

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we were contemplating on the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. His great love to the Father was shown not only in words but also concretized in actions through preaching, healing and forgiving even to the point of suffering and death. Jesus' daily manifestations are reflections of the mercy of the Father that gives us the image of a God who is merciful and compassionate. We too are invited to imitate Jesus to do the will of the Father. We all know how the world is in need of someone like Jesus who is willing to help our brothers and sisters to understand and to accept their real life situation so that they may be able to appreciate their life once again and learn to live life with purpose and direction.

This week, we shall not only live as the bridge of God's mercy but to be an instrument to pour out His mercy to those who really need our love and care. Let us share and announce to them the overflowing love of God for He is our Father and we are all His children – our Christian identity. The purpose of Jesus' passion and death is for the redemption of the beloved children of God.

Let us share to others the fruits of our Easter Encounter experience and let them feel the burning flame of God's love. Let us tell them that Jesus is alive and is among us for all eternity; He does not leave us alone. We are an Easter people! We are living in the time of the resurrection and that means we are like the disciples, who were on fire to make known to the people how much they are loved! That is the mercy God pouring out to His world. Through concrete communities where we see lives working together to make His mercy alive in

the midst of the many realities of today, His mercy will be alive if we work together.

EASTER MONDAY

Beloved Children of God

Luke 24:1-12 On the first day of the week, at the first sign of dawn, they went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. ² They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, ³ but on entering they could not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ As they stood there puzzled about this, two men in brilliant clothes suddenly appeared at their side. ⁵ Terrified, the women bowed their heads to the ground. But the two said to them, 'Why look among the dead for someone who is alive?' ⁶ He is not here; he has risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee: ⁷ that the Son of man was destined to be handed over into the power of sinful men and be crucified, and rise again on the third day.' ⁸ And they remembered his words. ⁹ And they returned from the tomb and told all this to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰ The women were Mary of Magdala, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. And the other women with them also told the apostles, ¹¹ but this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them. ¹² Peter, however, went off to the tomb, running. He bent down and looked in and saw the linen cloths but nothing else; he then went back home, amazed at what had happened.

We have received Christ in our hearts. To keep Christ alive, we must announce to everyone that all of us are beloved children of God. Before we were born, we are already in His heart and because of that, He allowed himself to suffer

and die on the cross to win life. Jesus' death is the ultimate image of God's love. It is an act of giving Himself completely to us and through it He is spreading the victory of new life. Let us not hesitate to come closer to Him and invite others to return to Him because He is waiting to embrace us again.

Are you willing to sacrifice yourself for Christ? How do you show it?

EASTER TUESDAY

Proclaim God's Greatness

Psalms 116:12-19 ¹² What return can I make to Yahweh for his generosity to me?

Matthew 18:20 ²⁰ For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them.'

The Lord has done wonderful things for us. It is an invitation for us to do some acts of gratitude for His dear love to us. As we receive the risen Christ, let us all go out and proclaim the goodness of the Lord. Let us tell them about His abundant love and that He is waiting for the return of those who are lost. As VD disciples, we must hold on to our four pillars: prayer, fraternal love, cross and mission to keep us live a risen life with Christ because these are tools to keep us in touch with Jesus and encourage us to continue to live our faith daily.

How is your discipleship? Do you still practice the four pillars of VD?

EASTER WEDNESDAY

Be Christ

Matthew 25:31-45 ³¹ When the Son of man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. ³² All nations will be assembled before him and he will

separate people one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. ³³ He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome, ³⁶ lacking clothes and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." ³⁷ Then the upright will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome, lacking clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we find you sick or in prison and go to see you?" ⁴⁰ And the King will answer, "In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

We, the children of God must work together considering that heaven is our desire to live in union with our risen Lord. But how can we attain heaven if we don't participate in the mystery of God's love? It is the time to live out our identity to be Christ. Let us open our hearts and mind to the different realities of this world. Do we just close our eyes to the unlovable and the unwanted? If we look at them closely, they are the thirsty people who are waiting to quench their thirst with the living water of Christ. They are the spiritually hungry people who are waiting to be fed with the word of God. Now is the time to pour out God's mercy to them. These people are instruments to make our faith alive and active and persevere until the end.

How do you participate in the mystery of God's love? Did you welcome Christ in your heart?

EASTER THURSDAY

Bear Much Fruit

Exodus 3:10 ¹⁰ So now I am sending you to Pharaoh, for you to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.'

Mark 1:38-39 ³⁸ He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can proclaim the message there too, because that is why I came.' ³⁹ And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out devils.

In as much as the Lord extended His arms on the cross for us, let us also extend our hands to our brothers and sisters to help them be freed from the clutches of sin, the craving for pleasure and power. Let us teach them how to pray fervently and live out their prayer and to put aside sin. Let us teach them to be like Christ and live their identity as children of God

How do you show your identity as a child of God?

EASTER FRIDAY

Love One Another

(Misericordiae Vultus 15) It is my burning desire that, during this Jubilee, the Christian people may reflect on the *corporal and spiritual works of mercy*. It will be a way to reawaken our conscience, too often grown dull in the face of poverty. And let us enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy. Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we

can know whether or not we are living as his disciples. Let us rediscover these *corporal works of mercy*: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the *spiritual works of mercy*: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead.

(Evangelii Gaudium 20) In our day Jesus' command to "go and make disciples" echoes in the changing scenarios and ever new challenges to the Church's mission of evangelization, and all of us are called to take part in this new missionary "going forth". Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel.

God's will for us is so simple and beautiful. He desires us to love Him with our whole heart and that we must love each other from the bottom of our hearts. We must radiate the risen Christ through our joyful attitudes at home, workplace and community as we do our daily tasks; for these are our fields of mission.

How can you radiate the love of Christ to others?

EASTER SATURDAY

Mercy in Action

(Evangelii Gaudium 22) God's word is unpredictable in its power. The Gospel speaks of a seed which, once sown, grows by itself, even as the farmer sleeps (*Mk*

4:26-29). The Church has to accept this unruly freedom of the word, which accomplishes what it wills in ways that surpass our calculations and ways of thinking.

(Misericordiae Vultus 18) I intend to send out Missionaries of Mercy. They will be a sign of the Church's maternal solicitude for the People of God, enabling them to enter the profound richness of this mystery so fundamental to the faith...

Let us make ourselves instruments of God's mercy. Let us become the hands, feet, mouth and heart of Jesus. Let us transmit the mercy and compassion of God through the mission and the way we live so that others too may feel, live and proclaim God's goodness.

In what way would you become a tool of God's mercy?

EASTER SUNDAY

2nd Sunday of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 5:12-16

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 118

2nd Reading: Revelations 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

Gospel: John 20:19-31



Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"Pour out His mercy."

March 28- April 3, 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 share and pour out the fruits of the Easter experiences.