

## Discernment

The process of making a decision about your life with help of the Holy Spirit is called "discernment." It is the process of discovering God's will for you.

In this process you deal with two persons: you and God. During the process, you will understand God's will better. As you begin, remember that both you and God ultimately desire the same thing -- your happiness. You want to make a decision about your life that will bring you meaning and happiness.

The process of discernment, though often a struggle consists of three steps.

### Step 1: Understand Yourself

One way to discern a call from the Lord is to see Him acting through your life. He created you with a unique personality and allowed you to experience a personal history. Your personality and personal history are part of your call. As you might get to know yourself, accept what you find. You might want to change some aspects of yourself in the future, but begin by accepting yourself as you are.

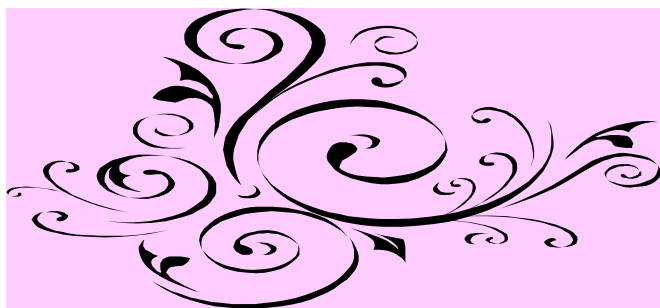
This is a process of developing one's self as a human being with a role in the Church.

### Step 2: Be Present Before the Lord

Develop a life of prayer that is a part of the fiber of your being. You must learn how to open yourself to the Lord in prayer and listen to Him. You have to spend time before the Lord and wait for the Lord to lead you. Look in all circumstances of your life, through prayer in other people and situations that in which reveals God's grace directing you in the right path. Be receptive to God and all His graces.

### Step 3: Seek Spiritual Advisor

Most helpful in discernment of one's vocation is to develop a relationship with a spiritual director with either a priest or religious. If you are open and honest with yourself and your spiritual director, personal knowledge will increase.



## Prayer for Vocation

Almighty God,

You have made me to know you,  
to love you and to serve you.  
And thereby to find and to fulfill myself.

I know that you are in all things,  
And that every path can lead me to you.  
But of them all, there is one especially  
by which you want me to come to you.

Since I will do what you want of me,  
I pray you, send your Holy Spirit to me:  
into my mind,  
to show me what you want of me:  
into my heart,  
to give me the determination to do it,  
and to do it with all my love, with all my mind  
and with all my strength right to the end.

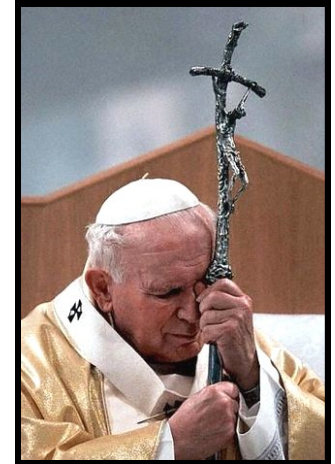
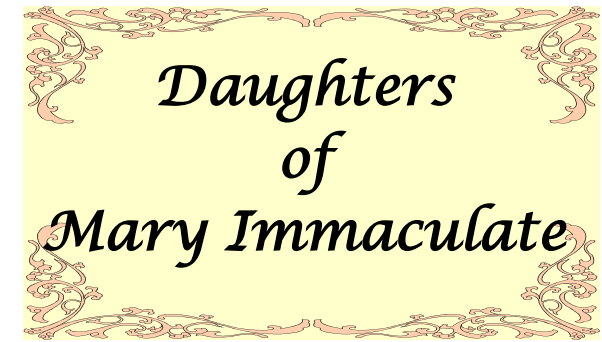
Amen



*Chaldean Sisters,  
Daughters of Mary Immaculate*

**Founded:** August 7, 1922  
**Moto:** "With Mary to the Highest."

*Dedicated and Consecrated  
to  
Mary Immaculate*



*"Acknowledge the voice resounding in the temple of your heart. Return His bright and penetrating glance which opens the paths of your life to the horizons of the Churches mission. Do not be afraid of the radicalness of His demands, because Jesus, who loved us first, is prepared to give Himself to you, as well as asking of you. If He asks much from you it is because He knows you can give much. Do you think that there can be anything greater than to bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus?"*

*John Paul II*

## Our History

Antoun Zabuni is the founder of the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate. He was born into a pious family in Mosel, Iraq on January 17, 1883, on the feast day of St. Anthony of Egypt, the father of the monks. In the year 1895 he entered the minor seminary of St. John the Evangelist, in Mosel. As a seminarian he was devoted to his studies and lived a life of virtue and devotion. He was ordained a priest on May 15, 1907 by Patriarch Emmanuel II Toma.

The war of World War I broke out in Iraq and the consequences of the war, left many people hungry, in poverty and without an opportunity for education. Specifically, many people left the villages and fled to Baghdad, in order to find any kind of work. Here, women began to work various jobs, even if it meant abandoning their faith and converting to Islam in order to make a living and be able to work. This devastated Father Antoun and increased his desire to start a congregation for women.

He wrote a letter to the Patriarch saying, “I had a lot of conviction that we need to start a religious congregation of women in our Chaldean Church. I understand that consecrated woman could help in this time of chaos. They can help the clergy with the great poverty, the homeless children, and even with pastoral needs of the community. I have a desire to begin this project and with much time spent before the Blessed Sacrament I see it is greatly needed.”

After much prayer and discernment, the desire became a reality, and permission was granted to Father Antoun to begin the first congregation of women in the Chaldean Rite on August 7, 1922. Because of his great devotion to the Blessed Mother, the Congregation was dedicated and consecrated to Mary Immaculate.



## Our Identity

The Congregation of the Chaldean Daughters of Mary Immaculate is an apostolic Congregation of patriarchal right. It was founded in Baghdad on August 7, 1922, at the time of Patriarch Mar Yousif Emmanuel II Toma, for the good of the Church and the world.

## Our Goal

Our Congregation aims at a life of contemplative unity with God, striving for holiness by practice of the vows of the evangelical counsels, a participation of the spirit of the beatitudes and the observance of our Rule. Our Congregation is a center of apostolic radiation and prayer. Each religious attempts to discover the will of God for herself and for the salvation of souls. Thus, one will become a sign and a testimony of conversion and consecration to God.

## Our Spirituality

Our spiritual life is an alliance with God that promotes holiness. This enables us to be more open to the needs of the Church and the world through one's religious life.

## Our Mission

Our mission consists of striving with diligence and alertness to sanctifying our souls. Let us strive with diligence and alertness to sanctify our souls, “in order to perfect the saints for a work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

Our dedicated life is apostolic in essence. We offer ourselves as an individual with all different kinds of talents and tasks flowing together in community life. The community takes up our fraternal union with Christ, the unity of our life in it and the life in the spirit of our Congregation, and transform it into a testimony to our growth in the grace of dedication, and into a proof of the authenticity Christ's mission in the world.



## Formation

**Pre – Postulancy** A person interested in exploring the possibility of a call to be a Daughter of Mary Immaculate will be asked to have contact with an appointed sister over a period of time, to help discern God's will for her. The young woman then begins a regular relationship with the community. She tries to clarify her motives, her desires, her relationships, and her fears as she considers the religious life. During this time the candidate should be experiencing deep dialogue with God, with herself, and with others.

**Postulancy** Postulants will live in the community of the Congregation for at least one year. The Directress will guide the Postulants in their prayer and to help them to discern their calling, to grow in their relationship with God and their community, and to foster their desire to serve God's people. At the end this period, Postulant and her Directress discern, together and individually, that she is ready to begin her Novitiate.

**Novitiate** Next comes the period of Novitiate, which lasts for 2 years. Firstly, one full canonical year is spent in the novitiate, which will enable her to know, and to experience life lived in community. Here she will deepen her life in Christ by her personal and community prayer, meditation on the Holy Scripture, and in learning the spirituality and constitution of the sisters of Daughters of Mary Immaculate. In the second year as a novice she is introduced to the congregation's various works of service, while continuing her studies in the spiritual life.

**Temporary Vows** After these two years, the Novice prepares to make her First Profession of poverty, chastity, and obedience. She may renew these vows every year for a period of six years before her final commitment. During these years she is supported by the community and continues her spiritual formation. She will be provided opportunities for further studies needed in ministry or may participate in the ministries according to her capacities and abilities.

**Final Vows** Then comes the time for her Final Profession, and the temporary professed sister through the deepening of a special relationship with Jesus, the growing in spirituality, the experiences gain in ministries, the sharing life and experiences with her Sisters will enable her to make an appropriate decision in her final act of consecration to God in the Congregation of Daughters of Mary Immaculate. Right before her final vows every sister will be prepared by her superior for a “second novitiate” which consists of a spiritual renewal, to better prepare to give herself totally to Christ.