

INTRODUCTION

God will look at how we have tried to be faithful in our faith, in our relationships, in our efforts to change or affect change in others and how we have tried our best to do His will. To be with Jesus is to learn and draw strength from Him. We need to share the Gospel and live according to the Word. And the challenge is to be fish for the people as such that we offer ourselves to people who need us. To be fish for the hungry, to be peace for the troubled, to be joy for the lonely, to be strength for weak, to be voice for the poor.

With this, we need to fix our eyes on Jesus in order to persevere in our following. To *“devote ourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” (Colossians 4:2)* As Pope Francis said in *Evangelii Gaudium 151* “.. if (a preacher) does not take time to hear God’s word with an open heart, if he does not allow it to touch his life, to challenge him, to impel him, and if he does not devote time to pray with that word, then he will indeed be a false prophet, a found, a shallow impostor ... by acknowledging his poverty and desiring to grow in his commitment, he will always be able to abandon himself to Christ.” Likewise, a continuous formation is essential. *“The Formation involves every moment of one’s life in its different stages and situations, implying that the formation needs to be progressive, integral and diversifies according to the circumstances or contexts in which each member or reality of life of the VDMFa find themselves.” (Statutes of the VDMFa #67)*

Through our thoughts, words and deeds, let us focus on Jesus’ life and teachings to become a credible witness of the Good News.

MONDAY

Offer up prayers and petitions with loud cries

“⁷ During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.”

**(Hebrews 5: 7-9)*

“Prayers attune us for converse with God and, through long practice, leads us to friendship with Him; with Him whose love accepts even worthless men and is not ashamed to enter into friendship with them, so long as the love that lives in them gives them daring.”

(St. Nilus of Sinai)

“The daily prayers of the faithful make satisfaction for those daily, tiny, light faults from which this life cannot be free.” *(St. Augustine of Hippo)*

Faithful prayer is essential in our work in the mission. We must pray without tiring because salvation depends on Jesus alone. Pray for your family, for people who hold important roles in society and in the church. A saint once said, “Pray as if everything depends on you, work as if everything depends on God.”

TUESDAY

Keep the Lord’s command

“¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of

our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.”

(1 Timothy 6: 14-16)

“Lord, shed upon our darkened souls the brilliant light of your wisdom so that we may be enlightened and serve you with renewed purity. Sunrise marks the hour for men to begin their toil, but in our souls, Lord, prepare a dwelling for the day that will never end. Through our unremitting zeal for you, Lord, set upon us the sign of your day that is not measured by the sun.” (St. Ephraem) Do you readily witness to our faith when an opportunity arises? What can you do to make the face of Christ be seen and HIS voice be heard?

WEDNESDAY

He humbled himself and became obedient to death

“⁶ who, though he was in ^athe form of God, did not count equality with God ⁷ a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a ¹servant, ² being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

(Philippians 2: 6-11)

The humiliation and obedience of Christ were the conditions for the receiving of His glory. Likewise, it is so with us if we are true disciple of Christ. For the Bible says, that “A student is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master.” Witnessing to the Gospel, we may be received, ignored, or ridiculed. Still, faith is something that must be shared and it grows stronger the more it is shared. In doing so, seek to be humble otherwise you will stumble.

THURSDAY

They are like children sitting...

“³¹ Jesus went on to say, “To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other:

“We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not cry.”

³³ For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’³⁵ But wisdom is proved right by all her children.”

(Luke 7: 31-35)

We need to value the experience our Church fathers have gained over the years. For every generation faces different problems and no generation can be totally free from the prejudices and limitations of the culture of the time.

Jesus came after John and he was superior to him, although he needed John. Every effort to evangelize will remain superficial and so will conversions, if the ground has not been prepared by movements which stir up concern for more justice in the world and inspire self-sacrifice. Do you know your proper role in God's salvific plan? In what ways are you collaborating with Jesus in his continued work of God's Kingdom on Earth?

FRIDAY

Devote yourself to preaching

¹² Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶ Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

(1 Timothy 4: 12-16)

Joyfully proclaim the goodness of the Lord. "Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise in the assembly of the faithful" (Psalm 149: 1) "What the world is in particular need of today is credible witness of people enlightened in mind, in heart, by the word of the Lord" (Porta Fidei, n. 21) What are the gifts the Holy Spirit has empowered you with? Are you exercising them appropriately?

SATURDAY

Fight the Good Fight

"² Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves. These are the things you are to teach and insist on. ³ If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when

you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."
(1 Timothy 6: 2-12)

"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) Someone said, "If we act prudently, using this world's goods with one eye on the poor and the other on God's kingdom, we will prove ourselves worthy disciples of Jesus hear and hereafter." Thus we need to focus on the eternal life to which we are called. St Elizabeth Ann Seton says this in line with the work of a disciple, "The first end I propose in our daily work is to do the will of God; secondly, to do it in the manner He wills it; and, thirdly, to do it because it is His will." Accustom yourself continually to do acts of godliness, love, and faith.

SUNDAY

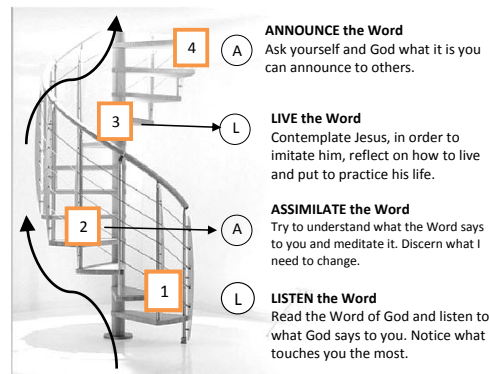
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Wisdom 2: 12, 17-20

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 54

2nd Reading: James 3: 16-4: 3

Gospel: Mark 9: 30-37



Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

What does the Lord expect from you as disciples?

September 14-20, 2015

General Theme: "The goal of our life is to be Christ."

General Objective: To give emphasis on the process and formative way of becoming apostles in order that the disciples are made aware of where they are and what the Lord expects of each of them.



Objective of the week:

To know Jesus more as the one we are followed as disciples.