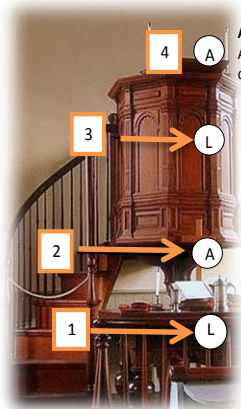


INTRODUCTION

As a missionary Church called to evangelize in the field of the world, we lose many times the missionary zeal in the midst of very strong realities. We need to nourish constantly ourselves from the true source of love and mercy. Our journey to God is in the world. We are in the world but we do not belong to the world. Where do we get our nourishment? Where do we get our food? Jesus made himself as food for missionaries. He made himself as the basic food that gives energy and strength for the journey and for the mission. He must be our normal daily nourishment.

This month has always been considered as the month of love. But the meaning of love has been distorted in the world. It is a clear reality that many people are so hungry and thirsty for love – for true love, but are drinking and eating in the wrong places. Let us look for the true source of love and fill ourselves from it. Let us ask the Lord to feed us with his love and mercy so that being fed by him, our missionary zeal will be restored and we may know how to feed others in the same way.

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



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

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

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

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

MONDAY

I am full of jealous zeal for you Lord.

1 Kings 19:4-10 ⁴ He himself went on into the desert, a day's journey, and sitting under a furze bush wished he were dead. 'Yahweh,' he said, 'I have had enough. Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.' ⁵ Then he lay down and went to sleep. Then all of a sudden an angel touched him and said, 'Get up and eat.' ⁶ He looked round, and there at his head was a scone baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. ⁷ But the angel of Yahweh came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, or the journey will be too long for you.' ⁸ So he got up and ate and drank, and strengthened by that food he walked for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, God's mountain. ⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of Yahweh came to him saying, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' ¹⁰ He replied, 'I am full of jealous zeal for Yahweh Sabaoth, because the Israelites have abandoned your covenant, have torn down your altars and put your prophets to the sword. I am the only one left, and now they want to kill me.'

God knows that the journey is too much for us. In order to restore and strengthen our missionary zeal, let us get up and be fed constantly.

TUESDAY

Come and eat.

John 21:9-13 ⁹ As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there and a charcoal fire with fish

cooking on it. ¹⁰ Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' ¹¹ Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore, full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them; and in spite of there being so many the net was not broken. ¹² Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples was bold enough to ask, 'Who are you?'. They knew quite well it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish.

From the heart of the Trinity, from the depths of the mystery of God, the great river of mercy wells up and overflows unceasingly. It is a spring that will never run dry, no matter how many people draw from it. Every time someone is in need, he or she can approach it, because the mercy of God never ends. The profundity of the mystery surrounding it is as inexhaustible as the richness which springs up from it.

(Misericordiae Vultus 25)

As in the Eucharist, we can experience the hospitality of Jesus who already prepared everything for us. He made himself as the food and strength for the journey. Let us learn to be fed and to draw strength from the true love, source of mercy and missionary zeal. Do you know where and how to get true nourishment and strength?

WEDNESDAY

Your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.
(Ash Wednesday)

Matthew 6:1-18 'Be careful not to parade your uprightness in public to attract attention; otherwise you will lose

all reward from your Father in heaven. ² So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win human admiration. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. ³ But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; ⁴ your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. ⁵ 'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. ⁶ But when you pray, go to your private room, shut yourself in, and so pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you. ⁷ 'In your prayers do not babble as the gentiles do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard. ⁸ Do not be like them; your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ So you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be held holy, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us. ¹³ And do not put us to the test, but save us from the Evil One. ¹⁴ 'Yes, if you forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours; ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive your failings either. ¹⁶ 'When you are fasting, do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they go about looking unsightly to let people know they are fasting. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put scent on your

head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.

We are longing for friendship in this journey and this is what one can get when he draws and be nourished constantly by the source of mercy. The experience of drawing is an experience of growing friendship and intimacy with God in secret. As Jaime Bonet says, "They are my faithful friends, inseparable companions..." referring to the Holy Trinity.

THURSDAY

Everything in Him speaks of mercy

8. With our eyes fixed on Jesus and his merciful gaze, we experience the love of the Most Holy Trinity. The mission Jesus received from the Father was that of revealing the mystery of divine love in its fullness. "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8,16), John affirms for the first and only time in all of Holy Scripture. This love has now been made visible and tangible in Jesus' entire life. His person is nothing but love, a love given gratuitously. The relationships he forms with the people who approach him manifest something entirely unique and unrepeatable. The signs he works, especially in favour of sinners, the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering, are all meant to teach mercy. Everything in him speaks of mercy. Nothing in him is devoid of compassion.

Jesus is the source of missionary zeal and mercy. He is the true source of love we need to be with and look up to in our life. The whole of his life and being is the revelation of God's love and mercy.

FRIDAY

Come along: everything is ready now

Luke 14:15-24 ¹⁵ On hearing this, one of those gathered round the table said to him, 'Blessed is anyone who will share the meal in the kingdom of God!' ¹⁶ But he said to him, 'There was a man who gave a great banquet, and he invited a large number of people. ¹⁷ When the time for the banquet came, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, "Come along: everything is ready now." ¹⁸ But all alike started to make excuses. The first said, "I have bought a piece of land and must go and see it. Please accept my apologies." ¹⁹ Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen and am on my way to try them out. Please accept my apologies." ²⁰ Yet another said, "I have just got married and so am unable to come." ²¹ 'The servant returned and reported this to his master. Then the householder, in a rage, said to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame." ²² "Sir," said the servant, "your orders have been carried out and there is still room." ²³ Then the master said to his servant, "Go to the open roads and the hedgerows and press people to come in, to make sure my house is full; ²⁴ because, I tell you, not one of those who were invited shall have a taste of my banquet."'

Everything is ready and everything has been offered freely. The problem comes from us. The Word of God, the food has been given and given constantly. But we have many excuses. Our excuses many times prevent us to be nourished and that's why we fall easily

along the way because we are weak and don't have the strength even to stand up in life.

SATURDAY

He feeds us in order that we can feed others

John 21:15-17 ¹⁵ When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' ¹⁶ A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He replied, 'Yes, Lord, you know I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Look after my sheep.' ¹⁷ Then he said to him a third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt that he asked him a third time, 'Do you love me?' and said, 'Lord, you know everything; you know I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'

The reason for this invitation to be constantly fed by Jesus is precisely in order that we may learn how to feed the people. The experience of love is not just for my own benefit and growth, but always towards loving others. "He comes to assist us in our weakness. And his help consists in helping us accept his presence and closeness to us. Day after day, touched by his compassion, we also can become compassionate towards others." (Misericordiae Vultus 14)

SUNDAY

1st Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 91:1-15
2nd Reading: Romans 10:8-13
Gospel: Luke 4:1-13

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Come and draw yourself from the source of true love."

February 8-14, 2016

General Theme: "I am eaten up with missionary zeal for your house (cf. John 2:17)"

General Objective:

- To awaken ourselves to the realities we see in the world today.
- To listen and to know what the Lord has to say in these realities.



Objective of the week:

To nourish ourselves from the true source of inexhaustible mercy as a pilgrim Church in mission.