

**HOMILY OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**HOLY MASS WITH PROFESSION OF TEMPORAL VOWS BY LUCY LU, CRUSADER OF MARY
AND ENTRANCE INTO THE FATHER TOMÁS MORALES PRIESTLY FRATERNITY
BY REV. ROBERT KATAFIASZ**

**BASILICA OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (CRYPT CHURCH)
WASHINGTON, D.C. – NOVEMBER 23, 2024**

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to be with you at Our Lady's National Shrine, in order to celebrate this special day in the life of the Crusaders of Mary. We surround Lucy with our prayers as she professes her temporal vows. We also pray for Fr. Robert, who at the end of this Mass will join the *Father Tomás Morales Priestly Fraternity* – the first priest in the United States to be a part of this fraternity. We are confident in the heavenly intercession both of the Blessed Mother and of Fr. Morales.

A warm welcome to all who are here, including Lydia Jiménez, General Director of the *Cruzadas*, all members of the Institute, and the family members and friends of Lucy and Fr. Robert. To everyone I express the Holy Father's spiritual closeness and paternal affection.

+ + +

In the Gospel of Luke which we just heard, the Sadducees seek to discount Jesus' teaching about the resurrection of the dead. To do so, they propose a case in which resurrection would seem to conflict with the laws of marriage. The problem is, the Sadducees are thinking about resurrection in categories that are too earthly. As Jesus tries to explain to them, the resurrection is something that transcends those categories. The resurrection from the dead, while fulfilling the human heart's longing for eternal life, also surpasses everything that we can conceive – so much so that it even dissolves the bond of earthly marriage.

Jesus' answer to the Sadducees' question invites them, and it invites *us*, to ponder the glorious mystery of what it means to be a people destined for the resurrection. But Jesus wants us to do more than just ponder this mystery. He wants us to be *in relationship with* the mystery of our future resurrection, even while we are still living on this earth. This is what St. Paul is getting at when he says that we

“have died” and our lives are “hidden with Christ in God”.¹ Hidden beneath our ordinary earthly lives, there is the power of a greater life – a life that we share with Christ even now, but which will be revealed in all its glory when he comes again.²

While every baptized person participates in this risen life, Christ calls some of his disciples to witness to that mystery in an even more radical way, by following him in the consecrated life. The vows taken by a consecrated person point to a life beyond this world. By the vow of poverty, she says: “I brought nothing into this world, and I shall not be able to take anything out of it.”³ By the vow of obedience, she says with Christ: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work.”⁴ And by the vow of celibate chastity, she becomes a living witness to “the coming age”, in which “those who are deemed worthy to attain to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage”.⁵ By professing her vows today, Lucy is becoming, in this particular way, a witness to the mystery of the resurrection.

It is a beautiful thing to live one’s life in witness to a mystery. Pope Francis spoke of this when he addressed those in secular institutes. He said:

“Your vocation and mission is to be attentive, on the one hand, to the realities that surround you, always asking: what is happening? without stopping at what appears on the surface but going deeper; and at the same time, to the mystery of God, to recognize where He is manifest. Attentive to the world, with your heart immersed in God.”⁶

This is the way that the Virgin Mary lived her life. As the Pope wrote in his recent encyclical on the Sacred Heart, our Lady “saw things with the heart. She was able to dialogue with the things she experienced by pondering them in her heart, treasuring their memory and viewing them in a greater perspective.”⁷ This is what

¹ Cf. *Colossians* 3:3.

² Cf. *Colossians* 3:4.

³ Cf. *1 Timothy* 6:7.

⁴ *John* 4:34.

⁵ *Luke* 20:35.

⁶ Pope Francis, Message to the Participants in the Italian Conference of Secular Institutes on the Occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Apostolic Constitution *Provida Mater Ecclesia*, 23 October 2017.

⁷ Pope Francis, Encyclical *Dilexit Nos* on the Human and Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ, 24 October 2024, 19.

your consecrated life, lived in close friendship with Mary, enables you to do: to see with your heart, to be in dialogue with the mystery, and to remain open.

Not only does this contribute to your own spiritual life, but it also becomes a precious service to the people who will cross your path. In this society – dominated by a hectic pace and by a market that floods our senses with images and messages designed to make us serial consumers – people often lack “the patience needed to engage in the processes that an interior life by its very nature requires”. Hence, they risk losing connection with their own heart.⁸ This is precisely where your secular consecration can be a source of ministry. As someone who is living in the world but always returning to that “heart-to-heart” encounter with Christ, you can remind others that it is possible for them to do the same. You can teach people to put aside the noise of the world and enter their own heart. You can show them how to open their hearts to Christ, with all that is in them: desires and memories, anxieties and wounds. Doing so, they will discover what you have discovered: that the heart of Christ, full of kindness and compassion, is waiting to pour his love into them, and to give them his peace.

In short, your consecration as a Crusader of Mary allows you to carry out the specific mission of the secular institutes. Pope Francis articulated this mission when he said:

“You are in the world to testify that it is loved and blessed by God. You are consecrated for the world, which awaits your witness to a freedom that gives joy, that nourishes hope, that prepares the future.”⁹

Hope: this is the spirit of the coming Jubilee Year. In Christ, we have a “hope that does not disappoint”.¹⁰ A hope that comes from his resurrection from the dead, in which we all share, and to which you give witness by the vows that you profess today.

May God bless the good work he has begun in your life, and in the life of the Crusaders of Mary; and may he continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.¹¹

⁸ Cf. *Dilexit Nos*, 9.

⁹ Pope Francis, Letter to the President of the World Conference of Secular Institutes on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of *Provida Mater Ecclesia*, 2 February 2022.

¹⁰ *Romans* 5:5.

¹¹ Cf. *Philippians* 1:6.