

INTRODUCTION

In the past two weeks we were on a journey with our dear Mother Mary. She taught us how to say 'yes' to live out our charism as Verbum Dei disciples. Later on, she showed us that in response to this calling, we are invited to live as pilgrims and accompany others to follow Christ. On this third week, we continue to journey with Mary our Mother in discovering the importance of our charism: the service of the Word of God.

After having visited her cousin, Elizabeth (c.f. Luke 1:45), we see Mary with a grateful heart as she sings a song of praise to God, her *Magnificat*. All her life she was praising God for the great things He has done and passing it to us, being the Mother of Verbum Dei, to live our lives inspired by our love for the Word of God. Like Mary, we are invited to make our lives a continuous *Magnificat* through our faithful and loving yes.

Mary teaches us that to be a servant of the Word of God isn't a profession or a topic. Rather, through our humble and simple yes, we recognize the maternal heart of God through our relationship with Him, a heart which goes out to many people. Jesus tells us *"I do not call you servants... Instead I call you friends"* (John 15:15). It is in this way that we receive the Word of God: we receive

it as His friends. Like Mary, she received the Word with a grateful and humble heart and offered her life to all, with the maternal love for her children.

But being servants of the Word of God isn't an easy task. *"Without Mary, we live as orphans, a reality impossible to overcome."* (VD Statutes 239). Mother Mary knows this, which is why she accompanies us, becoming our mother. We encounter many obstacles and challenges when we share and live it out in our lives. Because of this, Mary *"occupies a unique and decisive, indispensable and irreplaceable place in Verbum Dei"* (VD Statutes 241).

As we enter into this last week of praying with Mary, let us recognize the maternal heart of God. To love Mary is to love all God's children. This is our mission as Verbum Dei, and as the Lenten message of our Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: *"It is important... to remember that the greatest work of charity is evangelization, which is the "ministry of the Word." ... to introduce them to a relationship with God: evangelization is the highest and the most integral promotion of the human person."*

MONDAY

Mary, a constant Magnificat

"My heart praises the Lord." (Luke 1:46) Mary's life was an entire song of

praise. As we say our 'yes' to the Word of God, let our life be a song of praise like Mary.

Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶ Mary said, "My heart praises the Lord; ⁴⁷ my soul is glad because of God my Saviour, ⁴⁸ for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!

From now on all people will call me happy, ⁴⁹ because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me.

His name is holy; ⁵⁰ from one generation to another he shows mercy to those who honour him.

⁵¹ He has stretched out his mighty arm and scattered the proud with all their plans. ⁵² He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. ⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away with empty hands. ⁵⁴ He has kept the promise he made to our ancestors, and has come to the help of his servant Israel.

⁵⁵ He has remembered to show mercy to Abraham and to all his descendants for ever!"

Reflection:

With our yes to be bearers of the Word of God, does my life become an inspiration for others to live out God's word? Is my life helping others to also recognize God's loving presence in their lives?

TUESDAY

Mary, a servant of the Word of God

"He has remembered me, his lowly servant!" (Luke 1:48) Mary was a servant of the Word of God, who lovingly chose to offer her life and allowed God's Word to work through her. Let us do the same and offer our lives in service of God's Word, because He calls us friends.

John 15:15

¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because servants do not know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.

Reflection:

How is my relationship with God? Do I still find myself just doing things for Him or do I live it as a friend – listening to his will and putting it into practice?

WEDNESDAY

Mary, a woman with a humble heart

Because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me. His name is holy. (Luke 1:49), God called us to belong to Him and be loved by Him only.

Isaiah 43:1-5a

¹ Israel, the Lord who created you says, "Do not be afraid – I will save you. I have called you by name – you are mine. ² When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire, you will

not be burned; the hard trials that come will not hurt you. ³ For I am the Lord your God, the holy God of Israel, who saves you... ⁴ I will up whole nations to save your life because you are precious to me and because I love you and give you honor."

⁵ Do not be afraid – I am with you!

Reflection:

Being a servant of the Word, like Mary, what are the great things He has done for us that we should be thankful about? In every great favors He has done in our life, do we recognize it as His call to belong to Him and be loved by Him?

THURSDAY

Mary, a reflection of the maternal heart of God

Her love for us manifests the love of God for His children and *from one generation to another He shows mercy to those who honor Him (Luke 1:50).*

John 8:3-11

³The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and they made her stand before them all.⁴"Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery."⁵In our Law Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say?"⁶They said this to trap Jesus, so that they could accuse him.

But he bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. ⁷As they stood there asking him questions, he straightened up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her."⁸Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there.¹⁰He straightened up and said to her, "Where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you?"¹¹"No one, sir," she answered. "Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."

Reflection:

Can we show love to our brothers and sisters in the same way Mother Mary loves them? Through our own life, how can we be a reflection of God's greatest love for humankind?

FRIDAY

Mary, a woman whose heart and life were centered around the Word

His Word *scattered the proud with all their plans. (Luke 1:51).* The power of the Word of God listened to, assimilated and lived out is the only source of strength in Mary's life.

Hebrews 4:12

¹²The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to

where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart.

John 6:63

⁶³ What gives life is God's spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit.

Reflection:

Am I living my daily life centered on the Word of God? How can I empty myself of pride and of the things which feed it so as to freely live according to His Word?

SATURDAY

Mary, mother of Verbum Dei

"The Mother, so familiar and loved, occupies a unique and decisive, indispensable and irreplaceable place in Verbum Dei." (VD Statutes 241)

Reflection:

Like Mary, am I free and willing to be a parent in my own reality directing them to Jesus? Or do I even care about introducing Mother Mary as a mother to them?

MARCH 24: PALM SUNDAY

At the blessing of palms:

Luke 19:280-40

At the mass:

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel Reading: Luke 22:14-23:56

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"My heart praises the Lord!"

(c.f. Luke 1:46)



**Mama Mary
WEEK 3**

March 18 - 24, 2013

Objective of the week:

As we live our Verbum Dei charism, we live it with a grateful heart like Mother Mary, who offered her life as a mother to all