



# Radical Discipleship: Consecrated Life and the Call to Holiness

*Cardinal Francis Arinze*

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Since 2015 has been deemed the Year of the Consecrated Life by Pope Francis, this work by Cardinal Arinze is a very timely one-for this year, and for any time. A reflection on the consecrated life, *Radical Discipleship* represents a beautiful way for faithful Catholics to participate in this Church-wide theme and celebration by coming to a deeper understanding of the consecrated life.

*Radical Discipleship* illuminates the vocation of the consecrated state and its presence in the Body of Christ, beginning with a brief look at its origins in Scripture and the early Church. The work then reflects upon the following:

- The different forms this radical life takes
- The population of consecrated persons in the Church today
- The recognition that the consecrated life has received from the Church
- The vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience taken by all consecrated persons
- Community life as it pertains to consecrated life
- The prophetic aspect of the consecrated life
- The impact of the consecrated state on the Church community and on society

Alongside these fascinating topics, Cardinal Arinze addresses some of the problems faced by consecrated people, and how these difficulties have led some to abandon this vocation. In examining the struggles specific to the consecrated state, the Cardinal seeks to encourage other consecrated persons to persevere in their vocation. He further calls the entire Church to support the consecrated life and those who have dedicated themselves to Christ in this way.

Although filled with substantive information, even the most involved sections are presented in an engaging, readable and reflective style. The book is not, as the Cardinal explains, "a dissertation based on deep research on the theology and canon law on the consecrated life". *Radical Discipleship* is rather a reflection, written for consecrated people, other laity and clergy alike, and offers wonderful material for thought and prayer. It is Cardinal Arinze's hope that his work will make the consecrated life "better understood, loved, lived and promoted".

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