

## INTRODUCTION

In the coming months before the National Family Encounter this year, we will enter on its theme from St. Paul's letter to the Galatians "...Until Christ is formed in you." As preparation for the main event, we will pray on the topics proposed to us during the encounter.

This week, we will start by looking once again at Jesus and experience his deep love and concern as he accompanied the disciples. Jesus is fully human and he has deep love and concern for the needs of the people around him especially the disciples. He was sensitive to their human and as well their spiritual needs because he is a person in touch with all the dimensions of life.

In some of the readings during the week we see him inviting the disciples to be with him and experience the rest they need. He reveals to us that God is a welcoming God by how he welcomed everyone. With his kindness and acceptance, we are called to accept and be who were and as we are in front of Him. "Come to me as you are." Simply to be with God, and to stay with the one who loves me and knows me very well. His constant invitation of acceptance and welcome is a process of softening our hearts towards Him as we are. This is the experience of the power of his tenderness.

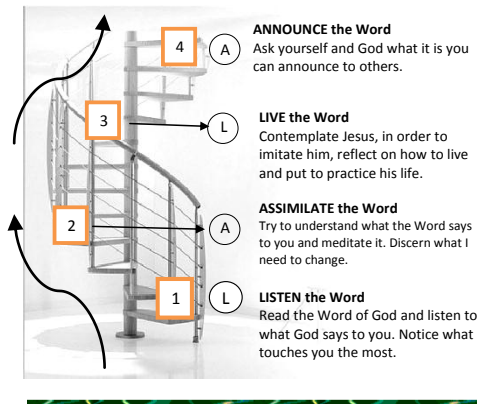
Jesus does this because he wants to draw out from us the true goodness, the true image that we were created from the very beginning.

Let us ask God the grace to be able to constantly allow him to love us until Christ is formed in us.

## 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

### Come away with me

**Mark 6:30-34** <sup>30</sup> The apostles rejoined Jesus and told him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> And he said to them, 'Come away to some lonely place all by yourselves and rest for a while'; for there were so many coming and going that there was no time for them even to eat. <sup>32</sup> So they went off in the boat to a lonely place where they could be by themselves. <sup>33</sup> But people saw them going, and many recognised them; and from every town they all hurried to the place on foot and reached it before them. <sup>34</sup> So as he stepped ashore he saw a large

crowd; and he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length.

*Jesus knew the need for rest in his disciples after a hard work in the mission and he responded to their need. Jesus looked with love and concern at them and the crowds. These are the eyes of a friend. What came out from Him after seeing the situation before Him? Here we can learn and enter in what fills his heart.*



## TUESDAY

### Come to me as you are

**Matthew 11:28-30** <sup>28</sup> 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

**Matthew 6:5-6** <sup>5</sup> '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. <sup>6</sup> 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.

*Being with Jesus is an experience of rest because I am as I am in front of him. This is his constant invitation, to taste and experience his gentleness and humble of heart. Help us Lord to be who we are whenever we are with you by being in touch with the private, deepest, most secret place of our hearts.*

## WEDNESDAY

### Our God is a welcoming God

**Luke 10:38-42** <sup>38</sup> In the course of their journey he came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. <sup>40</sup> Now Martha, who was distracted with all the serving, came to him and said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me.' <sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered, 'Martha, Martha,' he said, 'you worry and fret about so many things, <sup>42</sup> and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part, and it is not to be taken from her.'

**Revelation 3:20** <sup>20</sup> Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share a meal at that person's side.

God is a welcoming God always and he is willing to be with us constantly knocking at our doors. Let us learn to welcome him gladly so that he can share with us his love and concern with the closeness of friends.

#### THURSDAY

##### Learning to accept

**John 13:6-15** <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'. <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.

*Jesus wants to give us everything we need and is so willing to accept and teach us many things. The challenge is our willingness to accept him and his ways. There are so many things in us that still we cannot accept. Only Jesus*

*through the way he comes to us, will bring transformation in the way we see ourselves and others. Let us pray for acceptance of ourselves by accepting Jesus to be with us.*

#### FRIDAY

##### Drawing out Christ in us

**Galatians 4:19-20** <sup>19</sup> My children, I am going through the pain of giving birth to you all over again, until Christ is formed in you; <sup>20</sup> and how I wish I could be there with you at this moment and find the right way of talking to you: I am quite at a loss with you.

**Jeremiah 18:1-6** The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh as follows, <sup>2</sup> 'Get up and make your way down to the potter's house, and there I shall tell you what I have to say.' <sup>3</sup> So I went down to the potter's house; and there he was, working at the wheel. <sup>4</sup> But the vessel he was making came out wrong, as may happen with clay when a potter is at work. So he began again and shaped it into another vessel, as he thought fit. <sup>5</sup> Then the word of Yahweh came to me as follows, <sup>6</sup> 'House of Israel, can I not do to you what this potter does? Yahweh demands. Yes, like clay in the potter's hand, so you are in mine, House of Israel.'

*Jesus showed tenderness and compassion because he wanted to draw out from us the deepest yearning and capacity of love we have. We were created good, naturally good. This is who we are and Jesus wanted to draw these from us. Let us allow God to draw out from us our being Christ so that many might know him fully.*

#### SATURDAY

##### The power of tenderness

**Evangelii Gaudium 288** Whenever we look to Mary, we come to believe once again in the revolutionary nature of love and tenderness. In her we see that humility and tenderness are not virtues of the weak but of the strong who need not treat others poorly in order to feel important themselves.

**Evangelii Gaudium 169.** ...In our world, ordained ministers and other pastoral workers can make present the fragrance of Christ's closeness and his personal gaze. The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this "art of accompaniment" which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3:5). The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life.

*As apostles following Jesus and learning from Him, let us take on the revolutionary power of love and tenderness especially in our accompanying others towards him. Let us learn how to kneel down before the sacred ground of the life of every person and enter in the art of accompaniment.*

#### SUNDAY READINGS

##### 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 78  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** Ephesians 4:17, 20-24  
**Gospel:** John 6:24-35

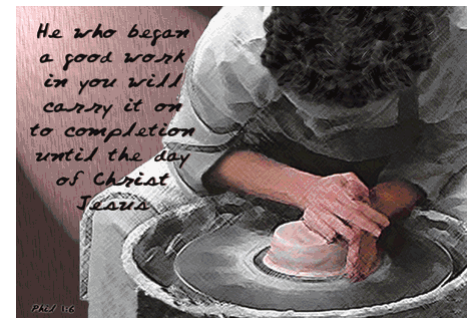
# Verbum Dei

## GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

**"...Until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19b)**

July 27- August 2, 2015

**General Theme:** "...until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19b)  
**General Objective:**  
To spiritually accompany the Verbum Dei Family, promoting the growth, maturity and fruitfulness of its members.



##### Objective of the week:

To enter and experience the deep love and concern of Jesus towards the people around him especially the ones who were closest companions.