

LITANY FOR VOCATIONS

Leader: God our Creator, hear our prayer.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Abraham at the age of 75 to leave his home to be the father of many nations.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Sarah who answered with laughter at the age of 90 to bear a son called Isaac.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Moses from the burning bush, to speak boldly to Pharaoh.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Hannah's son, Samuel, four times in his sleep, before he recognized your voice.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called the prophet Elijah with a tiny, whispering sound.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called prophet Isaiah, a man of unclean lips to be your prophet.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called the prophet Jeremiah from his mother's womb.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Zechariah and Elizabeth, both advanced in their years to bear a son named John.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Mary as a teenager through the angel Gabriel.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Joseph in his dreams.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called the first disciples to lower their nets after fishing all through the night.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called Mary of Magdala to be the first person to see the Risen Christ.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you called founders and foundresses of religious institutes to risk hope to follow Jesus.

All: Inspire us to answer your call.

Leader: As you call all of us forth to walk humbly together.

All: Inspire us to answer your call. Amen.

A word about clothing and living simply

WE ARE LIVING in times that are not particularly sensitive to the needs of the poor. The pressure to adopt an affluent lifestyle increases, while the voices of those dwelling in poverty tend to go unheard. Let us thank the Lord that so many men and women are devoted to caring for the poor and the excluded . . . ordinary people who quietly make themselves poor among the poor.

— MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE
2023 WORLD DAY OF THE POOR, 19 NOVEMBER 2023

The cost of the clothes we wear

A culture of careless accumulation negatively impacts humanity. The allure of clothing, particularly on sale and among the latest trend can entice us to make quick purchases for items we do not need and leave us with a closet full of clothes we rarely wear.

Consider that . . .

The fashion industry is the second most water-intensive industry in the world. It takes 713 gallons of water to make 1 cotton t-shirt! That's enough drinking water for one person for 900 days. Source: <https://sustainablecampus.fsu.edu/blog/clothed-conservation-fashion-water>

There are roughly 40 million garment workers in the world today and they are among the lowest paid. Roughly 85 percent of all garment workers are women between the ages of 18 and 24. Many more are children forced into child labor. Source: <https://truecostmovie.com/learn-more/human-rights/>

One garbage truck of clothes is burned or sent to landfills every second! In a world of accelerating demand, consumers want and can increasingly afford new clothing after wearing garments only a few times. Source: <https://www.wri.org/insights/numbers-economic-social-and-environmental-impacts-fast-fashion>

How religious sisters, brothers, and priests make decisions about their clothes

Each of the more than 700 religious institutes in the United States has its own unique spirituality,

mission, and charism (or spirit) that emphasizes the way community members pray, live, dress, and minister. Communities decide the external signs that symbolize their communal identity. The “dress code” of a community varies but all communities strive to wear attire that is simple, modest, and professional, and that gives witness to the fact that Christ is the center of their lives. Some communities wear distinctive clothing some or all of the time called a “religious habit” as a communal sign of their consecration. This habit may include a profession ring, distinctive crucifix, specific clothing, or other community symbol. The vow of poverty impacts the clothing choices of religious communities.

What is the vow of poverty?

Religious sisters, brothers, and priests publicly vow poverty and commit to living simply to more closely imitate Christ and put complete trust in God who is the source of all gifts. Living simply and sharing all things in common allows sisters, brothers, and priests to have a lighter global footprint and reject the ways of living that harm creation and dehumanize people. Individual paychecks, stipends, and donations are for the benefit of all members of the community. The vow of poverty removes the distraction and attraction to material things and encourages living with abundant generosity.

What you can do to live more simply

- Avoid the temptation to buy clothes just because they are on sale. Before a purchase, ask yourself whether you really need the item.
- Have a clothes swap with your friends and trade items.
- Be practical in the clothes you buy. Ask yourself whether you will wear it often and be able to mix and match it with other items.
- When making one new purchase, donate two used clothing items.
- Have a conversation with a sister, brother, or priest about how they live out their vow of poverty.