of the eternal marriage banquet. Every Sunday during evening prayer we read, “The wedding feast of the Lamb has begun, and His bride is prepared to welcome Him.” We welcome the spouse of virgins as we receive the life of our soul in Holy Communion during the sacred liturgy. We welcome Him in the present moment, always seeking His face in anticipation of what has been called the eternal now of heaven. Jesus wishes to transform us to be like Himself for the perfect glorification of the Holy Trinity. If we live lives of gentleness, modesty and prudent wisdom He will in turn welcome us with joy into the abode of His Most Sacred Heart. May Jesus Christ the crown and joy of virgins be praised both now and forever. Amen.”
**Current council members and officers are:**


Magalis Aguilera, 2007 – 2009 (appointed Vice-President thru 2009); Archdiocese of Miami.

Louise Pare, Treasurer, 2008 – 2010; Diocese of Lansing.

Twanna Bolling, Member-at-large, 2008-2010; Archdiocese of Chicago.

Aliceanne Sawyer, 2006-2008 (appointed Secretary thru 2008); Diocese of Trenton.

**Upcoming events:**

International Congress-Pilgrimage of Consecrated Virgins

**Rome**, May 14 to 20, 2008

See update article.

National Convocations of the United States Consecrated Virgins

2008: no U.S. convocation (due to International Pilgrimage to Rome)

summer 2009 Saint Louis area

**National Information Conferences**

August 6 to 8, 2008 at the Cenacle, Chicago, IL

August 5 to 7, 2009

August 4 to 6, 2010

**2008 National Information Conference Team**

Theresa Marshall has agreed to serve as the team leader for the “2008 National Information Conference Team”. Theresa is in the process now of forming her team and preparing announcements for the 2008 conference. These announcements should be available soon on our website.

You may contact Theresa for more information about the 2008 national information conference at marshall@wash.k12.mi.us.

**O Virgin of Virgins, Pray for Us**
Consecration Announcements from Other Countries:

**France**
- Catherine Varin, May 10, 2008, Diocese of Versailles
- Odile Chaumette, 15 December 2007, Diocese of Nantes
- Helene Delage, 27 April 2008, Archdiocese of Lyon
- Josyane Colorado, 10 May 2008, Diocese of Nice
- Catherine Duhamel, 9 December 2006, Diocese of Rennes
- Marie-Renee Hardy, 14 October 2007, Diocese of Rennes
- Sandrine Meignant, 14 December 2007, Diocese of Perigueux and Sarlat.
- Nicole Bonnet, 21 December 2007, Diocese of Poitiers
- Chile
  - 3 Consecrations on 6 October 2007 in the cathedral of Santiago

**Argentina**
- Ana Maria Mendizabel, 12 December 2007, Diocese of Gualeguaychu

**Italy**
- Raffaella De Ceglia, 28 January 2007, Diocese of Molfetta
- Paola Bolis, Samantha Columbo, Rosalia Ronchi, Maria Laura Trabattoni, 22 September 2007, Diocese of Milan
- Donata Frigerio, 3 October 2007, Diocese Reggio Emilia-Guastalla
- Teresa Mattu and Maria Antonieta Nieddu, 7 December 2007, Diocese of Nuoro
- Rita Milito, Grazia Ruffo, Maria Villata, 8 December 2007, Archdiocese of Rossano-Cariati
- Monica Viezzer, 8 December 2007, Diocese of Vittorio Veneto.
- Salvina Barone, Francesca Cascote, Rosaria Di Quattro, Cetrina Licitra, 5 January 2008, Diocese of Ragusa
- Barbara Baldassarri and Marzia Rogante, 2 February 2008, Diocese of Fermo
- Elisa Chiorrini, 25 March 2008, Diocese of Fabriano-Matelia

Consecration Announcements from the United States:

- Carolyn Blaszczyk, April 29, 2008, Diocese of Harrisburg, Most Rev Kevin C. Rhoades
- Yvonne Oliver and Gloria Oliver, April 27, 2008, Diocese of Rockville Centre, Most Rev. William Murphy

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