

INTRODUCTION

We continue to pray about the dynamism of the Word of God. Our first step was to welcome the Word with an act of faith and then, last week, we took another step on how to listen to the Word of God, the importance of silence and to practice what we listen.

Now, we will pray about how to assimilate the Word of God. Assimilation of the Word of God is the process in prayer through which what we listen, the teachings and words of Jesus, become part of ourselves. Just like a child learning how to write, read or count; what at first is an external teaching, with effort and practice it becomes part of our daily lives. We read, write and count even without thinking about it. Can we also think, speak and live like Christ?

So, we must assimilate the Word of God in such a way that with time, perseverance and effort, our lives are a reflection of what Jesus is teaching us. His words become habits in our lives, they become choices, our hearts are filled with His words and our mouths speak of the Word, as naturally as breathing.

Without the process of assimilation, the Word within us does not bear fruits, falls on hard soil. If we just listen, our prayer is only an act of observation and reflection. We read the Bible as if it is just another book. We read the parables of Jesus as if they are bedtime stories or philosophical enigmas.

Jesus would share His parables with the disciples with the intent of challenging them into this active process of assimilation. Otherwise they would remain listeners, like dogs sleeping by the side of the Shepherd.

We should also feel challenged and try to understand His words. Prayer is hard work, like digging for water in the desert; it takes effort and time to understand and assimilate. But the reward is worth it, Jesus says that understanding His parables, is like understanding the secrets of the Kingdom of God. We may consider the parables of Jesus as gates to the Kingdom, narrow gates, through which is not easy to enter, but when you do, great happiness waits for those who persevere and strive for understanding.

Then, by actively listening to the Word of God we let its light shine into our lives and let it speak directly into what we live today. The Word will be like a seed that falls deep into your heart, it will bear fruits for you, for your family, for us. Listen to his voice today! And don't harden your heart. Let that seed settle deep within you and change your life.

As part of the Verbum Dei Family, we are exposed to the Word of God constantly. But exposure is not enough if it stops short of assimilation of the Word.

And how can we listen without wanting to live it? How can we live it without feeling compelled to speak it? How can he speak if we don't stop to listen?

MONDAY

Assimilate the Word like a soil receiving seeds

"Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seed. As he scattered it across his field, some of the seed fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate it. Other seed fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seed sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plant soon wilted under the hot sun, and since it didn't have

deep roots, it died. Other seed fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants so they produced no grain. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they sprouted, grew, and produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!" Then he said, "Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand."

(Mark 4:3,9)

Do you understand the meaning of this parable? What does it speak to you, today?

TUESDAY

How to actively listen and assimilate the Word

"If you can't understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables? The farmer plants seed by taking God's word to others. The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away. The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for

believing God's word. The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!" **(Mark 4:13-20)**

Do you see yourself in any of these examples of listeners in the parable of Jesus?

WEDNESDAY

How the Word changes lives

"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!" **(Matthew 13:46)**

"In truth, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."
(John 12:24)

When you understand Jesus words, are you willing to change your life according to it? Would

you trade your old life for what you have found?

THURSDAY

Pray and assimilate daily

"To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them." **(Matthew 13:12)**

"If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you will turn your back on knowledge."
(Proverbs 19:27)

Do not harden your heart or turn your back on Jesus. Repent, look for confession and return to listen and learn from Him.

FRIDAY

A Missionary Family of Jesus' friends

"You are my friends if you do what I command. (...) Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me."
(John 15:15)

The seeds of good deeds become a tree of life; a wise person wins friends. **(Proverbs 11:30)**

Do you make friends in school or at work by sharing what you have listened from Jesus, and practicing with good deeds what you have learned from Him?

SATURDAY

Treasure and assimilate the Word of God in your heart

And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. **(Luke 2: 19)**

Listen to the Word of God and keep it in your heart during the day. Ponder about it and assimilate it into your daily life. Learn from His teachings and share the Word with your friends.

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading: Genesis 18:20-32

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 138:1-3, 6-8

2nd Reading: Colossians 2:12-14

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

“Other seeds fell on fertile soil and they sprouted, grew and produced a crop...”

(c.f. Mark 4:8)

July 22-28, 2013

Objective of the Week:

To enter in the dynamism of the Word of God as Verbum Dei Family who has its source in the Word of God.

To learn how to actively assimilate the Word of God with faith in order to live according to the Word and become ourselves Word of God to others.