

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him...

(Misericordae Vultus #1)

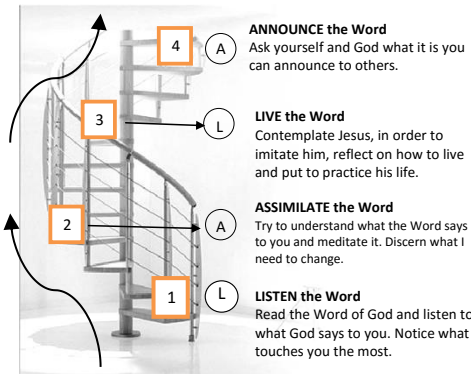
A Blessed New Year to all! It has been a year filled with many experiences. The Church invites us this year to enter in a deeper experience of the mercy of God as she opens the liturgical year as the Year of Mercy. With this same Spirit, we will pray and live this year following this invitation and call in our daily guidelines of prayer.

Our theme for this month will be from the Gospel of Luke – "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." The only way to do this is to look at Jesus and to learn from Him because we believe that he is the face of the Father's mercy. Jesus revealed himself to everyone and to the world as the face of the Father who is full of mercy and compassion. Mercy has become living and visible in Him. We have been experiencing this during the Christmas season in the mystery of the Incarnation.

But more than just looking at him as spectators, we look at him because we are touched deeply by His mercy. And because of this, we

enter freely and voluntarily in the school of mercy in order to learn and be transformed into Him who is constantly revealing mercy to the world. May our presence reveal the same mercy of the Father through our lives this year.

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

Jesus reveals himself as the face of the Father's mercy

Matthew 2:1-12 When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: ⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least

among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" ⁷ Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." ⁹ After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ They were overjoyed at seeing the star, ¹¹ and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

Celebrating yesterday the solemnity of the Epiphany of our Lord, we remember how he revealed his salvation of mercy to the world represented in the Magi. Christ has made known himself to the world as the face of the Father's mercy. Let us contemplate on how in his littleness showed the merciful heart of God to the world.

TUESDAY

Jesus revealed the glory of his mercy making the disciples believe in him.

John 2:1-11 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. ³ When the

wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴ (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." ⁶ Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. ⁸ Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. ⁹ And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." ¹¹ Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

At the wedding of Cana Jesus was concerned of the joy of the couple. The same is true to all of us. Jesus is always concerned for our life's joy and happiness. Let us allow him to perform miracles in our life this year through his mercy.

WEDNESDAY

Fix your eyes on Jesus and be touched by God's mercy

Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us

and persevere in running the race that lies before us ² while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith. For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God.

We fix our eyes on Jesus because we are touched by his mercy. His mercy moves us forward and is the strength beyond the struggles that our crosses bring us. Help us Lord to be more touched by your mercy.

THURSDAY

The synthesis of Biblical revelation has been proposed and lived by Jesus of Nazareth our Master

John 13:12-15 ¹² So when he had washed their feet (and) put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? ¹³ You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. ¹⁴ If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

...The Father, "rich in mercy" (*Eph* 2:4), after having revealed his name to Moses as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (*Ex* 34:6), has never ceased to show, in various ways throughout history, his divine nature. In the "fullness of time" (*Gal* 4:4),

when everything had been arranged according to his plan of salvation, he sent his only Son into the world, born of the Virgin Mary, to reveal his love for us in a definitive way...

(Misericordae Vultus #1)

God has been revealing his face as the face of mercy throughout history. Jesus lived as the mercy of God and proposed to us the way of living our lives in the mercy of God. Let us follow this way of life that Jesus has already opened for us.

FRIDAY

Enter freely and voluntarily in the school of mercy.

Ephesians 2:4-7 ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Exodus 34:6 ⁶ Thus the LORD passed before him and cried out, "The LORD, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity,

To become disciples of Jesus requires us to enter freely and voluntarily in the school of mercy. In this school, we come to contact with the Father who is "rich in mercy". Let us live this year like

students ready and willing to learn the mercy of the Father.

SATURDAY

Contemplation of the Father's mercy transforms us to Jesus.

John 14:9-11 ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves.

...Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.

(Misericordae Vultus #1)

Jesus completely is identified with the Father. They are one. "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." With Jesus, let us also be more identified with Him so that wherever we are, whatever we do, our lives will also reveal the mercy of God.

SUNDAY

Baptism of the Lord

1st Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 29

2nd Reading: Acts 10:34-38

Gospel: Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy"

January 4-10, 2016

General Theme: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. (cf. Luke 6:36)"

General Objective:

- to unite the prayer of the VD Family with same spirit of the whole Church in this extraordinary year of mercy
- to be aware of the graces this year on what mercy brings to us in our journey of faith.



Objective of the week:

To look at Jesus at the start of this year, as the face of the Father's mercy.