

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We are already into the second month of the new year. During February, the Church calls us to observe two special days: the World Day for Consecrated Life (February 2) and the World Day of the Sick (February 11).

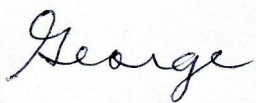
The World Day for Consecrated Life, as Pope John Paul said, “is intended to help the entire Church to esteem every more greatly the witness of those persons who have chosen to follow Christ by means of the practice of the evangelical counsels.” It is an opportunity for us to offer thanks for our vocation and to beg God’s strength to be true to that vocation to the end. February 2 also is the anniversary of the consecration of the first 11 members of the Bordeaux Sodality, and so let us pray as well for the lay branch of our Marianist Family.

The feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, February 11, is designated as the World Day of the Sick. It is a day for us to support prayerfully all who suffer and those who care for them. In his message for this day Pope Benedict XVI writes, “I would like to encourage the efforts of those who work daily to ensure that the incurably and terminally ill, together with their families, receive adequate and loving care.”

Toward the end of the month, we enter the season of Lent. Lent is special to the extent that we make it so. We recall that there are special seasons of grace, appropriate times to do things. If we treat all days the same, and think that we can attend to our relationship with God anytime, then we tend to let it drift. Let’s not do that this year. Lent is the acceptable time of salvation. Don’t let it pass by with regret.

Attached are special liturgical observances of this month. May our Lenten journey help us be united as a Church and as a Marianist Family to the crying needs of our world, and let us pray for God’s peace on our world and on us all!

Affectionately yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

George J. Cerniglia, S.M.
Assistant for Religious Life