

INTRODUCTION

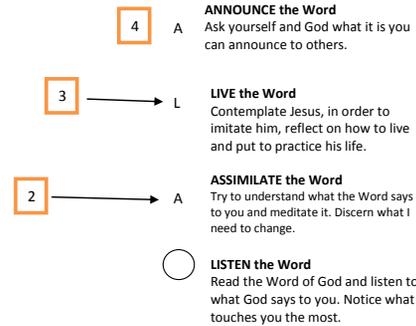
In this last week of lent, let us journey as one Verbum Dei missionary family united in the desire to journey with Jesus in every moment as we strive to live out His Words. To journey with Jesus this lent is not just to be with Him or walk with Him at a distance but to really be close to Him - to listen, live and love as He does. It is to enter into His heart, thoughts and perceptives.

To be disciples who follow Jesus very closely, we are called not only to live with Him but to be like Him. Taking the path He took let us witness and realize how He truly loves us. He lived with love, with compassion, with a heart free from all bitterness. "In this body there is no room for the indifference (1 Cor 12:26)."

To closely journey with Jesus and learn from Him, it is necessary that we seek forgiveness and reconciliation with our Father through Jesus Christ as a means for us to live in love, seeing others not as an enemies but as brothers and sisters. A heart reconciled with God and neighbour is a generous heart. (Pope John Paul II Lent, 2001). Jesus teaches us that His love "does not insist on its own way,...is not resentful,... does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right" (1 Cor 13:5-6). Resentment and indifference, hinder us to be truly close and be one with God and with others.

As one family journeying with the Lord towards His passion, let us take our part and enter into a transformation from within as we accompany others in order that they too may journey close to Jesus. Let us learn from the path of a self-giving love as we enter Holy Week.

DYNAMISM OF THE WORD



MONDAY

"Neither do I condemn you."

John 8:1-11 As for Jesus, he went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak Jesus appeared in the temple again. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. Then the teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They made her stand in front of everyone. "Master," they said, "this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now the law of Moses orders that such women be stoned to death; but you, what do you say?" They said this to test Jesus, in order to have some charge against him. Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. And as they continued to ask him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who has no sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And he bent down, again, writing on the ground. As a result of these words, they went away, one by one, starting with the elders, and Jesus was left alone, with the woman standing before him. Then Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go away and don't sin again."

God never condemns His people regardless of their sins. He doesn't judge by appearance, but he sees through the intentions of our hearts for He has His own way to purify and

make people repent through suffering. Yet in all our disobedience, fears, and flaws, He never tires of forgiving and showing us compassion in so many ways. Let us learn from Jesus to see our brothers and sisters not with their flaws, sinfulness and weaknesses but with a selfless love, without prejudice and discrimination, full of compassion and forgiveness.

TUESDAY

"He is with me."

John 8:21-30 Again, Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and though you look for me, you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come." The Jews wondered, "Why does he say that we can't come where he is going? Will he kill himself?" But Jesus said, "You are from below and I am from above; you are of this world and I am not of this world. That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. And you shall die in your sins, unless you believe that I am He." They asked him, "Who are you?"; and Jesus said, "Just what I have told you from the beginning. I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the One who sent me is truthful and everything I learned from him, I proclaim to the world." They didn't understand that Jesus was speaking to them about the Father. So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and that I do nothing of myself, but I say just what the Father taught me. He who sent me is with me and has not left me alone; because I always do what pleases him." As Jesus spoke like this, many believed in him. Sin brings death to the life that the Lord desires for us to live through the life of His Son, Jesus Christ.

To be able to journey closely with the living Christ is to die from the ways that keep us away from the path He leads us into-fulness of life in love. In this journey with Jesus, let us learn to replace fear with trust and confidence on how He teaches us to live and love others, the way God loved us first.

WEDNESDAY

"Be my true disciple"

John 8:31-42 Jesus went on to say to the Jews who believed in him, "You will be my true disciples, if you keep my word. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are the descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves of anyone. What do you mean by saying: You will be free?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave. But the slave doesn't stay in the house forever; the son stays forever. So, if the Son makes you free, you will be really free. I know that you are the descendants of Abraham; yet you want to kill me because my word finds no place in you. For my part, I speak of what I have seen in my Father's presence, but you do what you have learned from your father." They answered him, "Our father is Abraham." Then Jesus said, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do as Abraham did. But now you want to kill me, the one who tells you the truth—the truth that I have learned from God. That is not what Abraham did; what you are doing are the works of your father." The Jews said to him, "We are not illegitimate children; we have one Father, God." Jesus replied, "If God were your Father you would love me, for I came forth from God, and I am here. And I didn't come by my own decision, but it was he himself who sent me."

As Jesus' disciples, He invites us to follow Him not only on how we see Him and who we think He was, but to let His words concretely work in our lives, not only in order to live with Him but to be like Him. Let us continue to fix the eyes of our hearts on Him through our charism as Verbum Dei.

THURSDAY

"Be the new us"

Ephesians 4:20-32.

But it is not for this, that you have followed Christ. For, I suppose, that you heard of him, and received his teaching, which is seen in Jesus himself. You must give up your former way of living, the old self, whose deceitful

desires bring self-destruction. Renew yourselves, spiritually, from inside, and put on the new self, or self, according to God, that is created in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, give up lying; let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry, but do not sin: do not let your anger last until the end of the day, lets you give the devil a foothold. Let the one who used to steal, steal no more, but busy himself, working usefully with his hands, so that he may have something to share with the needy. Do not let even one bad word come from your mouth, but only good words, that will encourage when necessary, and be helpful to those who hear. Do not sadden the Holy Spirit of God, who you were marked with. He will be your distinctive mark on the day of salvation. Do away with all quarreling, rage, anger, insults and every kind of malice: be good and understanding, forgiving one another, as God forgave you, in Christ.

As disciples living out the Word of God, we are one body, one family being nourished by the living word. To journey with Him closely is to really see in our lives what we carry within to share to others whom we pass by along the way. Do we really keep and carry His words that gives life? Let us not allow ourselves to sin and live aimlessly over again. Jesus became human for us to see with human eyes how God wants us to live out the gift of life He gave us.

FRIDAY

"Be the Word of Life"

John 10:31-42.

The Jews then picked up stones to throw at him; so Jesus said, "I have openly done many good works among you, which the Father gave me to do. For which of these do you stone me?" The Jews answered, "We are not stoning you for doing a good work, but for insulting God; you are only a man, and you make yourself God." Then Jesus replied,

"Is this not written in your law: I said, you are gods? So those who received this word of God were called gods, and the Scripture is always true. What then should be said of the one anointed, and sent into the world, by the Father? Am I insulting God when I say, 'I am the Son of God'? If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. But if I do them, even if you have no faith in me, believe because of the works I do; and know that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." Again they tried to arrest him, but Jesus escaped from their hands. He went away again to the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had baptized, and there he stayed. Many people came to Jesus, and said, "John worked no miracles, but he spoke about you, and everything he said was true." And many in that place became believers.

James 2:26

Just as the body is dead without its spirit, so faith without deeds is also dead.

In our journey with Jesus towards His passion, let us examine ourselves, are we happily working things for Him or are we happier doing the work He asks of us to be done through our lives? As Jesus' disciples, may the Word of Life deeply rooted in us and nourishing us in spirit- be our strongest motivation to bring these words to others through our lives. Let the Word of God transcend into our actions.

SATURDAY

"Live united in love"

John 11:45-56

Many of the Jews who had come with Mary believed in Jesus when they saw what he did; but some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees called together the Council. They said, "What are we to do? For this man keeps on performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, all the people will believe in him and,

as a result of this, the Romans will come and destroy our Holy Place and our nation." Then one of them, Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! It is better to have one man die for the people than to let the whole nation be destroyed." In saying this Caiaphas did not speak for himself, but being High Priest that year, he foretold like a prophet that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also would die in order to gather into one the scattered children of God. So, from that day on, they were determined to kill him. Because of this, Jesus no longer moved about freely among the Jews. He withdrew instead to the country near the wilderness, and stayed with his disciples in a town called Ephraim. The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and people from everywhere were coming to Jerusalem to purify themselves before the Passover. They looked for Jesus and, as they stood in the temple, they talked with one another, "What do you think? Will he come to the festival?"

Let us always open our hearts and minds that we may not doubt the good and great works God has been doing in us. Jesus came to gather us all, united in this mission of sharing to others the life that is being nurtured in God's word of life and love. As Jesus' disciples He desires that we live our lives to the full- to love as He was taught by His Father.

SUNDAY

**Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion
Blessing of the Palms:**

Matthew 21:1-11

At the Mass:

1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

Psalm: Ps 22

2nd Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel: Matthew 26: 14--27:66

Verbon Dei

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER

"JOURNEY WITH ME"

April 3-April 9, 2017



Objective for the week:

To journey with Jesus in this last week of Lent and enter into His heart, thoughts and perspective.