

2 February 2025

MEDIA RELEASE

Catholic Religious Australia Celebrate World Day of Consecrated Life

Catholic Religious Australia marks this World Day of Consecrated Life by celebrating the lives of consecrated women and men, giving thanks for their generosity in the day-to-day challenges of ecclesial living and missionary service to Church and society.

Instituted by Saint John Paul II in 1997, the World Day for Consecrated Life invites us to offer prayerful support for all those who have committed themselves to consecrated life.

Coinciding with the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, religious women and men are reflected in the lives of Simeon and Anna, the two prophetic figures in Luke's Gospel account who bear witness to the infant Jesus' consecration to the Lord. This depiction reminds the Church of the contributions of consecrated women and men, who remain vigilant and steadfast in their faith and courageous in their pronouncement of the Good News through the living out of consecrated life, in all its myriad expressions.

"The gospel text tells us that Anna, a widow and representative for the dispossessed, prayed and fasted fervently at the temple. This is who our religious men and women are, making up vibrant and diverse communities who, through their charisms, gifts and ministries, nurture an ever-deeper relationship with Christ and proclaim the Gospel message by walking with people on the margins," said Anne Walker, CRA National Executive Director.

The celebrations this year carry added weight, occurring concurrently with the national celebration of the Jubilee for Consecrated Life, an integral part of the overall Year of Jubilee. The Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life (DICALSAL), has chosen to articulate the official motto of the Jubilee Year, "Pilgrims of Hope," in a special way for consecrated persons, "Pilgrims of hope on the path of peace."

"This year's celebration offers an opportunity for we religious to renew our missionary commitment as consecrated persons who are messengers of God's peace. This Jubilee Year we are reminded of our call to accompany God's people, particularly in their time of need, endeavouring to bring the hope of Christ and fullness of life to all. The People of God have provided strong support to consecrated religious across the country for which we are most grateful," said Gerard Brady CFC, CRA President.

As special Masses for consecrated life are celebrated around Australia, CRA asks the Australian Church to join with us in giving thanks for consecrated persons and the gifts they bring in their personal and community life, church life and as part of our wider society.

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