

## INTRODUCTION

Last month, we have been praying on 'missionary zeal' in response to the priority of the Verbum Dei Family this year on missionary expansion. We were brought to listen to God the past month in front of the strong realities and situations of the world. Seeing these situations, there is a strong need to form others. In order to do this, we realize the need of hands to help.

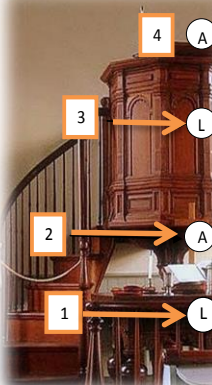
This month is a journey of getting close to Jesus in His Passion, Death and Resurrection. We will do this by entering deeply in the proposed talks that will be given during the Holy Week and Easter activities. In this way we can understand what is moving in the heart of Jesus.

This week is to get close to Jesus, like the disciples, in the Last Supper which we celebrate on Holy Thursday. In His mercy, he is the first one who approaches. He is the first to approach us and wash our feet. He comes to offer His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. Why all these? In order that we may understand the mystery of what we will celebrate this Holy Week. Let us willingly enter with the Lord and immerse ourselves in His immense mercy which we will experience in His Paschal Mystery. "Understand what I have done to you..." so that you may become the hands that can help in forming many

people to answer to the realities of the world.

"While he was instituting the Eucharist as an everlasting memorial of himself and his paschal sacrifice, he symbolically placed this supreme act of revelation in the light of his mercy. Within the very same context of mercy, Jesus entered upon his passion and death, conscious of the great mystery of love that he would consummate on the Cross" (*Misericordiae Vultus 7*).

**DYNAMISM OF THE WORD**



**4 A** ANNOUNCE the Word  
Ask yourself and God what it is you can announce to others.

**3 L** LIVE the Word  
Contemplate Jesus, in order to imitate him, reflect on how to live and put to practice his life.

**2 A** ASSIMILATE the Word  
Try to understand what the Word says to you and meditate it. Discern what I need to change.

**1 L** LISTEN the Word  
Read the Word of God and listen to what God says to you. Notice what touches you the most.

## MONDAY

**So strong is my faithful love for you**

**Psalm 103:8-14** <sup>8</sup> Yahweh is tenderness and pity, slow to anger and rich in faithful love; <sup>9</sup> his indignation does not last for ever, nor his resentment remain for all time; <sup>10</sup> he does not treat us as our sins deserve, nor repay us as befits our offences. <sup>11</sup> As the height of heaven above earth, so strong is his faithful love for those who fear him. <sup>12</sup> As the distance of east from west, so far from us does he put our faults. <sup>13</sup> As

tenderly as a father treats his children, so Yahweh treats those who fear him; <sup>14</sup> he knows of what we are made, he remembers that we are dust.

*As we continue this Lenten journey and go towards the Holy Week, we are invited to take part with Jesus in the Last Supper – in the outpouring of His mercy. Let us come with the awareness that God is love. His love is more stronger than death and whatever sin we may have. Do I believe that the mercy of God is more powerful than my sins, failures and problems?*

## TUESDAY

**Jesus is the first one who approaches us with love.**

**Jeremiah 31:3** <sup>3</sup> Yahweh has appeared to me from afar; I have loved you with an everlasting love and so I still maintain my faithful love for you.

**John 13:1** Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father, having loved those who were his in the world, loved them to the end.

*Jesus is loving in the Last Supper and in every Eucharist. He is the first one who approaches. Mercy is poured out for you. We are called to partake and participate in that same outpouring of His love. Are you willing this Lenten journey to partake in His supper? Let us immerse ourselves in this outpouring of love and understand what is in His heart.*

## WEDNESDAY

## I long to eat this Passover with you

**Luke 22:14-20** <sup>14</sup> When the time came he took his place at table, and the apostles with him. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, 'I have ardently longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; <sup>16</sup> because, I tell you, I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' <sup>17</sup> Then, taking a cup, he gave thanks and said, 'Take this and share it among you, <sup>18</sup> because from now on, I tell you, I shall never again drink wine until the kingdom of God comes.' <sup>19</sup> Then he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' <sup>20</sup> He did the same with the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood poured out for you.'

*"We are surrounded, covered, drugged by what the world offers... if we are living in the world eating what it offers, then we become intoxicated. That's why it's difficult to pray, think, meditate because we are very much and well fed by the world. We want to follow the Lord but we mix many things... We need to detoxify ourselves being nourished by another meal." (cf. Jaime Bonet in Familiares de Dios)*

*Jesus gives us the outpouring of His love in the Eucharist as our meal and nourishment. Let us receive what the Lord gives for our own spiritual health and of others. "Take this all of you and share it among you."*

## THURSDAY

**I became your servant to restore you to myself.**

**John 13:3-11** <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, <sup>4</sup> and he got up from table, removed his outer garments and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; <sup>5</sup> he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.' <sup>8</sup> 'Never!' said Peter. 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have no share with me.' Simon Peter said, <sup>9</sup> 'Well then, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!' <sup>10</sup> Jesus said, 'No one who has had a bath needs washing, such a person is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.' <sup>11</sup> He knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said, 'though not all of you are'.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made the sinless one a victim for sin, so that in him we might become the uprightness of God.

**Philippians 2:7** <sup>7</sup> But he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming as human beings are; and being in every way like a human being,

*"He became what we are so that he might make us what He is." (St. Athanasius) The maximum dream of Christ is that we become Him... But we are easily paralyzed by the opinions of*

*others. What will happen? What should I say? They will think of me as crazy... (Jaime Bonet in Familiares de Dios)*

*Jesus came to wash our feet to cleanse us and restore us to His friendship. Let us look and understand how much he loves us by emptying himself in order that we be filled.*

#### FRIDAY

**Understand what I have done to you.**

**John 13:12-17** <sup>12</sup> When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand', he said, 'what I have done to you?' <sup>13</sup> You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. <sup>14</sup> If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. <sup>15</sup> I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> 'In all truth I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> 'Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly.

*Every gesture of Jesus in the Last Supper is not only a gesture of love and service but every detail contains deeper meanings. Let us understand every gesture of love he gives and to ask constantly the grace to understand them. Do not stop by just enjoying the experience but to always go further in seeking to understand them. Faith seeks understanding.*

#### SATURDAY

**Do the same as I have loved you.**

**John 13:31-35** <sup>31</sup> When he had gone, Jesus said: Now has the Son of man been glorified, and in him God has been glorified. <sup>32</sup> If God has been glorified in him, God will in turn glorify him in himself, and will glorify him very soon. <sup>33</sup> Little children, I shall be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and, as I told the Jews, where I am going, you cannot come. <sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment: love one another; you must love one another just as I have loved you. <sup>35</sup> It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognise you as my disciples.

*Holy Thursday is often called Maundy Thursday. 'Maundy' which means 'mandatum' = 'command' referring to the new commandment that Jesus gave to His disciples during the Last Supper. The Last Supper was not only a meal, but is a call to the mission with this command of Jesus to love one another as He has loved us.*

#### SUNDAY

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Joshua 5:9-12

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 34

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

**Gospel:** Luke 15:1-32

# Verbum Dei

## GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

***"Understand what I have just done for you."* (cf. John 13)**

February 29- March 6, 2016

**General Theme:** "Mercy poured out for you."

**General Objective:**

- seeing the situations of the world, we need to form others. In order to do this, we need hands to help.
- to help us in the preparations of the Holy Week activities.
- to enter in the Spirit of the Easter Triduum celebrations.



**Objective of the week:**

To see how Jesus brought the disciples to experience his ways of mercy.