

WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

Readings: Zec 12:10-11, 13:1 Ps 63:2-6, 8-9 Gal 3:26-29 Lk 9:18-24	12 th Sunday in Ordinary Time June 20, 2010
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Word:	Remembering Christ's love is sharing life with Him.
Theme:	We share life with Christ when we deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Him. [Self- Denial]
Promise:	"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." (Luke 9:24)

Reflection:

Our theme for this week centers on self-denial as a virtue. It is perhaps the most difficult phase in our discipleship formation, but the most important test to pass in order for us to move forward in our relationship with Jesus, and living in unity with one another. Not that Jesus wants us to suffer, but it is a discipline that enables us to fulfill the one important commandment He gave us, and that is, to love one another as He had loved us, His Church. Christ's love is not self-centered. It moves away from the self and reaches out to the other. Ironically, when we love, pain is not far behind. It pains us to see a loved one castigated, or suffer from terminal illness; it hurts us to hear insults hurled at people we care about. Love and pain co-exist. It is a fact of life. Scripture tells us that our life on earth will not be free of trials, but one will be subjected to testing at some point or other in his lifetime and those who prevail will inherit the promise of eternal life. It is a race set by God Himself, about who can love as much as He does, and the prize is eternal joy in heaven for whoever wins and finishes the race. The only requirement is to love like Jesus. Jesus is God's expression of love for us. He gave Jesus to us, His only Son, to bear our sins and save us from eternal damnation. Jesus' love for the Father is expressed in His obedience to the Father's will, to the point even of dying on the cross for sins He did not commit. He gave up His life and even gave more; He yielded His Spirit, that we may be empowered to fight the wiles and temptations of the evil one. Christian love is sacrificial love.

Stated plainly, our theme says: **We share life with Christ when we deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Him.** In the second reading, Gal 3:26-29, it says: **"Through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ....You are all one in Christ..."** Our baptism has laid for us the foundation of our Christianity, with Christ as the cornerstone, the very example that we ought to emulate. Through our baptism, we put on Christ and dress ourselves with His deeds of love. And through our baptism, we are now sons and daughters of God. Through faith and its accompanying baptism, we are fused into the body of believers in Christ, and into the symbiotic unity that takes place therein. No more Jew or Greek, no ethnicity, gender, or social class, no distinctions but through faith, all are co-heirs to the promise of eternal salvation.

Going to the Gospel Reading from which our theme was derived, it may be important to ask ourselves the very same question Jesus asked Peter, **"Who do you say I am?"** Who is Jesus to me? Those of us in the renewal may perhaps be able to give deeper answers as we have come to know Jesus in a deeper way. However, we may also have differing answers to the same question, depending on our belief system of who Jesus really is to us, personally. The

gospel shows the answer in the following verse, ***“the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised....If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”*** Christ bore His cross in obedience to the Father for the love of the world. Cross-bearing for Him was not exclusive to His crucifixion, but included daily self-denial, as shown in His continuing to minister to the crowds despite his desire and urgent need for rest and solitude. His earthly life was not without stress. He faced much hardship and sacrifice, and He gave generously and selflessly of His time, talent - and one would think, treasures - to the lost sheep of His pasture.

Similarly in our lives, we face the same challenge of sacrificial love. Are we prepared to win this race? Can we accept the challenge in faith, knowing that to do so is our way of keeping fellowship with Christ in sharing His love for others? In life, we experience many crosses. At times, we ignore them, or run away from them. But as Christians called to be His disciples in BLD, we are to take up the challenge, for indeed many crosses are waiting to find shoulders that can bear them, and arms to embrace them. Our response to the many needs of our Community is crucial to the life of BLD; and even of our families and nation. As we are called to share in the suffering of Christ, we can pray for the grace to bear our cross/crosses with love, and take comfort in the hope offered by the promise that goes with it, taken from the Gospel, Luke 9:24 which says, ***“For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”***

Prayer:

Father, how good it is for You to love me despite my inconsistencies and my unfaithfulness. Undeserving that I am, You showed me what real love is. And I can only thank You, for the many times You have extended Your forgiving love, Your healing love, Your merciful love to me. I ask for that grace, O Lord God, to be able to rise from my difficulties in loving others like Your Son, Jesus. Help me to be strong enough to forgive and extend my love to people who need it the most, in my family, in my workplace, in my community. I trust in You Lord and I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Suggested Personal Reflection:

1. What difficulties in life can I associate with cross-bearing? How was I able to hurdle my test/s of faith?
2. How did it affect my spiritual life, my relationships? Share a victorious experience on self-denial.

Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:

June 21, 2010	2 Kgs 17: 5-8, 13-15, 18; Ps 60: 3, 4-5, 12-13; Mt 7: 1-5
June 22, 2010	2 Kgs 19: 9-11, 14-21, 31-35, 36; Ps 48: 2-3, 3-4, 10-11; Mt 7: 6, 12-14
June 23, 2010	Jer 1: 4-10; Ps 71: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 15, 17; 1 Pt 1: 8-12; Lk 1: 5-17
June 24, 2010	Is 49: 1-6; Ps 139: 1-3, 13-14, 14-15; Acts 13: 22-26; Lk 1: 57-66, 80
June 25, 2010	2 Kgs 25: 1-12; Ps 137: 1-2, 3, 4-5, 6; Mt 8: 1-4
June 26, 2010	Lam 2: 2, 10-14, 18-19; Ps 74: 1-2, 3-5, 6-7, 20-21; Mt 8: 5-17

“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”