

Jubilee Year of the Apparition

Monthly Recollection for Members of La Salette Matha Province

January 2021

“The Vocation to Live the La Salette Charism”

1. Opening Song: Holy Spirit Song

2. Opening Prayer: PRAYER FOR THE MARIAN YEAR

(See the Prayer Card)

3. Scripture Passage

Acts 2:2-8, 11b-13

4. Theme of Meditation:

The Vocation to Live the La Salette Charism

5. Reflection

5:1 Befriending the Wind

“There is a growing temptation among religious today to believe that our choices are limited. We feel constrained by age, by diminishing numbers, by finances, by professional education, by ecclesial expectations to carry on as we are, without really encountering the depth issues.

“Let us take a lesson from the successful sailor who makes a friend of the wind. Buffeted by contrary breezes, he chooses a tack and sets the sails. With one eye on the compass, the sailor strains forward toward the distant shore. Despite the winds buffeting us, we too can set our direction. Our compass is Christ; our sails are woven of faith and hope, courage and love. We can face only forward.

“Renewal has often invited us to look backward toward the great persons and events of our past. Now it is time to look forward, to the new leaders and creative deeds in our future. ***There was no golden age of religious life.*** There were only women and men, human as we are, who loved God, cared for persons in need, and dared to dream. ***We are as human, as flawed and gifted as they were, and still in touch with the dream.***

“... Let us (invoke) the wind that comes from another direction, the breath of the Spirit which blows where it wills. Sometimes a zephyr, sometimes a mighty gale – God's Spirit can nudge our timid choices, strengthen our frail resolve, reverse any misdirected course. Before he left us, Jesus promised the apostles that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit would come upon them, and they would be his witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Later, when their time was fulfilled, they were all in one place together... Now is our time. Spirit of God, fill us and send us forth with the power and passion of your Word!” (from “The Church & Consecrated Life”, edited by David



L. Fleming, S.J., and Elizabeth McDonough, O.P., pg. 215)

5.2 Why is Vatican II so Important to Laity and Religious Today?

In recent centuries (before Vatican II) religious life has lost its prophetic emphasis within the church and the world and has become based on three pivotal assumptions contrary to its original founding vision:

- 1) the world is **fundamentally evil** and **to be avoided**;
- 2) religious are the **spiritual elite of the church**; and
- 3) their task is to be **uncritically supportive of the ecclesiastical and pastoral status quo**.

5.3 After Vatican II, What Challenges were Religious Communities Asked to Face?

“Religious Orders were asked to revisit the meaning of their vows, their community life, their Rule of Life, and their ministries (both inside and outside of their community) vis-à-vis the new vision from Vatican II. *In addition, their new call to explore their unique identity and mission of their congregation (previously not allowed by the 1917 Code of Canon Law) was first described in 1971 by Pope Paul VI as their ‘charism.’* All these consequences of the new vision of the Church and the world caused excitement for many, confusion and discouragement of others.”

5.4 What are Some Qualities of the La Salette Message that Match Well with the Qualities of the “Charism” of Religious?

- **Mary Repeatedly Speaks of “My Son”:** Any genuine charism of religious life is a pure gift of God for the good of the church. It can generally be described as *a window on the gospel*, a framed vision of people following Jesus that attracts others to do so in a similar way.
- **The Weeping Mother Spoke about many Elements of a Well-Rounded Faith-Life:** Charisms are expressed in an entire way of life, a comprehensive culture, not merely in various norms and particular practices. They are deeply rooted in healthy spirituality. They exhibit sound and supple structures. Genuine charisms have customary practices that are formative of the chosen lifestyle.
- **Her Message and Mission is a Universal One — “Make this Known to All My People”:** A genuine charism of religious life can also transcend ethnic differences, social and economic classes, and the several generations alive at a given time. (It) has the potential to transform people's lives no matter who or where they are.



5.5 What does It Mean to be “Called” to Live a Charism?

“People simply *receive* the charism and *respond* to it. It touches and can change them... No one can actually re-found or reweave or re-create a *charism* of religious life.

“...Expressed in the subjective way that... (people) probably (have) experienced it at some time or another, a **vocation** to live within a certain religious charism is an overwhelming sense that something quite beyond clear description has dropped into one's life (or into one's hands or into one's heart or into one's head) and **evoked a spontaneous personal response** such as ‘Oh, my God, if I take this seriously, it could transform me drastically for the rest of my life.’”

Fr. Cassian Yuhaus, C.P., proposed four norms for the prophetic. “A community or an individual must answer ‘yes’ to all four questions in order to be accepted as prophetic.

“Question No. 1: Have you heard the cry of the poor?” The prophet will always speak from within reality... The prophet knows wherein he or she speaks. The prophet takes side. That side is with God on the side of the poor... And the prophet must know and identify the oppressors and the oppressing agencies and causes.

“Question No. 2: Can you read the signs of the time?” God is in continual interaction with all creation. This interaction attains its highest point of meaning and relevance in the life of the prophet and the prophetic community. God speaks through the events of life, the events of history. In these we discern the voice of God... We shall never understand properly what the cry of the poor means unless we interpret that cry in our reading of the events, the signs of our time.

“Question No. 3: Have you encountered Christ as liberator?” Is your Christ only to be found among the lilies of the field? Is your Christ only the meek and gentle shepherd boy watching tenderly his sweet little lambs? If that is the limit of your image of Christ, you can never be a prophet.

“The prophet sees the anger in the eyes of Jesus, feels the tightness in his throat, touches the tension in his muscles as he beats the whip over the money changers and kicks over their pots of gold... Jesus, anointed in the Spirit, came ‘to set the captive free’ and to liberate mankind from every form of evil and oppression. The prophet walks the same path.

“Question No. 4: Can you drink of the chalice?” Ultimately to be a prophet means to know no other fear than the fear of not being a prophet. The prophet cannot shut up or be shut up... When James and John wanted top billing in the kingdom, Jesus simply said, ‘Can you drink of the chalice?’ (Matt 20:22-23).”

6. Meditative Music

7. Questions for personal reflection and discussion:

- ☐ What positive message do you hear from the following: “There was no



golden age of religious life... We are as human, as flawed and gifted as they were, and still in touch with the dream”?

- ☐ Whom do you know whom you consider to be prophetic, who could say “yes” to all four questions above?
- ☐ Which La Salette (or other) ministry deals directly with prophetic situations and needs?

8. Group sharing based on the questions above (Optional)

9. Spontaneous prayers

10. Concluding Prayer

A Prayer for Wisdom to Our Lady of La Salette

Queen of radiant Light, Blessed Lady of La Salette, grant us the grace to realize fully the great truth that God's ways are above our own. Help us, through your loving example, to place before God our life and our talents, our time and our gifts.

May we always be ready to be used by God for all good things, great and small.

Grant that, through your loving intercession, we may be reconciled with God's gracious plan for us.

May your Son open our eyes in faith to see the path God bids us walk and may we be willing always to follow the Way that leads to life everlasting. **Amen**

Invocation:

Our Lady of La Salette, Reconciler of Sinners,

Pray without ceasing for us who have recourse to you.

11. Concluding Song: La Salette Song

