

## INTRODUCTION

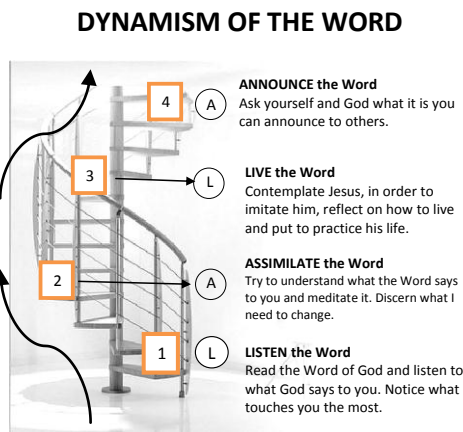
We were invited last week to increase our creativity in looking for a place for the Lord to come. The feast of Christ the King celebrated yesterday marks the end of the Liturgical year and the start of another Liturgical year. It welcomes advent wherein we are waiting in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Lord is near --- have no anxiety at all. St. Paul once wrote to the community in Greece "Always be courageous." Many times we are held captive by fears, in small concerns and worries. In the moments of difficulties and trials, when it seems that the weight of the world is on us, we should know that "our liberation is close at hand." We need to help each other to be watchful. The call to stay awake is a call to prayer. Knowing scriptures is not enough. The WORD needs to be put into practice. Each servant is called to be faithful to his work --- co-responsible partners of God's mission.

Let us be vigilant as we wait for the coming of our liberator. Let us heed to the invitation of Jesus to prepare a place for him in the hearts of others. Announce HIS coming with the words of Cardinal Newman:

*"They watch for Christ who are sensitive, eager, apprehensive in mind. Who are awake, alive, quick-sighted, zealous in honoring him, Who look for him in all that happens, And who would not be surprised, Who would not be over-agitated or overwhelmed, If they found that he was coming at once This then is to watch: to be detached from what is present, And to live in what is unseen; To live in thought of Christ as he came once, And as he will come again, to*

*desire his second coming, From our affectionate and grateful remembrance of his first."*



## MONDAY

### Be generous in giving to the Lord

"When Jesus looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasury and he noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood." **(Luke 21:1-4)**

*The worth of an offering is in terms of the amount of self-giving involved. The widow gave out of the fullness of her heart, an act likened to as the gift of her life. Fr. George R. Szewcs writes, "Those of us blessed with so much in this world will always have our generosity critiqued by the generosity of the poor." Do you have the courage or the faith to give it all away, every small coin you have to live*

*on? Do you have an offering today for the work in the mission? Do you always bear in mind that Jesus will judge our lives by the quality of our love?*

## TUESDAY

### Take care not to be deceived

"While some people were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings, Jesus said, 'All you see here --- the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down.' Then they asked him, Teacher, when will this happen? And what sign will there be when all these things are about to happen?' He answered. 'See that you not be deceived, for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he', and 'The time has come.' Do not follow them! When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for such things must happen first, but it will not immediately be the end. Then he said to them. 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, families, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky.'" **(Luke 21:5-11)**

*In these hard times we need to consider the concept of finality and responsibility. We need to seek to become responsible rather than immature, givers rather than takers, generous rather than addicted to self-interest. We are challenged to live the present moment in faith and fidelity. "Discipleship comes from responding to the call of Christ. The strength and power to meet its demands rests squarely on Jesus who invites the response." (Tom*

*Shanahan, SJ) How are you helping in the mission so that others will not to be deceived? Are you introducing Jesus into the hearts of others?*

## WEDNESDAY

### Persevere and you will triumph

"Jesus said to his disciples. Before the end happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogue and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony. Remember, you are not to prepare your defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends and they will put some of you to death. You will even be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives." **(Luke 21: 12-19)**

*Every day we are usually presented with many opportunities to practice endurance in our daily and ordinary circumstances ---- undertakings that don't go as we had planned, unexpected schedule changes, the bad manners of others, traffic jams, too many tasks, sickness, loss of a job, financial difficulties. Jesus said that those who are persecuted are blessed: "Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven." (Mt 5:11-12) Seek for God's grace today in order to persevere and endure in your endeavors for the mission.*

Likewise, how do you influence or encourage others?

## THURSDAY

### Your deliverance is near

Jesus said to his disciples, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, know that its desolation is at hand. Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. Let those within the city escape from it, and let those in the countryside not enter the city, for those days are the time of punishment when all the scriptures are fulfilled. Woe to pregnant women and nursing mothers in those days for a terrible calamity will come upon the earth and a wrathful judgment upon this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be taken as captives to all the Gentiles; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And where they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand." **(Luke 21: 20-28)**

*Cosmic signs as well as the signs of the times will cause anxiety and fear in the hearts of people. But to those who suffered for their faith know that Jesus is victorious over the forces of evil, whether these are wars or the roaring of the sea. The faithful disciples will stand erect with*

*heads held high to greet their faithful judge and all will know who is God. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). How do you share this to others so that they too may held their heads high in joyful expectation of the coming of the Son of Man? Do you value your missionary identity as such that you find ways to let others be aware of Jesus' coming which is about judgment and reward?*

## FRIDAY

### Learn the lesson of the fig tree

Jesus taught his disciples a lesson. "Consider the fig tree and all the other trees. When their buds open, you see for yourselves and know that summer is now near; in the same way, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." **(Luke 21: 29-33)**

*A fig tree, like most trees in winter, looks dead, but is in fact bursting with new life ready to explode in spring. The same is true of our personal selves and of the church. Jesus is telling us that our time for conversion is precious and that we must be discerning. As Verbum Dei disciples, we are aware that there will be an autumn and winter of hardships, persecutions, and trials. We will sow the kingdom in tears. But just as the fig tree comes to life in spring and summer, we will be delivered from our enemies. Hopefully, we will reap with shouts of joy what we have sown. Today, share to others parables of life teaching lessons on perseverance and hope.*

## SATURDAY

### Be on your guard

Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."

**(Luke 21:34-36)**

*Jesus warns us, "Do not get caught up in the day to day cares of living in the world." Passing pleasures can make one lose sight of God's Kingdom. Likewise, worries and anxieties may lead one to doubt the Lord's providence and love. We live in God's time too and we must pray to stay attentive to God's day and presence. Jesus comes in the poor and the crucified daily. Are we ready to stand secure before the Son of Man? Today, how do you live out the VD creative fidelity in the missionary expansion?*

## SUNDAY READINGS

### 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Isaiah 63: 16b-17, 19b; 64: 2-7

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 80

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

**Gospel:** Mark 13: 33-37



# Verbum Dei

## GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

**"Stay awake, that you may be prepared."**

**(Matthew 24:37-44)**

November 24-30, 2014

### **Theme for the month:**

Our Missionary intentionality in our missionary expansion

### **General objective:**

To experience the trust of God who considers us as faithful servants in whom he can trust his vineyard. We are co-responsible partners of God's Mission.

To live out our creative fidelity in the charism by being pro-active in the missionary expansion.



### **Objective of the week:**

To hear the invitation of the Lord to prepare a place for him in the hearts of others

To value more our missionary identity in announcing for his coming.