

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we were invited to renew our encounter with Jesus and to experience that only through this experience, our commitment to evangelize and our missionary option is strengthened each day.

As we continue to pray and deepen the Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis entitled '**Evangelii Gaudium**' (The Joy of the Gospel), we see that as we live out our being evangelizers – missionary disciples, there are challenges and temptations.

This renewed encounter with Christ, allows us to be fully seen by Jesus. He sees the greater things we will see when we follow him. "...**You are going to see greater things...**" (John 1:50) When He sees us, he sees the potentials. His look is very empowering because it is a look of love. It is an experience of being seen by someone who knows me very much, and who knows everything of me. He does not only see our imperfections, but he brings out goodness from them. These are the thoughts of Christ. He didn't come to destroy but to give life and bring us to our best.

Seeing the reality of our world today, he sees us very much affected. He knows that there are many challenges and temptations. Jesus is giving us his same mind so that we can face the challenges of this world and live fully our being missionary disciples.

This week, let us go to battle with him in the mission of evangelization and to recover that missionary spirituality.

EASTER MONDAY

Deep experience to be seen by Jesus

⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth.' ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, 'From Nazareth? Can anything good come from that place?' Philip replied, 'Come and see.' ⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael coming he said of him, 'There, truly, is an Israelite in whom there is no deception.' ⁴⁸ Nathanael asked, 'How do you know me?' Jesus replied, 'Before Philip came to call you, I saw you under the fig tree.' ⁴⁹ Nathanael answered, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the king of Israel.' ⁵⁰ Jesus replied, 'You believe that just because I said: I saw you under the fig tree. You are going to see greater things than that.' ⁵¹ And then he added, 'In all truth I tell you, you will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending over the Son of man.'

(John 1:45-51)

I look at him, and he looks at me.

(A peasant to St. John Vianney when asked about his prayer.)

Do I want to be fully seen by Jesus? It is an experience of empowerment because his look is a look of love.

EASTER TUESDAY

From the imperfections come out goodness

Therefore, that I might not become too elated, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, an angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated. ⁸ Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me, ⁹ but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." I will rather

boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. ¹⁰ Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong. **(2 Corinthians 12:7-10)**

²⁸ We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. **(Romans 8:28)**

I will turn darkness into light before them, and make crooked ways straight. **(Isaiah 42:16)**

How does God see whenever I see all the imperfections in life? Let us have the same eyes of Jesus trying to bring out goodness from all the imperfections.

EASTER WEDNESDAY

Jesus integrates the mind of God.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. ⁹ As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts. **(Isaiah 55:8-9)**

¹⁶ For "who has known the mind of the Lord, so as to counsel him?" But we have the mind of Christ. **(1 Corinthians 2:16)**

82. The problem is not always an excess of activity, but rather activity undertaken badly, without adequate motivation, without a spirituality which would permeate it and make it pleasurable. As a result, work becomes more tiring than necessary, even leading at times to illness. Far from a content and happy tiredness, this is a tense, burdensome, dissatisfying and, in the end, unbearable

fatigue. This pastoral acedia can be caused by a number of things. Some fall into it because they throw themselves into unrealistic projects and are not satisfied simply to do what they reasonably can. Others, because they lack the patience to allow processes to mature; they want everything to fall from heaven. Others, because they are attached to a few projects or vain dreams of success. Others, because they have lost real contact with people and so depersonalize their work that they are more concerned with the road map than with the journey itself. Others fall into acedia because they are unable to wait; they want to dominate the rhythm of life. Today's obsession with immediate results makes it hard for pastoral workers to tolerate anything that smacks of disagreement, possible failure, criticism, the cross.

(Evangelii Gaudium 82)

What is in the mind of Jesus? How can we think in the same way as He thinks especially towards the challenges of this world?

EASTER THURSDAY

Jesus sees us very much affected

77. As children of this age, though, all of us are in some way affected by the present globalized culture which, while offering us values and new possibilities, can also limit, condition and ultimately harm us. I am aware that we need to create spaces where pastoral workers can be helped and healed, "places where faith itself in the crucified and risen Jesus is renewed, where the most profound questions and daily concerns are shared, where deeper discernment about our

experiences and life itself is undertaken in the light of the Gospel, for the purpose of directing individual and social decisions towards the good and beautiful". At the same time, I would like to call attention to certain particular temptations which affect pastoral workers.

(Evangelii Gaudium 77)

79. At times our media culture and some intellectual circles convey a marked scepticism with regard to the Church's message, along with a certain cynicism. As a consequence, many pastoral workers, although they pray, develop a sort of inferiority complex which leads them to relativize or conceal their Christian identity and convictions. This produces a vicious circle. They end up being unhappy with who they are and what they do; they do not identify with their mission of evangelization and this weakens their commitment. They end up stifling the joy of mission with a kind of obsession about being like everyone else and possessing what everyone else possesses. Their work of evangelization thus becomes forced, and they devote little energy and very limited time to it. **(Evangelii Gaudium 79)**

When I go out and live out the mission of evangelization, what are those things that affect me? We need to allow Jesus to bring us through an ongoing conversion.

EASTER FRIDAY

The battle we face in evangelization

80. Pastoral workers can thus fall into a relativism which, whatever their particular style of spirituality or way of thinking, proves even more dangerous than doctrinal relativism. It has to do

with the deepest and inmost decisions that shape their way of life. This practical relativism consists in acting as if God did not exist, making decisions as if the poor did not exist, setting goals as if others did not exist, working as if people who have not received the Gospel did not exist. It is striking that even some who clearly have solid doctrinal and spiritual convictions frequently fall into a lifestyle which leads to an attachment to financial security, or to a desire for power or human glory at all cost, rather than giving their lives to others in mission. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary enthusiasm!

(Evangelii Gaudium 80)

78. Today we are seeing in many pastoral workers, including consecrated men and women, an inordinate concern for their personal freedom and relaxation, which leads them to see their work as a mere appendage to their life, as if it were not part of their very identity. At the same time, the spiritual life comes to be identified with a few religious exercises which can offer a certain comfort but which do not encourage encounter with others, engagement with the world or a passion for evangelization. As a result, one can observe in many agents of evangelization, even though they pray, a heightened individualism, a crisis of identity and a cooling of fervour. These are three evils which fuel one another.

(Evangelii Gaudium 78)

Our being missionary disciples are our identity. To follow Jesus and attend religious activities is not extracurricular. This should condition us and affect our daily lives. Even in my decisions, do I think as a missionary disciple?

EASTER SATURDAY

Recover the missionary spirituality

83. And so the biggest threat of all gradually takes shape: "the gray pragmatism of the daily life of the Church, in which all appears to proceed normally, while in reality faith is wearing down and degenerating into small-mindedness". A tomb psychology thus develops and slowly transforms Christians into mummies in a museum. Disillusioned with reality, with the Church and with themselves, they experience a constant temptation to cling to a faint melancholy, lacking in hope, which seizes the heart like "the most precious of the devil's potions". Called to radiate light and communicate life, in the end they are caught up in things that generate only darkness and inner weariness, and slowly consume all zeal for the apostolate. For all this, I repeat: Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the joy of evangelization! **(Evangelii Gaudium 83)**

²⁰ My eager expectation and hope is that I shall not be put to shame in any way, but that with all boldness, now as always, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me life is Christ, and death is gain.

(Philippians 1:20-21)

How do I spend my time? Why do I work for others? Why do I help? When there is no motivation, where do I spend all my energies?

EASTER SUNDAY

Week 5

First Reading: **Acts 6:1-7**

Psalm: **Psalm 33:1-19**

Second Reading: **1 Peter 2:4-9**

Gospel: **John 14:1-12**

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

Let yourself be fully seen by Jesus

May 12-18, 2014



Objective of the week:

To be empowered by Jesus as he sees us very much affected by the world.