

INTRODUCTION

This week, let us continue to pray on the cry of Jesus "I Thirst". In this world of competition, many of our suffering brothers and sisters are being left behind and deprived of what is due to them because of the indifference of some who we consider more fortunate than them. Let us try to ponder and see what message these sufferings of our neighbors bring to us as we reflect this part of the message of Pope Francis for lent.

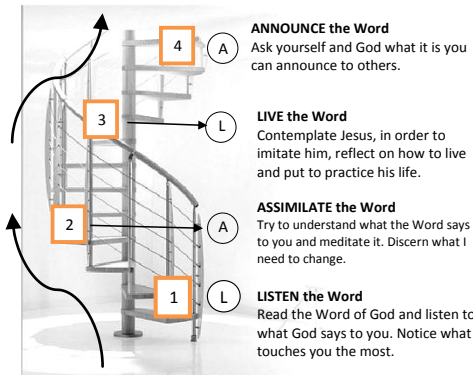
The suffering of others is a call to conversion, since their need reminds me of the uncertainty of my own life and my dependence on God and my brothers and sisters. If we humbly implore God's grace and accept our own limitations, we will trust in the infinite possibilities which God's love holds out to us. We will also be able to resist the diabolical temptation of thinking that by our own efforts we can save the world and ourselves.

(Pope Francis)

PRAYING WITH THE WORD

- "For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." **St. Jerome**
- And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying." **St. Ambrose**
(Dei Verbum #25 Vatican II document)

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

Apostles who hunger and thirst for justice

⁶ God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,^[a] for they will be satisfied.

⁷ God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

⁹ God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.

¹⁰ God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

(Matthew 5:6-10)

Usually, when we are healthy and comfortable, we forget about others (something God the Father never does): we are unconcerned with their problems, their sufferings and the injustices they endure... Our heart grows cold. As long as I am relatively healthy and comfortable, I don't think about those less well off. Today, this selfish attitude of indifference

has taken on global proportions, to the extent that we can speak of a globalization of indifference. It is a problem which we, as Christians, need to confront.

(Pope Francis' Message for Lent 2015)

To be hungry and really starving in spirit is what we really need in order to know what is in Jesus' heart, so that we can also fill in the hunger of others. Are you giving justice to the needy by giving concern to their needs in body and spirit?

TUESDAY

Set your heart on God's saving justice.

³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **(Matthew 6: 31-33)**

The suffering of others is a call to conversion, since their need reminds me of the uncertainty of my own life and my dependence on God and my brothers and sisters. If we humbly implore God's grace and accept our own limitations, we will trust in the infinite possibilities which God's love holds out to us. We will also be able to resist the diabolical temptation of thinking that by our own efforts we can save the world and ourselves. **(Pope Francis)**

Oftentimes we are in the rat race and in pressures of searching for security in life. We accumulate wealth

and fail to share to the less fortunate. Our church and supporting communities are in difficult situation because we fail to give our share of obligations. We worry so much of what tomorrow will bring. We fail to count God's promises to us to give us life in it's fullness. Jesus is thirsty for our trust and dependence on His Providence. Let us give justice to His promises by setting our hearts in His hands searching His divine gaze in readiness to do our share of quenching the thirst of others in their search for the fullness of life.

WEDNESDAY

Here I am! I am coming to do your will.

(Solemnity of the Annunciation of our Lord)

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." **(Luke 2: 33-35)**

A merciful heart does not mean a weak heart. Anyone who wishes to be merciful must have a strong and steadfast heart, closed to the tempter but open to God. A heart which lets itself be pierced by the Spirit so as to bring love along the roads that lead to our brothers and sisters. And, ultimately, a poor heart, one which realizes its own poverty and gives itself freely for others. **(Pope Francis)**

Today we celebrate the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord. We celebrate the angel Gabriel's appearance to the Virgin Mary, his announcement that the Blessed Virgin had been chosen to be the mother of our Lord and her willing acceptance to God's Holy Plan. Mary in her poverty accepted God's will for her life including the pain and suffering that her Son accepted to do the will of the Father. How about you, are you willing to do the will of God for your life in spite of the possibilities of the pain of ridicules and rejection? Jesus is thirsty for your "Yes". Ponder on it now.

THURSDAY

You neglect justice

³⁷ When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. ³⁸ But the Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal. ³⁹ Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰ You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹ But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you. ⁴² "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. **(Luke 11:37-42)**

Jesus is inviting us to be generous to him in the person of our suffering neighbors, not for the purpose of recognition but because we love Him.

It is not the amount that counts in your giving but how much love you put into your giving.

FRIDAY

Be trained in God's saving justice

¹⁷ for it is not eating and drinking that make the kingdom of God, but the saving justice, the peace and the joy brought by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ It is the person who serves Christ in these things that will be approved by God and respected by everyone. ¹⁹ So then, let us be always seeking the ways which lead to peace and the ways in which we can support one another. **(Romans 14:17-19)**

Christ serves us so that we in turn may become more like him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. There we become what we receive: the Body of Christ. In this body there is no room for the indifference which so often seems to possess our hearts. For whoever is of Christ, belongs to one body, and in him we cannot be indifferent to one another. **(Pope Francis)**

SATURDAY

Apostles who give solutions to the injustice of the world.

¹¹ Concerning him we have much to say and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes only of milk is not

accustomed to the Word of righteousness, for he is an infant. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. **(Hebrews 5:11-14)**

In this year of the poor, we too are being asked in silence to peer into the eyes of the crucified Lord, not plastic, nor wooden, nor closed, but open for me, confusing me, disturbing me, returning me to an original inspiration, healing me, raising me up, making me whole and surprising me anew with unaccustomed joy. In those twinkling eyes, we consider the quiet invitation to be actually poor, one with him, stripped of his clothes, his dignity, his possessions, his power, his strength, one with the unwashed, the oppressed, the scorned, the powerless, the miserable, the outcast. Of course, we can say no. We can repeat the valid, reasonable excuses. But we can also say yes. In this Year of the Poor, may our neediness be turned to sanctity, and may our arrogance be turned to service. In all, may the love of the Crucified Lord triumph as he gazes into our hearts and we dare to look into his. **(CBCP Pastoral Letter on Year of the Poor)**

SUNDAY READINGS

Palm Sunday

Procession: Mark 11:1-10 or John 12:12-16
1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22
2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11
Gospel: Mark 14:1-15:47



Verbum Dei
GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for justice."

March 23-29, 2015

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To understand the necessity of being in communion with the **intentionality** of God's plan: Salvation of all humanity through the apostles that contemplate and listen to the "I thirst" of Jesus and transmit the same intention to others.



Objective of the week:

To pray on the theme of the Easter Encounter 'I thirst' and to live out the Lenten season as apostles hungry and thirsty for justice.