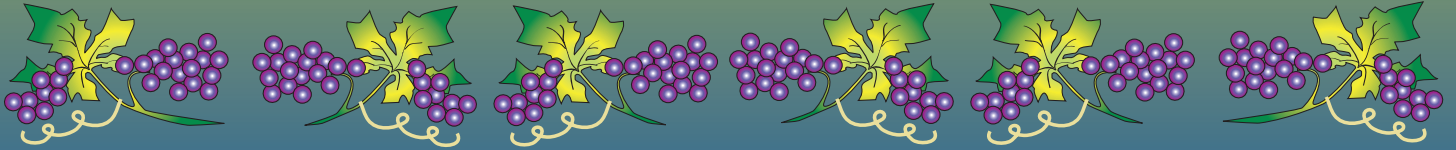


CONSECRATA

A newsletter for member communities, friends and supporters of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious



VOL. 6 NO. 2 WINTER 2013

THE SURPRISES OF GOD

World Youth Day Summer 2013

By *Junior Professed Sisters - SSVM*

In his homily during the Mass at the Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida in Brazil, Pope Francis insisted that we be open to “being surprised by God.” This is how He shows us His delicate love, that He “saves the best for us”, and in response we need only let ourselves be surprised.

The World Youth Day 2013 experience was an adventure, full of surprises, from the moment that we began fundraising for the event a year in advance. My religious family, the Religious Family of the Incarnate Word (IVE), organized a month-long pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for two-hundred and fifty pilgrims: youth, lay chaperones, priests, deacons, seminarians, and sisters from the United States and Canada.

We began our pilgrimage in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on the first of July, full of the freedom and expectation that comes from letting God be the guide. For the remainder of the month we traveled throughout Argentina visiting holy sites, specifically Marian shrines, culminating in the World Youth Day events in Brazil. The three weeks of pilgrimage before World Youth Day laid a foundation in prayer and sacrifice, both necessary for confident abandonment to the will of God.

By practicing this abandonment, God disposed us to receive the multitude of graces He had in store for us.

In week two of the pilgrimage, we stretched out our hands to assist in the Houses of Mercy run by our sisters and priests in San Rafael, Argentina. The poverty of the small town was overshadowed by the great joy and gratitude of the poor and abandoned whom we served. By week four, we met our fellow pilgrims and stretched out our hands, exchanging flags and entrusting to each other prayers and hopes for one's own mother country. Gathered together in Brazil, we, the youth of the Church, eagerly awaited the chance to encounter the Sweet Christ on earth in the person of our Holy Father Pope Francis; truly we love him as the father who guides us through this earthly pilgrimage. In every moment of sacrifice, expected, and unexpected, God stretched our hearts so that His own love for our Holy Mother Church could dwell within us and through us reach the rest of the world.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Sister Regina Marie Gorman, O.C.D.

To the dear Family and Friends of the
Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious,

We are grateful that you are with us and we are delighted
to share with you, through pictures and stories, a unique
glimpse into the life and work of CMSWR:

- The joy and sincerity of young hearts consecrating their
entire lives to God.
- The beauty of being spiritually renewed at the heart
of the Church.
- The fraternal union that comes from common life and
prayer . . . even an arduous pilgrimage!
- The power for good that flows from humble
collaboration among the disciples of Jesus.

Through your prayerful and generous support, you are
making our service to these Religious Sisters possible.



GOD REWARD YOU. As an
expression of our gratitude,
we remember you daily in
prayer in convents across the
United States.

May this Christmas bring to you
and your loved ones a renewed gaze on the Innocent Face of
Divine Love.

Gratefully in Christ,

Sister Regina Marie Gorman, O.C.D.

Sister Regina Marie Gorman, O.C.D.
Chairperson

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THE JOY OF BEING CALLED

A Pilgrimage to the Eternal City - July 2013

In July, several of our member Communities in initial formation traveled to Rome in celebration of the Year of Faith to profess our Faith at the Tomb of Saint Peter. The Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization initiated the pilgrimage with the theme “I Trust in You!” calling young religious and seminarians to proclaim hope to the world. Over six thousand responded to the invitation. The pilgrimage began with a procession to the Tomb of Peter, where all professed the Creed in his or her native language. On Saturday, Pope Francis welcomed the group in Paul VI Audience Hall. He spoke to the group of the essence of vocation as an enduring response to God’s call and the joy of intimacy with Our Lord. He shared that “The joy of the moment in which Jesus [looks at us], understanding and hearing, this is the secret of our joy.” His words were heartfelt, challenging and intensely convincing that Christ satisfies our hearts and blesses our generosity. The following are reflections from some of the Sisters who were able to experience this pilgrimage:

“Our Lord gave me abundant grace through experiencing the Church in its very heart and deepened my conviction of His call... As Pope Francis said, ‘The more mission calls you to go out to the margins of existence, let your heart be the more closely united to Christ’s heart, full of mercy and love.’”

(Sister Mary Grace, CK)



“My desire grew as I saw religious life in its vitality held up by the Church.” (Sister Fiat Marie, CK then just days away from reception into the novitiate)

“His encouragement to be joyful and have a missionary spirit, cautioned us on temptations and trials we are likely to face, made us laugh with his sense of humor and gave us meaningful advice from his own experiences.”

(Sr. Abigail Marie Fuenning, MS)

“Archbishop Fisichella stated, ‘The joy of vocation is the underlying reason why thousands of young people will gather together in Rome... This is truly what we experienced as we pilgrimaged with thousands of religious and seminarians through the streets of Rome to the tomb of St. Peter. ...we experienced the vitality of the Church and the truth that Christ is ever faithful to His Bride’”

(Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus)



A PILGRIMAGE TO ST. PETER'S DOORSTEP

CMSWR Rome Renewal Course - Domus Sancta Maria Guadalupe

By Sister Mary Hanah Doak, RSM

"Sisters, you won't believe this! We saw the Holy Father from four feet away this afternoon! We went to St. Mary Major and he spontaneously showed up!!" Naturally, we exploded into excited questions and begged for the story. Two Sisters from our group had gone to the Basilica of St. Mary Major during a period of free time. While they were there the Holy Father came to the Basilica to pray before the image of Our Lady Salus Populi Romani, entrusting to her his trip to World Youth Day in Brazil.

This special moment shared by two of our number to personally see the Successor of St. Peter aptly depicts the collective spiritual experience of the eleven Sister-participants from six different CMSWR member communities who had been invited by their Major Superiors to participate in the three-week CMSWR Rome Renewal Course held at the Domus Sancta Maria Guadalupe. This first Summer pilgrimage was conducted as a pilot program in the hope of having such programs on a regular basis for the dual purpose of enrichment for the Sisters and for contributing to the financial sustainability of the Domus.

Each Sister had her own unique experience of the pilgrimage, but there were certainly group highlights. Throughout the weeks we had pilgrimages and conferences by priests whose living faith in Christ and love of the Church gave the time a truly ecclesial character. Our life of

personal and communal prayer stabilized us interiorly to be attentive and engaged with our pilgrimages, classes and conferences.

Another essential part of the experience was the fraternal community that developed among us. We treasured the delightful exchanges and laughter around the dinner table and during meal preparation and clean up!

The program was fittingly termed a pilot program for a time of renewal. Having spent three weeks together in the heart of the Church in Rome, each Sister returned to her community and apostolic assignment with an interior freshness and readiness to share the love and joy of Jesus Christ.



CMSWR Communities participating: Congregation of Mary, Queen - American Region, Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus, Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church, Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles, Servants of God's Love and Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan



A small group went to the top of St. Peter's Basilica. We are on the top of the façade (at the level of the Statues of the Apostles). We took an elevator to the top of the façade and then walked the 300+ steps to the top of the Cupola.

CMSWR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY 2013

"Wellsprings of Hope: Women Religious in the New Evangelization"

This October 2013, the members of CMSWR gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL for the annual National Assembly. Talks, homilies, and discussions centered around the theme of "Wellsprings of Hope: Women Religious in the New Evangelization." In her keynote address, Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, S.V. shared with the members present the beauty and gift of spiritual motherhood in the New Evangelization.

Each day we were blessed to have priests and bishops from the Archdiocese of St. Louis celebrate Holy Mass for us, namely: Archbishop Robert Carlson, Bishop Edward Rice, Reverend Thomas Keller, and Reverend David Meconi, S.J. Reverend Ray Buehler and several of the

seminarians from the Archdiocese of St. Louis assisted us at Holy Mass and for our Holy Hour.

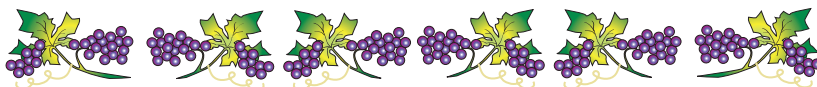
On Saturday morning, the members chose to attend one of three workshops: Religious Liberty and the HHS Mandate; Teaching Human Sexuality In A Time Of Confusion; National Retirement for Religious: Educating, Supporting, and Assisting Religious Institutes in their Retirement Future. The presenters were qualified religious from different member Communities.

The entire Assembly proved an enriching experience for our members and a wonderful means of establishing and maintaining friendships.



First and Final Professions 2013 of our CMSWR Communities

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BRIDE OF CHRIST



*In these pages we share the inspiring reflections of Sisters within CMSWR communities
who professed First Vows and Final Vows in 2013*

Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles, Alhambra, CA

"To be the spouse of Jesus means that as Saint Paul says, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." His whole life was for others and I pray daily that not a single moment of my life will be wasted in useless worry or distraction so that I may also assist Him in His work of salvation for the whole world with as much love and fervor as I can."

(Sister Maria Goretti, OCD)

"Blessed John Paul II said, "Man can only find himself in a sincere gift of self." God wants it all: my heart, my desires, my fears and failings. Everything given will be used by our Lord to show forth, through my consecrated life, God's wonder and goodness to all His people."(Sister Gianna, OCD)



"To be His spouse means to be all His, that there is no part of me or of my life that does not belong to Him. It also means to let all that is His be mine: His thoughts and desires, His motivation, His love, His will." (Sister Marie-Aimée, OCD)



Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, Nashville, TN

"To be a bride of Christ means all that I say and do, all that I am is for the One I love. God is the only One who can satisfy my longing and fill my heart. To be a bride of Christ means to bring others to Him whom I love."

(Sister Mara Grace, OP, Perpetual Profession 8/2013)



First and Final Professions 2013 of our CMSWR Communities

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BRIDE OF CHRIST

Congregation of Mary, Queen American Region, Springfield, MO

"As a bride of Christ, I know that I have to share with Him in His passion and in His death; and like St. Paul, I want to say that I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

(Sr. Theresa, CMR First Vows 6/8/13)



Franciscan Daughters of Mary, Covington, KY

"I belong to my Lover and my Lover belongs to me," and everything that I am and have is His. I'm ready to go wherever He wants me to go and do whatever He wants me to do."

(Sr. Clare Marie of the Holy Eucharist, fdm, First Profession)



Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

"Being a bride of Christ has already proven to be a life of many graces as I endeavor to live out the call to holiness, totally consecrated to Him. Each day is a renewal of the vows I have professed as I strive to live out joyfully the words of our Blessed Mother, 'Let it be done to me according to your will.'" (Sr. Amy Marie Havlat, MS, First Profession May 3, 2013)



Olivetian Benedictines, Jonesboro, AR

"I am so grateful to the Lord for His infinite mercy. As the mysterious gift of my vocation unfolds, I pray for the grace to persevere and to always give in return as He has given to me." (Sister Glorea Knaggs, O.S.B. Perpetual Vows Summer 2013)



Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, Prayer Town, TX

"To be a bride of Christ means to become who He has called me to be through faithfulness and trusting surrender to His will by drawing close to Him as a loving spouse. It is a revelation of His personal and deep love for me."

(Sister Marguerite Marie, DLJC First Profession 8/10/13)



Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, Manitowoc, WI

"For me, chastity is the foundation of my life as a consecrated woman. It is the cornerstone on which all other elements of my religious life are built. Adopting chastity as a way of life is, for me, a preserving (or protecting) of myself for the God whom I have chosen."

(Sister Regina Rose Pearson, FSCC, First Profession Summer 2013)



Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, Monroe, NY

"To be a bride of Christ means to give everything you are, everything you have, and everything you do to Christ, and to receive infinitely more from Him--His love, His guidance, and all His children, especially those most spiritually neglected and abandoned." (Sister Theresa Marie Moore, PVMI, First Vows 8/15/13)



First and Final Professions 2013 of our CMSWR Communities

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BRIDE OF CHRIST

Little Sisters of the Poor – United States Provinces

“I am so grateful to God for calling me to belong completely to Him. Knowing that I am the spouse of Jesus Christ fills me with great joy and peace. My greatest desire is that everyone can experience His love for them.” (Sr. Elizabeth Mary de la Croix, lsp, First Vows 6/1/13)

*“To be a bride of Christ means to give witness to the Catholic Church and to truly live out the Gospels.”
(Sr. Sharon of the Sacred Heart, lsp, First Vows 6/1/13)*

“I see my religious profession as a returning of the complete gift of my life back to God. Every moment is now His. All of the gifts He has given me are now consecrated totally to His service, to use or not as He wills for the building up of His kingdom and for His honor and glory. It’s a commitment to make the words of St. Paul, ‘It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me’ a reality. (Sr. Mary Gerard of the Cross, lsp, First Vows 6/1/13)

“To me it means I have a relationship with Christ, a relationship that began in Baptism and deepened in a new way in our consecration, in our vows. It is to remain joyful and have faith in God the Father through Christ; to glorify God in our lives and have confidence in His merciful love, because He is merciful and always faithful. Finally, like



St. Jeanne Jugan, it is to see God in the poor and be identified with the poor.” (Sr. Malia Makalita, lsp, First Vows 6/1/13)

“There is a calm about knowing you belong to God forever as His bride. It brings with it a peace that words can’t describe. It is knowing that you have been chosen forever to be His, no more questioning or wondering. It is final and forever. What joy and what calm.” (Sr. MaryJo of St. Michael, lsp, Perpetual Vows 8/25/13)

Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Alma, MI

*“To be a bride of Christ, to belong to the One who loved me from the foundation of the world, is a humbling and profound reality. “Love calls for love in return,” as St. Teresa of Jesus exhorts, so I strive to behold and love my Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, in the Sacraments and in the people with whom I live and serve each day as together we all await that which is ‘already and not yet’, the eternal wedding feast of the Lamb.”
(Sister Teresa Mary Kozlovski, RSM, Perpetual Profession 8/15/13)*



First and Final Professions 2013 of our CMSWR Communities

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BRIDE OF CHRIST

Sisters of Christian Charity – East Province, Mendham, NJ

“The Communion meditation was an excerpt from Mother Pauline’s autobiography written after her First Profession. My favorite line from this is, “In giving us these [evangelical] counsels, He the Infinitely Good must also give those who comprehend and accept the counsels the grace to observe them...” I am comforted by this insight – knowing well my own fragility – that God grants us the gift of perseverance in this life if we remain open and willing to receive His graces.” (Sister Elizabeth Kovacs, SCC, Perpetual Profession 8/15/13)



“At the end of the Bishop’s homily, he suggested that we ask one of the elder Sisters what was their secret for perseverance. From so many of you we have learned that the secret is truly intimacy with the Lord. There is no other way. After the Prayer of the Faithful, we offered our vow candles to the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph and asked them to present this offering to Jesus and lovingly guide and protect us throughout our religious lives. We presented ourselves to Jesus, and He gave Himself to us in the Most Holy Eucharist: the source of life of the Sisters of Christian Charity.” (Sister Mary Grace Harazim, Sister Sophia Marie Peralta, and Sister Mary Peter Tartaglia, SCC First Profession 8/16/13)



Sisters of Life, New York 8/16/13 First and Final Vows



First and Final Professions 2013 of our CMSWR Communities

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BRIDE OF CHRIST

Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, Mishawaka, IN

“To be a bride of Christ means to be joined with Him in a union that is a precious gift to the whole people of God. Each bride is called to be a special manifestation of Christ’s love in His one Bride, the Church.” (Sister M. Lucia Richardson, OSF, First Profession Summer 2013)

“As a bride of Christ I give of my whole self freely to Him who is the Divine Bridegroom. I love Him and take care of his children as a wife takes care of her family.” (Sister Mary Grace Richey, OSF, First Profession Summer 2013)

“What it means to be a bride of Christ is to give oneself trustingly and joyfully for the good of one’s spouse, Christ, and those whom He loves no matter what the cost.” (Sister Maria Faustina Herber, OSF First Profession Summer 2013)

“To be a bride of Christ is to recognize God’s unique love for us. We live out this love through intimacy in prayer and by caring for those who God has placed in our care.” (Sister M. Lissetta Gettinger, OSF First Profession Summer 2013)



Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George US Province St. Elizabeth

“To be a bride of Christ is a gift. We receive the greatest gift of Jesus Himself as our spouse and become one with Him in sharing the gift of God’s love to the world.” (Sister M. Caterina Vola, FSGM, First Profession 8/14/13)

“To be a bride of Christ means to love Him and allow yourself to be loved by Him. It means to always walk hand in hand with Christ on the road to Calvary and constantly seeking to console His bruised and broken heart.” (Sister Mary Francis Goodson, FSGM, First Profession 8/14/13)

“I kiss the wound in Your Sacred Side with sorrow deep and true, may every beat of my heart this day be an act of love for you.” –Anonymous. This prayer reminds me how I, a bride of Christ, am called to love and praise the Lord and follow Him unconditionally.” (Sister Teresa Maria Leis, FSGM, First Profession 8/14/13)



Servants of God’s Love, Ann Arbor, MI



Sister Mary Boersen, SGL
First Profession 8/14/13

First and Final Professions 2013 of our CMSWR Communities

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A BRIDE OF CHRIST

Dominican Sisters Congregation of St. Rose of Lima, Hawthorne, NY

As I reflect on what it means to be a consecrated religious, I am filled with gratitude that God has invited me to this state in life, setting me apart to live a life totally dedicated to Him and to the salvific mission of His Church. I will, with the help of God and my community, be imitating the kenosis of Jesus Christ and will continually offer my life in union with Him for the salvation of souls. (Sr. Regina Marie Harper, O.P., September 14, 2013, Feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross)



Institute of the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara, Immaculate Conception Province, USA
Profession of Final Vows



Dominican Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Justice, IL
Profession of Final Vows



Franciscan Sisters T.O.R. of Penance of the Sorrowful Mother, Steubenville, OH
Profession of First Vows



Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, Meriden, CT
Sister Mary Kolbe Heffern, First Vows, 8/1/13, Assisi, Italy

Society Devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Northridge, CA

“Every time each person says “yes” to the will of God, the whole universe is affected by it. There is no other possible response to the One my heart loves than to say “Yes...” (Sister Guadalupe Rodriguez, SDSH, Final Vows 3/27/13)



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If you are inspired to support any of our member Communities in their apostolic and educational needs, please contact us at the National Office or contact the individual Communities through our website:
<http://cmswr.org/member-communities>
May God reward you for your prayers and support of religious life.
Please know of our daily prayers for you.

SAVE THE DATES:

+ 2014 Formator's Workshop: March 11 - 14, 2014
Drury Plaza Hotel at the Arch in St. Louis

+ 2014 National Assembly: September 25 - 28, 2014
Location to be announced

Contact the National Office for more information and to register.

Check out our new website: www.cmswr.org !