

WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

Readings: Isaiah 6:1-8
Psalm 138:1-5, 7-8
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 7, 2010

Word: Disciples of Christ obey His call to spread the Good News of salvation.

Theme: We spread the Good News of salvation when we depend on and trust in God's grace. [Submission]

Promise: *"...you have made great above all things your name and your promise. When I called, you answered me; you built up strength within me."* (Ps 138:3)

Reflection:

"The BLDGK Ministry members were awake at the crack of dawn on a rainy Sunday for the two-hour drive to Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. They were eager to conduct a Basic Bible Seminar (BBS).

It was the first time for most of the participants to hold a Bible. At the far end of the packed room, a frail-looking man in his mid-50s was visibly struggling with the first exercise. I immediately approached him. I saw the pain in his eyes as he struggled to write down the titles of the different books of the Bible. He got stuck with "Exodo" and lagged far behind the rest of the class.

I soon realized what his problem was. He could barely write and was patiently copying from the blackboard, one letter at a time. But it did not stop him from actively participating and listening intently all day long.

It was almost dark and it was pouring when we left the Fr. Lehman's BLD-GK village. My husband, Raul, and I were tired, sweaty and smelly. But our hearts were full of joy and love. We had done our part in spreading the Gospel, at least for that day." (Bible Reflection for January 11, 2010, Didache)

This BLDGK episode is no doubt an all too familiar story for most of us in community who strive to obey God's call to spread the Good News of salvation. The response could come in many forms i.e., building homes in a BLD GK village, sponsoring an encounter weekend, shepherding at an LSS outreach, visiting inmates at the Correctional Institute for Women or the Bilibid Prison, and many more. Often, we become over-anxious or pre-occupied with the logistics – the preparations, fundraising, securing volunteers, recruiting candidates, while engaged in other secular pursuits. And when we do go out to evangelize, we have a tendency to rely on our own human resources and ability, forgetting that we are merely the Lord's instruments in building His kingdom.

Our readings this Sunday demonstrate, in the persons of Isaiah, Paul and Peter, how the Lord manifests His presence and His grace in our lives, as we reach out to others and go about doing our work in His vineyard. In the 1st reading, the seraphim touches the mouth of Isaiah and declares, **“See, now that this has touched your lips, your wickedness is removed, your sin purged,”** (Is 6:7). In so doing, without much physical preparation, the Lord instantly empowers Isaiah to go and become a prophet speaking in God’s name. And it was sufficient for Isaiah to respond in humble obedience, **“Here I am...send me!”** (Is 6:8).

In the 2nd reading, Paul makes known that it is not by his own power that he is able to go and preach, but by God’s grace. **“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been ineffective. Indeed, I have toiled harder than all of them; not I, however, but the grace of God that is with me,”** (1 Cor 15:10).

Finally, the gospel tells us that the Lord knew the disciples had been fishing all night without bringing in a catch, yet He commands them to cast their nets. One can imagine Simon Peter’s consternation, “Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets,” (Luke 5:5). We all know how the story ends. A great number of fish were caught and their nets were tearing. And all Peter had to do to release God’s bounty was suspend his skepticism and obey Jesus.

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Covenant Community, there can be no better time for us to reflect upon the lives of these servants of the Lord and emulate them. Inspired by our Global Spiritual Director, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, the theme of our year-long silver anniversary celebration revolves around God’s word in the gospel, **“Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch,”** (Luke 5:4).

Let us, as one body moving forward in Christ, embark on our mission for the next 25 years, following in the footsteps of the prophet Isaiah who willingly submitted to the Lord’s calling. Let us heed the words of Paul who relied on God’s grace to do the work. And most of all, let us keep our faith burning like Simon Peter who remained steadfast in his trust and confidence, regardless of the circumstances, **“If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth,”** (1 Pet 4:11).

Prayer:

Lord, thank you that among so many others, you have called us to serve you in the Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Covenant Community. As ambassadors for Christ, we commit ourselves to serve You with all humility. We pray that You will give us the grace to be steadfast, unmovable, and always abounding in Your work. Use us to heal the sick, comfort the brokenhearted and preach deliverance to the captives. Let us do Your will and help finish Your work. Empower us to be Your ministers and witnesses that we may declare Your glory and be a light to others. By Your divine grace, may we be Your chosen vessels to bear Your. All this we ask in the mighty name of Jesus Amen.

Suggested Personal Reflection Guide:

1. When we go out to do mission work, do we become overly anxious, leaning more on ourselves rather than on God's grace for guidance and support?
2. Whenever we are asked to join an outreach program, do we respond as Isaiah did and willingly say to the Lord, "Here I am, send me."

Next Week's Daily Mass Reading Guide:

February 08, 2010 (Mon):	1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13; Ps 132:6-10; Mk 6:53-56
February 09, 2010 (Tue):	1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30; Ps 84:3-5, 10-11; Mk 7:1-13
February 10, 2010 (Wed):	1 Kgs 10:1-10; Ps 37:30-31, 39-40; Mk 7:14-23
February 11, 2010 (Thur):	1 Kgs 11:4-13; Ps 106:3-4, 35-37, 40; Mk 7:24-30
February 12, 2010 (Fri):	1 Kgs 11:29-32, 12:19; Ps 81:10-15; Mk 31-37
February 13, 2010 (Sat):	1 Kgs 12:26-32, 13:33-34; Ps 106:6-7, 19-22; Mk 8:1-10

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