

## An experience of consecrated life from the charisma of the Apostolic Movement

From the heart of the Inspirer-Founder of the Apostolic Movement, Mrs. Maria Marino, comes the idea of a Secular Feminine Institute, with special consecration to the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, as a spiritual support for the evangelizing work of the Apostolic Movement.

This desire finds a convinced welcome by the then Archbishop of Catanzaro-Squillace, H.E. Msgr. Antonio Ciliberti, who approves on 6 January 2006 the Constitutions of the Secular Institute "Mary Mother of the Redemption" (ad experimentum,) and subsequently, on 26 February 2006, he receives in his hands the temporary vows of the first five consecrated persons of the nascent Institute, among which there is the Mrs. Maria Marino herself, and later, December 23, 2007, their perpetual profession in a solemn co-celebration in which H.E. Msgr. Antonio Cantisani (archbishop emeritus of Catanzaro-Squillace) and H.E. Msgr. Vincenzo Rimedio (bishop emeritus of Lamezia Terme) are also present.

Currently the Public Association, in view of being established in the Secular Institute of Diocesan Law, has 61 members, from Catanzaro, Lamezia Terme, Rome, Grosseto, Varese, Trapani and Caserta. And by now, it has long been well structured and ordered

in its constituent organs of government, administration and organization, clearly indicated in the Constitutions.

From December 22, 2015, the archbishop of Catanzaro-Squillace H.E. Msgr. Bertolone, who since his inauguration has been paternally solicitous towards the experience of the consecrated, has entrusted their spiritual journey to the care of the theologian Fr. Domenico Domenico. The Community Adoration of the first Thursday of each month and the formation meeting on the last Sunday of the month are two fundamental stages of the ordinary journey of the Association. The care of the sick (nursing homes, hospitals, lonely people) and the poor (Caritas canteens, volunteer work, collaboration in projects of solidarity and distance adoptions) are a permanent opportunity for evangelization.

As the soul is for the body, so the Secular Institute Mary Mother of the Redemption is for the Apostolic Movement and for the Church: it is a living fire, perpetually lit, of charity and truth that must set fire to every heart of love for its Lord, for its Church and for the salvation of the world. In particular every consecrated person lives the personal consecration offering her own life to the Mother of God for the conversion of hearts, the salvation of souls and the return to God of all his children, manifesting evangelical holiness through a sober, modest life, exemplary in everything, dedicating herself to the daily prayer for the work of vocations both to the Ordained Priesthood and to those of special religious and also lay consecration.

As a feature of her own consecration each member of the Institute wears a small medal in which the effigy of the Virgin Mary Mother of the Redemption is imprinted and is daily engaged in praying.

### Can perhaps a blind man lead another blind man?

**The** universal eyes that let us see God, his Word, his Law, man, creation, time, eternity, the Church in her mystery of salvation and every member of the body of Christ, according to most pure divine truth, are those of our Creator, Lord and God, given to us by his Holy Spirit, in Christ, through Christ and with Christ. Without these divine eyes, one remains in blindness. Nothing can be seen. We advance in darkness and walk in the darkness which is universal. But how does the Lord give these eyes? The first gift is in his Word. In the Garden of Eden there are two trees, one of life and the other of death. How will man go about knowing which is the tree of life and of death? The Word of the Lord reveals to him the truth of the one and the other tree. But now it is the responsibility of man to feed himself on the tree of life and not touch the tree of death.

But man did not listen to his Lord, he ate of the tree of death. However, the law on how to get sight did not change. To his people, that it might see the way of life and separate it from the way of death, he gave the Ten Commandments. If man obeys them, he will always walk on the path of life. The Law is the only way to life. If the Commandments are transgressed, man will walk in darkness and sink into eternal death. Jesus gave his disciples as eyes the Sermon on the Mount, his Gospel. Who sees the path of life? Who follows the Word of light, the Word of life that is the one of the Gospel. Whoever stands out of the Word, becomes blind, plunges into darkness, advances towards eternal darkness. But the Lord has not left the Word to the free comprehension of the individual. In

the Church, He has established Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Masters and Doctors, whom he has entrusted to preserve and give the Word according to his eternal, divine and immortal truth. All of these, according to a hierarchical order established by the Lord, are the ministers of the Word. But when do they give the Word according to truth? When are they eyes for the blind and ears for the deaf and mouth for the dumb? When they travel the path of life. If they walk the path of disobedience to the Word, they too become blind and blind guides. This is what happened at the time of Jesus.

Who wants to be the guide of the blind, must put every commitment to a perfect obedience to every Word of Jesus, but always in the respect of the rules given by Christ the Lord, to walk in the truth. The first truth is hierarchical obedience. Whoever does not let himself be enlightened might never illuminate. Who refuses the source, the spring of his light, never might he become light for others. He will find the fortitude to obey the light in the assiduous celebration of the mystery of the Eucharist. It is the source, the spring of all grace and divine strength to live for Christ, in Christ and with Christ. The constant source of light is also the uninterrupted contact with the Word of the Gospel together with the humility of letting himself be guided by who in the Church is the minister of the Word. Mother of God, Mother of the Redemption, ensure that every disciple of Christ the Lord is true son of the light to become in the Church, with the Church and for the Church, light of the world and light of the Gentiles.

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## THAT UNREPEATABLE VALUE OF THE PRESENT

Reflections starting from the homily of H.H. Francis  
for World Youth Day (Panama, 27.1.2019)

"In the synagogue, everyone's eyes were fixed on him. Then he began to tell them: "Today this Scripture that you have heard has been fulfilled" (Lk 4: 20-21). It is on today of God that Pope Francis captures the attention of the young. To incite them to take their present in their hands with responsibility and decision according to God's plan, so that all the potential for good and salvation, which is now in their hands and must be used now, is not defused in a narcotizing wait for the future.

In reality, it is a message addressed to everyone, not only to young people. The Lord always encourages us to put our today to good use. "Listen to his voice today:" Do not harden your heart, as in Meribah..."» (Ps 94: 9). "Now is the favourable time, now is the day of salvation!" (2 Cor 6: 2). The parable of the talents is the pressing appeal of the Lord so that the present time may be enhanced to bring that personal fruit of good that tomorrow will no longer be recoverable (cf. Mt 25: 14-30). The parable of the ten virgins also gives us the full meaning of the Lord's expectation, which is not passive negligence, but a solicitous commitment to find us ready at all times (cf. Mt 25: 1-13).

There are two serious "cultural" risks that distract us from sanctifying today. We could define them as follows: "today without the future" and "the future without today".

There is the temptation to live today without a project, without a destination and without hope. Without a future, but also without memory. "Believing in eternity"? "Ask yourself what sense does it have"? «If I do not think about it anymore, I feel good» - the text of a song just launched proposes - «and I take my life as it comes». This is the model of a life sucked into today, but in

which the present becomes a prison, because it prevents the existence of unfolding in its time with wisdom and love. Man is not all himself in the moment. Man is time. Our intelligence, our formation, our spirit and our own biological condition, need to grow, learn, prepare and mature. Closing everything in the illusory well-being of the present moment, means insulting our own humanity, lying against its nature, deceiving it against a history that one day will present the account of the lost time. What does regretting not having studied, not having learned, not having listened, not having loved and not having followed one's vocation, mean? Of course, you can repent, you can start over and resume the journey... but the lost good will not be recoverable. «Listen to his voice today...» The Gospel calls us today, there is a current will of God for each of us, there is a personal invitation to follow Christ, who cannot be put on wait.

There is also the risk of losing the appointment with history in the vague expectation of a better future, always postponing to tomorrow the time of putting to use the personal talents. Christian hope is not passivity. "Whoever does not want to work, let him not even eat" - St. Paul recalls (2 Thess 3:10). Christian life is yes a "wait for its coming", but it is not a waiting room. It is a vigilant, industrious and fruitful wait for time and for eternity.

Virgin Mary, you have never placed the least distance between the invitation of God and your "yes": help us to regain faith in our mission of reminding the Gospel, the source of every personal life that sanctifies the present by directing it to the horizon of the project of God.

Father Francesco Brancaccio

The  
Lord's Day  
ROMAN RITE

EVERY TREE IS KNOWN BY ITS OWN FRUIT  
(VIII Sunday O.T. - Year C)

### THE FRUIT OF A TREE SHOWS THE CARE IT HAS HAD (Sir 27.5-8)

The Christian has been planted, rooted in Christ Jesus. He is perennially nourished by the divine sap of the Holy Spirit, to produce fruits of love, fidelity and righteousness of the heavenly Father. When we separate ourselves from Jesus with sin, we are also rendered devoid of the divine sap of the Holy Spirit and in no way do we produce the fruits of God's love. In every moment, every Christian knows how he is cultivating his tree. If he produces fruits of the flesh, he attests that he walks according to the flesh and cultivates the tree of the flesh. His works which are "fornication, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, discord, jealousy, dissension, division, factions, envy, drunkenness and orgies reveal it". If he produces: "love, joy, peace, magnanimity, benevolence, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal 5,19-22), the fruits of the Spirit ripen on his tree. Looking at his fruits, everyone knows what his tree is like.

### BE FIRM, STEADFAST (1Cor 15, 44-58)

Faith becomes salvation for us, only if it is founded on the truth that is in Christ Jesus, given to us in its fullness by the Holy Spirit, in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. When we move away from the truth of the Holy Spirit, we separate ourselves from the thought of Christ, our faith does not save either us and or others. We proclaim the Gospel of Christ, but not the truth of Christ. From what do we realize that we are not on the path to salvation? From the fruits we produce. When the fruits are according to the flesh it is evident that we are not in the truth of Christ. It is not a

conceptual, philosophical truth, but a truth of nature, truth of history and truth of life. At any moment, each of us can know if he is in the true faith or if his is only an illusion, a deception and a lie. Today our faith is only an illusion and a lie because the words of faith have all been deprived of the truth of the Holy Spirit. We have the Word and not the truth.

### REMOVE THE WOODEN BEAM FROM YOUR EYE FIRST (Lk 6, 39-45)

Let us apply the truth of Paul to the Christians and we will understand the teaching of Jesus: "But if you call yourself a Christian and you rest safely on the Gospel and put your pride in Christ the Lord, know his will and, instructed by the Word, you know how to discern what is better and you are convinced that you are the guide of the blind, light of those in darkness, educator of the ignorant, teacher of the simple, because in the Word you possess the expression of knowledge and truth... Well, how come that you, who teach others, do not you teach yourself? You who preach not to steal, steal? You who say you do not commit adultery, commit adultery? You who hate idols, rob their temples? You who pride yourself of the Gospel, offend Christ the Lord by transgressing the Gospel! In fact, it is written: The name of God is blasphemed because of you among the Gentiles (Rom 2: 17-23). One does not led to light from darkness, nor from falsehood to truth and nor from sin to grace. Whoever wants to lead to truth, to light and to grace, must dwell and live in the house of light, truth and grace.

by the theologian,  
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