



Let us remember **that we are in the holy presence of God.**

Opening Song: Servant Song (verses 1 - 3)

Brother, let me be your servant;
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant, too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
We are brothers on the road;
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christlight for you
In the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
Speak the peace you long to hear.

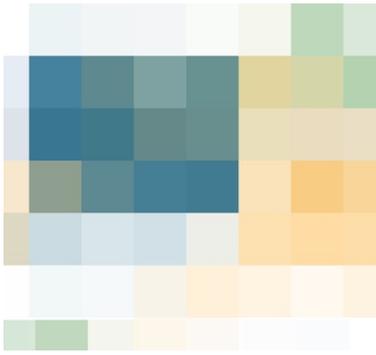
Psalm 34:2-11,18-19

I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall be always in my mouth
My soul will glory in the LORD;
let the poor hear and be glad.

Magnify the LORD with me;
and let us exalt his name together.
I sought the LORD, and he answered me,
delivered me from all my fears.

Look to him and be radiant,
and your faces may not blush for shame.
This poor one cried out and the LORD heard,
and from all his distress he saved him.

The angel of the LORD encamps
around those who fear him, and he saves them
Taste and see that the LORD is good;
blessed is the stalwart one who takes refuge in him.



Fear the LORD, you his holy ones;
nothing is lacking to those who fear him.
The rich grow poor and go hungry,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.



The righteous cry out, the LORD hears
and he rescues them from all their afflictions.
The LORD is close to the brokenhearted,
saves those whose spirit is crushed.

Reading from the Gospel - Matthew 20:20-28

Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached him with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something. He said to her, "What do you wish?" She answered him, "Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus said in reply, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?" They said to him, "We can." He replied, "My cup you will indeed drink, but to sit at my right and at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus summoned them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Reading from the Rule

29. In the light of the Gospel, the Brothers always keep in mind the promotion of justice and the direct or indirect service of the poor -- the economically poor, the victims of social injustice, delinquents and those excluded from society -- which is the preferred option of their ministry of education. When they work with pupils from better-off families, they teach them the duties imposed by responsibility, and those regarding social justice and worldwide charity. The Brothers give special attention to those of their pupils who have greater difficulties at school, personal problems, or problems adjusting to family life or society.

29.1 Regions and Districts draw up plans which enable all their works to be really committed to helping the poor and combating the causes of poverty. These plans, which include cooperation between congregations, develop the community dimension of educational works, and encourage the shared mission to open up more to the service of the poor.

29.2 Following the example of their Founder, the Brothers see their lives as a process of affective, intellectual, moral and religious conversion, which commits them increasingly to the cause of helping the poor. They do this through dialogue and by taking into account existing social conditions.

29.3 By their entire life and by their teaching inspired by the social doctrine of the Church, the Brothers prepare their pupils to create relations that are more just among peoples. They help them to become actively involved in promoting justice, peace, solidarity, and the protection of creation.



A Personal Reflection
Br. Dan Fenton, FSC

We were just returning to Bahay Pag-asa Youth Center from a court hearing in a city about one hour's drive to the south, when we got news that one of our residents had run away from the center. I was traveling with our social worker, our cook, Gerald, who was our driver for that day, and two of our residents. The young man who ran off was 18 years old and had no court case filed against him - which means that he could leave whenever he wanted, but since he was admitted with a court order, we had to go through the formality of getting a release document from the court. In any case, he had apparently had an argument with a staff member and had become very angry. Letting himself out with a set of kitchen keys, with which he had been entrusted, he managed to elude the security guards and disappear into the surrounding fields.

It was getting late on our trip back to Bahay Pag-asa and we had just dropped off our social worker near her home, when our cook suddenly spotted this young man marching determinedly toward Bacolod. I had no intention of trying to apprehend him - indeed I had no right to do so - but I wanted to see if I could calm him down or at least find out where he was headed so that we could inform his family and his social worker. So Gerald pulled over and I jumped out of the vehicle and tried to speak with our departing resident. He was having none of it - and his face was set, "like flint" as they say. When it became clear that he was not stopping - indeed not even slowing - I made the decision to walk with him. I knew that I could not stop him, but at least I could find out where he was going.

So off we went, marching our way through curbside markets, busy jeepney stops, and lots of people who were at least mildly interested in this odd sight. At first I was behind him but that, unfortunately, made it seem as if I was chasing him and I worried that some of the crowd on the street might try to intervene. So at one point I ran ahead of him but that became problematic because...well, I had no idea where we were going. And so I finally settled on a fast walk alongside of him, which was not easy in some areas since it placed me in the path of oncoming traffic, but I kept pace and tried to ask him where he was going. Meanwhile, Gerald and the boys in our vehicle tried to follow us in a low-speed pursuit.

For the first few kilometers, our departing resident said nothing - in fact, didn't even seem to notice my presence. We walked past fields of sugar cane as the sun set and then past corners crowded with local folk having just finished a day's work and shopping for a few items for dinner. We marched past the San Miguel Brewing Company and I recall thinking that I would be happy to trade in my unexpected exercise for a cold beer. It was soon dark enough that I thought that it would only be a matter of time before one of us became a victim of the erratic and heavy traffic. Finally, I was told the destination of our trek - a neighborhood where a friend or relative might live. It didn't sound very well thought-out. I told my companion, "I will not try to stop you, but I need to know that you find a meal and a safe place to stay tonight. I will keep walking with you, but I do have some coins and would be happy to travel by jeepney for a while."

And so, in the night, we rode along on wheels for a while; my feet were grateful. It was certainly worth the 14 pesos. And then, at the next big intersection, my friend hopped out and I jumped down after him. More walking, side by side we went past restaurants and the New Government Center and had just started moving toward a poorly-lit residential area. And then, suddenly, there were several Bahay Pag-asa staff members and two police officers ahead of us signaling the end of our journey. All ended well. The young man willingly returned to the center, his anger and upset used up in our walking. Over the next few days he was able to put his problems into perspective and we arranged for his move to stay with his mother who had moved to another island.

Many visitors come here and tell me, "You're like a father to these boys." More like a grandfather, I think to myself, but neither is really true. I'm a Brother and that's what I must be here. I don't lead (though I know many Brothers who do); I accompany as far as I am able. Sometimes it just means sitting next to one of our residents who is trying to understand why his family no longer wants him to live with them. And, at other times it means literally walking with young people as they try to find what they're really looking for. When God gives me the opportunity, I teach and I have found a number of ways of being useful here. At other times, like court hearings, I just stand next a young person and tell the judge, "I'm with him." It's what a brother would do.

Prayers of Intercession (Response: **Lord, hear our prayer.**)

For all Religious Brothers in the Church today, that they may always find opportunities to witness to the Gospel through their work and their life together, we pray to the Lord.

For all those who work in the ministry of vocation discernment, that they may encouraged in their efforts by their communities and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, we pray to the Lord.

For all young men considering lives of service in the spirit of the Gospel, that they may consider living their calling as a Religious Brother, we pray to the Lord.

That we Brothers may always give, through the example of our ministry and our communal life and prayer, a sign to young people of the vitality and integrity of the Church at its best, we pray to the Lord.

For all young people who, because of poverty, prejudice, conflict or misfortune, find themselves deprived of the educational opportunities to realize their full human potential, that they may find, in the Religious Brother, a welcoming educator, advocate and guide, we pray to the Lord.

That all Religious Brothers may experience, in their prayer, community life and ministry, the love of God and the fulfillment of their calling, we pray to the Lord.

(Please offer any additional intentions.)

Our Father...

Closing Prayer

We pray, Lord, that you will always sustain us in the ministry to which we have been called by you. We ask that you give us always, in our prayer, ministry and community life, the ability to participate in the coming of your Kingdom, here on Earth. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Saint John Baptist de La Salle... **pray for us.**

Live Jesus in our hearts....**forever.**

