

INTRODUCTION

Jesus at the beginning of his ministry chose disciples which later became his apostles who believing in his teaching followed him and learned his ways. Jesus spent more time in prayer before he chose them; he can't be wrong in choosing his apostles.

Before we were born, we already have been chosen to continue the work of Christ to proclaim the Good News to every person until they recognize their identity as child of God. In this moment we are invited to deepen on how to accompany others until they make an option to follow Jesus.

To form others as an apostle, I must first recognize my own calling as an apostle. To be able to accept it, to be convinced, and to claim it to myself who I am and what I am called for. For it is God who called me to follow him and to continue the mission he has started. In accompanying others, God assures us that he will be there always and that we need to connect to him for us not to lose sight of what we are called for. We need to always pray so that we may be able to understand God's words within us. The Holy Trinity is within me, and I am the bearer of that Good News. It is but our pleasure to proclaim the Good News to others with conviction, enthusiasm, and compassion.

MONDAY

I am called by God

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 For you are a people holy to the LORD, your God; the LORD, your God, has chosen you from all the peoples on the face of the earth to be a people specially his own. 7 It was not because you are more numerous than all the peoples that the LORD set his heart on you and chose you; for you are really the smallest of all peoples. 8 It was because the LORD loved you and because of his fidelity to the oath he had sworn to your ancestors, that the LORD brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. 9 Know, then, that the LORD, your God, is God: the faithful God who keeps covenant mercy to the thousand generations toward those who love him and keep his commandments.

God is totally familiar with each one of us, and nothing is hidden from him. He knows our past, present, and future and he knows all the people he chooses to be his apostles. What is his criteria? Actually, there is no standard criteria. I need not be a superstar, nor a genius nor a talented one, not even on my physical appearance or stature, nor on gender, nor on a specific race or nationality, nor on the ability to make money or to make friends nor on seniority or superiority. He just choose on whom he is pleased, most likely those people who has the heart and the availability for the work Jesus has started, the work for salvation of the human race.

Do I recognized the desire of God in my heart? Perhaps God called me to be his apostle, am I available for him?

TUESDAY

The Word accompanies me

Jn. 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.

Jn. 15:16 It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.

Union with God in Christ is the best source of energy, fidelity, enthusiasm and joy of the apostle. **(Statutes of the Verbum Dei Missionary Family #25)**

As an apostle accompanying others I need to remain in his words, for his words give me the strength I need and in many ways capacitates me to do the things which I presume I am not capable of doing. It breaks any blockage that hinders me to follow Jesus more closely and to be with him more dearly; and truly Jesus and his words shall be the lamp unto our feet and light unto our path.(cf. Ps 119:105) We might be taken by the many concerns we have in our situations this moment, but if we remain and stay with Jesus in all these circumstances he will show himself more clearly and will reveal to us the desires of our hearts which definitely give us the joy we are looking for.

Do I consider the word of God to be my daily need and companion?

WEDNESDAY

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening

1 Sam 3:3-10 The lamp of God was not yet extinguished, and Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the LORD where the ark of God was. The LORD called to Samuel, who answered, "Here I am." He ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called me." "I did not call you," Eli answered. "Go back to sleep." So he went back to sleep. Again the LORD called Samuel, who rose and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "You called me." But he answered, "I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep." Samuel did not yet recognize the LORD, since the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. The LORD called Samuel again, for the third time. Getting up and going to Eli, he said, "Here I am. You called me." Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the youth. So he said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" When Samuel went to sleep in his place, the LORD came and stood there, calling out as before: Samuel, Samuel! Samuel answered, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

The path of being an apostle is a path of daily listening and recognizing the voice of God. God ignites in us a sensitive and listening heart which recognizes and hears clearly God's voice and understand his commands in a simple way. God conveys his message in the most familiar way that is possible for us to understand, but most of the time we're the ones making it more complicated.

Like Samuel, am I willing to listen to what God wants to tell me today? Do I simply believe of

his message or am I making it more complicated?

THURSDAY

Called to be bearer of the Good News

Luke 4:18-21 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

My life as an apostle is the bearer of Good News. As Jesus' apostle, it is my duty, task, responsibility, and joy to continue what Jesus had started to see and to fulfill his salvific mission of bringing the Good News (the word of God which is Jesus himself) to the lost, the least, and the last to the farthest and depressed possible places of the world. The best way to bring the Good News to all our brothers and sisters in Christ is to let Christ be the standard bearer of my life by making him alive in the very life I live everyday.

How am I bringing the Word of God to his people, the people whom he wanted to reach and to be touch by the Word of God through me?

FRIDAY

Run straight towards the goal

Philippians 3:14 I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in

Christ Jesus.

Song of Songs 1:4 Draw me after you! Let us run! The king has brought me to his bed chambers. Let us exult and rejoice in you; let us celebrate your love: it is beyond wine! Rightly do they love you!

An apostle is a person whose heart is conquered by Christ, sharing the same vision of Jesus, and running towards the goal and never loses the gaze. The apostle's gaze focuses on what he is being appointed to do without hesitation and invasion but with certainty and courage to continue to the last strip of one's strength to the finish line; being confident of reaching the finish line because the stamina one has is not anymore of one's own but with that of Christ who taught him/her how to run.

Am I still in focus of reaching the goal as an apostle of Christ?

SATURDAY

The Life I received, I proclaim to you!

1 John 1:1-3. What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we looked upon and touched with our hands concerns the Word of life for the life was made visible; we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was made visible to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

As His apostles, we are called to share and proclaim what we ourselves have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have experienced of God. In other words, the fullness of Life we found in God, we ought to share with others. Our apostleship doesn't end in the good deeds we have done or in the righteousness we inherit from following Jesus. It is to share with others the very life and experience we have in doing what Jesus did, with the Holy Spirit instructing us.

Am I willing to proclaim Christ on the account of the good he has been doing to me? How do I see myself accountable in bringing others to discover the goodness in them through Jesus, the Word of Life?

SUNDAY

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

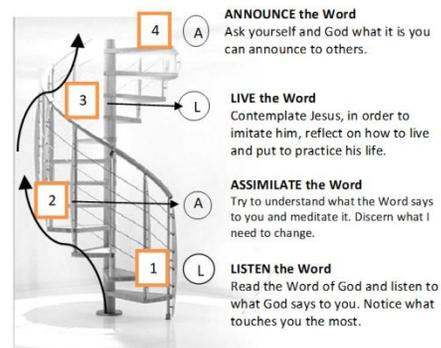
First Reading: Ez 33:7-9

Psalm: Psalm 95:1-2,6-9

Second Reading: Rom 13:8-10

Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"He chose twelve, whom he named apostles"

Mk.3:14

September 4-10, 2017

General Theme:

"... Until Christ is formed in you!"

General Objective:

To deepen on how to accompany others until they make an option to follow Jesus.

Objective of the week:

That I may recognize my calling as an apostle.