

## FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



Today, February 5<sup>th</sup>, Super Bowl Sunday, is also the World Day for Consecrated Life. We celebrate the Religious who have consecrated themselves to God for the sake of the Kingdom.

The presence of the Kingdom is manifest in two distinct ways: Matrimony and Virginty, or Consecrated Life. One is not better, or more important than the other, but both are necessary, because they each give witness to the presence of the Kingdom in our midst.

The witness of Consecrated Virgins is essential for us as Christians. Consecrated Life gives testimony that God alone is enough, that he is able to satisfy the longing of the human heart.

Marriage makes manifest the great truth that two can become one flesh by the power of God. Marriage is an image of the betrothal of God to his people. Christ, the Bridegroom, is espoused to the Church, his Bride. The love which unites lover and beloved is indissoluble, meaning nothing is able to break. That is why the vows exchanged at Marriage are for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health. These vows are not given on the strength or commitment of the couple, but are given with the Sacramental grace of God. The couple, married in the Church, receives a supernatural grace which enables them to fulfill their vows to each other. They have stability, bedrock that enables them to confront and overcome, with sufferings and joys, whatever life may throw at them.

In the world this is impossible, but for those who are in Christ all things is possible.

Today is Super Bowl Sunday. Millions of people, adults and children, will be watching the game, cheering on the heroes on the field.

The Church invites us to watch, and emulate the real heroes, those in Consecrated Life.

When was the last time you visited the Missionaries of Charity, or the Carmel of the Carmelites, or the Friars of the Renewal? Did you ever take you children, or grandchildren, to a cloistered convent, or to an Abbey?

If you want to see people who are full of joy, with radiant smiles, with peace in their eyes, and light coming out of their souls, go to the cloistered convent in Newark, or Morristown, or visit the Friary in the Bronx. You will not be disappointed!

Perhaps your child may never be an NFL quarterback; perhaps she will never play for the US Women's Soccer Team. But, with God's grace, one of your children may begin to discern a call to Religious Life! If so, Congratulations, you have won the jackpot!

Fr. Sean