

Waiting for the Tomorrow of God

Looking at many negative developments in the world and in the Church we could be tempted to become pessimistic and discouraged. But it is precisely in times of crisis that christian hope proves itself because it is more than a naive optimism. Only religious and religious communities which radiate hope and joy, are attractive to people. "Can we wait for the Tomorrow of God?", is a challenging question the Pope puts to us.

- ✿ This hope is not based on statistics or accomplishments, but on the One in whom we have put our trust (cf. 2 Tim 1:2), the One for whom "nothing is impossible" (Lk 1:37). This is the **hope which does not disappoint**; it is the hope which enables consecrated life to keep writing its great history well into the future. It is to that future that we must always look, conscious that the Holy Spirit spurs us on so that he can still do great things with us.
- ✿ We all know the difficulties which the various forms of consecrated life are currently experiencing: decreasing vocations and aging members, particularly in the Western world; economic problems stemming from the global financial crisis; issues of internationalization and globalization; the threats posed by relativism and a sense of isolation and social irrelevance... But it is precisely amid these uncertainties, which we share with so many of our contemporaries, that we are called to practice the virtue of **hope, the fruit of our faith in the Lord of history**, who continues to tell us: "Be not afraid... for I am with you" (Jer 1:8).
- ✿ We have our troubles, our dark nights of the soul, our disappointments and infirmities, our experience of slowing down as we grow older. But in all these things we should be able to **discover "perfect joy"**. For it is here that we learn to recognize the face of Christ, who became like us in all things, and to rejoice in the knowledge that **we are being conformed to him** who, out of love of us, did not refuse the sufferings of the cross.
- ✿ At the foot of the Cross, Mary is at the same time the woman of sorrow and of watchful expectation of a mystery far greater than sorrow, which is about to be fulfilled. It seemed that everything had come to an end; every hope could be said to have been extinguished. She too, at that moment, remembering the promises of the Annunciation could have said: they did not come true, I was deceived. But she did not say this. And so she who was blessed because she believed, sees blossom from her faith a new future and awaits God's tomorrow with expectation. At times I think: **do we know how to wait for God's tomorrow? Or do we want it today?** For her the tomorrow of God is the dawn of Easter morning, the dawn of the first day of the week. It would do us good to think, in contemplation, of the embrace of mother and son. The single lamp lit at the tomb of Jesus is the hope of the mother, which in that moment is the hope of all humanity. I ask myself and I ask you: is this lamp still alight in monasteries? In your monasteries are you waiting for God's tomorrow?



Sources: [Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to all consecrated people](#); [Vatican Congregation for institutes of consecrated life: Rejoice!](#)

- What prevails in my heart: sadness or joyful hope?
- What do people sense when they visit our communities?