



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

COUNSELS

BLD Youth Ministry members experience a blessed YLSS weekend



BLD Newark's YLSS #22 was held this past weekend, and once again, the Holy Spirit reigned in triumph. In the article below, two of the Youth Ministry's members, a lamb and a shepherd, recount their profound experiences.

BELIEVE, RECEIVE, REPENT

From YLSS # 22 Lamb – Tricia:

It truly was a blessed weekend for the 25 candidates that took the Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #22. The youth that participated came from a variety of regions, such as Newark, NJ; Rockland, NY; and St. Antoninus Parish. Each candidate, or lamb as they are called, had their own perception of what the weekend would be like. Each one had their own questions, concerns and anxieties regarding how the weekend would play out. Monsignor Schetelick, the new Spiritual Director of BLD Newark, requested that the candidates ask the Holy Spirit to help them do three things during the weekend: **to believe, to repent and to receive.**

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Be Not Afraid

THEME: We overcome temptation when we listen to God's voice.

WORD: Gn 12:1-4a / Ps 33:4-5,18-19,20,22
2 Tm 1:8b-10 / Mt 17:1-9

ORDER: **Rise up and do not be afraid.** (cf Mt 17:7)

REFLECTION:

The readings for this Sunday invite us to reflect on God's presence in us, the need for transformation to reopen our hearts to what God may be asking of us, both in our personal lives, as well as in our BLD community. Both the first and second readings speak to us about the "call" of God.

Abram is called by God to do something that sounds impossible. **"Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father's house to a land that I will show you."** (Gn 12:1) In other words, leave everything you know, everything you've grown up with, all those you love, and head for an unnamed place. And Abram goes in faith, as directed.

In the second reading, St. Paul tells Timothy that he had to bear his share of the hardships which the Gospel entailed. Like him, we too, are all reminded of our common call to a life of holiness - a call to grow closer to God, to be more like Him, and to understand that hardships are necessary in order to be in obedience and in conformity with God.

As described in the Gospel Jesus' transfiguration, witnessed by Peter, James and John, is a reminder, a wake-up call for us about how our relationship with Jesus should be. It directs us to think and better understand that God loves us so much that He wishes to transform our lives, and for us to develop deeper relationships with Him.

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Promise of the Week

"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you." (Gn 12:2)

BELIEVE, RECEIVE, REPENT (from page 1)

He told them that by focusing on these three things during the weekend, they would each have a chance to renew their faith. The lambs did this, and were thus able to strengthen and solidify their new found faith.

At the end of the seminar, it was quickly noted how each of the candidates' faces were transformed. The smiles and the peace that emanated from each one of them after the Baptismal Exhortation was precious. In the end, it was truly amazing to see the youth opening themselves up to His undying love and grace.



During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Msgr. Schetelick blessed everyone present with holy water. And at that moment, I felt like there were holy angels' wings touching both my arms and back.

While standing with my eyes closed, I felt my whole body fall down gently as my spirit calmly rested. I felt as if someone was pressing my hands down over my chest. Before I stood up, I felt someone lifting me up and spreading my hands to my sides. While the exhorters were praying, my tears kept falling, and I quietly felt God's love and felt forgiveness for my sins.

From YLSS #22 Shepherd – Issa:

As I watched my lamb become transformed in the Spirit during her Baptism, I prayed in tongues, asking the Lord to make me an intercessor for her. I prayed that she would fully experience a complete surrendering to the Holy Spirit. I prayed that she may learn to trust and feel God's constant presence in her life. I asked that the Lord exchange her pains, doubts, and worries with spiritual charism, healing, and love.

The Spirit prompted me to speak prophecies to my lamb. I felt as if Jesus was beside me, telling me the exact words she needed to hear in order to become open to the Holy Spirit. After watching my lamb's reactions to the prophecies and hearing her testimony of her baptismal experience, I learned that shepherding her has opened my eyes to see the hand of God in everything.

Congratulations to all the newly baptized Youth, and thank you to all who helped the Holy Spirit triumph at YLSS #22. Thank You Lord for Your forgiveness, and mercy.

Ruled with Your Ruler



“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful... For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.” (Lk 6:36,38)

There are so many evil things going on in our world today. You turn on the TV and the news is all about the bad things our fellow brothers and sisters are doing to themselves, their loved ones, and each other. However, instead of judging others for their actions, we need to start with looking at ourselves.

Meanwhile, remember too that we should all be grateful that we have a merciful God.

In God's eyes we are perfect; at creation, made in His image and likeness. But sin entered the world and separated us from Him. So now, we need to stop measuring ourselves and our fellow brothers and sisters based on the world's standards; for example, when we judge others - their social class by the color of their skin, their worth by the types of clothes they wear; when we judge them by the manner of how they speak. Measuring our brothers and sisters with our own ruler or our own flawed preconceptions has got to stop.

We need to be more accountable for the things that we do. We do a lot of blaming; but when wrong, we make excuses, we do not admit our faults and we do not acknowledge our wrongdoings.

When we look at others, too often we use our own 'ruler' and impose our expectations on our brothers and sisters without even measuring our own faults and honestly assessing our expectations first. Let us not rule or be ruled by our own ruler. Instead, ask this - how do I/we measure up to God's ruler? And then always strive to live up to His standards.



The Prodigal Son

The Parable of the Prodigal Son (also known as the Lost Son, Running Son, Loving Father or Lovesick Father) is one of the parables of Jesus and appears in Luke 15:11-32. Jesus Christ shares it with His disciples, the Pharisees and others. Today, just about everyone knows about the story of the Prodigal Son.

This is the last of the three parables about loss and redemption, following the parable of the Lost Sheep and the parable of the Lost Coin. Jesus told these after the Pharisees and religious leaders accused Him of welcoming sinners and eating with them. The father's joy described in this parable reflects Divine Love - the *boundless mercy of God* and *God's refusal to limit the measure of His grace*.

The request of the younger son for his share of the inheritance is brash, even insolent, and was tantamount to wishing that the father was dead. His actions did not lead to success and he eventually became an indentured servant, with the degrading job of looking after pigs, and even envying the swine for the carob pods they were eating.

This mention of the son's longing to eat what the swine were having (Lk 15:16) could refer to how the Pharisees viewed the sinners and Christ eating with them (Lk 15:2). The Pharisees were so caught up in their ideas of ritual cleanliness, so they might have thought of these people as loathed pigs.

On the son's return, the father treats him with generosity far more than he had a right to expect.



Some have suggested that this mirrors what Christians should do after sinning: feel contrition and return to their Heavenly Father. Is this something we are ready to do?

Also in the story is the older son, and in contrast, he seems to think, solely in terms of *law, merit and reward*, rather than *love and graciousness*. He may represent the Pharisees who were criticizing Jesus.

The father, who represents our Heavenly Father, implies to the older son that his love for both sons is not dependent upon their perfection, but their willingness to return to Him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Our Father will always graciously welcome us back.

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We need to be transfigured, changing our lives for the better and removing all unnecessary things we put on ourselves. This change is not a once-for-all experience and then living-happily-ever-after; it is instead, a matter of continuous transfiguration as situations change.

There was a story about a husband who made a toast to his wife on their 50th wedding anniversary: "Cheers to my wife, whose love for me has been tried and true!" To which the wife, who was a little hard of hearing, responded: "Yes, I'm tired of you, too!"

Some of us are tired and need a mountaintop-graced experience with God to be recharged and energized, in order to see clearer and be more confident in our identity as we are called to serve, especially in our community.

We must respond when God calls. Oftentimes, we don't respond, because we are afraid or we simply don't understand. We tend to be with the crowd all the time, to build comfort zones in our lives and to evade the pains and struggles that are there. We need a determination to face the difficulties, and at the same time, cling to God's promise of glory. Let us remember the often-used adage, "No pain, no gain." Many times, we want success without the struggle; we want fulfillment without the hard work. Some get by in simply coasting along, afflicted with AIDS - not the sexually transmitted sickness, but an acronym for "As If Doing Something." When laziness starts to slip in, it will be best to join the TV program "American Idol" (Idol)!

Each of us had experienced our own personal transfiguration-moments during our encounters, seminars, teachings, retreats and discipleship. It was an experience when we felt especially close to God. It is not so much about our faces shining like the sun or our clothes becoming white as light that matters, but instead, it's that of becoming a more beloved son or daughter, in whom the Father is well-pleased.

It is never too late to finally receive or accept a special task from God. Let us not be discouraged as we submit to the call and leave behind the security of our homes and families. We can overcome any sufferings and hardships; and then, what will be ours are the glory, and eternal joy, and life in the presence of God, as we follow Jesus all the way in our lives and through our services in the BLD community.

We must firmly believe that it is God who is calling; that He has a plan; that He is in command; and that His faithful love is our only assurance. He is saying: **"Get up, do not be afraid!"**

Let us all go and do not hesitate to proceed on the often difficult journey...

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“to the land I will show you ... so that... all the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you” (Gn 12:1-3).

Direction: Trust that the Lord will equip you when He calls you to serve in ministry.

A Special Night at St. Gen's in Elizabeth

On February 25, 2017, members of the BLD Singles Praise Ministry held a special night of Eucharistic Adoration and Praise and Worship at St. Genevieve's Church in Elizabeth, NJ. Their intention was to create an intimate environment in which those who attended could experience the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed, and people sat in the presence of Jesus while Singles Praise sang songs and offered prayers to God through two segments, with a short break in between for silent adoration.

As people gathered in the church, the night started with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Afterward, Praise started singing songs they had selected to match the intimacy of the moment, asking God to open the eyes of their hearts, singing how they loved God, and of how God is so good to them. This was coupled with prayers which also expressed adoration of God and Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

At one point during the night, Father Ronnie Nombre, one of St. Genevieve's parochial vicars, led a prayer for world peace, followed by a few minutes of quiet adoration. When the music picked up again, the theme of adoration resumed in their music, with the line "Jesus, oh how we love You" repeated over and over again.

Finally, the Blessed Sacrament was reposed in its tabernacle, and Praise sang one more song expressing just how great our God is. After the night was over, those in attendance, members, as well as non-members of BLD, were raving about what they had just experienced. Special appreciation was given to the music, with attendees saying that the music sounded "full" and that they were in awe about how it enriched the experience of adoration.

Singles Praise thanks those who were able to attend. For those who were not there, if you wish to experience this type of worship for yourself, the good news is that the Singles Praise ministry is already in talks with St. Genevieve's to hold another special night of Eucharistic Adoration, sometime in either April or May. We hope that more people will be able to attend this special event.

A pdf of this Covenant News is also available online at BLDNEWARK.com

LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings	\$ 2,146	\$ 22,832
Mission Collections	\$ 40	\$ 1,585

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

BLD-Newark
1992-2017



Teaching Calendar

Teachings for Saturday, **March 11, 2017** - 1 to 6 pm:
 - Apologetics (LSS 1-43)
 - Prayer Leadership (LSS 1-45)
 - Encounter with Jesus (LSS 1-46B)

LSS # 47

March 31 - April 2, 2017

Contacts: Manny & Nette Manguiat - lexman@hotmail.com,
 Earl & Flo Manguiat - bldnewarklsa@gmail.com

Retreat: Feel the Father's Love

(The Parable of the Prodigal Son)



Join us, with **Msgr. Paul Schetelick** leading the Community in reflection and meditation.

Divine Mercy Auditorium
 Saturday, April 22, 2017
 11:30 am to 6:30 pm
 (lunch will be served)

Marriage Encounter # 48

May 19-21, 2017

Hotel Executive Suites
 30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ
 Contact email: MLA@bldnewark.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Mar 17	Management
		Mar 24	Mission
		Mar 31	Pastoral
		Apr 7	Evangelization