

INTRODUCTION

It is good to live the start of the year full of gratitude and hope for all the blessings God has bestowed upon us. The blessing is Jesus himself given to us and is now with us forever.

We are in the final phase of the Christmas season, the days between Epiphany and the feast of the Lord's Baptism. During this week, we are called to reflect on a series of "epiphanies," manifestations which reveal that Jesus is truly Emmanuel, "God with us." The celebration of the epiphany last Sunday is not simply man's search for God, but God's revelation of himself to man. The Greek word epiphany means "manifestation" or "revelation." This means that we can seek the Lord – and we can find him – because he has come to be with us as a man. He shows us his face. This is what the joyful season of Christmas is all about.

We as a Verbum Dei Family are called to seek him and manifest Him as the Word made flesh, real and is with all of humanity. We manifest how his love is real and becomes flesh in our lives. We are the people who walked in darkness and have seen a great light. Jesus brought light and grace to the world, and that grace ***"made salvation possible for the whole human race," Pope Francis said.*** We make salvation possible for the whole human race.

Like the Magi, we journey together and search everyday how to make His love real and alive in the world. We are the Magi of today. Together with a great company of searchers, we have the same goal and mission – to be with Him always, identify with him and help him to be made known and manifest himself to the world through our lives.

Let us be more and more united in the Word who is making himself known to all. Let us be one in his universal love and grow with him as a Family in his growth in wisdom, in favor with God and men. Let him be our only motivation in bringing out the best gifts we have like the Magi who brought out their best gifts as they encountered Him.

MONDAY

Gratitude and Hope for all the blessings received

Out of the fullness of his grace, he has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another. ***(John 1:16)***

Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! For in our union with Christ he has blessed us by giving us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world. Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his through our union with Christ, so that we would be holy and without fault before him. Because of his love, God had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would make us his children – this was his pleasure and purpose. Let us praise God for his glorious grace, for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son! For by the blood of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. How great is the grace of God, which he gave to us in such large measure! ***(Ephesians 1:3-8)***

What do you want to thank God for of the past year?

What are you hoping for this year?

TUESDAY

I am Verbum Dei: called to manifest "God with us"

⁷ My dear friends, let us love one another, since love is from God and everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever fails to love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is the revelation of God's love for us, that God sent his only Son into the world that we might have life through him. ¹⁰ Love consists in this: it is not we who loved God, but God loved us and sent his Son to expiate our sins. ***(1 John 4:7-10)***

³⁵ What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 8:35-39)

By our love for one another as a Family, we manifest more and more the presence of God with us. In the midst of many challenges, the love we have makes it clear that nothing can separate us from Him. He has made himself inseparable to our humanity.

WEDNESDAY

I am Verbum Dei: people who have seen a great light

While Jesus embodied light and love, those who hate walk in "darkness." "If we love God and our brothers and sisters, we walk in the light; but if our heart is closed, if we are dominated by pride, deceit, self-seeking, then darkness falls within us and around us," ***(Pope Francis)***

¹¹ My dear friends, if God loved us so much, we too should love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God, but as long as we love one another God remains in us and his love comes to its perfection in us. ¹³ This is the proof that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us a share in his Spirit. ¹⁴ We ourselves have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ Anyone who acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶ We have recognised for ourselves, and put our faith in, the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. ¹⁷ Love comes to its perfection in us when we can face the Day of Judgement fearlessly, because even in this world we have become as he is. ¹⁸ In love there is no room for fear, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear implies punishment and no one who is afraid has come to perfection in love. ***(1 John 4:11-18)***

It is true that we have been walking in darkness. We have had many experiences of darkness in life. But we are people who have seen a great light. Like the Magi we continue to journey together towards this great light, not stopping until we encounter Him and make him as our light.

THURSDAY

I am Verbum Dei: united in His same universal love

The Verbum Dei Missionary Family is an Institution in the Catholic Church at the service of the Word of God in which belong all the faithful that share the same spirituality and mission of Verbum Dei... **(FAMVD Statutes 1.2.2)**

The identity of the FAMVD is expressed in her name: to be "family", profoundly "missionary", at the service of announcing the "Word of God". The FAMVD reunites in her womb persons or groups from all states of life, sex, culture and social condition, that participates in one same vocation to be "Verbum Dei"... **(FAMVD Statutes 1.2.3)**

Its finality is the living out and the propagation of the Kingdom of God through prayer, testimony of life and the ministry of the Word, forming apostles of Christ and generating evangelizing communities... **(FAMVD Statutes 1.2.4)**

⁴² When daylight came he left the house and made his way to a lonely place. The crowds went to look for him, and when they had caught up with him they wanted to prevent him leaving them, ⁴³ but he answered, 'I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns too, because that is what I was sent to do.' **(Luke 4:42-43)**

The invitation today is to be one in the universal love of Christ who desires so much to reach out and welcome everyone in the Fathers embrace. We are called as Verbum Dei to build the Kingdom sharing in the His same universal love. This is seen

in the persons that consist in the Family – people of all races, culture, etc.

FRIDAY

I am Verbum Dei: Learning and growing like Jesus as a Family

³⁹ When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And as the child grew to maturity, he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him. **(Luke 2:39-40)**

⁵¹ He went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and with people. **(Luke 2:51-52)**

⁷ During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, with loud cries and with tears, to the one who had the power to save him from death, and, winning a hearing by his reverence, ⁸ he learnt obedience, Son though he was, through his sufferings; ⁹ when he had been perfected, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation **(Hebrews 5:7-9)**

Jesus grew in wisdom, in stature, in favour with God and people. We as a Family are called to be united in His process of growth.

SATURDAY

I am Verbum Dei: Making Jesus grow greater

²² After this, Jesus went with his disciples into the Judaeen countryside and stayed with them there and baptised. ²³ John also was baptising at Aenon near Salim, where there was plenty of water, and people were going there and were being baptised. ²⁴ For John had not yet been put in prison. ²⁵ Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew about purification, ²⁶ so they went to John and said, 'Rabbi, the man who was with you on the far side of the Jordan, the man to whom you bore witness, is baptising now, and everyone is going to him.' ²⁷ John replied: 'No one can have anything except what is given him from heaven. ²⁸ 'You yourselves can bear me out. I said, "I am not the Christ; I am the one who has been sent to go in front of him." ²⁹ 'It is the bridegroom who has the bride; and yet the bridegroom's friend, who stands there and listens to him, is filled with joy at the bridegroom's voice. This is the joy I feel, and it is complete. ³⁰ He must grow greater, I must grow less. **(John 3:22-30)**

As we end the Christmas season, we continue to encounter and manifest Jesus as the source of our joy, our motivation in giving ourselves daily. We as a Family must continue to make him known in the world of today by letting Him grow greater each day and forever.

SUNDAY READINGS

Baptism of the Lord

First reading – **Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7**
Responsorial psalm – **Psalms 29**
Second reading – **Acts 10:34-38**
Gospel – **Matthew 3:13-17**

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

I am Verbum Dei: Making Jesus known

January 6 – January 12, 2014



Objective of the week:

1. To be more united in the process of the growth of Jesus making Him known to all.
2. To enter in the spirit towards our preparations for our Local Assembly by knowing our identity as a Verbum Dei Family.