



**Helpful Resources to Celebrate  
2019 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE  
*Pro Orantibus Day*  
 (“For Those Who Pray”)**

**November 21, 2019**

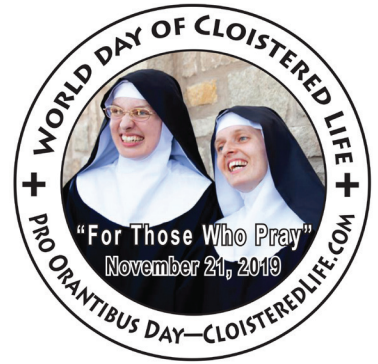
**A Day of Spiritual Solidarity and Support  
for the Cloistered and Monastic Life**

**Compiled by the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE  
available online at  
[CLOISTEREDLIFE.COM](http://CLOISTEREDLIFE.COM)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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



**2019 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE**  
**—*Pro Orantibus* Day (“For Those Who Pray”)—**  
**Scheduled for November 21, 2019**

Chicago, IL—Catholics throughout the world are encouraged to support the cloistered and monastic life on WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, which is Thursday, November 21, 2019, 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 and sacrifice unceasingly. Pope St. John Paul II later expanded its celebration and encouraged Catholics to highlight and support this hidden vocation in any way possible.

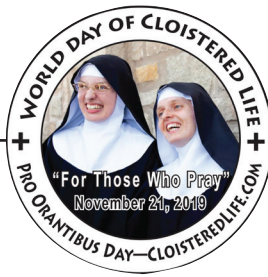
Since his election, Pope Francis has strongly encouraged the faithful to express appreciation to cloistered women and men, especially on this day dedicated to them. “Let us thank the Lord for the witness of the cloistered life and let us not fail them in our spiritual and material support in accomplishing 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](http://CloisteredLife.com).

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*The cloistered religious featured on the 2019 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE logo are from the Benedictine Abbey of St. Walburga in Virginia Dale, Colorado. The community’s website is [Walburga.org](http://Walburga.org).*



## **Bulletin Announcements**

### **to observe WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE**

#### ***To be inserted the weekend of November 9-10, 2019:***

On November 21 (the Memorial of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple), the Church will celebrate the 66th annual WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE, an ecclesial event for all Catholics worldwide to commemorate the hidden lives of contemplative 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 religious 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](http://CloisteredLife.com).

#### ***To be inserted the weekend of November 16-17, 2019:***

This Thursday, November 21 (the Memorial of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple), the Church celebrates the 66th annual 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).

Last year Pope Francis asked cloistered nuns gathered for a special conference in Rome: *“What would become of the Church without the contemplative life? What would become of the weaker members of the Church who find in you a support to continue the journey? What would happen to the Church and the world without the beacons that signal the port to those who are lost on the high seas, without the torches that illuminate the dark night we are going through, without the sentinels announcing the new day when it is still night?”*

For these very reasons the INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE wishes to promote this annual celebration in the United States and encourage the faithful to support the cloistered life in any way they can.

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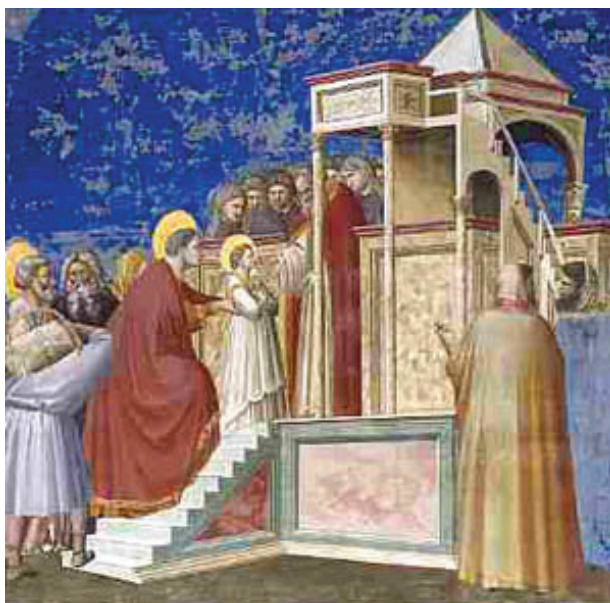
For more information visit [CloisteredLife.com](http://CloisteredLife.com).



## **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 a very young girl, 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.

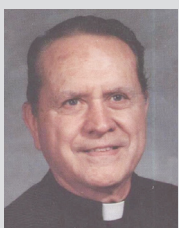
Help me to love God with my whole mind—so that my mind may be habitually occupied with God and that I may value His good pleasure above everything else, above my convenience, above all earthly treasures, above all knowledge and friendship, above health and life.

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.

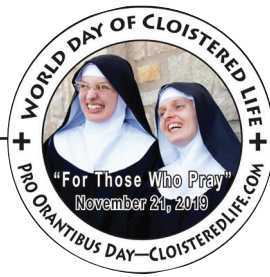
*Mary, Model and Mother of the Cloistered Life, pray for us!*

**Visit [CloisteredLife.com](http://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

Mt 12:46-50

### 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.*

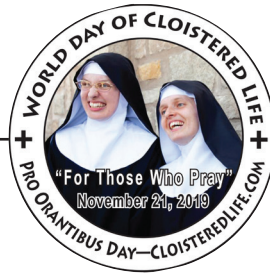
### Reposition

*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  
2019 WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE  
—*Pro Orantibus* Day (“For Those Who Pray”)—**

***A Matter of Doing the Will of God***

**Gospel Reading:** Mt 12:46-50

While Jesus was speaking to the crowds,  
His mother and His brothers appeared outside,  
wishing to speak with Him.  
Someone told Him, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside,  
asking to speak with you.”  
But He said in reply to the one who told Him,  
“Who is My mother?  
Who are My brothers?”  
And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said,  
“Here are my mother and my brothers.  
For whoever does the will of My Heavenly Father  
is My brother, and sister, and mother.”



**Reflection:**

Today’s Gospel passage is often misinterpreted. Some argue that it stands for the proposition that Jesus was making a comment intended to lessen the importance of his earthly mother. This runs contrary to the biblical context of the encounter and rejects the consistent, unbroken Christian tradition.

In the writings of the Early Church Fathers, Our Lord’s words are intended to highlight the fact that Our Lady’s greatness lies not merely on her physical maternity. Rather Mary’s greatness reflects her most perfect response as a disciple striving to do the will of God.

Today’s Memorial of the Presentation of Mary reminds us that as a young girl the Blessed Virgin was dedicated to God at an early age. It recalls that particular day, according to Catholic tradition, when her parents, Sts. Joachim and Anne, presented their daughter in the Temple so that she might dedicate her life completely to the Lord.

Mary had already been chosen by God, preserved by a singular grace as a chosen vessel through whom the Incarnate Word would be given for the salvation of the whole world. However, the offering by her parents is a response to the invitation to join our free choice to God's invitation to serve Him with our whole heart, mind and soul. This exercise of freedom lies at the heart of Christian discipleship, and is the inner core of every vocation—to freely cooperate with God's grace.

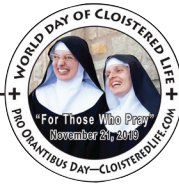
On this special Marian feast, the Church also celebrates WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE. Traditionally known as *Pro Orantibus* Day—"for those who pray"—it highlights those women and men who freely dedicate themselves to lives of prayer and penance seeking the grace needed for others to respond to the call to be missionary disciples in a world badly in need of the Good News.

Like Mary, cloistered women and men, in monasteries and hermitages dedicate themselves totally to God, in silence and in solitude. Their greatness simply lies in their burning desire to do the will of the Father in a hidden way in all things and in each and every moment of their day.

May each of us—inspired by such selfless dedication—learn to freely give of ourselves as an offering to the Lord as Our Lady did as a young girl and as cloistered women and men strive to do today. Let us support them in their sublime vocations by our prayers, encouragement and with any material support we can give.

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## Prayer in Support of the Cloistered Life

Eternal Father,

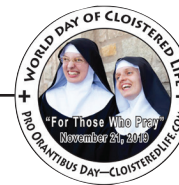
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May all of us be mindful of the spiritual and material needs of those who commit their lives to seeking God by fixing their gaze on those things which are eternal.

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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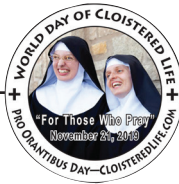
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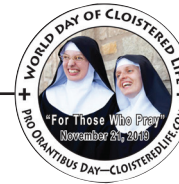
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## Oración en Apoyo a la Vida de Clausura

Padre Eterno,

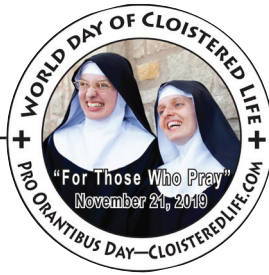
Te alabamos y te agradecemos por las hermanas y los hermanos que han abrazado el don de la vida claustral y monástica. Su presencia en oración es indispensable para la vida y misión de la Iglesia, y es el fundamento de la Nueva Evangelización.

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](http://CloisteredLife.com)



## **General Intercessions** **to observe WORLD DAY OF CLOISTERED LIFE** **November 21, 2019**

### **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 women and men 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 young people discerning their specific vocation and mission in life, that they may be granted the graces to respond generously to the will of God 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 cloistered women and men to live out their hidden 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, contemplative life as visible signs of the Kingdom that is yet to come. Grant this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.