

INTRODUCTION

Jesus takes occasions to teach the people the cost of discipleship. He is seen as powerful in words and in actions and people flock to Him. He refuses the devil's temptation to make His mission easy by using His power as Son of God. Rather, our Lord chooses to be an itinerant preacher were He and his disciples live upon the charity of generous people. Jesus does not enjoy the security that God affords animals and birds. He has nowhere to rest his head.

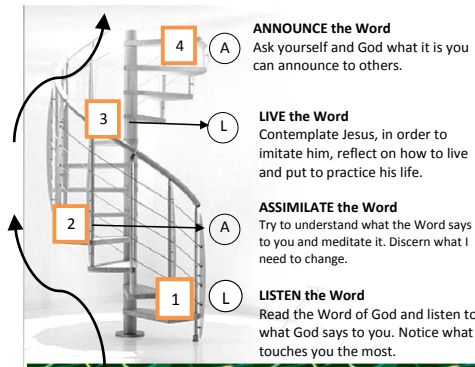
Following Jesus means taking His simple and meager lifestyle. It will lead us to carrying our own cross; to establish a right relationship with God as such that is to tie our humble performance to the love and the grace which God offers us in Jesus. We are to try to do good and because we are afraid of God, but because we love Him; not because sin is breaking God's law, but because it's breaking God's heart. God loved us so much that He gave us Jesus as an expiation ---- it's benefits are shared all who have faith.

PRAYING WITH THE WORD

- "For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." **St. Jerome**
- And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying." **St. Ambrose**

(Dei Verbum #25 Vatican II document)

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

Peter's Confession about Jesus

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock^[a] I will build my church, and the gates of hell^[b] shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed^[c] in heaven."

(Matthew 16:13-19)

Jesus wanted to know if there was anyone who recognized him for who he was and would be able to carry on after

he is gone. So he asked his disciples, "who do you say that I am?" How we know, understand, and relate with one another is very important. What people tell of us may not be totally true, but their impression of us may have some grain of truth, we are before Him, his love and mercy for us personally, will have more weight than what others say or what we know about ourselves. On the other hand, as a Verbum Dei disciples who is Jesus for you?

TUESDAY

The Calming of the Storm at Sea

²³ And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵ And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶ And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷ And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

(Matthew 8:23-27)

In the various storms of our life, we see our problems as indications of God's absence or disfavor. When we have faith in God and learn to entrust everything to His will, when our "boat" is being tossed, we will not be afraid of anything. The Lord will banish our fear and anxiety. God is with us. "Immanuel". Trusting in his presence, we have the confidence of the Psalmist who prays, "Wherever I lay down and slept, the Lord preserved to rise again." (Ps 3:6).

WEDNESDAY

The Healing of Gadarene Demoniacs

²⁸ And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarene two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" ³⁰ Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹ And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." ³² And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. ³³ The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

(Matthew 8:28-34)

It is often said that if we believe in good, we must also believe in evil. Sin is not due to human failure alone. The devil is a reality, seeking to destroy us. Peter warns "Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5: 8) The people displayed wrong priorities and missed a great opportunity,; they had God among them and were unable to recognize Him. At times, we are blind to spiritual good and are more concern of our financial loss. Ask Jesus to exorcise the demons in us. Seek for humility, faith and prayer.

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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The Healing of a Paralytic

And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.² And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven."³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming."⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?⁵ For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?'⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home."⁷ And he rose and went home.⁸ When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

(Matthew 9:1-8)

Evil thoughts are the real paralysis that needs healing! They paralyze us and keep us from opening to other people and to the Lord's graces. They enclosure us in our own misery, firing up the anger, jealousy, or depression welling in us. Before you entertain evil thoughts, ask first Jesus' question. "Why do you harbor evil thoughts?" Often it is easy to do good, a lot tougher to think good. Today, give every person you meet the benefit of the doubt

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin,^[a] was not with them when Jesus came.²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

(John 20:24-29)

Thomas is absent when the Risen Lord comes and gifts them all with peace, with the power of the Holy Spirit and sends them into the world to forgive and hold bound those that need it. He refuses to believe and so he stifles the Spirit and stops the Good News from getting into the world. Are you also like that at times? We are the dwelling place for God in the Spirit ---- do you keep that in mind? And Jesus for the needed grace and faith so that we can tell others of the Good News.

SATURDAY

New Wineskins

¹⁴ Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast,^[a] but your disciples do not fast?"¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."¹⁶ No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.¹⁷ Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."

(Matthew 9:14-17)

Jesus says that His teaching can be received only by fresh wineskins. Mind and heart must be "renewed" so that people can receive the good news of the kingdom. We have to be new wineskins, open and ready for the working of the Spirit. Not every old thing is to be discarded, nor is every new thing necessarily good. We need a discerning heart that is the gift of the Spirit. Let the Lord's voice be heard and His face seen in your witnessing today.

SUNDAY

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Zec 9: 9-10
Responsorial Psalm: Ps 145
Second Reading: Rom 8:9, 11-12
Gospel: Mt 11: 25-30



GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of humanity becomes clear."

(Gaudium et Spes 22)

June 29-July 5, 2015

General Theme:

"Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and men."

General Objective:

To assimilate that to form Jesus in our lives and in the lives of others imply that we integrate the Word of God in all dimensions of our life.

Objective of the week:

To contemplate Jesus in whom we can find the true value of our humanity. To aspire to be perfect as Jesus was a perfect man