The Mountaineer

United States Conference of Secular Institutes

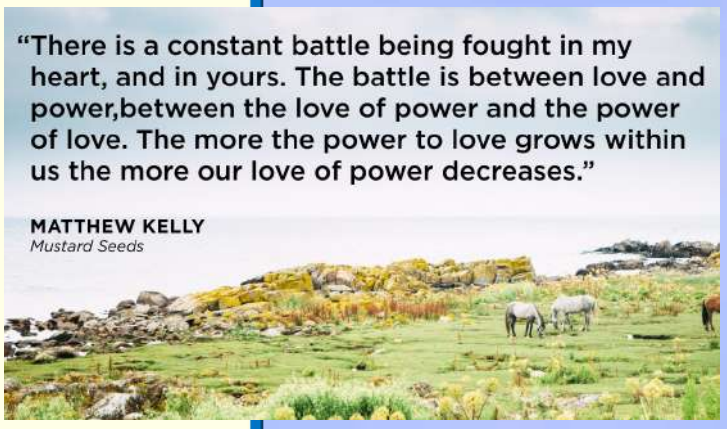
April 2025

Volume 18, Issue 1

From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

In thinking back on the beautiful virtual prayer service that our five conferences of consecrated life held on February 2nd, I decided to go back and reread Pope Francis' remarks for the World Day for Consecrated Life. He focused his reflection on the heart of consecrated life (after the Eucharist) the evangelical counsels.



In speaking of evangelical poverty - which "frees from attachment to worldly things" - the Pope observes that it enables men and women to "manifest the goodness of those things in the order of love, rejecting everything that can obscure their beauty—selfishness, greed, dependence…and embracing instead all that can highlight that beauty: simplicity, generosity, sharing and solidarity." We recognize that our natural propensity to possess never leaves us but challenges us daily to pray for the disposition to true poverty as Christ was-–forgiving, generous with time and tending to His neighbor.

The vow of chastity, its origin founded in the Trinity and the love between the three divine Persons," enables "consecrated persons to speak to the world about the primacy of God's love…as well as overturning the drive for superficial relationships and selfish affectivity that seeks to use others for their own fleeting pleasure." The Pope notes on a personal level "what a balm it is for the soul to encounter religious women and men capable of a mature and joyful relationality."

He then spoke about the vow of obedience which consecrated people embody in their "deep sense of responsibility animated by mutual trust" and that loneliness is set aside by this evangelical counsel of obedience acting as an antidote to isolated individualism, since it fosters active listening. Only in this way," says Francis, "can a person fully experience the joy of gift, overcoming loneliness and discovering the meaning of his or her existence in God's greater plan."

These evangelical counsels are the lights which, with the Eucharist, light our paths and nourish our affirmation: Here we are, Lord; we come to do your will!

Happy Easter to all.
Sue Larkin

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Jubilee Holy Year Celebration

USCSI Members contribute to a Historic First for the United States of America

February 2, 2025: Virtual Prayer Service for Consecrated Life



Sr. Carol Zinn, Bishop Boyea, Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Sr. Anne Catherine Burleigh, Bishop Beyrouti, and Bishop Bill Wack





Joan Patten, Fr. Scott Jones, and Maritina Paniagua representing the USCSI

Jubilee Holy Year Celebration in USA & Invitation to Global Celebration in Rome

In February of 2024, members of the five US conferences of consecrated life were called to Rome to discuss how the United States would participate in the Jubilee Year for Consecrated Life. The mandate was to come up with a way with which the entire country could celebrate and acknowledge consecrated life. Joan Patten, of the Apostolic Oblates, was asked and agreed to represent secular institutes at this Rome meeting.

Over the next six or seven months, this committee met by Zoom to generate ideas and work out the details. Among the decisions were to pray the glorious mysteries of the rosary in honor of our national patron, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Each conference would lead a decade of the rosary, prayed by two members in Spanish and English in addition to a third who would give a testimony of his or her vocation. The hour was opened by the Papal Delegate Christophe Cardinal Pierre.

Maritina Paniagua of SIM joined with Fr. Scott Jones of the Institute of the Heart of Jesus in praying the fifth glorious mystery of the rosary and Joan Patten gave testimony of her vocation as a member of a secular institute. This turned out to be a virtual prayer service encounter for ouer 2550 consecrated people for the Jubilee for Consecrated Life in the U.S. and was an extraordinarily moving and beautiful hour spent in gratitude and prayer in celebration of the gift of consecrated life.





Your Invitation to the ***World Jubilee of Consecrated Life*** in Rome October 8-12, 2025:

October 8-9 are organized by the Dicastery for Evangelisation with the Dicastery for Consecrated Life.
Please register **before August 3, 2025 at the following link:**
https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/pellegrinaggio/calendariogiubileo/GrandiEventi/Giubileo-della-Vita-Consacrata.html
These first two days include: Visit and prayer at the Tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul / Passage through the Holy Door / Prayer vigil for consecrated persons / Eucharistic celebration presided by the Holy Father / Meeting dedicated to Secular Institutes / Initiatives and events of Consecrated Life throughout the city of Rome.

October 10-12 are coordinated by the Dicastery for Consecrated Life.
Please register **before August 3, 2025 at this link:** https://www.vitaconsacrata.va/en/eventi/iubilaeum2025/iscrizione.html
These days of hope and peace are in planning with joint and separate sessions for the different forms of consecrated life, concluding with the Angelus on Sunday 12 October.

Looking forward to meeting you, fraternal greetings in the Lord, *Elba Catalina Fleita, CMIS President*

Personal Experience/Reflection Maritina Paniagua

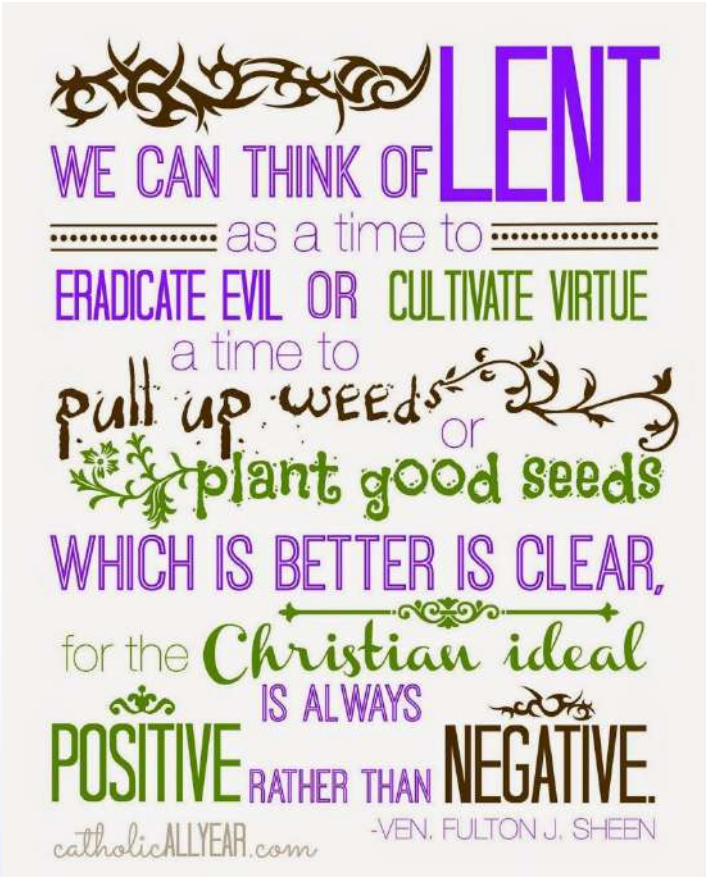
It was an honor and a great joy to be invited to pray with Fr. Scott Jones (the Society of the Priests of the Heart of Jesus) the Fifth Glorious Mystery in English and Spanish at the "Pilgrims of Hope on the Path of Peace: Virtual Encounter of Prayer for All Members of Consecrated Life in the United States" on February 2, 2025.



What touched me deeply were the testimonies given at the start of each decade by a representative of an organization of consecrated life. Their testimonies were filled with a beautiful enthusiasm and commitment to their life of consecration and a great love for the Lord and Blessed Mother.

Two examples that touched me deeply were Joan Patten of the Secular Institute of the Apostolic Oblates and Sister Lucia Christi, S.V. of the Sisters of Life. I write some of their comments below.

Joan Patten highlighted the essence of consecrated life in Secular Institutes. She said that our Blessed Mother was faithfully united to the Holy Trinity and lived her mission on earth. Members of secular institutes turn to Mary as Mother and they too unite themselves faithfully to God through their consecration and live their mission in the midst of secular realities in the world. They go out into the world where other members of the Church cannot penetrate. They go into professional careers, politics, and other secular structures alongside the laity. Their consecration is motivated by the desire to be with Jesus no matter the activity that is being carried out. Their attentiveness to His Presence, to their prayers and to their neighbors allows them to be witnesses of hope to the Church and to the world. They extend the Church's work of evangelization in the world through their consecration in everyday life.



The other speaker that impacted me was **Sister Lucia Christi, S.V.** She said that through their mission that nothing is beyond the reach of God's love and mercy. She gave a moving testimony that she was recently diagnosed with stage three cancer. Everything in her life changed except the ring on her finger which was a sign of the unshakable love and fidelity of Jesus the Bridegroom. He is enough. She was amazed at the beauty of consecrated life, to be so free and so alive in His love, a love so full of joy and of hope, no matter what we do we are the Lord's. She said "I can love God and the person in front of me."

Your Invitation to the USCSI National Meeting Celebrating the Jubilee Holy Year



Date: Friday afternoon, September 26-28, 2025 through Sunday 1:00 pm

Location: Bons Secours Retreat Center, 1505 Marriottsville Rd, Marriottsville, MD / BWI or Dulles airport

Theme as Pilgrims of Hope Holy Year
Hope of our Secular Institutes with a Future Vision

Speaker: Fr Jorge Torres, Executive Director of CCLV

Afternoon Panel: How do you live your vocation in a spirit of hope? Active discussion on ways to avoid burnout, deal with issues of closure, and inviting new members …

The Executive Committee thanks Bishop Rivituso and the 16 principal contacts who met over Zoom on March 15th. Our sharing centered on **How do you do formation in your institute?**

Frs John O'Neill & Scott Jones held the second **Formandi Meeting** with 22 participating on March 8th. Let us continue to pray for many and good vocations to all of our US secular institutes.

Join the Jubilee Holy Year National Walk as PILGRIMS OF HOPE

As the three-year National Eucharistic Revival in the United States draws to a close on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, excitement mounts with a sequel this Spring. The **2025 Drexel Route opens with a Mass of Thanksgiving in Indianapolis** on **Sunday, May 18th**. The team will travel with the Blessed Sacrament through 21 dioceses in parts of the Midwest before heading to Texas and along the states of the Southwestern United States.

The pilgrimage will visit the tomb of Venerable Servant of God Archbishop Fulton Sheen, the Shrine of Blessed Stanley Rother, and stop at several missions in Southern California. Another highlight of the journey is a stop at St. Michael Church near Window Rock, which is the capital of Navajo Nation, before **concluding during Corpus Christi weekend in Los Angeles**, where the Eucharistic Procession winds around the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels.

The Patron of this Pilgrimage is St. Katharine Drexel. She came from a devout and wealthy family who used their material goods to serve those in need. After discerning a call to the religious life, she founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. This order was dedicated to serving the Native American and African American populations. By the time of her death in 1955, Mother Katharine had used the funds from her inheritance to build a vast network of 50 missions and over 60 schools, with 500 sisters teaching in them. She was canonized a saint in 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

Please share in Summer Mountaineer what your institute/parish/neighborhood is doing for the Jubilee



Vatican validates beatification cause for quadriplegic lay apostle

Member of the SECULAR INSTITUTE—VOLUNTEERS WITH DON BOSCO

Catholic Vote NEWS FEED // Rachel Quackenbush on February 4, 2025

The diocesan inquiry for the beatification and canonization of Antonino "Nino" Baglieri, an Italian quadriplegic lay apostle of the Salesian Family, was officially validated by the Vatican's Dicastery for the Causes of Saints January 21, 2025. *-Agenzia Info Salesiana*

Nino Baglieri was born in Modica on 1 May 1951. After attending primary school he became an apprentice bricklayer at 17 years of age, and on 6 May 1968, he fell from a 50 foot high scaffolding. Admitted to the emergency ward, Nino was bitterly disappointed to understand that he was completely paralyzed. Faced with a very dramatic situation his mother Giuseppina confiding in God, bravely made herself available to personally care for him for the rest of her life. Thus began Nino's journey of suffering as he went from one hospital to another, but without improvement. Back in his home village in 1970, after the early days of visits from friends, ten long years of obscurity began for Nino, without leaving home, lonely, suffering and almost despairing.

On 24 March 1978, Good Friday, at four in the afternoon, a group of people who were part of Renewal in the Spirit prayed for him; Nino professed acceptance of his cross and felt himself transformed. From that moment he accepted his Cross and said his 'yes' to the Lord. He began to read the Gospels and the Bible. He discovered the wonders of faith. Helping some children who were near by to do their homework, he learnt to write with his mouth. And thus he began to write his memoirs, letters to all kinds of people around the world, writing personal holy pictures for people who visited him. He began to write down telephone numbers and got into direct contact with sick people and his calm and convincing word calmed them all.



Over the years, Baglieri became an active evangelist. Thus began a constant flow of relationships that not only brought him out of his isolation, but led him to testify to the Gospel of joy and hope. From 6 May 1982 onwards, Nino celebrated the anniversary of his Cross. He became a member of the Salesian Family as a Salesian Cooperator. On 31 August 2004 he made his perpetual profession with the Secular Institute—Volunteers With Don Bosco (CDB). On 2 March 2007, at 8 a.m., Nino Baglieri, after a lengthy time of suffering and trial, gave up his soul to God. He was buried in a suit and sneakers, so that, as Baglieri had said, "On my last trip to God, I will be able to run towards him." +++

Prayer for the beatification of Nino Baglieri, "Volunteer With Don Bosco"

We adore you in your mystery as the God of love
guide our souls, Shepherd and Father
safeguard our life, Son and Redeemer,
Holy Spirit, burning bush,
inflame our hearts.

We praise you for the epiphany of your love
in your beloved disciple Nino Baglieri,
who following Don Bosco's example
took your Cross upon himself
loved Jesus in the Eucharist,
Mary Help of Christians and the Church
and made himself a victim like yourself.

We bless you for your way of love
that urged Nino Baglieri to make such a gift
consecrated in the world, in the Salesian family,
he testified to the joy of Christ to all,
to the young and to those who were suffering,
so that our life might be more human.

We thank you for the fruitfulness of your love
in the great works of charity
that you accomplished in Nino Baglieri
to the glory of your name and on our behalf,
so that today we may be true Christians
and we ask you in all humility:
that this exemplary witness to holiness
may be recognized by your Church.

Grant through his intercession,
the grace that we now ask …,
especially our conversion
that we may adhere with faith to your truth
and do not ever allow us to tire
of always doing your will.

For information and indications of graces received
write to the: Postulation, Via Marsala 42,
ROMA postulatore@sdb.org

Meditation for SI members: "Who do you say I am?"

At daily Mass, I was listening to a retired priest from Cody, WY, break open the Scriptures. In this Jubilee Holy Year, I felt he was speaking par excellence to all secular institute members: -Ed.

Jesus was always a sign of controversy. Recalling that the Gospel was written not just for the Pharisees and, as some in the Jewish leadership called, "the accursed crowd," but the Gospel was written for each of us today.

One of the most fundamental questions of the Gospels, especially the three synoptic Gospels, is Jesus' asking: **"Who do you say that I am?"** Our answer makes all the difference in the world and in our eternity…

We live in societies where most people answer this question with total indifference – *it does not matter to me.*

John's mystical, theological gospel is difficult to understand. John asks the same question to us in a different dilemma.

Recently there was published a *Pew Report* which gave indication that 67% of the people in our own nation are indifferent to the person and the teaching of Jesus. With the recent tragedy of the covid virus many people have stopped practicing the faith. Many priests explain that people seek the help of the Church at crisis and funerals -- Only. At funerals for example, people may claim that Uncle Joe is catching trout at a paradisical trout stream and reeling them in… (How boring can that be for an entire eternity?!)

All the Gospels force us to a conclusion: Who is Jesus to me and what impact does he have in my life? **We must declare our allegiance.** Especially as consecrated lay men and women, we are called to model our witness to Christ, his Church, and to Eternity.

There are many who want a politician to agree with their pet projects. We exclaim that the Gospel is not a political message. Many want a Democratic or a Republican Christ. They are indifferent to the Jesus revealed in the Gospels. Jesus will always be controversial. It is Jesus who came to save me from Hell or he is Not the Christ. I can't save myself.

We need to see, that no political power or heredity or economic status will save us. Reading so and so many political documents or going to untold meetings of discussion has saved no one. I can't save myself, I must ask Jesus to heal and to save me.

Back to the dilemma where Jesus presents the fundamental question: Who do YOU say that I am? If I say yes, I believe you are the Christ, then I must also speak up and I must do something to make Christ the center of my life! I don't want to make the choice for cheap grace. Rather decide to follow Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life.

A person's knowing there is no other way to salvation and an eternity with the Trinity; a person who knows there is no other life except through Jesus Christ -– then we are called to be evangelizers! We are called to call others. The promise of God is to save ourselves and to save others, and in so doing to glorify God.

May the Holy Week help us to "Make up our minds!"

Although the singer, 18-year old Rachel Holt, is still pretty much a newcomer, her beautiful pro-life song, written by Chris Wallin, was an instant hit. Wallen has been a hitmaker for Country Western superstars Garth Brooks, Montgomery Gentry, Kenny Chesney, Toby Keith, and Trace Adkins.



"I Was Gonna Be" hit the major streaming platforms just two days ahead of the anniversary of the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. Sung from the perspective of the Unborn Child, the lyrics may make you cry but encourage you to keep fighting at the same time.

USCSI Mission Statement:

- The USCSI shares in the mission of Jesus Christ in serving its member institutes by providing education, resources, and support for member institutes.
- The USCSI is an organization of member institutes committed to making known, understood, and appreciated the call to consecrated secularity in the Catholic Church.
- The USCSI collaborates with other groups to present consecrated secularity as a viable option in today's Church.

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Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwrsN2t7T8xHfrdyGCHY59g
Websites: www.secularinstitutes.org & www.cmis-int.org/en/
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/secular_institutes_usa/
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Please share joys & blessings from your institute. Contributions and photos for our **Summer Mountaineer** can be emailed to jessica@schsrsmary.org by **June 1, 2025**

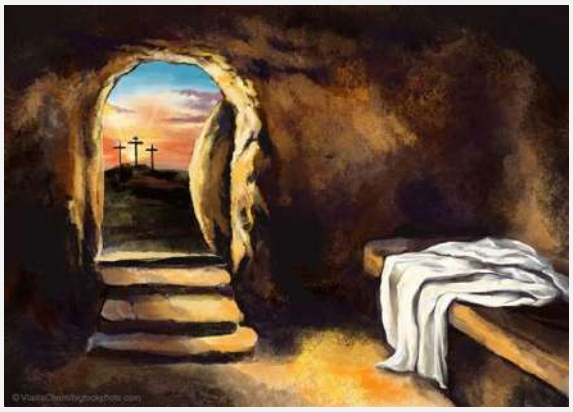
Making donations to USCSI:

We are most grateful for any amount. Please send donations (checks made to "USCSI") to: Deacon Paul Lang, 100 Pin Oak Court, Kingsland GA 31548-3389

***URBI ET ORBI MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS* – EASTER April 9, 2023**

On this day we proclaim that he, the Lord of our life, is "the resurrection and the life" of the world (cf. *Jn* 11:25). Today is Easter, the Pasch, a word that means "passage," for in Jesus the decisive passage of humanity has been made: the passage from death to life, from sin to grace, from fear to confidence, from desolation to communion. In him, the Lord of time and history, I would like to say to everyone, with heartfelt joy, **Happy Easter!**

… Let the Church and the world rejoice, for today our hopes no longer come up against the wall of death, for the Lord has built us a bridge to life. Yes, brothers and sisters, at Easter the destiny of the world was changed, and on this day, we can rejoice to celebrate, by pure grace, the most important and beautiful day of history.



Christòs anesti! **–** "Christ is risen; he is truly risen!" In this traditional proclamation of the Churches of the East, the word "truly" reminds us that our hope is not an illusion, but the truth! And that, in the wake of Easter, humanity's journey, now marked by hope, advances all the more readily. The first witnesses of the resurrection show this by their example. … At Easter, then, the journey quickens and becomes a race, since humanity now sees the goal of its journey, the meaning of its destiny, Jesus Christ, and **is called to make haste to meet him, who is the hope of the world.**