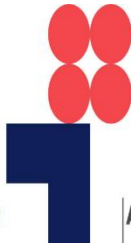


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RETREAT MONTH OF AUGUST 2024

To begin this reflection, we can take a few minutes to relive those most beautiful and significant moments of our religious vocation. Remember the events that motivated you to enter the Company of Mary, the people who supported you, the obstacles overcome, the most pleasant moments. This call of Jesus challenged us to a new way of living, not to consider ourselves better than others but to feel fully fulfilled.

In this Retreat we are going to confront our lives with the living of the Vows in order to prepare ourselves for the Renewal.



The foundation of the vows is found in the surrender to the Kingdom of God, as the reason why Jesus asks us to follow him. It is to serve the Kingdom that we become poor, chaste, and obedient. Therefore, it is appropriate to ask ourselves at all times: **What personal realities are showing that God urges me to live the vows?**

The vow of **poverty** opens our eyes to appreciate and assume those humanizing, hospitable, simple and spontaneous qualities of the least who, for this reason, are first in the Kingdom.

Thus, the vow of poverty places us at the center of following Jesus, who asks us to make everything relative in order to achieve what is fundamental. And it places us in the first and most radical requirement for God to reign.



How can I strengthen my option for the poor in these times of crisis and hope? (Article IX of Constitutions 1 to 8)

The vow of **chastity** is the clear expression of our love for those around us and in whom God himself exists. With this vow, we ratify our deep conviction of wanting to give the best of ourselves so that life triumphs over so much evil caused and so that the history of our people will become better. The vow of chastity enables us to reject any form of use of feelings that could lead to treating people as objects. The Lord called us as men and women, sexual beings, with feelings, but our goal and horizon is the proposal of Jesus Christ.

Read Article X Constitutions 1 to 8. What does the Lord propose to me through these Constitutions?

The vow of **obedience** makes us like Christ who is always subject to the Father's will. Our Obedience, therefore, is linked to Jesus' obedience to his Father.

Jesus' style of obedience to the Father stimulates us in the constant search for God's desire for us.

Obedience is lived in a framework of healthy freedom, where dialogue with our superiors is always carried out in fraternal encounters.



To the angel's news, Mary responds: "I am the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). This attitude of service and obedience to the Lord far outweighed her concerns about the future. Her obedience to the task God had delegated to her would have involved the abandonment of her betrothed and her dishonor as a woman. Mary did not stop to think about the consequences of obeying God, and when she heard the command her heart of obedience responded positively. Mary put into practice – even before it was written – what Romans 12:1 says: she gave her body as a living and holy sacrifice.

What does the Lord say to me and what does He ask of me, in Article XI Constitutions 1 to 7 for this renewal of Vows?

Linked to the vows, there is another characteristic element of religious life in the Church and that is "**community life**". The religious men and woman do not dedicate themselves alone to the task of sanctifying themselves by imitating Jesus Christ, but they share their efforts, triumphs, and challenges in community, within a new family.



What does my community provide for me to help me live in fidelity to the Lord?

Let us see and look at our reality of community life:

In our community, how do we interact:

- as friends: How does this become noticeable?
- as sisters: How do we make this visible?
- as servers: How do we give witness to this?
- To what is God calling us as we live in Community in the environment where we are presently missioned?

Pope Francis: Faith is not lived isolation but in Community.

In the whole community dynamic, Christ, his paschal mystery, remains the model how unity is built. The commandment of mutual love has in Him the source, the model and the measure, since we must love one another as He has loved us.



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And He has loved us to the point of giving His life. Our life is participation in Christ's charity, in his love for the Father and for his brothers and sisters, which is a love that totally forgets one's self.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Each community prepares it according to its needs.

SONG: Hermanos, amémonos unos a otros...Brothers and sisters, let us love one another. Youtube.

Dios Familia...God family. Julian Zini. Youtube

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Constitutions of the Company of Mary. (The Vows)

Pope Francis' Message on Community