

Rome, April 20, 2020

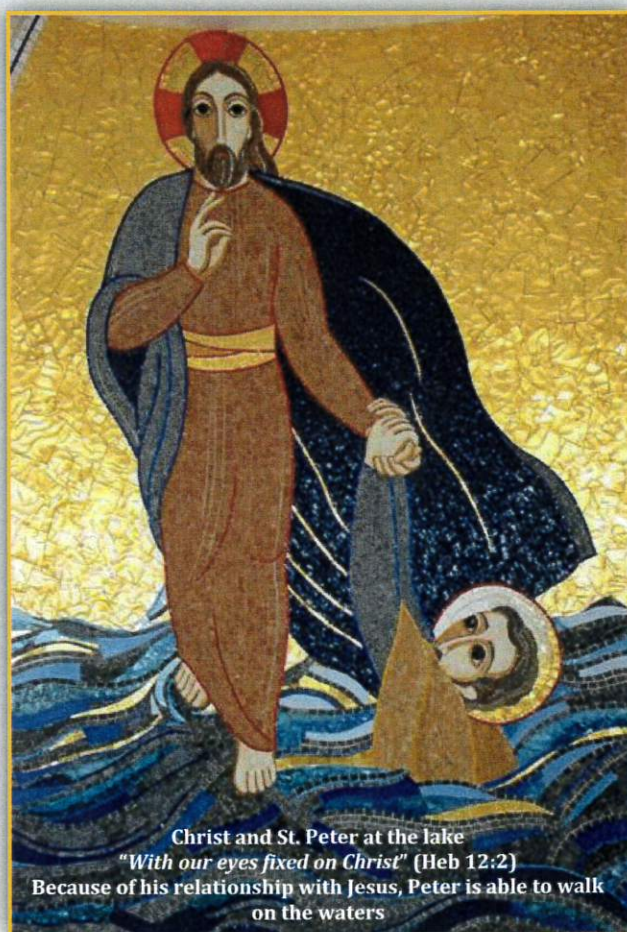
Prot. n° 068/2020

**Subject:** World Day of Prayer for Vocations - May 3, 2020

**Dear Sisters and Candidates of the Congregation,**

The World Day of Prayer for Vocations, is an opportunity to express our gratitude to God for the vocation of each Sister and Candidate in the Congregation, and we are invited to be in communion with the Church that prays “*asking the Lord, the Good Shepherd, to send workers for His harvest*” (Mt.9:37). To celebrate this day, Pope Francis chose the biblical passage from the Evangelist Matthew, which recounts the remarkable experience of the encounter between Jesus and his disciple Peter during a stormy night at the Lake of Tiberias (cf. Mt.14:22-33)<sup>1</sup>.

The choice of the vocation is a journey of discovering the God who reveals himself in different ways and in the various situations of our lives, through unexpected encounters, even in the midst of turbulent waters, so that in our daily struggle, we try to attain joy and abide in it with the totality of our being<sup>2</sup>. At any stage of our life, we are called to revisit in depth the core of our personal life, where we find the real meaning of our life with the Master, and of being disciples of the Master. With this motivation, we go out to encounter the youth and show them the beauty of our scalabrinian religious consecration; and to assure them that following the Master means to be able to live in depth the existential phases of the vocation, which also include fear of taking a decision and renunciation of one’s certainties. It means to allow oneself to discover a specific call, availing oneself of every opportunity and facing all the risks of the waters, listening to only one voice: “*Take courage. It is me. Do not be afraid!*”



<sup>1</sup> Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 57th World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

<sup>2</sup> Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Rejoice*, A letter to consecrated men and women, n.3

Dear Sisters and Candidates, let us live this day of prayer for vocations, in the light of the provisions issued by the XIV General Chapter, which recommend us that “the vocation promotion be undertaken by each Sister as the highest priority of this six-year term, to which we want to devote our best energies, at all levels, for the growth of the Congregation and the mission”<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, certain that vocation promotion is a task of all the baptized, let us try to involve the laity more and more, in particular the Lay Scalabrinian Missionaries, so that they participate with us in this noble mission of awakening and accompanying new vocations to the Church, and with courage let us “get on the boat and go to the other shore”, to meet the youth of our time.

In front of the vocational reality of our Congregation, which is familiar to us, I reaffirm once again, dear Sisters, the need to renew our personal encounter with Jesus Christ, letting us to be encountered by Him, seeking Him constantly, day by day, and following the Master who alone has “*words of eternal life*” (Jn 6:68). And thus, we make our whole life a pilgrimage of loving transformation<sup>4</sup>, so that we can be *Paschal women*, witnesses of the joy and the tenderness of God who enkindles our hearts, awakens our hope and attracts us to do good. Let us be *women sheperdesses* who decide to encounter the youth and to be encountered by them, helping them “to participate in the life of the Church.... and nurture the seeds of faith, without expecting to immediately see the fruits of the work of the Holy Spirit”<sup>5</sup>. Let us be *listening women*, capable of guiding the youth in building their life project, which includes the following stages: awakening, discerning, cultivating and accompanying.

Therefore, we invite all the Sisters, the Candidates in the Congregation and the Lay Scalabrinian Missionaries to promote, if possible, on **Thursday, April 30, 2020**, an hour of Eucharistic adoration for vocations, based on the message of Pope Francis, which is attached to this letter. Furthermore, on May 3, 2020, we will publish the prayer for vocations in the communication means offered for the celebration of this day, as well as in social networks.

We entrust each Sister, Candidate and Lay Scalabrinian Missionary to the protection of the Virgin Mary, Mother of vocations: may she help us to be radiant testimonies of communion, in the service to migrants and refugees, with ardent and generous faith, so that *the joy of the Gospel can reach the ends of the earth and that no periphery is deprived of its light!*

I wish you a happy and blessed world day of prayers for vocations!

Sr. Neusa de Fátima Mariano mscs  
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Superior General, Counselors and General Secretary

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<sup>3</sup> XIV General Chapter, Final Document

<sup>4</sup> Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Rejoice*, A letter to consecrated men and women, n.4

<sup>5</sup> Pope Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit*, n. 246