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(parish/organization name)
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(parish/organization e-mail)

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***Pro Orantibus Day* (“For Those Who Pray”)
Scheduled for Nov. 21, 2011**

Chicago, IL--Catholics throughout the world are encouraged to honor the cloistered and monastic life on *Pro Orantibus* Day, which is Monday, Nov. 21, 2011.

“The primary purpose of *Pro Orantibus* Day (“For Those Who Pray”) is to thank God for the tremendous gift of the cloistered and monastic vocation in the Church’s life,” noted Fr. Thomas Nelson, O.PRAEM., National Director of the Institute on Religious Life. “Since the lives of these women and men religious dedicated to prayer and sacrifice is often hidden, this annual celebration reminds us of the need to support their unique mission within the Body of Christ,” he added.

In 1997 Pope John Paul II asked that this ecclesial event be observed worldwide on November 21, the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary’s Presentation in the Temple. It is a special day to thank those in the cloistered and monastic life for serving as “a leaven of renewal and of the presence of the spirit of Christ in the world.” It is also intended to remind others of the need to provide spiritual and material support “for those who pray.”

Pope Benedict XVI has spoken often of the tremendous value of the cloistered, contemplative life. Speaking to a group of cloistered Dominican nuns in Rome, the Holy Father referred to such religious as “the heart” which provides blood to the rest of the Body of Christ. He noted that in their work and prayer, together with Christ, they are the “heart” of the Church and in their desire for God’s love they approach the ultimate goal.

The nationwide effort to publicize *Pro Orantibus* Day is coordinated by the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE, a national organization based in the Chicago area. The IRL was founded in 1974 by Servant of God Rev. John A. Hardon, S.J., and is comprised of bishops, priests, religious and laity who support and promote the vowed religious life.

Visit CloisteredLife.com for more information.

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