

February 2, 2025 — Presentation of the Lord and World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life

Instead of Bishop Boyea’s regular column (which will return with the next issue of *The Lamp*), we highlight the USACV’s participation in the February 2, 2025 Virtual Prayer of the Rosary with other members of consecrated life in the United States. A collaborative effort of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, United States Association of Consecrated Virgins, and United States Conference of Secular Institutes, the virtual prayer service was attended by more than 1,700 persons in consecrated life. The prayer together on the Feast of the Presentation, World Day of Consecrated Life, came as we begin the Jubilee Year, Pilgrims of Hope.

Sister Anne Catherine Burleigh, O.P. and Sister Carol Zinn, SSJ, warmly emceed the time of prayer. His Eminence Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, offered a word of welcome at the beginning and at the end remarked how this experience offered a glimpse into the reality that the prayers of consecrated men and women are constantly being offered on behalf of the Church and the world. Bishop Earl Boyea, chair of the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations, and Episcopal Moderator for the USACV, spoke of the gift of consecrated life for us individually and for the entire Church, noting that our consecration reminds all in the Church that we are set apart for Christ, that we are on a pilgrimage through this life to our true home, and that we consecrated offer a light of hope along the way.

Each decade of the Rosary was introduced by a different conference of consecrated life, beginning with a brief testimony and a reflection on the mystery. The rosary was led in English and Spanish. Consecrated virgins prayed the Rosary opening prayers and introduced the fourth Glorious Mystery, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven. Consecrated virgin Claire Halbur offered the testimony and virgins Eileen Belongea, Elma Espinoza, and Lorraine Manlolo led the rosary prayers.

Inside this Issue	Page
Something Ancient, Something New	3
The President’s Journal	5
Virtual Vespers	5
Life Corner	6
Announcements	6
USACV-IRC Leadership Team	7
Convocation 2025	8
Consecration Announcements	9
In Memory of Our Deceased Sister	9
Anniversary Reflections	10
Information Conference	11
Candidate Discussion Groups	12



Following are some screenshots from the prayer. The *Review for Religious* offers the following link to a video of the time of prayer, "Pilgrims of Hope on the Path of Peace": <https://www.reviewforreligious.com/in-news/pilgrims-of-hope-on-the-path-of-peace/>



Bishop Boyea

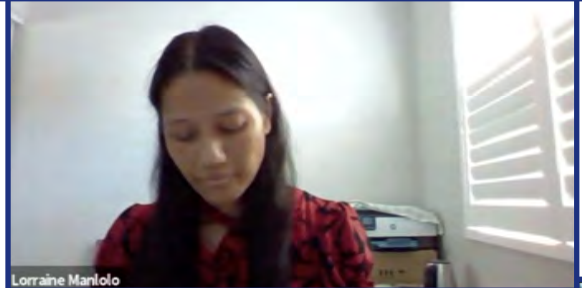
PILGRIMS OF HOPE ON THE PATH OF PEACE

World Day of Consecrated Life
Virtual Encounter of Prayer for All Members of Consecrated Life in the United States

PROGRAM

- Opening remarks and prayer with Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the U.S.A.
- Rosary
 - 1st Glorious Mystery led by members of Conference of Major Superior of Men
 - 2nd Glorious Mystery led by members of Council of Major Superior of Women Religious
 - 3rd Glorious Mystery led by members of Leadership Conference of Women Religious
 - 4th Glorious Mystery led by members of United States Association of Consecrated Virgins
 - 5th Glorious Mystery led by members of United States Conference of Secular Institutes
- Closing remarks and prayer with Bishop Earl Boyea, Chairman for USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations

Welcome! Please type your name, religious initials, and *consecrated life* conference under your photo. We will begin shortly.



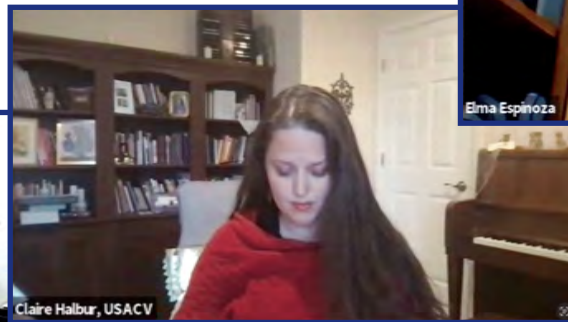
Lorraine Manlolo



Elma Espinoza



"Sr. Carol Zinn, SSJ, LCWR (EN)



Claire Halbur, USACV



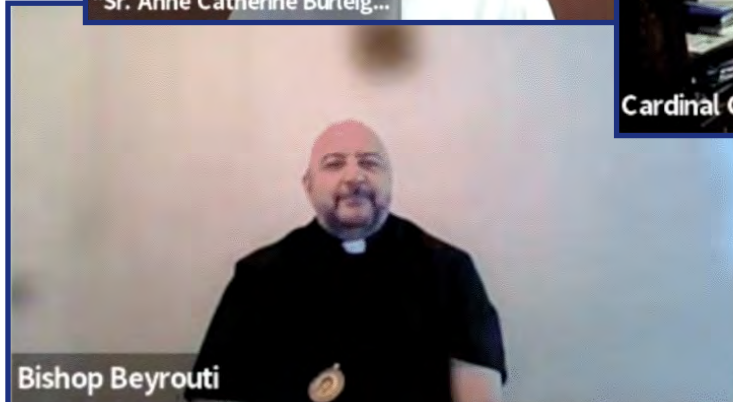
Eleen Belongea



"Sr. Anne Catherine Burleigh...



Cardinal Christophe Pierre



Bishop Beyrouti



Bishop Bill Wack, CSC

By Dr. Magalis Aguilera, Psy.D.

**The *Ordo Consecrationis Virginum*, Historical Notes
(continued from Dec. 12, 2024 “Lamp”)**

. . . In any case, there were no explicit books of consecration rites in those early centuries and there wasn't a formal rite of virginal consecration in the ancient Church, as later appeared. There are references to ancient Roman “sacramentaries,” beginning with the Leonianum or Veronese. We read in the investigation of Vizmanos (1947) that a *propositum* or vow existed in the first century for virgins and widows. In the year 65, Saint Paul wrote to Timothy, pastor of the Church of Ephesus, in reference to some virgins who were called widows, and to widows: “Exclude younger widows, for when their sensuality estranges them from Christ, they want to marry, and will incur condemnation for breaking their first pledge. . . for some have already turned away to follow Satan.” What Vizmanos confirmed was the existence of a “pledge” or *propositum* for virgins; Paul wanted to alert Timothy about permitting the consecration for someone who could become a source of scandal by not being faithful until death to her vow or *propositum* (see I Tim 5).

Vizmanos also referred to consecrated virgins in those centuries, before the *Ordo Consecrationis* was used, and he provided the words of the *propositum* that the virgins presented to the Father or Bishop Father of the Church, or to the Pope: “I renounce your works, oh Satan! I renounce the pomp of this century and its seductions; I promise to lessen my flesh in your service, and I make a “vow,” or “*propositum*,” and swear that, even when offered any human enticement, which I declare I don't desire, I will remain uncontaminated and virgin bride of Christ forever.” In addition to Spanish, Vizmanos presented the text in Latin: “Renuntio tibi, diabole, et saeculo tuo et pompae tuae et operibus tuis: serva foedus quod pepigisti et esto consentient pactumque custodiens cum adversario tuo dum es in via huius seculi.” Similar to this *propositum* or vow there is evidence of Origen and Saint Jerome saying that nearly these same words were used in the *propositum* of virgins and widows in their times, before the rite or an official Pontifical appeared in the sixth century.

The most ancient evidence of the Roman liturgy is the Leonine Sacramentary, composed over the fourth to the mid-sixth century. In the Sacramentary notes for the prayers of consecration is the simple mention, *ad virgines sacras*, or “to sacred virgins.” The consecration rite was often referred to by the more representative rubric or expression, *velatio* or “veiling.” The term *velar*, meaning “to veil” or “to give the veil,” was synonymous with the term *consecrare*, meaning “to consecrate.” *Velar* was the

expression used in the early Church before the Roman sacramentaries and Pontifical. For example, Pope Siricius had already designated the virgin who had received the consecration by the expression *virgo velata*. The *velatio* (veiled) virgin was distinguished from the virgin who had made the *propositum virginitatis*, the commitment to virginity, but had not yet been veiled (consecrated).

At times there were errors made in regard to who could consecrate virgins living in monasteries and virgins living with their families. The Church reacted very strongly whenever violations of the Bishop's right occurred and those who were not Bishops consecrated the virgins. The Council of Carthage in 390, can. 3, ruled that the consecration of a virgin could not be performed by priests, and the Council of Rouen, around 650, can. 9, required that virgins receive the veil from the Bishop and not from priests. In fact, the Council of Paris in 829, can. 4, had to respond to the practice in the ninth century of some abbesses and even mere nuns having been arrogated the power to consecrate virgins. The Paris Council also imposed canonical penalties on priests who carried out consecrations of virgins. The abbesses disregarded these interdictions and continued consecrating virgins in their monasteries until the thirteenth century when Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) and Innocent IV (1242-1256) thought it necessary to condemn these actions again.

The Leonine or Veronese Sacramentary already contained the beautiful prayer of consecration, *Deus, castorum corporum*, composed by Pope Saint Leo the Great (440-461) and used even today by the Bishop in consecrating virgins. But the Rite passes and then returns, through the intricate jungle of the Romano-Germanic Pontificates, until the *Pontificale Romanum* of Clement VIII on February 10, 1596 was revised, becoming the basis for the Pontifical which has been valid until now. The result of this millennial process was a solemn and elaborate rite of consecration of virgins—the most elaborate of all the rites in the Pontifical, after the *Ordo* to consecrate a church—a complex and majestic rite, in which golden elements alternate with others of a much inferior alloy.

Since then, for four centuries, the rite remained intact; but—it must be noted immediately—it also from then fell completely into disuse. In the few environments in which the rite survived, they used their own liturgical books, as was the case among the Cistercian nuns. Most importantly, in the second half of the 19th century, at the initiative of Prosper Louis Pascal Guéranger, a French priest and Benedictine monk who served for nearly 40 years as the abbot of the monastery of Solesmes, beginning in the year 1833, there was a new start to the use of consecration in the Benedictine environments of France and Germany. Prosper Guéranger founded a community of

women under the rule of Saint Benedict. Even in this case, however, the rite used was not the *Ordo* contained in the Roman Pontifical, but rather an adaptation of the same, carried out by the celebrated liturgist, uniting elements typical of the *consecratio virginum* with others coming from the monastic tradition.

With this state of affairs, the peremptory order of the Second Vatican Council that the rite of the *Consecratio virginum* be submitted to revision represented the authoritative acceptance of a deeply felt aspiration of some bishops, by some ascetic circles, and by some qualified liturgical environs.

Bride of Christ

In good time, the theme of the bride of Christ was applied to the Christian virgin. From then on, this title pointed beyond the relationship of Christ and the Church to the bond that unites Christ and the maiden who professed perpetual virginity. By inference, Christian virgins were the image of the Church to whom our Divine Lord Jesus Christ gave himself. The virgin stands as the icon of the spousal love of the Divine Spouse for the Church. In the Roman Church the Christian virgins didn't accept human marriage because they recognized the Divine Lord as their Spouse. An example is Saint Agnes who expressed words that we consecrated virgins sing at our consecration: "I am espoused . . ." Many suffered martyrdom out of love for their heavenly Bridegroom. Tertullian was the first among the Fathers to use the expression *sponsa Christi*, that is, "bride of Christ," to designate the Christian virgin. The term *sponsa Christi* and its symbolism entered into common usage in the fourth century, found particularly in the writings of Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, and Pope Siricius.

"It may not be necessary to say that the revision of the rite of consecration (and consequent restoration of the *Ordo virginum*) has been carried out according to the general criteria established by the Council for the renewal of the liturgy. The *Consecratio* has retained its solemnity; the biblical texts have been expanded; and some ecological texts have been restored to their original purity. Moreover, each element has been placed back in its proper place so that the simple development of the rite is clear and transparent. And above all, it has been desired to preserve—starting with the title—the authentic and traditional meaning of the rite that has always been understood as the nuptials of Christ with she whose virginity is consecrated to Him." (see A. Nocet, "La consacrazione delle vergini" in *La Chiesa in preghiera*, p. 685, trans. M. Aguliera).

The sacrifice of some formulas that, accentuating the consecrated aspect, could not be translated into a renunciation of that aspect related to Christ: to marry Christ that, even if some do not understand it, many Christian virgins, guided by the

Holy Spirit and without falling into sensualism understood it precisely as a committed participation in the general personification of the Church as the authentic Bride of Christ.

But the scope of the restoration of the *Ordo consecrationis virginum* is not exhausted in its technical aspects. Rather, it implies a considerable extension of the use of consecration, since from now on it could be applied both to women who profess monastic life (see chap. II, Ritual) and to those who live in the century (see chap. 1). The decision of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments to extend the *consecratio virginum* to *mulieres vitam saecularem* (women living in the ordinary circumstances of the century (*Praenotanda* n. 4) puts an end to a period of very strict legislation and returns the rite to a situation similar to that of its origins. With this, the Latin Church recognizes the spiritual value of a consecration—prior and exterior, wrought by the Holy Spirit and based on personal commitment—conferred under the guarantee and by the ministry of the Bishop of the local Church, to women who, offering all their soul to Christ, are obliged to live forever dedicated to the service of God, of the Church and of the brothers: a consecration that should be translated into practice with traditional and diocesan characteristics. It is therefore outside the structures of a religious family which are otherwise very valid: life in community, constitutions, superiority and the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience that are lived in the charism of the founder. The vocation of the consecrated virgin is lived in the ordinary circumstances of life (in the world) and the gift of virginity is lived as the charism of the spousal Love of the Divine Spouse in integral donation of the virgin's body and soul to Him as a witness of the spouse who, as the Church, waits for His second coming and the celebration of the eternal wedding feast. It is to live the virginal vocation that dwells in the deepest place of our soul.

The new grace received in the consecration gives integrity to our humanity as we live in the mortal world, meaning in our temporal time and space, in our relationship with others, and in our perpetual vocation of virginity. Saint Basil of Caesarea wrote a letter to an unfaithful virgin. He is also considered to be the author of a treatise on the true integrity in virginity, but although this book is listed among his works, it really belongs to Basil of Ancyra. The treatise is important because it is the first that deals with the physiological side of virginity (Francisco de B. Vizmanos, 1949, *Las virgenes Cristianas de la Iglesia primitiva*, p. 111).

For the woman who receives the gift of virginity, and who is to be consecrated, it is recommended that she follow the advice of Saint Jerome to virgins: "I do not want to induce in you pride in your intentions, but rather induce fear. *You walk laden with gold; you must keep out of the robber's way.*" (*Jerome Letter 22*).

By Dr. Judith M. Stegman, JCD
Archdiocese of Miami (FL)

In today's issue of the Lamp, in her "Something Ancient, Something New" column, Dr. Aguilera continues her probe into the history of the liturgical rite of consecration to a life of virginity. Exploring this history makes me once again be filled with gratitude to our heavenly Father for the restoration in today's Church of the ancient *Ordo virginum*. The words of the Decree of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship on May 31, 1970 promulgating the revised rite for the consecration of virgins bear repeating, as they refer to this graced history:

The rite for the consecration of virgins is one of the most treasured in the Roman liturgy. Consecrated virginity is among the most excellent gifts bequeathed by Our Lord to his Bride, the Church. From apostolic times women have dedicated their virginity to God, so adding to the beauty of the mystical body of Christ and making it fruitful in grace. Even from the earliest times, as the Fathers of the Church bear witness, Mother Church in her wisdom set her seal on this high vocation by her practice of consecrating those who followed it by a solemn prayer. This prayer, enriched in the course of time by other ceremonies to bring out more clearly the symbolism of virginity in relation to the Church, the Bride of Christ, was incorporated in the Roman Pontifical.

We might recall that just one hundred years ago, in 1927, the Sacred Congregation for Religious had responded negatively to requests from Bishops asking that the ancient rite of consecration be opened once again to women living in the world. Although reasons for the denial weren't given, commentators at the time noted what they felt was obvious: if the consecration was to be opened to virgins living in the world, then these women would be constituted as "sacred persons" in the Church, mystically espoused to Christ, and dedicated to the service of the Church. How could an inviolable mystical espousal to Christ be lived by women outside of the protection of a monastery and without the protection of special clothing and veil (which presumably would not be worn by a woman living *in saeculo*, that is, in the ordinary circumstances of life)? By its nature the common monastic life was dedicated to the service of the Church—could this be true for a life lived in the world?

And yet, "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.' (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) 110-113).

As more and more women seek this vocation of love for our Lord Jesus Christ, it is important that we not overlook these very points that gave the Church the virgin saints and martyrs of the early centuries. By their prayer, their dress, their demeanor, and their service to the people of God, the virgins gave witness to being consecrated as brides of our Lord Jesus Christ. May our generation of virgins likewise give witness to our Bridegroom, and by His grace, following in the stead of our Blessed Virgin Mother, give rise to a new generation of virgin saints.

Pray With Us! Virtual Vespers

Consecrated virgins, candidates, and friends joined once again for Virtual Vespers on the Feast of Saint Agnes, Virgin and Martyr, January 21, 2025. We look forward to these rare times of prayer together. We join for Virtual Vespers on various feast days of our Divine Spouse, our Blessed Virgin Mother, and virgin saints. A few days before each time of prayer, a link will be sent to all consecrated virgins and those who have attended a recent Information Conference. If you do not receive a link and would like to participate, please contact info@consecratedvirgins.org.

Upcoming Virtual Vespers dates:

- + Tuesday, March 25, 2025, The Annunciation of the Lord, 9:00pm ET
- + Sunday, April 27, 2025, Sunday of Divine Mercy, 9:00pm ET



Saint Lucy, artwork by Marion Biestek

By Florence Sundberg

Mother Teresa used to say that we cannot do everything but we can do something—so let us do that something which will bless the lives of others, especially pregnant women and their preborn babies. When one life is extinguished, our world becomes darker, colder, inhumane. Dorothy Day spoke of love in action as a harsh and dreadful love—because, I believe, it asks everything from us, no holding back. President Roosevelt reminds us that we are all in the 'arena' fighting on God's side for an infiltration of His love, His sacrificial love, into our hearts, for love stands and fights relentlessly against the forces of evil in our world. "The Man In The Arena," Theodore Roosevelt from a speech at the Sorbonne Paris, France April 23, 1910:

It is not the critic who counts, not the one who points out how the strong man stumbled or how the doer of deeds might have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred with sweat and dust and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, if he wins, knows the triumph of high achievement; and who, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

So let us stand and defend the lives of babies in the womb no matter the cost- we must at least try!

Volume III of the Ordo Virginum series

Shalina Stilley, Diocese of San Diego

Volume III, about virgin saints, continues to come along nicely and is in the editing stage at this point. If you have volunteered to write about a Saint but haven't yet submitted it, please contact Shalina at catherinestilley@gmail.com. Artists, too, are invited to contact Shalina if you haven't yet been in touch.

Submissions Accepted

If you would like to submit an article or artwork for consideration in a future edition of The Lamp, please email it to info@consecratedvirgins.org. We accept articles and artwork from consecrated virgins related to our vocation or related to Our Lady and the virgin saints. If you would like to write and submit a remembrance or memorial for a deceased consecrated virgin to be published in a future edition of The Lamp, please email it to info@consecratedvirgins.org.

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 recent years to send these so that she can update our albums. The "family" albums travel each year to our convocation, and always bring smiles and memories. You can email Anne at anne.gishpert@gmail.com.

Ordo Virginum Brochures Available

The USACV has thousands of beautiful tri-fold printed pamphlets on our vocation that were prepared by consecrated virgins for the National Eucharistic Congress. These are not yet available in our USACV online store, but you may order some for displays in parishes, schools, or diocesan offices, or to have available to distribute at a consecration. The cost is \$5 for 25 pamphlets; \$15 for 100 pamphlets; or \$70 for 500, plus shipping. To order, just send an email to info@consecratedvirgins.org letting us know what you would like (number and English or Spanish), and the mailing address. We'll let you know the cost, including shipping.

Recordings Available!

Links to recordings from the virtual sessions of the 2022 United States Convocation of Consecrated Virgins (held in La Crosse) and the 2022 Virtual Information Conference on the *Ordo virginum*, are now available, and links to the 2024 Virtual Information Conference will be ready soon. If you attended a particular conference in person or virtually, and would like to receive a link to the conference you attended, at no charge, please email info@consecratedvirgins.org with your request. If you did not attend the conference, links to the recordings are available for purchase through our online store at consecratedvirgins.org.



**United States Association
of Consecrated Virgins**
PO Box 442170
Miami, FL 33144

**Email: info@consecratedvirgins.org
president@consecratedvirgins.org**

www.consecratedvirgins.org

Rome in October 2025 - Are You Interested?

Pope Francis has chosen the motto “Pilgrims of Hope” for the 2025 Jubilee Year. The Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life has announced a Jubilee of Consecrated Life to be held October 8-9, 2025, with the theme, “Pilgrims of hope, on the path to peace.” The official Jubilee events for consecrated life include passage through Holy Doors and Mass with the Holy Father, and we understand that there may be a specific gathering of consecrated virgins these days. More information can be found on the Vatican website at <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/pellegrinaggio/calendario-giubileo/GrandiEventi/Giubileo-della-Vita-Consacrata.html>.

The USACV is not planning to organize travel for consecrated virgins to Rome for these Jubilee Days in October 2025, however we would be pleased to organize some activities for virgins who may travel to Rome for these days. Are you interested in working with a group of virgins to make plans for us in Rome in October? Are you already planning to travel to Rome during these days? If so, please be in touch with Judith Stegman at president@consecratedvirgins.org.

The USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations is also preparing a Resource Packet for anyone in dioceses or organizations who might find it useful as they prepare for the Jubilee Days for Consecrated Life. The Resource Packet includes tips for those who may make a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee Days as well as suggestions for celebrating Consecrated Life locally.

2025 Membership Drive and USACV Leadership Team Elections

Consecrated virgin Lauren Gault is handling the logistics of the election to fill three vacancies on the USACV leadership team. We give thanks that five consecrated virgins put forward their names to run for the three open seats! All consecrated virgins who registered as 2024 members of the association, and who have a certificate of consecration on file with the USACV, are eligible to vote and were sent ballots. The election is underway now and ballots are due back to Lauren by February 20, 2025. Results will be announced soon after.

The 2025 Membership Drive will begin very soon under the leadership of our membership chair, consecrated virgin Francesca Riddick.

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

USACV Leadership Team

Claire Halbur 2024-2026; Diocese of Phoenix (AZ).
(Secretary of the USACV-IRC, Music Team Leader,
and 2025 Convocation Team Leader).
Elizabeth Lam 2023-2025; Diocese of Oakland (CA).
(Website Team Member).

Election is in process for three open seats to serve
2025-2027.

IRC Leadership Team

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

Judith Stegman, President of the USACV-IRC 2019-
2025; USA, Archdiocese of Miami (FL).

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

Renu Rita Silvano; INDIA, Archdiocese of Bombay.

Noemi Angeles; PHILIPPINES, Diocese of Malolas

One Unfilled Position

Other USACV-IRC Services, among others

Leandra Hubka; Diocese of Winona-Rochester (MN).
Coordinator of the 2024-2025 Season Candidate
Discussion Group.

Diane LeMay; Diocese of Columbus (OH). Website
Team Leader.

Joani McCann; Archdiocese of Boston (MA). Rome
2025 Jubilee, Event Coordinator.

Julie Radachy; Diocese of Knoxville (TN). Social
Media Team Leader. Co-chair for 2025 Convocation
Team. Concierge and technical assistant for
Information Conference.

Francesca Riddick; Diocese of Joliet (IL). USACV
Membership and eTapestry Team Leader.

Amanda Schrauth; Diocese of Helena (MT).
Publication of *The Lamp*.

Karen Webb 2024-2026; Diocese of Rochester (NY).
USACV-IRC Treasurer.

Upcoming Issues of the Lamp

May 31, 2025 Visitation of the Blessed Virgin

September 8, 2025 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin

December 12, 2025 Our Lady of Guadalupe

February 2, 2026 Feast of the Presentation
and World Day for Consecrated Life

Consecration Announcements

January 11, 2025 — **MacKenzie Warrens**, at the hands of His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston (TX).

January 21, 2025 — **Isabella Vella**, at the hands of the Most Reverend John Noonan, Bishop of Orlando (FL).



MacKenzie Warrens with Cardinal DiNardo and Bishop Italo, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston



Isabella Vella with Bishop John Noonan, Diocese of Orlando

Upcoming Consecrations

We are unaware of any upcoming consecrations. If you would like to submit one, please email info@consecratedvirgins.org.

In Memory of Our Deceased Sister

Joyce Stolberg

January 30, 1945 – February 3, 2025

Before I moved to Colorado Springs, I often prayed "God, I know this is what you want for me but I don't know why". I am certain Joyce was one of the reasons. Shortly after my consecration she started planning regular lunches for the consecrated virgins in the diocese. I honestly can't imagine my last six years without the friendships she was so intentional about helping us to form. I loved seeing the joy on Joyce's face when something good happened in Tara's or my life. When I decided to be a campus minister at the local Newman Center her joy radiated from her face. She was so confident it was what God had planned for me.

I was blessed to see her twice last week, where we discussed her book club choice, *Interior Castle*, and then I got to sit next to her that Friday for the Mass to celebrate World Day of Consecrated Life with Bishop Golka. She had that radiating smile as she said she got snowbombed on her 80th birthday!

Joyce loved our Spouse with everything she had, desired for others to see the beauty of this vocation He called us to, and cared so deeply for all of us. I am struggling to imagine our book clubs without her voice, our lunches without her presence and not running into her at ordinations, Masses or other events around the diocese. Rest in peace, sweet friend. You will be missed!

- Lisa Hunt, Diocese of Colorado Springs (CO)



While Joyce will be remembered for her faithful life as a consecrated virgin, I'll remember her, too, for her years of faithful service to the USACV. Joyce arranged the articles, photos, and illustrations for "The Lamp" from May of 2015, after the death of Julie Taube, to May of 2019. Joyce's maturity and professionalism were apparent and greatly appreciated in this work—it is a labor of love for our vocation.



Theme: The Interior Castle with St. Teresa of Jesus

Plan to join other consecrated virgins for a retreat-style convocation in the beautiful Smoky Mountains, with cozy condominium lodging and talks by Fr. David Whiteside and Bishop Boyea. You'll be nourished with daily Mass, adoration, chanted communal Liturgy of the Hours, and time for personal prayer and fellowship—while surrounded by God's creation!

Registration to open Mar 1. Register early to ensure your spot!

- For those flying, book your travel to/from Knoxville airport (TYS).
- Convocation opens with noon Mass on Fri 6/27 at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart!)
- Convocation ends Tues 7/1 after Lauds, Mass, and breakfast.
- Optional extension days to enjoy local attractions!

Cost:

- Convocation registration (meals + private room & bath for 4 nights): \$725*
- Convocation registration (meals + shared room & bath for 4 nights): \$500*

Extra nights for early arrival or extended stay:

- Private @ \$115/night (meals on own)
- Shared @ 60/night (meals on own)

*Earlybird pricing. Costs increase by \$50/person after April 1 (paper registration) or April 15 (online registration).

Questions? Julie Radachy (radjulie31@gmail.com or 865-279-9185)

Consecrated virgins who celebrate significant anniversaries during 2025 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*.

20 Years

Diane Christine Farr
consecrated February 20, 2005
Diocese of Rochester (NY)

Twenty years ago in February 2005, I had the joy of being consecrated as a virgin bride of Christ. Many things have happened in my life since then. I have tried to see them as opportunities for me to grow in love and service to God and other people. I took care of my mother until 2011 when she died of Muscular Dystrophy. My own health is now declining because of the same disease. I am dealing with many challenges. I adopted a wonderful kitten named Lily in 2009. Last January, I had to give her back to God. One month later I adopted a six-year-old tabby named Skittles. She is good company like all of my cats before her. I have made many good friends because of my vocation. I am especially close to consecrated virgin Theresa Drajin. We read books together over the phone. I have greatly enjoyed becoming a regular part of *The Lamp*. I have come to see writing as a learning experience. I have grown so much contemplating the different aspects of the consecration to a life of virginity. I am grateful to be able to share these reflections. I love and appreciate my vocation especially since it has drawn me into a deeper intimacy with Jesus. I will conclude with an allegorical story that I wrote several years ago. It highlights our total dependence on God's strength and our complete trust in His mercy.

I have learned that when a person loses their health and can't do what they used to do, their relationship with God is marked by greater simplicity. In one sense our vocation is lived beyond this world. The following story illustrates this reality.



“The Story of the Little Lily” by Diane Christine Farr
An allegorical account of Jesus and his love for a
little soul

Once in the garden of humankind there was a lovely white lily. She enjoyed the simple pleasures of the kingdom, the musical voices of the birds, the gentle breeze, the small creatures that played about in the garden and the splendor of the other flowers. Now this lily was very small and delicate. It would seem that she was hardly noticed among the many other flowers growing in the garden.

One day the great king came to the garden. Upon seeing the little lily his heart was moved with love. He wished to put her in his storehouse for he desired her all for himself. Now the great king was all wise and wonderful. He was so powerful that he could make himself very small—so small that he could enter secret places where none other could go without causing great injury. The great king had sacrificed himself for all the treasures of his kingdom. Nothing was too great an obstacle for his love.

He gently called the little lily by name. She was enchanted by his voice and captivated by his great mercy. When the king came to take possession of his little lily and betrothed her to himself, she had no fear of opening herself to him, of letting herself be loved and of welcoming him into his palace for hidden dwelling. He gently came to her in secret.

She now possessed her greatest joy. A joy beyond anything she had ever known. She was now living in deepest intimacy with her lord and king. Sharing all his joys and sorrows. She no longer feared her weakness or fragility, for she now belonged to the great king. With him she could do all things, suffer all things and bear much fruit for his kingdom.

She was now a lily carried in the hand of her master. She was enfolded in his mantle, living in a heart-to-heart exchange with her beloved. Who among other flowers would have ever guessed that the great king would choose the little lily for his bride? For now she had become his garden enclosed, his fountain sealed.

The USACV-IRC is pleased to announce the 2025 Information Conference on the *Ordo Virginum*, which will be held in a virtual format once again. The conference includes prayer together, testimonials from consecrated virgins, presentations on significant aspects of the vocation of consecrated virginity lived *in specula*, and times for questions and answers. Presenters include Bishop Earl Boyea, Episcopal Moderator for the USACV and, among others, consecrated virgins Dr. Magalis Aguilera, Psy.D. and Dr. Judith M. Stegman, JCD.

This conference is a valuable resource for anyone with a serious interest in discovering more about the vocation of consecrated virginity, including those who are pursuing the consecration as aspirants or candidates; diocesan delegates for consecrated life; diocesan vocation directors; other diocesan representatives responsible for discernment and formation for this vocation; and consecrated virgins themselves.

The Information Conference is a prerequisite for participation in Candidate Discussion Groups (see page 12).

2025 Virtual Information Conference on the Vocation of Consecrated Virginity

Dates: Friday to Sunday, September 5 to 7, 2025

Time: 1:00-6:00pm ET each day

Format: Webinar

Coordinators: Judith Stegman, Julie Radachy, and Leadership Teams of the USACV and IRC

Presentation topics:

- † Overview of Vocations in the Catholic Church, and the Ecclesial Identification of the *Ordo virginum*
- † The Liturgical Rite of Consecration and the Marian Dimension of the Vocation
- † The Liturgy of the Hours and Prayer Life of the Consecrated Virgin
- † Historical Aspects of the Consecration of Virgins; Virgin Saints
- † Sacred Scripture and the Witness of the *Ordo Virginum*, in *Ecclesiae sponsae imago*
- † Mystical Espousal to Christ, the Son of God
- † Living *in saeculo* and in the Local Church
- † Personal Testimonies of Consecrated Virgins Serving on the Team
- † Psychological Maturity for Living the Virginal Vocation
- † Prerequisites for Admission to the Virginal Consecration
- † Stages of Preparation for Admission to the *Ordo virginum*
- † About Associations, the *Ordo virginum*, and Next Steps

Online registration is not yet open. To pre-register, please email:

info@consecratedvirgins.org.



2024-2024 Season of the Candidate Discussion Group

Consecrated virgin Leandra Hubka of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester is coordinating the 2024-2025 season of the Candidate Discussion Group, sponsored by the USACV. The Candidate Discussion Group is designed to be a supplement for diocesan-based formation for consecration in the *Ordo virginum*. The group meets quarterly, online, for one hour, to hear presentations and engage in guided discussion regarding relevant aspects of the life of consecrated virginity.

2024–2025 Program

The Candidate Discussion Group (CDG), sponsored by the USACV, is designed to be a supplement (not a substitute) for diocesan-based formation for consecration in the *Ordo virginum*. The CDG meets quarterly, online, for one hour, to hear presentations and engage in guided discussion regarding relevant aspects of the life of consecrated virginity. Topics for the 2024-2025 Season:

November 4, 2024: *Ora et Labora: Prayer in the Life of a Consecrated Virgin In Saeculo*, Presenter Leandra Hubka. *Recording available to those who attended the session. Please contact Leandra Hubka for more information.*

February 3, 2025: Relationships in the Life of the Consecrated Virgin: Living in the World but not of the World, Presenter Dr. Magalis Aguilera, Psy.D. *Recording available to those who attended the session. Please contact Leandra Hubka for more information.*

May 5, 2025: Living Integrated Virginity: Living the Charism of Virginity through the Lens of Theology of the Body, Presenter Jen Settle.

August 4, 2025: Virginity and the Interior Life: The Virginal Heart in Its Seasons, Presenter Elizabeth Lee.

Who is invited to participate?

Aspirants or candidates for consecration in the *Ordo virginum* who are referred by a diocesan representative, and who have previously attended an Information Conference sponsored by the USACV, are warmly invited to participate in the Candidate Discussion Group. Because the next Information Conference will not be held until September 2025, an aspirant or candidate who plans to attend the 2025 Information Conference and has viewed the recordings of the 2022 or 2024 Information Conference, is also invited to participate.

Consecrated virgins are also most welcome to attend, as ongoing formation.

Registration

Registration information and online registration forms are available here: [OV Candidate Discussion Group Registration](#). There is no cost to register. Further information about each of the 2024-2025 presenters can be found on the registration form.

Questions? Please contact Leandra Hubka at info@consecratedvirgins.org.



Saint Agnes, artwork by Marion Biestek