**Introduction**

Preaching the Word of God is being forged in our lives. The call to preach comes out as a way of loving him in return having experienced how much God loves us. "God so love the world that he sends his only begotten son." Realizing this set our hearts to love Jesus by way of preaching the Word of God as our response to Him in love. As St. Paul said, "I may be able to speak the languages of human beings and even of angels, but if I have no love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or a clanging bell. I may have a gift of inspired preaching; I may have all knowledge and understand all secrets; I may have all the faith needed to move mountains, but if I have no love, I am nothing" (1 Cor 13:1-2).

This week we are reminded that preaching the WORD of GOD is a part of our life, because in baptism we are made priests, prophets and kings. This is the very answer as found in the book of Numbers 11:29 that said, "Would that all the people of God were prophets!" Yes, we are.

In fact our relationship to preaching of the WORD of GOD is like the relationship of a husband and wife that implies a deep relationship with God. "Your creator will be like a husband to you" (Is 54:5); another is "Israel you are like a young wife" (Is 54:6). This makes us understand that it is our duty to proclaim the GOOD NEWS. In Baptism and then in Confirmation, we commit ourselves to follow Jesus; just as a husband and wife committing to each other to remain together in building up a family, we too commit ourselves to remain united with Christ in His mission.

"For better and for worse, in sickness and health, for richer and for poorer, till death do us part"; this is how we commit ourselves in preaching the WORD of GOD. We are to remember that every Christian is incorporated into the three-fold mission of Christ as priest, prophet, and king. So St. John Paul II have written a document called Christifidelis Laici which is about the lay members of Christ faithful.

"Through their participation in the prophetic mission of Christ, who proclaimed the Kingdom of his Father by the testimony of his life and by the power of his word, the lay faithful are given the ability and responsibility to accept the gospel in faith and to proclaim it in word and deed, without hesitating to courageously identify and denounce evil. United to Christ, the great prophet (Lk 7:16) and in the Spirit made witnesses of the Risen Christ, the lay faithful are made Sharers... in the grace of the word (cf. Acts 2:17-18; Revelation 19:10). They are also called to allow the newness and the power of the gospel to shine out every day in their family and social life, as well as to express patiently and courageously in the contradictions of the present age their hope of future glory even though the framework of their secular life" (Christifidelis Laici no.14).

How wonderful to see that as Christians we have to take responsibility to carry out the mission entrusted to us, and be faithful to it.

**MONDAY**

**GOD's WORD is perfect**

**and beautiful**

**(Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord)**

**Song of Songs 4:7-10**

How beautiful you are, my love;

how perfect you are! Come with me from the Lebanon Mountains, my bride; come with me from Lebanon.Come down from the top of Mount Amana, from Mount Senir and Mount Hermon, where the lions and leopards live.The look in your eyes, my sweetheart and bride,and the necklace you are wearing have stolen my heart. Your love delights me, my sweetheart and bride.Your love is better than wine; your perfume more fragrant than any spice.

**Lk 1:26-38**

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. He had a message for a young woman promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. Her name was Mary. The angel came to her and said, “Peace be with you! The Lord is with you and has greatly blessed you!”

Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message, and she wondered what his words meant. The angel said to her, “Don't be afraid, Mary; God has been gracious to you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ancestor David was, and he will be the king of the descendants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!” Mary said to the angel, “I am a virgin. How, then, can this be?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God. Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she cannot have children, but she herself is now six months pregnant, even though she is very old. For there is nothing that God cannot do.”

“I am the Lord's servant,” said Mary; “may it happen to me as you have said.” And the angel left her.

*Let us be grateful of how God created us. He created us beautifully and made us His masterpiece among all creation. Have you recognized the beauty God is giving you? How do you look at yourself? Is your beauty based on the world's standards or from God's? You ask God today in your prayers, how does He look at you as his disciple?*

*Mama Mary is the most beautiful and most blessed among all women in heaven and on earth. She is our model of perfect beauty as God's creation. What could be her secret?*

**TUESDAY**

**GOD's WORD has to be proclaimed from the secrets of our hearts**

**Song of Song 1:2-3**

Your lips cover me with kisses;

your love is better than wine.

There is a fragrance about you;

the sound of your name recalls it.

No woman could keep from loving you.

**Song of Songs 4:11-12**

The taste of honey is on your lips, my darling; your tongue is milk and honey for me.Your clothing has all the fragrance of Lebanon. My sweetheart, my bride, is a secret garden, a walled garden, a private spring

*God is thirsting for our presence in front of him to talk with Him. How's your daily prayer? He is longing for our presence to listen to him and to dialogue with Him daily. He wants to take care of our hearts for it is important to set our hearts in Him in order that we can proclaim His WORD. Our daily dialogue with Him is the very source in order to tell the world of His love.*

**WEDNESDAY**

**GOD's WORD needs our voice**

**(Stanislaus, bishop and martyr)**

**Song of Songs 2:8-16**

I hear my lover's voice.He comes running over the mountains, racing across the hills to me.My lover is like a gazelle, like a young stag.There he stands beside the wall.He looks in through the window and glances through the lattice. My lover speaks to me.

Come then, my love; my darling, come with me. The winter is over; the rains have stopped; in the countryside the flowers are in bloom.This is the time for singing; the song of doves is heard in the fields. Figs are beginning to ripen; the air is fragrant with blossoming vines.

Come then, my love; my darling, come with me. You are like a dove that hides in the crevice of a rock.

Let me see your lovely face and hear your enchanting voice. Catch the foxes, the little foxes, before they ruin our vineyard in bloom. My lover is mine, and I am his. He feeds his flock among the lilies.

*How beautiful to recognize that God owns us; that our life is for God and He needs us to be with Him in order to enjoy his love by listening to his words, so that we can share this love to others. It is urgent now to let others be conscious of the love of God, for their life is meant for the love of God.*

**THURSDAY**

**GOD's WORD is mercy and forgiveness**

**Jeremiah 15:16-21**

You spoke to me, and I listened to every word. I belong to you, Lord God Almighty, and so your words filled my heart with joy and happiness. I did not spend my time with other people, laughing and having a good time. In obedience to your orders I stayed by myself and was filled with anger. 18 Why do I keep on suffering? Why are my wounds incurable? Why won't they heal? Do you intend to disappoint me like a stream that goes dry in the summer?”

19 To this the Lord replied, “If you return, I will take you back, and you will be my servant again. If instead of talking nonsense you proclaim a worthwhile message, you will be my prophet again. The people will come back to you, and you will not need to go to them. I will make you like a solid bronze wall as far as they are concerned. They will fight against you, but they will not defeat you. I will be with you to protect you and keep you safe. I will rescue you from the power of wicked and violent people. I, the Lord, have spoken.”

*We are invited to look at God's mercy and forgiveness because He loves us. This is the very core of our being a prophet. As baptized Christians we received one of the best gifts—being a prophet. So therefore we are reminded today that God is always willing to give his mercy and forgiveness as long as we return to him every time we fall in disobedience and unfaithfulness. God never gives up on us, how constant is His love. We have to ask God to teach us on how to be obedient and faithful to His love.*

**FRIDAY**

**GOD's WORD is GOD's Spirit**

**(St. Martin I, Pope and martyr)**

**John 6: 63-71**

What gives life is God's Spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit. Yet some of you do not believe.” (Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones that would not believe and which one would betray him.) And he added, “This is the very reason I told you that no people can come to me unless the Father makes it possible for them to do so.”

Because of this, many of Jesus' followers turned back and would not go with him anymore. So he asked the twelve disciples, “And you—would you also like to leave?”

68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. 69 And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God.”

Jesus replied, “I chose the twelve of you, didn't I? Yet one of you is a devil!” He was talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For Judas, even though he was one of the twelve disciples, was going to betray him.

*Today we are invited to hold on to God's life-giving Spirit. Jesus is reminding us that he himself is the one choosing us as His disciples. We need to fix our eyes on him in order that we will not go astray and become unfaithful. Let us listen to Jesus today for he is the only true source of eternal life. He wanted us to be close to Him day in and day out.*

**SATURDAY**

**GOD's WORD is Love**

**Jn 21:15-17**

After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Take care of my lambs.” A second time Jesus said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Take care of my sheep.” A third time Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” and so he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!”

Jesus said to him, “Take care of my sheep.

*Jesus wants to show that His call to us means a lot to Him. As He sets his eyes on us he will never divert His gaze whatever happens. His gaze of mercy and love is already fixed on us. He constantly calls us with the same intensity and he never stops calling us until we will respond to Him. It is now our time to learn that as His followers it is our duty to work with Him in his mission for it is the only way to find true happiness.*

**SUNDAY**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

1st Reading: Acts 3:13-15.17-19

Psalm 4

2nd Reading: 1 Jn 2: 1-5a

Gospel: Luke 24:35-48

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**Guidelines for Prayer**

**"Preaching as Spousal Love"**

**April 9-15, 2018**

**General Objective:** To become aware of the presence of Christ in our brothers and sisters of today and to listen to the call of God to announce urgently the Word of God as a way of transforming the world.

**Specific Objective:** The call to preach comes out from His first love for us and our love for Christ.