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**GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER**

Translating the Eucharist into life

July 23-29, 2018

**General Theme:**

The Eucharist forms and transforms apostles

**General Objective:**
To renew constantly my identity as an apostle in the Eucharist

To follow the same steps of Jesus

**Objective of the week:**

To learn before the tabernacle how to translate and transform into life the truths of faith we are to proclaim to others

**INTRODUCTION**

As Apostles of Christ, we are called to transmit the truths of our faith not just with ideas and words but with our lives. It is in the Eucharist that we come to know how to translate them into our life for others. Jaime Bonet stressed the importance of the Eucharist as a forge where the genuine personality of the evangelizer is formed through a transforming dialogue with Jesus (A Heart on Fire page 27).

 How can we make our life the bearer of the fire of God’s love when we don’t draw closer to him. It is God’s blessing to see with our eyes what is shown in the Eucharist. We need to value the very presence of Jesus in the tabernacle and spend time with him there, listening to his words where our ears can hear the “Good News.” It is through our constant visitation of the Blessed Sacrament that can transform us into real servants of the WORD.

 The Eucharist in the tabernacle is the *word made flesh*, so therefore we need to receive it as often as we can through the Holy Mass. It is where our lives will also be transformed to the life Jesus in the Eucharist. Our life must also become the word of God made flesh and be shared to others.

Jaime Bonet taught us:

Since the participation in the Body and Blood of Christ makes us “become what we receive”, christifying us, the Holy Eucharist constitutes the center of our purest affections, the fountain of our fruitful life and the stability of a life of imperturable peace and joy.

(A Heart On Fire page 36)

 This week we are reminded to follow the example of Jaime Bonet who spent most of his life before the tabernacle until he is transformed, we are also called to do the same.

Jaime Bonet underlines:

“Our own eternal life and that of many, depends on the contact, communion, and vital transmission that emanates from our living dialogue with Christ.”

**MONDAY**

**The right will be clearly seen**

Memorial of St. Bridget of Sweden

**1 Cor 11:17-22**

**17**In the following instructions, however, I do not praise you, because your meetings for worship actually do more harm than good. **18**In the first place, I have been told that there are opposing groups in your meetings; and this I believe is partly true. (**19**No doubt there must be divisions among you so that the ones who are in the right may be clearly seen.) **20**When you meet together as a group, it is not the Lord's Supper that you eat. **21**For as you eat, you each go ahead with your own meal, so that some are hungry while others get drunk. **22**Don't you have your own homes in which to eat and drink? Or would you rather despise the church of God and put to shame the people who are in need? What do you expect me to say to you about this? Shall I praise you? Of course I don't!

This is now the moment where we are given the time to ponder our following as Christians. How beautiful if we can spend quality time with Jesus’ presence in the tabernacle. Let us listen to him, especially in the passage given to us for this day. We are invited to examine ourselves with these questions:

*How is my following as a Christian?*

*Am I for Jesus or for myself only?*

*Is my heart and mind set for what is right and good in the eyes of God?*

*Did I live out the word of God that said: “What you do the least of my brothers and sisters you do it unto me”?*

**TUESDAY**

**Look and listen to our God who heals us**

Memorial of St. Sharbel Makhlūf

**Mt. 13:14-17**

**14**So the prophecy of Isaiah applies to them:

‘This people will listen and listen, but not understand;
    they will look and look, but not see,
**15**because their minds are dull,
    and they have stopped up their ears
    and have closed their eyes.
Otherwise, their eyes would see,
    their ears would hear,
    their minds would understand,
and they would turn to me, says God,
    and I would heal them.’

**16**“As for you, how fortunate you are! Your eyes see and your ears hear. **17**I assure you that many prophets and many of God's people wanted very much to see what you see, but they could not, and to hear what you hear, but they did not.

How much time do we spend in listening to what is the TRUTH? Are we aware of so many fake news and situations in our society today? We are to thank our Lord and God for blessing us to set our eyes on what is shown in the Eucharist. He reminded us to use properly our eyes and ears in order that we can follow him closely. Jesus is the only source of TRUTH, so no need to limit ourselves in following him. How good that we are Verbum Dei. This is a great opportunity to know the TRUTH for we are so close to the Good News. By being with his words, he can help us develop the attitude of using our eyes and ears to listen and see the goodness of the Lord in our life.

**WEDNESDAY**

**Life is at work in us**

Feast of St. James, Apostle

**2 Cor 4:7-12**

**7**Yet we who have this spiritual treasure are like common clay pots, in order to show that the supreme power belongs to God, not to us. **8**We are often troubled, but not crushed; sometimes in doubt, but never in despair; **9**there are many enemies, but we are never without a friend; and though badly hurt at times, we are not destroyed. **10**At all times we carry in our mortal bodies the death of Jesus, so that his life also may be seen in our bodies. **11**Throughout our lives we are always in danger of death for Jesus' sake, in order that his life may be seen in this mortal body of ours. **12**This means that death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

God shows always his concern to us because for him we are the bearers of his love. His love is the greatest treasure on earth. It is wonderful to note that God trusts so much our life to be the bearer of this great treasure. Being bearers of his love, we can come closer to him and can enjoy his care and protection.

*Are you aware of the intention of God in your life? Are you open and willing to be the bearer of God’s love for others? How?*

**THURSDAY**

**Speak what we believe**

Feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**2 Cor 4:13-15**

**13**The scripture says, “I spoke because I believed.” In the same spirit of faith we also speak because we believe. **14**We know that God, who raised the Lord Jesus to life, will also raise us up with Jesus and take us, together with you, into his presence. **15**All this is for your sake; and as God's grace reaches more and more people, they will offer to the glory of God more prayers of thanksgiving.

We are reminded today how important is our role as believers and followers of Jesus Christ. We are needed by God to help him in his big project of evangelization, spreading his love to the whole world. We are invited to learn more about God’s love by listening to Jesus intently, everytime we are in front of the blessed sacrament. As Verbum Dei apostles and disciples, the seed of evangelization has been already planted in us with the help of the Verbum Dei missionary community.

*Are you nurturing it? How much time do you spend in prayer every day? Do you often visit the Blessed Sacrament? Did you allow the words of God to nourish you every day? How? Why?*

**FRIDAY**

**Stay with me for you to learn from me**

**Mt. 26:36-46**

**36**Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” **37**He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Grief and anguish came over him, **38**and he said to them, “The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

**39**He went a little farther on, threw himself face downward on the ground, and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want.”

**40**Then he returned to the three disciples and found them asleep; and he said to Peter, “How is it that you three were not able to keep watch with me for even one hour? **41**Keep watch and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

**42**Once more Jesus went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cup of suffering cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done.” **43**He returned once more and found the disciples asleep; they could not keep their eyes open.

**44**Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. **45**Then he returned to the disciples and said, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners. **46**Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!”

Jesus is asking us to stay with him as he prayed also for us. He is setting us an example on how to remain with the Father as the true source of everlasting love. Jesus is begging each one of us to spend just an hour each day in order to recharge to the true source of love. It is only in Jesus that we can learn how to connect to the Father. In this way we will know how to bring the love of the Father to others. We are invited again to fix our eyes in Jesus as we stay in front of the tabernacle. To listen to him and ponder his words. This is the only way where our hearts and minds will be transformed to become real bearers of the love of God.

*Are you willing to be transformed by the love of God as a Verbum Dei apostle and Disciple? How? When do you allow yourself to be transformed?*

Let us fix our eyes in Jesus’ encounter with the Father in Gethsemane, how this encounter transformed him in the way he lived in his passion, death, and resurrection, in which His life encourages others in the process.

**SATURDAY**

**Give it to them to eat**

**2 Kings 4:42-44**

**42**Another time, a man came from Baal Shalishah, bringing Elisha twenty loaves of bread made from the first barley harvested that year, and some freshly-cut heads of grain. Elisha told his servant to feed the group of prophets with this, **43**but he answered, “Do you think this is enough for a hundred men?”

Elisha replied, “Give it to them to eat, because the Lord says that they will eat and still have some left over.” **44**So the servant set the food before them, and as the Lord had said, they all ate, and there was still some left over.

How beautiful if we see the value of our life the way Jesus values our life? He is reminding us today that our life has a very important purpose: “We are servants of the word.” This is the intention of God for each of us, He is even calling each one in our name according to this purpose. We are called to serve the word of God to everyone. God sent Jesus to us in order to transform our hearts and minds because of this purpose. We are to be Christ in our different realities in a way that we are requested by Jesus to help him serve the word of God to others in order that “these others” will be nourished too. Our life is the best bearer of the word of God if it is seen in the way we live. The best life we can serve is by being Christ to others.

**SUNDAY**

**17th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**1st Reading**  2 Kings 4:42-44

**Responsorial Psalm** Psalm 145

**2nd Reading**  Ephesians 4:1-6

**Gospel** John 6:1-15