

INTRODUCTION

Last week we saw the important connection between believing in God and in transmitting our faith in Him. This week we are invited to show compassion to our brothers and sisters in the faith, in order to help feed the multitudes with the Word of God.

Seeing the reality of people's needs or suffering does not always move us to compassion, especially when we feel overwhelmed by it. We need to see the reality through the eyes of compassion of the Lord. We are not asked to provide something. We need to see ourselves as the providence of God - to offer who we are and what we have. We need to fix our eyes in the confidence of the owner of the harvest who gives us talents, and not our own limitations. He knows what He wants to do, but sometimes tests our faith by asking us to participate in His miracle. He believes in the initiatives of the little ones. Feeding the crowds and transmitting the faith is in itself a continuous act of faith.

The duty of Christians to take part in the life of the Church impels them to act as witnesses of the Gospel and of the obligations that flow from it. This witness is a transmission of the faith in words and deeds. Witness is an act of justice that establishes the truth or makes it known. All Christians, by the example of their lives and the witness of their word, wherever they live have an obligation to manifest the new man which they have put on in Baptism and to reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by whom they were strengthened at Confirmation. (CCC 2472)

It was a process of prayer and discernment when Jaime Bonet discovered the importance of his mission. There are three main elements to this episode: Seeing the hunger of the people, experiencing the compassion of Jesus and hearing the call of Jesus to the disciple to feed the people.

As a member of the Verbum Dei family, do you want help in the multiplication of the loaves? Ponder on the following question which our founder, Jaime Bonet once asked.

"Why do I want to evangelize, to announce the Good News of the Kingdom? Why do I want to dedicate myself to the propagation of the Faith to the ends of the earth? Why do I want to preach the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth and consecrate the whole of my life to prayer and ministry of the word?" (Jaime Bonet)

MONDAY

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

"So they left by boat for a quiet place, where they could be alone. But many people recognized them and saw them leaving, and people from many towns ran ahead along the shore and got there ahead of them. Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. Then Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to the

disciple so they could distribute it to the people." **(Mark 6:32-34, 39, 41)**

Our LORD knows and sees our various hungers (justice, peace, love, acceptance, joy) as well as the hunger for GOD's mercy and forgiveness. This hunger makes us wander and at times lead us astray if we do not fix our eyes on Jesus. This prompted Jaime Bonet to evangelize. "Because I want to communicate '... the Good News to the afflicted, to soothe the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison and proclaim a year of favor of the Lord..." (c.f. Is 61; 1-2). So that "the lame walk, those suffering from virulent skin diseases are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life..." (Mt 11: 4-6)

What do you hunger today? Tell it to Jesus and he will feed and satisfy you.

TUESDAY

Feed My Lambs

"After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' 'Yes, Lord Peter replied, 'you know I love you.' 'Then feed my lambs, Jesus told him. Jesus repeated the question: 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' 'Yes, Lord, Peter said, you know I love you.' 'Then take care of my sheep', Jesus said. A third time. He said, 'Lord you know everything. You know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Then feed my sheep.'" **(John 21:15-17)**

"Because I long for families to enjoy the warmth of a loving home, instead of the cold atmosphere of a cemetery, without even the embers of love and intimacy, affection and care, and the spontaneity and joy that is fruitful and creative. I

want to run and untie the rope of million and millions of young people that in a contagious desperation alienate themselves seeking a collective suicide. I cannot stop proclaiming the Good News of freedom to save millions of children whose lives are broken and disintegrated as soon as their eyes are opened to the light or even while in their mother's womb" **(Jaime Bonet)**

Our founder, Fr. Bonet sees the hunger of our LORD's sheep and lambs. It lead him to answer to Jesus call of feeding and taking care if these lambs. Will you also answer the same call?

WEDNESDAY ***Generous Giving***

"Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. For God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need & plenty left over to share with others. **(2 Corinthians 9: 6-8)**

"I am praying that you will put into action the generosity that comes from your faith as you understand and experience all the good things we have in Christ. Your love has given me much joy and comfort, my brother, for your kindness has often refreshed the heart of God's people.

(Philemon 1:6-7)

Fr. Jaime Bonet generously gave his life as such that "I want to collaborate with my entire mind, heart, and strength, and in the most effective way, to the redemption and liberation of all humanity. I want all to be saved and reach the knowledge of

the truth. That all may be freed from every kind of slavery." (Jaime Bonet)

Have you like Fr. Bonet experience the compassion of Jesus which lead you to be a generous giver of the faith?

THURSDAY **God's Providence**

"As she was going to get it, he called to her, 'Bring me a bite of bread, too.' But she said, 'I swear by the LORD your God that I do not have a single piece of bread in the house. And I have only a handful of flour left in the jar and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the jug. I was just gathering a few sticks to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die. 'But Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid! Go ahead and do just what you are said, but make a little bread for me first. So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her family continue to eat for many days. There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the LORD promised through Elijah."

(1 Kings 17:11-13, 15-16)

"Only the Gospel of Jesus has the necessary strength and power to transform the wretchedness that corrupts today's environment into a generating energy of abundant life."

(Jaime Bonet)

Fr. Jaime Bonet, on hearing the call of Jesus to feed the people, has lead him to totally trust in God's will and providence. Like the widow at Zerephath, the Verbum Dei community has always enough "flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the LORD promised." Do you also trust GOD's providence as you hear the call of Jesus to feed the lambs?

FRIDAY

Feeding the Sick Lambs

"After they had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret. The people recognized Jesus at once, and they ran throughout the whole area, carrying the sick people on mats to wherever they heard he was. Wherever he went --in villages, cities or the countryside--they brought the sick out to the market places. The begged him to let the sick touch at least the fringe of his robe, and all who touched him were healed."

(Mark 6:53-56)

"Because I want to put in to movement so many paralyzed lives that are without direction or meaning, without the desire to live; lives that are bored and lethargic, with doubts and suspicious, uncertainty and indecision; lives that are empty and broken by disabling complexes." This is just one of the many reasons why Fr. Bonet wants to evangelize. He cares a lot for our LORD's sick lambs. Moved with the compassion of Jesus and like the good Samaritan, Fr. Bonet will "treat the wounds with oil and wine and wrapped them with bandages. Them he put him on his own animal and brought him to an inn where he took care of him." (Luke 10: 34) Can you do likewise?

SATURDAY

Parable of the Talents

"Again, the kingdom of heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last-

- dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account on how they had used his money. The servant whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more. The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.' The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.' Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you did not plant and gathering crops you did not cultivate. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant!' Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who used well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away."

(Mt. 25:14-15, 19-20, 22-26, 28-29)

"To not evangelize would be equivalent to burying the talents that God has entrusted to me, for myself and for everyone." **(Jaime Bonet)**

As part of the Verbum Dei family, can you say the same?

29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1st Reading: **Exodus 17:8-13**

Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 121**

2nd Reading: **2 Timothy 3:14-4:2**

Gospel: **Luke 18:1-8**

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"You yourselves give them something to eat"

(c.f. Luke 9:13)

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Objective of the week:

To realize that first motivation for the transmission of the faith is the compassion of Jesus to feed the multitudes with the Word of God.