

INTRODUCTION

We will help and support each other in the most effective way, in our most complete and perfect formation and preparation possible, both in the content and the form, to proclaim the Word. We will diligently look after each other, from the first to the last in the community, so that each and every one of its members makes maximum use of their talents and multiplies and perfects them more everyday in patience and doctrine we exhort you, put up with suffering and efforts characteristics of the Kingdom in order to realize responsibility the function of evangelizers, fulfill to perfection our ministry. **(Statutes of the Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity # 154)**

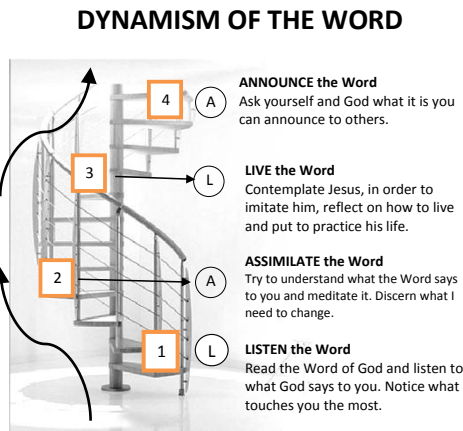
Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and in any place on the street, in a city square, during work on a journey. **(EG 127)**

What is your perception of your role in God's plan? Are you willing to play this role? Are you zealous enough to imitate the Lord giving HIS entire life to the service of others? What ways are you collaborating with Jesus in his continuing work of building God's Kingdom on earth?

This week we are invited to realize that we have a role to play in the realization of God's plan. To join in the work of building God's Kingdom by using the talents God has given you. And in times of stormy trials, keep calm and trust in Jesus.

As disciples of Jesus, we face uncertainty, opposition and persecution. We need not be afraid for the spirit of Jesus is with us. Are you willing to sacrifice your time, treasure and talents

for others? Remaining in Jesus' love is not a personal matter but a communal effort.



MONDAY

The Poor Widow's Contribution

Jesus^[a] looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box,² and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins.^[b]³ And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them.⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

(Luke 21: 1-4)

Generous giving out of our plenty is important. But we imitate Jesus best when we give generously out of our poverty. Christ's words and the Widow's example are tough ones to follow for those of us who enjoy life in a culture of plenty. We will probably not have the courage or the faith to give it all away --- every small coin our life. As a Verbum Dei disciple, how are you supporting the Verbum Dei Family in

the mission? Are you giving your coins - -- of time, care, compassion, trust, and love to others?

TUESDAY

The Signs of the End

⁵ And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said,⁶ "As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."⁷ And they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?"⁸ And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them."⁹ And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once."¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. **(Luke 21: 5-11)**

"The real importance of the end times is in the present ... The future is about the now and our knowledge of the future is about how we will live in the present." (Ray Bucko SJ). We are challenged to live the present in expectation and anticipation in faith and fidelity. The signs of the time have come --- violence, war, earthquakes, floods and the like. But Jesus gives us

hope in the midst of doom and gloom. Likewise, are you giving hope, love and support to others in these trying times? Are you telling others about Christ before the end of time?

WEDNESDAY

The Coming Persecution

¹² But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake.¹³ This will be your opportunity to bear witness.¹⁴ Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer,¹⁵ for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.¹⁶ You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers^[a] and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death.¹⁷ You will be hated by all for my name's sake.¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish.¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your lives. **(Luke 21: 12-19)**

Jesus talks about the challenges that his followers will inevitably encounter if they remain true to him. Likewise, HIS promise is not immunity from pain or conflict but the assurance of wisdom and grace to be faithful. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Mt 5:

11-12) Are you experiencing pain and persecution lately as you follow Jesus? Remember that the best things in life are bought with great pain and perseverance. "No cross, no resurrection!"

THURSDAY

The Great Tribulation

²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, ²² for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. ²³ Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ²⁵ "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, ²⁶ people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise

your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:20-28)

We need no prophecies to foresee the destruction of our world. We have abused Mother Earth and she is getting back at us. Let us listen to Pope Francis' request to care for the environment in order to combat climate change. Likewise, we can also read the signs in our relationships and our affairs. Our soul and conscience give us signals when we are turning away from God. Let us read them and heed God's call before we find ourselves in a dry, dark land. Are you helping or encouraging others prepare for the day of liberation? Have you reminded them that "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8: 31)

FRIDAY

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

²⁹ And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰ As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. (Luke 21:29-33)

The only mistakes in life, they say, are those we do not learn from. As said, "Wise men learn from the mistakes of others. Fools learn from their own mistakes." As disciples of Jesus we need to be reminding each other as well as telling others that there will be an autumn and winter of persecutions and

trials. But just as the fig tree comes to life in spring and summer, the disciples of Jesus will reap with shouts of joy what they have sown. In your faithful following of Jesus, have you accompanied others so that they will persevere in the mission that HE entrusted?

SATURDAY

Exhortation to be Vigilant

³⁴ "But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

(Luke 21:34-36)

Our daily concerns and struggles can drown and stifle us. "Cast your care upon the Lord." (Psalm 55:23) We are never alone when we face the unknown. After doing the best we can, we can rest and entrust the results to the Lord. We can only do so much. Leave some work for God to do. Let God be God in your life. Today, be sensitive and encourage someone to trust in the Lord, to endure in the work for the mission, to persevere in prayer.

SUNDAY

1st Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 25

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:12 – 4:2

Gospel: Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage --- with great patience and careful instruction."

(2 Timothy 4:2)

November 23-29, 2015

General Theme: Until Christ is formed in You and in Them

General Objective: To continue deepening in the love of Christ for others that entails a daily encounter with Him.



Objective of the week:

As a community, we help and support one another in completing the mission that Jesus entrusted.