

INTRODUCTION

This week, we are invited to reflect and ponder the time when Verbum Dei Family came from. It was the time when the Church opened her doors to the breath and fresh air of the Holy Spirit towards the new evangelization. That is when the Vatican II was opened and proclaimed. It is in this new era that all Catholic Christians are informed and are more aware of their role as baptized Christians in proclaiming the Gospel - The big role of the "LAY PEOPLE" in the evangelization together with the priests and religious; to recognize that each one of us possess that missionary identity when Jesus said in *John 20:21*: "Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you, as the Father sent me, so I send you."

Isn't it wonderful to feel that Jesus himself is sending us to preach his message of love to all people? Isn't it beautiful to realize that Jesus trusts us so much in our discipleship? We are given the Verbum Dei Missionary Family (as the instrument of the Holy Spirit) to lead and guide us on how to perform our missionary identity, according to who we are and what culture we belong; Making us able to read the signs of our times in our Catholic Church of today.

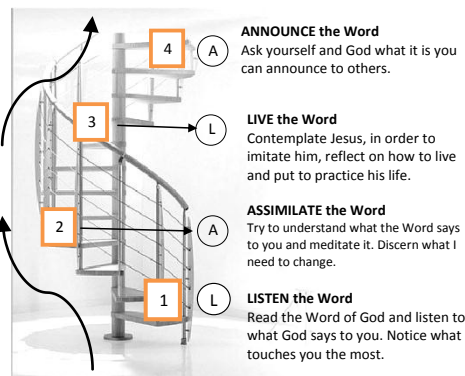
How wonderful to understand what God said to each one of us in *Isaiah 52:7* "How

beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announce peace, who brings good news, who announce salvation, who says to Zion, Your God is King". How good to realize that each one of us is the owner of the beautiful feet to walk towards the people whom at this present time still do not recognize the Love of God in their lives. Think of all those in your family, friends and people whom you know, see and work with. How many of them are you willing to say yes? How wonderful to think that "YOU" can actually be the one to pass on the good news.

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

God's gift becomes flesh in the cultures of those who receive it

115. The People of God is incarnate in the peoples of the earth, each of which has its own culture. The concept of culture is valuable for grasping the various expressions of the Christian life present in God's people. It has to do with the lifestyle of a given society, the specific way in which its members relate to one another, to other creatures and to God. Understood in this way, culture embraces the totality of a people's life.⁸⁴ Each people in the course of its history develops its culture with legitimate autonomy.⁸⁵ This is due to the fact that the human person, "by nature stands completely in need of life in society"⁸⁶ and always exists in reference to society, finding there a concrete way of relating to reality. The human person is always situated in a culture: "nature and culture are intimately linked".⁸⁷ Grace supposes culture, and God's gift becomes flesh in the culture of those who receive it.
(*Evangelii Gaudium 115*)

*Do you believe that God is very present in our Filipino culture?
Do you see God's trust in each Filipino to be with other cultures throughout the world in order that all of these cultures will be one in the Catholic Church?*

TUESDAY

God's spirit enriches its culture with the transforming power of the Gospel

116. In these first two Christian millennia, countless peoples have received the grace of faith, brought it to flower in their daily lives and handed it on in the language of their own culture. Whenever a community receives the message of salvation, the Holy Spirit enriches its culture with the transforming power of the Gospel. The history of the Church shows that Christianity does not have simply one cultural expression, but rather, "remaining completely true to itself, with unswerving fidelity to the proclamation of the Gospel and the tradition of the Church, it will also reflect the different faces of the cultures and peoples in which it is received and takes root".⁸⁸ In the diversity of peoples who experience the gift of God, each in accordance with its own culture, the Church expresses her genuine catholicity and shows forth the "beauty of her varied face".⁸⁹ In the Christian customs of an evangelized people, the Holy Spirit adorns the Church, showing her new aspects of revelation and giving her a new face. Through inculturation, the Church "introduces peoples, together with their cultures, into her own community",⁹⁰ for "every culture offers positive values and forms which can enrich the way the Gospel is preached, understood and lived".⁹¹ In this way, the Church takes up the values of different cultures and becomes *sponsa ornata monilibus suis*, "the bride bedecked with her jewels" (cf. *Is 61:10*).⁹²

(*Evangelii Gaudium 116*)

Are you convinced that you have a big role in the oneness of the Catholic Church in the midst of these diversities?

Can you be the one of the Filipinos who can offer positive values and forms which can enrich the way the Gospel is preached, understood and lived?



WEDNESDAY

God's spirit will teach us how to read the signs of the times in our Catholic Church.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 Before God and before Christ Jesus who is to be judge of the living and the dead, I charge you, in the name of his appearing and of his kingdom: ² proclaim the message and, welcome or unwelcome, insist on it. Refute falsehood, correct error, give encouragement -- but do all with patience and with care to instruct. ³ The time is sure to come when people will not accept sound teaching, but their ears will be itching for anything new and they will collect themselves a whole series of teachers according to their own tastes; ⁴ and then they will shut their ears to the truth and will turn to myths. ⁵ But you must keep steady all the time; put up with suffering; do the work of preaching the gospel; fulfil the service asked of you.

Have you read the signs of times today where many people are more in materialism and consumerism, and they don't want to listen to what is the TRUTH? Are you willing to bring the message of what is essential of today? Do you want to bring the good news of eternal life to them?

THURSDAY

God's spirit will make us humble in bringing the message of love.

1 Corinthians 9:19-22 ¹⁹ So though I was not a slave to any human being, I put myself in slavery to all people, to win as many as I could. ²⁰ To the Jews I made myself as a Jew, to win the Jews; to those under the Law as one under the Law (though I am not), in order to win those under the Law; ²¹ to those outside the Law as one outside the Law, though I am not outside the Law but under Christ's law, to win those outside the Law. ²² To the weak, I made myself weak, to win the weak. I accommodated myself to people in all kinds of different situations, so that by all possible means I might bring some to salvation.

Are you willing to humble down just to bring the Gospel of love to others?

Do you recognize the effectivity of living out the message within your life before it is proclaimed in words?

FRIDAY

God's spirit will capacitate us to bring the Gospel of salvation to everyone.

Acts 2:17-18 ¹⁷ In the last days -- the Lord declares -- I shall pour out my Spirit on all humanity. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, your old people dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even on the slaves, men and women, shall I pour out my Spirit.

Do you see how important you are to the Lord our God in proclaiming his message of Love to others?

Have you realized that he loving you and he is concerned of you in recognizing that you are an important part of our Catholic Church?

SATURDAY

God's spirit will unite us in his love to be one people – one culture in the Catholic Church.

Acts 10:34-35 ³⁴ Then Peter addressed them, 'I now really understand', he said, 'that God has no favourites, ³⁵ but that anybody of any nationality who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

Do you see God's loving arms in embracing the whole humanity to be one as his family?

Have you realized that God's family is not complete without you?

SUNDAY

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 15

2nd Reading: James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27

Gospel: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

The Holy Spirit will help us together as a Family to read the signs of times.

August 24-30, 2015

General Theme: "The Process of Incarnation of the Verbum Dei Charism".

General Objective:

To read our current history of the Philippines in the light of the way the Church and the Verbum Dei worldwide are doing.



Objective of the week:

To know where we are coming from as a Verbum Dei Family and to learn to read signs of the times.