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Francis: 'Older religious offer wisdom, younger, vitality'

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The Francis Chronicles

On Sunday, Pope Francis celebrated the 18th World Day for Consecrated Life highlighting the fact that at the center of Consecrated Life there is always Jesus.

In his Homily at Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, Francis recalled the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple which commemorates when Jesus and Mary brought the infant Jesus to the Temple forty days after his birth. He said it was a meeting between the young - Mary, Joseph and their infant - and the elders Simeon and Anna, "two characters who always attended the Temple."

He then made the point that in religious life each needs the other. Each brings certain vital charisms.

Then he went on to say this about religious life, which make special sense when viewed in a context of the Global North, which has been rich in vocations, but with far fewer today, and the Global South, where there are many new vocations but much less experience.

Francis, with his rich sense of global church, seems to understand this. He said: "In the consecrated life we live the encounter between the young and the old, between observation and prophecy. Let's not see these as two opposing realities! Let us rather allow the Holy Spirit to animate both of them, and a sign of this is joy: the joy of observing, of walking within a rule of life; the joy of being led by the Spirit, never unyielding, never closed, always open to voice of God that speaks, that opens, that leads us and invites us to go towards the horizon.

It's good for the elderly to communicate their wisdom to the young; and is good for the young people to gather this wealth of experience and wisdom, and to carry it forward, not so as to store it in a museum, but to bring it forward addressing the challenges of life, to carry it forward for the sake of respective religious

orders and of the whole Church."

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