



ORDINE OSPEDALIERO | di  
SAN GIOVANNI DI DIO

# The courage to take a risk for God's promise.

4th Hospitaller Week of Prayer for Vocations

6 – 12 May, 2019



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## Introduction

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Dear Brothers,

We are now celebrating Eastertide, a season of joy and jubilation for all Christians. Christ has risen, LIFE has overcome death.

The Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God's General Commission on Vocations Promotion and Formation has prepared these materials for the 4th Hospitaller Week of Prayer for Vocations, which this year will be held from 6 to 12 May. As in previous years, on the last day we shall be uniting our prayers with the whole Church as we celebrate together the 56th World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

These materials that we are proposing for each day of the Week are sufficiently flexible to be used at whatever time of the day you consider the most appropriate. We have used the message of Pope Francis for this Day and selected a few biblical texts and reflections regarding Vocations Promotion which may help the communities to pray and reflect on the gift of the vocation.

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for this Day of Prayer for Vocations is **"THE COURAGE TO TAKE A RISK FOR GOD'S PROMISE"**. *It is not always easy to discern one's own vocation and to direct our lives in the correct manner. This makes it necessary for the whole Church and the Order to undertake a renewed pledge to provide opportunities to listen and to practise discernment, especially for our young people. We need the kind of Youth Pastoral Care and Vocations Promotion that will help them to discover God's plan for them, particularly through prayer, meditation on the Word of God, Eucharistic adoration and spiritual accompaniment.*

Let us lay before our Lord the gift of our vocation to Hospitality which each one of us has received, and pray that He will send vocations into the Church and particularly into the Hospitaller Order of St John of God, so that we can continue performing the mission of Evangelisation to which we are all committed.

**General Commission on Vocation Promotion and Formation  
of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God**



## GO FORTH - **Monday 6 May**

### **Introduction**

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

After the lively and fruitful experience of the Synod devoted to young people last October, we recently celebrated the Thirty-fourth World Youth Day in Panama City. These two great events allowed the Church to be attentive both to the voice of the Spirit and to the life of young men and women, their questions and concerns, their problems and their hopes.

Building on what I shared with the young people in Panama, I would like to reflect, on this World Day of Prayer for Vocations, on how the Lord's call makes us bearers of a promise and, at the same time, asks of us the courage to take a risk, with him and for him. I will do this by reflecting briefly with you on these two aspects – promise and risk – as they appear in the Gospel account of the calling of the first disciples by the sea of Galilee (Mk 1:16-20).

Two pairs of brothers – Simon and Andrew, and James and John – are going about their daily tasks as fishermen. In this demanding work, they had learned the laws of nature, yet at times, when the winds were adverse and waves shook their boats, they had to defy the elements. On some days, the catch of fish amply repaid their efforts, but on others, an entire night's work was not sufficient to fill their nets, and they had to return to shore weary and disappointed.

Much of life is like that. Each of us tries to realize his or her deepest desires; we engage in activities that we hope will prove enriching, and we put out on a "sea" of possibilities in the hope of steering the right course, one that will satisfy our thirst for happiness. Sometimes we enjoy a good catch, while at others, we need courage to keep our boat from being tossed by the waves, or we are frustrated at seeing our nets come up empty.

### **Message of the Holy Father for the 56th World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

### **Biblical text: Mark 1, 16-20**

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*As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.*

## Reflection

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Following Jesus means acquiring a new family. Those who live with Jesus must share His path and continue His work. They have not chosen each other, but all have been chosen by Jesus. But once they have accepted the vocation to follow Him alone, they are obliged to be brothers to one another. It is a personal call, to shared discipleship and to undertake a mission to be performed jointly with all the Brothers. They may have left behind their families and their previous work but they will never cease to be brothers, nor must they ever cease to be fishers.

To follow Jesus it is not necessary to cut all bonds of affection with home and work, or any other task other than accompanying Jesus. Acquired skills and inborn talents are retained but they must be devoted to the new cause: they will not cease to be brothers, and do not have to give up fishing, but they will do so by following Jesus and proselytising. The disciple of Jesus recognises himself to be a brother all those who, like him, have been called by Jesus share His life and mission.

**Elementos esenciales de la vocación cristiana**  
**Juan José Bartolomé SDB**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God, who reveals his love in Christ.

- For the Church, and for each and every member, so that by word and deed we may bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ on whom we pin our faith and hope. LORD HEAR US
- That our Lord will give each one of us the strength and the joy of serenely discovering God's call to us in a world that is dominated by haste and anxiety. LORD HEAR US
- For our communities, that they may never cease to sow the seeds of vocations to marriage, the priesthood and the consecrated life. LORD HEAR US
- For ourselves, united in this prayer, that we may be able to challenge ourselves in the sight of God and before our Brothers about our contradictions, and that we may make our hospitaller community a genuine and praying family with the capacity to attract new members. LORD HEAR US.

## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

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"Father of mercy,  
Who gave us Your Son for our salvation  
never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
that are sources of fraternal life, able to awaken in young people  
the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

May Mary, the Mother and Teacher of Jesus,  
Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."  
Amen





## ACCOMPANY - Tuesday 7 May

### Introduction

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As with every call, the Gospel speaks of an encounter. Jesus walks by, sees those fishermen, and walks up to them... The same thing happened when we met the person we wanted to marry, or when we first felt the attraction of a life of consecration: we were surprised by an encounter, and at that moment we glimpsed the promise of a joy capable of bringing fulfilment to our lives. That day, by the sea of Galilee, Jesus drew near to those fishermen, breaking through the "paralysis of routine" (Homily for the XXII World Day for Consecrated Life, 2 February 2018). And he immediately made them a promise: "I will make you fishers of men" (Mk 1:17).

The Lord's call is not an intrusion of God in our freedom; it is not a "cage" or a burden to be borne. On the contrary, it is the loving initiative whereby God encounters us and invites us to be part of a great undertaking. He opens before our eyes the horizon of a greater sea and an abundant catch..

### **Message of the Holy Father for the 56th World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

### **Biblical text: Acts of the Apostles 8, 26-39**

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*Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south[g] to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.*

## Reflection

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Vocational accompaniment provides assistance to people in search of their vocation in life and trying to discover God's plan for their history, and the signs that are pointing them towards a specific place and seeking the means to use in order to respond to them. Accompaniment primarily means standing by the side of that person, to share life and to travel together starting out from his present situation and his questions, to guide him towards the maturity of his faith and in his search for God's plan for him.

Those who provide vocational accompaniment point out the vocational path, not necessarily in words, and therefore also provide them with at least an insight of the fatigue, novelty, risk, surprise, and greatness of the vocation. It is a task performed from person to person, by example and inspiration, through to direct personal contact.

**Animación vocacional en tiempos difíciles y formidables.  
Abrir el corazón. Juan Carlos Martos**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God who reveals his love in Christ. Let us respond to each petition:

- For Pope Francis, that God may grant him a holy life and security as he shepherds his people. LORD HEAR US
- For our Bishop, priests and deacons, for religious brothers and sisters, that we may live faithful to our vocation. LORD HEAR US
- For all those on the path of conversion and the catechumens: that God will open the doors of his mercy and through baptism initiate them into the new life of Christ. LORD HEAR US
- For all those who feel called to the priesthood or the consecrated life, that they may respond generously to their calling. LORD HEAR US

## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

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"Father of mercy,  
Who gave us Your Son for our salvation  
never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
that are sources of fraternal life, able to awaken in young people  
the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

May Mary, the Mother and Teacher of Jesus,  
Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."

Amen



## MERCY – Wednesday 8 May

### Introduction

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God in fact desires that our lives not become banal and predictable, imprisoned by daily routine, or unresponsive before decisions that could give it meaning. The Lord does not want us to live from day to day, thinking that nothing is worth fighting for, slowly losing our desire to set out on new and exciting paths. If at times he makes us experience a “miraculous catch”, it is because he wants us to discover that each of us is called – in a variety of ways – to something grand, and that our lives should not grow entangled in the nets of an ennui that dulls the heart. Every vocation is a summons not to stand on the shore, nets in hand, but to follow Jesus on the path he has marked out for us, for our own happiness and for the good of those around us.

**Message of the Holy Father for the 56<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations.**

### Biblical text: Matthew 9, 10-13

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*And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?’ But when he heard this, he said, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.*

### Reflection

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Mercy is one of the most frequently used words in the Magisterium of Pope Francis, who sees it as the key to the Gospel and the Christian life, and therefore declares it to be a fundamental theme for vocations promotion in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church.

We remember Pope Francis’s first Angelus on Easter Sunday following his election to the papacy. In a short speech, he spoke of the mystery of God and referred to a book by Cardinal Kasper. For the Pope, the heart of the Gospel is the message of divine mercy: the salvation that God is offering us is the work of His Mercy. This is why the Church must be a place of freely-granted mercy, where everyone feels welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live according to the good life of the Gospel..

**La Pastoral Juvenil a la luz de la Evangelii Gaudium  
Koldo Gutiérrez Cuesta, sdb**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God who reveals his love in Christ.

- Lord Jesus, we have found in you and in following you in the Hospitaller Order the joy which comes from you. Give us a merciful heart, so that we can faithfully radiate your love in the world. LORD HEAR US.
- We pray for the grace to fully live that joy which transforms and renews our lives, which drives us to respond generously at the service of the mission which you have committed to us. LORD HEAR US
- We pray that the joy of your call and your love will be transparent and surprising to the men and women we wish to serve and to proclaim you. LORD HEAR US
- We pray that this joy be granted to those whom you choose to call to serve you in the Hospitaller Order, that it will enable them to respond joyfully and generously to your call with their lives. LORD HEAR US

## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

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"Father of mercy,  
Who gave us Your Son for our salvation  
never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
that are sources of fraternal life, able to awaken in young people  
the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

May Mary, the Mother and Teacher of Jesus,  
Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."  
Amen





## DIALOGUE - Thursday 9 May

### Introduction

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Embracing this promise naturally demands the courage to risk making a decision. The first disciples, called by Jesus to be part of something greater, “immediately left their nets and followed him” (Mk 1:18). Responding to the Lord’s call involves putting ourselves on the line and facing a great challenge. It means being ready to leave behind whatever would keep us tied to our little boat and prevent us from making a definitive choice. We are called to be bold and decisive in seeking God’s plan for our lives. Gazing out at the vast “ocean” of vocation, we cannot remain content to repair our nets on the boat that gives us security, but must trust instead in the Lord’s promise.

I think primarily of the call to the Christian life which all of us received at Baptism. It teaches us that our life is not a fluke but rather a gift: that of being God’s beloved children, gathered in the great family of the Church. It is precisely in the ecclesial community that the Christian life is born and develops, especially through the liturgy. The liturgy introduces us to God’s word and the grace of the sacraments; from an early age, we are taught the art of prayer and fraternal sharing. In the end, the Church is our mother because she brings us to new life and leads us to Christ. So we must love her, even when we see her face marred by human frailty and sin, and we must help to make her ever more beautiful and radiant, so that she can bear witness to God’s love in the world..

### **Message of the Holy Father for the 56<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

### **Biblical text: Genesis 12, 1-13**

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*Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’*

*So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, ‘To your offspring I will give this land.’ So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.*

## Reflection

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Any outreaching pastoral care approach must come decisively down on the side of dialogue with young people. There are many Vatican II and post-Conciliar documents that ask us to adopt an attitude of dialogue with the present world, such as *Gaudium et Spes* and Paul VI's encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, which show that the Church must move towards dialogue with the world in which it has to live. The Church becomes a word; the Church becomes a message; the Church becomes discussion. When we talk or dialogue with young people we usually mean convincing young people about the things we want; but this dialogue should be a matter of listening to their dreams and their aspirations, fully respecting their autonomy.

In view of a tendency to create welcoming environments for young people with self-referencing feedback, we have to focus on the type of vocations promotion/pastoral care which is at the mercy of the elements, helping young people to shift the focus of their self-fulfilment from their navel to a place closer to the other.

**Una pastoral con jóvenes "en salida"**  
**Jesús Rojano Martínez, sdb**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God who reveals his love in Christ.

- Lord, we pray for the Church, that it may be a sign of mercy. LORD HEAR US.
- We pray for the capacity to promote and accompany your vocations to hospitality. LORD HEAR US.
- Lord, we pray for those who live their faith within the world that their pledge to "do more" will be their response to the need to love more. LORD HEAR US.
- Lord, we pray for all those who are gathered together in this place, so that our eyes will always remain open to see the needs of those around us and that our response will always be inspired by the mercy of a God who is Love. LORD HEAR US.

## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

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"Father of mercy,  
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never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
that are sources of fraternal life, able to awaken in young people  
the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

May Mary, the Mother and Teacher of Jesus,  
Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."  
Amen



## DISCERN - Friday 10 May

### Introduction

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In encountering the Lord, some may feel the attraction of a call to the consecrated life or to the ordained priesthood. It is a discovery that can excite and at the same time frighten us, since we feel called to become “fishers of men” in the barque of the Church by giving totally of ourselves in commitment to faithful service of the Gospel and our brothers and sisters. Such a decision carries the risk of leaving everything behind to follow the Lord, to devote ourselves completely to him, and to share in his work. Many kinds of interior resistance can stand in the way of making this decision, especially in highly secularized contexts where there no longer seems to be a place for God and for the Gospel. Places where it is easy to grow discouraged and fall into the “weariness of hope” (Homily at Mass with Priests, Consecrated Persons and Lay Movements, Panama, 26 January 2019).

And yet, there can be no greater joy than to risk one’s life for the Lord! I would like to say this especially to you, the young. Do not be deaf to the Lord’s call. If he calls you to follow this path, do not pull your oars into the boat, but trust him. Do not yield to fear, which paralyzes us before the great heights to which the Lord points us. Always remember that to those who leave their nets and boat behind, and follow him, the Lord promises the joy of a new life that can fill our hearts and enliven our journey..

**Message of the Holy Father for the 56<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

### Biblical text: St Paul’s Letter to the Romans 12, 1-3

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*I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.*

## Reflection

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Discernment helps the candidate to acquire the ability to take coherent decisions, to be themselves, and to give testimony of their personal choice before others. These are often lacking in young people today. Accompaniment is therefore being offered to help them overcome any indecision, to cast fear aside, to take on their responsibilities and take decisions in their daily life based on values, appropriately emphasising the primacy of God in whatever small or major decisions they may take, recovering the roots of the 'I'; discovering and responding to their vocation as believers as the cornerstone on which their own name is engraved, and lastly, bearing witness to their choice.

It means knowing how to discover the signs of God's calling not only in the extraordinary events of life but in everyday happenings, reinterpreted as a believer in all their questions, anxieties and aspirations brimming with gratitude stemming from their conviction of the love they have received.

**Animación vocacional en tiempos difíciles y formidables.  
Abrir el corazón. Juan Carlos Martos**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God who reveals his love in Christ.

- John of God, Jesus was always the focus of your life and absorbed you entirely. We pray that he will grant young people the ability to find enthusiasm for your charism and the way your sons are working for the Church. LORD HEAR US
- May our life of prayer be ever more widely shared with others, so that we can bear witness to young people and thereby move them to follow the poor and humble Christ. LORD HEAR US
- We pray for our communities, so that we can be light, testimony and joy in this world, and thereby see the Risen Christ. LORD HEAR US

## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

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"Father of mercy,  
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never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
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the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

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Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."  
Amen



## TRUST - Saturday 11 May

### Introduction

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Dear friends, it is not always easy to discern our vocation and to steer our life in the right direction. For this reason, there needs to be a renewed commitment on the part of the whole Church – priests, religious, pastoral workers and educators – to provide young people in particular with opportunities for listening and discernment. There is a need for a youth ministry and a vocational promotion that can open the way to discovering God's plan, above all through prayer, meditation on God's word, eucharistic adoration and spiritual accompaniment.

**Message of the Holy Father for the 56<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

### Biblical text: Matthew 8, 18-27

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*Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. A scribe then approached and said, 'Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' Another of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father. But Jesus said to him, 'Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead. And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A gale arose on the lake, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up, saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' And he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, you of little faith?' Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, 'What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?'*

### Reflection

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It is not sufficient to keep repeating that pastoral care is a matter of urgency. We must frequently remind ourselves of the very cogent and convincing reasons that drive us more decisively to commit ourselves to it. We must not close our eyes to the signs of weariness and reluctance that leads us to fall into apathy and scepticism. Frustrated by the poor results of the harvest, despite all the hard work we have put into it, faced with the temptation to let everything go until times improve, looking at our rising ageing and our declining human resources, and having to deal with such a complex world as ours... where can we find the convincing reasons we need to continue relying on our vocations promotion work? Is it even reasonable to invest in the future?

But, despite all, we that believe it is reasonable. We have many sound reasons to offer, and not all of them are clean either. But since we are not here to admit defeat, but to motivate, I will focus on the five most vital reasons: 1 – because God continues to call people, 2 – because proclaiming the Kingdom and vocations go hand-in-hand, 3 - because people are continuing to hear God's call and respond with generosity, 4 – because the consecrated life is the work of God, and 5 – because the Church is the cradle of vocations.

**¿Cabe aún la Pastoral Vocacional en nuestros proyectos?**

**Juan Carlos Martos**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God who reveals his love in Christ.

- May our consecration through baptism bear true testimony to our participation in Christ's Easter.  
LORD HEAR US
- Following your example. Lord, may we commit ourselves to a way of life that is wholly grounded on the Gospel and not on self-affirmation. LORD HEAR US
- That meditating like you, Mary, on the words spoken in our hearts, we can announce to all people our own experience of Christ. LORD HEAR US
- That young people approaching the Hospitaller Order to experience the world of pain, suffering and marginalisation, may find us welcoming and see in St John of God a model of generous self-giving.  
LORD HEAR US

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## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

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"Father of mercy,  
Who gave us Your Son for our salvation  
never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
that are sources of fraternal life, able to awaken in young people  
the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

May Mary, the Mother and Teacher of Jesus,  
Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."  
Amen



## RISK - Sunday 12 May

### Introduction

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As was made clear several times during the World Youth Day in Panama, we should always look to Mary. Also in the story of this young woman, vocation was both a promise and a risk. Her mission was not easy, yet she did not allow fear to prevail. "It was the 'yes' of someone prepared to be committed, someone willing to take a risk, ready to stake everything she had, with no more security than the certainty of knowing that she was the bearer of a promise. I ask each one of you: Do you see yourselves as bearers of a promise? What promise do I bear within my heart to take forward? Mary's would undoubtedly be a difficult mission, but the challenges that lay ahead were no reason to say 'no'. Things would get complicated, of course, but not in the same way as happens when cowardice paralyzes us because things are not clear or sure in advance" (Vigil with Young People, Panama, 26 January 2019).

On this World Day of Prayer for Vocations, let us join in prayer and ask the Lord to help us discover his plan of love for our lives, and to grant us the courage to walk in the path that, from the beginning, he has chosen for each of us.

### Message of the Holy Father for the 56<sup>th</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations

### Biblical text: Luke 1, 26-38

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*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.'*

## Reflection

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As Religious, we are the first to be convinced (or reminded) that promoting vocations means promoting all vocations. So long as we continue to view our vocations promoters as being responsible only for our own Institute, we are faced with a real problem. Of course there are many challenges facing us in the world today: young people, new circumstances, a hostile society and our own demographic situation, yet there are also many young people who urge us to have confidence in their ability to continue to take their life choices seriously. But the Synod document also throws down a challenge to us, namely, whether at this stage in the game we are able to be credible witnesses (not of ourselves, but of God and the Gospel).

**El Sínodo de los Obispos. Una ocasión para escuchar, descubrir, interrogarnos y proponer**  
**José María Rodríguez Olaizola, S.J**

## Petitions

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Let us pray to the Lord our God who reveals his love in Christ.

- Lord, we pray for all the people we know who have no faith, that they may believe in you and thereby find the true sense and meaning of their lives and reach full knowledge of the truth..  
LORD HEAR US
- Lord, we pray for all the people who, at this very moment, are facing difficulties or sickness and who have placed their Faith and their trust in You. LORD HEAR US
- Lord we pray for all the people who lead us in the Church, that they will help us to make progress in the faith and all together that we may bear witness to hope and love wherever we may be.  
LORD HEAR US
- Lord we pray for all the members of the great Family of Saint John of God: Brothers, Co-workers, Volunteers, Benefactors, our sick Guests and their loved ones... that the example of John of God will help us to awaken within us a life of greater service and generosity to others. LORD HEAR US

## Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

"Father of mercy,  
Who gave us Your Son for our salvation  
never failing to support us with the gifts of Your Spirit,  
Give us living, fervent and joyful Christian communities,  
that are sources of fraternal life, able to awaken in young people  
the desire to consecrate themselves to You and to evangelisation.

Support them in their pledge to offer young people  
a sound vocational catechesis and pathways of special consecration.  
Give them the wisdom they need to discern vocations  
so that everything may clearly reveal the greatness of Your merciful love.

May Mary, the Mother and Teacher of Jesus,  
Intercede for each and every Christian community,  
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,  
they may be a source of genuine vocations at the service of the holy people of God."  
Amen







ORDINE OSPEDALIERO | di  
SAN GIOVANNI DI DIO