

INTRODUCTION

"The Church is missionary by her very nature" (Ad Gentes No. 2).

We have just celebrated the World Mission Sunday where God showed His generosity in providing us the opportunity to perform our Christian duty, "on mission" a Christian virtue. The mission is entrusted to the whole Church as well as every Christian from baptism. Each baptized Christian has to share in this mission of the Church. What is mission for you? How beautiful to learn that mission is not simply something the Church does; mission is not merely an activity but a part of the Church identity.

We are so blessed this week. Why? God wants us to deepen our understanding about the mission. Every Christian has a very important role in this mission of the Church. We need to open our hearts and minds wide in order to see God's perspective about mission. In Jn. 4: 35-38 it says:

"You have a saying, 'Four more months and then the harvest', but I tell you, take a good look at the fields; the crops are now ripe and ready to be harvested! The one who reaps the harvest is being paid and gathers the crops for eternal life; so the one who plants and the one who reaps will be glad together. For the saying is true 'someone plants, someone else reaps.' I have sent you to reap a harvest in a field where you did not work; others worked there and you profit from their work."

We need to take a look at the fields where we are to work. The owner of the harvest wanted us to value the work to form apostles. It is rewarding to participate in the mission which is at the heart of our Christian faith. All Christians are called and sent, being part of the "Bit Project" of God in spreading His love through the Gospel. As St John Paul II said, "The mission is not over yet, it has just started." Which means there is work to be done! Are you ready? As members of the Verbum Dei Missionary Community we are sent as frontliners of

this mission. Remember, we are equipped with one of the most important tools for mission, *prayer*, where the center is the word of God that connects us to the source of LOVE. LOVE is the motor that can drive one to mission. Therefore, we need to develop the attitude to always go back to the source in order to gain the passion in union with Jesus the *beloved*. This is the only way to learn what Fr. James McTavish, FMVD has said in his book "Sharper Than A Sword"—"Where there is love, there is sharing and where there is love, there is mission." It is also good to learn from our founder Fr. Jaime Bonet when he said, "Mission is not something, it is someone." Are you ready to bring Him to others? How wonderful if we generously respond to this by participating and collaborating in the mission.

This is also what Pope Francis in reminding us about the mission:

"My mission of being in the heart of the people is not just a part of my life or a badge I can take off; it is not an "extra" or just another moment in life. Instead, it is something I cannot uproot from my being on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world. We have to regard ourselves as sealed even branded by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing, and freeing."

MONDAY(St. John Capistrano)

"Start today by giving with open hearts"

This is right and, is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. **1 Tim 2:3-4**

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by

always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹As it is written, "*He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.*"¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; ¹²for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. **2 Cor. 9:6-14**

Today we are encouraged to fix our gaze on the generosity of God in our life where we can learn how to become generous in our time, talent, and treasure. Let us open our hearts to give to others for the reason that God is so generous to us. He is the one who provides us in order to become rich enough to be generous. We need to ask the Lord in our prayer today, "Lord, teach me how to be really generous." Let us move now and start to be generous in our own homes, workplaces, schools, and in our neighborhood.

TUESDAY

(St. Anthony Mary Claret)

Be faithful servants

Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

(Lk 12:37-38)

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. **1 Cor. 4:1-2**

When I see the need for Divine teaching and how hungry people are to hear it, I am

atremble to be off and running throughout the world, preaching the word of God. I have no rest, my soul finds no other relief, than to rush about and preach. —

Anthony Mary Claret

Our life will be more excited and active if we are able to discover our passion to evangelize; it is innate in us. The passion to evangelize is a grace from God in showing how faithful He is to us. We are reminded today that to be a faithful servant is by recognizing the sincerity of the Master I giving his full trust to his servant. How blessed are we to have a master who not only trust but also love as he gives his full concern to his followers the sincerest way He can. What we need is to be thankful to Jesus in capacitating us to be faithful as He is the first one who is faithful to us. It is important not to be discouraged in moments when we fail to become faithful to Him; just get up and try again. "Fidelity consists of getting up each time we fail." (A Heart On Fire, p. 66)

WEDNESDAY(St. Boniface)

Be responsible stewards

From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded. **Lk 12:48b**

Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. **Col 3:23-24**

The Church is like a great ship being pounded by the waves of life's different stresses. Our duty is not to abandon ship, but to keep her on her course.

(St. Boniface)

How passionate are you to evangelize? We have been receiving much from the Verbum Dei Missionary Family with regards to how to follow Christ. All the knowledge and the skills we gain from the different formations

we received is a treasure. We are asked to be a responsible steward for these treasures, by using them according to the purpose of God in our life as evangelizer. These treasures must not be kept and buried, but instead these must be shared. As Fr. Jaime Bonet, our founder, said, "To evangelize is a duty and right for me, a joy and a complete and irreversible dedication. Not to evangelize would be equivalent to burying the talents that God has entrusted to me." (A Heart on Fire, p. 82)

THURSDAY
Set the earth on fire

"I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled. **Lk 12:49**

How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! **Lk 13:34b**

"How I long to find the right words to stir up enthusiasm for a new chapter of evangelization full of fervor, joy, generosity, courage, boundless love, and attraction! Yet I realize that now words of encouragement will be enough unless the fire of the Holy Spirit burns in our hearts.

(Evangelii Gaudium 261)"

How beautiful that idea to set the earth on fire. This is the only way to build the Kingdom of God while we are still on earth. Today, we are reminded that we need to approach the four sources of the fire of life to be used to ignite the hearts of people to make a blazing world of the fire of the love of God: 1) the centrality of loving dialogue with the Holy Trinity, 2) the Eucharist, 3) our concern to the Mystical Body of Christ--the crucified Christ of today, 4) our filial love to Mother Mary (A Heart On Fire, p. 27).

FRIDAY
Seek and Save the Lost

⁵For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? ⁶But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said

to the paralytic—"Stand up, take your bed and go to your home."⁷ And he stood up and went to his home. ⁸When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings. ⁹As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.¹⁰ And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. **Mt.9:5-10**

Thus, I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation. **(Rom 15:20)**

We are reminded today the need to imitate the first Apostles in their apostolic zeal. Why? For this is our guide to have that same zeal that we receive from our baptism. Do you believe that you are great in the eyes of God? We are great in the eyes of God as He capacitated us and trusted us to bring His saving love to the many people who are close to us and to those we encounter every day. Jesus is asking us to help Him in reaching the hearts of those who don't have the love of God in their life. Who are the people whom God wants you to bring to them His merciful love through His words? It is now our time to share the saving power of God that we receive through the community when we were taught how to pray. Prayer leads us to have a personal encounter with the saving love of God through His living word.

SATURDAY
(St. Jude Thaddaeus&St. Simon the Zealot)
"I told the Good News"

You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted. Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my

heart." I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord. I have not hidden your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation. **Psalm 40:5-10**

For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. ²¹To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. ²²To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. ²³I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings. **1 Cor 9:19-23**

"The Word is written with fire, but it is the fire of the speech of the preachers that will inflame in the hearer. The hearts can take fire on the measure that the preacher is taken by the fire" (Fr. Jaime Bonet).

We are now asked to preach the Word of God wherever we are. How beautiful life is as we perform our duty as evangelizer. Today we are reminded again that the fullness of our hearts will be attained as we "tell the whole world of God's love". What we need is to believe in the trust of God in our life. For Him our life is valuable because he gave us the capacity to bring the Good News to all people around us. It is our time now to shine, living the charism as a Verbum Dei apostle: prayer and preaching. Then to teach others also on how to do it until the world will be covered with the knowledge of the love of God.

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Readings: Exo 22:20-26
Psalm 18:2-4,47,51
1 Thes 1:5c-10
Mt.22:34-40

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

MISSION at the HEART of the CHRISTIAN FAITH

(World Mission Sunday 2017 Theme)
(October 23-29, 2017)

Objective:
To generously respond in participating and collaborating in the mission