

Videomessaggio del Santo Padre Leone XIV
Ai partecipanti dell'Assemblea annuale 2026 per il 70°
anniversario della fondazione della "Leadership Conference of
Women Religious" negli Stati Uniti d'America
12 agosto 2026

Dear friends in Christ,

I cordially greet the members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in the United States of America, which is celebrating the 70th anniversary of foundation at its 2026 Annual Assembly. I likewise offer prayerful good wishes to the women and men religious from various Congregations throughout the Americas who are participating in this year's event.

Even though you come from communities with different histories and apostolates, it is important to remember the need to foster unity within and among your Institutes as well as in the broader Church. All Christians are called to be builders of Christ's communion, formed in a synodal Church in which everyone cooperates in the same mission according to their own charism and ministry (*cf. Opening Address to the Extraordinary Consistory, 26 June 2026*). In a special way, those in religious life are called to become experts in synodality due to the opportunities afforded by community life to practice it, as well as the very way that your Congregations are organized (*cf. Address to the Participants in the Jubilee for Consecrated Life, 10 October 2025*). As such, I was pleased to learn that the Assembly's proceedings will include a synodal method of listening, discussion and discernment, with an openness and a willingness to understand what others are saying. I therefore hope that, through this format of fraternal and receptive dialogue, you will be able to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying (*cf. Rev 2:7*) about the present and future of consecrated life in the nations where you serve.

In a particular way, through the many charisms bestowed by the Holy Spirit throughout history, consecrated women and men have helped to make the mission and mystery of the Church visible in our world (*cf. Saint John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Vita Consecrata, 1*). In this regard, I express gratitude for the longstanding contributions of your Institutes in the fields of evangelization, education and caring for the poor and marginalized, to name but a few. As you reflect on your theme of "Many Charisms, One Spirit, One Call," I pray that you will

especially keep in mind the specific charisms entrusted by God to the founders and foundresses of your respective communities. The Church needs you and all of the diversity and richness of the forms of consecration and ministry that you represent, for with your vitality and the witness of a life centered on Jesus, you can contribute to waking up the world (*cf. Address to the Participants in the Jubilee for Consecrated Life, 10 October 2025*). In this way, together, you will be able to confront the globalization of indifference and of powerlessness with the remedy of Christ's love and mercy.

In order to promote the authentic flourishing of consecrated life, the work of fostering religious vocations is of vital importance. As many of us have personally experienced, Christ's call to follow him with an undivided heart through vows of poverty, chastity and obedience brings joy, peace and fulfillment. Today, despite the increasing phenomenon of secularization in the world, there is also a growing hunger for God. Indeed, as I recently observed on my Apostolic Journey to Spain, "many young people and adults are rediscovering the Christian faith, sometimes after having drifted away from God over a period of time" (Prayer Vigil, 9 June 2026). In your interactions with the young people, therefore, try to seek ways to introduce them to your way of life, and help them to hear the voice of the Lord, who speaks to us in the depths of our hearts. Encourage them to be courageous in responding to Jesus, who is never outdone in generosity, so that they too may share the joy that comes from following his call.

With these sentiments, I wish you a fruitful gathering and assure you of my spiritual closeness. I entrust the work of the Assembly to the maternal protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, that she may intercede for all of you and for the communities which you represent.

And may Almighty God bless all of you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.