

**Homily – Saturday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time
Mass for Focolare Group, Mission Concepción – October 12, 2024**

Dear friends, reading and studying about God is only relevant in-so-far as we get to know God personally. Today's Gospel reminds us that the Word of God is not just a concept to be studied, but a living reality, a Person – dynamic, active, and transforming. The Word of God revealed to us is a Verb, not a noun, calling us into action. The Word of God must be lived out, day by day, moment by moment.

Jesus prays, “May they all be one,” (Jn 17:21), showing us that unity is the goal, a fruit of the Holy Spirit that arises when we live according to the Word. As you know well, this unity is not just a personal goal, but one that extends to all our relationships, to society, and even to the world. Pope Francis teaches that *“we are unable to achieve unity by our own strength. Unity is above all a gift, it is a grace to be requested through prayer.”* As Focolare, you are especially called to promote this unity by building fraternal relationships across diverse cultures, nationalities, and even faith traditions. Spiritual and social renewal are a fruit of dialogue and community building. It is about walking together – led by God's love – toward the truth and unity that Christ desires for us all.

St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, offers us a deep reflection on this unity, reminding us that “through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus.” Paul emphasizes that the law, though important, is temporary and relative. What truly matters is faith in Jesus Christ. Faith unites us as children of God, transcending divisions of Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or

female. This new identity in Christ brings us freedom and invites us into a relationship of love with God and with each other.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, our model, was the first to respond fully to the Word of God, not just by hearing it but by living it. Her “yes” to God changed the course of history, and it teaches us how to embrace God’s will in our own lives. She reminds us that true discipleship is found in listening to the Word and putting it into practice, as Jesus tells us in today’s Gospel: “blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

As we go forward, may Our Lady of the Pillar – whose memorial we celebrate today – help us live the Word as a verb — actively loving, serving, and uniting. Through our faith, may we become agents of unity and peace, working toward the vision Jesus prayed for: that we may all be one.