**Guidelines for Prayer**

 Fulfill the Good Work You Have Begun

(cf. Phil 1:26)

Week IV

(Feb. 24-March 1, 2020)

**General Theme**: Heirs of a Charism, Open to the Dynamism of the Spirit

**General Objective of this Year**:

To promote in the entire Verbum Dei Family a missionary, prophetic, itinerant and expansive spirit by looking at the signs of times so that we can joyfully form apostles and evangelizing communities.

To deepen into the roots of our charism and legacy received from our founder, Jaime Bonet, so that we renew our missionary consecration and we transmit it with creative fidelity to the new generations.

**Specific Objective** **for the month**:

To go deeper in the understanding of our Charism.

 To be faithful to how our founder, Fr. Jaime understood this Charism

**INTRODUCTION**

“*Lord, continue to fulfill the good work you have started with us*”. Let this be our constant petition to God. Verbum Dei is now in the new stage as our founder is no longer physically present with us. Who guarantees now the charism? Who is responsible for the unity and continuity of the Verbum Dei Missionary Family? An organization must not end after the death of a leader. Who are the successors of Fr. Jaime Bonet? The Lord gave Fr. Jaime the gift of a shepherd who will lead and protect the flock. This gift is now handed over to us. As members of the VDMFa, we are the successors of our founder. We are now the responsibles to fulfill the good work that Fr. Jaime had begun. How? For what?

It is a challenge for each one of us Verbum Dei disciples on how faithful are we to the charism we have received and not to deviate it. Let us fix our eyes in the faithfulness of Jesus to the life of our founder. In the same way, let us also look at our founder on how he responded to the faithfulness of Jesus in his life. Jesus is now reminding us when he said:

*“Remain united to me and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way, you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.” Jn 15:4*

Our faithfulness in the charism will depend on how close we are to the real source of faithfulness and that is Jesus. As disciples, we are always reminded about our prayer life. How close are we to Jesus through His words? Jesus is also praying for us in Jn 17:17 that says: “Dedicate them to yourself by means of the truth; your word is truth.”

The TRUTH is almost gone in our society today. How sensitive are we to the prompt of the Holy Spirit through the signs of the time? People nowadays are no longer conscious of the presence of God in their lives. As Cardinal Tagle said in one of his homilies, “God is missing in our society, but nobody missed God.” As His followers and members of a missionary family, how can we be of help to the present situation of our society today? What can we contribute through our charism? It is in making Him present and alive in our daily life. It is in announcing Him with our words and witness of life. May we live by it especially as we enter the Lenten season. Let us be reminded that it is very urgent.

**MONDAY**

**Being Witness of the Light**

*I want you to know, my friends, that the things that have happened to me have really helped the progress of the gospel.****13****As a result, the whole palace guard and all the others here know that I am in prison because I am a servant of Christ*.**Phil 1:12-13**

 It is a great privilege our being Verbum Dei through the life of Fr. Jaime Bonet. Let us treasure the kind of prayer we learn from him where the center lies in listening to the Word of God. Not just ordinary listening but deep listening where we are able to encounter our God personally. Through the word of God, we can receive the light of Christ. We are now reminded to obey to the Word of Truth in order that our lives can shine brightly with the light of Christ and we can continue working with Him for the completeness of our salvation and the salvation of the whole humanity.

 *How often do we expose our life to the word of God? In what ways do our hearts been more open to the word of God? Do we consider* *the word of God as the most precious treasure in our hearts? How willing are we to obey to give witness of Him?*

**TUESDAY**

**Prolongation of Jesus Humanity**

*Now, the important thing is that your way of life should be as the gospel of Christ requires, so that, whether or not I am able to go and see you, I will hear that you are standing firm with one common purpose and that with only one desire you are fighting together for the faith of the gospel. Don't be afraid of your enemies; always be courageous, and this will prove to them that they will lose and that you will win, because it is God who gives you the victory.  For you have been given the privilege of serving Christ, not only by believing in him, but also by suffering for him*.**Phil 1:27-29**

*Your lives will be filled with the truly good qualities which only Jesus Christ can produce, for the glory and praise of God*.**Phil 1:11**

 Let us thank the Lord our God in trusting our lives to be the bearers of His words. Most of all to thank Him for giving us the opportunity to become the extension of the life of Christ here on earth. The only thing that we need is to live what the gospel of Christ requires from us.

 *As His follower, what is my attitude towards suffering? When I find my crosses heavy and burdensome, do I find my strength and consolation only in Jesus? How do I live the gospel of Christ in this modern world of today?*

**ASH WEDNESDAY**

**Putting People in Contact**

**with the Word of God**

*For this reason I fall on my knees before the Father,  from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name. I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves,  and I pray that Christ will make his home in your hearts through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundation in love,  so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love.  Yes, may you come to know his love—although it can never be fully known—and so be completely filled with the very nature of God*. **Eph 3:14-19**

*Because of the crowd, however, they could find no way to take him in. So they carried him up on the roof, made an opening in the tiles, and let him down on his bed into the middle of the group in front of Jesus.  When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the man, “Your sins are forgiven, my friend.”***Lk 5:19-20**

“*Can anything good come from Nazareth?” Nathanael asked.*

*“Come and see,” answered Philip*.

**Jn 1:46**

 As believers, we are supposed to be the number one example of putting our trust in the word of the Lord. Let us together put out trust in the word of God for our life. It is important to be closer always to the word of God and live it out. This will be the concrete way where we can also encourage and bring others to come in contact to the word of TRUTH.

 *Do I consider the word of God as a valuable treasure in the depths of the temple of my heart? How often do I take inventory of my* *spiritual life? Do I put my trust in the words of God more than anything else in this world?*

**THURSDAY**

**Fruitfulness in our Mission.**

**The Mission is SOMEONE…**

*My dear children! Once again, just like a mother in childbirth, I feel the same kind of pain for you until Christ's nature is formed in you*. **Gal 4:19**

 Only from a prayerful life and united to God can we live the true following of Jesus, build the Kingdom among us and create fraternal environments in our world. In the same way, we can only be fruitful in our mission if we remain in the Word and in the love of Jesus: “Whoever remains in me and I in him, will bear much fruit, because cut off from me you can do nothing.” **IMVDMFa# 31**

 Our mission as baptized Christians and as Verbum Dei disciples will only be fruitful if we always connect to God through prayer. As Fr. Jaime Bonet, our founder said, “*There is no Verbum Dei if there is no prayer.*” This is a kind of prayer where it transforms our hearts that makes us to be like Christ in this modern world that we are living today. Here lies the fruitfulness of our mission. We are called to be the light of Christ in the world. Let us open our hearts to his transforming word.

 *Is the Word of God firmly taking root and growing in my heart? How do I remain in deep humility so that my heart can be truly open to God’s word? Am I open to the transformation that God wanted me to become*?

**FRIDAY**

**Formation of Communities**

 **of Evangelical Life**

*Surely you remember, our friends, how we worked and toiled! We worked day and night so that we would not be any trouble to you as we preached to you the Good News from God*.

*You are our witnesses, and so is God, that our conduct toward you who believe was pure, right, and without fault. You know that we treated each one of you just as parents treat their own children.  We encouraged you, we comforted you, and we kept urging you to live the kind of life that pleases God, who calls you to share in his own Kingdom and glory.* **1 Thes 2:9-12**

 We are to be grateful why we are here in the Verbum Community until this present moment. Today is a very precious time to remember the people whom Jesus make them as His instruments to work hard in order for us to become a member of this big family of God. The faithfulness of Jesus in our life was passed on to the missionaries and disciples in order for us to become a witness of the love of God in our life. Now is our time to do the same. We are now the successors of the unity and the continuity of the church of Christ. The baton is now in our hands. It is a great opportunity that we are trusted as successors. Being successor is a gift of a shepherd.

 *Do you still remember the faces of people who brings you here in the Verbum Dei Community? Do you value their great efforts in order for you to have this living encounter with God and be a committed disciple? Are you ready to receive the responsibility being heirs of the charism in the midst of the signs of the time?*

**SATURDAY**

**Transformation in Society**

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth disappeared, and the sea vanished.  And I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared and ready, like a* bride dressed to meet her *husband.  I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne: “Now God's home is with people! He will live with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God.  He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. The old things have disappeared.” Then the one who sits on the throne said, “And now I make all things new!” He also said to me, “Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted.”  And he said, “It is done! I am the first and the last, the beginning and the end. To anyone who is thirsty I will give the right to drink from the spring of the water of life without paying for it.* **Rev 21:1-6**

 Our society today needs a living witness of the love of God. There’s a great need of people who can teach by example to others. This is our calling and a challenge being His followers in this modern society we are living now. How beautiful if our life will become a living WORD of God where the Trinitarian love can be visible for them to see with the way we live. The love of God that we try to live and share to others is the Kingdom of God here on earth. Let us keep a constant listening to the word of God and regularly receive the sacraments. For these are ways where we can be strong as we work together to show to the people around us that heaven is just right here on earth and within our midst.

 *Do I see the value of sustaining a profound communion with God to be able to face the difficult and challenging situation of this changing times? Do I value the humble service to God and others as my true greatness being a disciple?*

 **1st SUNDAY OF LENT**

1st Reading Gn 2:7–3:7

Ps 51:3-17

2nd Reading Rm 5:12-19

Gospel: Mt 4:1-11