

Homily of His Eminence George Jacob Cardinal Koovakad
Prefect, Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue

***To Brothers and Sisters Gathered in Rome for the World Jubilee of Consecrated Life,
At the feet of St. Peter – Vatican City, 10 October 2025***

Main Theme: “*Pilgrims of Hope on the Path to Peace*”

Theme of the Day III: “*Pilgrims of Hope*”

Readings of the Day: *Joel 1:13–15; 2:1–2 • Luke 11:15–26*

Dear brothers and Sisters—religious men and women, contemplatives, members of secular institutes, consecrated virgins, societies of apostolic life, and new forms of consecration—on this third day of your Jubilee Pilgrimage, we stand together as *pilgrims of hope and artisans of peace*, walking toward the heart of God and toward the wounded heart of the world. We come to the feet of Peter, as disciples renewed in mission, to let the Lord rekindle the fire that first called us.

1. “*Sound the trumpet in Zion*” — The urgency of hope (Joel 1:13–15; 2:1–2)

The prophet Joel’s cry echoes across the centuries: “*Gird yourselves and lament... sound the trumpet in Zion.*” It is not a cry of despair, but of awakening. It calls us to rise from fear, to shake off weariness, and to rediscover the joy of belonging to God. Joel speaks of darkness and clouds, yet his voice carries the melody of hope: “*The Day of the Lord is near.*” Not as a threat, but as a promise: God never abandons His people.

For you, **beloved consecrated men and women**, this trumpet does not sound to alarm but to awaken. You, who left everything to follow Christ, are sent into the “dark clouds” of our time—into loneliness, war, indifference, poverty, ecological crisis—not to be overwhelmed, but to bring light. Your consecration proclaims the truth the world still hungers for: **that love has the final word.**

2. “*A house divided cannot stand*” — The struggle within and without (Luke 11:15–26)

In today’s Gospel, Jesus faces misunderstanding: “*He drives out demons by the power of Beelzebul.*” But the Lord reveals the foundation of all mission: “*Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste.*” Only unity in the Spirit can withstand the forces of darkness. A divided heart cannot sustain peace; a divided community cannot bear witness to Christ’s love, a divided Church cannot offer hope to the world.

Consecrated life, in all its forms, is a living sign of unity. Through your vows or missionary oaths of poverty, chastity, and obedience, you testify that it is possible to live undivided heart, wholly given to God and to others. You reveal a Kingdom where God reigns over every part of our life. Yet we know how fragile this unity can be. The spirit that has been cast out often seeks to return—as discouragement, fatigue, isolation, or routine. Consecrated life is a pilgrimage of transformation. Each day is a new *yes*, a

small resurrection, a chance to begin again. Peace in the world begins with peace in our heart.

3. “*Dilexi te*” — Love that becomes hope for the poor

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi te* (9 October 2025), the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, reminds us: “*To love the poor is to touch the wounds of the Heart that first loved us.*” This deepens the message of *Dilexit nos* (24 October 2024) from Pope Francis, who invited us to contemplate the divine and human love flowing from the Heart of Jesus. Now, Pope Leo XIV calls us to make that Heart visible—through compassion that becomes concrete: solidarity, hospitality, and humble presence among the least.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, your vocation is a privileged space where this love takes flesh. In silence behind cloister walls or in the noise of city streets, in hospitals, schools, refugee camps, or remote missions — you are the beating heart of mercy. You are not mere “workers of charity,” but **bearers of hope**, instruments through whom Christ still loves the poor, heals the broken, and reconciles the estranged. Never think your life is insignificant or forgotten. Even the quiet fidelity of your prayer sustains the world. In the end, what matters most is not the magnitude of our works, but the depth of love and the quality of presence with which we serve.

4. Pilgrims of Hope, Artisans of Peace

The Jubilee invites us to rediscover consecrated life as *pilgrimage*. A pilgrim walks lightly, carrying little but faith, love, and hope. Hope is not naïve optimism; it is courageous trust in God’s promise when everything seems uncertain.

You are bearers of hope to the world! Let Christ make use of us to renew the face of the earth. Your communities are called to be *laboratories of peace*—places where forgiveness is practiced, where diversity nurtures communion, and where prayer gives birth to mission. In a polarized and violent world, your fidelity to the Gospel and your charisms becomes a prophetic word: **communion is possible**. Brothers and sisters, never underestimate the power of your witness. A smile, a gesture of mercy, a word of blessing can reopen hearts and rekindle faith. When you walk as *pilgrims of hope*, you remind the world that God is still journeying with His people.

5. Mary, Star of Hope

As these Jubilee Days draw to a close, we turn to Mary—the first consecrated woman, the *pilgrim of faith*. In her we see hope made flesh: she believed against all hope, stood beneath the Cross, and became the *Mother of Peace*. May she teach us to live our consecration with joy and tenderness, so that a weary and wounded world may see in us the reflection of that Heart that forever whispers: “*Dilexi te*” — *I have loved you*.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, the Church looks upon you as the **living face of hope**. You are the **trumpet of Joel**—calling to conversion; the **unity of the living Gospel**—casting out division; and the **love of *Dilexi te***—embracing the poor and broken-hearted.

Go forth, *pilgrims of hope*! Walk the *path of peace*, and let your consecration become a *song of love that the world cannot silence*.