

INTRODUCTION

Jesus tells us that not all who profess to be HIS followers are true followers. True followers can be identified by their fruit. When you become fruitful disciples of Jesus, the Father will be honored. Also, if we obey Jesus, HE will keep loving you and will make you completely happy. *“Love one another as I have loved you and your joy may be complete.”* (cf. John 15)

This week we are invited to seek for the plan of God to develop in community. We are reminded of our *“Christian duty to be prophetic voices in the midst of our Communities.”* (Pope Francis) We need to pray always and take the fruits of our prayer into the world so that all may know the love of God.

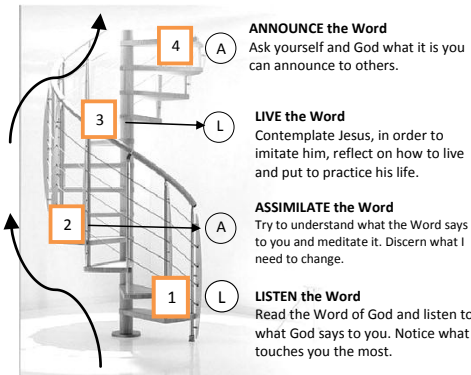
“The Kerygma has a clear social content: at the very heart of the Gospel is life in community and engagement with others. The content of the first proclamation has an immediate moral implication centered on charity.” (Evangelii Gaudium # 177)

Help us Jesus to renew the plan of God in our life as a community who is conscious of its ultimate purpose and that is to be with you in all eternity.

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

“... and He chose twelve”

¹⁴ and he appointed twelve; they were to be his companions and to be sent out to proclaim the message, (**Mark 3:14**)

He summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to drive them out and to cure all kinds of disease and all kinds of illness. (**Matthew 10:1**)

HE called those He wanted. These, in turn, will call others. Anyone can do apostolic work but nobody makes himself an apostle: one has to be called to his responsibility. Although, the harvest is plentiful, the laborers are few. Those who are called are to be people of prayer in order to persevere in mission work. Pope Francis said in Evangelii Gaudium 12 “In every activity of evangelization, the primacy always belongs to God, who has called us to cooperate with him and who leads us on by the power of His Spirit. The real newness is the newness which God himself mysteriously brings about and inspires, provokes, guides and

accompanies in a thousand ways.” As a VD disciple, are you serious with your mission in forming apostles?

TUESDAY

“Then the world will know that you sent me.”

²⁰ I pray not only for these but also for those who through their teaching will come to believe in me. ²¹ May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. ²² I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. ²³ With me in them and you in me, may they be so perfected in unity that the world will recognise that it was you who sent me and that you have loved them as you have loved me.

(**John 17:20-23**)

Jesus prayed that the faithful might be as one body under one head by their union with the Son and the Father through the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. Let us endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, praying that all believers may be more united in one mind, heart, and judgment. We hope that the world will be convinced of the truth and excellence of our Catholic faith, our communion with God and the saints. What have you done lately to manifest Jesus in your life?

WEDNESDAY

“Where two or three are gathered in my Name, there am I among them.”

(Ash Wednesday)

¹² Tell me. Suppose a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays; will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and

go in search of the stray? ¹³ In truth I tell you, if he finds it, it gives him more joy than do the ninety-nine that did not stray at all. ¹⁴ Similarly, it is never the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost. ¹⁵ If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. ¹⁶ If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you: whatever the misdemeanour, the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain the charge. ¹⁷ But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a gentile or a tax collector. ¹⁸ In truth I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ In truth I tell you once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them.'

(**Matthew 18:12-20**)

Generally people seek God in temples, or in the contemplation of nature, or in peace of soul. But God, want us to first seek His presence in the Christian community. HE is present when we gather to pray in the name of Jesus. He is present in the development of the community, in its crises, in its problems. Are you faithful in coming together as a community ----- the VD family through sow, revision of life disciples retreat, Easter encounter? Do you find time in praying with other disciples so as to encourage them and keep the fire burning within them? The prayer of the community --- of the Apostolic council,

Misioneros and Misioneras, the Christian couples, youth, teens, the working group, the Mamas, is necessary to arrive at a deep understanding among ourselves before we present our common desire to God.

THURSDAY

"Two are better than one."

⁹ Better two than one alone, since thus their work is really rewarding. ¹⁰ If one should fall, the other helps him up; but what of the person with no one to help him up when he falls? ¹¹ Again: if two sleep together they keep warm, but how can anyone keep warm alone? ¹² Where one alone would be overcome, two will put up resistance; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken. **(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)**

Someone said "Surely he has more satisfaction in life, who labors hard to maintain those he loves, that the miser has in his toil." The union of Christians will yield success and safety. As VD disciples, we need to encourage and warm each other's hearts, converse together of Christian fellowship. Where two or three are closely joined in holy love and fellowship, Jesus will come --- the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus, lead me to my ultimate purpose and will --- YOU.

FRIDAY

"Whoever remains in the will bear much fruit."

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. **(John 15:1-2)**

⁴ Remain in me, as I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, unless it remains part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. **(John 15:4-5)**

Each of us has to consider how he is joined with Jesus through faith, prayer, and keeping HIS Word. We are to bear fruit and these fruits come from the Holy Spirit. The success of the Church is not measured by its achievements but rather by the progress of those who interiorize Christ's mystery and share in his cross and resurrection. (In Evangelii Gaudium #24), Pope Francis says that "an evangelizing community is always concerned with fruit, because the Lord wants her to be faithful." Is Jesus pruning you lately so as to bear much fruit? The pruning process might be painful, but persevere for the fruits that you will bear will benefit and bless others.

SATURDAY

"Community: manifestation of the face of God"

(Memorial of St. Peter Damian)

¹² For as with the human body which is a unity although it has many parts -- all the parts of the body, though many, still making up one single body -- so it is with Christ... ¹⁴ And indeed the body consists not of one member but of many.

(1 Corinthians 12:12-14)

²² What is more, it is precisely the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest which are the indispensable ones. ²³ It is the parts of the body which we consider least dignified that we surround with the

greatest dignity; and our less presentable parts are given greater presentability ²⁴ which our presentable parts do not need. God has composed the body so that greater dignity is given to the parts which were without it, ²⁵ and so that there may not be disagreements inside the body but each part may be equally concerned for all the others. ²⁶ If one part is hurt, all the parts share its pain. And if one part is honoured, all the parts share its joy. ²⁷ Now Christ's body is yourselves, each of you with a part to play in the whole.

(1 Corinthians 12:22-27)

The Verbum Dei family is a community sharing the same concern --- to from apostles. "Differences between persons and communities can sometimes prove uncomfortable, but the Holy Spirit, who is the source of that diversity, can bring forth something good from all things and turn it into an attractive means of evangelization. Diversity must always be reconciled by the help of the Holy Spirit; he alone can rise up diversity, plurality and multiplicity while at the same time bringing about unity." (ED # 131) The unity of all in mind, heart, talent manifests the face and body of God. Ask God for the grace in order to endure in the work of the mission the grace in order to endure in the work of the mission and use the time, talent and treasure God has given you."

SUNDAY READINGS

1st Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: Genesis 9:8-15

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 25

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Community: manifestation of the face of God."

February 16-22, 2015

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To renew in the apostles the plan of God for their lives as a person, as a disciple, as a community, as a family VD and help them to enter in **God's vision**, in his dream of transcendence and hope in order to be open and available for His **plan**.



Objective of the week:

To renew and deepen why the plan of God is to develop in community.