

1. Totally for the Gospel



Theme: Our relationship with Christ and his Mission

Aspects: Baptism as the root of our vocation.
Living the Charism to the full.

Keywords: Total dedication. Gift of one's self. The meaning/sense of our lives.

“Profession is deeply rooted in baptismal consecration, and is a fuller expression of it. Consequently, by this act, the members are incorporated in a particular way into the mission of Christ as ministers of the Gospel, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.” (C.47) The members of the Congregation confirm their personal and community life by religious profession, so as to bind themselves totally to the work of the Gospel and to the perfect practice of apostolic charity, for this is the very purpose of the Congregation.” (C.46)

The third Chapter of our Constitutions strongly links the gift of religious profession to our baptismal consecration (C.47). By our consecration we are called to a deep personal relationship with Christ (C.49; 50), and to participate in a special way in the mystery and mission of Christ (C.48), within the Church (C.50).



Introduction

A crucifix or an image of Jesus significant for the group is placed on a table at the centre along with a bowl of water, which will be used in the renewal of baptismal vows. A member leads the group in seeking the light of

the Holy Spirit. A hymn or appropriate song may also be used.

Lived Experience

The world continues to change at a fast pace. There's so much to do and so little time. At times one is not sure as to what to do and how to do it. Often one can get discouraged. Questionings and doubts assail us from different quarters. Alphonsus had the same experience. His times were also difficult. He grounded the sense and meaning of his life and of the new Congregation he was founding precisely in Jesus Christ and his mission.

As you look at what is going on around you:

What are the challenges you feel?

What is your experience?

Do I feel challenged to live my vowed life in a more committed way? How? Why?

Each is invited to share this with the group.

The Word of God

Let us now read the text of Luke 5: 1-11. The reading should be done meditatively, with a short period of silence after it is finished.

a. The members are invited to narrate in their own words what is said in this text. Highlight what is considered crucial in the passage at this point in his life.

b. If a member wishes, he can also share how he experienced being called as a Christian to follow Jesus in a deeper way.

c. What is the significance of verses 10-11 for an understanding of discipleship in Luke's Gospel?

Meditation and Reflection

a. We now consider what God has been saying to us personally and as a community thus far in our reflection together. Share with the group what you think the Lord is 'revealing' to you through your faith-sharing together.

b. What obstacles within me block a fuller participation in Christ's mission and a fuller practice of apostolic charity to which I have vowed myself? What do I still need to leave behind in order to follow Jesus more completely? In what we have shared so far, what is God specifically demanding of me as Redeemtorist?

Prayer and Supplication

God speaks to us in so many ways. After sharing our experiences and dreams, let us take time to respond in prayer to God, to what he is saying to us 'this day.'

Repeat as you breathe in or breathe out the prayer Alphonsus often quotes "My God and my All." Let your heart speak to God. Anyone who wishes may express out loud in his own words his response to God.

After a few minutes, conclude the prayer by saying together the Our Father.

Sharing Vision and Resolutions

We are being called to a fuller dedication of ourselves as disciples of Jesus. As with the apostles in the Gospel, for us too this is a process of gradual growth, as persons and as community.

a. How am I personally open to growth in understanding and implementing the demands of discipleship?

b. How can we help each other to live more fully and with greater enthusiasm our total dedication to Christ and his Mission?

Preparation for the Next Meeting

Arrange the date and time of the next meeting and invite a member of the group to coordinate it and prepare its final celebration. You are asked to bring one or two cut-outs that express some predominant features of the consumerist society in which we live as well as a picture of yourself. These will be used in a collage.

Celebration

The community celebrates a paraliturgy in which the members renew their baptismal vows. A text for this celebration is given in the Appendix. Two by two members of the community come forward and sprinkle each other with water from the bowl prepared beforehand.

