

INTRODUCTION

We started this year 2017 recognizing that we are God's family. That Verbum Dei is our own family which God has gathered and has chosen in His name in order to welcome many people. We were called to belong to this family to fulfill God's desire for our lives and for others. What is God's desire for us Verbum Dei Family this year?

"Enlarge the space of your tent" (Isaiah 54:2). This is the new theme for our NAP (National Apostolic Project) for next three years.

As Verbum Dei Missionary Family (VDMFam) in the Philippines, we will take another step of our commitment and desire to make our lives and mission as fruitful as possible. This theme is in continuity with our previous NAP and the desire for missionary expansion. This growth and expansion is on-going and we face the beautiful, if somewhat challenging task, to invest our lives in our local communities without losing sight of the bigger horizon.

The project is national because it reflects what each local community is living and what we have seen and heard, lived and shared is already written here (see 1 John 1:1-4). Elements from the previous NAP have also been taken into consideration to give continuity to the work the Spirit has already been doing in, among and through us.

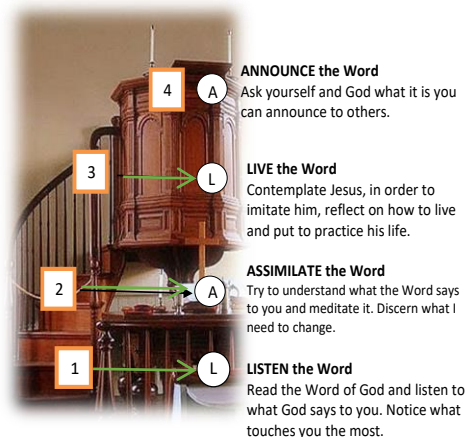
The Holy Spirit, through our founder, Fr. Jaime Bonet, has entrusted us with a charism to form apostles of Christ. The words of Jaime Bonet resound now more strongly than ever: *"I would like to say to Verbum Dei... since I feel it as my great responsibility before God, that Verbum Dei without prayer will not exist, nor preach, nor expand, nor can it*

grow, nor can it be happy, nor have reason to exist".

We all need to pray and reflect together on how best to be Verbum Dei and form apostles, in the Philippines, in Asia, in the Third millennium and in our world of today.

Let us get to know more what is NAP all about and what it is created for. How can we respond to this project that God entrusted to us as Verbum Dei Missionary Family?

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

A GUIDE AND COMPASS FOR OUR VERBUM DEI COMMUNITY (St. Martina of Rome)

Matthew 28:16-18

16 As for the Eleven disciples, they went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw Jesus, they bowed before him, although some doubted. 18 Then Jesus approached them and said, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.

Luke 4:32 ³² And his teaching made a deep impression on them because his word carried authority.

We were not formed only to be apostles in our own family, in our workplace, school, even in our Verbum Dei Community but also to be an apostle forming apostles. Enlarge the space of our tent is to enlarge our trust in Jesus, who have been given all the authority by the Father to gather all His children, calling us to extend our mission in all sides and directions. As a Missionary Family we were also given the authority to go to those places, people who have not known, encountered, experienced the greatest love of the Father. Where is Jesus leading you? To whom is Jesus telling you to go to?

TUESDAY

CONTINUITY OF THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (St. John Bosco, priest)

Matthew 28:19-20

19 Go, therefore, and make disciples from all nations. Baptize them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teach them to fulfill all that I have commanded you. I am with you always until the end of this world."

Our charism came from God, entrusted to us by the Holy Spirit. A gift that will capacitate us to continue what the Holy Spirit had started doing for the mission. Enlarge the space of our tent is to extend our charism by being faithful to our call as Verbum Dei. Not being afraid to go out from ourselves. To go beyond our comfort zones, our limits, our time. For we have God given gifts and talents.

Fears, doubts, worries will deprive others to encounter God, to learn to pray and to live a fruitful life. Are we willing enough to make options in order to introduce our charism to others? Can we make extra efforts to teach them how to pray with the Word of God and to share their own experiences to others?

WEDNESDAY

CALLED TO THINK GLOBALLY BUT TO ACT LOCALLY (St. Severus)

Isaiah 54:2-3

2 Enlarge the space for your tent, stretch out your hangings, lengthen your ropes and strengthen your stakes, 3 for you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will take possession of the nations and inhabit cities that have been abandoned.

We are called to continue to sow the Word of God in our own land but not being afraid to push our boat a little further from the shore and spread our nets wider. For the harvest is large and we are also asked to lift our gaze to see the multitudes in our neighboring countries who still do not know Jesus and have not experienced the hope He can bring. Enlarge the space of our tent is to enlarge our missionary heart in order to welcome a bigger family. What wall of division in our life do we need to remove in order to have a bigger space to accommodate more people?

THURSDAY

THE DESIRE OF GOD TO REVEAL HIMSELF (Presentation of the Lord International Day of Consecrated Life)

Luke 2:22-35 ²² And when the day came for them to be purified in keeping with the Law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord- ²³ observing what is written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord- ²⁴ and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is prescribed in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. ²⁵ Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to the restoration of Israel and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. ²⁷ Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, ²⁸ he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said: ²⁹ Now, Master, you are letting your servant go in peace as you promised; ³⁰ for my eyes have seen the salvation ³¹ which you have made ready in the sight of the nations; ³² a light of revelation for the gentiles and glory for your people Israel. ³³ As the child's father and mother were wondering at the things that were being said about him, ³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Look, he is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is opposed- ³⁵ and a sword will pierce your soul too -- so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

The Presentation of the Lord is indeed God's greatest desire to reveal himself to the Gentiles (who are living in

darkness, the unbelievers, who have lost the meaning of life) and the many Simeons around us, in our family, in work place, in neighboring cities, towns, nations and countries, who were and still waiting for the salvation to come. Enlarge the space of our tent is to enlarge our dedication in working for the salvation of the many. What kind of salvation have you experienced in your life that God is asking you to reveal to the Gentiles and the Simeons of this time?

FRIDAY

BE FAITHFUL IN OUR DAILY PERSONAL ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST
(St. Blaise, bishop and martyr St. Ansgar, bishop)

VD Statutes # 25

Union with God in Christ is the greatest source of energy, fidelity, enthusiasm, and joy of each member of the VDMFa. From this union arises the true following of Christ and in the same way the realization of an authentic Christian family. The personal encounter and familiar relationship of affectionate intimacy with God ensures that our ministry of the Word be always accompanied by a clear testimony of life according to the Gospel.

As committed disciples of Christ we are encouraged to pray daily with the Word of God. Daily encounters with Jesus will spring forth a desire to own this project, this desire of God to bring back His children home and the willingness to expand. This mission will be impossible and hard to bear if we don't pray. Enlarge the space of our tent is to listen to God and renew our commitment with Him

everyday. Renew our perspective, conviction, patience, understanding, faith. How faithful are we in our daily dialogue with Jesus?

SATURDAY

BE FAITHFUL IN CONTINUING FORMING APOSTLES
(St. Andrew Corsini)

1 Corinthians 9:16-22 ¹⁶ In fact, preaching the gospel gives me nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion and I should be in trouble if I failed to do it. ¹⁷ If I did it on my own initiative I would deserve a reward; but if I do it under compulsion I am simply accepting a task entrusted to me. ¹⁸ What reward do I have, then? That in my preaching I offer the gospel free of charge to avoid using the rights which the gospel allows me.

Like Jaime, to participate in the expansion of Verbum Dei, we need to experience the urgent and existential need of the people for the Word of God. Give the Word, transmit the joy we have experienced as we share the Word. Through our preaching, people will experience the joy of experiencing His mercy. Enlarge the space of our tent is to enlarge the joy of preaching the Word. How enthusiastic are we to preach the Good News?

SUNDAY

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Isaiah 58:7-10
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 112
2nd Reading: 1Corinthians 2:1-5
Gospel: Matthew 5:13-16

Verbum Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

“VDMFa: Enlarge the space of your tent”

January 30 - February 5, 2017

General Theme: Enlarge the space of your tent. (Isaiah 54:2)

General Objectives:

To introduce the National Apostolic Project (NAP) to the VDMFa inviting them to own and personalize this project of God for the Verbum Dei Missionary Family Philippines for the next three (3) years.



Objective of the week:

To introduce the NAP to the VDMFa in the call of God to extend our mission and charism to the world.