

INTRODUCTION

In this week's guidelines we are invited to form ourselves and further to translate in our life with what our founder passed on to us - these Sources of our Spirituality, namely the Mystical Body of Christ, the Holy Eucharist, the Indwelling of the Holy Trinity, and Mother Mary. These will give us strength in our mission of evangelization and will help us to become more radical. This formation can be through study, prayer, and testimony of life. In forming ourselves, it will make us equipped for every good work we are to do. We are to take care during the day's journey in a proper atmosphere of contemplative life, of translating into life, for all the Church, the truth that, for the life and for the good of all, we study, learn, pray, and live. In this exercise and life in Christ is rooted our formation and the apostolic strength proper of our evangelizing mission. Living and sharing with the Total Christ of today, Head and Members, our prayer will follow the vital rhythm of all His Body, living in our own flesh the drama and situation of His Church, seconding the request of the Vicar of Christ on earth. One and identified with the reality of the Christ of today in all the humanity, our prayer and mission must form only one life, the life of Jesus shared and lived out with all, (cf. VD Statutes 204-205, 208) especially in this time as we pray for the unity of all Christians. (Note: January 18-25 is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity)

MONDAY

Doing what God wants as Christ's brothers and sisters
(Memorial of St. Vincent, Deacon & Martyr)

Mark 3:31-35 – Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside the

house and sent in a message, asking for him. A crowd was sitting around Jesus, and they said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, and they want you."

Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" He looked at the people sitting around him and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does what God wants is my brother, my sister, my mother.

To form ourselves is to continue to listen and to do what God wants us to do through prayer and living out what we prayed for. This strengthens our identity as Christ's brothers and sisters.

We become more familiar and share with people we are close to, like among couples and best friends. In a similar way, if we are giving importance to our relationship with our Father through Jesus and His companionship for sure He will be happy calling us his brothers and sisters.

What is the fruit of your prayer today?

What is the Lord inviting you to do for Him this year?

TUESDAY

**Receiving the message
to bear much fruit**

Mark 4:13-20– Then Jesus asked them, "Don't you understand this parable? How, then, will you ever understand any parable? The sower sows God's message. Some people are like the seeds that fall along the path; as soon as they hear the message, Satan comes and takes it away. Other people are like the seeds that fall on rocky ground. As soon as they hear the message, they receive it gladly. But it does not sink

deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. Other people are like the seeds sown among the thorn bushes. These are the ones who hear the message, but the worries about this life, the love for riches, and all other kinds of desires crowd in and choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. But other people are like seeds sown in good soil. They hear the message, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred. "

Jesus reminds that it is God's grace that makes us worthy of receiving the Word of God, and that we owe it to Him. God himself has chosen us to receive and proclaim the Kingdom. We cannot fail to see what are born of the Gospel and continue to be born where it is received. The Kingdom is manifested in the life and example of the saints, known and unknown. All is born in the Word, but it must mature and take shape in the heart of humble people.

Do our lives bear fruit from last year? Have we put effort in the proclamation of the Kingdom of God and of the Good News? How do we see our life for this year?

WEDNESDAY

**Acknowledging His work in us
(Memorial of St. Francis de Sales)**

Acts 22:3-16 – "I am a Jew, listen to me as I make my defense before you! When they heard him speaking to them in Hebrew, they became even quieter; and Paul went on:

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up here in Jerusalem as a student of Gamaliel. I received strict instruction in

the Law of our ancestors and was just as dedicate to God as are all of you who are here today. I persecuted to the death the people who followed with the Way. I arrested men and women and threw them into prison. The High Priest and the whole Council can prove that I am telling the truth. I received from them letters written to fellow Jews in Damascus, so I went there to arrest these people and bring them back in chains to Jerusalem to be punished.

As I was traveling and coming near Damascus, about midday a bright light from the sky flashed suddenly around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me? Who are you, Lord?" I asked, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute,' he said to me. The men with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. I asked, 'What shall I do, Lord?' and the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything that God has determined for you to do.' I was blind because of the bright light, and so my companions took me by the hand and led me into Damascus.

In that city was a man named Ananias, a religious man who obeyed our Law and was highly respected by all the Jews living there. He came to me, stood by me, and said, 'Brother Saul, see again! At that very moment I saw again and looked at him. He said, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see his righteous Servant, and to hear him speaking with his own voice. For you will be a witness for him to tell everyone what you have seen and heard. And now, why wait any longer? Get up and be baptized and have your sins washed away by praying to him. '

Like St. Paul, we were once an impure people and enemies of God, and we have our own story of conversion to tell where Jesus is formed in us, changed and moved us to follow Him in his way of life, even called us to give witness of His love through our lives.

St. Paul shared his conversion experience even in such an intense situation. He spoke of the beginning of his love story with Jesus, though his audience consisted of his enemies waiting for his downfall.

Have I shared my own conversion, a conversion that gives light to others that there is still hope and that God will make his way in continuing to change us for the better, and for the best?

THURSDAY

Allowing ourselves to be formed makes us a new person
(Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul & Feast of Verbum Dei)

1 Timothy 4:11-16 – Give them these instructions and these teachings. Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity. Until I come, give your time and effort to the public reading of the Scriptures and to preaching and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift that is in you, which was given to you when the prophets spoke and the elders laid their hands on you. Practice these things and devote yourself to them, in order that your progress may be seen by all. Watch yourself and watch your teaching. Keep on doing these things, because if you do, you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Jesus calls us for a higher calling. Our actions, decisions, and options are affecting not only us, but those who are behind us (our parents, our spouses, our children, our co-worker, our superior etc.). We have been entrusted to pass on the eternal richness and treasure of our faith to others. The profound knowledge of the Bible will be our strength.

The Church needs more people capable of expressing their faith creatively—a gift that springs from spiritual knowledge and habitual contact with the Word of God: smiles, goodwill, and psychology cannot replace this charism. Let us be courageous enough to be more persevering in reading, studying, and meditating the Word. Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. (cf. CCC2705)

Have I watched over what I do and say for the sake of those who followed Christ and for the sake of my love for Christ?

FRIDAY

Being founded on the Love of God and of others
(Memorial of Sts. Timothy and Titus)

1 Timothy 3:14-17 – As I write this letter to you, I hope to come and see you soon. But if I delay, this letter will let you know how we should conduct ourselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. No one can deny how great is the secret of our religion:

He appeared in human form, was shown to be right by the Spirit, and was seen by angels. He was preached among the nations, was believed in throughout the world, and was taken up to heaven.

Even if we are in charge of the Church of God, we are neither its founder nor its masters. The Church was born through a merciful intervention of God, when he decided that his Son should identify with the human race. The Church is the pillar and foundation of the truth. In spite of all the infidelities of the Church, God uses it to

preserve true knowledge of the Father, Son and Spirit in the world. Without this knowledge, people cannot be free nor can humanity reach its maturity.

Have I allowed myself to be deeply founded in the Love and mercy of God and for the love of the Church of God?

SATURDAY

Becoming equipped for every work
(Memorial of St. Angela Merici)

2 Timothy 3:14-17 – As for you, continue with what you have learned and what has been entrusted to you, knowing from whom you received it. Besides, you have known the Scriptures from childhood: they will give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through God and is useful for teaching, refuting error, for correcting and training in Christian life. Through Scripture the man of God is made expert and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Let us help others to know how to meditate for meditation is the best means of making faith mature. Yet we must remember that the Word of God is the normal nourishment of faith. It is not only useful for teaching: Bible reading has the value of the sacrament for the faithful. No preaching, no catechism even though biblical can replace the frequent meditative reading of the Word of God for the development of our faith.

SUNDAY

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
(National Bible Sunday)

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm: Ps 95
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"BE EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK"

(2 Tim 3:17)

January 22-28, 2018

General Objectives:

- To welcome the beginning of the year by entering deeply in the love and devotion of Jaime towards the Sources of Spirituality of Verbum Dei as sources of our faith and of the whole Church.

- To make this new year truly a School of Apostles where we strengthen our love and commitment to Jesus by praying and living out the Sources of Spirituality of Verbum Dei.

Objective of the week:

- To translate in our life the Sources of Spirituality.

-To form ourselves with these Sources for our mission.