

**WEEK OF PRAYER FOR
HOSPITAL VOCATIONS
20-26 APRIL 2026**



**WITNESSES, THEREFORE,
MISSIONARIES OF HOSPITALITY**

“Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”



Hermanas
Hospitalarias

Dear Hospitaller Family.

Christian witness springs from friendship with the Lord; this is the invitation that Pope Leo XIV offers us for the 40th World Youth Day, a message which the General Commission for Vocational Ministry and Formation of the Sisters of St John of God and the Brothers of St John of God has taken as the basis for the development of the Tenth Hospitaller Week of Prayer for Vocations, which this year will take place from 20 to 26 April 2026.

The document contains references to our Founders and our spiritual heritage, which illuminate our journey by acting as beacons pointing the way of the Good Samaritan; they are a living source of inspiration and guidance. Brothers and sisters of different nationalities, cultures and ages have collaborated in the creation of this material by sharing their life testimonies; they speak to us of authentic joy, of fraternity, of the cross, of humility, forgiveness and peace.

Testimonies of a life lived in coherence with our faith—this is what young people seek from us; how can we fail to speak of the treasure we carry within? We are called to pray for young people and to commit ourselves to them, to stand by their side, to walk with them and to show them that God is welcoming, listening, close to us and full of mercy.

We invite the whole Hospitaller family to pray with this material, which is full of testimonies of hope and peace; let us unite in prayer to ask the Lord of the Harvest to raise vocations for the Church and especially for the Hospitaller Order.

**Vocational Ministry and Formation
Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus;
Hospitality Brothers of St John of God**



MONDAY 20

Witness and Discipleship

Christian witness arises from friendship with the Lord, who was crucified and rose for the salvation of all. Jesus chose to call his disciples “friends.” He made known to them the Kingdom of God, asked them to remain with him, to become his community, and sent them to proclaim the Gospel (cf. Jn 15:15, 27). So when Jesus tells us, “Be witnesses,” he is assuring us that he considers us as his friends. He alone fully knows who we are and why we are here; “Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”

A message of hospitality

God calls us by name, appeals to our personal freedom and respects our decision. This choice demands that we be willing to lay down our lives for the love of Jesus and his Kingdom; it is a falling in love with and trusting adherence to God’s plans, a loving response to the gift freely received.

The ultimate norm and supreme rule of religious life is the following of Christ according to the Gospel, which entails the abandonment of all things to live in intimacy with Him, and to go with Him wherever He goes. To follow Jesus, as Sisters of Charity and Brothers of St John of God, is to walk in a process of becoming like Christ, sharing his very life and destiny, continuing on earth his saving mission on behalf of the poor and the sick. (PGF - Sisters of Charity No. 56-57)

Testimony

The Lord has always given me what I needed to overcome the difficulties that have arisen: the separation from my home, from my family, from my homeland, and the fact of suffering from an illness when I felt the Lord’s calling.

Jesus has helped me to remain steadfast in my vocation as one consecrated to Him, in the service of the sick, from whom I have always received such a warm welcome, respect and so much love. They have been my teachers and, day by day, I am learning to listen to them, to be patient, to encourage them and to love them.

Together with my sisters in the community and in the service of the sick, I have been responding to the Lord, who has been strengthening me with great love and guiding my path constantly. Thank you for my vocation as a Sister of the Hospital. (Sr Ana María Lizarrondo - La Inmaculada Clinical Community, Bogotá, Colombia)



TUESDAY 21

Testimony and friendship

The gaze of Jesus, who always wants nothing but our good, precedes us (cf. Mk 10:21). He does not want us to be servants, nor “activists” of a political party; he calls us to be with him as friends, so that our lives may be renewed. And witness arises spontaneously from the joyful newness of this friendship. It is a unique friendship that grants us communion with God, a faithful friendship that helps us discover our dignity and that of others “Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”

Hospitality Message

The Hospitaller Order recognises that the mystical experience unfolds in three ways, namely: love, action and knowledge. St John of God lived the mystical way of love united with the path of good works. In this sense, St John of God is a mystic, whose profound experience of Christ moves him to care for those who suffer, and to glimpse the divine presence in creation. These paths—of love and action—in St John of God have always been open to the mystical path of knowledge. Therefore, today the brothers and sisters are called to be mystics in order to be authentically Christian, because their vocation is to see their existence as wholly united with Christ; in other words, to pray and contemplate God in the sick and in creation, as a practice of their mystical love. (Formative Itinerary of the Brothers of St John of God, General Curia Rome, October 2024 No. 27)

Testimony

My friendship with the Lord begins with his gaze that precedes me: a gaze that seeks my good, not my performance. He calls me first to be with him as a friend, not as a servant or an activist. In prayer, I experience him as a faithful presence who sustains me in times of weariness and spiritual dryness. This friendship restores my dignity, reminding me that I am loved before I am useful.

In religious life, I encounter Christ in the sick, the poor and the vulnerable, often in very ordinary moments. Sometimes I recognise him in gratitude; at other times, in difficult situations that test my patience and my mercy. Love becomes action when service springs from communion rather than from pressure.

Over time, the Lord teaches me a deeper understanding: to see his presence in people, in creation and in everyday tasks. From this friendship, witness arises naturally: a quiet joy, compassion and perseverance.

My prayer today: Lord, keep me close to You, so that my service may remain love and my life may become a true sign of You. **(Brother Jacob Ketchen; Novitiate, Lomé - Togo)**



WEDNESDAY 22

Witness and Joy

“This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true” (Jn 21:24). The entire preceding account is summarized as a “testimony,” full of gratitude and wonder, from a disciple who never reveals his name, but calls himself “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” This title reflects a relationship: it is not the name of an individual, but the testimony of a personal bond with Christ.... Each one of you is a “beloved disciple” for him, and from this love comes the joy of witness. “Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”

A message of hospitality

I long to serve and love Jesus and to bless Him because He is our loving Saviour and sends us His sanctifying visits, making us partakers of a piece of His holy Cross through slander and persecution, which are sources of grace and blessings.

So what matters is to serve and love Jesus, carrying the Cross with holy joy, which gives peace to those who embrace it with love and trust in His Divine Mercy.

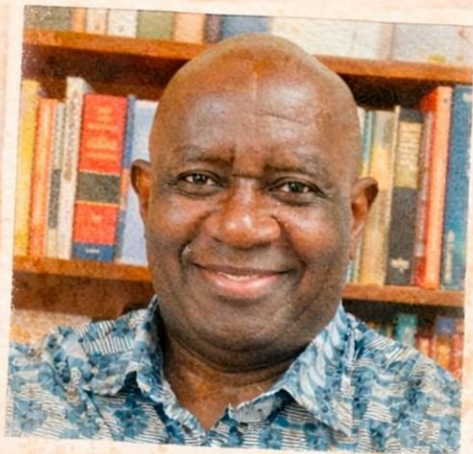
Pray, my daughters, for your most loving Father, who never forgets you, in the presence of the Lord and the Immaculate Virgin, our Most Beloved Mother and our Refuge. Your most loving Father blesses you all in Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Letter from SBM 394)

Testimony

When I began to walk more closely with Jesus, He was teaching me to place my life in God’s hands and to move forward with peace and confidence, growing in inner freedom. His presence gives me security and dispels my fears, anxiety and uncertainty, which previously so easily overwhelmed me.

Jesus gives meaning to my life; His Word guides my steps and directs my way of being and acting; He invites me to shift my focus away from myself so that I may see, through His eyes, the suffering and needs of others—especially the sick and the poor—and serve them as He does, with love, compassion and tenderness.

What brings me the greatest joy in having Jesus in my life is knowing that I am loved and sent forth. Being with Him and bringing His light, comfort, hope and joy where illness and hardship darken and sadden the lives of those who suffer makes me deeply happy and fills me with gratitude towards God and towards my brothers and sisters for the love we share and for the beauty of the hospitaller vocation. (Rindra Prisca Raholiarimalala, junior - Ciempozuelos, Spain)



THURSDAY 23

Witness and humility

True witnesses are humble and inwardly free, above all from themselves, that is, from the pretense of being the center of attention. Therefore, they are free to listen, to understand, and also to speak the truth to everyone, even in the presence of those who are powerful. From John the Baptist, we learn that Christian witness is neither a proclamation of ourselves nor a celebration of our spiritual, intellectual or moral abilities. True witness is recognizing and pointing to Jesus when he appears, as he is the only one who saves us. *“Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”*

A message of hospitality

No one ever saw him troubled, nor did an angry word ever pass his lips; rather, in the face of the gravest insults and affronts, he remained calm and cheerful, as one who had no other will but that of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose cross alone he took pride, as was seen in many incidents that befell him, of which we shall mention a few here....He was so humble that he was always ready to speak of and recount his faults, and never of his virtues and merits, always steering conversations towards his own self-deprecation and humiliation, and so that they might serve as an edification to others, shunning all vainglory as a moth poisonous to the spiritual life. St John of God: His Early Writings, Edited and Annotated by Manuel Gómez-Moreno, Madrid 1950, p. 117.

Testimony

Hospitality in itself is a commitment to humility. There is no hospitality without humility: the washing of others' feet following the example of Jesus Christ. In my joy at being a hospitaller, I have had many experiences rich in lessons about humility. What humility has taught me is the realisation that in life we too will one day need others to serve us, when we are in difficulty.

I remember my first year as a postulant, when I was helping out in the pharmacy. One night I was called to assist in an emergency following a serious road accident. The scene was terrifying. One of the victims, after hearing my name when the doctor called me, also called out to me twice, and I thought he was in a state of confusion and that was why he was calling me. I did not respond. The third time I had to answer and go over to him. I realised he was a cousin who had also been in the car, who had a spinal cord injury and was lying on a stretcher. This left me confused.

Since then, I have learnt to be humble, because I never imagined that someone I knew would also be there needing help. I then realised that we are all exposed to frailties and vulnerabilities and, therefore, we all need help. That is why humility is needed to serve others, knowing that one day you might be the one who needs help, the one in difficulty. Humility is serving unconditionally and also a commitment to help others in whatever way we can. This is an event that taught me to choose and serve others freely, knowing that we all need one another. It is when you least expect it that you will be in need. Humility is key. **(Brother Robert Chakana; Monze - Zambia)**



FRIDAY 24

Testimony and the Cross

Granted, it is not always easy to bear witness. In the Gospels, we often find tension between acceptance and rejection of Jesus: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (Jn 1:5). Similarly, the disciple-witness experiences rejection firsthand and sometimes even violent opposition. The Lord does not hide this painful reality: “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you” (Jn 15:20). However, it becomes an opportunity to put into practice the greatest commandment: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Mt 5:44) “Message of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”

A message of hospitality

Seeing that, through the Lord’s mercy, I am granted the privilege of suffering slander for His love which is a blessing and an inestimable and desirable treasure ask the Lord to grant me strength and peace of heart. Great trust in the Lord, great patience and charity; love of silence, love for the Holy Institute to which we are committed, and fidelity in the fulfilment of our duties; seek holy recollection with serene joy, under the mantle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and lift our hearts often to Jesus, Mary and Saint Joseph the Patriarch; whose Holy Names, when they spring from the heart, are sweeter than honey on our lips, and like precious nectar, which embalms the soul and makes the thorny path of self-denial which is the Way of the Cross, our hope and the gate of Heaven gentle and joyful. (Letter of SBM 393)

Testimony

Conflicting situations are not to be sought out, for they draw near and arrive of their own accord. It happened to me years ago. A sister with whom I work closely began, at some point, to behave towards me in a distant, indifferent and, at times, somewhat aggressive manner. I tried to reach out to her, but I only met with rejection or was simply ignored. In my prayer I asked our God: help me to understand what is happening!

One day it occurred to me to write a letter to this sister; I felt uneasy should I write a letter to a sister who lives with me? but I did so in the hope of finding a way to bridge the gap. In the letter, I told her that I didn’t feel comfortable with the situation and that I could see she didn’t either, and asked her to please explain to me what was going on.

My attempt bore fruit: on the very afternoon I wrote to her, I had her reply in my room. She explained that something about my attitude was upsetting her and that she thought I was doing it to make her feel bad. We ended the day by clearing everything up and asking each other for forgiveness.

This has helped me to understand that, in sisterly relationships, we must not give up; if God has never given up on me!... I have no reason to give up on anyone (Sr. **Silvia Moreira; Lubango - Angola**)



SATURDAY 25

Testimony and fraternity

From friendship with Christ, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit within us, there arises a way of life that bears the character of fraternity. Young people who have encountered Christ bring the “warmth” and “flavor” of fraternity wherever they go, and anyone who comes into contact with them is drawn into a new and profound dimension, made up of selfless closeness, sincere compassion and genuine tenderness. The Holy Spirit enables us to see our neighbor with new eyes: in the other person there is a brother, a sister! The witness of fraternity and peace that friendship with Christ awakens in us casts off indifference and spiritual laziness, helping us to overcome closed-mindedness and suspicion. “Message of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”

A message of hospitality

Saint Ricardo Pampuri belonged to Catholic Action from childhood; when he arrived in Morimondo, he became an efficient collaborator for with the parish priest: co-founder of the Catholic Action Youth Circle, serving as its first president, and organiser of a brass band. He placed both the former and the latter under the protection of Saint Pius X. He also served as secretary of the parish’s Missionary Commission. He organised a series of Spiritual Exercises at the “Villa del Sagrado Corazón” run by the Jesuit Fathers in Triuggio, for the young people of the Circle and for farm labourers and workers, frequently covering the costs himself, and even inviting his colleagues and friends. (www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints)

Testimony

“Man, theophany of God for man, in hospitality”

Within my experience as a son of St John of God, in the charism, “Hospitality” arises and is practised as a fundamental part of Being, when, as men who have chosen Jesus, in the poorest and most needy, we are not indifferent to the gaze that confronts us, the cry that challenges us and the times that demand a real response from a God who is love, because that is how we make him known. In the face of hospitality made LIFE, all theory is finite, since the Father of Mercy is the Word himself revealed in his Son, whom we manifest in concrete deeds through a greeting, a word, a piece of bread; all of this in a spirit of self-giving. This is what I experience and can see in the daily lives of my fellow brothers in the community, and of the whole Juan de Dios family. How can one call all this, if not an event, a great anthropological theophany? It is: “the Kingdom of God already among us” (**Brother Albert David Castro, Province of Latin America and the Caribbean**)



SUNDAY 26

Witness and Peace

To that end, dear friends, let us listen to the voice of God within us and overcome our selfishness, becoming active artisans of peace. That peace, which is a gift of the risen Lord (cf. Jn 20:19), will become visible in the world through the common witness of those who carry his Spirit in their hearts... As he was dying on the cross, he entrusted the Virgin Mary to John as his mother, and John to her as her son. That ultimate gift of love is for every disciple, for each of us. I invite you to welcome this holy bond with Mary, a mother full of affection and understanding, and to cultivate it in particular by praying the Rosary. “Message of the Holy Father Leo XIV for the 40th World Youth Day”

A Hospitality Message

It is known that, at that time, there lived in Granada a nobleman, originally from the region of Requena, named Antón Martín, who was in dispute with another man over a certain amount of property and over the death of one of his brothers, for which he accused him. As serious and charitable people were unable to persuade him to forgive the poor man or to stop him from harassing him, the blessed Father met him one day in Calle de la Colcha and knelt before him, taking out a crucifix he carried with him. He presented such firm and effective arguments for him to forgive the man that Antón Martín yielded to them and said that not only did he forgive him, but that, from that moment onwards, he wished to follow his holy way of life. (José Luis Martínez, Process of Beatification of SJD, p. 39)

Testimony.

The community in Drohobycz is small. There are four of us: Brother Kazimierz, Brother Jan, the prior Brother Wawrzyniec and myself. Four people, four stories, four hearts that each day strive to bear the weight of time and the place in which we have been called to live. I have been here for three and a half years. In a country that has not known silence for a long time. In a country where the night is often interrupted by sirens and the day by news of those who will never return home. Alarms, power cuts, the uncertainty of tomorrow: it is not merely a backdrop. It is the daily reality in which we serve people.

Each of us tries to live with moderation, responsibility and zeal. It seems simple, but it demands so much. Because when the elderly, the families, the mothers and the children arrive, they bring with them nothing but pleas. They bring pain, fear and helplessness. Sometimes a despair so heavy that it becomes almost physical. To touch their stories is to touch real suffering. Trying to resolve their problems through offices and institutions is often like breaking through a wall of indifference and chaos. Sometimes we feel that nothing more can be done. Yet, the very next day, someone comes knocking at the door again. During the Eucharist and communal prayer, I see the weariness on the brothers' faces. Genuine, profound weariness. But I also see something else: the determination to be there, to kneel, to stay. Because it is the only place where one can lay down the burden that the heart can no longer bear alone. I thank God because on this journey he places honest, open and authentic people. **(Brother Jonasz Wojewodzić. Community of Drohobych - Ukraine)**



Hermanas
Hospitalarias

Vocational Prayer.

Father of mercy,
who continually sustains us with the gifts of your Spirit,
grant us vibrant, fervent and joyful Christian communities,
which bear witness to fraternal life, forgiveness and peace
and which awaken in young people
a desire to be witnesses to your Gospel.

Sustain them in their commitment to offer young people
an example of discipleship
and paths of special consecration.

Grant them the wisdom for the necessary discernment
of vocations, so that in everything
the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth.

May Mary, Mother and teacher of Jesus, and Saint Joseph
intercede for each Christian Community,
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,
they may be a source of authentic vocations
in the service of God's holy people.

Amen

