

INTRODUCTION

A few days is left before 2015 closes. A year that we have experienced how the Lord has walked with us. Looking at the incarnation of Jesus, He became human for us to show the path of life. A baby that showed the dream of God for humanity and the same baby that opened the way for the lives of Mary and Joseph to dream with God with their own lives. What does Jesus' birth bring to my life?

When Jesus was born, perhaps Mary and Joseph carried questions in their hearts too as they look at the child Jesus. What will the future of this child be? How can I raise this baby to be how the angel said to me – “great and the Son of the Most High? What will be the future of my family?

In the same way in our lives, this new year, we also carry questions like – how will be this 2016? What are the experiences that will await me for my life, my family and community of faith?

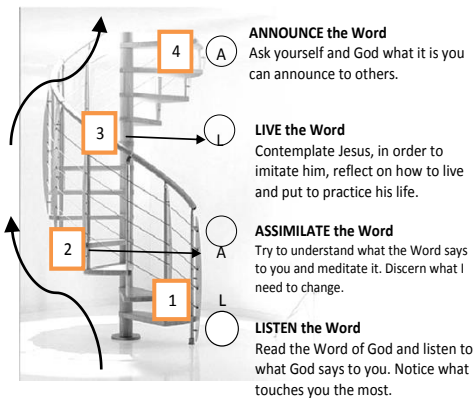
This new year is an opportune time to once more dream with God and take the moment to stop and ask, “Lord, what are your dreams for this coming year in my life, family, apostolate and community?”

Pope Francis said “It is important to dream in the family...

“When you lose this capacity to dream you lose the capacity to love, the capacity to love is lost.” To hear the dreams that we have in our hearts and that of God, it is important to pray. He said, “To hear and accept God’s call, to make a home for Jesus, you must be able to rest in the Lord. You must make time each day for prayer... but if we do not pray, we will not know the most important thing of all: God’s will for us. And for all our activity, our busyness, without prayer we will accomplish very little.” (Excerpt Pope Francis Message to Families, 2015)

May we contemplate and ponder the Holy Family to help us to welcome the dreams of God for this year with an open and pondering heart.

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

Mary and Joseph opened their lives to the dream of God

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. **And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.** Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them. When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. (Luke 2:16-21)

Jesus became human in a family. Mary and Joseph gazed at the beautiful gift that God gave- Jesus – the Son of God both human and divine. As a family, perhaps they have pondered what would be their future like? The same with our lives, we carry questions how our future will be? What attitudes and dispositions can we imitate from the Holy Family to welcome the dreams of God?

TUESDAY

Dreaming in the family is a capacity to love

“It is important to dream in the family. All mothers and fathers dream of their sons and daughters in the womb for 9 months. They dream of how they will be. It isn’t possible to have a family

without such dreams. **When you lose this capacity to dream you lose the capacity to love, the capacity to love is lost.** I recommend that at night when you examine your consciences, ask yourself if you dreamed of the future of your sons and daughters. Did you dream of your husband or wife? Did you dream today of your parents, your grandparents who carried forward the family to me? It is so important to dream and especially to dream in the family. Please don’t lose the ability to dream in this way. How many solutions are found to family problems if we take time to reflect...” (Excerpt of Pope's Francis message to families January 2015)

At the start of this year, may we again heed the call to dream for and with our families. Perhaps in our 2015 there had been unexpected circumstances. Events that wasn't how we expected or wanted them to be. We start to lose perspective and hope. But let us rediscover once more God's dream. What is your dream for your life and for your family and what is God's?

WEDNESDAY

Prayer leads me to hear & accept the dreams of God

“To hear and accept God’s call, to make a home for Jesus, you must be able to rest in the Lord. **You must make time each day for prayer.** But you may say to me: Holy Father, I want to pray, but there is so much work to do! I must care for my children; I have chores in the home; I

am too tired even to sleep well. This may be true, but if we do not pray, we will not know the most important thing of all: God's will for us. And for all our activity, our busy-ness, without prayer we will accomplish very little. Resting in prayer is especially important for families. It is in the family that we first learn how to pray. And don't forget when the family prays together, it remains together. " (Excerpt of Pope's Francis message to families January 2015)

To discover our dreams and the dreams of God entails moments of reflection as Pope Francis said. Moments of prayer and resting in the Lord. Yet oftentimes, it is easy to be taken by the demands of work, family needs that are to be met. Let us not forget that the Lord gives appropriate time for everything and that may we learn to find time with Him that we may know the will of God for every situation that our family faces.

THURSDAY

The certainty of God in our midst helps us embrace the ways God

¹³After the Visitors of the East had left, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph and said, "Herod will be looking for the child in order to kill him. So get up, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you to leave."¹⁴**Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and left during the night for Egypt,** ¹⁵where he stayed until Herod died. This was done to make come true what the

Lord had said through the prophet, "I called my Son out of Egypt." (Matthew 2:13-15)

When we listen to the dream and voice of God for our families, like Mary and Joseph, oftentimes, God presents plans that we never expected. Change happens that often makes us feel unsure whether we can pull it through. Mary and Joseph were able to welcome moving to an unfamiliar territory of Egypt because they hold in their hands, the Child of God and God in His goodness will always guide them and bring them for what is best.

FRIDAY

The Word of God is our strength in the journey of fulfilling the dream of God

Israel, the LORD who created you says, "Do not be afraid—I will save you. I have called you by name—you are mine."²When 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 ⁴I will give 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!** (Isaiah 43:1-5)

May we face the challenges that this coming year brings with the certainty that God is with us as He carries out His dreams in our lives.

SATURDAY

We are called to imitate the attitudes of Mary and Joseph

²²The time came for Joseph and Mary to perform the ceremony of purification, as the Law of Moses commanded. So they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.³³**The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him.** ³⁴Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against ³⁵and so reveal their secret thoughts. And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart." (Lk 2:22-35)

The Holy Family encountered challenges too. They are not certain as to how God would carry out His dream for them but they possessed the attitudes of openness, humble trust and a pondering heart. May we ask the Help of Mother Mary our Mother to help us perceive and remain open as this new year unfolds.

SUNDAY

The Epiphany of the Lord

1st Reading: *Isaiah 60:1-6*
Responsorial Psalm: *Ps 72:1-13*
2nd Reading: *Eph 3:2-3, 5-6*
Gospel: *Matthew 2:1-12*

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Mary pondered all these things in her heart"

(Luke 2:19)

December 27, 2015 – Jan 3, 2016

General Objective:

To allow the Holy Family to help us to be constantly open to the plans and dreams of God



Objective of the week:

To perceive the dreams of God for my life and the people God has placed in my care