



**Helpful Resources to Celebrate
2017 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE
Pro Orantibus Day
 (“For Those Who Pray”)**

November 21, 2017

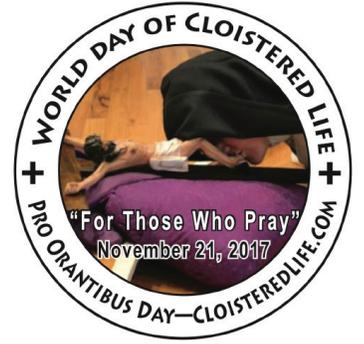
**A Day of Spiritual Solidarity and Support
for the Cloistered and Monastic Life**

**Compiled by the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE
available online at
CloisteredLife.com**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (insert parish/organization contact name)
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(insert date of release)



2017 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE
—Pro Orantibus Day (“For Those Who Pray”)—
Scheduled for November 21, 2017

Chicago, IL—Catholics throughout the world are encouraged to support the cloistered and monastic life on WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, which is Tuesday November 21, 2017, the Memorial of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple.

“The primary purpose of WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, traditionally known as *Pro Orantibus* Day (“For Those Who Pray”), is to support—both spiritually and materially—the gift of the cloistered and monastic life,” notes Rev. Thomas Nelson, O. PRAEM., National Director of the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE. And as Pope Francis reminds us, “it is an opportune occasion to thank the Lord for the gift of so many people who, in monasteries and hermitages, dedicate themselves to God in prayer and in silent work.”

Pope Pius XII first instituted this ecclesial worldwide event in 1953 to publicly recognize women and men who so generously give of themselves to this unique calling and who each day, from the various convents and monasteries spread throughout the world, offer prayer unceasingly. Pope St. John Paul II later expanded its celebration and encouraged Catholics to support this sublime vocation in any way possible.

Since his election, Pope Francis has strongly encouraged the faithful to express appreciation to cloistered women and men, especially on this day dedicated to them. “Let us thank the Lord for the witness of the cloistered life and let us not fail them in our spiritual and material support in accomplishing such an important mission.”

The nationwide effort to publicize WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE (*Pro Orantibus* Day) is coordinated by the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE. 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.

A free packet of resources is available online, including a meditation for this occasion at CloisteredLife.com.

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The cloistered religious featured on the 2017 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE logo is from the Carmelite Monastery of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The community’s website is CarmelofSantaFe.org.



Bulletin Announcements **to observe WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE**

To be inserted the weekend of November 11-12, 2017:

On November 21 (the Memorial of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple), the Church will celebrate WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, an ecclesial event for all Catholics worldwide to commemorate the hidden lives of consecrated religious in cloisters and monasteries. We celebrate this day because the contemplative life is a gift from God to us all, because the entire world spiritually benefits from the prayers and sacrifices of these dedicated religious, even when we do not know it. On this day, the faithful are encouraged to reach out to the cloistered and contemplative communities in their diocese, through prayer, encouragement, and material support.

Some concrete ways to do this are: participating in a novena and offering up Masses, writing notes of appreciation to contemplative communities, visiting them, and making a special point to teach families, religious education classes, youth groups, etc., about the tremendous value of the contemplative life. Pope Francis has said, “It is a good opportunity to thank the Lord for the gift of so many people who, in monasteries and hermitages, dedicate themselves to God in prayer and silent work.”

[Here mention any specific ways the parish or parishioners can commemorate this event. Also, note any cloistered convents or monasteries within the (arch)diocese.]

For more information visit CloisteredLife.com.

To be inserted the weekend of November 18-19, 2017:

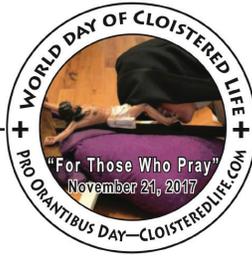
This Tuesday, November 21 (the Memorial of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple), the Church celebrates WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, an ecclesial event for all Catholics to commemorate the hidden lives of cloistered and monastic religious. Ways to honor the event include prayer (participating in a novena, offering up Masses, etc.), encouragement (writing letters to contemplative communities, visiting them, calling to thank them, etc.), and material support (monetary donations).

A few years ago at a general audience in St. Peter’s Square, Pope Francis reminded the Church, “Let us give thanks to the Lord for the powerful testimony of cloistered life.” He also urged the faithful to lend their spiritual and material support to these brothers and sisters of ours “so that they can carry out their important mission.”

Special promotion of this annual celebration is being coordinated in the United States by the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE.

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For more information visit CloisteredLife.com.



Novena in Preparation for the Feast of Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

By Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D.

(Novena to take place from November 12-20)



Meditations and Prayers

Days 1, 4 and 7:

Mary, Mother of God, tradition tells us that when you were 3 years of age, your parents, Joachim and Anne, took you to the Temple in Jerusalem to fulfill their vow. The holy couple offered you to God by the ministry of the priest in charge, who invoked the blessing of God upon you and your parents. How fervently your mother and father thanked God for having given you to them and begged Him to accept the offering that they were making! They then left a small offering of silver required by the Law of Moses.

What a beautiful example for parents to imitate! Their children also belong to God, for they are His gift. Teach parents to care for their children as God's sacred trust, to guard them from sin and to lead them in the way of virtue. May they consider it to be the greatest privilege bestowed upon them by God to dedicate their sons and daughters to His holy service. Help them to become worthy of this blessing through their own prayers and good example.

Mary, my Mother, your first presentation to God, made by the hands of your parents, was an offering most acceptable in His sight. Let my consecration of myself to God be made under your patronage and assisted by your intercession and in union with your merits. Amen.

Mary, Model and Mother of the Cloistered Life, pray for us!

Days 2, 5 and 8:

Mary, Mother of God, already in your childhood you dedicated yourself to the love and service of God. Led by divine inspiration to His house, you prepared yourself for your sublime dignity of Divine Motherhood in silence and solitude with God. Though the designs of God were unknown to you, you nevertheless detached your heart from the world in order to give all your love to God.

Consecrated to the Lord, you may have remained in the Temple until the age of 12. When you later returned to your home, you were under the loving care of your mother, Saint Anne. With her you loved to sing the psalms and canticles of the inspired authors of your nation. From Anne you heard the touching story of the Chosen People. You learned to read the sacred books by yourself and tried to penetrate their hidden meaning. You often discussed the coming of the Messiah, since you knew He would be of your race and family.

Mary, my Mother, you were laying the foundation of that hidden life in which, by the practice of the highest virtues, you were to reach that sublime degree of holiness to which you were predestined as Mother of the Son of God and Mother of all the souls for whom He was to die. Attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit, you diligently gathered up all His lessons, preserving them in your soul with zealous care. Amen.

Mary, Model and Mother of the Cloistered Life, pray for us!

Days 3, 6 and 9:

Mary, Mother of God, may the perfect gift of yourself to God through love in your presentation in the temple be an inspiration to me. You loved God with your whole heart and mind and strength. Obtain for me the grace to love God with my whole heart—so that all the love my heart is capable of may be consecrated to Him, and all other affection subordinated to the love I owe God.

Help me to love God with my whole soul—so that all the faculties of my soul may be consecrated to Him, and that I may make use of them only to make Him known, loved and served.

Help me to love God with my whole mind—so that my mind may be habitually occupied with God and that I may value His good pleasure above everything else, above my convenience, above all earthly treasures, above all knowledge and friendship, above health and life.

Help me to love God with my whole strength—so that I may consecrate undividedly, unreservedly and continually to His service, my life, my health and all I am and have.

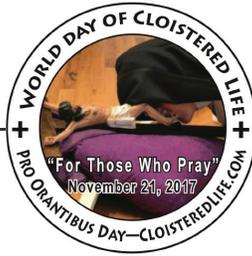
Mary, my Mother, pray that the love of God above all things and detachment from the world and its false pleasures, may also make my soul the temple of the living God. After your example, I desire to be known to God and unknown to men, to possess God and to be forgotten by creatures. May God dwell in me and may I live to Him alone through frequent Holy Communion and still more frequent prayer so that God may direct my whole life—my thoughts, words and actions—to His greater honor and glory. Amen.

Mary, Model and Mother of the Cloistered Life, pray for us!

Visit CloisteredLife.com



Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D., was a missionary priest of the Society of the Divine Word. After completing his theological studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, he served as a teacher and preached parish missions throughout the U.S. and conducted retreats throughout the world. In 1954, Father founded the Sisters of the Divine Spirit, a missionary congregation of women religious. His life's ideal was to make God more known and loved through his writings. He published more than 30 books and over 75 pamphlets.



Special Holy Hour to Celebrate WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE

Exposition *While the celebrant is bringing the Eucharist to the altar the suggested or another suitable hymn may be sung by the congregation.*

Opening Hymn O Saving Victim/ O Salutaris

Adoration *During this period there should be times of silence and appropriate prayers, hymns, songs, readings from Scripture, and a brief homily to help the congregation focus its attention on worship of the Lord and specifically to intercede for the cloistered and monastic life.*

Gospel Reading Lk 21:1-4

Homily/Meditation See *Meditation/Reflection Notes*

Prayer in Support of the Cloistered Life

Eternal Father, we praise and thank you for those sisters and brothers who have embraced the gift of the cloistered and monastic life.

Their prayerful presence is indispensable to the Church's life and mission, and is the foundation of the New Evangelization.

As we celebrate WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, let us honor the holiness and glory of the Blessed Virgin. May she, who was presented in the Temple, intercede so that many young people might dedicate themselves entirely to Your divine service by hidden lives of contemplative prayer and selfless sacrifice.

May all of us be mindful of the spiritual and material needs of those who commit their lives to seeking God by fixing their gaze on those things which are eternal.

We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction *After an extended period of silent meditation the celebrant goes to the altar, genuflects and kneels. The following or another suitable Eucharistic hymn is sung.*

Benediction Hymn Down in Adoration/ *Tantum Ergo*

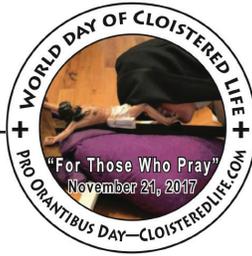
Eucharistic Prayer Lord our God, You have given us the True Bread from Heaven. In the strength of this food may we live always by Your life and raise in glory on the last day. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Eucharistic Blessing *The priest or deacon blesses the congregation with the Holy Eucharist.*

Reposition *When the priest or deacon has blessed everyone, he then places the Blessed Sacrament back in the tabernacle and genuflects. The Divine Praises may be said aloud at this time. Afterwards, the suggested or another suitable hymn may be sung by the congregation.*

Closing Hymn *Holy God, We Praise Thy Name*





Meditation/Reflection to observe
2017 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE
—Pro Orantibus Day (“For Those Who Pray”)—

A Matter of Salvation

Gospel Reading: Lk 19:1-10

At that time Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way.

When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house.” And he came down quickly and received him with joy.

When they saw this, they began to grumble, saying, “He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner.”

But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over.”

And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost.”

Reflection:

Our Lord came to earth to seek out the lost and to heal sinners. His grace is the only real cure for all the ills of the human race. However Christ does not want slaves but sons and daughters who are heirs to His Kingdom. This Kingdom begins on earth through our progressive conversion and is completed in Heaven. Most of human life is spent preparing us to receive grace and live it here on earth so that we may experience lasting happiness with Him in the Beatific Vision. Though we cannot give ourselves grace it is a truism that as Augustine says: “God who created us without our participation will not save us without our participation.”

The Gospel for this WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE (*Pro Orantibus Day*) is a witness to the divine call and our preparation. Zacchaeus has heard about Christ and is eager to see Him. His small stature demands that his eager desire to look on Christ drives him to commit a very humiliating act for an adult: *he climbs a tree*. This action shows Zacchaeus’ openness to salvation despite the awkward fact that he is one of the hated collaborators with the Romans, a tax collector. Not only were the publicans Roman collaborators but many of them took advantage of the lack of clarity in the tax laws to prey on their ignorant victims in collecting taxes. Though Zacchaeus does not appear to have unjustly profited from his position, his awareness of his collaboration and his need for repentance are enough for him to seek salvation. He has sacrificed his dignity in society by climbing his own cross, the tree.

Our Lord responds to this sacrifice with the healing words that He wishes to stay at Zacchaeus' house in defiance of all social convention among the Jews of his time. Zacchaeus responds by further desiring to make restitution for anyone he may have defrauded even going beyond the demands of the Old Testament.

The cloistered and monastic life would seem far removed from influencing a conversion such as Zacchaeus'. After all, cloistered religious exercise no active apostolate outside the enclosure. Yet nothing could be further from the truth.

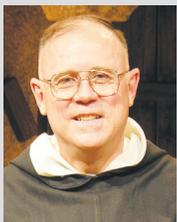
As is well known, cloistered religious do not put up their grills to isolate themselves from interest in mankind. It is rather to demonstrate that Heaven which is final union with God through Christ, is at the heart of the world and is the primary concern to every person's conversion of heart. Cloistered women and men surrender physical presence in the world to be a spiritual presence here by demonstrating in a practical way what the happy life of Heaven is about and by seeking out the lost through prayer.

As to Zacchaeus' rather spectacular conversion, one can wonder if someone who loved him prayed for that. By making reparation for a world gone mad with selfish egotism, the difficulty of offering their physical sufferings and spiritual asceticism of an enclosed community life in union through love for Christ, associates cloistered religious with His desire to stay with Zacchaeus. By giving up physical stays in the houses of people, cloistered religious can spiritually be present to every soul.

This should lead them through their unity with Christ in charity to also offer their lives as He did for the conversion of sinners and their ongoing free embrace of the spiritual life. In fact, cloistered religious can participate in the conversion of another by their union of friendship with Christ. Thomas Aquinas asked in *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 114, and 6 if it was possible to merit the conversion of another person. There the Angelic Doctor teaches that there are two participants in the conversion of each person: God by merit of strict equality who moves the person, as He is always first; and the person who by proportionate equality participates in their own conversion, if they are beyond the age of reason, by their free will. We must do our part to receive grace. Christ was the primary source of the conversion of Zacchaeus, but he did his part.

If cloistered religious are filled with friendship with Christ, though they obviously in strict justice cannot merit the conversion of others by their prayers and desires, nevertheless by their union of hearts God will want to aid in the conversion of others they pray for. Aquinas says: "But one may merit the first grace for another proportionately; because a man in grace fulfills God's will, and it is proportionate and fitting and in harmony with friendship that God should fulfill man's desire for the salvation of another, although sometimes there may be an impediment on the part of him whose salvation the just man desires." It is a fittingly friendly thing that God should want to do man's will in this. Thank God we have cloistered religious to pray so that all may climb the tree of their conscience, restore others whom they have harmed and thus have Him come to the house of their souls.

As we celebrate WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, let us remember these dedicated women and men who in convents, monasteries and hermitages give of themselves selflessly to God by their prayers and sacrifices. Let us offer these dedicated souls our spiritual and material support—in whatever way we can—so that they may merit the graces needed for the conversion and sanctification of our wounded and broken world.



Rev. Brian Mullady, O.P., is a nationally-known Dominican priest, retreat master, spiritual director, and television host on ETERNAL WORD TELEVISION NETWORK. Besides giving parish missions, Father Mullady teaches at Holy Apostles Seminary and the *Vita Consecrata* Institute. He also writes for a number of Catholic publications including the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, *Religious Life* and *The National Catholic Register*. He has published a number of books including *Both a Servant and Free* and *Glorify God in Your Body: The Theology of the Body for Priests, Religious & Other Consecrated Persons*.



Prayer in Support of the Cloistered Life

Eternal Father,

We praise and thank you for those sisters and brothers who have embraced the gift of the cloistered and monastic life. Their prayerful presence is indispensable to the Church's life and mission, and is the foundation of the New Evangelization.

As we celebrate WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, let us honor the holiness and glory of the Blessed Virgin. May she, who was presented in the Temple, intercede so that many young people might dedicate themselves entirely to Your divine service by hidden lives of contemplative prayer and selfless sacrifice.

May all of us be mindful of the spiritual and material needs of those who commit their lives to seeking God by fixing their gaze on those things which are eternal.

We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

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Oración en Apoyo a la Vida de Clausura

Padre Eterno,

Te alabamos y te agradecemos por las hermanas y los hermanos que han abrazado el don de la vida claustral y monástica. Su presencia en oración es indispensable para la vida y misión de la Iglesia, y es el fundamento de la Nueva Evangelización.

Al celebrar el DÍA MUNDIAL DE LA VIDA DE CLAUSURA, honremos la santidad y la gloria de la Santísima Virgen. Que ella, quien fue presentada en el templo, interceda para que muchos jóvenes puedan dedicarse enteramente a Tu servicio divino con vidas ocultas de oración contemplativa y sacrificio desinteresado.

Que todos nosotros estemos atentos a las necesidades espirituales y materiales de los que comprometen su vida a la búsqueda de Dios, fijando la mirada en las cosas eternas.

Te lo pedimos por Nuestro Señor Jesucristo, Tu Hijo, que vive y reina contigo y el Espíritu Santo, un solo Dios, por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.

Visita CloisteredLife.com



General Intercessions **to observe WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE** **November 21, 2017**

Presider:

Trusting that Our Heavenly Father is always faithful to His promises, let us turn to Him with childlike confidence and unwavering trust.

Reader:

Let us together unite our voices as we respond: *Lord hear our prayer.*

- For Pope Francis and all our bishops, that they might wisely and courageously shepherd the souls entrusted to their care, we pray to the Lord...
- For world leaders (*may add specific names*) that they promote peace, uphold the dignity of human life, and respect all the inherent rights of those they govern, we pray to the Lord...
- For all Christians, especially those who are being persecuted, that they may grow in their life of prayer and offer up their sufferings in union with Our Merciful Savior, we pray to the Lord...
- For consecrated men and women in convents, cloisters, monasteries and hermitages throughout the world, that they faithfully live out their vocation and fruitfully implore God's merciful love for the sake of others, we pray to the Lord...
- For all those discerning their specific vocation and mission in life, that they may be granted the graces to respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and be open to considering the cloistered and monastic life, we pray to the Lord...
- For parents and families of contemplative religious and all who make sacrifices to enable contemplative men and women to live out their sublime vocation, we pray to the Lord...
- For those who have died (*especially...*) and all deceased contemplative religious that they may experience the fullness of God's glory, we pray to the Lord...

Presider:

Loving God, giver of all good things, bless Your Church and give us an abundance of vocations to the cloistered and monastic life as visible signs of the Kingdom that is yet to come. Grant this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.