

# *Lesson #4*

## *The Apostolic Heart*

**The Grace I am seeking . . .**

*To understand and live more fully the Cenacle's challenge to "be good, do good, be a power for good."*

**Before each prayer session:**

*O Holy Spirit, fill me with Yourself; fill me with love. Help me to feel loved by the Father and by Jesus. Help me to feel loved by my Associates. Set me on fire with love. Teach me how to love the Father and Jesus. Teach me to love my Associates and my neighbors. As you taught the first Apostles at Pentecost to communicate the love of God to all persons, teach me to be the apostle I have been called to be. Let me bring the message of the Father's love and Jesus' love to all, but especially to those who really do not know You, who do not feel loved. Help me, O Holy Spirit of love, to be an apostle of love. Amen.*

**After each prayer session:**

*Jesus, spark me with your Holy Spirit and grant that I may never merit the condemnation of the lukewarm, whom You have declared You will vomit from Your mouth. Fire me with a passion for life, and a passion for loving You, my brothers and sisters, and all of creation. Holy Spirit, completely fill me as You filled my brother Jesus. Produce in me the same mind that was in Jesus so that I, like Him, will be consumed with a passion for the will of His Father and my Father. Amen.*

# *Missionary Cenacle Practice and Devotion*

Father Judge encouraged each Cenacle Missionary to choose a virtue and work for its acquisition for at least one year. This was called a **practice**. A simple process for selecting a practice and helping to grow in that practice might include the following steps:

- 1. Take time to examine your life, especially your weaknesses and failings.** In what areas is the Holy Spirit inviting you to grow? Where do you sense that you are the weakest or most in need to conversion? Don't become discouraged by this. Thank God also very much for the virtues and gifts you see already present in your life!
- 2. Choose a virtue that will best help you to grow in this area.** For example, if you notice that you are very reluctant to act out of shyness, you may want to work on the virtue of courage. If you are harsh on people in your judgements or your words, you may need to develop the virtue of charity of humility.
- 3. Talk to your spiritual director or a trustworthy spiritual friend about your choice.** Sometimes we don't see or know ourselves as well as others do. We either may be too hard on ourselves or we may be missing completely what is an obvious area of needed growth. A good spiritual director or spiritual friend should be able to help you in this.
- 4. Daily do an examination of conscience on this virtue.** Father Judge used to recommend we spend a few minutes to make what he called a "particular examen" every day at noon on our practice. How are we doing with it during these past twenty-four hours? Where have we seen ourselves exercising this virtue we are attempting to acquire? When have we failed to put this virtue into practice?
- 5. Once a week, on Tuesdays, reflect and pray about the pursuit of this chosen virtue.** What Scriptures or other readings can help you understand and love this virtue more? What examples of this virtue do you see being exercised in the lives of people you know? Use good role models to understand how to live this particular virtue more fully.
- 6. After a year -- or sooner -- talk to your spiritual director about your practice.** It may be time to move on to another area of growth and development in your spiritual life. God will show this to you with the help of a trusted spiritual friend or guide.

Let the Holy Spirit do awesome things in your life! May you grow daily ever more fully into the image and person of Christ!

# *Introduction*

The missionary life, as envisioned by Father Judge, was a relatively simple affair. There was a place for everyone in the work. You didn't need an advanced degree or a powerful position in society. You didn't have to have a profound knowledge of the life of mysticism. You didn't have to engage in a certain type of work. Rather, Father Judge summarized the entire missionary vocation in three simple phrases: **“Be good, do good, be a power for good!”** When all was said and done, that was the very heart of the missionary call as he understood it.

**“Be good”**: become aware of those areas of your life where you need to change and grow. Ask the Holy Spirit for the grace you need to become all that God has created you to be. Allow virtue to grow within you.

**“Do good”**: it is not enough to simply “be holy” ourselves. Rather, goodness by its very nature needs to reach out to others, to extend itself. Goodness is the radiant beam of God's love and light shining forth in our hearts. We need to allow that goodness to be expressed in acts of charity and kindness to others, especially the poorest and most abandoned among us.

**“Be a power for good”**: as God's life grows within you, you naturally communicate that life to others. Beyond the immediate good that you do, you lead others to a deepening knowledge and love of God in their lives. Through your example, words, and prayer others are brought to a deeper following of Jesus. Your life becomes a dynamic center of goodness which, through others, extends way beyond the immediate good you yourself are able to do.

This is the essential core of the missionary vocation and call. In a sense, it describes the “apostolic heart.” Although it seems very simple, it is surprisingly deceptive. It takes a life time of love, faith, and prayer to let the Holy Spirit make these simple words a reality in our lives. But the power for good that is released through a living of this missionary vocation will extend far beyond the immediate reach of our lives. The apostolic heart really is the heart of Jesus who “went about doing good” (*Acts 10:38*)!

# *Process for Daily Prayer*

**▮ Read each passage once slowly, then reread it. Underline or mark any phrases or ideas that strike you.**

**▮ Think about what you've read. What attracts, challenges, excites, or upsets you? Perhaps the questions below can help you in your reflection.**

**▮ Talk to God about it. Whatever is on your heart -- concerns, anger, hopes, dreams, joy, thanksgiving -- open it up to God.**

**▮ Rest a while and let God speak to you in the quiet.**

# WEEK I

## ***Weekend Reflection: Holiness and Your Baptism***

*[Before the Second Vatican Council, the Church saw the laity as sharing in the mission of Jesus by “helping” or “aiding” the priest. The laity’s mission thus depended in large part on what the priest would ask -- or not ask -- them to do. The bishops at the Second Vatican Council, however, began to see and to teach that this limited the initiative of the laity. It also truncated their own sense of call and mission. What the Church came to understand and teach is that each baptized person is called to mission precisely because of their baptism into Christ. Union with Christ in holiness of life is the essential core of the missionary life. This is always done in communion with the pastors of the Church but not waiting or depending upon the pastors. Personal holiness which springs from union with Jesus is the essential core. The following reading from the Second Vatican Council Decree on the Laity makes this point strongly:]*

“3. The laity derive the right and duty to the apostolate from their union with Christ the head; incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord Himself. They are consecrated for the royal priesthood and the holy people (cf. 1 Peter 2:4-10) not only that they may offer spiritual sacrifices in everything they do but also that they may witness to Christ throughout the world. The sacraments, however, especially the most holy Eucharist, communicate and nourish that charity which is the soul of the entire apostolate.[3]

“One engages in the apostolate through the faith, hope, and charity which the Holy Spirit diffuses in the hearts of all members of the Church. Indeed, by the precept of charity, which is the Lord's greatest commandment, all the faithful are impelled to promote the glory of God through the coming of His kingdom and to obtain eternal life for all men--that they may know the only true God and Him whom He sent, Jesus Christ (cf. John 17:3). On all Christians therefore is laid the preeminent responsibility of working to make the divine message of salvation known and accepted by all men throughout the world.

“For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit Who sanctifies the people of God through ministry and the sacraments gives the faithful special gifts also (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7), "allotting them to everyone according as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:11) in order that individuals, administering grace to others just as they have received it, may also be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10), to build up the whole body in charity (cf. Eph. 4:16). From the acceptance of these charisms, including those which are more elementary, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the building up of the Church, in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where He wills" (John 3:8). This should be done by the laity in communion with their brothers in

Christ, especially with their pastors who must make a judgment about the true nature and proper use of these gifts not to extinguish the Spirit but to test all things and hold for what is good (cf. 1 Thess. 5:12, 19, 21).[4]

“4. Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and origin of the whole apostolate of the Church, the success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity's living union with Christ, in keeping with the Lord's words, "He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids which are common to all the faithful, especially active participation in the sacred liturgy.[5] These are to be used by the laity in such a way that while correctly fulfilling their secular duties in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate union with Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. In this way the laity must make progress in holiness in a happy and ready spirit, trying prudently and patiently to overcome difficulties.[6] Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life, in keeping with the words of the Apostle, "Whatever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17).

“Such a life requires a continual exercise of faith, hope, and charity. Only by the light of faith and by meditation on the word of God can one always and everywhere recognize God in Whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), seek His will in every event, see Christ in everyone whether he be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to man's final goal.”

*Do you feel as if you have been “assigned to the apostolate by the Lord Himself”? If not, where do you think your call comes from? How much do you feel you need to “wait for directions” before engaging in apostolic work? Since the “success” of the apostolate depends upon your “living union with Christ,” what is the current condition of your union with Him? Do you feel like you are close friends, lovers, acquaintances, distant relatives, or boss and trainee?*

**p Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## WEEK I

### Monday: “A greater love of God”

*From Father Judge:*

“This year how many added reasons we have for thanking and praising God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit because of the graces and favors received. Each . . . will note their own personal obligation for thanksgiving because of their particular graces. What an interesting recital it would be if these could be mentioned, and told of. There is one outstanding blessing so remarkable among the rest that a special note must be made of it. This is the marked perfection of the entire Cenacle movement, a very noticeable spiritual progress which shows itself . . . as an evident manifestation of God’s Will, that the [Cenacle members] give themselves generously and entirely to a more perfect way of religious living.

“The beginning of this must be a greater love of God and a greater zeal for one’s own soul. What will be done for the neighbor depends upon our love of God and our love of our own souls. I would recommend, then, that each and everyone should study carefully and meditate on the difference between the salvation of our soul and its sanctification.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.203)

*From the Word of God:*

“<sup>23</sup>I am going to display the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am Yahweh—declares the Lord Yahweh—when in you I display my holiness before their eyes.<sup>24</sup>For I shall take you from among the nations and gather you back from all the countries, and bring you home to your own country.<sup>25</sup>I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your filth and of all your foul idols.<sup>26</sup>I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead.<sup>27</sup>I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws, and respect and practise my judgements.<sup>28</sup>You will live in the country which I gave your ancestors. You will be my people and I shall be your God.<sup>29</sup>I shall save you from everything that defiles you, I shall summon the wheat and make it plentiful and impose no more famines on you.<sup>30</sup>I shall increase the yield of tree and field, so that you will never again bear the ignominy of famine among the nations.” (*Ezekiel 36:23-30*)

*Father Judge distinguishes between what he calls “salvation” -- “making it to heaven”! -- and “sanctification” -- being filled with God’s holiness. As you read the section from Ezekiel, ask yourself what is the source of holiness the prophet describes? Will the people make themselves “holy” by certain actions they do or is holiness a freely given gift? How do you look on holiness and your own sanctification? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a “new heart.”*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## ***Tuesday: A “practice”***

*From Father Judge:*

*[For more on the idea of a “practice,” see the section on Missionary Cenacle Practice and Devotion for Lesson #4.]*

“God wishes, indeed, that all men [and women] be saved, but there is a more exacting will of God -- that [women and] men should sanctify their souls. ‘For this is the will of God, your sanctification.’ (*1 Thessalonians 4:3*) The highest manifestation of the Will of God for us is the words of our blessed Savior: ‘Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect’ (*Matthew 5:48*). Ever keep this Gospel of our dear Lord before you. With it we should measure and square and set our every thought, word and action.

“A [Cenacle missionary] will, therefore, realize of what value and importance are the exercises of piety, for example, meditation, spiritual reading, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, . . . and [a] practice. Through this last -- a practice -- we may know how sincere, how interested, how zealous we are for our soul’s perfection. Our relation to our practice is the story of our interest in our soul’s welfare. I am anxious that all should have a practice . . . and be faithful to it.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.203)

*From the Word of God:*

“5 Put yourselves to the test to make sure you are in the faith. Examine yourselves. Do you not recognise yourselves as people in whom Jesus Christ is present?—unless, that is, you fail the test.6 But we, as I hope you will come to recognise, do not fail the test.7 It is our prayer to God that you may do nothing wrong—not so that we have the credit of passing a test, but because you will be doing what is right, even if we do not pass the test.8 We have no power to resist the truth; only to further the truth;9 and we are delighted to be weak if only you are strong. What we ask in our prayers is that you should be made perfect.10 That is why I am writing this while still far away, so that when I am with you I shall not have to be harsh, with the authority that the Lord has given me, an authority that is for building up and not for breaking down.” (*2 Corinthians 13:5-10*)

***St. Paul tells the Corinthians to “examine themselves.” Father Judge urges us to do the same. What is the biggest single challenge in your life right now, the area where you feel farthest from God? What is the sin or character defect that you feel God is calling you to change? Be as specific as possible . . . and only identify one! God helps us to grow little by little. Spend some time examining yourself. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you that area where God is inviting you to grow.***

**Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## Wednesday: “The school of virtue”

*From Father Judge:*

“Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart’ (*Matthew 11:29*) ‘God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble’ (*James 4:6*).

“We should treat Our Lord as a real person. Sometimes we do not put heart enough into our relations to God, put heart into your prayers, and have a personal feeling of love for Jesus. There is a power in those words of our text, the words of a Model, and so it is not hard to follow out His words. Our Lord is a teacher. This is his hardest lesson, humility. But if we have a personal feeling for Christ, we shall not find it hard, for He is so close to us. God loves the humble best of all, and we all want God to love us.

“In the spiritual life there are three states: the purgative, or repentance after long sin; the illuminative, or that of advance in the way of God; and that of perfection, where the soul is sanctified. This is the school of virtue. You want to become dearer to Almighty God. God fights and resists the proud, those who have an inordinate love of themselves. They think they are built of a certain kind of clay, of a superior sort.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.202)

*From the Word of God:*

“**3** Now Moses was extremely humble, the humblest man on earth. (*Numbers 12:3*)

“Where do these wars and battles between yourselves first start? Is it not precisely in the desires fighting inside your own selves?<sup>2</sup> You want something and you lack it; so you kill. You have an ambition that you cannot satisfy; so you fight to get your way by force. It is because you do not pray that you do not receive;<sup>3</sup> when you do pray and do not receive, it is because you prayed wrongly, wanting to indulge your passions.<sup>4</sup> Adulterers! Do you not realize that love for the world is hatred for God? Anyone who chooses the world for a friend is constituted an enemy of God.<sup>5</sup> Can you not see the point of the saying in scripture, ‘The longing of the spirit he sent to dwell in us is a jealous longing.’<sup>6</sup> But he has given us an even greater grace, as scripture says: God opposes the proud but he accords his favour to the humble.<sup>7</sup> Give in to God, then; resist the devil, and he will run away from you.<sup>8</sup> The nearer you go to God, the nearer God will come to you. Clean your hands, you sinners, and clear your minds, you waverers.<sup>9</sup> Appreciate your wretchedness, and weep for it in misery. Your laughter must be turned to grief, your happiness to gloom.<sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will lift you up.” (*James 4:1-10*)

*Continue taking time to look at yourself. Examine your daily actions, your motives for the things you do. Recognize all within them that is not of God. What are your motives for what you do and say? Don’t become discouraged as these things become clear to you. Rather “humble yourselves before the Lord and he will lift you up.”*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## ***Thursday: Recognizing our need***

*From Father Judge:*

“The thought came to me that it would please our Lord if we were to hear the words that He spoke to us in that consoling Gospel to the sinner . . . He came to us with a message of cheer and encouragement to those who have been wayward; to those who have offended -- even though they were old offenders -- and that message comes in these words: ‘O God, be merciful to me the sinner!’ (*Luke 18:13*) In that very extraordinary Gospel the Lord God rejected an apparently good person . . . He plainly condemned one who passed as very good, as a very just man, a man of good works . . .

“Proud arrogance is condemned and contrite humility is exalted. This Gospel is surprising and terrifying. It is frightful to those who have a sense of security in their own righteousness. To God, the Pharisee was despicable and the Publican blessed. God rejected the man of good works for one who sinned in every way.

“Think of that man who fasted and gave alms, He was distinguished as a man of virtue -- and God rejected him. For what? For a saint? No -- for a man who was guilty of every crime. . . It is certainly a Gospel of mystery.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.239)

*From the Word of God:*

“**9** He spoke the following parable to some people who prided themselves on being upright and despised everyone else,**10** ‘Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector.**11** The Pharisee stood there and said this prayer to himself, ‘I thank you, God, that I am not grasping, unjust, adulterous like everyone else, and particularly that I am not like this tax collector here.**12** I fast twice a week; I pay tithes on all I get.’**13** The tax collector stood some distance away, not daring even to raise his eyes to heaven; but he beat his breast and said, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’**14** This man, I tell you, went home again justified; the other did not. For everyone who raises himself up will be humbled, but anyone who humbles himself will be raised up.’”  
(*Luke 18:9-14*)

*Self-knowledge can be painful, but it is a very important -- essential! -- grace of the Holy Spirit. If we can recognize our sinfulness, our brokenness, our need for God's mercy, then God can heal, forgive and transform us. Recognition, humble acknowledgment, and repentance is the first step. As you continue to look at your own life, what are those areas -- present and past -- of which you need to repent? Humbly acknowledge this before God. Ask for forgiveness and new life.*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## ***Friday: “A divine idea”***

*From Father Judge:*

“Thinking it over [the Gospel on the Publican and the Pharisee], meditating upon it -- if we dare to question the divine act, we say, ‘Why?’ Our Lord gives us the reasons: because one man said, and the other did not, ‘O God, be merciful to me the sinner.’ There was no request in the Pharisee’s prayer, only extolling of his own virtues -- particularly over the Publican. He prayed but his prayer was a litany of his own good deeds. He told of his virtues. He told our Lord of the good things he did and told our Lord he was glad he was not like the Publican. That Publican must have been a very bad man -- if all the Pharisee said about him was true . . . . But the one our Lord chose was the one who was wicked -- and He rejected the proud man.

“Our Lord had a purpose in giving us this Gospel. He had an idea when He spoke this to His Apostles . . . . He had an idea when He inspired His Church to preach that Gospel to millions . . . . Think of the power of an idea -- that of Columbus, of Pasteur! These changed the history of the world and of medicine. But here is a divine idea. ‘For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted’ (*Luke 18:14*) This is the idea of Jesus in giving us this Gospel: first of all to call our attention to what a damnable thing pride is. Pride damns even the just and the good. Lucifer was driven out of Heaven. The Pharisee asked nothing for himself. He was self-sufficient, proud. He was simply enchanted with himself -- and our Lord condemned him.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.239)

*From the Word of God:*

“7 He then told the guests a parable, because he had noticed how they picked the places of honour. He said this,<sup>8</sup> ‘When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take your seat in the place of honour. A more distinguished person than you may have been invited,<sup>9</sup> and the person who invited you both may come and say, ‘Give up your place to this man.’ And then, to your embarrassment, you will have to go and take the lowest place.<sup>10</sup> No; when you are a guest, make your way to the lowest place and sit there, so that, when your host comes, he may say, ‘My friend, move up higher.’ Then, everyone with you at the table will see you honoured.<sup>11</sup> For everyone who raises himself up will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be raised up.’” (*Luke 14:7-11*)

*You’ve spent this past week taking a “hard look” at yourself -- your actions, words, and motives. What have you seen? Are there things in your life that cause you a sense of guilt, shame, sorrow? Bring yourself before God. In your imagination, go the last place at the table. Kneel humbly in the back of the temple. Now listen to, watch our Lord. What does He say to you? How does He react to your sense of sorrow, contrition, guilt, and shame? What does He do? Be filled with confidence and hope and courage.*

**▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## **WEEK II**

### ***Weekend Reflection: Missionary Spirituality***

*[In this selection from John Paul II's encyclical on the missionary work of the Church -- Mission of the Redeemer-- it is clear how the life of the missionary involves a profound call to holiness. There are certain elements of a "missionary spirituality" the Holy Father outline here. Everything must spring from a living, personal, intimate union with Jesus.]*

“87. Missionary activity demands a specific spirituality, which applies in particular to all those whom God has called to be missionaries.

“This spirituality is expressed first of all by a life of complete docility to the Spirit. It commits us to being molded from within by the Spirit, so that we may become ever more like Christ. It is not possible to bear witness to Christ without reflecting his image, which is made alive in us by grace and the power of the Spirit. This docility then commits us to receive the gifts of fortitude and discernment, which are essential elements of missionary spirituality.

“An example of this is found with the apostles during the Master's public life. Despite their love for him and their generous response to his call, they proved to be incapable of understanding his words and reluctant to follow him along the path of suffering and humiliation. The Spirit transformed them into courageous witnesses to Christ and enlightened heralds of his word. It was the Spirit himself who guided them along the difficult and new paths of mission.

“Today, as in the past, that mission is difficult and complex, and demands the courage and light of the Spirit. We often experience the dramatic situation of the first Christian community, which witnessed unbelieving and hostile forces "gathered together against the Lord and his Anointed" (Acts 4:26). Now, as then, we must pray that God will grant us boldness in preaching the Gospel; we must ponder the mysterious ways of the Spirit and allow ourselves to be led by him into all the truth (cf. Jn 16:13).

“88. An essential characteristic of missionary spirituality is intimate communion with Christ. We cannot understand or carry out the mission unless we refer it to Christ as the one who was sent to evangelize. St. Paul describes Christ's attitude: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God" did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:5-8).

“The mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption is thus described as a total

self-emptying which leads Christ to experience fully the human condition and to accept totally the Father's plan. This is an emptying of self which is permeated by love and expresses love. The mission follows this same path and leads to the foot of the cross.

“The missionary is required to "renounce himself and everything that up to this point he considered as his own, and to make himself everything to everyone." [172] This he does by a poverty which sets him free for the Gospel, overcoming attachment to the people and things about him, so that he may become a brother to those to whom he is sent and thus bring them Christ the Savior. This is the goal of missionary spirituality: "To the weak I became weak...; I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the Gospel..." (1 Cor 9:22-23).

“It is precisely because he is "sent" that the missionary experiences the consoling presence of Christ, who is with him at every moment of life--"Do not be afraid...for I am with you" (Acts 18:9-10)--and who awaits him in the heart of every person.”

*Father Judge taught that we must “be good.” The Holy Father is calling for something similar when he writes that the missionary must be “molded from within by the Holy Spirit.” How have you experienced this “molding” going on in your life? Think back on your walk with Jesus: what have been the highlights? Where have you experienced your “intimate communion with Christ” growing? What have been the struggles and the obstacles you have faced? What part has the Cenacle played in your journey up until now?*

**▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## WEEK II

### Monday: “Going for the gold!”

*From Father Judge:*

“Let us [consider] the subject of acquiring virtue. Our Lord is teaching us ever since we followed Him . . . . He is our example and model. If beauty of body can be enhanced, it is more true that the beauty of the soul may be enhanced. It is our hope and wish that you may become great spirits before the throne of God.

“I was in Baltimore some time ago at the consecration of a bishop. There was a great pageant, and as I saw it, I got to thinking of that other procession -- the Procession of Processions, when people are coming out of their graves. I made up my mind that I wanted to get a good place in that Procession. Heaven is a kingdom. God is the King. If we want a good place in that Procession, we must have a friend. Our Blessed Mother will be that friend for she is the Queen.

“At the opening of a great amphitheatre, I thought of the great amphitheatre on that last day -- and the spectators. Prepare yourselves for that day. Ornament your souls. Glorify yourself now. We read in the Old Testament how Esther and Judith decorated themselves to meet human men, but you are to ornament yourself to meet God. You will come up before the whole world, all assembled there to see you judged. . . . This day is coming and, then, all earthly things will be useless. Ornament your souls to meet your God.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.227)

*From the Word of God:*

“You have stripped off your old behaviour with your old self,<sup>10</sup> and you have put on a new self which will progress towards true knowledge the more it is renewed in the image of its Creator;<sup>11</sup> and in that image there is no room for distinction between Greek and Jew, between the circumcised and uncircumcised, or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and free. There is only Christ: he is everything and he is in everything.<sup>12</sup> As the chosen of God, then, the holy people whom he loves, you are to be clothed in heartfelt compassion, in generosity and humility, gentleness and patience.<sup>13</sup> Bear with one another; forgive each other if one of you has a complaint against another. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same.<sup>14</sup> Over all these clothes, put on love, the perfect bond.<sup>15</sup> And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in one body. Always be thankful.<sup>16</sup> Let the Word of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God;<sup>17</sup> and whatever you say or do, let it be in the name of the Lord Jesus, in thanksgiving to God the Father through him.” (*Colossians 3:9-17*)

*What virtue is God asking you to “put on”? What is that part of the “new self” that you need to grow in? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you that dimension of the new life with which God wants to adorn or strengthen your soul. Be as specific as possible. Don’t pick everything -- just one thing. This is your “practice” that God has given you to work on for love of Him. Write it down on a holy card or piece of paper and put it in a place where you can see it daily.*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## Tuesday: Growing in Virtue

*From Father Judge:*

*[Once we have identified our “practice,” how can we grow daily in this virtue?]*

“But how shall I get this virtue? How can I get Faith, Hope, and Charity? By developing a prayerful, a humble spirit. But there is a background of daily faults which block the way of grace and grieve the Holy Spirit.

“Pick out a certain virtue which you are going to acquire this year. Work at it. In doing this you will become so sanctified that you will find the acquirement of other virtues easy.

“Read spiritual reading, the Bible, etc. Study all you can about the virtue. Take humility, for instance. See what Christ did in regard to it. What the Blessed Virgin did. What some friend you know, who is noted for it, does. They had to go through a process to get it. It was acquired by practice. Just as it is necessary to go through the mechanics of any art, go through acts of that virtue.

“Shall we then resist humiliations? Shall we excuse ourselves or shall we accept them as a means of grace? Examine your conscience daily, especially on some particular fault, and on this virtue that you need. Ask Jesus for the strength to overcome your weakness, ask Him for Grace . . . Finally, you will think that day a black one when you have not been humbled, and you will humble yourself.

“Practice particular examination at noon. See how you have failed in that virtue which you have been trying to acquire. Ask God to protect you from yourself. ‘Lord, protect me from myself, protect me from my own pride, my own selfishness.’ Live in the Presence of God. ‘Lord, Thy servant heareth.’” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p.227)

*From the Word of God:*

“**10** Finally, grow strong in the Lord, with the strength of his power.**11** Put on the full armour of God so as to be able to resist the devil’s tactics.**12** For it is not against human enemies that we have to struggle, but against the principalities and the ruling forces who are masters of the darkness in this world, the spirits of evil in the heavens.**13** That is why you must take up all God’s armour, or you will not be able to put up any resistance on the evil day, or stand your ground even though you exert yourselves to the full.**14** So stand your ground, with truth a belt round your waist, and uprightness a breastplate,**15** wearing for shoes on your feet the eagerness to spread the gospel of peace **16** and always carrying the shield of faith so that you can use it to quench the burning arrows of the Evil One.**17** And then you must take salvation as your helmet and the sword of the Spirit, that is, the word of God.**18** In all your prayer and entreaty keep praying in the Spirit on every possible occasion. Never get tired of staying awake to pray for all God’s holy people . . . .” (*Ephesians 6:10-18*)

*Father Judge recommends we work seriously on one virtue at a time: study and read about it, pray for it, look for good models of it in the lives of others. He also urges us to daily examine our lives in reference to our practice at noon every day. How have I practiced or failed to practice this virtue these past twenty-four hours? We call this review of life the “particular examen.”*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## **Wednesday: The Danger of “Measuring Progress”**

*From Father Judge:*

“[In this matter of seeking perfection] some timid and restless souls become quickly discouraged at the labor involved. It is true that for our self-reformation or to advance progressively in virtue, labor, hard labor, even painful labor is necessary. These faltering ones would justify a lack of response to grace by saying, ‘I do not see any improvement’ or ‘I am just as imperfect as ever.’ Do you know God does not permit us to see our advance? It is well for us that we cannot trace it. Spiritual progress has no physical measure, therefore it cannot be taped or handled, weighed or measured.

“We should be content with this sole satisfaction that by God’s grace, we have tried to do as well as we could. It is of far more value to us that we humble ourselves and express our sorrow to God because of our lapses, than that we know at every instant what our spiritual status may be. To be wondering and speculating as to our spiritual progress may become a very dangerous pursuit. I fear that in this the evil spirit bothers and tempts many souls . . . .” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 50)

*From the Word of God:*

“ **14** This, then, is what I pray, kneeling before the Father,**15** from whom every fatherhood, in heaven or on earth, takes its name.**16** In the abundance of his glory may he, through his Spirit, enable you to grow firm in power with regard to your inner self,**17** so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith, and then, planted in love and built on love,**18** with all God’s holy people you will have the strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth;**19** so that, knowing the love of Christ, which is beyond knowledge, you may be filled with the utter fullness of God.**20** Glory be to him whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine;**21** glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.” (*Ephesians 3:14-21*)

***Do you find the process of conversion -- or “becoming good” -- discouraging at times? One common source of discouragement is concentrating too much on ourselves: what “I” am doing or not doing, achieving or not achieving. If you find yourself becoming disheartened in the process, keep your mind and heart fixed on Jesus and His love for you. God’s desire is that you be “filled with the utter fullness of God.”***

**Write down your reflections briefly here:**

# **Thursday: Virtue -- a Communal Affair**

*From Father Judge:*

*[Father Judge saw the immense value of missionaries coming together in Cenacles for mutual support and strength. Cenacles, like individuals, have “virtues” that characterize them. In “measuring” growth in virtue, he suggests the following method:]*

“There is a sign, however, that we may safely study and joyfully hope it may apply to us. It is any pronounced virtue or perfection made manifest either in the Cenacle at large or that Cenacle in which we labor. For example, let us suppose that the virtue of charity is intensely active in a certain Cenacle. The warmth of this charity is reflected back on the members of that particular Cenacle, since the virtue of the Cenacle, after all, is but the virtue of its members. . . .

“What, then, does [such] a heavenly manifestation of virtue mean? It means that religion, faith, hope and charity, humility and other virtues in the individual hearts of such Cenacles are very much exalted. Yet this truth comes to these favored ones in such an impersonal way that they can safely think about it. It is for all the world like an intensely blazing fire. No particular coal can claim the credit for the heat and light, yet every particular coal is illumined. In fact, no coal can be in such an intense glow without the fire and light of the other coals being communicated to it.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 50)

*From the Word of God:*

“**3** I thank my God whenever I think of you,**4** and every time I pray for you all, I always pray with joy**5** for your partnership in the gospel from the very first day up to the present.**6** I am quite confident that the One who began a good work in you will go on completing it until the Day of Jesus Christ comes.**7** It is only right that I should feel like this towards you all, because you have a place in my heart, since you have all shared together in the grace that has been mine, both my chains and my work defending and establishing the gospel.**8** For God will testify for me how much I long for you all with the warm longing of Christ Jesus;**9** it is my prayer that your love for one another may grow more and more with the knowledge and complete understanding**10** that will help you to come to true discernment, so that you will be innocent and free of any trace of guilt when the Day of Christ comes,**11** entirely filled with the fruits of uprightness through Jesus Christ, for the glory and praise of God.” (*Philippians 1:3-11*)

***Communities, like individuals, have their own character. What is the “character” of your Cenacle community? Of the Cenacle in general? What are the virtues or strengths you see there? Be as specific as possible; make a list. How have these gifts touched and transformed your life? Thank the Holy Spirit for the manifestation of virtue you see in your local Cenacle and the Cenacle at large.***

**Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## ***Friday: “Jump to your feet!”***

*From Father Judge:*

*[Individual members of the Cenacle community make it either a place of support and strength -- as we saw in our reflection for yesterday -- or can tear down the fabric of Cenacle life and zeal. Father Judge warned us about becoming the “slag,” a waste product of the coal burning furnaces of his day!]*

“There is in that fiery furnace a dross called slag. It is a thief among coals. It is a counterfeit; it steals from the real coal and does nothing itself. Taken away, instantly it becomes a cold, dark, useless mass. So likewise in the Cenacle, in the midst of ardent love, each soul may entertain the fear that it is the slag in the furnace of Divine Love.

“If such souls would only jump to their feet, plunge ahead again in the way of God, shake off this melancholy, resolutely turn their faces to the heights from which they came, throw off foolish fears and temptations, clamber again on high, they will reach heights of sanctity that seemed inaccessible.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 50)

*From the Word of God:*

“**6** That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift of God that you possess through the laying on of my hands.**7** God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power and love and self-control.**8** So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to our Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but share in my hardships for the sake of the gospel, relying on the power of God**9** who has saved us and called us to be holy—not because of anything we ourselves had done but for his own purpose and by his own grace. This grace had already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus, before the beginning of time,**10** but it has been revealed only by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus. He has abolished death, and he has brought to light immortality and life through the gospel,**11** in whose service I have been made herald, apostle and teacher.**12** That is why I am experiencing my present sufferings; but I am not ashamed, because I know in whom I have put my trust, and I have no doubt at all that he is able to safeguard until that Day what I have entrusted to him.**13** Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.” (*2 Timothy 1:6-13*)

*How do you “fan into flame the gift of God” you possess? How do you keep yourself from becoming like “slag,” a drain on others by negativity, criticism, or laziness? How do you individually deal with that sort of negativity in others or in your Cenacle? Do you let it affect you? In what way? Ask the Holy Spirit to “fan into flame” that fire in you many times daily.*

**✎** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## **WEEK III**

### ***Weekend Reflection: Doing Good in the World***

*[From the Decree on the Laity of the Second Vatican Council]*

“There are innumerable opportunities open to the laity for the exercise of their apostolate of evangelization and sanctification. The very testimony of their Christian life and good works done in a supernatural spirit have the power to draw men to belief and to God; for the Lord says, "Even so let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5: 16).

“However an apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one's way of life; a true apostle looks for opportunities to announce Christ by words addressed either to non-believers with a view to leading them to faith, or to the faithful with a view to instructing, strengthening, and encouraging them to a more fervent life. "For the charity of Christ impels us" (2 Cor. 5 :14). The words of the Apostle should echo in all hearts, "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16).[1]

“Since, in our own times, new problems are arising and very serious errors are circulating which tend to undermine the foundations of religion, the moral order, and human society itself, this sacred synod earnestly exhorts laymen--each according to his own gifts of intelligence and learning--to be more diligent in doing what they can to explain, defend, and properly apply Christian principles to the problems of our era in accordance with the mind of the Church.

“7. God's plan for the world is that men should work together to renew and constantly perfect the temporal order.

“All those things which make up the temporal order, namely, the good things of life and the prosperity of the family, culture, economic matters, the arts and professions, the laws of the political community, international relations, and other matters of this kind, as well as their development and progress, not only aid in the attainment of man's ultimate goal but also possess their own intrinsic value. This value has been established in them by God, whether they are considered in themselves or as parts of the whole temporal order. "God saw that all He had made was very good" (Gen. 1:31). This natural goodness of theirs takes on a special dignity as a result of their relation to the human person, for whose service they were created. It has pleased God to unite all things, both natural and supernatural, in Christ Jesus "so that in all things He may have the first place" (Col. 1:18). This destination, however, not only does not deprive the temporal order of its independence, its proper goals, laws, supports, and significance for human welfare but rather perfects the temporal order in its own intrinsic strength and worth and puts it on a level with man's whole vocation upon earth . . . .

“The laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. Led by the light of the Gospel and the mind of the Church and motivated by Christian charity, they must act directly and in a definite way in the temporal sphere. As citizens they must cooperate with other citizens with their own particular skill and on their own responsibility. Everywhere and in all things they must seek the justice of God's kingdom. The temporal order must be renewed in such a way that, without detriment to its own proper laws, it may be brought into conformity with the higher principles of the Christian life and adapted to the shifting circumstances of time, place, and peoples. Preeminent among the works of this type of apostolate is that of Christian social action which the sacred synod desires to see extended to the whole temporal sphere, including culture.[2]

“8. While every exercise of the apostolate should be motivated by charity, some works by their very nature can become specially vivid expressions of this charity. Christ the Lord wanted these works to be signs of His messianic mission (cf. Matt. 11:4-5).

“The greatest commandment in the law is to love God with one's whole heart and one's neighbor as oneself (cf. Matt. 22: 37-40 ). Christ made this commandment of love of neighbor His own and enriched it with a new meaning. For He wanted to equate Himself with His brethren as the object of this love when He said, "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it for Me" (Matt. 25:40). Assuming human nature, He bound the whole human race to Himself as a family through a certain supernatural solidarity and established charity as the mark of His disciples, saying, "By this will all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). . . . For this reason, pity for the needy and the sick and works of charity and mutual aid intended to relieve human needs of every kind are held in highest honor by the Church.[3]”

*Where is God calling you to “do good” in the world? Do you experience the call of God to you in the ordinary events and circumstances of your life, i.e. the “temporal order”? In what way? How do you think God is “renewing” your world by the things you say and do? In a special way, what is your attitude to those who are most abandoned and poor among us? Is God calling you to “relieve” their human needs in some way?*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## WEEK III

### Monday: Doing God's Will

*From Father Judge:*

“There are some people who never try to find out what God's Will is. They never care anything about it. . . . There are some people who never say a prayer for the accomplishment of God's holy Will. There are others who are resigned. They won't oppose God's will, but they are not bothering what it is. There are some souls who really go to seek it and want to know what it is. Your will is the captain of your faculties. It is your will which makes you do this thing and not do something else . . . .

“In family life, when wills are together, there is harmony, and when wills are in disagreement, there is argument. It makes a whole lot of difference whether you do the Will of God or not. When it comes to God's Will, there is no place for argument or hesitation. We ought to do the Will of God sincerely whatever it may be. We should have a desire to have our will in union with the Will of God in all the events of life . . . . God permits the heat for some reason. Blessed be the holy will of God. If God wants it to be hot, it is agreeable to us. . . . The will of God leads us, checks us, compels us, draws us back. We all want perfection but, independent of the will of God, it is impossible.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 96)

*From the Word of God:*

“**16** In fact, preaching the gospel gives me nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion and I should be in trouble if I failed to do it.**17** If I did it on my own initiative I would deserve a reward; but if I do it under compulsion I am simply accepting a task entrusted to me.**18** What reward do I have, then? That in my preaching I offer the gospel free of charge to avoid using the rights which the gospel allows me.**19** So though I was not a slave to any human being, I put myself in slavery to all people, to win as many as I could.**20** To the Jews I made myself as a Jew, to win the Jews; to those under the Law as one under the Law (though I am not), in order to win those under the Law;**21** to those outside the Law as one outside the Law, though I am not outside the Law but under Christ's law, to win those outside the Law.**22** To the weak, I made myself weak, to win the weak. I accommodated myself to people in all kinds of different situations, so that by all possible means I might bring some to salvation.**23** All this I do for the sake of the gospel, that I may share its benefits with others.” (*1 Corinthians 9:16-23*)

*How many “conditions” do you put on your doing of God's Will? Complete the sentence, “I'll do God's Will IF . . . .” Paul was content with whatever would help him do God's Will. What would make you happy? How much are you willing to “accommodate yourself to people in all kinds of different situations” to accomplish God's will?*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## ***Tuesday: To become a Saint!***

*From Father Judge:*

“The will of God is made manifest to us by His declarations. What is the Will of God? ‘Keep my commandments’ (*John 14:15*). Well, that is true; it is a general law. It concerns everybody. I want to do more than just keep the commandments . . . I am sure that God wants you to save your soul and save somebody else’s soul if you can. That does not satisfy you either . . . There is no ending to the next thing God says. It is contained in the words of the Holy Spirit: ‘This is the will of God, your sanctification’ (*1 Thesalonians 4:3*). There is a life’s work for you. If you want to do what God wants, you can sanctify yourself. . . . The degree of sanctification, the degree of your own personal holiness, depends upon your generosity combined with the grace of God. I have a hope that some of you some day will be lifted to the honor of the altar -- that a Church will be named after you. Why? Because you are generous. Because you go on sanctifying yourself. There are very saintly souls in the Cenacle. There are those who have taken the word of God: ‘You therefore are to be perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect,’ (*Matthew 5:48*), to heart. And they have gone a long way on the road to perfection . . . . That is the will of God -- that you become saints.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 96)

*From the Word of God:*

“**1** Finally, [sisters and] brothers, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus; we instructed you how to live in the way that pleases God, and you are so living; but make more progress still.**2** You are well aware of the instructions we gave you on the authority of the Lord Jesus.**3** God wills you all to be holy. He wants you to keep away from sexual immorality,**4** and each one of you to know how to control his body in a way that is holy and honourable,**5** not giving way to selfish lust like the nations who do not acknowledge God. **6** He wants nobody at all ever to sin by taking advantage of a brother in these matters; the Lord always pays back sins of that sort, as we told you before emphatically.**7** God called us to be holy, not to be immoral;**8** in other words, anyone who rejects this is rejecting not human authority, but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit. **9** As for brotherly love, there is no need to write to you about that, since you have yourselves learnt from God to love one another,**10** and in fact this is how you treat all the brothers throughout the whole of Macedonia. However, we do urge you, brothers, to go on making even greater progress**11** and to make a point of living quietly, attending to your own business and earning your living, just as we told you to,**12** so that you may earn the respect of outsiders and not be dependent on anyone.” (*1 Thessalonians 4:1-12*)

***Do you really want to be a saint? Is that your life’s goal? If not, why not? What would be an alternative life goal for you? For you, what does it mean to be a “saint”? Think about the people you know who seems closest to God. How do they live? Are they happy, peaceful, courageous? Do their lives make a difference for other people? In what ways? Ask the Holy Spirit for the ever deeper desire to be a saint!***

**p Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## Wednesday: A generous spirit

*From Father Judge:*

“You have a particular spirit, the spirit of the Cenacle. You all have the grace to be [Cenacle missionaries] . . . . Some have that grace in an extraordinary degree. What must we do to insure that these graces will not be void in us? That takes in the love of God. That takes in the more perfect love of God. That takes in the matter of charity. That takes in the subject of purity; that takes in the subject of mortification. That takes in the question of fortitude. That covers, in a word, the whole subject of cooperation with God’s will . . . .

“Let us go back to the time you entered the Cenacle. Before God, before the Holy Spirit, since you entered the Cenacle, what have you done with those gifts He gave you? . . . . What have you done for the . . . Cenacle in which the Providence of God has placed you? What have you done with that divine fire which our Lord . . . came on earth to scatter? What have you done that it might flame more ardently in your will?

“What are you doing to deepen the charity of God in your heart, and to deepen the spirit of generosity? You know the apostolic spirit should be a generous spirit. Have you a heart for sacrifice? Sacrifice means a great love of God . . . .” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 96)

*From the Word of God:*

“**21** Whatever bold claims anyone makes—now I am talking as a fool—I can make them too.**22** Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.**23** Are they servants of Christ? I speak in utter folly—I am too, and more than they are: I have done more work, I have been in prison more, I have been flogged more severely, many times exposed to death.**24** Five times I have been given the thirty-nine lashes by the Jews;**25** three times I have been beaten with sticks; once I was stoned; three times I have been shipwrecked, and once I have been in the open sea for a night and a day;**26** continually travelling, I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from brigands, in danger from my own people and in danger from the gentiles, in danger in the towns and in danger in the open country, in danger at sea and in danger from people masquerading as brothers;**27** I have worked with unsparing energy, for many nights without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty, and often altogether without food or drink; I have been cold and lacked clothing.**28** And, besides all the external things, there is, day in day out, the pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.**29** If anyone weakens, I am weakened as well; and when anyone is made to fall, I burn in agony myself.” (*2 Corinthians 11:21-29*)

*The measure of your love is your willingness to sacrifice for the one you love. How much are you willing to sacrifice for love of God? Place yourself before the Cross. Look at all He suffered and sacrificed for love of you. How much are you willing to give in return?*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

# Thursday: For the Love of God

*From Father Judge:*

“Remember that you are in training not so much to learn this or that art as you are to become apostles. Never forget that this will be your work -- to save souls. Whatever will conduct to develop in you an apostolic, missionary spirit will be a grace. The essentials of such a spirit are the love of God and your neighbor, sacrifice and fortitude.

“What are you proposing to yourself? To love God with you whole heart and soul. To live, to die for that love. Not content with this you wish to bring others to the same love of God. No nobler, sublimer, more sacred end could there be in life. . . . To attain successfully to its accomplishment, you must daily, hourly, even oftener refresh and inflame yourself with this intention. You must grow more and more in His holy love by repeating acts of the love of God. Consider the reasons why you should love God. Ask for this love . . . .

“God claims our love by right of His infinite love for us and innumerable benefits by which He proves it. He created us . . . . He created, also, the visible world for our use; and when the sin of our first parents had forfeited all our rights, and degraded our nature which God created glorious, God, in the incomprehensible excess of His loving mercy, assumed our fallen nature and redeemed us by three and thirty years of privation and suffering, closed by an amazing death.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 228)

*From the Word of God:*

“**34** But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees they got together**35** and, to put him to the test, one of them put a further question,**36** ‘Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?’**37** Jesus said to him, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.**38** This is the greatest and the first commandment.**39** The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. **40** On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets too.’” (*Matthew 22:34-40*)

*“Consider the reasons why you should love God.” Take a few minutes and think about this. Make a list of the “reasons” why you should love God: the beauty of creation, God’s workings in other people, in your own life, in the Church. Be as complete as you can in your list. Thanks God for each thing and ask the Holy Spirit to increase your love more and more.*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## ***Friday: “He ain’t heavy; he’s my brother”***

*From Father Judge:*

“Love makes all labor light. It makes the sacrifice of ourselves as nothing. What love is there comparable to the love of God? What sacrifice could there be like unto that with which the love of God will inspire you? Work, pray, strive for this divine love. Cry out to heaven for it so that at least you can say, ‘O God, you are my God for whom I seek; for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water’ (*Psalms* 62:2).

“‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind’ (*Matthew* 22:37). Can we love Him above all else? Not only can we love Him, but it is our supremest duty and the sum of all our duties so to love Him. Not only can we love Him above everything else but this is very easy - with the aid of His grace which is never wanting. Is it not very easy to love a Being Who is beauty itself, and justice and goodness, and Who is our greatest and only benefactor, the source of all perfection? . . . Love for the creature disturbs, defiles, enslaves the heart; the love of God ennobles, calms and delights, and there is no liberty so perfect as theirs who love Him. Is it not strange that we require to be reasoned into it?” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 228)

*From the Word of God:*

“**8** Yes, I will go further: because of the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, I count everything else as loss. For him I have accepted the loss of all other things, and look on them all as filth if only I can gain Christ**9** and be given a place in him, with the uprightness I have gained not from the Law, but through faith in Christ, an uprightness from God, based on faith,**10** that I may come to know him and the power of his resurrection, and partake of his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death,**11** striving towards the goal of resurrection from the dead.**12** Not that I have secured it already, nor yet reached my goal, but I am still pursuing it in the attempt to take hold of the prize for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.**13** Brothers, I do not reckon myself as having taken hold of it; I can only say that forgetting all that lies behind me, and straining forward to what lies in front,**14** I am racing towards the finishing-point to win the prize of God’s heavenly call in Christ Jesus.**15** So this is the way in which all of us who are mature should be thinking, and if you are still thinking differently in any way, then God has yet to make this matter clear to you.**16** Meanwhile, let us go forward from the point we have each attained.**17** Brothers, be united in imitating me. Keep your eyes fixed on those who act according to the example you have from me.**18** For there are so many people of whom I have often warned you, and now I warn you again with tears in my eyes, who behave like the enemies of Christ’s cross.” (*Philippians* 3:8-18)

*Think of an example where love has made “labor light” in your own experience. Do you have that kind of love of God? Do you feel a burning passion to “take hold of the prize” of life in Christ Jesus? What are you willing to sacrifice for that? Is there anyone or anything in your life that has a higher priority than God. Be as honest as you can as you consider this question. Who is it? What is it? Ask the Holy Spirit for the burning love of an apostle to “do good” no matter what the cost.*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## **WEEK IV**

### ***Weekend Reflection: Being a Power for Good***

*[From the Mission of the Redeemer, an encyclical letter of John Paul II]*

“90. The call to mission derives, of its nature, from the call to holiness. A missionary is really such only if he commits himself to the way of holiness: "Holiness must be called a fundamental presupposition and an irreplaceable condition for everyone in fulfilling the mission of salvation in the Church." [174]

“The universal call to holiness is closely linked to the universal call to mission. Every member of the faithful is called to holiness and to mission. This was the earnest desire of the Council, which hoped to be able "to enlighten all people with the brightness of Christ, which gleams over the face of the Church, by preaching the Gospel to every creature." [175] The Church's missionary spirituality is a journey toward holiness.

“The renewed impulse to the mission . . . demands holy missionaries. It is not enough to update pastoral techniques, organize and coordinate ecclesial resources, or delve more deeply into the biblical and theological foundations of faith. What is needed is the encouragement of a new "ardor for holiness" among missionaries and throughout the Christian community, especially among those who work most closely with missionaries. [176]

“Dear brothers and sisters: let us remember the missionary enthusiasm of the first Christian communities. Despite the limited means of travel and communication in those times, the proclamation of the Gospel quickly reached the ends of the earth. And this was the religion of a man who had died on a cross, "a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles"! (1 Cor 1:23) Underlying this missionary dynamism was the holiness of the first Christians and the first communities. . . .

“The missionary must be a "contemplative in action." He finds answers to problems in the light of God's word and in personal and community prayer. My contact with representatives of the non-Christian spiritual traditions, particularly those of Asia, has confirmed me in the view that the future of mission depends to a great extent on contemplation. Unless the missionary is a contemplative he cannot proclaim Christ in a credible way. He is a witness to the experience of God, and must be able to say with the apostles: "that which we have looked upon...concerning the word of life,...we proclaim also to you" (1 Jn 1:1-3).

“The missionary is a person of the Beatitudes. Before sending out the Twelve to evangelize, Jesus, in his "missionary discourse" (cf. Mt 10), teaches them the paths of mission: poverty, meekness, acceptance of suffering and persecution, the desire for justice and peace, charity--in other words, the Beatitudes, lived out in the apostolic life (cf. Mt 5:1-12). By living the Beatitudes, the missionary experiences and shows concretely that the kingdom of God has already come, and that he has accepted it. The characteristic of every authentic missionary life is the inner joy that comes from faith. In a world tormented and oppressed by so many problems. a

world tempted to pessimism, the one who proclaims the "Good News" must be a person who has found true hope in Christ.

“92. Today, as never before, the Church has the opportunity of bringing the Gospel, by witness and word, to all people and nations. I see the dawning of a new missionary age, which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians . . . respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time.

“Like the apostles after Christ's Ascension, the Church must gather in the Upper Room "together with Mary, the Mother of Jesus" (Acts 1:14), in order to pray for the Spirit and to gain strength and courage to carry out the missionary mandate. We too, like the apostles, need to be transformed and guided by the Spirit.

“On the eve of the third millennium the whole Church is invited to live more intensely the mystery of Christ by gratefully cooperating in the work of salvation. The Church does this together with Mary and following the example of Mary, the Church's Mother and model: Mary is the model of that maternal love which should inspire all who cooperate in the Church's apostolic mission for the rebirth of humanity. Therefore, "strengthened by the presence of Christ, the Church journeys through time toward the consummation of the ages and goes to meet the Lord who comes. But on this journey...she proceeds along the path already trodden by the Virgin Mary. . . ."[177]

“As Christ sent forth his apostles in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, so too, renewing that same mandate, I extend to all of you my apostolic blessing, in the name of the same Most Holy Trinity. Amen.”

*The power of missionary witness depends on several things, according to the Pope: faith-filled conviction that the Kingdom has already come; the joy that accompanies faith; a personal experience of Jesus. The power of the missionary to effect change will depend totally on holiness of life. Does this console you? Challenge you? Disturb you? What questions or concerns do these considerations raise in your heart?*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## WEEK IV

### Monday: Sharing the Mission

*From Father Judge:*

“It is well to premise certain conditions . . . distinctive of our day which imperil the faith and morals of our generation, namely: a growing worldliness, and an extraordinary seeking for pleasure; the breaking up of home life; the child problem; growing hatred and opposition to the Church; widespread indifference to God’s teaching; impious attacks on the law of God and our traditional faith.

“The agencies of irreligion seem to conspire in a particular way to despiritualize and corrupt the springs of the coming generation, that is, the children of today. The ordinary American child is much disadvantaged in life’s struggle because that Christian and vigilant home life of former years is disappearing. The Church has suffered much leakage in the past years. There is no doubt that many have been lost to the faith but if we lose the children, or if the influence of the Church over them is greatly lessened, the consequence will be calamitous to religion of the next decade.

“Two kinds of missionary work at present are very necessary and urgent, one of prevention and the other of reclamation. These can be effected through the laity, encouraged, instructed, and properly motivated and spiritualized . . . . The hope of the Church now lies largely with such a laity. A spiritualized lay action is the providential remedy for many of our present day ills . . . .” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 229)

*From the Word of God:*

“**1** I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae;**2** give her, in the Lord, a welcome worthy of God’s holy people, and help her with whatever she needs from you—she herself has come to the help of many people, including myself.**3** My greetings to Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,**4** who risked their own necks to save my life; to them, thanks not only from me, but from all the churches among the gentiles;**5** and my greetings to the church at their house. Greetings to my dear friend Epaphroditus, the first of Asia’s offerings to Christ.**6** Greetings to Mary, who worked so hard for you.**7** Greetings to those outstanding apostles, Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and fellow-prisoners, who were in Christ before me.**8** Greetings to Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.**9** Greetings to Urban, my fellow-worker in Christ, and to my dear friend Stachys.**10** Greetings to Apelles, proved servant of Christ. Greetings to all the household of Aristobulus.**11** Greetings to my kinsman, Herodion, and greetings to those who belong to the Lord in the household of Narcissus.**12** Greetings to Tryphaena and Tryphosa who work hard in the Lord; greetings to my dear friend Persis, also a very hard worker in the Lord.**13** Greetings to Rufus, chosen servant of the Lord, and to his mother—a mother to me too.**14** Greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.**15** Greetings to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all God’s holy people who are with them.**16** Greet each other with the holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send their greetings.” (*Romans 16:1-16*)

***Think about the people who have been a “power for good” in your life. Concentrate especially on brothers and sisters of the Faith and in the Cenacle Family. Make a list of their names. Note the ways in which their lives have touched and transformed yours.***

**Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## ***Tuesday: Every Catholic an Apostle***

*From Father Judge:*

“All this [charitable and missionary work], however, is not the ultimate work of the Cenacle. *Its chief effort is to effect that ‘every’ Catholic should be an Apostle.* The Church has a great treasure of resources and power in the working people, and it is amongst them that this apostolic idea takes quick and deep root. The influence of the working man and the working woman for good cannot be measured. Our people have strong instincts for good, and they look for encouragement and leadership. It is the mission of the [Missionary Cenacle] . . . to encourage the good-willed and offer direction.

“These work-a-day apostles are trained to do missionary work in their every day life. They are shown what an influence for good they can be. In fact, in the particular providence of their every day life, they are taught to realize that they *are* the Church and to be alert for its interests and the welfare of souls . . . .

“Thanks is to be given to God for the great good they have done for religion. . . . Pray for them . . . for they are deserving of prayerful mention since their missionary work is ever calling upon them to make apostolic sacrifices.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 229)

*From the Word of God:*

“**7** But we hold this treasure in pots of earthenware, so that the immensity of the power is God’s and not our own.**8** We are subjected to every kind of hardship, but never distressed; we see no way out but we never despair;**9** we are pursued but never cut off; knocked down, but still have some life in us;**10** always we carry with us in our body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus, too, may be visible in our body.**11** Indeed, while we are still alive, we are continually being handed over to death, for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus, too, may be visible in our mortal flesh.**12** In us, then, death is at work; in you, life.**13** But as we have the same spirit of faith as is described in scripture—I believed and therefore I spoke—we, too, believe and therefore we, too, speak,**14** realising that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up with Jesus in our turn, and bring us to himself—and you as well.**15** You see, everything is for your benefit, so that as grace spreads, so, to the glory of God, thanksgiving may also overflow among more and more people.” (*2 Corinthians 4:7-15*)

***What criteria do you use to judge or evaluate other people? Are the measures you have Gospel measures or do they reflect more the thinking of the world? Are you easily influenced by the appearance of individuals, their wealth, influence, position? Or do you tend to pass over easily people with physical or mental disabilities, those who are poor or of little importance in this world? To whom would Christ pay more attention? Where does real power lie according to the Scripture?***

**✎ Write down your reflections briefly here:**

# Wednesday: The Power of Zeal

*From Father Judge:*

“‘The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.’ So speaks the Scriptures (*Psalm 68:10*). The charity that is inflamed, the white heat of charity, is zeal. Zeal is a beautiful virtue; it is characteristic of the Apostles. It is needed today, my dear children. I wonder if much of the evil condition in the world today is not because of a lack of zeal. I wonder if that is not the reason.

“We can become ‘officials.’ We can do things in a perfunctory way. We can do things through routine. We can become in the hosue of God a mere clerk. In other words we can do things without zeal. Our Lord had zeal, the Apostles had zeal. Anything connected with the apostolic age is of zeal. It is an ardent charity; it is just that desire to give and give and give oneslef to God and to God’s work. . . .

“Self love has so many manifestations. . . . Sometimes it shows itself in a stinted service; sometimes it is in taking care of oneself, thinking of oneself, of one’s needs, difficulties, pains and infirmities. Here is what our Lord said about that: ‘Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose it, shall preserve it.’” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 308)

*From the Word of God:*

“**23** Then, speaking to all, he said, ‘If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me.**24** Anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, will save it.**25** What benefit is it to anyone to win the whole world and forfeit or lose his very self?**26** For if anyone is ashamed of me and of my words, of him the Son of man will be ashamed when he comes in his own glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.” (*Luke 9:23-26*)

*Do you do your apostolic work with “verve” and enthusiasm? Or is it just another task, something routine to get over? What is your attitude towards those God brings daily into your life? How much do you consciously attempt to influence others or your surrounding for good? Ask the Holy Spirit for the power in abundance that only God can give.*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here:

## ***Thursday: Power from On High***

*From Father Judge:*

“I have known good people to do something and then go to Atlantic City for a week or two to recover. I have known good people to do some little thing for the Lord, and then lay off for a month. The Lord does not like that. That is pretense and God is never fooled. And surely we are not fooled. That is not the characteristic of the zealous. Zealous [missionaries] will drop in their tracks.

“You know what zeal is . . . It is beautiful. It is the tow-boat that drags all the barges after it. It is the dynamo of a power house. Of course that power has to be harnessed, like any power. Power is good and gives good service when it is directed, and zeal is good, but it has to be watched. An inordinate zeal may do a lot of harm. However, we can forgive much to the zealous, God bless them.

“O but the sluggards, the sluggards in the hosue of God, the drones! It is really hard to forgive them. Their influence is so demoralizing. I don’t think the over-zealous ever hurt very much the peace of a house. They may worry [others. Some] will say, ‘Good gracious, they are going to hurt their health, or get into some kind of a mix-up; but that is not much of a worry. But the others, they do worry [those in charge]; they do bother; they are dead weights, the deadheads of the work of God, the drag on community progress. The zealous are the thoroughbreds. The drone, the sluggard, is a mongrel.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 308)

*From the Word of God:*

“**15** That is why I, having once heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love for all God’s holy people,**16** have never failed to thank God for you and to remember you in my prayers.**17** May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him.**18** May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, how rich is the glory of the heritage he offers among his holy people,**19** and how extraordinarily great is the power that he has exercised for us believers; this accords with the strength of his power**20** at work in Christ, the power which he exercised in raising him from the dead and enthroning him at his right hand, in heaven,**21** far above every principality, ruling force, power or sovereignty, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.**22** He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as he is above all things, the head of the Church;**23** which is his Body, the fullness of him who is filled, all in all.” (*Ephesians 1:15-23*)

*The Greek Fathers of the Church spoke of the Holy Spirit as “energy.” As you go about your daily life, do you rely on your own “energy” and “power” or is your “energy” and “power” from “on high”? Where does your action spring from: your own desires or plans or in response to the call or direction of God? Do you recognize the power you have for good as being really the same power that was active in Jesus’ resurrection?*

**▶ Write down your reflections briefly here:**

## ***Friday: Mary, Mother of God***

*From Father Judge:*

“The title that makes Mary so great, the grace that explains her blessedness is that she is the Mother of Jesus Christ. These are tremendous words. My tongue should stammer and falter as I pronounce them -- Mother of God.

“The general notion that we have of God may be very unsatisfactory, but we know that He is the Infinite, the Eternal, and our necessary Being. The prophets said that we shall speak and say many words but the sum of all our words is this: He is all. We cannot measure God in speech, the Eternal, the Divine, the All Holy, Almighty God, Creator of all things, the First and the Last, He Who is, Who was, Who always shall be. Mary was His Mother, truly the Mother of God. All of you know what a mother is, though speech finds it difficult to explain . . . Who is it that clings so closely to a child as a mother? Upon whom is the child more dependent than upon his mother? What today is the great, wonderful, inspiring power of the world, but the mother? Mary was His Mother. When we speak of the Mother of Jesus many of our small ideas of motherhood are shattered because she was miraculously the Mother of God by the cooperation of the Holy Spirit: ‘And the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and . . . the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God’ (*Luke 1:35*) When we say the Mother of God, we say everything.” (*Missionary Cenacle Meditations*, p. 7)

*From the Word of God:*

“**46** And Mary said: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord**47** and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;**48** because he has looked upon the humiliation of his servant. Yes, from now onwards all generations will call me blessed,**49** for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name,**50** and his faithful love extends age after age to those who fear him.**51** He has used the power of his arm, he has routed the arrogant of heart.**52** He has pulled down princes from their thrones and raised high the lowly.**53** He has filled the starving with good things, sent the rich away empty.**54** He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his faithful love**55** —according to the promise he made to our ancestors—of his mercy to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.**56** Mary stayed with her some three months and then went home.” (*Luke 1:46-56*)

*As we contemplate Mary, where does true power lie? What has been Mary’s influence and power for good over the centuries? What is your relationship with Mary? Do you call upon her often? Do you confide your concerns, life, and missionary vocation to her powerful care and intercession? Do you ask her to help you be a power for good in bringing many women and men to her Divine Son? Pray the Hail Mary slowly and reflectively.*

**p** Write down your reflections briefly here: