

Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
Office of the Archbishop  
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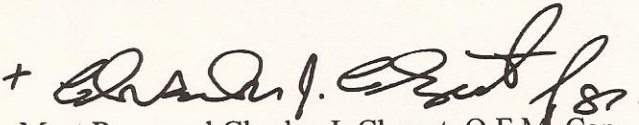
During the weekend of February 4-5, 2012, the Church in the United States will join with the Universal Church in marking the "Sixteenth World Day for Consecrated Life." Initiated by our late beloved Blessed John Paul II, this remembrance was designed to focus attention on the various charisms and ministries embodied in the lives of those responding to this special calling of the Holy Spirit. The Church's commemoration also enables all the faithful to thank the Lord for His many gifts and to renew each one's own personal commitment whatever that may be.

Our Archdiocese of Philadelphia has been remarkably blessed and enriched by the personal dedication and response of so many men and women who have given themselves so totally, in not only attempting to live out the traditional ecclesial vows, but also in ministering with genuine openness of heart and soul. Pope John Paul II characterized such total generous oblation as truly a servitium caritatis (Vita Consecrata, III). In various apostolates and bold initiatives consecrated persons have enlivened our local Church. One need only think of the servitium caritatis of Saint John Neumann and Saint Katharine Drexel in sharing the Gospel message, especially with the marginalized and those often overlooked. Such models continue to inspire and uplift.

This "World Day for Consecrated Life" also enables us to appreciate the quiet service of those in contemplative settings. In addition, the Church recognizes and embraces persons called to live in perpetual virginity and eremitical solitude within contemporary society, a witness which today's world cannot grasp, but which leads us to ponder the Gospel's radical challenge.

Joining with the clergy and laity of the Archdiocese, I personally rejoice in each of you and pray that your fidelity to the consecrated life may bring you fulfillment and peace. Likewise, I ask for your prayers that I may be blessed to live out my own life of consecration, begun years ago and continuing, as I serve you as Archbishop, brother and friend.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

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Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia