



AUG 11 2009

CONGREGAZIONE
PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, July 14, 2009

Re: Donation to the Apostolic Visitation of Institutes of Women Religious in the United States

Your Eminence / Your Excellency,

My dear Brothers Bishops in the United States, as you are aware, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, in an audience on November 17, 2008, authorized an Apostolic Visitation of the principal institutes of apostolic women religious in the United States. On December 22, 2008, as Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, I signed a decree appointing Mother Mary Clare Millea, A.S.C.J., Superior General of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to serve as the Apostolic Visitor.

I am pleased that Mother Mary Clare had the opportunity to present information about the Apostolic Visitation during the spring General Assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. We count on your support in this effort to:

- look into the quality of the life of apostolic women religious in the United States
- learn more about the varied and unique ways in which apostolic women religious contribute to the welfare of the Church and society
- assist the Church to strengthen, enhance and support the growth of the apostolic congregations to which approximately 59,000 women religious in the United States belong.

In order to assure the most balanced assessment possible I have asked the Apostolic Visitor to be in communication with the Diocesan Bishops regarding the women religious in their dioceses. I thank you in advance for your collaboration in this effort.

Because this Apostolic Visitation is so very important for safeguarding and promoting consecrated life in the United States, it is also imperative that it be methodically and efficiently conducted. We have a projected budget of \$1,100,000 for the three years which the total work of the Apostolic Visitation will require. I am asking you, my brother Bishops, for your help in offsetting the expenses which will be incurred by this work for the future of apostolic religious life in the United States.

May I suggest that the donation you wish to make be sent to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 00120 Vatican City State, Europe. Please specify that it is to be used for the "Apostolic Visitation of Institutes of Women Religious in the United States".

I am grateful to each of you for your genuine interest and sincere concern for the vitality of religious life in your great country. Be assured of my fraternal affection and esteem for you and the promise of my prayers.



Franc Card. Rodé
Franc Card. Rodé, C.M.
Prefect