

## **Quotations from Pope Benedict XVI on consecrated life**

### **Message to men and women religious in the Diocese of Rome (Dec. 10, 2005)**

Since its origins, in fact, consecrated life has been marked by its thirst for God: *quaerere Deum*.

May your first and supreme desire therefore be to witness to the fact that God should be listened to and loved with all your heart, with all your mind and with all your might, before any other person or thing.

### **Address to Canadian bishops (May 11, 2006)**

The life of prayer and contemplation founded on the Eucharistic mystery is also at the heart of the vocation of consecrated people who have chosen the path of the *sequela Christi*, to give themselves to the Lord with an undivided heart in an ever more intimate relationship with him. By their unconditional attachment to Christ and to his Church, they have the special mission to reminding everyone of the universal vocation to holiness.... [C]onsecrated men and women proclaim that God alone can give fullness to human existence.

### **Address to superiors general of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life (May 22, 2006)**

Consecrated men and women of today have the duty to be witnesses of the transfiguring presence of God in a world that is evermore disoriented and confused, a world where toning down has substituted sharp and distinctive colours....

Belonging to the Lord: this is the mission of the men and women who have chosen to follow Christ – chaste, poor and obedient – so that the world may believe and be saved. To belong completely to Christ so as to become a permanent confession of faith, an unequivocal proclamation of truth that frees us from the seduction of the false idols that deceive the world.

### **Message for World Day of Consecrated Life (Feb. 2, 2007)**

Those who are chosen by God for the consecrated life make this spiritual longing their own in a definitive way. In it, in fact, they have one expectation: the Kingdom of God: that God reign in our will, in our hearts, in the world. In them burns a unique thirst for love which can be quenched by the Eternal One alone.

By their example they proclaim to a world which is often bewildered but, in fact, increasingly in search of meaning, that God is the Lord of life and that his "steadfast love is better than life" (Ps 63[62]:4[3])....

[N]ever forget that the consecrated life is a divine gift and that it is the Lord in the first place who ensures its success in accordance with his plans....

And so, when one renounces everything to follow Christ, when one gives to him all that one holds most dear, braving every sacrifice as did the divine Teacher, the consecrated person who follows in Christ's footsteps necessarily also becomes "a sign of contradiction," because his/her

way of thinking and living is often in opposition to the logic of the world, as it is almost always presented in the media.

**Vespers with priests, religious and seminarians (Shrine of Mariazell, Austria, Sept. 8, 2007)**

By your prayer and intercession, you are the advocates of all who seek God, who are journeying towards God. You bear witness to a hope which, against every form of hopelessness, silent or spoken, points to the fidelity and the loving concern of God. Hence you are on the side of those who are crushed by misfortune and cannot break free of their burdens. You bear witness to that Love which gives itself for humanity and thus conquered death. You are on the side of all who have never known love, and who are no longer able to believe in life. And so you stand against all forms of injustice, hidden or apparent, and against a growing contempt for man.

***Spe Salvi* (Encyclical on Christian Hope, Nov. 30, 2007)**

This new freedom, the awareness of the new “substance” which we have been given, is revealed ... in the great acts of renunciation, from the monks of ancient times to Saint Francis of Assisi and those of our contemporaries who enter modern religious Institutes and movements and leave everything for love of Christ, so as to bring to men and women the faith and love of Christ, and to help those who are suffering in body and spirit.... From the hope of these people who have been touched by Christ, hope has arisen for others who were living in darkness and without hope.... For us who contemplate these figures, their way of acting and living is de facto a “proof” that the things to come, the promise of Christ, are not only a reality that we await, but a real presence: he is truly the “philosopher” and the “shepherd” who shows us what life is and where it is to be found (8).

**Homily, Votive Mass for the Universal Church, (St Patrick’s Cathedral, April 19, 2008)**

Dear brothers and sisters, in the finest traditions of the Church in this country, may you also be the first friend of the poor, the homeless, the stranger, the sick and all who suffer. Act as beacons of hope, casting the light of Christ upon the world, and encouraging young people to discover the beauty of a life given completely to the Lord and his Church.