

Dear Mothers in Christ,

It is with great joy and sincere humility before the Lord that I have accepted to serve as the new Director of the Confraternity of Christian Mothers. My joy comes from the alignment of my heart with the goals of the Confraternity and with my conviction for the great need for the Confraternity in the particular times in which we live.

The Confraternity began in 1850 in France by a pious group of women who saw the great evils of their time and responded by gathering together to pray for one another and their children. From the outset and to this day the Confraternity exists to assist mothers in their vocation to form their children in the Catholic faith through prayer and education within the home. The former National Director of the USA confraternity Fr. Bertin Roll says the following:

“What could be more basic to the needs of the world than to have wives and mothers made aware of their dignity and responsibility so that they may form the minds and hearts of their children in a Christian way of life?”

In more recent times, Pope St John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation about the family (*Familiaris Consortio*) reminds us that there is a war directed against the family and that we are living in “a moment of history in which the family is the object of numerous forces that seek to destroy it or in some way to deform it.”

Christian mothers are on the front lines of the war and are the key combatants in this epic battle. The overall victory has been guaranteed by the death and resurrection of Christ. However, our task is to protect and equip our children for the battle and to win many others to the kingdom of Christ.

The Confraternity is clearly needed today even more than when originally started in the late 19th century! In this spiritual battle, prayer and instruction are our greatest weapons. Through prayer comes the graces needed to accomplish this great task. Through instruction and mutual support, the mind and heart are fully prepared.

Therefore, I encourage you to prayerfully consider attending two events. The first is the Confraternity’s annual retreat which will be held at St Elizabeth Ann Seton on December 9th. This year's speaker, Father Sebastian Walshe, is a powerful speaker who has written numerous books, several of which focus on the Christian family. This retreat will be a significant time of prayer and formation reinvigorating us in our vocation. Second, I encourage you to please try to find time in your very busy schedules to attend the Confraternity monthly Holy Hour held at St Joseph’s at 7:30 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. In addition to the time of prayer and intercession for our children, approximately every other month, there will also be a time of instruction by the Director with subsequent discussion relating to the vocation of Christian motherhood. This year’s theme for our Holy Hours will focus on “forming battle ready disciples for Christ.”

Since the Confraternity is canonically approved, there are innumerable spiritual benefits available. For although Christ is present whenever two or three are gathered in his name, as a canonically approved Confraternity, there are graces available that exceed other informal gatherings of prayer. For one, whenever members gather together or even pray alone, the prayers are efficacious and powerful because they are joined with all the other members of the confraternity and raised as a heavenly incense and petition to almighty God the Father. It is like the difference between fighting alone against an enemy army, as opposed to approaching the enemy with a formidable army. Secondly the Confraternity is under the care and protection of Our Blessed Mother in her patronage as Our Lady of Sorrows; and she will petition her son for the grace needed for our task.

Speaking about the Confraternity Pius IX stated “give me truly Christian mothers, and I will renew the face of the earth!”

May we work in the power of the Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth!

May the Lord Jesus richly bless you with His abundant graces!

Deacon Rob Lanciotti