

**REMARKS OF HIS EXCELLENCY ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
COUNCIL OF MAJOR SUPERIORS OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS
TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 2017, WASHINGTON, DC**

My Dear Sisters in Christ,

As the Apostolic Nuncio, the Holy Father's personal representative in the United States, I wish to assure you of Pope Francis's personal closeness, congratulations and his heartfelt good wishes and prayers as the the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious celebrates twenty-five years of collaboration and communion in the service of the Church and consecrated persons.

At the Easter Vigil this past year, Pope Francis noted the presence of women, who unlike the disciples **“did not run away, who remained steadfast, who faced life as it is and who knew the bitter taste of injustice. We see them there, before the tomb, filled with grief but equally incapable of accepting that things must always be this way.”** (Pope Francis, Homily at the Easter Vigil, 15 April 2017)

As consecrated women, you are witnesses to the power of the Risen Lord, which manifests itself in love and which opens new horizons that lead to peace and joy. The Holy Father continued: **“The beating heart of the Risen Lord is given to us, and we are asked to give it in turn as a transforming force, as the leaven of a new humanity.”**

Just as Mary Magdalene gave prophetic witness to the Risen Lord, your witness is also prophetic. Recall the words of the Holy Father as he concluded the Year for Consecrated Life: **“Consecrated persons are called to be a concrete and prophetic sign of God's closeness, of this sharing in a condition of fragility, of sin and of the wounds of man in our time.”**

This is what the CMSWR has been doing for twenty-five years, sharing the grace of the Risen Lord by supporting and sustaining your members in their mission, pointing them toward God, and promoting a strong religious identity, rooted in common life, prayer, apostolic works, and, above all, in and through the life of the evangelical counsels in communion with the Holy Father and the Bishops.

You have responded generously to the call of Christ, your true Spouse. *Let the word of Christ, rich as it is dwell in you. In wisdom made perfect, instruct and admonish one another. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns, and inspired songs.*

With these sentiments, the Holy Father paternally imparts to all the members of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious and to the faithful gathered here his Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of peace in Christ Jesus.