

INTRODUCTION

As we continue our Lenten journey, we are invited to prepare ourselves for the Holy Week. The very important week of our Christian life, because it is the very moment that Christ conquered the world for us. A great victory which He shared generously to all of us.

Last week, we were praying on the call to be witnesses of the victory of Jesus. He has already won for us. This is a great challenge and an inspiration to all of us Christians because this victory of Christ is a GOAL for us to reach. A goal that is clearly put up by Christ for each one of us to reach for it.

In moving towards the goal is a call of collaboration for each one of us. This is a sure way that we can savor completely that victory Jesus won for us. Our hope to reach that goal gave us the courage to move on and to give this hope as well to others.

As Verbum Dei Missionary Family, our missionary commitment is the concrete way of collaborating in moving towards that victory Christ has for us. We have to bear in mind that we need to be united in the victory of Christ over the world. To be united with Christ in His victory is a great privilege of every baptized Christian. How can we be united in that victory of Christ? By strengthening our missionary commitment in helping others actively to enter in the mystery of Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection. That is what it means to be a disciple and apostle of Christ – to be one with Him more closely in His Pascal Mystery with strength and courage.

As baptized Christians, it is our role and our responsibility to participate in the life and mission of Christ.

“Thus by Baptism, men are grafted into the Pascal Mystery of Christ. Died with Him, buried with Him and rise with Him.” (Vat. II, S.C.G.)

This is a clear reason why we need to touch others' lives by helping them enter in the Pascal Mystery with the same courage and hope. This is our mission and it entails an active commitment.

MONDAY

“Enter in the Mystery of Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection”

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered, “This is

Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.” **(Matthew 21:1-11)**

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **(Philippians 2:6-11)**

Do you see yourself in the crowd as Jesus entered into Jerusalem? Who are you and what are you in the great entrance of Jesus to Jerusalem? Are you willing to be with Him, in entering into His Passion, Death and Resurrection? Are you determined to say yes to Jesus and to humbly empty yourself in being with Him in the Pascal Mystery?

TUESDAY

“Strengthen our Missionary Commitment”

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

They answered him, “We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?” Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are

Abraham's descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.”

“Abraham is our father,” they answered. “If you were Abraham's children,” said Jesus, “then you would do what Abraham did. As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the works of your own father.” “We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.” Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. **(John 8:31-42)**

I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. **(John 17:14-19)**

Do you value freedom out from the truth? Are you willing to stand for the truth that our life is a mission? Do you value your great dignity that you are a child of God? Do you see how Jesus strengthens our missionary commitment?

WEDNESDAY

“Helping Others to Be Committed”

...but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin." **(John 8:1-11)**

"Jesus is not looking for spectators or even admirers but he needs imitators: Christians who experience His compassionate love for others who suffer." **(By Fr. James Mctavish, FMVD)**

What do you see in the way Jesus expresses His love to you? Are you eager to do the same to others? Are you willing to help others to be committed to love like Christ?

THURSDAY

Assume an Active Role...

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard.

He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard. "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. "He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?' " "Because no one has hired us," they answered. "He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'" **(Matthew 20: 1-7)**

Do you recognize the efforts of God behind us, as we mission? Are you ready to assume an active role in the mission? Do you see the great inheritance God has given to you? Are you conscious that the Church needs you? Do you realize that the Church needs your response when it said: "the Harvest is great but the harvesters are few"?

FRIDAY

Courageous stand for Christ

Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

(Matthew 26:36-38)

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

(Matthew 26:26-28)

Are you brave enough to stay with Jesus and to keep watch with Him? Are you courageous enough to stand for Jesus even in the midst of your struggles and difficulties of life? Did you realize the value of the Eucharist in your missionary journey? Do you see how Jesus stands courageously to his love for you?

SATURDAY

Courageous Stand in the Mission

The Sovereign Lord has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed. The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears; I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away. I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. **(Isaiah 50:4-7)**

Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this

mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

(Colossians 1:24-29)

Are you an obedient servant of the Lord? Do you courageously stand for the mission to bring Christ to others? Are you willing to bring others in order for them to become united with the Pascal Mystery? Do you understand that you are chosen by God to work with Him in the mission?

SUNDAY READINGS

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

The Procession of the Palms

Matthew 21:1-11

First Reading – Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalm – Psalm 22

Second Reading – Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel – Matthew 26:14-27:66



GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Stay Here and Keep Watch with Me" Matthew 26:36-38

April 7-13, 2014

Objective of the week:

To strengthen the missionary commitment of every disciple and apostle.

To assume an active role and courageous stand in the mission as Christians.