

## INTRODUCTION

*To love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person the face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely.*"(Pope Francis, Address during Visit at the Homeless Shelter "Dono Di Maria," 5/21/13)

The Mystical Body of Christ needs to be healed and transformed. The way we are called to response is through prayer and preaching. This is the concrete way where He asked us to serve him in our brothers and sisters.

Preaching is not only spousal and paternal but also reveals our maternal love in caring for the other in their journey of faith. As apostles of Christ, we need to pray for one another to gain strength to respond to the urgent invitation of the Church - to heal the wounds of Jesus in our suffering brothers and sisters. The vital way to heal Jesus' wounds is the word of God. This is the invitation to all who knows and believes in Christ. We are the ones who can collaborate with the Church's mission with our maternal instinct. It is also a call to keep our faith burning and nurture it with the gospel. If Jesus has conquered the world by His death on the cross, we too can take part to heal their brokenness and woundedness. It is through the gospel that they can truly be healed and be brought back to Christ. We also need to show them that mercy and compassion is stronger than evil and suffering. We do not bring destruction and defeat, but healing and transformation.

We can count on the help of our mother Mary who desires that all her children would be one with Christ in continuously collaborating with our yes. She constantly intercedes with each one of us. We know that the "yes" of our Mother Mary did not only end until Jesus' death, but it continues in our time. We too are like Mother Mary ,who brings everyone to

Jesus. Our preaching is like a motherly love that always gives reminder and guidance to her children. A mother who keeps her children from harm, give them security and mold them into better Christians. If one goes astray, she worries and risks herself to look for the lost one.

So let us not be afraid to preach the good news, but be willing to risk to heal and transform the Mystical Body of Christ. While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who were listening to the message. (Acts 10:44)Let us open our hearts and minds to the Lord, so that the Holy Spirit can work with us actively and the gift of understanding shall descend upon the listeners. God will provide us what to speak and works among all. Let us bring forth this Motherly love that is open to the Holy Spirit, to listen to what the Holy Spirit wants to say to each person, encouraging, and strengthening each disciple /follower of Christ.

### Monday

**1 Cor. 1:17-21** Christ did not send me to baptize. He sent me to tell the Good News, and to tell it without using the language of human wisdom, in order to make sure that Christ's death on the cross is not robbed of its power. For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved it is God's power. The scripture says,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and set aside the understanding of the scholars."

So then, where does that leave the wise? or the scholars? or the skillful debaters of this world? God has shown that this world's wisdom is foolishness! For God in his wisdom made it impossible for people to know him by means of their own wisdom. Instead, by means of the so-called "foolish" message we

preach, God decided to save those who believe.

*Jesus came to redeem mankind through His death on the cross. It is the ultimate manifestation of God's maternal love to all. With this, He became the liberator who freed us from sin and death, bringing healing, forgiveness and salvation. As believers of Christ, let us reflect on this message of love and let us make Him our role model as we live our life day by day.*

Do I love Jesus? How do I manifest His love in me everyday?

### Tuesday

**1 Thes 2:7-9**...even though as apostles of Christ we could have made demands on you. But we were gentle when we were with you, like a mother taking care of her children. <sup>8</sup>Because of our love for you we were ready to share with you not only the Good News from God but even our own lives. You were so dear to us! <sup>9</sup>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.

**1 Cor. 2:4-5** and my teaching and message were not delivered with skillful words of human wisdom, but with convincing proof of the power of God's Spirit. Your faith, then, does not rest on human wisdom but on God's power.

*To be active Christians, we should never hesitate and be afraid to announce the good news; instead, it's to trust Him for He first trusted us as He commissioned each one of us for this mission. We, then speak as He wants us to. The church urgently awaits our immediate response towards the restoration of the Mystical Body of Christ due to divisions between the rich and the poor, indifference,*

*ambitiousness, greed, etc. It is truly our obedience to the Lord that draw people to Him.*

Have I been collaborating with the Church's mission? How do I rate my collaboration?

### Wednesday (Feast of St. Mark, the Evangelist)

**Mk. 16:15-20** He said to them, "Go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all people. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. Believers will be given the power to perform miracles: they will drive out demons in my name; they will speak in strange tongues; if they pick up snakes or drink any poison, they will not be harmed; they will place their hands on sick people, and these will get well." After the Lord Jesus had talked with them, he was taken up to heaven and sat at the right side of God. The disciples went and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and proved that their preaching was true by the miracles that were performed.]

*Jesus, by the word of His mouth, invites us to follow Him. He doesn't like spectators, but does to perform what he did. As new apostles of Christ, let us be in one mind and one heart to collaborate with Jesus and show to the whole world that mercy and compassion is greater than sin. With our faith burning desire, inspired by the gospel and examples of the Apostles, we become collaborators of Jesus who mend broken relationships and heal the wounds experienced by the people.*

What is the invitation of Jesus for me today? In what way should I light my candle of faith as an expression of my motherly love for His people?

## Thursday

**Eph. 4:1-6** I urge you, then—I who am a prisoner because I serve the Lord: live a life that measures up to the standard God set when he called you. Be always humble, gentle, and patient. Show your love by being tolerant with one another. Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives by means of the peace that binds you together. There is one body and one Spirit, just as there is one hope to which God has called you. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; there is one God and Father of all people, who is Lord of all, works through all, and is in all.

*God has given us different gifts to share and to give complement to each other. Maternal love consists in putting everything you are in the service of the other. Let us encourage ourselves to be creative in utilizing our gifts in a way that we can relate with one another in a loving way. Let us work together in announcing to them that Christ is alive to open up their eyes of faith in order to see God in everything around them.*

## Friday

**1 Cor. 12:12-26** Christ is like a single body, which has many parts; it is still one body, even though it is made up of different parts. In the same way, all of us, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or free, have been baptized into the one body by the same Spirit, and we have all been given the one Spirit to drink. For the body itself is not made up of only one part, but of many parts. If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, "Because I am not an eye, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. If the whole body were just an eye, how could it hear? And if it were only an ear, how could it smell? As it is, however, God put every different part in the body just as

he wanted it to be. There would not be a body if it were all only one part! As it is, there are many parts but one body. So then, the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" Nor can the head say to the feet, "Well, I don't need you!" On the contrary, we cannot do without the parts of the body that seem to be weaker; and those parts that we think aren't worth very much are the ones which we treat with greater care; while the parts of the body which don't look very nice are treated with special modesty, which the more beautiful parts do not need. God himself has put the body together in such a way as to give greater honor to those parts that need it. And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern for one another. If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.

*A motherly love promotes communion, respects and helps each person to be an active and living member of Christ's body. It is then to take the responsibility in looking for the lost and to give encouragement to those who believe and work for Jesus. The sharing of faith is vital in our following for it gives strength and encouragement to continue with our charism to listen to the Word of God and spread the good news especially to those aching members of Christ. It is through our dedication that we bear much fruit and transform the world.*

In what way shall I be productive? How is my sharing of faith? Do I give time for it?

## Saturday

**1 Cor. 12:27-29** All of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it. In the church God has put all in place: in the first place apostles, in the second place prophets, and in the third place teachers; then those who perform miracles, followed by those who are given the power to heal or to help others or to direct

them or to speak in strange tongues. They are not all apostles or prophets or teachers. Not everyone has the power to work miracles

*Diversity of gifts is not a hindrance to proclaim the Word of God. It is through our creativity of utilizing these gifts that we are able to reach out to our brothers and sisters. It is through this way, we are expressing our maternal love. Let us use these gifts for the advantage of God, making Him the center of all our activities and plans. It doesn't mean that we are blessed because we are gifted but because we obeyed God's will to share Christ using our diversity of Gifts to make Him known to others.*

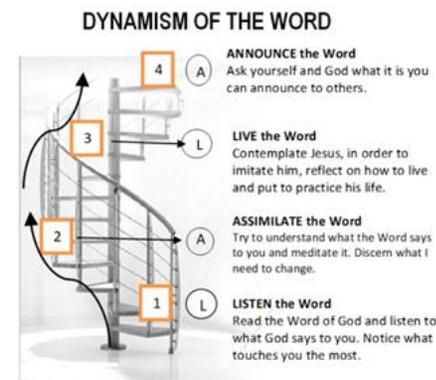
Am I grateful to God for the gifts I received? In what way have I expressed gratitude to Him?

## Sunday

(5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)

Readings:

1<sup>st</sup> Rdg: Acts 9:26-31  
Psalm 22:26-28,30-32  
2<sup>nd</sup> Rdg: 1 Jn 3:18-24  
Gospel: Jn 15:1-8



# Verbum Dei

## GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

### Preaching

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### Maternal Love

Week 4

(April 23-29, 2018, 4th week of Easter)

**General Theme:** Mystical Body of Christ: The preaching and the way we preach is transformed.

**General Objectives:** 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:** To live preaching as an expression of maternal love that gathers people, and defends what promotes communion between and for the good of the different members of the body.

