

INTRODUCTION

We, as disciples are blessed by the VD community because we have been filled with the knowledge of the Lord and molded to become Christ like. Last week, we were reminded about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ whom we follow to comply with the mission on redemption. However, we have to be grateful to the Blessed Mother Mary. Because of her powerful faith, she was able to say "Yes" to God's favor. Her positive response to the invitation has brought salvation to all human race in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us also say "Yes" to God so that we may become like Mary who is ever willing to serve for Christ. We too must be willing to serve Him through helping our brothers and sisters make their paths straight as what John the Baptist did as he prepared the way for the Lord.

Let us invite our brothers and sisters to prepare for the coming of Christ not in an expensive and luxurious way but in a simple and significant way by praying, reconciling, going to confession and receiving holy communion.

How do you welcome Jesus into your heart? Did you welcome Him with Joy? How do you make your preparations more significant? How often do you commemorate Christmas?



DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

Preparing for the coming of the baby in the womb.

Judges 13:2-7 ² There was a man of Zorah of the tribe of Dan, called Manoah. His wife was barren; she had borne no children. ³ The Angel of Yahweh appeared to this woman and said to her, 'You are barren and have had no child, but you are going to conceive and give birth to a son. ⁴ From now on, take great care. Drink no wine or fermented liquor, and eat nothing unclean. ⁵ For you are going to conceive and give birth to a son. No razor is to touch his head, for the boy is to be God's nazirite from his mother's womb; and he will start rescuing Israel from the power of the Philistines.' ⁶ The woman then went and told her husband, 'A man of God has just come to me, who looked like the Angel of God, so majestic was he. I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name. ⁷ But he said to me, "You are going to conceive and will give birth to a son. From now on, drink no wine or fermented liquor, and eat nothing unclean. For the boy is to be God's

nazirite from his mother's womb to his dying day."'

It is God who always has the initiative to come closer to man. His heart could not afford to watch his beloved children go astray from His love and will last with Him forever. So He seeks someone to become his instrument to bridge their broken relationship. Are you willing to help the Church prepare the way for Christ? Is your heart ready to become a manger for baby Jesus?

TUESDAY

The Yes of Mary

Luke 1:26-38 ²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favour! The Lord is with you.' ²⁹ She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, ³⁰ but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. ³¹ Look! You are to conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; ³³ he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?' ³⁵ The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And I tell

you this too: your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, ³⁷ for nothing is impossible to God.' ³⁸ Mary said, 'You see before you the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said.' And the angel left her.

As Christians, we should not be afraid to open our hearts to all types of people without discrimination. We must do our part to become bridges of those with broken relationships and resolve the issue that cause division and war. As Mary says "Yes" to God, to become the mother of His son, we too have no reason to turn down the favor God asks from us. For with all these, all spiritual benefits shall come back to us. Are you willing to give your yes to God? How do you concretize it?

WEDNESDAY

Listening and welcoming with joy. (Memorial of St. Peter Canisius)

Titus 3:4-7 ⁴ But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour for humanity were revealed, ⁵ it was not because of any upright actions we had done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own faithful love that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and renewal in the Holy Spirit ⁶ which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our Saviour; ⁷ so that, justified by his grace, we should become heirs in hope of eternal life.

Let us empty ourselves from carnal desires and open our eyes with joy and reflect on the message of the baby Jesus in the manger. Let us allow our heart to become a manger of the baby

Jesus so that we may also become generous of our love to others not only during Christmas season but all throughout the year. Are you willing to open your heart to become a manger for Jesus?

THURSDAY

Preparing a place for the Lord

Luke 2:15-20 ¹⁵ Now it happened that when the angels had gone from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go to Bethlehem and see this event which the Lord has made known to us.' ¹⁶ So they hurried away and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, ¹⁸ and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as they had been told.

As we prepare the place for the Lord, let us think of opportunities to become more sensitive to God's calling. Let us not invest our life to the worldly pleasure but live our life simply, for simplicity helps keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. It is also an opportunity to experience His joy, love and peace in our hearts. Do you invite others to prepare the way for Christ? In what way do you invite them?

FRIDAY

The one who will prepare (Memorial of St. John of Kanty)

Matthew 3:1-4 In due course John the Baptist appeared; he proclaimed this message in the desert of Judaea, ² 'Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is close at hand.' ³ This was the man spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said: A voice of one that cries in the desert, 'Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.' ⁴ This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather loin-cloth round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

When we speak about Christmas, we always prepare gifts to give and think of gifts to be received. Let us set aside this practice and learn to make a difference. God is the main reason we live and that we must also live for Him. Let us make our hearts His dwelling place, full of love, forgiveness and compassion. We have to forgive those who hurt us, forget those ill memories, reconcile with those we hate, give back what we have taken, say sorry for the wrong we've done and pray for those who do not accept our loving gestures.

SATURDAY

My Yes to God. (Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord)

Luke 1:57-66 ⁵⁷ The time came for Elizabeth to have her child, and she gave birth to a son; ⁵⁸ and when her neighbours and relations heard that the Lord had lavished on her his faithful love, they shared her joy. ⁵⁹ Now it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother spoke up. 'No,' she said, 'he is to be called John.' ⁶¹ They said to her, 'But

no one in your family has that name,' ⁶² and made signs to his father to find out what he wanted him called. ⁶³ The father asked for a writing-tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And they were all astonished. ⁶⁴ At that instant his power of speech returned and he spoke and praised God. ⁶⁵ All their neighbours were filled with awe and the whole affair was talked about throughout the hill country of Judaea. ⁶⁶ All those who heard of it treasured it in their hearts. 'What will this child turn out to be?' they wondered. And indeed the hand of the Lord was with him.

As we prepare for the birth of Christ, let us clothe ourselves with good habits and virtues. We should be Christ like in all that we do marked with much kindness, humility and love to live our life to the fullest.

SUNDAY

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Mass during midnight

1st Reading – Isaiah 9:1-6

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 96

2nd Reading – Titus 2:11-14

Gospel – Luke 2:1-14

Mass at dawn

1st Reading – Isaiah 62:11-12

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 97

2nd Reading – Titus 3:4-7

Gospel – Luke 2:15-20

Mass during the day

1st Reading – Isaiah 52:7-10

Responsorial Psalm – Psalm 98

2nd Reading – Hebrews 1:1-6

Gospel – John 1:1-18

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

Prepare a house for me to dwell in.

December 19-25, 2016

General Theme: Eternity stepped into time.

General Objectives:

- to value the time given to us in the Church for the preparation and of change.
- to know more deeply who is the one coming.
- to celebrate with joy the mystery of Christmas.



Objective of the week:

- to know how to prepare for His coming.