



November 2011.

HERE I AM, LORD

پیش Invocation to the Spirit

We are here, before You, Holy Spirit,
we feel the burden of our weaknesses,
but we are all united in Your name.

Come to us, help us,
come into our hearts, and teach us
what we must do,
show us the way to follow,
accomplish in us what You ask of us.
May You alone propose and guide
our decisions.

Keep us close to You, by the gift
of Your grace,
since we are one in You,
with God the father and His Son,
and may nothing separate us from the truth.

AMEN!

پیش The Word of God

This is my commandment: **love one another as I have loved you**. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants anymore, because a servant does not know his master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learned from my Father.

You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; and then the Father will give you anything you ask Him in my name. What I command you is to

love one another.

Jn 15:12-17



پیش Reading and reflection on the meaning of the Association's logo (Statute p.6)

پیش You did not choose me. no I chose you ... Jn 15:16

It is Jesus Himself who calls and chooses: He separates us from the masses so as to make us understand who we are, what we must do and how to do it. Christ, if we are willing, helps us to discover the way to take and the characteristic to give our plan.

Jesus knows how to see in each one of us that which others do not see and penetrates the deepest thoughts of our hearts.

Every vocation, every call, is really an encounter and dialogue. The Lord communicates with us, calls us and asks us to follow Him. And this invitation attracts us like an answer of love because **what Jesus proposes is always something wonderful**, involving and unique, and goes straight to our hearts. The call, taken into consideration and welcomed, makes our hearts exclaim

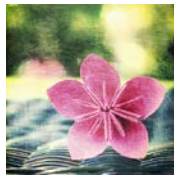
"Here I am!"

In the Word of God we find the expression "here I am"; it is the generous and ready response as well as the joy of the one who is attentive and waits for the realisation of something in which he/she must take part-

with all the qualities and energy of his/her own life.

God calls each of us by name, He brings us into being from nothing, giving us a well-defined personality. Each person is unique and unrepeatable. From all eternity God thought of each one of us in that way. And in that name there is a call which is mine, only mine. I do not have a vocation: I am my vocation. That voice which called from nothing gave me a personality at the same time as, in an act of infinite tenderness, He pronounced my name. That voice called me "to be for":

*Desired by God because loved by God
as I am. .*



*** Reading and reflection**
Identity of the Lay person in the Church

Statutes art. 1, p. 15-16

*** A reflection follows:**

**پیش Priestly... prophetic...
kingly office ...**

Priestly office: "Hence the laity, dedicated as they are to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvellously called and prepared so that even richer fruits of the Spirit maybe produced in them. For **all their works, prayers, and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work, relaxation of mind and body**, if they are accomplished in the Spirit - indeed even the hardships of life if patiently born - all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. In the **celebration of the Eucharist these may most fittingly be offered to the Father along with the body of**

the Lord and so worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God.

In a very special way, parents share in the office of sanctifying "by leading a conjugal life in the Christian spirit and by seeing to the Christian education of their children."

Prophetic Office: Lay people also fulfil their prophetic mission by **evangelization, "that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life."** For lay people, "this evangelization . . . acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world. This witness of life, however, is not the sole element in the apostolate; the true apostle is on the lookout for occasions of announcing Christ by word, either to unbelievers . . . or to the faithful Lay people who are capable and trained **may also collaborate in catechetical formation, in teaching the sacred sciences, and in use of the communications media.**

In accord with the knowledge, competence, and pre-eminence which they possess, [lay people] have the right and even at times a duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church, and they have a right to make their opinion known to the other Christian faithful, with due regard to the integrity of faith and morals and reverence toward their pastors, and with consideration for the common good and the dignity of persons

Kingly office: By his obedience unto death, Christ communicated to his disciples the **gift of royal freedom**, so that they might "by the self-abnegation of a holy life, overcome the reign of sin in themselves. **That man is rightly called a king who makes his own body an obedient subject and, by governing himself with suitable rigor, refuses to let his passions breed rebellion in his soul, for he exercises a kind of royal**

power over himself. and because he knows how to rule his own person as king, so too does he always sit as its judge. He will not let himself be imprisoned by sin. Moreover, by uniting their forces let the laity so **remedy the institutions and conditions of the world** when the latter are an inducement to sin, that these may be conformed to the norms of justice, favouring always and everywhere rather than hindering the **practice of virtue**. **By so doing they will impregnate culture and human works with a moral value.**
Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 901-909



پیش **Reading and reflection:**
Statutes n. 2, n 3, p. 16-17
A reflection follows:

پیش **The Mission of the laity**

Lay people are women and men of the Church in the heart of the world and women and men of the world in the heart of the Church. Lay people are God's prophets in the world. This means helping to build a new humanity, a new society, more just, human and Christian.

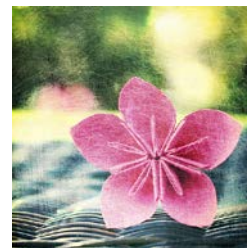
The first characteristic of a lay person, immersed in the world according to God's will, **is a journey towards holiness and discover the new signs of the times.** Here are some examples: secularity, hunger, oppression, injustice, war, terrorism, violence, disease and poverty. From a religious point of view great ignorance and religious indifference prevail. It is vital to respond to these issues.

We need **new evangelization of culture, of young people, of peace and the proclamation of the Gospel to poor countries.**

Lay people may directly collaborate in many sectors of evangelization and also collaborate in the **promotion of human dignity**.

"A new chapter, rich in hope, has begun in the history of relations between consecrated people and the laity." (VC 54). **New itineraries of communion and collaboration** deserve to be encouraged *so as to unite the common effort of consecrated and lay people regarding mission.*

Religious people and laity are two very rich subjects that have much to learn from one another through mutual collaboration.



پیش **In Magdalene's life**

Magdalene of Canossa' whole life is the fulfilment of her spiritual experience which is concisely expressed by the well-known motto:

"Charity is a fire that ever spreads embracing everything."

In fact, Magdalene, whose heart was aflame with the love of Christ Crucified, wished to reach out to the greatest number of people possible to uplift them, make Jesus known to them, comfort them in sorrow and in sickness.

Prelates and Bishops of other towns appreciated the work blossoming in the houses she had founded and solicited her to respond to the needs of their flocks as well. Her Daughters, however, though generously available, could not cope with all their pressing requests.

Thus, Magdalene nourished the “challenging idea ... that the Tertiaries ...” should stand in wherever her Daughters could not, to carry out many ministries that the Institute of the Canossian Sisters could not embrace because they were to be involved in the works proper to the Institute.

The institution of the Tertiaries reminds us of “Third Orders” of old, but it has its simple and essential structure.

It stands side by side with the Institute of the Daughters of Charity and involves young women, widows and married women who are touched by the “Greatest Love” contemplated in Christ Crucified and Our Lady of Sorrows.

The modalities by which this wonderful, still relevant fruit of Magdalene’s insight, are incarnated in history and vary from time to time.

The Tertiaries, at the very beginning, and the lay vocations of today, are ablaze with the same flame of charity that kindles many generous people.

M. Elide Testa



گي Her first plans ...

Magdalene, being an ingenious and creative woman, guided by the Spirit, invented new means to spread God’s Kingdom in the world. Thus, the “Tertiaries” of the Daughters of Charity were born of her mind and heart. This Institution is not one of the five official “Branches of Charity”. It is the fruit of the

inner fire that urged Magdalene to set others with the same zeal.

Initially, Magdalene thought of **lay people** (virgins, widows or married women) willing to co-operate with her to implement her great apostolic project. Her first insight dates back to earlier than 1818. In fact, on 21st October 1818, replying to Elena Bernardi, Magdalene begged her to tell her Milanese friend, Countess Carolina Durini, that she had no time to write about the Tertiaries:

*“Tell my Durini, whom I embrace dearly with all the other friends, that, since I’m running of time, I am unable to write about the Tertiaries. However, I would not write, even if I were able, because I **have no one to consult**. I have not been able to see Don Galvani, as usual, because he was out of town and they tell me he will return after I have left.”*

Five years later (1823) **the Plan of the Tertiaries** was ready to be sent to Milan to Monsignor Francesco Maria Zoppi who was going to Rome to be consecrated a Bishop. Below the Plan, she wrote by hand: “Dispatched from Milan to Rome on 17th November 1823.”

Maria Nicolai



پیش Prayer

*I have been created to do and to be someone
for which no one else has been created.*

*I occupy a place in God's counsels,
in God's world a place occupied
by no one else.*

*It doesn't matter if I am rich or poor,
despised or esteemed by men:
God knows me and calls me by name.*

*He entrusted me with a work that He had
not entrusted to anyone else.*

*I have my mission. In some way I am
necessary to his plans,
as necessary in my place
as an Archangel in his.*

*He did not create me in vain. I will do
Some good, I will do His work,
I will be an angel of peace, a preacher of
truth, in the place He assigned me
Even if I do not know it. It is enough that I
follow His commandments
And serve Him in my vocation.*

*God of my joy, help me to always
perceive in my heart
that echo full of tenderness that He planned
that I should be.*

*May I discover day after day my "name",
in a glow of wonder and gratitude.*

*May I live it in fullness sharing
Your dream, responding to love with love.*

پیش Questions for reflection

- Am I convinced that God chose me to follow a journey of Holiness in the Greatest Love according to the charism and spirituality of St. Magdalene?
- Do I live my priestly, prophetic and kingly mission/office every day?
- Do I remember "my beloved Poor" every day?

پیش Personal Notes

