



**United States Association of
Consecrated Virgins**

May 2008
Ascension of Our Lord

Volume 13, Issue 3

In preparation for the Rome 2008 International Congress-Pilgrimage of Consecrated Virgins – an abbreviated issue of “The Lamp”

President's Journal

May 2008

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

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**Special points of
interest:**

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Invitation

**Excerpts from an essay by Diane Farr,
“The Consecrated Virgin – Living Image of the Church”**

“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 mar-

riage 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.”

*With joy and thanksgiving
Diane Lynn Zerwas
requests the honor of your presence
as she receives the Rite of Consecration of a
Virgin Living in the World*

*The Rite of Consecration will take place during
the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass celebrated by
Francis Cardinal George, O.M.V.
Archbishop of Chicago*

Saturday, June 28, 2008, at 10:30 a.m.

*St. Thomas More Church
2825 West 81st Street
(81st and California)
Chicago, Illinois*

*Parking available in church parking lot or on street
Reception following downstairs in Danton Hall*

*Please R.S.V.P. by June 15
Phyllis (708) 952-0681
pas1964@att.net
or
Diane (708) 424-5915
dianezerwas@sbcglobal.net*

No gifts, please. Your presence is a gift.

Council News

Current council members and officers are:

Judith M. Stegman, President, 2007 – 2009; Diocese of Lansing.

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.



*O Virgin of Virgins,
Pray for Us*

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

ROME UPDATE

from Isabel Bettwy:

Final preparations are being made for the Rome 2008 International Congress-Pilgrimage of consecrated virgins, May 14-May 20. Various women have been diligently translating talks and reports for the Congress. Yolande Salmon and her team, along with Judith Stegman and many others, have been very busy with details. Please keep them all in your prayers.

The facility where the Congress session will be held has a limited seating capacity and there is a waiting list. But, it is doubtful that anyone else will be accepted. The total numbers around 500, from all over the world.

Registration from the United States is complete as registrations have closed. Our group consists of thirty-one women from the United States, two from Australia, and one from each of the following countries: Nigeria, Denmark, El Salvador, Jamaica and India. We also have in our group Archbishop Burke, two monsignors and a priest who will be with us for the after-pilgrimage to the Shrines of Italy. There are twenty participants for that pilgrimage and registration is still open. If anyone is interested, please let me know as soon as possible.

To be distributed very soon are details regarding hotel assignments, where the buses will be at the airport in Rome, and a detailed schedule of events during the Congress. Many hands are working on all the details. We are delighted that the date and time of our private Papal audience have now been announced.

As I speak with women not only in our country but abroad, everyone is excited about the Congress and looking forward to meeting and being with other consecrated virgins for the week. Please ask the Lord and Our Lady to send angels out to protect everyone who is registered for the Congress-Pilgrimage that we will all arrive safely and with no incidents or causes for concern.

We will remember all of you during the Congress, especially during Holy Mass. Be assured that we will also take your prayer petitions along with us. As you make them known to Our Lady, we will be praying for them also. We ask that you do the same for us.

**United States
Association of
Consecrated Virgins**

300 West Ottawa Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933-1577
USA

Fax: 253-270-5507

E-mail:
info@consecratedvirgins.org
President@consecratedvirgins.org

● www.consecratedvirgins.org



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

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 Antonietta Nieddu, 7 December 2007, Diocese of Nuoro

Rita Milito, Graziella 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-Matelica