



TO THE MAJOR SUPERIORS OF THE ORDER ON THE OCCASION OF THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

December 4, 2014

Dear Brothers:

As Pope Francis convenes the year of Consecrated Life, he invites us to look at the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope, highlighting the prophetic dimension of our vocation. We have been called to “Wake up the world” authentically living our Augustinian charism, in both communal and personal ways, with creativity and openness. This year offers us the possibility of renewal and hope to move forward in a process full of challenges and possibilities, reflecting the joy and the beauty of living the Gospel and following Christ as Augustinians.

In his most recent letter to the Order, the Prior General emphasized that the Year of Consecrated Life can contribute to the healing of our weaknesses, strengthen our fraternity, and promote a more decisive openness to the emerging scenarios in the world of the youth, the laity, the family, and the care of the most vulnerable of our earth (*Evangelii Gaudium* 209), of the mission *ad gentes*. It gives us the opportunity to grow and bear witness.

The Institute of Augustinian Spirituality (ISA) was created in the last General Chapter and has as a goal to promote the spiritual formation of the Order in service to the Augustinian Family. At the beginning of this moment of grace for the Church and for the Order, we want to assist in the achievement of the objectives of the Year of Consecrated Life and offer our collaboration. In the creative and lively meetings of the Plenary Board and the Directive Committee of the Institute, which took place in Rome from October 22-24, various proposals were presented and then approved by the General Council of the Order.

1. CELEBRATIONS

*Day of prayer for all of the members of the Order: Friday, May 8, 2015 (Our Lady of Grace). It seems important to us that everyone in the Order, on the same day, will celebrate a Day of Prayer for Augustinian Religious Life. Each community is invited to organize the day in a creative way (meetings, activities with laity, liturgical celebrations, presentations on Augustinian Charism, vocational activities, etc...) We are asking each community of the Order to program as part of the day, a common prayer time which will include the renewal of our Augustinian Profession of Vows. In the future, the ISA will send suggested texts and materials.

*Day of prayer for those in Formation: Saturday October 10 2015. The International Commission on Initial Formation proposes that, throughout the Order, a special day will be set aside in each circumscription for all in Initial Formation. The participants in this day will be all Novices and Professed Students and we encourage the pre-novices to be included also. Where it is possible, this day could be a collaborative celebration among circumscriptions, especially those in the same country. The day can include a time of reflection (proposals, evaluation), celebrations (prayer, Eucharist), service (acts of Charity), and festive gatherings. The Commission on Initial Formation will send, through the ISA, further suggestions and materials.

*Day of prayer for each circumscription (Province, Vicariate, Delegation): Each circumscription is invited to plan a celebrative day which offers the members an opportunity for fraternal gathering and a chance to deepen our Augustinian charism. We suggest a part which includes a talk or discussion, a liturgical celebration presided by the respective major superior, and a festive gathering.

2. MEETINGS

*Age groups. The circumscriptions are encouraged, during the Year of Consecrated Life, to organize meetings according to age groups (young, middle age, seniors) where pertinent themes can be presented and discussed as way to contribute to renewal. If it is convenient, these meetings can be organized among circumscriptions which are near each other, especially in the same country.

* With the laity. Each community is invited to plan during this Year of Consecrated Life a meeting with laity. Two possible suggestions: With the laity who may not know us, organize an opportunity to share our charism and our ministries so that they may know the Augustinians, who we are, where we are, and what we do; With the laity who already know us and with whom we minister, organize an opportunity to deepen their understanding of lay Augustinian spirituality and to listen to their suggestions and

contributions. Special attention should be paid to the Augustinian Lay Fraternities and those people in especially close relationships to us.

3. MATERIALS

*Bi-monthly reflections: A brief text, prayer, points of reflection and discussion, and an image will be sent to the members of the Order on a bi-monthly basis.

*Chapters of Renewal: Suggestions and materials to help organize these Chapters will be offered.

* Bibliography: On themes of Religious life, especially Augustinian themes.

*Other Materials: From both the Order and the Church. For example, we will add the Apostolic letter of Pope Francis, signed on the 21st of November for the Year of Consecrated Life.

All of these materials will be collected on the **Web Page** of the Institute of Augustinian Spirituality, which is currently in construction and we hope will soon be ready. We hope that the web page will be a dynamic instrument of assistance and interactivity. We are also considering other ways of being present in social media networks.

Soon we will present other proposals and activities for the Order which are still in the discussion and organizational phases.

The institute of Augustinian Spirituality will be at your disposal to help with any of your needs. We are at your disposal. We also ask for your help in sending us any of your suggestions and any materials which we may share that you find useful during this year of Consecrated Life. You may send them directly to the Secretary of the ISA, Fr. Bob Guessetto, OSA: bguessetto@aol.com

Many thanks and a fraternal embrace to you all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Luis Marín". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Fr. Luis Marín de San Martín, OSA
President of the Institute of Augustinian Spirituality