



FOR THE FORMATION OF MEN
AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS, AND
SEMINARIANS

MAY

“Let us pray that men and women religious, and seminarians, grow in their own vocational journey through human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, that lead them to be credible witnesses of the Gospel”



PRAYER INTENTION REFLECTION

APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION
VERITATIS GAUDIUM⁷
Francis
27 December 2017

2. [...] As I have had occasion to note, “one of the main contributions of the Second Vatican Council was precisely seeking a way to overcome this divorce between theology and pastoral care, between faith and life. I dare say that the Council has revolutionized to some extent the status of theology – the believer’s way of doing and thinking”.^[4] (...) in dialogue with all people of our time, listening attentively to their concerns, their sufferings and their needs.^[8] Consequently, *Optatam Totius* stresses, “pastoral concern... ought to permeate thoroughly the entire training of the students”,^[9] so that they become accustomed to “transcending the limits of their own diocese, nation, or rite, and to helping the needs of the whole Church, [and] prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel everywhere”.^[10]

3. This rich legacy of analysis and direction has been tested and enriched, as it were, “on the ground” thanks to the persevering commitment to a social and cultural meditation on the Gospel undertaken by the People of God in different continental areas and in dialogue with diverse cultures. The time has now come for it to be consolidated and to impart to ecclesiastical studies that wise and courageous renewal demanded by the missionary transformation of a Church that “goes forth”.

⁷ See full message:

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_constitutions/documents/papa-francesco_costituzione-ap_20171208_veritatis-gaudium.html

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The primary need today is for the whole People of God to be ready to embark upon a new stage of “Spirit-filled” evangelization.^[19] This calls for “a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform”.^[20] In this process, a fitting renewal of the system of ecclesiastical studies plays a strategic role. These studies, in fact, are called to offer opportunities and processes for the suitable formation of priests, consecrated men and women, and committed lay people. At the same time, they are called to be a sort of providential cultural laboratory in which the Church carries out the performative interpretation of the reality brought about by the Christ event and nourished by the gifts of wisdom and knowledge by which the Holy Spirit enriches the People of God in manifold ways – from the *sensus fidei fidelium* to the magisterium of the bishops, and from the charism of the prophets to that of the doctors and theologians.

This is essential for a Church that “goes forth”! All the more so because today we are not only living in a time of changes but are experiencing a true epochal shift^[21], marked by a wide-ranging “anthropological”^[22] and “environmental crisis”.^[23] Indeed, we daily see “signs that things are now reaching a breaking point, due to the rapid pace of change and degradation; these are evident in large-scale natural disasters as well as social and even financial crises”.^[24] In a word, this calls for “changing the models of global development” and “redefining our notion of progress”.^[25] Yet “the problem is that we still lack the culture necessary to confront this crisis. We lack leadership capable of striking out on new paths”.^[26]

This vast and pressing task requires, on the cultural level of academic training and scientific study, a broad and generous effort at a radical paradigm shift, or rather – dare I say – at “a bold cultural revolution”.^[27] In this effort, the worldwide network of ecclesiastical universities and faculties is called to offer the decisive contribution of leaven, salt and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the living Tradition of the Church, which is ever open to new situations and ideas.

The document is 87 pages long and aims to promote comprehensive education that takes into account all aspects of the individual.

The Pope Video - FEBRUARY 2022:

<https://thepopevideo.org/february-for-religious-sisters-and-consecrated-women/>

The Pope Video - MAY 2020:

<https://thepopevideo.org/may-for-deacons/>

The Pope Video - June 2019:

<https://thepopevideo.org/the-priests-way-of-life/>

The Pope Video - October 2018:

<https://thepopevideo.org/the-mission-of-religious/>

The Pope Video - July 2018:

<https://thepopevideo.org/priests-and-their-pastoral-ministry/>

➤ 30 March 2023 - WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS