

Introduction

In the words of Saint Paul we find again the faithful echo of the teaching of Jesus himself, which reveals His mystical unity with his disciples and the disciples with each other, presenting it as an image and extension of that mystical communion that binds the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in the bond of love, the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 17:21). Jesus refers to this same unity in the image of the vine and the branches: "I am the vine, you the branches" (Jn 15:5), an image that sheds light not only on the deep intimacy of the disciples with Jesus but on the necessity of a vital communion of the disciples with each other: all are branches of a single vine. (Christifideles Laici #12)

We all live in Christ and we form his mystical body, the Church. We are one Body in Christ in which "regenerated as "Children in the Son", the baptized are inseparably joined together as 'members of Christ and members of the body of the Church'" (Christifideles Laici#12)

Our God, having the great project and plan of salvation for all of us, has arranged to unite us with him and among ourselves with vital bonds. "The comparison of the Church with the body casts light on the intimate bond between Christ and his Church. Not only is she gathered around him; she is united in him, in his body. Three aspects of

the Church as the Body of Christ are to be more specifically noted: the unity of all her members with each other as a result of their union with Christ; Christ as head of the Body; and the Church as bride of Christ." (CCC #789)

One of the truths of our faith is that we are already vitally united to Christ because "believers who respond to God's word and become members of Christ's Body, become intimately united with him...and the Eucharist, by which 'really sharing in the body of the Lord, . . . we are taken up into communion with him and with one another.'"

It is the desire of the Father, the will of Jesus Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, that the whole body of the Church, no less than the individual members, should resemble Him because this is our identity, "May they be in us", living in union with the Trinity.

As we continue deepening our prayer on the Mystical Body of Christ in this lenten journey, how are we to respond as Verbum Dei Family to this truth of our faith?

Monday Sent to heal

Lk 4:24-27 I tell you this," Jesus added, "prophets are never welcomed in their hometown. Listen to me: it is true that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah, when there was no rain for three and a half years and a severe famine spread

throughout the whole land. Yet Elijah was not sent to anyone in Israel, but only to a widow living in Zarephath in the territory of Sidon. And there were many people suffering from a dreaded skin disease who lived in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha; yet not one of them was healed, but only Naaman the Syrian."

As Verbum Dei, let us reflect what or to whom are we sent for? What do we have, God-given gifts, that we can share to the other members of the Church?

Tuesday God shows sinners the way

Ps 25: 8-10, 12-14 Because the Lord is righteous and good, he teaches sinners the path they should follow. He leads the humble in the right way and teaches them his will. With faithfulness and love he leads all who keep his covenant and obey his commands. Those who have reverence for the Lord will learn from Him the path they should follow. They will always be prosperous, and their children will possess the land. The Lord is the friend of those who obey him and he affirms his covenant with them.

(CCC# 799-801) All charisms, extraordinary or simple, are graces of the Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church. Charisms must be accepted with thanksgiving and used for the Church's apostolic vitality. These must be genuine gifts of the Spirit

and used with charity (the measure of all charisms).

All charisms must be discerned by the Church's shepherds who have the duty to test all things "so that all charisms work for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7).

How would our charism (prayer, ministry of the word & testimony of life) in Verbum Dei helps us and the other members of the Church to walk towards salvation?

Wednesday Lead others to obey faithfully

Deuteronomy 4:5-9 "I have taught you all the laws, as the Lord my God told me to do. Obey them in the land that you are about to invade and occupy. Obey them faithfully, and this will show the people of other nations how wise you are. When they hear of all these laws, they will say, 'What wisdom and understanding this great nation has!'

As Verbum Dei, what have we listened in our prayers, preachings from others in words and deeds that we can share to the crucified Christ of today?

Thursday Faithfulness to God's Words to renew and build up the church

Matthew 5:20 I tell you, then, that you will be able to enter the Kingdom of heaven only if you are more faithful than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees in doing what God requires.

2 Corinthians 5:7 For our life is a matter of faith, not of sight.

(CCC #797-798) *The Holy Spirit makes the Church "the temple of the living God": Indeed, it is to the Church herself that the "Gift of God" has been entrusted. . . .It is in her that communion with Christ has been deposited, that is to say: the Holy Spirit, the pledge of incorruptibility, the strengthening of our faith and the ladder of our ascent to God. . . .For where the Church is, there also is God's Spirit; where God's Spirit is, there is the Church and every grace.*

The Holy Spirit is "the principle of every vital and truly saving action in each part of the Body." He works in many ways to build up the whole Body in charity: by God's Word; by Baptism; by the sacraments; by "the grace of the apostles, which holds first place among his gifts"; by the virtues; finally, by the many special graces (called "charisms"), by which he makes the faithful "fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church."

Being Verbum Dei, what could be our contribution in helping the Church to continue walking in faith and not by sight?

**Friday
Bringing people back to the Lord**

The Lord says, "I will bring my people back to me. I will love them with all my heart; no longer am I angry with them. I will be to the people of Israel like rain in a dry land. They will blossom like flowers; they will be firmly rooted like the trees of Lebanon. They will be alive with new growth, and beautiful like olive trees. They will be fragrant like the cedars of

Lebanon. Once again they will live under my protection. They will grow crops of grain and be fruitful like a vineyard. They will be as famous as the wine of Lebanon. The people of Israel will have nothing more to do with idols; I will answer their prayers and take care of them. Like an evergreen tree I will shelter them; I am the source of all their blessings." May those who are wise understand what is written here, and may they take it to heart. The Lord's ways are right, and righteous people live by following them, but sinners stumble and fall because they ignore them.

Hosea 14:2-10

Verbum Dei Statutes #248 Our sincere and profound gratitude to the Father , who out of love gave us His only son until death and death on the cross so that we may have eternal life and the love of Christ who loved us and gave His life for us victim of our sins, moves us to apply to Him all our flesh and blood turn into pain and love in His own open wounds by us in His Mystical Body. We can only humbly promise Him like the prophet David " I will teach sinners your commands, and they will turn back to you."

How would our obedience: giving quality time for prayer, saying yes in preaching the Word and our daily conversion, lead others to listen and function according to their role in the body of Christ?

**Saturday
It is love that God desires from us**

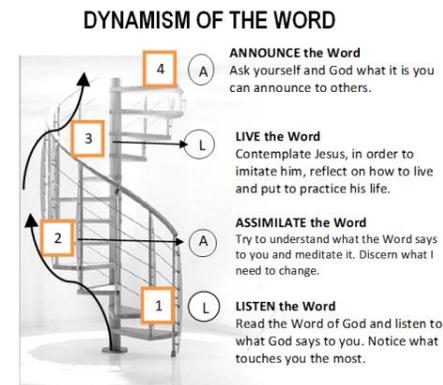
But the Lord says, "Israel and Judah, what am I going to do with you? Your love for me disappears as quickly as morning mist; it is like dew, that vanishes early in the day. That is why I have sent my prophets to you with my message of judgment and destruction. What I want from you is plain and clear: I want your constant love, not your animal sacrifices. I would rather have my people know me than burn offerings to me. **Hosea 6:4-6**

Christ provides for our growth: to make us grow toward him, our head, he provides in his Body, the Church, the gifts and assistance by which we help one another along the way of salvation. CCC794

What could be the ways we can concretely respond to God through others?

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

1st Reading – 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23
 Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 137
 2nd Reading – Ephesians 2:4-10
 Gospel – John 3:14-21



Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"May they be in Us"

(John 17:21a)

March 5-11, 2018

General Theme:
MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST:
 The composition of place for our daily prayer and mission.
General Objective: To create awareness of the presence of Christ in our brothers and sisters of today.
Specific objectives:

- To make us realize of the desire of God for us to live in union with the total Christ, Head and members, so that we may live our genuine identity.
- To see the importance and repercussion of what he has done.