



COVENANT NEWS

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POPE AND HOLY SEE

Pope Encourages Young People to Keep a Spiritual Journal

- Message for the 2017 World Youth Day

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Pope Francis encouraged young people to keep a “spiritual journal every day and to “cultivate praise.” In his Message for the 2017 World Youth Day, published on March 21, the Pontiff invites them to “remain connected” to God. The Church is not a “flashmob,” and life must not be a “reality show,” he also stressed.

“I have (. . .) at heart that you young people can walk not only by remembering the past, but by having (. . .) courage in the present and hope for the future,” writes the Holy Father in his long Message for the WYD that will be observed at the diocesan level on Palm Sunday, April 9, on the theme “For He who is mighty has done great things for me” (Luke 1:49).

To be young does not mean, in fact, “to be disconnected from the past,” he explains. The facts of the past must be “a dynamic reality, on which to reflect and to draw a teaching and meaning for our present and our future,” he continues. It is about “discovering the red thread of the love of God that connects our whole existence.”

To do so, he offers suggestions to “remain connected”: “At the end of each day we can pause for a few minutes to recall the good moments, the challenges, what went well and what went wrong. Thus, before God and ourselves, we can express sentiments of gratitude, of repentance and of trust by writing them, if you wish, in a notebook, a sort of spiritual journal.”

The Pope recommends to “know the Bible well, the Word of God, to read it each day and compare it with your life.” He also invites to “cultivate praise, to not be fixed solely on problems and difficulties.

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COUNSELS

Authentic Belief in Jesus

THEME: The glory of God shines through us when we remain steadfast in our faith.

WORD : Ez 37:12-14 / Ps 130:1-2,3-4,5-6,7-8
Rom 8:8-11 / Jn 11:1-45

ORDER: “Ask of God, God will give you.”
(Jn 11:22)

REFLECTION:

Resurrection is the highest point and goal of our earthly life. It is the meaning and purpose of our earthly journey. Resurrection is the reason we make sacrifices and endeavor to live a good and just life. It is the reason why we follow Jesus and fulfill His commandments. Resurrection is our hope of glory, and the promised fulfillment of eternal life with God.

The theme for the 5th Sunday of Lent is: **The glory of God shines through us when we remain steadfast in our faith.** Our faith in God can help us triumph over the passion we share with Jesus - all the problems, struggles and difficulties we face in life - just as it can overcome our fear of death - and death itself.



Jesus Raised Lazarus from the Dead

through faith, the kind of faith that is deeper than mere knowledge. It is full confidence that the goodness and power of God can overcome any known obstacle...

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Promise of the Week

“I will put my spirit in you that you may come to life.” (Ez 37:14a)

POPE AND HOLY SEE

(from page 1)

In the dynamic of life, the supplications of today will become motives for thanksgiving tomorrow.”

Decide Your Future!

To those who are “particularly wounded by life’s circumstance, who would like to ‘reconfigure’ their life, the Pope says: “there are no Saints without a past, or sinners without a future. A pearl is born in the wound of an oyster!”

However, to have a past “is not the same thing as to have a history,” says Pope Francis, putting one on guard against the excesses of the social networks: “Young people’s faces (. . .) appear in numerous photographs that speak of more or less real events, but we do not know in all of that what is a ‘history,’ an experience that can be told, having an objective and a meaning.

“Do not let yourselves be misled by this false image of reality!” he insists. “Be protagonists of your history, decide your future!” And the Pontiff assures: “You young people can also do great things, take on great responsibilities, if you recognize the merciful and all powerful action of God in your life.”

“Your history also has its place in the history of the Church,” continues the Pope, stressing that “a genuine experience of the Church is not like a flashmob, where one gets together, does a performance and then each one goes his own way. The Church bears in herself a long Tradition, which is transmitted from generation to generation, being enriched at the same time by each one’s experience.”

A “Reality Show” Life

“A society that only values the present also tends to devalue all that is of the past, as for instance the institutions of marriage, of consecrated life, of the priestly mission,” adds the Pontiff in his Message: “These end by being seen as bereft of meaning, as exceeded models.”

Pope Francis exhorts young people to not let themselves “be deceived!” “One thinks that one lives better in so-called ‘open’ situations, behaving in life as in a reality show, without an objective and without an end.” However, “to accord the value due to the past” helps to “plan a future of happiness.”

“Our time does not need ‘couch potato young people,’” said the Pope, taking up the expression used in the 2016 Krakow WYD. He gives Mary as a model, who “is not the sort of person that, to be at ease, is in need of



Perpetual Adoration



“Hide not your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me; in the day when I call, answer me speedily.” (Tuesday, April 4; Ps 102:3)

“In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice.” (Friday, April 7; Ps 18)

Whenever I go through life’s trials, I always see myself crying before the Blessed Sacrament. In this Holy Place, I can feel His presence, and I pour out my heart to Him. I always share this practice with my friends and tell them about the Perpetual Adoration chapels that I go to.

We all need the presence of another person to listen to our woes, and to provide us with guidance. However, in my case, I don’t necessarily need the presence of another person, but I do seek Christ’s loving embrace. Why is that so?

Because I know that my God will never forsake me. He will always be there for me, listening to and answering my cry for help. He will always be there for me as my Friend... as my Father. He will always be my One True Lord.

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➔ a couch where she can feel well installed and sheltered.”

Finally, the Holy Father mentions the October 2018 Synod, on the theme: “Young People, Faith and Discernment of Vocations.”

“We will ask ourselves about the way that you, young people, live the experience of faith in the midst of the challenges of our time. And we will also address the question of the way in which you can mature a life project, by discerning your vocation, understood in the wide sense, namely, to marriage, in the secular and professional environment, or in consecrated life and the priesthood.”

A God Who Makes Us Think

The Gospel for Monday, April 3 is about the adulterous woman who was about to be stoned. The scribes and Pharisees wanted to test Jesus' adherence to the law, and asked Him directly, "**Teacher... So what do you say?**" (Jn 8:4,5) What they did not know was that they were in for one of the most powerful teachings to come from Jesus.

To me, one of the strongest proofs of Jesus' divinity comes, not from the miracles He performed, but from the instances when there was no miracle, and yet the lesson that was affirmed is so powerful that it can only point to Divine Love. The episode involving this woman is one of them.

In this world, there is actually a place for laws and rules. While useful, man does have a tendency to limit life to simple adherence to them, because, in a very real sense, it's easier since it's the laws that will rule, and conveniently, man wouldn't really have to think for himself: Compliance = Salvation.

To the modern person, the law of Moses would seem barbaric – *death as the punishment for adultery?* If we dismiss this whole episode as archaic because of that, then I suspect that we would miss out on a number of precious lessons to come out of it.

First, as aforementioned, how Jesus did not need a miracle to save a woman's life. Furthermore, how He was able to use the occasion to show the men who wanted to stone her, the folly of strict adherence to the law, but more importantly, the folly of self-righteousness when in reality, all were sinners in need of forgiveness. And in the end, how Jesus Himself did not condemn – He simply said, "**Go, and from now on do not sin any more.**" (Jn 8:11)

Much like the Parable of the Prodigal Son (where no miracle was involved either), the episode seems to have been placed in the Gospel by the Evangelist so that Christ can make us think, way beyond simple adherence to rules and laws.

We don't have to look far to see a "what have you done for me lately" perspective; in the Old Testament reading for the next day (Tuesday, April 4). Despite having seen an actual miracle with the parting of the Red Sea, the children of Israel were still complaining. Seems that for some people, even big miracles like that had an expiration clause attached to their belief.


The understatement is that Jesus is different. Even His summary of the two greatest commandments – love God and love neighbor – leaves so much for us to ponder and act upon. In the end, love should rule, and He makes us think about how it will in our lives.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

even the natural law involving the loss of life. With faith as small as a mustard seed, the Lord tells us that we can do marvelous things, things that may seem humanly impossible. How much less demanding it would be for us to let go of our old ways, abandon bad habits, get rid of our old self-centered ways, and make ourselves available for the cross.

It is possible that, with no meaningful relationship with God, our life may have lost purpose and direction. We may be slaves to sin, shackled to addiction, obsessions and fatal attractions. We may be among the living dead who live in tombs, not tombs of stone, but tombs of the spirit, mind and heart, and from these Jesus calls us to come forth. When Jesus says,



**"I am the
resurrection
and the
life."**

JOHN 11:25

He is teaching us that the critical moment in every human life is not the moment of a job promotion, or marriage, or of giving birth. Not even the moment of death, but the moment when we turn from unbelief to authentic belief in Jesus. The moment is decisive because it connects us to Jesus in a very personal way.

One of the keys to our spiritual growth as Christians is believing in God's love – even when we cannot see it. Jesus then becomes not a distant figure but someone close to us and involved in our life. From Him, we receive a new kind of life that is stronger than death because it is Jesus' own life that we call "grace."

The miracle of Lazarus coming to life is the promise of new spiritual life that Jesus can give to us here and now. Jesus gives us this new life that conquers any kind of death. The point of this Lazarus Gospel is that Jesus is indeed the Resurrection and the Life, as embodied in our promise this 5th Sunday of Lent - "**I will put my spirit in you that you may come to life.**" (Ez 37:14a)

Directions:

1. Share God's presence with those seeking fulfillment in life, serving and praying for all who live their new life in the Spirit.
2. Be a living witness of the Gospel.

Perpetual Adoration (from page 2)



Listed below are some of the parishes in New Jersey that have 24-Hour Perpetual Adoration (in terms of driving distance, these are within about an hour away from Rahway):

St. John 94 Ridge St Orange, NJ 07050 973-674-0010	St. Peter the Apostle 179 Baldwin Rd Parsippany, NJ 07054 (Convent Chapel) 973-334-2090
Our Lady of Fatima 501 New Market Rd Piscataway, NJ 08854 (except for Sunday Masses) 732-968-5555	Our Lady of Mount Carmel 1 Passaic St Ridgewood, NJ 07450 201-444-2000
St. Joseph 509 Hooper Ave Toms River, NJ 08753 732-349-0018	St. Raphael 3500 S Broad St Hamilton, NJ 08610 609-585-7049
St. Raphael 3500 S Broad St Hamilton, NJ 08610 609-585-7049	St. Veronica 4215 US Highway 9 Howell, NJ 07731-3378 732-363-4200
St. Leo 103 Myrtle Ave Irvington, NJ 07111 973-372-1272	St. John the Apostle 1805 Penbrook Terr Linden, NJ 07036-5436 908-486-6636
St. Margaret 6 Sussex Ave Morristown, NJ 07960 973-538-0874	Our Lady of Lourdes 304 Central Ave Mountainside, NJ 07092 908-232-1162
St. Michael 4 Church St Netcong, NJ 07857-1325 973-347-0032	St. Mary 26 Leonardville Rd New Monmouth, NJ 07748 732-671-0071
St. Lucy 118 7th Ave Newark, NJ 07104-1897 973-484-4899	EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

LORD'S PROVISION Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings	\$ 3,230	\$ 31,172
Mission Collections	\$ 85	\$ 2,317

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com
Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

BLD-Newark
1992-2017



BLD-Newark
1992-2017



You are invited to a
BLD 25th Anniversary Event

**Feel The Father's Love Retreat
(Parable of the Prodigal Son)
with Msgr. Paul Schetelick**

Sat., April 22, 2017 11:30am-6:30pm
Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Registration & Lunch start promptly at 11:30am & end at 12:30pm

Seats are limited. Please RSVP early to: teaching@bldnewark.com.

Marriage Encounter # 48

May 19-21, 2017

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

June 16 -18, 2017

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center
Garrison, NY 10524

Singles Encounter #37

Come all you who are thirsty...

Please contact: **Jutt Bustos**
Lita Alfaro

June 23-25, 2017

Days Hotel of East Brunswick
195 Route 18 S
East Brunswick, NJ 08816

Solo Parents Encounter #19

"Jesus is calling..."

Please contact: **Cherry and Reuben Vibar**

Marshaling



Schedule

Date	Apostolate
Apr 7	Evangelization
Apr 21	Formation
Apr 28	Management
May 5	Mission