

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we were challenged on the truth of our faith as co-builders of the kingdom of God, to create it here and now, in our day to day activities. This week God's calling is to concretize His kingdom through our specific dedication to the Word, "We ourselves will devote ourselves full time to prayer and to the service of the Word." (Cf. VD Constitution 28)

In as much as we ourselves just want to be comforted, to be settled in our little worlds, to attend to our myopic concerns, this time Jesus is inviting us to go out from our comfort zones, to imitate him in the way he sees and responded to the miseries, desolations and depressions of our brothers and sisters.

"Jesus went around visiting all the towns and villages. He taught in the synagogues, preached the Good News about the Kingdom, and healed people with every kind of disease and sickness. As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:35-38) After the tragedies of the 7.2. earthquake, the resent super typhoon Yolanda, the heated senate trial on the pork barrel scam, how is our eyes on these many "crowds" in front of us? Is there something significant that we can do as a Family dedicated to the ministry of the Word? As Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest." (cf. Mt. 9:37)

"In view of the situation of the world, and hearing the cry of the members of Christ's body, our brothers and sisters, we will feel completely moved by the urgency of the mission. Then neither day nor night will suffice in order to respond. We will apply ourselves wholly to the Total Christ -Head and members- and we will feel obliged to request and seek workers for so much labor. (VD Statute 32)

As one VD Family, we are convinced that through our total dedication to the Word through *Prayer, Testimony of Life and Preaching, we are transmitting to our brothers and sisters the very life of God.* (C.f. VD Constitution 15)

However, we are aware of the sublimity of this dedication which goes beyond mere external activities, convenient based responses, and even an on-off collaboration to the mission... "The Life that we are called to give to many, which as the true aim of our dedication to the ministry of the Word, does not come from ourselves. It is Jesus himself who calls us, chooses us and sends us to give this fruit of Life and who insists, as a matter of life or death, upon our vital union with Him. He sums up and completes these invitations, entreaties and supplications with this imperative: "Remain in my love". (VD Constitution 22), thus our sincerity and delicacy to this dedication will first and foremost starts in our union with Jesus, the fountain, motor, and goal of our specific dedication.

MONDAY

"And for their sake I dedicated myself!"

"It is not right for us to neglect the preaching of God's word in order to handle finances. 3 So then, friends, choose seven men among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and we will put them in charge of this matter. 4 We ourselves, then, will give our full time to prayer and the work of preaching." (Acts 6:3-4)

And for their sake I dedicated myself to you, in order that they too, maybe truly dedicated to you. (John 17:19)

The Verbum Dei Community, with the motto of the first disciples of Jesus: Orationi et ministerio verbi instantes, decides and makes concrete the specific mission and their own contribution to the Church in their total and exclusive dedication to prayer and teaching to pray experientially with the ministry of the Word and the testimony of life.

(VD Statues 59)

Jesus has been truly dedicating himself to us. In the same way He wanted us to do the same. With a grateful heart, we want to give freely what we have received freely. The immeasurable love of God that made us free from our slaveries enabling us to liberate others and announce his love to the whole world.

TUESDAY

"My people are like sheep without a shepherd"

As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. 2 He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. 3 He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised. 4 Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me.

(Psalm 23:1-4)

Jesus, we know how it has been to follow your teachings, your footsteps. It was never easy; it entails denials of our own caprice. To bend our being human standard ways and means and change it as you taught us to be. Lord in as much as we love ourselves, we love you even more. We come to do your will to be shepherds of the flock. We heard the loud cries of your voice, greater than our own.

WEDNESDAY

"Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples"
(cf. Mt. 28:18-20)

"The exercise of the ministry of the Word, at whatever level, aspires to move the person progressively closer to Christ, in the measure of the capacities and possibilities of each one. It is a patient labour of teaching and of learning to pray by means of which the apostle, more than by theoretical explanations, guides the disciple by the hand towards the Person of Christ. We have saved someone when we have taught him or her to pray; Christ will have a new disciple when he or she, through prayer "comes to know Him" personally, not by hearsay but by personal experience". (VD Constitution 40)

We know that humanly speaking there is "last will and testament" and so thus Jesus, this is his will to us and be assured that on the last day, we inherit the promise that He told us to possess. We may find difficulty in doing His will, but he also once showed it to us, how to live life according to his way, we need to remain humble, and be sensitive to the needs of our brothers and sisters, not be stingy even to those who are difficult to love but instead to be persistent, because they can be a key to unlock the hardest core within. There is nothing colder than a Christian who does not seek to save others. (St. John Chrysostom)

THURSDAY

"One in mind and heart"

The group of believers was one in mind and heart. None of them said that any of their belongings were their own, but they all share with one another everything they had. With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all. There was one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale, and turn it over to the apostles, and the money was distributed according to the need of the people. (Acts 4:32-35)

Fidelity to our specific mission of exercising the ministry of the Word demands that we receive a theoretical-practical, intense and prolonged formation in the exercise of prayer, a life of prayer and an ever-increasing charity. (VD Constitutions 17)

With the oneness that the Spirit brings to the group, there is no desolation. All issues has been resolved from top to bottom, according to what the group need it was addressed with equality even financial matters was not an issue...As VD Family are we in unison in mind and heart with the Holy Spirit, the animator and giver of our dedication? Like the first community of apostles, their fidelity to the Spirit bears a hundredfold of witnesses to God's love, ours too will bear the same fruit and even more in as much as we remain faithful in mind and heart to the Holy Spirit.

FRIDAY

"Do you love me? Take care of my sheep"

After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do? Yes, Lord, he said, you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, "Take care of my lambs. A second time Jesus said to him, Simon son of John, do you love me? Yes, Lord you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, Take care of my sheep. A third time Jesus said, Simon son of John, do you love me? Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me? And so he said to him, "Lord you know everything, you know that I love you! Jesus said to him "Take care of my sheep."

(John 21:15-18)

If you are in the person of Peter, where you have been asked the 3rd times, what reaction could you get? Will you be sad, mad, or irritated? Human as we are we can have one of the reactions. We may say, "kultit", "balik-balik", "bingi". More to that reaction, we have to understand the

point of Jesus, He wanted the assurance of Peter to handle the task at hand with greater responsibility, with greater assurance of love to be of service not just for himself but for others as well. Because it is our life that is at stake here our salvation.

SATURDAY

**"I came to set the earth on fire"
(c.f. Lk 14:49)**

Only a complete and full-time gift of self to the mission that Jesus sent us to carry out: "...I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last..." , will completely fulfill our vocation and give true meaning to our lives. It is only then that the vocation is understood, and it fills, fascinates and entirely captivates the person, absorbing every moment of their day and night; only then is it lived and experienced in all its fullness, with neither interference nor compromise. (VD Constitution 33)

We who hear the message, and were called as disciple of Christ must not disappoint him this time. We witnessed how many of our brothers suffer the consequence of our convenient based responses, and even an on-off collaboration to the mission. This time, out of love and gratitude let us Christ to the world through prayer, witness of life and preaching the good news that is in us.

33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First reading: Malachi 3:19-20a

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9

Second reading: 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"We ourselves then, will DEDICATE to prayer and the work of preaching"

November 11-17, 2013



Objective of the week:

To see the same urgency of Jaime to consecrate ourselves to such a mission, not merely as an external activity, but as a way of life to love the God of our faith.