



Evangelization team uplifts Nursing Home residents

Like Mary in the Gospel of Luke, who set out and traveled to a town of Judah to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, that the infant in her womb leapt for joy upon hearing Mary's greeting, last Sunday, December 21, three groups from the Evangelization team brought glad tidings and great joy to residents of two NJ nursing-homes: the Clara Maas Nursing Home in Belleville and the Glen Arbor in Cedar Grove, NJ.

That morning, the Evangelization team visited the Clara Maas Medical Center in Belleville, NJ with the Praise Ministry delighting the residents with excerpts from "Everlasting Light"; in the afternoon, residents of the Glen Arbor Nursing Home were treated with songs and dances from members of SPM and LSA. In their colorful attires and Santa Claus bonnets, the members sang a medley of joyful Christmas songs. To the further glee of the residents, they were treated to two Filipino folk dances. That same evening, Praise members gave their usual support at the Simbang Gabi celebrated at St. Peter's Church, also in Belleville.

Likewise, 20 disciples from the Singles Ministry visited the elderly at all 3 floors of the Canterbury Nursing Home, also in Cedar Grove, NJ, later praying with some of the residents in their rooms.

It was a blessing not only for the residents of these three homes and the parishioners of St. Peter's but also for the team members who answered His call to evangelize: "*Behold I come to do Your Will.*" (Heb. 10:9), for the Lord takes delight in a cheerful giver.

Other news:

- The Catholic bishops of the Philippines strongly objected to the announcement that capital punishment would resume after a 3-year moratorium; the bishops rejected the government's argument that executions would help bring an end to a rash of kidnapping.
- The Holy Father appointed the first Filipino bishop to serve in the US last Dec 11. Father Oscar Azarcon Solis, born in San Jose City was

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COUNSELS

Guided by the Light of Christ

WORD: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt. 2:1-12

ORDER: Rise up in splendor! (Is 60:1); Pay Him homage and serve Him.

(from Ps72:11)

REFLECTION: "*And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother.*" (Mt 2:9-11)

Where were you during the historic blackout of the Northeastern United States last summer? Millions of people were plunged into darkness. It could have been worse were it not for the timing of the blackout that occurred around 4:00PM, when there was still daylight. In a large metropolitan city such as New York, our dependence on electricity and light, became very obvious. It was impossible and extremely dangerous to move around in the dark.

At the time of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem of Judea, there of course was no electricity. Light was provided by the flickering fire of oil lamps. Also, even centuries before Jesus' birth, there were already people who studied the stars in the sky and who could interpret signs from them. In fact, it is believed that the Magi (Greek *magoi*), or wise men, came from this priestly sect of astrologers, possibly from Persia. The dogged persistence of the Magi in following the new star is of great significance for us. It was widely held at that time that new stars appeared when great rulers were born. And although there were many unknowns, the wise men set out on their journey anyway. They did not know how long the trip would be when they

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God's Promise for the Week

"Nations shall walk by your light and kings by your shining radiance." (Is 60:3)

Mary, Mother of God

Mary, the mother of God, was born in Jerusalem about 20 B.C. to Anne and Joachim. Upon her marriage, Anne promised to offer her first child to the service of God. However for many years, she and Joachim could not bear a child. Sadly, Joachim went to the desert to pray and fast, leaving Anne at home. After about five months, an angel appeared to her, announcing that she will bear a child unlike any in the world. Mary, from the moment of her conception, was free of original sin. The parents dedicated Mary to the service of the Temple in Jerusalem as promised.

As a young woman, Mary was betrothed to Joseph, a carpenter from Nazareth. Before they were wed, the angel Gabriel appeared to her and said: "*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you.*" Virgin Mary was perplexed but the angel said: "*Do not be afraid. You have won God's favor. You will conceive and bear a son and he will be called Son of the Most High.*" (Luke 1: 28, 30-32). And Mary in humility and deep faith replied, "*Be it done unto me according to your word.*" This consent of Mary is of tremendous importance to our salvation because in the incarnation of the Word was the restoration of the human race.

So intimately does Mary share in the mystery of Christ. Her giving birth heralded joy for all the world; her request at the wedding in Cana made Jesus perform His first miracle; her patient suffering and anguish during the cruel persecution of her beloved Son gained her the glorious reward in Heaven.

In all adversities, she sustained her unwavering fidelity and complete obedience to God's will. With untiring love she gave herself to His service and wholeheartedly accepted God's divine plan for renewing all things in Christ

She became the mother of all the living when Jesus entrusted her to John as He hung upon the cross, saying: "Behold your mother." Being our loving mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary is unceasingly praying for us that God may enrich our lives with His grace and forgiveness and strengthen our weakness with His healing power.

When we are faced with trials and fears, confronted with sorrows, pain and conflicts, we can turn with confidence to our Blessed Mother, calling to her as our mother of mercy and advocate of peace, to ask God to hear our prayers. We must always seek her intercession in our distress for no one is closer to Jesus than His mother. She is our star of hope and our pillar of faith who unites us to Jesus, our Saviour.

A youth speaks on Growing in Faith

Faith is a funny thing. It is neither tangible nor alive, and yet I frequently find it playing games with me. And more often than not, the game is "hide and seek."

When I was discerned as a member of the District Youth Council during my senior year of high school, my faith blossomed. As I did the Lord's work, my faith strengthened day by day. I could see it in the faces of the youth that would help us set up for Friday worship and in the faces of the Youth Praise members, who sang passionately even when attendance was low. Aside from BLD, I had been accepted to a good college and, at the end of the year, all of my teachers gave me warm wishes for the future. I was positive that all of this was God's doing.

After just a few weeks of attending college, however, my perfect world, and my faith, were nowhere to be found. The unexpected difficulty of my classes humbled me. I was not used to bad grades and mediocrity, and they blinded me to the Lord's outstretched hand. I wanted so badly to feel the spiritual fulfillment I felt just a few months before, but my prayers were, at best, half-hearted, and it became increasingly difficult to find God's advice in the daily readings. It did not help that I was unable to attend Friday worship regularly.

By the end of the academic year, I felt that the Lord had abandoned me. I was disappointed in my grades and had nightmares of not being accepted to a medical school. However, that summer, I served at the Youth Encounter #9, and it turned out to be just the cure for my wavering faith. Seeing more than 60 candidates sing to the Lord was awe-inspiring, and I could not keep myself from being touched by their love for the Lord. Later that summer, I helped facilitate the Youth Encounter #4 in Long Island, and the candidates' smiles and enthusiasm reminded me of the joy of service for God's Kingdom. Truly, the strength of my fellow youth was what helped build my faith once more.

In allowing myself to lose sight of my faith because of obstacles I had come across, I had made a grave mistake. Yet, through all this, I made an important observation. In those moments when it seemed that I had lost my faith, I always seemed to accidentally brush up against it during Friday worship or saw it winking at me as it floated along the notes of a hymn during mass. Thus, it is not lost - it is merely hiding, waiting to be sought, found, and nurtured.

(from page 1..)

an assistant parish priest at St. Rocco in Newark 1984-1988, and will now serve as auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles.

In the Spirit of Transparency

Authority Is God's Gift To Community

The role of authority and leadership in any community is one of many God-given gifts to build His church. It is to help all community members exercise their own gifts for the good of the whole body, resulting in harmony, with one heart, one soul and one spirit. Authority is not a guardian of law that stifles growth but a catalyst towards freedom and fulfillment.

The fruitfulness of authority as a gift depends on the way it is exercised. Most often authority is taken in a very legalistic approach. People understand authority as the responsibility to make decisions, command effectively and exercise power and to which the usual response is simple obedience. This is the reason why authority, at times, fails to bring blessings to a community.

Authority is, first of all, a rock, solid and firm. It gives support and provides life through love and forgiveness and is a source of water that cleanses and nourishes. It is a gardener who tills the soil and waters the seed so that it may grow and bear fruit.

Authority is a leader whom others can turn to for help and advice, to provide security, to affirm, encourage and guide the members. He is an anointed leader who organizes community and discerns the role of members for the body's general good, animating them, so that all remain focused on God and their work for Him. He loves them and is very concerned about their spiritual growth. He sets the proper perspective of every member's mission in this lifetime and feels truly responsible for others knowing that they are not their properties but distinct beings with hearts in whom resides the light of God and who are called to the freedom of truth and love. But most importantly, he is an ideal witness who continues to love God above all and his neighbor as himself.

Authority is a shepherd that leads the flock to green pastures so that all may grow spiritually and mature in their relationship with the Lord. He is like Jesus Who led His flock by going lower than others and worked for communion. He knows His lambs by their names, nourishes them and helps their gifts grow. He nurses their wounds, comforts them and gives them strength. He is bonded to people with links of love and is ready to give his life for them, sacrificing his own personal interests.

Authority is God sent and fruitful - a gift that brings growth, spiritual fulfillment, unity and communion!

From the Presiding Servant Leader of the CSL

My dearest brothers and sisters in Leadership,

Another year has passed and we are all aware of the sad incidents we had to face up to. But that is all in the past and I exhort all to learn from those experiences and take it to heart as we all gather in the first Global Inter District Conference of 2004. This is the time to chart our future as one body under the headship of Christ. A lot of paradigms will change and we as a community of varied cultures and milieus will have differences in our points of view, but community does not mean uniformity but unity in diversity. That is the challenge. That is the call. To be socially relevant when morality has gone down to its lowest, to be an arm and the heart of our mother Church, to be in communion while in mission, to be united in our diversity.

Let us ask every member of our Districts to offer prayers and sacrifices so as to cover us with the presence of our Lord in this very crucial point of our community. It is about time that we the leaders, decrease ourselves and empower others who are to take over our positions of leadership. In this season of Christ's birth he gave all of us the example of how he became one of us to train a measly group of twelve who impacts our lives up to this day.

Let us actively join this conference so that we as a community of faith would have a common understanding of what we will be in the days to come.

With love and prayers to all of you,

Dodo and Paulette Javier
Pastoral Servant Leader

Father Paul Lehman exhorts the community to observe moments of silence during the Liturgy.

- after the penitential rite before the Lord have mercy
- after the first reading before the responsorial psalm
- after the second reading (if there is one) before the Alleluia
- after the homily
- after Communion even if there is a Communion hymn.

Counsels from page 1

decided to follow the star. They did not know how they would be received in the faraway foreign land. They did not know what the king would look like or when or if they would return home. Yet they, like Abraham, chose to make the journey.

Following the light of God is a journey of similar faith. We often feel as if we don't know where our journey will lead us, and we certainly never know what we will find along the way. We do, however, know that God goes before us and with us to illumine our path, and we know that the journey is not in vain. Take this community, for instance. Eleven years ago, when the first seeds were being planted, I don't believe none of the three couples who began the community ever had an idea of how the community would be now. And yet, because they followed the Spirit's promptings in their hearts and remained true to God's Word, you and I are here now.

Like the Magi who were "overjoyed at seeing the star", we too are joyful and grateful to be in community. Through the face of every member, we can see a reflection of God's Love and Light. Through our encounters and seminars, we have found the peace that we had been searching for. Through our regular prayer meetings, Masses, teachings, fellowships, mission works, we pay homage and offer worship to the Light of the World. Out of gratitude for the Lord's abundant blessings in our lives, we have opened our hearts, offered our treasures and talents, yes, our very selves in service to the King of Kings by ministering to one another.

"And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way." (Mt 2:12) Herod could not derail God's plan for the salvation of the world. After their encounter with the Savior, the wise men were enlightened and their lives were forever transformed. They experienced not only a new metaphysical relationship but also new moral, material or social relationships: for them it meant 'going another Way'.

In this New Year, let us resolve even more, with God's help, to remain steadfast in the New Life that we have found in Jesus so that we can bring Christ's Light to the world. Now that we are an Association of the Faithful, let us diligently search our hearts for a new direction for the community, for 'another way' of working more fruitfully in the Lord's vineyard.

Direction: *Let your light shine before others.*

(Mt 5:16)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jan 10 Discipling, St Leo Conference Rm 1-6pm
- Jan 17 Newark Teachings, St. Antoninus 1-6pm
- Jan.24-25 Medical Mission, Paranaque, Metro Mla

*May the blessings of the Lord
be upon you. . .*

Birthdays

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Jan 1 | Sally Castaneda, LSS4 | 6 | Isa Hammond, LSS11 |
| 2 | Tricia Bustos, LSS14 | | Mel Hernandez, LSS20 |
| | Chichi Obi, ME22 | | ChariePaule, ME2 |
| | Lirra Tolentino, YE 9 | 7 | Romy Chan, LSS16 |
| 4 | Orange Avisado, LSS15 | | Nonong Punzalan, LSS10 |
| | Ted Briones, LSS8 | 8 | Melody De La Cruz, YE |
| | Elaine Francisco, SE12 | | May Tolentino, YE 8 |
| | Leni deGuzman, LSS19 | | |
| | Becky Napenas, LSS19 | | |
| | Step Ikalina, YE 8 | | |
| 5 | Lita Abes, LSS10 | | |
| | Joy Anyanwu, LSS21 | | |
| | Emil Canlas, LSS7 | | |
| | Joy Castellon, LSS7 | | |
| | Eric Cruz, LSS17 | | |
| | Evelyn Taino, LSS18 | | |



Anniversaries

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------------|
| Jan 2 | Ricky & Nardz Santos, LSS 20 |
| 3 | Ed & Tess Eusebio, LSS4 |
| | Jean & Marie Jean – Bart, ME22 |
| | Bong & Blandie Montemayor, LSS5 |
| | Nick & Island Raagas, LSS6 |
| | Jhun & Whie Yanza, LSS14 |
| 6 | Tony & Letty Luna, LSS9 |
| | Eddie & Nene Gutierrez, LSS19 |
| 7 | Nestor & Letty De Guzman, LSS5 |
| | Jess & Mita Olaso, LSS11 |

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

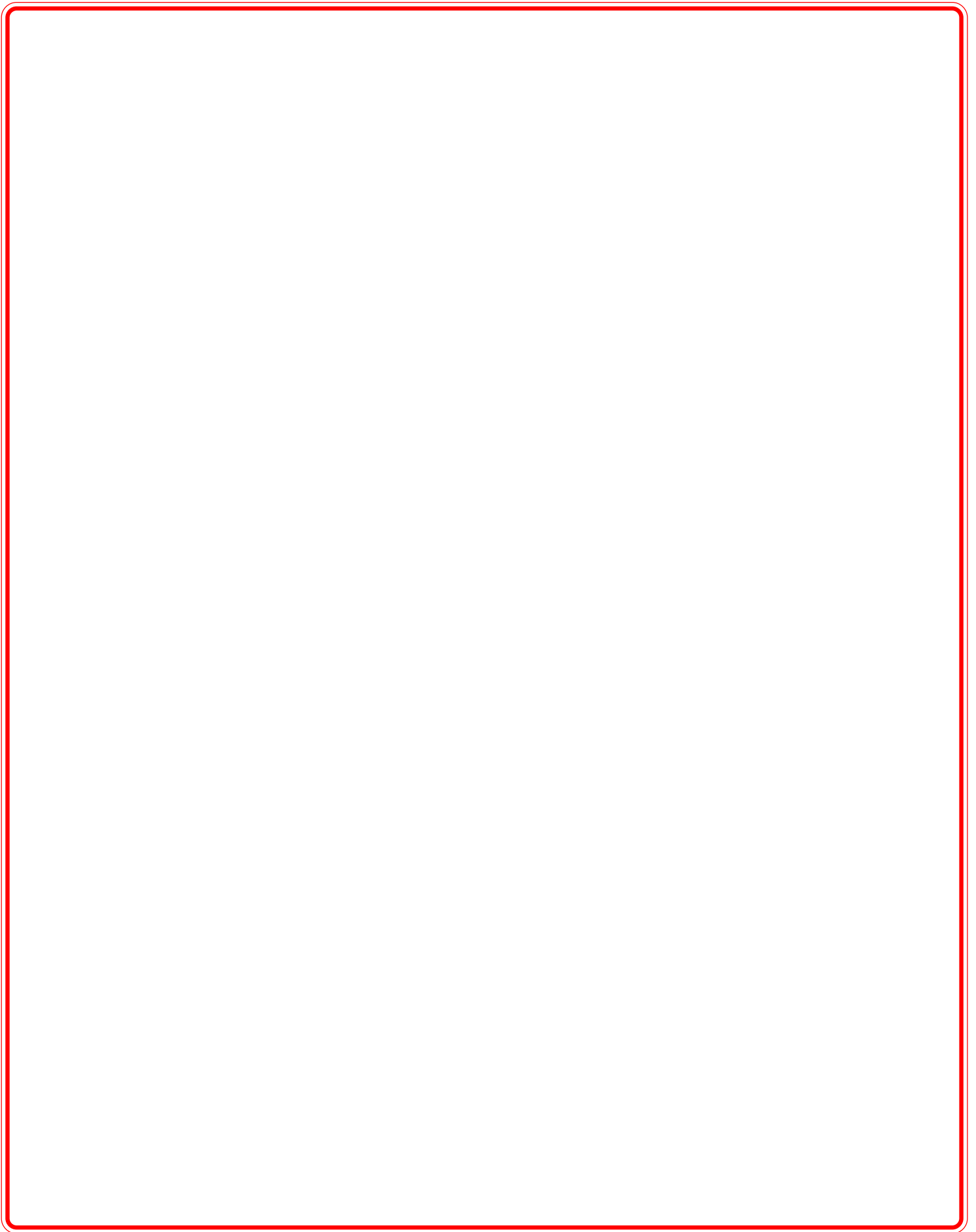
12/12	\$3,520
12/19	3,693
12/26	2,796
51-wk avg	\$3,678

EXPENSES

51-wk avg	\$4,105
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Thank you for your generosity!





Leaders to depart for first BLD Global Inter-District Conference

On January 24 and 25, BLD Community Servant Leaders, DCS, DIP Core and Spiritual Directors/Advisers, will be meeting in Manila for the first time ever to “chart our future as one body under the headship of Christ” (see letter from the CSL last issue).

In their collective wisdom, BLD’s Spiritual Director, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo and the new CSL decided to call this assembly so that everyone will have a chance to participate in the molding of our plans and programs, and address issues and concerns unique to their ministry and locality.

Our Spiritual Director and DSL, representing the Newark cluster, and one steward from each of the 5 DCS apostolates will be attending. The conference agenda includes plenary sessions to discuss global community issues such as the Covenant of Communion and multi-track break-out sessions which include the following topics: *(cont'd on page 4)*

Fr Paul speaks on “Transcendence”

Last December 26, the community ended 2003 with a liturgical celebration in lieu of our traditional weekly Friday worship. In his homily, Fr. Paul Lehman, our Spiritual Director focused on *transcendence* as an ability, a state or a grace by which we can accomplish something extraordinary, overcome a barrier and reach a difficult goal.

Fr. Paul drew from the day’s Scriptural account of Stephen (Acts 6-7), one of seven men chosen from the Hellenist community and anointed by the Apostles to help them. St. Stephen not only worked great wonders among the people, but was oblivious to the danger, fury and outcry from around him; the impending danger, and finally his martyrdom by stoning. In the Gospel (Mt 10), Jesus exhorts his disciples to endure to the end for His sake, because of His name. They will do this by looking beyond their human limitations, persevering through persecution and contradictions, and having faith in Him and the Spirit of the Father. *(cont'd on page 4)*

COUNSELS

Baptism and Ministry

WORD: Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 104:1b-4, 24-25, 27-30; Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7; Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

ORDER: “*Reject godless ways and worldly desires and live temperately, justly and devoutly.*”

(Ti 2:12)

REFLECTION:

When John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan, our Lord formally began His public ministry and mission as the promised Savior of all people. His ministry was that of teaching, healing, and proclaiming that God’s kingdom had come. His mission was to invite all people to reconcile and to become united with God. Jesus, true God and true man, did not need to be cleansed or purified by this baptism. He was without sin. The Lord’s baptism was an *epiphany* of the three Divine Persons in the Trinity. It was a signal moment in the Savior’s mission as He received the blessing of God the Father and the Holy Spirit. “*The holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my beloved Son; with You I am well pleased.’*” (Lk 3:22)

The Gospel reminds us of our own baptism, a defining moment in our lives whereby we become disciples of Christ and are integrated to His Body, the Church, in the name of our Triune God. Our baptism signifies the beginning of a new way of life - a life of total devotion and service to the Lord and to others. Our baptism empowers us to live in Christian faith, hope and love by which we overcome this world’s problems and uncertainties. As members of His Body, we have to remain connected to Him, to become like Him. The Lord left us an example to follow, which is utmost humility and obedience to the Father’s will. These should be the indelible qualities of our discipleship in Christ.

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“*He will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire.*” (Lk 3:16b)

Saint John Neumann

John Neumann was short, only 2 or 3 inches over five feet. He was humble, self-effacing and soft-spoken, with an old world accent. Criticized as not sufficiently impressive in appearance, manner and speech, he was referred to by many as *the Little Bishop*.

Actually, the young Neumann never really considered priesthood during his childhood, and at twenty, he was still undecided about his choice of career. Nevertheless, his mother thought that he should give theological studies a try. Shortly after sending his application letter, John Neumann received an acceptance letter from the Budweis Theological Seminary, where he excelled in his academics. He had exceptional skills in mastering languages, and became fluent in Italian, Spanish, Greek and Latin in addition to his native German and Bohemian.

In 1836, John traveled in a small steamboat to Manhattan. He was ordained in St. Nicholas Church on 2nd Street. His early ministry placed him in the whole Niagara frontier of upper New York State where he served as a pastor. There he built churches, raised log schools and taught German and Irish children.

He joined the Redemptorists at Pittsburgh, PA in 1840, becoming their superior in 1847. A decade later, Pope Pius XI consecrated him as the 4th Bishop of Philadelphia. The new bishop carried out his ministry with vigor and charisma. He traveled his vast diocese using boats, stagecoaches, horses and railroad and used well his gift of eleven languages to shepherd the souls of Philadelphia.

In eight extraordinary years, Bishop John Neumann reached out to minister to all the faithful and unfaithful in Philadelphia, by building 80 churches and 40 schools despite numerous financial difficulties. He also introduced the parochial school system. He was the first in America to establish a diocesan Forty Hours Devotion. He founded the Glen Riddle Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis.

In 1860, shortly before his 49th birthday, he died suddenly a few blocks from his new Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul. He was laid to rest at the Redemptorists' St. Peter the Apostle Church, where the faithful from all various walks of life still come today to seek his intercession.

After many years and many verified miracles, Bishop John Neumann was declared a Saint. One of many memorable exhortations he gave is the following: *"Works even the most simple, performed with constant perfection in the midst of inevitable difficulties, spell heroism in any servant of God."*

In the simplicity of St. John Neumann's works, and without regard to his stature and appearance, the faithful find a firm reason to bolster their faith by imitating him. He was canonized in 1977, the first American man to be so.

Bring the Good News to the Poor

Michael is a small, thin elderly man with squinty eyes. My wife and I met him at the office of a social service worker in Paterson who called us in to see if we could place him in our health facility. He was not shy about accepting an offer of donuts. We were amazed as this ragged, fragile man gulped down one, then two, then three donuts and asked if he could keep a fourth one. We could plainly see his hunger in his eyes.

On the way to the facility, we stopped to get his meager belongings at a run-down boarding home where we saw two roaches and a healthy mouse staring at us. Michael wanted reassurance that his roommate was not there. He was afraid he would be beaten up, or that his money taken away. He was not only poor; he had also been physically and verbally abused. He had no family or friends who could help him.

We took Michael to a clothing store. His face blank, he held on to a wool jacket and a woolen beret hat, price tag and all. As we headed to the car, I felt warm tears running down my face, for I saw Jesus in this little man. *"Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."* (Mt 25:40)

Before my encounter with Jesus a few years ago, it would have been so easy to say no to the social worker's request and favor the higher-paying private patients. But what would I tell Jesus, who proclaimed the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor."* (Lk 4:18) I saw in Michael a certain dignity, a dignity given him by Christ who saved us by His blood. His economic and social misfortune does not diminish his dignity one bit. Rich or poor, every man is sacred in God's eyes. I am bound by the love of Christ to treat Michael with dignity and respect.

Through my words and actions, I pray that I am able to convey to this downtrodden, oppressed, afflicted and forgotten man that Jesus loves him, that Jesus gave up His life to redeem him, just as He redeemed you and me. Michael represents the poor that Luke refers to in the gospel (Luke 4:18; 6:20-22; 7:22; 14:12-14), who have been enriched by accepting Jesus' message of salvation. We who are more abundantly blessed with warm homes and abundant pantries should ponder Mother Theresa's exhortation: *"If you can't feed a hundred people then feed just one."*

Please send all comments to
word@bldnewark.com



On Repentance (Metanoia)

When John the Baptist's ministry ended, Jesus's ministry began. Our Lord's first message was a reverberating echo of John's plea: "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" (Mt 4:17) What is repentance and why is it essential to our spiritual life? The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*, which means a "change of heart." This change involves a firm return to the Lord, a 180-degree turn from our self-centeredness to God-centeredness, from exalting ourselves to exalting Christ.

Repentance makes inward change a visible reality. This is the essence and fruit of renewal. Picture yourself before joining BLD and where you are now. Have you repented of your sins? Does your life show evidence that you have broken off from the bondage of sin? Can you and others see the positive change in you? The power of the Holy Spirit is clearly manifest in the repentant sinner's spiritual growth and transformation.

In my own life, repentance meant a deep and growing desire for the Lord, for His presence in my life, for His kingdom values. I resolved to turn away from my past sins, to leave behind my old life, and to live my new life in Jesus. I wanted to be led by the Holy Spirit, to find out and obey His will, and in the process, to become the person God wanted me to be.

A godly sorrow accompanies authentic repentance, a heartfelt sorrow for sinning against our good Lord, for causing pain in others. Have we gone back to the person we have offended to ask for forgiveness? Have we sought to reconcile with those alienated with us? When we encounter cynicism and doubt about the sincerity of our repentance, do we respond with humility, understanding and love?

Because we are broken, our life is one of *continuing repentance and conversion*. This is one mark of a follower of Christ. As disciples, we must not be discouraged when we stumble, but rather call on the Lord's mercy to rid us of our sins and our weaknesses. We must persevere in the midst of trials, never wavering in our focus and determined march to the waiting arms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance may not be easy, but God's grace is more than enough to bring us safely to the Lord's embrace, if we persevere. God is Emmanuel. He is with us, He is waiting for us, He will not leave us alone.

*"Dear Lord, I leave my past to your mercy,
my present to your love
and my future to your providence."*

St. Padre Pio

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions For January 2004

General intention

That all men and women may recognize that they are members of God's one family and end wars, injustice and discrimination among themselves.

Missionary intention

That every mission Church may engage itself in the training of apostolic personnel.

Ministry Announcements

Newark disciples! Teachings resume this month:

Jan 17 - Christian Servanthood LSS1-18

- Understanding Corporate Worship LSS 1-19
- Motivational Gift Inventory LSS 1-19
- Christian Parenting LSS 1-21

Jan 23 - Intercessory Formation Intercessory Ministry

- BBB /Approaches Singles/SPE
- Youth Shepherds Training Part 1

Jan 30 - Youth Shepherds Training Part 2

Mission of Mercy. We collected 103 boxes of medicines from the Catholic Mission Board. On top of this, we were able to purchase *children's medicines valued at \$42,000* – 20 times as much as we traditionally bring – from the Interfaith Assistance group for *less than \$3,000*. We praise the Lord, the Source of all that is good!

YOUTH RALLY 2004 !!! SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, February 15, 8:30am- 6pm with Mass to follow

Youth LSS#9 March 20-21 La Consolata Mission Center, Somerset NJ. Deadline to register is February 6. Contact Leah Narciso or Chay Pangilinan.

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

01/02 \$2,635
2003 Avg 3,678

EXPENSES:

01/02 \$ 400
2003 Avg 4,105

Thank you for your generosity!

"Come to Christ, light of truth"

(John Paul II, January 6, 2004)

Counsels *from page 1*

These traits were evident in John the Baptist. He devoted his life to a single mission: to prepare the way for the Messiah's coming. When Jesus came, John knew that his work was over, and he needed to step aside in favor of the Lord: "*He must increase; I must decrease.*" (Jn 3:30) John was able to let go of being the focus of attention. Instead, he gave way to the Lord. He was able to do so because he understood from the beginning that his life's work wasn't about himself. It was about bringing God's message of repentance to His people. We too must be like John, who did his work but pointed not to himself but to the Lord: "*I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming.*" (Lk 3:16)

Like John, we must grow in faith and obedience to God's calling. Our baptism connects us not only to the Lord and His Church but also to His work. As our life's mission continues to unfold, we may find that the nature of the work God calls us to do at some point in time has changed, sometimes radically as in the case of John. In the context of community, this may mean a new ministry assignment or a new apostolate. These new responsibilities invariably require difficult transitions or a plunge into uncharted waters. The natural response to change is to struggle, to grumble, to try to cling to what we have been comfortable doing. The supernatural response is to deny ourselves, to let go, and to joyfully accept the change, trusting that He who called us will also anoint us to a fruitful new ministry.

At every stage of our life, no matter how young or old we may be, God has valuable work for us to do, and He has equipped us to perform such work. Let us heed God's will for each of us, which He manifests in discernment, and through our gifting. Be assured that when we totally surrender to our Father's plan, He too will be well pleased with us just as He was with His only beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

DIRECTIONS

- Be eager to do what is good through godly acts.
- Forgive one another.
- Frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Transcendence *from page 1*

Fr. Paul's homily drew easy resonance with the assembly, who once again found inspiration from God's Word and related it with our community life, and the difficulties we inevitably encounter in our ministries, in mission work and even in our formation. The lessons are no less relevant at home or work and in school, in the drudgery that dulls our soul or the fierce struggles that we may live thru.

Fr. Paul helped us start the year with his invigorating message. We rise above human limits only by being fully yielded to the Holy Spirit, fixing our eyes on heavenly things. Let us be filled with hope in Christ, Who promised that we shall be given what we need at the moment. *Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit!*

Community Calendar

Jan 10	Discipling, St Leo Conference Rm 1-6pm
Jan 17	Teachings, St. Antoninus, 1-6pm
Jan 20	Newark Teachings, St. Antoninus 1-6pm
Jan 23, 30	Youth Shepherds' Refresher Course, Boland Hall 10pm
Jan 24-25	Medical Mission, Paranaque, Metro Manila
Feb 13	Healing Mass, YLSS#9 Salubungan
Feb 15	Youth Rally, Boland Hall & Annex Basement 8:30-6pm
Mar 20-21	YLSS#9, Consolata Mission Center

BIRTHDAYS

1/09	John Alonzo, LSS19
1/10	Hilda Briones, LSS8 Luz Talag, LSS8
1/12	Trif Col, LSS9
1/13	Nonoy Catelo, LSS17 Auring Macalino, LSS9
1/14	Rose De Castro, LSS6 Letty Luna, LSS9 Gen Mangasi, LSS19
1/15	Manny Ausan, YE 10

ANNIVERSARIES

1/09	Kelly & Tessie Concepcion, LSS13
1/14	Sundee & Neneng Ikalina, LSS12
1/15	Flory & Gen Mangasi, LSS19

First BLD Global Conference *from page 1*

Evangelization - Encountering Our Youth & Singles 1: What We Are Facing/ The Looming Battlefield: ME, FE, SPE/ Youth & Singles 2: Securing Our Future/ Encounters in Mission: Fighting the Battle

Formation - The Long Journey from the Mind to the Heart/ The Harvest is Ripe but the Laborers are Few (Choosing & Training)/ Family Ties: Loose Ends in the Formation

Management - Administering the Community: Thinking Outside of the Box/ The Accountability in Community

Mission - The Impossible Made Possible/ Our Diocese: Our Mission Field

Pastoral - Beyond the Word Sharing Circle/ Peter, Do You Love Me?

Organization - The Flock in Frock: The Sp. Director Meets with the Sp. Advisers /Decision Making in Community: One Heart & One Mind.

We pray for travel mercies and the mighty anointing of the Holy Spirit on everyone!



Godspeed!

This weekend, a big batch of BLD disciples from the Newark district cluster departs for Manila.

Medical mission. Most of the 50 disciples will serve in 4 separate medical Missions of Mercy to Paranaque, Batangas (2 cities) and Pangasinan. They will dispense medical, surgical and dental services to the poor, bringing with them prayers, fellowship and a record amount of free medication.

Global conference. About 10 servant leaders will be in the group to attend the first Inter-District Conference on Jan 24-25. Some of them will play key roles during this historic meeting: Fr. Paul Lehman and Richard de la Fuente as panelists for the plenary session on the Covenant of Communion; Fr. Paul as main celebrant and homilist for the Sunday Eucharistic celebration; and on 2 of the breakout sessions, Richard as co-speaker with Fr. Jack Quinlan of BLD Detroit, and Rene Castaneda co-speaker with the Bacolod DSL.

New DSL. Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, BLD Spiritual Director recently announced the appointment of Eliong/ Lea Sison as District Servant Leader for BLD Manila. Many of our members are familiar with this couple who had shared their wonderful gifts of discernment and counsel with BLD families on several past visits. Their appointment completes the 10 Servant Leaders from the 8 districts and 2 directorates that make up, along with the Executive, the Council of Servant Leaders of our global community.

Retreat. Last Sunday, the district leadership were led in a retreat on "Transcendence" at St. Antoninus by Fr. Paul. This truly was a communing with the Lord that will focus and invigorate them during their mission. *We pray for the success of these 2 events and the safety of everyone. God speed you, God prosper you!*

22 disciples seal Covenant

Having completed the requirements for covenant discipleship, 22 aspirants humbled themselves before the Lord in a commissioning rite during the Eucharistic celebration on January 9, 2004.

COUNSELS

Faithful Obedience

WORD: Is 62:1-5; Ps 96:1-3, 7-10; 1 Cor 12:4-11; Jn 2:1-11

ORDER: "Do whatever Jesus tells you." (Jn 2:5)

REFLECTION: John's gospel account brings to fore two radiant models of faithful obedience: Mary and Jesus. We find them at a wedding in Cana, some 30 years after the Virgin Mary gave her assent to God, bore and gave birth to His child - the promised Messiah - nursed and formed the Incarnate Lord from infancy to childhood to manhood. She was the perfect mother- she did not waver to offer her whole self to the extraordinarily good fruit that she bore: our Savior.

In Cana, we find Jesus at the onset of the Messianic work entrusted to Him by His Father. From the young age when He began discerning His divine Sonship (Lk 2:49), through the hidden years in Nazareth and throughout His public ministry, our Lord Jesus Christ lived in faithful obedience to God's will. His life and ministry bore the extraordinarily good fruit of our salvation, our adoption as God's children, our incorporation to His Body, the Church, and our heavenly inheritance. At the wedding at Cana, we see the glory of the Lord shining radiantly in both Mary and Jesus.

The glory of the Lord shines upon those who live in faithful obedience to His will. In this our theme today, the glory of the Lord means the Presence of the Lord. What does living in faithful obedience to God's will mean?

Sharing in the life of God (Is 62:5; 2 Pt 1:4; Gal 2:20). When we experience His life in our life, the Lord allows us to see as if through His eyes, think in unity with His thoughts, speak with His words, and act in obedience to His will. He gives us inner eyes of faith that penetrate

God's Promise for the Week

"You shall be called 'My Delight.'"

(Is 62:4b)

Prayers For Healing

Healing, along with preaching and teaching, was an integral part of the ministry of our Lord. *“Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.”* (Mt 4:23) He understood that deeply rooted in the human heart is a desire to be freed from illness and to be able to understand its meaning.

Sickness is a life reality that every person encounters. It finds particular significance in the Church, where sickness is understood and accepted as a means of union with Christ and of spiritual purification. Moreover, for those who find themselves in the presence of the sick person, it is an occasion for the exercise of charity. Sickness, like other forms of human suffering, brings about that special intimate moment with God as we ask for His grace, the ability to accept sickness in the spirit of faith and conformity to His will, and for healing.

Prayer for the restoration of health is therefore part of the Church’s experience, past and present. What in some ways is new is the formation of prayer meetings, at times, combined with liturgical celebration, for the purpose of obtaining healing from God. In our community, the Pastoral Ministry formed prayer teams under a program called Jeremiah 17. We felt a great need for such a program in loving response to numerous requests from the members of our community.

During his public ministry, Jesus’ encounters with the sick were not isolated but continual. *“Jesus went around to all towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness.”* (Mt 9:35) These healings are signs of his messianic mission (Lk 7:20-23), his victory over every kind of evil. Healing had also been the promise of the Risen Jesus, and the first Christian communities witnessed its realization in their midst: *“These signs will accompany those who believe:...they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”* (Mk 16:17-18)

The Pastoral Ministry, through its Jeremiah 17 program, welcomes all requests for assistance for healing prayers and intercession from members of the community or their immediate relatives seeking restoration of health. The only hindrance is their possible lack of faith. *“If you can! Everything is possible to one who has faith.”* (Mk 9:23) And above all, there is a sacrament especially intended to strengthen those who are being tried by illness, the Anointing of the Sick.

Fishers of Men

In this short but wonderful passage, Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James and John to follow Him with the simple words, *“Come after me.”* He does not use preparation or persuasion to convince them. Nor do we read of any hesitation or resistance from those whom He called, because of the impracticality of leaving their family and trade or perhaps some doubt about the credibility of Jesus. No mention about mission strategies or how to achieve a mammoth task. The disciples responded with trusting obedience, faith and love. Their nets were their means of living, perhaps all that they owned. By leaving them immediately and following Jesus, they gave tremendous evidence of sincerity and trust. They showed the kind of response that we too as disciples should have - the willingness to follow Jesus wherever He leads us, and to forsake all for the His sake.

We see too, that God puts honor on those who are diligent and humble. Jesus said, *“I will make you fishers of men.”* It is He that qualifies us for this work, calls us to it and commissions us to fish for souls. He chose fishermen as his first disciples. They were men who were accustomed to hardships and hazards; fishermen must be often wet and cold; they must watch, wait, and toil. Their capacity to convert others would come from a source of love and grace greater than themselves.

And yet, those who would preach Christ must first learn Christ, and learn of Him. How can we expect to bring others to the knowledge of Christ, if we do not know Him well ourselves? Jesus called the apostles to experience Him as a person, to believe in Him and what he stood for and ultimately to follow the model He created.

Christ calls each one of us to be His disciples. The gifts we have received are not for our selfish benefits, but to be shared to further Christ’s mission on earth. Whether one is a fisherman or a professional in some trade makes little difference. Each day is an occasion for witnessing the love of Jesus, each gift to be used in proclaiming the Good News. We are called to “leave our nets” and follow Him. Like the first disciples, we should cheerfully go when our Savior calls us, willing to commit all into His hands, in sickness or health, in riches or poverty, even unto death. Let the love of Jesus encompass our hearts and lead us to remove any hindrance that would prevent the full grace of Christ from working in us.

**SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15
YOUTH RALLY 2004!!!**

Listening To God's Word

In addition to prayer, listening intently to the Word of God and actualizing it everyday in our lives lead to a balanced spirituality. When we prayerfully meditate on the Scripture, we encounter Christ who is present in the inspired text and who draws us to a deeper personal relationship with Him. He leads us to a growing understanding of His Person, His love for us and His will for us. He brings us along His side as He fulfills His ministry of salvation in the Gospel, and we identify with what He experienced. We share in His joy, in His pain, in His rest, in His death and resurrection. As we live in Him, He will teach us about God's love, the love that transforms us into Him. In Him, we find our rest, strength, joy and peace.

We will find wholeness only in Christ. His presence in the Word brings wellness into our interior life and empowers our prayer. The Lord invites all: *"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves."* (Mt 11:28-29) In Mark 6:31, He encouraged His apostles who had just returned from their mission to rest in body and spirit: *"Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while."* Jesus desires to give us the fullness of His grace in the intimacy of prayer, in the enlightenment of His Word.

We will find life and health when we listen attentively to God's Word: *"My son, to my words be attentive, to my sayings incline your ear... For they are life to those who find them, to man's whole being they are health."* (Proverbs 4:20, 22) The Word of God, who is present body, blood, soul and divinity in the Eucharist, gives spiritual nourishment that will never end: *"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst."* (Jn 6:35)

We must abide in Jesus every moment of our life, for without Him, we are *"like a land parched, lifeless and without water."* (Ps 63:2) But with Him, we are *"like a tree planted near streams of water, that yields its fruit in season. Its leaves never wither; whatever they do prospers."* (Ps 1:3) When our life is joined to the life of Jesus, we will find our peace, well-being and harmony, for our heart will rest in the heart of God.

What do you think of the CN?
Let us know at
wordministry@bldnewark.com.

Ministry Announcements

January Teachings:

Tomorrow, Jan 17 St. Antoninus 1-6pm:

- LSS 1-18 Christian Servanthood
- LSS 1-19 Understanding Corporate Worship
- LSS 1-19 Motivational Gift Inventory
- LSS 1-21 Christian Parenting

- ▣ Jan 23 Intercessory Formation Intercessory Ministry
BBB /Approaches Singles/SPE
Youth Shepherds Training Part 1
- Jan 30 Youth Shepherds Training Part 2

▣ Youth Ministry

- Feb 6 Deadline to register for Youth LSS #9 on Mar 20-21. Contact Leah Narciso or Chay Pangilinan.
- Feb 15 Sunday Youth Rally 8:30- 6pm with Mass to follow.

LSS #22 All encountered couples, singles, solo parents and religious are invited.

- Jan 30, Feb 6 Orientation, church basement
- Feb 27 *Salubungan*, St. Leo church
- Apr 3-4 LSS weekend, Consolata Mission Center, N. Brunswick NJ

Covenanted Disciples *from page 1*

The community joyfully welcomed the newly-covenanted disciples from TRENTON: Ernesto/Nelia Doropan and Isabel Guerrero; and from NEWARK: Eric Amador, Angel/Aida Calilap, Bernadette Ekedede, Danny/Cora Labung, Ver/Addie Limtian, Oddie/Jho Martin, Tom Pattugalan, Joey/Cynthia Reyes, Joven/Lisa Soriano, August/Carmen Soto, and Rene/Ditas Tolentino.

May the fire of the Holy Spirit from whom all evangelization springs, descend upon these members as they, led by the same Spirit, carry out Christ's great commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

01/02	\$2,635
01/09	3,977
2-wk avg	3.306

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

2-wkavg	\$1,949
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Counsels *from page 1*

beyond what our natural eyes can see, for He reveals to us signs of His presence and action in creation, people and events. We discover in difficult relationships, trials and afflictions many opportunities for conversion and sanctification. There is a fundamental shift in our thinking and attitudes, as we begin to place God as our first and only priority, our greatest value. His wisdom enlightens our every desire, judgment and plan, enabling us to discern His expectations and obey His will for us. We perceive the deeper meanings of our life's experiences in the light of His Spirit who dwells in us. We accept without fear what we do not understand, trusting that God will guide and protect us through the darkness. We speak and act with love, truth and respect, aware that we are always in God's presence. As Paul exclaimed, it is Jesus who lives in us, and thus thinks within us, speaks through us and acts in us.

Abiding in Christ (Jn 15:1-5). When we remain united to Jesus who is our Lord and the love of our life, He becomes our way, our strength and our goal. We become His bride, His joy (Is 62:5), His possession, whom He has made a new person, and given a new name (v2). His voice beckons within us, and we heed His call to an ever-deepening communion of life and love through prayer and servanthood. We detach ourselves from false idols that could enslave us. We choose Him and we completely abandon ourselves to Him. Our every breath is a song of praise for Him (Ps 96:1); our every step proclaims His glory to all (v3). We love and serve Him and despise sin and its associations. For our greatest desire is to delight Him, even if it means crucifying our own will. We rely on Him for everything, using our gifts and talents, even our inability to fulfill His purposes (1 Cor 12:4-6). When the wine of wellness is depleted by our frailties, trials or affliction, we turn to Him for help and we do whatever He tells us (Jn 2:5). We rejoice at whatever He gives us, knowing that He who faithfully loves us will not be silenced, will not be quiet until we are vindicated and victorious. For He has espoused us and will never forsake us. He has in His heart only what is best for us.

DIRECTIONS

- Identify the areas of fruitfulness in our personal & communitarian life.
- Discern the Lord's will for us in serving the Archdiocese of Newark as an Association of the Faithful.

Please send all comments to
wordministry@bldnewark.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jan 17 Teachings, St. Antoninus, 1-6pm
Jan 20 Newark Teachings, St. Antoninus 1-6pm
Jan 23, 30 Youth Shepherds' Refresher Course,
Boland Hall 10pm
Jan 24-25 Medical Mission, Paranaque, Metro Manila
Feb 13 Healing Mass, YLSS#9 Salubungan
Feb 15 Youth Rally, Boland Hall/HS Basement
8:30- 6pm
Mar 20-21 Youth LSS#9, Consolata Mission Center,
N Brunswick
Apr 3-4 LSS#22 (*see LSS calendar on page 3*)

**May the blessings of the Lord
be upon you!**



BIRTHDAYS

- 01/16 Baby Arambulo, LSS3
Mong Ong, SE12
01/17 Ray Chan, YE 9
Chay Pangilinan, YE 4
01/18 Ryan Manguiat, YE 4
Susan Borja, LSS12
01/19 Tina Almonte, LSS3
Remy Policarpio, LSS14
01/20 Arleen Alcala, SE12
01/21 Ging Eballo, SE12
Neth Opinion, LSS14
Tom Pattugalan, LSS15
Purie Salar, LSS18
01/22 Geoff Canlas, LSS12

ANNIVERSARIES

- 01/16 Sonny & Bren Solema, LSS20
01/18 Jimmy & Joy Castillon, LSS7
01/21 Bong & Merle Encarnacion, LSS8
01/22 Gerry & Dimples Canlas, LSS7
Rey & Pen Perez, LSS13

Doxology (Ps 72:18-19)

**“Blessed be the Lord, our God,
Who alone does wonderful deeds.
Blessed be His glorious Name
forever.**

**May all the earth be filled
with the Lord's glory.
Amen and amen!”**



We observe Christian unity

The theme of this Week of Prayers comes from the mouth of no other than our Lord Jesus Christ: *My peace I give to you* (Jn 14:27). It is actually an 8-day week that runs from last Sunday, Jan 18 to next Sunday, Jan 25. We gather with Christians of various confessions and traditions in offering prayers for full communion and unity.

Pope John Paul II stressed the urgent need of our “world thirsty for peace” as he referred to the theme and program that was prepared by Syrian Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants – churches of the Middle East where unity and peace are the most acutely felt priorities.

It is a blessing of divine Providence that, as Christians from around the world pray together and gather in ecumenical meetings, the BLD community seeks the anointing of full unity and communion in its first global inter-district conference in Manila (*see page 2*). In his position paper, our District Servant Leader expands on the principle of “One heart, one mind” in moving with the Holy Spirit and pursuing unity in community decision-making. He submits that this would be impossible without Christ, as it is His will alone that we should seek and obey. The Lord is the giver of authentic peace; unity is a gift of the Spirit.

In his turn, our Spiritual Director, Fr. Paul Lehman in advocating the changes in our Covenant of Communion stresses the imperative of the far-flung BLD districts to always seek communion with the local Ordinary. As we seek to share in the life and mission of the Church, we need to preserve the BLD global vision while adhering to certain ecclesiological principles. He also stressed faithfulness to our baptismal covenant with Christ, saying, “I believe that BLD districts globally derive their unity from their unity with the Church.”

Please see related article on page 3.

**SAVE THE DATE, FEBRUARY 15
YOUTH RALLY 2004!!!!**

COUNSELS

The glory of the Lord shines upon those who proclaim the good news to the poor

WORD: Neh 8:4a, 5-6, 8-10; Ps 19:8-10, 15; 1Cor 12: 12-30; Lk 1:1-4, 4:14-21

ORDER: “Bring glad tidings to the poor.” (Lk 4:18)

REFLECTION: The 3 readings this Sunday have a familiar setting: an assembly of people hearing God’s Word. In the first reading, Ezra encouraged them to richer, fuller lives. The new Christian community at Corinth was assembled to hear Paul’s letter read aloud. And in the Gospel, Jesus proclaimed the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy at a synagogue in Nazareth.

Note the familiar structure in the first reading. The people assemble, make a prayer blessing, hear the word of God, receive instruction and encouragement and then respond in worship, prayer and feasting. Ezra reads the law to the people whose heart-rending response suggests how they need the encouragement of the law’s promise, as well as the discipline that the law required of them. In our present-day worship, we witness how this combination of sorrow for sin and the joy of being forgiven produces the same healing tears. Faith depends on hearing and hearing depends on someone to speak.

Paul’s letter to the Corinthians contains insights we need to belong to our faith communities in the most productive and supportive way imaginable. There is no greater statement in Christian literature about mutual responsibility and individual dignity than this text. Likewise, there is no greater indictment of Christians who would feel superior and disdain to others. It reminds us that there are no insignificant members;

(Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“Do not be sad, the joy of the Lord is your stronghold.” (Neh 8:10b)

St. Vincent, Deacon and Martyr

St. Vincent was a native of Saragossa in Spain. Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa being impressed by Vincent's promising youth made sure he was carefully educated. Bishop Valerius ordained him a deacon and entrusted him with religious instruction and most of the diocesan preaching, since the bishop suffered an impediment of speech.

Vincent's service in his diaconal role is unknown. It was terminated during the last of the great Roman persecutions. In 303, co-emperors Diocletian and Maximian issued two decrees intended to wipe out all Christian clergy. Another decree in 304 extended the persecution to the Christian laity.

The Roman governor, Dacian, carried the anti-Christian campaign in Spain. He proved to be an executioner and a cruel one. His early step was the arrest of Bishop Valerius and his aide, Deacon Vincent of Saragossa. He had them transported to Valencia and jailed. Thinking that deprivation of food and comfort might break their wills, he left them in prison for a good time. Dacian used the approach of alternating persuasion with threats – the carrot or the stick. Valerius remained silent. Deacon Vincent asked his bishop, "Father, if you order me, I will speak." The tongue-tied bishop whispered, "Son, as I committed to you the dispensation of the word of God, so now I charge you to answer in vindication of the faith which we defend." Thereupon, Vincent told the governor that neither threats nor promises would influence them. They were ready to suffer anything for the true God.

Dacian decided to concentrate on the young Vincent while the bishop he simply sent into exile. He reserved the cruelest tortures he could think for Vincent. While Vincent's body twitched with pain, his soul remained calm and his mind even witty. After having Vincent whipped and grilled alive on a gridiron, he had his mangled body thrown into a dungeon. He gave up with the courage he has seen only in Vincent. Eventually, the faithful were allowed to see Vincent and dress his wounds, and he died shortly after being laid in a regular bed. When he was flung upon the earth, a raven guarded his body. When sunk out at sea, the waves cast it ashore.

The admiration of his furious persecutor was outdone by the admiration of the faithful for this heroic spiritual victim. Veneration of Vincent quickly spread throughout Europe and into the East where he was placed in the Litany of Saints. Valencia, Saragossa and Portugal adopted him as patron as did winemakers, brick makers and sailors. His relics are preserved to this day in the Augustinian monastery at Lisbon. His feast is celebrated on January 22, and he is most appropriately invoked by deacons.

TOMORROW AND SUNDAY THE FIRST BLD GLOBAL CONFERENCE MANILA, PHILIPPINES

*For the success of the
2004 BLD Inter-District Conference*

COMMITMENT PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I praise You and thank You for Your love. I unite myself in this love with all the members of BLD.

O most Holy Spirit, pour Your light into my heart that I may live that love.

Dear Jesus, I especially pray for Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, our Spiritual Director, our Spiritual Advisers, the Council of Servant Leaders, the District Council of Stewards, and all those in authority, that they may serve with humility and compassion.

I commit myself to listen to You at all times with my heart and my mind, and to live a righteous and holy life as my daily offering on Your altar of love.

I unite myself with all my brothers and sisters in BLD in praying for the 2004 Inter-District Conference, that You may send Your Holy Spirit to inflame once more into our hearts the joyful love we held for one another when we first joined BLD, and to give us a fresh anointing and fervor in spreading Your Good News to wherever You send us.

Mary, our Mother, help us to be servants of God's Word and unite us all in His love.

In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

*Moving with
the Spirit In
Community*

On Christian Unity

The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It originated in the Pentecostal movement in Scotland, with Pope Leo XIII encouraging the practice originally in the context of Pentecost in 1894. But our understanding of Christian unity goes way back.

The church is one. The Council of Constantinople in 381 stated 4 marks of the Church, foremost of which is unity. This unity is both internal and external, spiritual and visible. With Christ as its founder, its members should be *united in faith, worship and government.* We manifest this unity by external, public profession of one faith: in worship manifested chiefly in the reception of the same sacraments; and in government, by which all its members are subject to and obey the same authority, which was instituted by Christ Himself.

“Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.” (Mt 12:25) Scripture is replete with the declaration of the essential unity of the True Church of Christ. Our Savior spoke of His Church as the kingdom of God (Lk 13:18); a city with keys entrusted to the Apostles (Mt 5:14); a sheepfold with one shepherd (Jn 10:7-17); as a vine and its branches (Jn 15:5); a house built upon rock (Mt 16:18). He prayed that His disciples be one as He and the Father are one (Jn 17:20-23).

We read about the early Christians being of “one heart and one mind” in Acts 4:32. Saints John, Peter and Jude all proclaimed the necessary unity of the Church. St. Paul branded dissension and factions as works of the flesh that will disinherit us of the Kingdom (Gal 5:20-21). He urges to *“agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose.”* (1 Cor 1:10) *“Is Christ divided?”* he asked plaintively (v13). *“Preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace,”* for there is but *“one body and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.”* (Eph 4:3-6)

God shows no partiality, but welcomes all to the fullness of his kingdom. As children of God, we show a unity that surpasses all that divides us. The Spirit, alive and working in our community, helps us to recognize this unity and do our share to break down all the walls that divide the people of God.

The Eucharist is the supreme Source of unity.

“We, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.” (1 Cor 10:16-17)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Teaching Ministry

- Jan 30 Youth Shepherds Training Part 2
Feb 6 Formation: Service Ministry
Feb 7 LSS 1-21: Christian Parenting 2
LSS 1-19: Agony in the Garden/
Washing of the Feet
Shepherds Training Part 2
“King David” – Praise Ministry
Feb 20 John 6 Teaching
Feb 21 LSS 1-18: Advanced Intercession/
Spiritual Warfare
LSS 1-20: Encounter with Jesus/
Commitment Intro/Intercession Intro
LSS 1-21: Growth in Prayer/Praise
and Worship
LSS 1-21: New Creation Realities
Feb 27 Mark 10 Teaching
Basic Bible Study Part 3 – Singles/
Single Parents
Formation: Intercessory Ministry

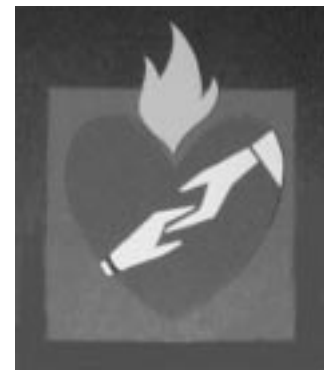
Youth Ministry

- Feb 6 Deadline to register for Youth LSS #9 on Mar 20-21. Contact Leah Narciso or Chay Pangilinan.
- Feb 15 Sunday Youth Rally 8:30-6pm with Mass to follow.

LSS #22 All encountered couples, singles, solo parents and religious are invited.

- Jan 30, Feb 6 Orientation, church basement
- Feb 27 Salubungan, St. Leo church
- Apr 3-4 LSS weekend, Consolata Mission Center, N Brunswick NJ

Wedding Anniversary Celebrants. Couples celebrating 25 years; and those with 35 years or more of married life are invited to submit their names to Liturgy Ministry, to be honored at the next healing Mass on February 13. Ed/Nanie at afyeod@hotmail.com or call 718-948-2049.



Counsels from page 1

those who are weaker and, by secular standards, might seem less important are, by Christ's standards, all the more important. Their weakness makes them all the more necessary for the community.

The body of Christ is a definitive study of unity in diversity. There can be no choosing among members with regard to their relationship with other members. Can the eye say to the hand, "I don't need you?" Of course not. Can we fool ourselves into thinking that we are not in need of one another? Of course not.

The final section reminds us that there are different roles to be filled in our Christian life. We are given gifts according to the needs of the whole body - not according to any personal privilege, nor to rank, but with regards to pastoral function. This is a reminder to those in pastoral authority that their vocation is to serve and not to reign.

St. Luke begins the Acts of the Apostles by telling "Theophilus" that He wishes to write down an "orderly" and "certain" sequence of the events that had been fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus' words in today's Gospel suggest that writing down the Gospel on the scroll has not completed Luke's objective; the Gospel is completed and fulfilled only in Jesus, in the lives of those who encounter Him throughout the ages.

Where Jesus quotes Isaiah, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,*" we hear a reference to His baptism and anointing; this is what is fulfilled in our hearing. Jesus further quotes Isaiah to explain why he has been anointed *to bring glad tidings to the poor, liberty to captives, sight to the blind, freedom for the oppressed.* The fulfillment of the first part of the prophecy (His baptism) is a guarantee that His mission will also be fulfilled.

Jesus' bold confidence in His identity as the Anointed One invites similar boldness from us who have received the same Spirit in our baptism. Today let us live the Paschal mystery as we continually look for the poor, captive, blind and oppressed among us. We do not have to look very far. "*Today, this passage has been fulfilled*" is true only when we ourselves respond to those around us who need nourishing, strengthening and joyful words. This means that God's word is something we not only hear on Sunday, but which becomes a living Word in our hearts, inspiring us to be living Gospels in our very selves. As we gradually grow into being anointed by the Spirit, we, like Jesus, are the fulfillment of the Scripture.

DIRECTIONS

- Know the Word by being faithful in reading the Scriptures.
- Pray for the success of our medical mission and inter-district conference.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jan 23, 30	Youth Shepherds' Refresher Course, Boland Hall 10pm
Jan 24-25	Medical Mission, Paranaque, Metro Manila
Feb 13	Healing Mass, YLSS#9 Salubungan
Feb 15	Youth Rally, Boland Hall/HS Basement 8:30-6pm
Mar 19-21	Trenton YE#3, Ramada Inn, Piscataway
Mar 20-21	Youth LSS#9, Consolata Mission Center, N Brunswick
Apr 3-4	LSS#22 (see LSS calendar on page 3)

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .

BIRTHDAYS



01/23	Jen Canlas, LSS 21
01/25	Imma Anyanwu, LSS15
	Aileen Ciocon, LSS6
	Paby Ibarrola, LSS17
	Noemi Ilagan, LSS14
	Marie Lazaro, LSS9
01/26	Neil Clarin, YE 10
01/27	Jaja Nacion, YE 9
01/28	Elo Encarnacion, LSS19
01/29	Nelson Ilagan, LSS14

ANNIVERSARIES

01/23	Rene & Grace Gallofin, LSS13
	Bert & Lita Guerrero, LSS17
	Boyie & Stella Huelgas, LSS1
01/24	Joey & Linda Viola, LSS6
01/25	Tony & Fely Carrera, LSS13
01/28	Angel & Aida Calilap, LSS14
01/29	Henry & Aida Koryan, LSS2

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

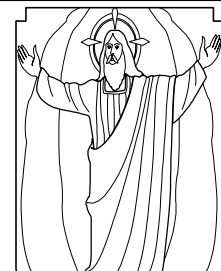
COLLECTIONS

1/02	\$2,635
1/09	3,977
1/16	4,073

3-wk avg 3,563

EXPENSES

3-wk avg \$1,422



Thank you for your generosity!



Community teachings resume

After a brief hiatus due to the Christmas festivities, Teaching Ministry activities resumed on January 17, 2004 with scheduled teachings in **Christian Parenting**, **Christian Servanthood** and **Understanding Corporate Worship** along with the administering of the **Motivational Gifts Test**. Both teachers and students braved the cold Saturday weather to carry on with the community's formation program. "It was time well spent," quipped one of the newer teachers while one of the students regretted that her husband could not come.

Teachings provide the basic framework upon which the community's activities are built. This is where new members open up their Bibles and spend ample time to study the word of God. In a community that promotes scripture-based activities, a carefully thought out study program provides the necessary foundation for members before they engage in active ministry work. As we read in 2 Tim 3:16-17, "*All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*"

For their part, the teachers who are themselves products of the community's formation program are eager to perform their duties that require much preparation. With the recent reshuffling in the Teaching Ministry, its members are back with renewed vigor, confident that the current spirit of openness and transparency will linger on but only for the glory of God.

Holy Father's Intentions for February

General - For peaceful co-existence among Christians, Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land.

Missionary - That in Oceania priestly and religious vocations for evangelization in the local Churches may receive special care.

RESERVE THE WEEKEND: JULY 30-AUG 1
FAMILY ENCOUNTER #11

COUNSELS

Love: The Greatest Gift Of All

WORD: Jer 1:4-5,17-19; Ps 71:1-6,15,17;
1 Cor 12:31--13:13; Lk 4:21-30

ORDER:

"Stand up and tell them all that I command you."
(Jer 1:17b)

"Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts... faith, hope, love... but the greatest of these is love."
(1 Cor 12:31, 13:13b)

REFLECTION: We read this Sunday how Paul addresses Corinth, a problem church. Although the most successful of the churches that Paul established, it was plagued with pride and Paul is gently attacking its character. He refers to their jealousy, pride, selfishness and desire for greater recognition. That is why Paul wrote these passages for they uncover the weaknesses and failures in any Christian community. These words cut churches down to size because they show us what really matters to God—love that direct us to our true calling. It is love which proceeds from a God Who is Love Himself. It is love which should be the foundation of any Christian community.

Perhaps the most famous words that Paul ever wrote tell us the very nature of what this love is. "*Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.*" (1 Cor 13:4-6)

Paul describes a person who is filled with the love of God. It is only the love of God that can help us face our
(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"They will fight against you, but not prevail over you, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." (Jer 1:19)

Thomas Aquinas: His Greatest Work

The **Summa Theologica** is a thorough summary of our Catholic beliefs, written by Thomas Aquinas in question-and-answer format. He would present his point by first bringing the objection and then answering with what reason dictates as the truth. The work is divided into three parts:

Part I is about GOD. It treats of God, who is the “first cause, himself uncaused” (*primum movens immobile*) and as such existent only in act (*actu*), that is pure actuality without potentiality and, therefore, without corporeality. His essence is *actus purus et perfectus*.

In simpler terms, it is saying that God is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the source of our life and all the things that we see in creation. He is the source of love, He created us because He loves us and calls us forth to share this love with others. We must always live a life of love.

Part II is divided into two inter-related sections; the first one being ETHICS. Its theme is man’s striving after the highest end, which is the blessedness of the *visio beata*, the beatific vision of God.

The second section then touches on the VIRTUES that we need to have namely: faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, grace, and life. All these are tools for us to encounter God and have a relationship with God, who is basically our primary goal in life.

Part III then talks about JESUS CHRIST. Thomas puts in a romantic way why he believes Christ is important in our lives. Christ, in as much as he is man, is the way by which we tend to God. It presents the Saviour beginning with His incarnation and then what he did and suffered. What follows then is the Sacraments, his gift to us where we can continue to experience His presence among us.

Aquinas concludes his work by talking about eternal life. We attain immortality with God through Jesus Christ, Who says, “*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.*” Thus, we need to walk in the path that Jesus took, a path that experiences suffering, dying and in the end, resurrection.

What then can we learn from the good saint and his *Summa Theologica*? Thomas Aquinas shows how our lives are not ours; we live not for ourselves, we are not the end. Our lives are a gift of love from God and we are therefore challenged to live in love, for by doing so we live our faith as we wait in hope for the day when we shall be with God in his kingdom.

Jesus and His Family

His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called him. A crowd seated around him told him, “Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside asking for you.” But he said to them in reply, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mk 3:31-35)

It may seem that Jesus was ignoring his mother and his relatives when they called him. The crowd recognizes Jesus’ natural kinship to his mother and his relatives. Jesus took this opportunity to reveal his divine nature to those who seek him and listen to him. Jesus invites us to a relationship that is far greater than our human relationships.

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, “Abba, Father!” The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. (Rom 8:14-17)

In our Baptism, we were initiated into the eternal family of God, the Triune God, Who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus teaches us that to become coheirs of God’s Kingdom, we must do the will of God by keeping his commandments.

You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Mt 22:37-39)

To fulfill the first commandment, we need to transcend our natural relationships and our natural desires by loving God above everyone else and above everything else, with our entire being. As we experience this loving relationship with God, we are then able to descend back to our natural relationships filled with love for one another, with a love that is not self-serving but rather is self-giving. The Holy Spirit, which is the very essence of God’s loving presence in us, leads us to fulfill the commandments.

May we all find inspiration in the life of our Blessed Mother Mary for the fulfillment of God’s will for us.

Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” (Lk 1:38)

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY FEB.15
YOUTH RALLY 2004!!!

Please send all comments to
wordministry@bldnewark.com.

In the Spirit of Transparency

What A Community Leader Should Be

Nehemiah led God's people in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem in just 52 days. As governor for a poor group of people, he set the right perspective and attitude during a difficult time. He was a leader and model.

This man of action relates in Nehemiah 5:14-19, "*From the time that King Artaxerxes appointed me governor... neither I nor my brethren lived from the governor's allowance. The earlier governors had laid a heavy burden on the people, taking from them each day forty silver shekels for their food; then too, their men oppressed the people.*

"But I, because I feared God, did not act thus. Though I had acquired no land of my own, I did my part in this work on the wall, and all my men were gathered there for the work. Though I set my table for a hundred and fifty persons, Jews and magistrates, as well as those who came to us from the nations round about, and though the daily preparations were made at my expense... every ten days, despite this I did not claim the governor's allowance, for the labor lay heavy upon this people. Keep in mind, O my God, in my favor all that I did for this people."

Amid the struggles of Judah and the prevailing confusion and opposition, Nehemiah established the required atmosphere of unselfishness, sharing, cooperation and collaboration. He set the climate of working together as a body, which the people followed.

The greatest responsibility of any community leader is neither in his job title nor in his job description. It is his leadership and witnessing. Consistently, he should be able to set the proper direction and instill the required ideals and mode of conduct that should prevail within a ministry and mission.

As a community where everyone is expected to lead another, have we considered what we have done to influence our brethren to unselfishly dedicate their work to the Lord? Have we considered the climate that we establish within our ministry? With our attitude, words and actions, do we perhaps intimidate others in their work for the Lord? Is it quite tense around us or peaceful?

As leaders in community, we set the mood and atmosphere in community. Through our interaction, we build community, whether we like it or not. As leaders, we therefore need to be models of love, caring, forgiveness, unselfishness and respect. We need to be Christ to all, thinking always of our main vocation of bringing others to God through community work and proper witnessing.

As leaders, let us make our community a place where we will feel the presence of Jesus.

Ministry Announcements

Mark 10

- New Friday worship venue is the St. Leo Annex building.
- If there is a 5th Friday in the month, Mark 10 children and core members will be joining the adult worship.

Teaching Ministry: February Teachings

- Feb 6 Formation: Service Ministry
Feb 7 LSS 1-21: Christian Parenting 2
LSS 1-19: Agony in the Garden/
Washing of the Feet
Shepherds Training Part 2
"King David" – Praise Ministry
Feb 20 John 6 Teaching
Feb 21 LSS 1-18: Advanced Intercession/
Spiritual Warfare
LSS 1-20: Encounter with Jesus/
Commitment Intro/Intercession Intro
LSS 1-21: Growth in Prayer/
Praise and Worship
LSS 1-21: New Creation Realities
Feb 27 Mark 10 Teaching
Basic Bible Study Part 3 – Singles/
Single Parents
Formation: Intercessory Ministry

Youth Ministry

- Feb 6 Deadline to register for Youth LSS #9 on Mar 20-21. Contact Leah Narciso or Chay Pangilinan.
- Feb 15 Sunday Youth Rally 8:30- 6pm with Mass to follow.

LSS #22 All encountered couples, singles, solo parents and religious are invited.

- Feb 6 Orientation, church basement
- Feb 27 *Salubungan*, St. Leo church
- Apr 3-4 LSS weekend, Consolata Mission Center, N Brunswick NJ

Wedding Anniversary Celebrants. The community desires to honor couples celebrating 25, 30, 35 years and longer (multiples of 5 years) of married life this year, at our healing Mass on Feb 13. Please contact Liturgy Ministry: Ed/Nanie at afyeod@hotmail.com or 718-948-2049.

Do readers want a new "CN look"?

Please let us know at

wordministry@bldnewark.com

Counsels *from page 1*

self-centeredness and shine light into our inner darkness. In God's love there is no place for asserting our rights, envying our brothers and sisters, or treating them selfishly. Rather, the love of God makes us look outwards to the needs of others. Love is not a spiritual gift like prophecy, healing or teaching. It is the supreme manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit. It is a way in which to live... an action, not a mere feeling. It seeks the common good of the body-church, building it up in Christ! It originates from God, expressed so concretely when Christ gave His life for us on the cross. It is the active love, powered by the Holy Spirit that sends us to serve others in the name of Jesus Christ.

As we read this passage, we are led to focus on the various aspects of love as portrayed by St. Paul. We all know that there are some people who seem to have a knack of bringing out the worst in us. It is easy to blame them for our reactions but that is not how it should be. The love that Paul talks of can see through someone's annoying habits and faults. When people do annoy us, the love of God enables us to treat them not in the context of what they have done but as who they are in Christ. As Paul says, "*It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*" (1 Cor 13:7) In other words it does not just forgive, it forgets as well.

Paul closes this section with perhaps the most powerful sentence of all. "*So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*" (1 Cor 13:13) This makes it clear for all to see that this love is not a mere human quality but a gift from God. It is only God's love that can enable us to live as Paul describes in the face of the evil and horror that this world often throws at us.

Love never fails. Love remains constant and immovable; it continues, it endures, in this earthly life and also in the life to come. Love commends above all other endowments as a gift that can never pass even in the life to come.

May we therefore follow the example of Jesus in building up love that is eternal. As disciples of Christ, we witness to His love as we speak graciously to others. May we continue to seek the spiritual gifts and may we proclaim His words as he commends us.

May we be reminded that love is the greatest gift and that it never fails: That though the world may be against us, it shall never prevail because the Lord is with us!

DIRECTIONS

- Do not be afraid to tell the truth but express it with Love.
- Reflect on the attributes of Love (1 Cor 12:31--13:13).

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Feb 6-27 (All February teachings are on page 3)
Feb 13 Healing Mass, YLSS#9 Salubungan
Feb 15 Youth Rally, Boland Hall/HS Basement
8:30-6pm
Mar 19-21 Trenton YE#3, Ramada Inn, Piscataway NJ
Mar 20-21 Youth LSS#9, Consolata Mission Center, N. Brunswick
Apr 3-4 LSS#22 (see LSS calendar on page 3)

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!



BIRTHDAYS

- 01/31 Luz Amarante, LSS10
02/01 Nanie De Los Reyes, LSS9
Fr. Michael Fugee, ME22
02/02 Boyette Miranda, LSS5
Chris Francisco, YE8
02/03 Emma De Borja, LSS13
02/05 JP Liwanag, SE12
Maribelle de la Cruz, YE4

ANNIVERSARIES

- 01/30 Eddie & Amy Olegario, LSS3
01/31 Roger & Pina Coquia, LSS6

Isn't It Strange...

- how we need to know about a church or BLD event 2-3 weeks in advance so we can include it in our agenda, but we can adjust for other events at the last minute?
- how difficult it is to learn about God and share Him with others, but how easy it is to learn, understand, extend and repeat gossip?
- how 2 hours seem so long when we're in church, and how quickly they pass when watching a good movie?

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

01/09	\$3,977
01/16	4,073
01/23	2,754
4-wk avg	3,360

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

4-wk avg \$1,340



Lambs meet their shepherds

The *Salubungan* for LSS#22 was held after worship last Friday, with 85 candidates meeting their respective shepherds. There was an air of keyed-up anticipation as the lambs eagerly awaited the names of their shepherds. One could feel the mighty power of the Holy Spirit as the participants gained new acquaintances with great animation.

The LSS weekend will be held at La Consolata in Somerset NJ on April 3-4. We pray for all our candidates and shepherds as they prepare for a momentous encounter with the Lord and for the seminar team whom our Lord has called to serve.

The Power of His Love

The film *The Passion of the Christ* which depicts the last 12 hours of the life of Christ has been surrounded by controversy, accused of anti-semitism and resurrecting old claims that the Jewish people were responsible for the death of Jesus.

Saturday morning at 2 AMC theatres in Clifton was a scene in microcosm of the universal reaction to the movie, which grossed in its first 5 days a staggering, third-best ever \$125 million. As with many church groups, BLD Newark booked 1 theatre for community viewing of the film. Signups quickly filled this up and a 2nd one also sold out, with people lining up an hour early.

The audience was in absolute silence. Young or old, male or female, there was not a dry eye in the crowd, with mothers seemingly the most pained as they watched Mary sharing every moment of the passion of her Son. As the movie ended, the audience was still as it tried to regain its bearings and suddenly, there was clapping. Many were stunned by the intensity of it all. This is an experience that will never be forgotten in our hearts, bringing to painful focus the reality of Christ's redemptive suffering for mankind.

Please see insert for some reactions to the movie.

COUNSELS

Transformed In Christ Jesus

WORD: Gen 15:5-12, 17-18; Ps 27:1, 7-9, 13-14; Phil 3:17-4:1; Lk 9:28b-36

ORDER: Listen to Him. Wait for the Lord with courage; be stouthearted. Stand firm in the Lord.

REFLECTION: Eight days after telling His disciples of His looming passion, death and resurrection, "*Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white.*" (Lk 9:28-29)

As we enter the second week of Lent, Holy Mother Church invites us to contemplate the mystery of the Transfiguration of the Lord Jesus. It is a time that prepares us to relive the Passion of Christ during Holy Week, which comes to its summit on Easter Sunday. For at the time of the Transfiguration, Jesus appears in Glory, that is to say in that state of beatitude and happiness which is that of Christ, and that of all the faithful who live in him. Now, if Jesus appears in Glory, and if his disciples see him in this sublime state, it is precisely so that these same disciples may be comforted by this heavenly vision before passing through the tragic test of the Passion of the Savior. They witnessed, as far as it is humanly possible to see with the human eye, the brilliance that comes with the transforming glory that awaits those who will be changed into the image of Jesus Christ.

St. Paul tells us in Philippians 3:20 that our citizenship is in heaven, and we must conduct ourselves accordingly. Knowing *that our citizenship is in Heaven*, our present goal in life should be to prepare ourselves for what awaits us. Our preparation should consist of examining ourselves, looking into the deep recesses of our hearts, (Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Christ will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body." (Phil 3:21a)

Works of Mercy

“What more can I give or give up this season which is pleasing to my Lord?” We could give the Lord a sacrifice acceptable to Him, our own “spiritual fasting.” Jesus tells us in Mt 25:35-26, “*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.*”

Throughout Scripture, man is told how to offer this spiritual fast. St. James taught us, “*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works.*” (Jas 2: 14,18) The prophet Isaiah wrote eloquently, about a “fast” which the Lord prefers: “*This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.*” (Is 58: 6-7) The Church refers to these as “corporal works of mercy” which are motivated out of love for God and of neighbor: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned and the sick, give shelter to the homeless and bury the dead.

Just a month ago, around sixty members of our BLD Newark community – volunteer physicians, dentists, nurses, medical technologists, pharmacists, as well as non-medical and support personnel, embarked on a medical mission of mercy. Flying mostly out of JF Kennedy Airport with medical provisions and supplies in tow, they traveled more than 8,000 miles to their homeland to serve about 3,000 of our brothers and sisters in need – the poorest of the poor – during one weekend at Our Lady of Peace Hospital in Paranaque. One could not help but marvel at how the Lord sustained the work of His volunteers from BLD Newark in spreading and sharing the works of mercy and love during those two days.

If you are still looking for answers to the question “What more can I give or give up this season?” you don’t have to look far for your personal “mission of mercy.” Within our community or even in your own parishes, there are those who are unemployed, ailing or grieving for a lost loved one, who need to be reminded of God’s love and tenderness. All you need to do is give of yourself.

Fr. Paul Updates Abp. Myers

Saying “the results far exceeded my expectations,” our Spiritual Director reported in a letter to His Excellency the Archbishop of Newark, Most Rev. John J. Myers on the first BLD Global Inter-District Conference held in Cavite last January. The letter said in part:

“Our Newark evaluation of the BLD statutes was explained to the central leadership and all the leaders of the worldwide districts. I am personally relieved and greatly encouraged by the positive results of this conference. Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, the spiritual director of the global community, completely endorses the Newark evaluation.

“The discussion of your decree establishing BLD Newark as a private association of the faithful led to the emergence of a consensus among the global leaders to seek the status of public association of the faithful from the Pontifical Council of the Laity. The community will be working to bring about an even greater simplification and precision to the statutes in preparation for such application.

“We are grateful to you... for the opportunity to bring a very vibrant movement into more precise **conformity with ecclesiology and subsidiarity**. I will be periodically updating you on the progress of the **revision of the statutes**, as well as our ongoing **integration into the ministries of the Archdiocese**.

“We are slowly trying to connect with the archdiocesan offices and ministries in offering our resources to support the spiritual growth of our Archdiocese.”

In response, His Excellency urged Fr. Paul and the community to talk about “existing possibilities” with Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha who heads an archdiocesan Task Force for improved and increased evangelization.

Fr. Paul has initiated discussions with CYO in collaboration with the Youth Ministry, for the latter to help run one-day LSS events for parish youths. In addition, Fr. Paul initiated contacts with the Natural Family Planning office, to have some of our doctors and couples trained on NFP. He also connected the Singles Ministry with the Family Ministry Office on the possibility of BLD organizing Pre-Cana retreats for couples preparing for matrimony.

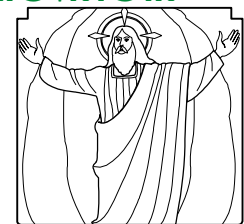
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS:

2/13	\$3,901
2/20	4,811
2/27	4,606
9-wk avg	3,763

EXPENSES:

9-wk avg	\$2,301
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Thank you for your generosity!

Initial brief from the Pastoral Steward

On the global community's concern in implementing an **active Pastoral Care Program**:

- Our goal is to ensure that every member has an identified pastoral coordinator who will take care of the member's pastoral needs.
- Train mature and responsible coordinators.
- Institute training programs for community counselors based on Elijah House.
- Community elders constituting a Reconciliation
- Board will hear serious grievances and reconcile the members according to our guidelines on reconciliation and fraternal correction.
- A feedback and monitoring process is a vital part of the Program.

U.S. Bishops Emphasize SILENCE

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has once more asked all parishes in the United States to begin implementing some new Liturgical changes within the Mass, notable among these is the greater emphasis on silence.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) recommends that "even before the celebration itself, it is praiseworthy for silence to be observed in church, in the sacristy and adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves for the sacred rites which are to be enacted in a devout and fitting manner" (GIRM 45). The *General Instruction* also recommends brief moments of sacred silence throughout the liturgy: at the Penitential Rite and after the invitation to pray, after the readings and the homily, and especially after Communion, so that the word of God and the Eucharist "may be taken into the heart by the fostering of the Holy Spirit" (GIRM 56).

We in the community have all noticed the dramatic loss of silence in church, either before, during, and after Mass or Friday worship. The Church is now renewing her desire that all the faithful observe silence in church. This Lent, let us all strive to obey Mother Church and maintain silence both before and after Mass or worship, not only to promote personal prayer and meditation but also to show reverence for Jesus in the Tabernacle.

Lenten Meditation. Go to http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/lent/ then click on *Lent 2004*.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Treasury Ministry guidelines:

1. Reimbursement vouchers will be paid the week after the Friday it is presented. Exceptions are:
 - If below \$30, immediate reimbursements will be handled from petty cash.
 - Vouchers for LSS, MEs and other programs will be paid in 2 weeks.
 - Emergencies emailed by Thursday night to Rubenluz@aol.com.
2. Our Friday cutoff time of 11:45pm; please allow us a short time for fellowship and to finalize deposits, reconcile figures and clean up.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

Teaching Ministry: March Schedule

(Unless announced otherwise, all teachings are at St. Antoninus, 1-6pm)

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Mar 6 | All covenanted Disciples:
<i>Shepherds Training Refresher Course</i>
LSS 1-20: <i>Gifts, Fruit of the Holy Spirit</i>
LSS 1-21: <i>Basic Bible Seminar</i> |
| Mar 19 | Liturgy Ministry: Lectors
John 6 |
| Mar 26 | Singles/Single Parents:
<i>Basic Bible Seminar</i>
Intercessory Ministry
Mark 10 |

Recollection Day with EWTN's Sister Joan Noreen and Fr. Paul Lehman. Saturday March 20 at St. Leo Church 9:30-5pm. The retreat will end with Mass.

Family Encounter. Reserve the weekend: July 30-August 1, South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size for FE #11; sign up early.*

CSL has new Presiding SL

The Executive Council of Servant Leaders recently announced the designation of Kiko (and Aida) Josef as Presiding Servant Leader. Kiko, who will preside over the Executive Council of Servant Leaders for a period of 7 months, February thru August 2004, takes over this stewardship from Dodo (and Paulette) Javier.

The Presiding SL coordinates and supports the different activities of the Servant Leaders; presides over the meetings of the Council; and ensures that community-wide concerns are adequately addressed and resolved.

Let us always keep our leaders in prayer!

Counsels from page 1

repenting of our sins and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, making amends. Let us reflect upon the glory that our loving Heavenly Father has prepared for each and every one of us through Jesus Christ.

As disciples of Christ, shouldn't we be ready to take up our own crosses and die to ourselves and allow God to *change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body?* (Phil 3:21a) Should we live according to the dictates of this world instead of the example given us by our Lord and Savior? Should we not persevere in our obedience to the commandments of God, and submit ourselves in obedience to Church authority? Shouldn't we serve our Christian brothers and sisters in humility, shining in love towards them instead of closing our eyes to the wars, division and hatred that go on in this world? Should we not be showing charity towards the poor instead of accumulating an over-abundance of wealth that will be left behind when we depart from this world? Should we not be sharing the Good News with all those who we come in contact with instead of being indifferent to our faith?

There is so much that we can do, if we are willing, to accumulate credits that will be applied towards our heavenly reward. What are a few moments of our time here and there in comparison to what awaits us? What are a few weekly sacrifices as compared to the blessings that we shall receive as heavenly citizens? Everyday of our lives, we must make sacrifices, always giving thanks to God for everything that He has given us.

Christ died for us so that we may be made righteous through Him. Through His death on the Cross as the sacrificial Lamb, we qualify to inherit the salvation that awaits all those who persevere in their living faith. At that moment, after the last trumpet, in the twinkle of an eye, *we shall be changed* (1 Cor 15:52) *and bear the image of the heavenly one* (v49). *Our perishable bodies will put on imperishability, for that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality* (v54).

We believe and call upon the Lord as we sit at the Lord's feet in prayer. At the Mount of Olives, Christ stood between the inglorious apostles and His glory in Moses and Elijah; He too will transform us from our inglorious, sinful state to the promise of His grace and glory.

DIRECTIONS

- Take refuge in the Lord in prayer.
- Conduct ourselves according to the model of Jesus Christ.
- Be not distracted by earthly things.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

(See March teachings on page 3)

Mar 13	DLC meeting
Mar 19-21	Trenton YE#3
Mar 20	BLD Recollection (see page 3)
Mar 20-21	Youth LSS#9, Consolata Mission Center, N Brunswick
Apr 3-4	LSS#22, Consolata Mission Center, N Brunswick
April 16-18	Aspirants' Retreat
April 16-18	Trenton LSS#4
May 1-2	Long Island LSS#8
May 14-16	SPE#5

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!!!



BIRTHDAYS

03/05	Rita Santos, LSS18 Gep Espejon, YE 9
03/06	Jim Altieri, LSS21 Grace Baquilod, LSS2 Francia Edquilag, LSS17
03/07	Violy Dugayo, LSS11 Stella Huelgas, LSS1
03/08	Mina Mantes, LSS11
03/09	Danny Palomares, LSS17 Kirk Inocencio, YE 10 Alan Laxina, YE 8 Joven Soriano, LSS15
03/10	Maryann Mcgehrin, LSS20
03/11	Ali San Miguel, YLSS7

ANNIVERSARIES

03/05	Glicer & Marichu De Castro, ME22
03/06	Jerry & Tina Almonte, LSS3
03/08	Gerry & Elma Garcia, LSS3

We welcome your contributions.

Our editorial policies are the norm for all publications:

- We can give no assurance that your contribution, solicited or not, will be published; and
- The article is subject to any edits or revisions by our editorial staff.

Please be patient and understanding of the constraints we work with in publishing our weekly newsletter. We appreciate your effort in writing your articles, and we prayerfully give thanks!



BLD Inter-District Youth Conference

Welcome Toronto, Trenton & LI Youth Leaders!

BLD Newark's Youth Ministry will host youth leaders from BLD Toronto, Long Island and Trenton who will be attending an inter-district youth conference on March 13 from 12pm-7pm at the St. Leo's Boland Hall. The conference aims to share lessons learned in ministering to the youth.

The speakers include Fr. Paul Lehman and several Newark youth leaders. The conference includes break-out sessions, worship, the Eucharist and a praise jam. Members of Newark's Youth Ministry are invited and requested to come on time.

The Toronto youth visitors are: Andrew Rejano; Maria Kristine Prollamante; Jervy Lasquite; Jeffrey Buado; JR Sabbun; Frandie Lasquite; Mary Jane Pudjowargono; Ivan Piamonte; Kathleen Ongteco; Darice Bellido; Timothy Nazal; Arvictor Canaria; Marc Sacramento; Valerie Campos; John Christopher Yulo; Jennifer Carandang; Gino Albert Guillermo; Nicole Valdez; Ruth Dale Dimen; RD Dimen; Carlo Suarez; Benson Virtucio; Nicole Valdez; Benson Virtucio and Carlo Suarez

Deepening of Prayer Life Retreat

The community is invited to attend a spiritual retreat on *Deepening of Prayer Life* at St. Leo's Church on March 20 from 9:30am-5:00pm. The retreat masters are Sister Joan Noreen of Our Lady's Missionaries of the Eucharist (OLME), and Fr. Paul Lehman, district spiritual director.

Sister Joan will speak on *Praying with the Sacred Word* and the Holy Father's latest encyclical "*Rekindle Eucharistic Amazement*". Fr. Paul will speak on Deepening of Prayer Life and lead an exercise in meditation/listening prayer. The retreat will culminate with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

Sister Joan founded the OLME in the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia in 1978. Today, OLME is present in Newark, Philadelphia and Allenton, PA. In 2000, Sister Joan founded the Spirituality Evangelization Academy in response to the Pope's call to a new evangelization and to the Lord's mandate to "Go and make disciples of all nations". Sister Joan hosts the weekly EWTN series, Eucharistic Journey.

COUNSELS

Repentance & Fruitfulness

WORD: Ex. 3: 1-8, 13-15; Ps. 103: 1-4, 6-8, 11; 1Cor.10: 1-6, 10-12; Lk.13: 1-9

ORDER: Repent! Repent or you will perish. Bear fruit!

REFLECTION:

Jesus began his mission with a call to repentance; "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt.4:7). Today, the same call of Jesus is addressed to us through the voice of the Church. The call to repentance is at the heart of the Gospel. Jesus addressed it to all people: sinners and saints alike, without exception.

Repentance is more than simply reflection, prayer and penance. It is an everyday, ongoing conversion of our hearts. Jesus reminds us in the Gospel that time is not on our side. He gives us two examples: the slaughter of some Galileans in the hands of Pilate and the death of eighteen people when the tower of Siloam fell on them. He exhorts us to repent so that we will be prepared in case of tragedies like these.

The fig tree in Jesus' story was a very privileged tree because it was planted in an orchard. In spite of this, the tree was barren. Yet, the fig tree was given another chance. God is patient; He cannot stop hoping that we, like the fig tree, might show signs of bearing fruit after receiving special care. The fig tree is found wanting, not because it produced bad fruit, but because it failed to produce any fruit. The parable's main thrust is this: the fig tree's failure consists of the good that it failed to do.

We Christians must ask ourselves the question, "What good have I failed to do today?" The call to repentance is not merely a call to turn from evil, but a call

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"He pardons all iniquities, He heals all your ills. He redeems your life from destruction, He crowns you with kindness and compassion." (Ps.103:3-4)

From the Global Inter-District Conference 2004 Excerpts from:

Administering the Community: Thinking Outside of the Box

By: Alex Ebarvia (former Servant Leader for District Development)

Emerging Leaders

We at times succumb to choose on the human level because of friendship, gratitude, or because they belong to our group. . . We at times fail to realize that positions (of) authority or leadership are a call to greater accountability, responsibility and trust. Though such positions carry honor and respect in and out of community, these positions are really positions of sacrifice, pruning, commitment and fully relying not on our ability, intelligence and resource, but on submitting ourselves and the resources He has entrusted to us to His Plan. These would be times wherein you think less of yourself and fully lay out your life for the Lord to use FREELY.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:4-11)

Aside from the gift of tongues, all the other gifts were meant for use not for ourselves but for the benefit of others: our brothers and sisters, our apostolates, our district, our community. The revelational gifts of Knowledge, Wisdom and Discernment are available to us for our use. We must as leaders continuously use these gifts. . . *In your Council meetings, (do you not experience that many) decisions often times are overturned by a Word received from the Lord?*

The Word of God

As we daily read and reflect on the Bible readings, we would find out . . . (that many management principles come) . . . from the Holy Bible.

- Delegation (Moses & Jethro)
- Task force or Fact-finding Missions (Numbers 13:1)
- Leadership by example: Our Lord Jesus taught (His disciples) . . . Leadership By Example.

The Holy Spirit and the Holy Bible play an extremely large role in the growth of our community. . . (in) our decisions. . . we seek God's Word, we learn of His plan, we move (on this basis) and . . . make decisions that contradict human logic and intelligence.

Leadership

Our Community's (leadership) structure itself was taken from the Bible. We have:

- Servant Leaders (Apostles)
- Stewards (Local Elders)
- Apostolate/Ministry Coordinators (from Acts - Stewards)

As a leader, . . . your main task is to wait on the Lord, discern His plan for our community and move towards achieving that plan. Never do hands-on work, you will . . . lose your objectivity. You must train our future leaders, your future replacements. discipling them, sharing your experiences. . . .

Common Pitfalls in Administering or Managing a District

- Over-enthusiasm. Desire to act immediately when entrusted with a new position
 - Inability to ask, to listen and to gather relevant data or information
 - Fishermen throwing a dragnet into the sea retaining those he can use and throwing back those which are trash or garbage
 - Building a community is not revolutionary, it is evolutionary. We are not building physical structures, we are building the body of Christ.
- Lack of delegation by leaders. (Too much hands-on)
 - Failing to train future leaders, our replacements.
 - Members are only taught to be good followers and not good leaders. Members are taught only the HOW TO's and without the WHY (Reason) for doing things.
- In the application of sanctions or replacements: Failure to inform first the person to be affected by a decision or policy
- Desire to outperform, excel or be better than others
- (Lack of) Prudence in controversies: Deciding on issues leveled against you as a leader by a member, resulting in the application of a sanction.
- (Failure to) Select which has greater need. . . the apostolate or. . . the entire district.
- Failure to rotate members and leaders to other ministries
- Allowing a leader or a member to stay (too) long in a particular ministry or apostolate because they have been good workers is detrimental. You are depriving them of (their opportunity for) growth. . . that will make (them) . . . our future leaders - better leaders.

Appointing Coordinators

- In the selection of leaders or heads:
 - 1st: Review the tasks to be done or the work needed
 - Is it something new or it is routine work?
 - What does it require or what are the skills needed?
 - 2nd: Select leader/workers:
 - You shall know them by their fruits.
 - Those who can be trusted in small things can be trusted in big things.
 - One person sows while the other person waters.
 - Is the person you have identified a:
 - Sower (foundation layer)
 - Reaper (Administrator)

Formulation of Policies or Rules

- Apply policies or rules to yourself, can you follow such policy?
- Apply policies to your friends and relatives in community before others within your apostolate.

Common Communication Concerns

- Failing to disseminate the information
- Lack of dialogue
- Too much need to know basis
- Not putting information or requests in writing
- Not spending time to read communications, manuals or guidelines

Personal Disposition

- Always remember, just like you, everyone has good intentions. It is never your monopoly.
- Ensure at all times you have custody of your heart and purity of your intention.
- Know your call because not all tasks/positions may be what the Lord had planned for you.
- Owe no debt to anyone.
- Don't seek repayment from those whom you had helped

Those of us who help others, should treat (our) service as an opportunity to glorify the Lord. Never treat your service as way of building up your kingdom.

Final Word

Jean Vanier, the author of *Community & Growth*, which I personally believe should be a MUST reading for all leaders, said:

“We are not in community to do extra-ordinary things but do ordinary things with extra-ordinary love.”

Ministry Announcements

Disciples' Assembly tomorrow 1-6pm at St. Leo's Annex. *All disciples, committed and covenanted, are expected to attend.* Please come on time.

Teaching Ministry: March Schedule

Mar 19 Liturgy Ministry: *Lectors* John 6
Mar 26 Singles/Single Parents: *Basic Bible Seminar*
Intercessory Ministry Mark 10

Recollection Day with EWTN's Sister Joan Noreen and Fr. Paul Lehman. Saturday March 20 at St. Leo Church 9:30-5pm. The retreat will end with Mass

Family Encounter. Reserve the weekend: July 30-August 1, South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size for FE #11; sign up early.*

Walking the Walk

Hypocrites! That's exactly what our Lord Jesus Christ called the Pharisees, the so-called "teachers of the Law of Moses." He said: "So you must obey them and do everything that they tell you, but do not do what they do for they do not practice what they preach" Mathew 23:3. Jesus decried the hypocritical attitude of these religious leaders, who knew but did not live by the Scriptures. They didn't care about being holy, but rather in just looking holy, so as to gain the people's admiration and praise.

Matthew, like the other synoptic writers, described the confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees. Jesus denounced their traditions and their interpretations and applications of the Law, which became as important as God's Law itself. The Pharisees told the people to obey their man-made rules but did not do so themselves. If they obeyed the rules, it was not to honor God but to look good to others.

We are likewise exhorted not to be like the Pharisees. As true followers of Jesus, we must live by His standards of Love. We must make sure that our actions match our beliefs. Living out Christianity merely as a show for others is like washing a cup on the outside only. But when we are clean in the inside, our cleanliness on the outside is for real. We must not become hidden Pharisees by emphasizing outside obedience at the expense of inner renewal.

Let us be both hearers and doers of the Word. When we are asked to help in missions both here and in the Philippines, let us heed the call, go out of our comfort zones, and serve the poor and the downtrodden. Let us apply all that we have learned from our teachings, Word Sharing, encounters, the LSS, reunions, and ministry work to the tasks given us by Christ. Let us by our witnessing and work manifest our genuine discipleship in Christ. Let the love of God coming from deep in our hearts empower us to praise, glorify and serve Him.

Let us walk the walk, and not just talk the talk. Let us always remember what Pope John Paul II said in his encyclical "*EVANGELII NUNTIANDI*", that people nowadays no longer listen to teachers but to witnesses, and if ever they listen to teachers, it is because these have become witnesses themselves.

Prayer: Oh Lord, who fasted for 40 days and 40 nights in the desert for our sake, give us the grace to become true witnesses. Help us to love with Your sacrificial love so that we may obtain perfect forgiveness for our sins. Amen.

"We Wish to See Jesus" John 12:21

20th World Youth Day Theme
Cologne, Germany 2005

Counsels from page 1

to “produce the fruits” of good living. Thus, our worship theme for this week is: “*We believe and call upon the Lord as we repent and bear fruit.*”

How do we know if we are bearing fruit in the community? Can we say we’re fruitful because we already have done many successful encounters and LSS? No, it is much more than numbers. More importantly, St. Paul says we must live by the Spirit (Gal.5:16). He gives us the standard to use. “The fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control.” (Gal 5:22-23)

Let us examine ourselves against these standards:

- Joy: Does the joy of Christ in our hearts burst forth from our very being to those around us?
- Peace: Does the peace of Christ control our hearts so that we can stay calm amidst the turmoil around us?
- Patience: Are we patient with each other? Do we take the time to prepare new disciples to answer the call to follow Christ?
- Kindness: Are we making the effort to make newer members truly feel they are part of the community by getting to know them?
- Generosity: Do we give fully of ourselves when given tasks to perform, or do we grumble? Do we offer our gifts to the altar with gladness in our hearts for the good of all the Church?
- Faithfulness: Have we been faithful to the Covenant we have made with God by living our pledges to God and the community?
- Gentleness: Are we truly gentle and respectful when communicating with brothers or sisters?
- Self-control: Do we let the Spirit guide us in our life?
- Love: Love is the fruit from which all others flow. Do we truly love one another as Jesus loves us-unconditional, without any demands?

In this time of Lent, let us truly examine ourselves, repent of our omissions and wrongdoings, and bear fruit as God commanded us. God sent His own Son to preach conversion and to release to us the Spirit, source of all fruitfulness.

DIRECTIONS:

- ☒ Do not grumble.
- ☒ Examine ourselves against the Fruit of the Holy Spirit.
- ☒ Do not grumble.

Community Calendar

- Mar 13 - Disciples’ Assembly, St. Leo Annex, 1-6pm
(see page 3)
- Inter-District Youth Conference, St. Leo’s Boland Hall 12-7 pm (see News)
- Mar 19-21 - Trenton YE 3
- Mar 20 - BLD Recollection (see page 3)
- Mar 20-21 - Youth LSS 9, Consolata Mission Center, New Brunswick
- Apr 2 - Invocation Mass for LSS 22
- Apr 3-4 - LSS 22, Consolata Mission Center, New Brunswick
- April 16-18- Trenton LSS 4
- April 23-25- Aspirants’ Retreat
- May 1-2 - Long Island LSS 8
- May 14-16 - SPE 6

BIRTHDAYS

- 03/12 Jhun Yanza, LSS14
- 03/13 Rod Largoza, LSS12
Mat Talag, LSS8
Kelli Anyanwu, YE 9
- 03/14 Tet Almazan, LSS3
Millie Constantino, ME22
Randy Trinidad, LSS10
- 03/15 Ike Alimario, LSS17
Celina Tolentino, SPE5
Deng Trillana, LSS7
- 03/16 Art Nano, LSS18
- 03/17 Fred Atienza, LSS10
Bambi Pascoguin, LSS20
- 03/18 Letty Chua, LSS13
Menchee Tibayan, LSS17

ANNIVERSARIES

- 03/16 John Alonzo, LSS19
- 03/16 Ed & Nanie De Los Reyes, LSS9



The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

2/20	\$4,811
2/27	4,811
3/05	3,764
10-wk.Avg	3,765

***Thank you for
your generosity!***

EXPENSES: 10-wk.Avg \$3,021



Stewards spell out Objectives

At the quarterly Disciples' Assembly held last Saturday at St. Leo, the district stewards presented the long-term objectives, some of them in quantifiable terms, of their respective apostolates. Given the Order from the day's Readings as discerned by the assembly, the mood throughout was strong for the leadership to "Serve your people." (Micah 7:14)

After prayers and Scripture reflections, Noel Trillana gave updates on community matters, among them the Community Day on August 21; the hiatus in Teachings in August and December; upcoming Retreats; St Leo's 150th anniversary celebration and postponed church renovations. The District Servant Leader (DSL), Richard de la Fuente, then explained and clarified the functions of the DSL as approved by our Spiritual Director, Abp Angel Lagdameo (*see today's CN Supplement*).

Each apostolate then gave progress reports and laid out their objectives:

Formation seeks to coordinate the tasks of discipling, teaching and shepherding our members; streamline Teaching modules and methods, introduce "home schooling" for those who cannot attend weekend teachings and integrate singles, single parents and youth in teaching programs; identify better our members' "community gifts" and strengthen our post-covenanting or diaconate program. *page 3* ☞

Youth conference is huge success

32 delegates traveled all the way from Toronto to join their Newark counterparts last Friday for the first ever BLD Youth Inter-district Conference. Their great enthusiasm was very evident from the opening worship, during which their interaction demonstrated the very essence of their presence here: their love for God. Our guests from Toronto had a glimpse of how the Newark youth carry out their activities, exchanged ideas on how they can make their ministry better, and partook of warm fellowship. The proceedings elicited the remark from one of the guests, "The Lord is here!" in this community. *page 3* ☞

COUNSELS

Our Response to God's Mercy

WORD: Jos 5:9-12; Ps 34:2-3, 4-7; 2Cor 5: 17-21; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

ORDER: Be reconciled to God so that we might become the righteousness of God.

REFLECTION: The parable of the prodigal son occasions in the reader a wonderful Lenten reflection on repentance and reconciliation. It is a complete story of 'going away' and 'coming back' to the Father. Different elements are highlighted in the prodigal sons' journey to ruin and reconciliation. The elements and corresponding verses are listed below:

Prodigal Son's "S's" Leading to Sinfulness:

Self-will - [v12] The younger son said to his father, "Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me." So the father divided the property between (the two sons).

Selfishness - [13] After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings

Separation - and set off to a distant country

Sensuality - where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.

Spiritual Destruction - [14] When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need.

Self-abasement - [15] So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine.

Starvation - [16] And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. *page 4* ☞

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

"So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away: behold new things have come." (2 Cor 5:17)

The Long Journey from the Mind to the Heart

Based on the IDC Presentation by Jun Eala

Why does it take so long for our formation program to produce a covenant disciple? Or, Why does it take so long for many of our disciples to have the desired change in character and behavior expected from our protracted formation program?

What are the expectations of a covenant disciple in the BLD community?

We can look at our Covenant of Communion, but some find our vision and mission too vague to be realistic in defining a disciple of BLD. Others feel that our community norms are impossible for most disciples to attain and by retaining them, we are giving tacit approval to non-adherence. One certain expectation of our Formation Program (CDFP) is Spiritual Maturity. But how do we define spiritual maturity or the desired change of heart expected of a covenant disciple?

Spiritual maturity should consist of at least three things:

- Stability of attitude - a non-vacillating and steady outlook on what is good and what is right. Disciples should be able to maintain peace with themselves and others, a joyful heart in the midst of passion, suffering and trials, humility in loving the unlovable, self-control and a never ending hope that God will always be there for us.
- Consistency of commitment - taking to heart what we have promised and pledged in our community covenant to bring to fruition the Lord's invitation to "*Come and I will make you fishers of men*" and His mandate to "*Go and make disciples of the world.*" We require maturity to be able to go beyond recognition, power and position and serve consistently and heartily only because we love.
- Willingness to share freely, as a second nature, what has been given us by the Lord. A disciple must share not only to the least of our brethren but to all that might need our help and assistance.

Our focus in Formation continues to be on how we can achieve greater excellence. An alternative suggestion, the **HEART** approach - the **H**uman **E**vocative **A**pproach to **R**elevant **T**eaching/ **T**raining - advocates that learning should be fun, full of life, love and laughter. It's easy to identify the areas where we can improve, but the challenge facing the Formation Apostolate globally is how to modify our program without sacrificing the substance. How do we make our current syllabi and teaching methodology more evocative and relevant in order to form in each disciple a forgiving, compassionate, listening, worshipping, honest, rejoicing, an enduring and a pure heart? A heart like Jesus'!

(To be concluded next week.)

God's Witness

By the words that come out of our mouths and the actions that originate from us, we can either bring God to His people and draw them closer to Him, or drive people away from Him. Do we "walk the talk" is the big question that should be in our hearts.

If we want our community to witness as Christ did, then everyone should be Christ to one another. We can only reap what we sow. If love and forgiveness are our norm, then they should be deeply imbedded in our hearts to naturally flow from within us. If we desire support and commitment from one another, then we ought to be able to give them to all.

As formation stewards of our Lord with a task to form and mold according to the character of Christ those whom He sends us, we ought to realize that the primary requisite for such work is to be able to lead oneself and others by example, by the life we model to all. No servanthood and leadership tool is as effective as the example of one's life - what one does, what values and principles one's actions reflect, how close the "walk" matches the "talk." The model that our personal example affords us makes the difference between deep and long lasting influence on our neighbor and skepticism which can breed in their hearts.

We are leaders and servants of our Lord. We lead and serve others in small, unintended ways as well as in big and well-planned ministry and apostolate work. The countless casual encounters within community and outside our fold are opportunities to convey and teach the character of Christ. Our interactions which add up to one's life make a difference more than an eloquently worded teaching intended to make a profound and lasting impression among men.

When Jesus said: "*Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven...I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" (Mt 5:19-20) He was inviting us to assess our impact on the lives of those whom God has sent our way. He wants us to rid ourselves of indifferent leadership and replace it with our authentic witness and servanthood.

God wants our witness to be humble yet optimistic, recognizing that the model one affords can be a profound influence today and in the future. He desires that we mirror the character of Christ, be doers of the word, doing what helps to make others love and serve God and his neighbor.

Here I am Lord, send me!

Nine more disciples sealed their covenant during last Friday's Eucharistic Celebration. Having completed the requirements of discipleship through instructions and discipline of Christ's Word and Church teachings, they will now begin a new journey through life as covenanted disciples of BLD doing the holy work of evangelizing and shepherding other members towards a personal relationship with God. The newly covenanted disciples are: *Eme and Imma Anyanwu, Reggie and Orange Avisado, Ed and Pat Santos, Frank and Malou Venadas and Tita Valonzo.*

Huff n' Puff Dads

The new Parents' Health & Fitness Program kicked off with the first Men's 40+ Basketball Workout last Saturday at the Boland Hall gym, attended by 13 huffing and puffing hoopers.

The day commenced with Invocation and Reading of the Word and a reading of the club's foundation scripture (1Cor 9:25-27). Following compulsory stretching exercises (and initial court disorientation) the workout games began in earnest fun, ending 2 hours later with a closing prayer and brief meeting to schedule future games. For the "moms", aerobics and nutrition or weight-watchers type workshops are some of the activities being studied. To bring dads and moms together, the prospect of ballroom dance instructions are being considered.

The Health & Fitness Program aims to complement the "spiritual training" of interested disciples' with these activities for physical well-being. Those who want to join may contact the coach/trainer, Mon Chan; Reuben Vibar or Rey Duma.

Youth... from page 1

Fr. Paul Lehman talked on the obstacles that the Christian youth faces today: the challenge of authority, human sexuality and adherence to our faith. He expounded on the difficulties of being a counter-culture organization and exhorted the need for Jesus in the struggle to adhere to our Christian faith.

The Newark youth leaders talked about their organization, formation, function and mission, while the Toronto group presented a powerful play on the many challenges that face today's youth. The profound message, played out in silence with only background music, drew a teary-eyed response from the audience. In the ensuing discussion, small groups pondered on the strengths, challenges and concerns of both districts. Holy Mass was celebrated, and the 2 groups then each made Praise presentations.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Deepening of PrayerLife" Retreat with EWTN's Sister Joan Noreen and Fr. Paul Lehman. Tomorrow, March 20 *at St. Antoninus church* 9:30-5pm. Please bring light lunch provision. The retreat will end with Mass.

Teaching Ministry. Next Friday, Mar 26: Singles/Single Parents (Basic Bible Seminar); Intercessory Ministry; Mark 10.

Holy Spirit Breakfast. April 3 Saturday 9am-12noon at Our Lady of Libera church in West New York, NJ. Tickets are \$9 for adults, \$ for children. Please come to this annual event that BLD has lent its traditional support. Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes.

Follow the Spirit 2004 Conference. April 23-25 at the East Brunswick Hilton. This annual charismatic event features workshops, liturgies, prayers for healing, penance service, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and uplifting, Spirit-filled music. Speakers include Bishop Sam Jacobs, Sr. Ann Shields, Molly Kelly and David Thorp. BLD Mission will be serving this year, supported by ME classes 16 and 18. Fee is \$55 for adults, \$15 for youth and children. *Free registration for first-time attendees, when registering with a returning conference attendee.* Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes.

Family Encounter Reserve the weekend: July 30-August 1, South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size for FE #11; sign up early.*

Stewards' objectives... from page 1

Mission is studying how to link evangelization in our mission activities, to expand these beyond Newark (Cherry Hill, Washington DC), make year-round our service with the Missionaries of Charities, and assist the DIPs' in developing teachers, sharers and disciplers. A Medical Advisory Board will be created to better plan and coordinate our Medical Missions.

Pastoral plans to strengthen the community's internal structures to bring members to full spiritual maturity; improve the pastoral aspect of the WSC; train circle shepherds; develop a pool of prayer counselors; and establish a Reconciliation Board.

Management dwelt on the Isaiah 58 program, attendance tracking and an annual pledge appeal in lieu of traditional fundraising; and is considering hiring an office manager and auditor.

Evangelization will institute ways to achieve Excellence in Worship; it looks to develop more sharers, presentors, coaches, find new priests for our Encounters and seminars, and review talks to improve the process of these events. It reciprocates the desire to improve coordination with Formation and Mission programs and activities.

Your article contributions to Covenant News:

* All articles, whether solicited or not, are subject to any edits or revisions by our editorial staff.

* Although we cannot assure publication, we appreciate your effort in writing, and prayerfully give thanks!

Counsels (from page 1)

Prodigal Son's "R's" Leading to Reconciliation:

Realization - [v17] Coming to his senses he thought, "How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger.

Resolution - [18] I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him,

Repentance - "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. [19] I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."

Return - [20] So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.

Reclothing - [22] His father ordered his servants, "Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Rejoicing - [23] Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, [24] because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found." Then the celebration began.

Though we look at the younger son as lost and prodigal, there is another lesson that Christ is telling us concerning the older son. God's mercy is so great that man cannot grasp it. The elder son thinks his father loves his brother excessively, and his jealousy prevents him from understanding how his father rejoices and celebrates so much the recovery of the prodigal. It cuts him off from the joy that the whole community feels. Though it is true that the younger son was a sinner, Christ asks us not to pass judgment on him. We must always be merciful, as our Father is merciful. We must always be forgiving, so that we can be forgiven; to have pity in our hearts, for we too are all sinners.

Can we identify with the frustrations of the older brother? Do we consider ourselves children of our God the Father? Are we judgmental? Are we on the road to ruin and sinfulness or on the road towards reconciliation?

Are we back in our old world or are we fully living our New Life in the Spirit? The Lord promises us in 2 Cor 5:17, "Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: The old things have passed away; behold, new things have come." It is God Who has brought us all into oneness. "And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation." (2 Cor 5:18) **God is rich in mercy toward all who believe and call upon Him.** We believe and call upon the Lord **when we reconcile with Him and with one another.**

DIRECTIONS

- Be ambassadors of reconciliation.
- Bless the Lord at all times.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Mar 19-21 Trenton YE 3
- Mar 20 BLD Recollection (see page 3)
- Mar 20-21 Youth SS 9, Consolata Mission Center, N Brunswick
- Apr 2 Invocation Mass for LSS 22
- Apr 3-4 LSS 22, Consolata Mission Center, N. Brunswick
- April 3 Holy Spirit Breakfast (see page 3)
- April 16-18 Trenton LSS 4
- April 23-25 Aspirants' Retreat
- April 23-25 NJCCC Follow the Spirit 2004 (see page 3)
- May 1-2 Long Island LSS 8
- May 14-16 SPE 6

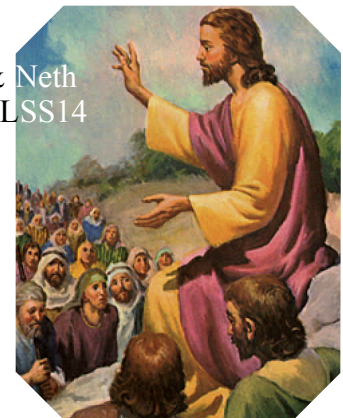
BIRTHDAYS

- 03/18 Elvie Apo, LSS20
- 03/19 Joe Baluyot, LSS3
Eugene Briones, YE 9
- 03/20 Lito Constantino, ME22
- 03/21 Jerry Pagdonsolan, LSS20
- 03/22 Ginny Celentano, SPE5
Perpetua Ekweghariri, LSS20
Daniel Duma, YE 10
- 03/23 Fely Carrera, LSS13
- 03/24 Carlos Beato, LSS20
- 03/25 Marilyn Alejan, LSS7
Lucy Robles, LSS17
Tita Tionson, LSS1

ANNIVERSARIES

- 03/19 Charlie & Neth
Opinion, LSS14

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you...



THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

<u>Collections</u>		<i>Thank you for your generosity!</i>	
2/27	\$4,606		
3/05	3,746		
3/12	4,811	<u>Expenses</u>	
11-wk average	\$3,753	11-wk average	\$3,210



BLD visits with Bishop Da Cunha

Fr. Paul Lehman and 3 of our Stewards responded to an invitation to meet with Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha last Monday, at the behest of His Excellency Abp John J. Myers. The Bishop is heading a new evangelistic task force as the evangelization office of the archdiocese is being revived.

The meeting addressed the possible areas where our community could be involved in, including the Family Life Office's initiative on Engaged Encounters; Natural Family Planning program, and programs of the Archdiocesan Youth Ministry. Noting the deep involvement of our members with their current BLD ministries, Fr. Paul indicated that much remains to be done in these areas of service and cooperation with the Archdiocese. But "good contact has been established," he reported.

43 Youth attend LSS

Another victory has been won for our Lord God as 36 Newark and 7 D.C. candidates were able to "taste and see the goodness of the Lord" (Ps 34) in the 9th Youth LSS this past weekend. It marked the start of a new life with the Holy Spirit for all the lambs, who experienced God's love in a very special way, especially after being baptized by the Holy Spirit. The seminar was led by Father Paul Lehman and the presentors for: **God's Love**-Victor San Luis & Kerwyn Velasco; **New Life**-Nikkie Narciso & Justin Cruz; **Healing & Forgiveness**-Pena Family; Growth-Leah Narciso; and **Transformation**-Margaret Aliparo & Gino Pattugalan. Our God is truly an awesome God, inflaming the desire in our youth to praise and serve Him.

(See the list of graduates on page 4)

Recollection sees big turnout

About 165 BLD members and guests experienced a wonderful day of Recollection last Saturday at St. Antoninus. The retreat was led by Sister Joan Noreen of Our Lady's Missionaries of the Eucharist, and our Spiritual Director, Fr. Paul Lehman.

(continued on page 3)

COUNSELS

Grace in Suffering

WORD: Is 43:16-21; Ps 126:1-6; Ph 3:8-14; Jn 8:1-11

ORDER: Know Him and share in His sufferings.

REFLECTION: This Sunday's Gospel portrays a woman caught in adultery, a sin punishable by death under Mosaic Law; but being under Roman rule, the Jews were not allowed to put anyone to death. The Pharisees and the elders brought the woman before Jesus, intending to entrap Him. If He consented to the stoning, He would be breaking the Roman law; otherwise, he would be transgressing the Mosaic Law.

But Jesus turned the challenge towards his accusers. In effect He said: Go ahead and stone her! But "*let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.*" (Jn 8:7) This forced them to look within themselves and realize their imperfections.

The crowd beginning with the elders left as they became aware of their sinfulness. The woman, knowing her guilt, waited for judgment; but Jesus did not condemn her, offered her forgiveness, and told her to go and sin no more.

Our encounter with Jesus does not end after we are forgiven. We are called to repent and show the same forgiveness to others that we have received ourselves. "*Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.*" (Eph 4:32)

Lent is a good time to affirm our belief in God and pursue the goal of knowing Jesus. For Paul, to know Jesus meant to know the power of His resurrection and the sharing of His sufferings (Phil 3:10). St. Paul came to God in humble faith, believing the right relationship is not based upon the law but on faith in Christ. It is not enough to say we're

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Those who sow in tears will reap with cries of joy." (Ps 126:5)

The Long Journey from the Mind to the Heart

(Concluded from last week)

Although our formation constitutes the entire process of the five W's (Worship, Witness, Work, Warfare and Word), the study of the Word is the ultimate force in the fulfillment and realization of our spiritual maturity. The Word is the wellspring of wisdom and knowledge to be able to do the will of God. Thus the Word and the imparting of the Word is the foundation of our formation program. Therefore, it behooves us to examine "what, when and how" we proclaim the Word of God.

- **What**

Is our program integrated, enculturated, and interpersonal enough? Do we spend too little time on the basic teachings? Is there an orderly and integrated progression of topics towards our objective of a deeper personal relationship with our Lord? Are we too geared to the cognitive dimension rather than the affective and psychomotor dimensions of learning? Does this prevent us from reaching the heart, or will the knowledge obtained result in changes in attitudes as well?

- **When**

In the distribution of subjects in the CDFP, we have a very heavy load in the pre-covenanting phase of the curriculum, with very little offered in the post covenant period. The timing of the offerings can also be improved. We tend to cram a whole set of modules into one sitting to be able to accomplish the requirements we have set for Covenanting, but without the benefit of internalization. Yet we know there is no substitute for a slow, deliberate and penetrating process that will transform men and women.

- **How**

The way we teach has been criticized by some for being too cerebral with too much theology and too many verses lumped together on the acetate. At the other end of the spectrum, there are those who appreciate the deeper study of the Word and feel that we don't use the Bible enough.

Here in Newark, we have started with a well-defined mentorship program to better train and equip new teachers. We will continue to review the CDFP to try to integrate it more with the movement of members through their worship, work witness and warfare in the community, much as the intercession topics do through their systematic progression. We will prepare for Diakonate Offices through offerings of Catholic Lay Evangelism, Christian Counseling, Sharer's Development, Prophet's Development, Apologetics and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. And finally, using the BBS as a model, we will review each syllabus to see how it can be modified into a more evocative, fun approach to learning God's Word. The Formation Apostolate gladly welcomes ideas, suggestions and help from any community member interested in being a part of this undertaking.

Remain in My Word

As members of our community, we become more aware of our role as disciples of Jesus. We long to live a life that is truly pleasing to God, one that glorifies our Savior, one that helps lead others to seek and worship Him. But most of the time it is difficult to do so.

We live in a world full of distractions, full of choices and full of temptations. It is almost a struggle to focus our hearts and minds solely on Jesus first thing in the morning and just before we go to sleep. We are so occupied with succeeding in our jobs and meeting other obligations and activities that life throws our way. We could easily get lost in the whirligig of worldly demands. We feel trapped and somehow become slaves by our own choice. There is neither joy nor peace when this happens.

A true disciple of Christ is a free person - free from worldly distractions and material bondage. He chooses to live a simple life in Truth and by the Truth. He trusts in the Lord for all his needs.

"If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32) We say we believe in and love God with all our heart and mind but this is not enough. We must start acting it in every detail of our life. We must pray unceasingly for God's grace to transform our hearts to become like Jesus'. Our spiritual life must grow. We must make a conscious decision to nurture and nourish our faith. We can deepen our faith by daily prayers, by soaking in the Holy Scriptures and by frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. We allow God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation to heal our brokenness and restore us to wholeness. In this graceful state, we are less likely to succumb to sin, to which we are most vulnerable in our emotional woundedness and deep hurts. The Holy Eucharist keeps Jesus constantly alive in our life, keeping us strong and firm in proclaiming His mighty kingdom and prompting us to serve and love others as He has commanded us.

Jesus is our Bread of Life. We must remain faithful to His word so we can be Bread of Life for others. By our good deeds and examples we can lead them to Jesus, our Light and our Salvation.

One day we all will be united with Him in Heaven for all eternity. This is all that matters—this is all that counts. Let this be our goal.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

03/05	\$3,764
03/12	3,648
03/19	3,175
12-wk avg	3,705

*Thank you for
your generosity!*

EXPENSES

12-wk avg \$3,374

Jesus' Call to Fellowship

Today, we may not have the luxury of personally fellowshiping with Jesus but He gives us such opportunity through His church as He invites us to abide in Him. *"Remain in me and I will remain in you."*

When we respond positively to Jesus and become one body united in His Name, we remain in Him as we share His word with one another. We fellowship with Jesus as we minister to each other's concerns through His Word and relate to one another in His spirit of love and understanding. We relate to Him when we work together in mission as we do our evangelic work. With His grace and empowerment, *we become fruitful for without Him we are nothing.*

Fellowshipping with Jesus can be as simple as being there for one another during our weekly worship service, LWGs, disciples' assemblies, retreats, mission and ministry meetings. During those special community days, Jesus patiently awaits all of us, not only to worship Him and to pray to Him as a Body united in His Name, but to guide us in our work, to learn from one another, to share with everyone the blessings of living in the spirit and to witness to one another the great work He has done in all of us.

Regrettably, a great majority has not responded to our Lord's call to fellowship with Him through community. Only a handful of disciples joyfully attend community functions. Absenteeism has become the norm rather than the exception. We pick and choose what to attend and support. Rather than positively contribute, *we become obstacles to our community's work* for our Lord.

Jesus has been so good to our community and blessed us beyond measure. The Archdiocese of Newark has given us our canonical designation as an *Association of the Faithful*, but to give what is due His church Jesus wants us to be aware of the great demand for workers in community. He expects every disciple to be proactive and not to be coldly indifferent to community affairs. He hopes that we will be One Body in His Name as we pursue our work for Him. He wants us to realize that ***indiscriminate and chronic absenteeism in community affairs*** is a way of rejecting Him and does not reflect the ways of a true Christian disciple.

Jesus loves us. He is calling us to His side in our appointment and our new name. To be able to serve with cohesion and fruitfulness, we must follow Him and be true to our vocation. We need to fellowship as a community in Christ's Name and move as One Body, united in His love and spirit!

Ministry Announcements

Holy Spirit Breakfast. April 3 Saturday 9am-12noon at Our Lady of Libera church in West New York, NJ. Tickets are \$9 for adults, \$6 for children. Please come to this annual event that BLD has always supported. Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes.

Follow the Spirit 2004 Conference. April 23-25 at the East Brunswick Hilton. This annual charismatic event features workshops, liturgies, prayers for healing, penance service, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and uplifting, Spirit-filled music. Speakers include Bishop Sam Jacobs, Sr. Ann Shields, Molly Kelly and David Thorp. BLD Mission will be serving this year, supported by ME classes 16 and 18. Fee is \$55 for adults, \$15 for youth and children. *Free registration for first-time attendees, when registering with a returning conference attendee.* Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes.

Family Encounter. Reserve the weekend: July 30-Aug. 1, South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size for FE #11; sign up early!*

Recollection... from page 1

Sister Joan described the 3 basic needs for us to be in "flawless unity" with our Lord: the Sacred Word of God, the Holy Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As God's creatures, our highest form of adoration is our total obedience to the His Word, which we need to read "with all our five senses." She quoted liberally from Pope John Paul's *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* while calling ardently for a new reverence, a "mystical understanding" of the Eucharist – the "Gift of gifts." Noting how the current culture has stripped the Eucharist of its sacrificial meaning and is wrongly understood by many as "a mere banquet," she propounded ways to better understand the high mysteries, "what's really happening at the altar" during Mass.

Fr. Paul talked about contemplative prayer, inspired by the works of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. The attendees were led to a 40-minute quiet meditation that brought many to a strong awareness of God's presence. Several shared the awesome peace and joy they felt.

The day culminated with Eucharistic celebration led by Fr. Eustace. He commended the patience of the assembly, who hardly noticed the passing of time amid the beauty of the teachings. We praise Almighty God the Source of all that is good and true.

"Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'"

(Luke 1:38)

We observe the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord on March 25, nine months before the Nativity on Christmas Day. On this feast celebrating the conception of Jesus, let us pray for all the unborn, especially those who are threatened with or were victims of abortion.

Counsels *from page 1*

sorry for our sins; we need to trust Him to come into our life and make us into the people He wants us to be. Paul's desire is not only to know Christ but to gain Christ. He lost everything in pursuit of his goal. Similarly, it is in our loss that we can find and receive God's redeeming love.

Knowing Jesus is not by mere hearing of the ear, but by the experience of our hearts. It is knowing His mercy, grace and power. In Him, we learn that the desire of our heart is to be liberated from negative passion so we could be equipped to share in Christ's sufferings. To suffer for our faith is to persevere in the pursuit of good; it helps us grow in the much-needed virtue of patience. St. Alphonsus commented, "There is nothing more pleasing to God than a soul who patiently and serenely bears whatever cross he is sent."

Understanding and knowing Christ is to identify ourselves with His death and resurrection. In Christ's crucifixion, we learn to crucify our old self, our old habits and sins. With the Risen Christ, we learn to walk in newness of life. We "*forget what lies behind but strain forward to what lies ahead.*" (Phil 3:13b)

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our souls empowers us to live the Lord's sufferings. As we are called to live our community life and serve in our ministries, we commit ourselves to Christ by accepting the cross of inconvenience, suffering, mockery and renunciation of all earthly desires. We also share in the sacred intimacy of Christ's suffering when we share the grief and sorrows of others. When we endure trials meekly and unite them with the Lord's Passion, they gain that immense redemptive value that so pleases our God.

The Lord will not allow us to experience these trials unless they be for our good. We open ourselves to the Holy Spirit to understand how God is moving in our lives. God promises to replace our tears with joy. Good Friday leads to the glorious dawn of Easter. Being conformed to the death of our Savior, we are transformed unto the glory of eternal life.

DIRECTIONS

- Sin no more. Remember not the events of the past.
- Do not have any righteousness of our own, but only that which comes through faith in Christ.
- Pursue the goal of God's calling.
- Do not judge.

YLSS 9... *from page 1*

We pray for your growth in your New Life in the Spirit!

Aglibut, Irvin	Cruz, Joseph
Arias, Marvin	Cruz, Josh
Arribe, Christel	De Castro, Colette
Arseno, Maria	De La Cruz, Gasparov
Ausan, Manny	De La Cruz, Grace
Avestruz, Camille	De Vera, Julia
Badiola, Katrina	DeLara, Ria
Banom III, Steve	Demegillo, Aimee
Briones, Eugene	Demegillo, Ryan
Chatterjie, Kristine	Ekneghariri, Chi
Clarín, Neil	Galemna, Joe

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Apr 2	Invocation Mass for LSS 22
Apr 3-4	LSS 22, Consolata Mission Center, N.Brunswick
April 3	Holy Spirit Breakfast (<i>see page 3</i>)
April 9	Good Friday (<i>No Worship</i>)
April 16-18	Trenton LSS 4
April 23-25	Aspirants' Retreat
April 23-25	NJCCC Follow the Spirit 2004 (<i>see page 3</i>)
May 1-2	Long Island LSS 8
May 7	Healing Mass
May 8	DLC Meeting
May 14-16	SPE 6, Ramada Inn, S. Plainfield NJ
May 14-16	Long Island ME 10
Jun 4	Healing Mass
Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, PA
Jun 6	SPE 6 Grand Reunion
Jun 11-13	Long Island SE 5
Jun 12	DLC Meeting
Jun 18-20	ME 5
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS 10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary
Jun 26	Trenton Community Day

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!



BIRTHDAYS

03/26	Lou Alejandro, LSS18
03/27	Poch Gatchalian, LSS2
03/28	Libby Cruz, LSS18
	Way Gomez, LSS1
	Merle Encarnacion, LSS8
	Joe Entena, YE 7
03/30	Thomas Mariadson, SE11
03/31	Mahyeen Bernatchez, LSS10
	Rizza Ruaya, LSS8
04/01	Edgar Bueser, YCR4

ANNIVERSARIES

03/26	Felix & Perpetua Ekweghariri, LSS20
	Joe & Helen Madrigal, LSS13
03/28	Ding & Cora Fadri, LSS2

Inocencio, Kirk	Pangilinan, Todd
Labung, Curt	Reyes, Bianca
Laxina, Ian	Salmo, Kevin
Lim, Fid	Salud, Allyson
Magadia, Jeff	Solema, Gian
Mangasi, Maricris	Solon, Nile
Masisado, Christian	Tolentino, Lirra
Masisado, Christine	Uy, Jennifer
Minano, Bulay	Valle, Joseph
Nacion, Jazelyn	Van Geyt, Axcell
Pagdonsolan, Jean	



CSL launches global web portal

The BLD global website portal is up and running, newly redesigned to make it more engaging, informative and productive for our Community. **BLDWorld** connects our different districts, DIPs and outreaches, and is our “face” to the world, explaining who we are, what we are, and why we do what we do. It provides the right BLD information and tools to use in our evangelization and mission work, and promises to inspire and sustain us in our spiritual journey.

We may access the site at www.bldworld.org (or www.bldworld.com or www.bldworld.net), and from it, community resources such as www.bldcovenanthouse.org. Its highlights include BLD’s history, archives of key BLD documents and answers to FAQs about the Charismatic Renewal, Baptism in the Spirit and more. It features first-person testimonies on how God has changed lives, and helpful information on community teachings, local meeting times/venues, our membership, leadership and ministries.

At the Forum, we can meet brothers and sisters from around the world and exchange information, views and insights on issues of the day. So go ahead. Visit it, use it. *Come home to BLDWorld today!*

Archbishop Recommends “Passion”

Manila’s Archbishop Guadencio Rosales has urged Christians to see *The Passion of the Christ* as a way of helping them “to remember and reflect on the passion of our Lord” during this Lenten season. He called the film a “serious labor of love, painstakingly made, of genuine artistic and religious value.” At the same time, he cautioned that the film might be too graphic for children under high-school age. He also restated the Church’s position “not to blame all the Jewish people of Jesus’ own time... It was all of us, throughout the ages, who were responsible” for the death of Christ.

The Passion opened in the Philippines only last Wednesday. In the US, the movie ended its 5th week with revenues of \$315 million, the 13th highest gross among all-time box office hits.

COUNSELS

Emptied and Humbled

WORD: Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24;
Ph 2:6-11; Lk 22:14—23:56

ORDER: “At the name of Jesus every knee should bend... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil 2:10-11)

“Pray that you may not undergo the test.” (Lk 22:40)

REFLECTION: The cycle of Lenten readings these past 5 weeks now leads us to the events of Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Our prayerful reading and loving reflections will help us to live the passion and death of our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness.” (Phil 2:6-7a) Christ Who is exalted above all suffered extreme abasement, cruelty and ignominy. The Lord of all creation stripped Himself of some aspects of His divinity and temporarily renounced the exercise of rights that belonged to Him as God.

What does the follower of Jesus do in imitation of the Master? We have no lofty stature to give up, and so our emptying must be of our baser nature. It is in the renunciation of our attachment to worldly possessions and ambitions, our ignoble passions – anger, anxieties, greed – that we come closer to the example of the Lord.

The ways of earthly detachment lead us to holiness and the clear path laid down for us by Jesus. Having been purified, we find little attraction for perishable things. Emptied and humbled, we are not distracted but remain focused on our one worthy goal – the salvation of our soul and attainment of eternal life. Stripped of arrogance and pride, we forget about petty, human willfulness but always seek the will of God.

“Found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, ☩ Page 3

God's Promise for the Week

“The Lord God is my help therefore I am not disgraced, I shall not be put to shame.” (Is 50:7)

“The Stones Will Cry Out!”

Palm Sunday commemorates our Lord’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem five days before His crucifixion and marks the start of Holy Week. This day takes its name from the fact that as Jesus approached Jerusalem on a donkey (fulfilling Zechariah 9:9), the huge crowd that followed carried palm branches as they praised and hailed Him as the long awaited “Son of David,” the Messiah.

We have a dual focus in the liturgy, which begins with hymns, prayers, and Scripture readings that reflect the jubilation of that day. A second focus is our Lord’s Passion, wherein the entire passion story is read in place of the sermon.

For most of us, our entry to BLD was marked by a welcome like no other we’ve experienced. Whether it was an Encounter or the LSS, the reception was overwhelming throughout the weekend. The sponsoring class serenaded us with beautiful love songs, and we were much affected by the very touching, melodic praise songs that we heard for the first time. It was then that we found our renewed love for the Lord, love for our spouse and family, contrition for our sins and gratitude for His innumerable blessings.

The joy of Palm Sunday quickly turned somber. The warm acclaim changed to hostility, denial and condemnation. Christ willingly suffered His passion and death on the Cross. When we in community decided to firmly say “Yes, Lord, here I am, I come to follow you,” we were also willing to take the long, arduous journey of discipleship. We were willing to carry our cross and walk with Christ, renouncing a worldly existence for a life of humility, service and sacrifice, all for the purpose of gloryfying our God and loving our neighbor. When we find ourselves struggling in His service, ambivalent towards our commitment to Him, longing for our “old” life, we should hastily rebuke the evil one who plants all these in our minds. We should instead unite our trials with the Lord’s Passion, an experience He suffered as expiation for our sins. We find solace in His unconditional love and mercy.

When the whole multitude in Jerusalem began to praise God with loud joy for all the mighty deeds they had seen, some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “*Teacher, rebuke your disciples.*” Our Lord gave a remarkable response, saying that if His disciples kept silent, “*the stones will cry out!*” (Lk 19:37-40) We should never be distracted, deterred or discouraged by opposition and unbelief. Jesus encourages our exultant joy and spirit of praise. We too proclaim, “*Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!*” (v 38)

Pope to Preside Over Holy Week Services

John Paul II plans to preside over all the Holy Week services, including the Easter Vigil celebration and the Easter Sunday Mass.

According to the program published today by the Office for the Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff, the services will begin on Palm Sunday this weekend. At 10am in St. Peter’s Square, the Pope will bless the palms and olive branches and, at the end of the procession, will celebrate the Mass of the Lord’s Passion.

On Holy Thursday, at 9:30am in St. Peter’s Basilica, the Holy Father will preside at the concelebration of the Chrism Mass with cardinals, bishops, and diocesan and religious priests present in Rome. This celebration will be “a sign of the close union between the pastor of the universal Church and his brothers in the priestly ministry,” said Archbishop Piero Marini, master of the liturgical celebrations.

The Easter triduum of the Lord’s Passion and Resurrection begins in St. Peter’s Basilica at 5:30pm with the Mass of Our Lord’s Last Supper. The Pope will preside at the concelebration of the Mass. After the homily, the rite of the washing of the feet of 12 priests will take place. During this rite, those present will be invited to give alms for sick children in Rwanda and Burundi. At the end of the celebration, the Blessed Sacrament will be transferred to the Chapel of Reposition.

On Good Friday, the Holy Father will preside at the commemoration of the Passion of Our Lord in St. Peter’s Basilica at 5 pm. He will lead the Stations of the Cross at the Colosseum at 9:15pm and, at the end, speak to the faithful and impart his apostolic blessing. This year, the meditations have been entrusted to Father André Louf of Belgian, a Trappist former monastery abbot who now lives in retirement in a hermitage in the south of France.

On Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil will begin at 7 pm in St. Peter’s Basilica, when the Pope will bless the new fire in the atrium of the church. After the entrance procession with the Easter candle and the singing of the Exultet, John Paul II will preside at the Liturgy of the Word and the baptismal and Eucharistic liturgies, which he will concelebrate with cardinals.

On Easter Sunday, at 10:30am, the Holy Father will celebrate Mass in St. Peter’s Square, after which he will impart his blessing “*urbi et orbi*” — to the city of Rome and the world — which will be broadcast live worldwide. (Source: Zenit.org, March 30, 2004)

RECLUSTERING OF BLD W.C.D.

Resolution No. 0217-01-07

Series of 2004

Whereas, based on consultations with the incumbent West Coast Directorate Coordinator the growing demand of full-fledged districts and districts in process comprising the Directorate has resulted in the need to redefine the clustering of these districts in order to address their concerns with greater attention and care;

Whereas, in consideration of the geographical locations and the need for an efficient and effective management and sharing of resources of all the concerned districts, the ECSL recognizes the need to redistribute the districts into 3 clusters, with each cluster coordinated by a Cluster Shepherd.

Resolved, as it is hereby resolved that in consonance with all these considerations the West Coast Directorate is redistributed into the following Clusters:

1. North California Cluster (Sacramento, Oakland, Reno)
2. South California Cluster (LA, Phoenix)
3. Seattle-Vancouver Cluster

Resolved further, that the functions and responsibilities of a Cluster Shepherd are as shown in the attached "Annex A."

"Know that the Lord is God, our Maker to whom we belong; whose people we are, God's well-tended flock." (Psalm 100:3)

FOR THE COUNCIL OF SERVANT LEADERS

KIKO & AIDA JOSEF
Presiding Servant Leader

Jesus Prays

Our Lord prays before the decisive moments of His mission: before his Father's witness to him during his baptism and Transfiguration, and before his own fulfillment of the Father's plan of love by his Passion.

He also prays before the decisive moments involving the mission of his apostles: at his election and call of the Twelve, before Peter's confession of him as "the Christ of God," and again that the faith of the chief of the Apostles may not fail when tempted.

General Instructions on the Roman Missal (GIRM) 146

The people should stand **after the priest's invitation** to pray, "Pray, my brothers and sisters..." **and before the response**, "May the Lord accept..."

Counsels from page 1

even death on a cross." (Phil 2:7b-8) On Sunday, we hear once again in the Mass of our Lord's Passion the lengthy narrative from St. Luke's Gospel of the dreadful, sorrowful suffering and death of Jesus Christ. We hear Him say at the start, "*Father, not my will but yours be done.*" (Lk 22:42) And He cries out at the end, before breathing his last, "*Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.*" (Lk 23:46)

The surrender of our will to God's will indicates a constant, full awareness that God is our Creator and we are mere creatures. And yet God loves us so much that the entire Christ event played out in His magnificent plan for our redemption. The more we grow in Christ, the more we accept this truth.

Knowing God's merciful and unconditional love, we too can be confident and filled with courage in the face of the most daunting trials. "*The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.*" (Is 50:7) We have frequent and certain recourse to His help in time of need. "*But you, O Lord, do not stay far off; O my strength, come quickly to help me.*" (Ps 22:20)

In reminding us to have the same attitude as Christ, St. Paul appeals to our relations with brethren and neighbor to mirror the same relationship we have in Him. We are to serve one another: "*to humbly regard others as more important than ourselves; to look out not for our own interests, but everyone for those of others.*" (Phil 2:3-4) He stresses the need for us always to be in unity: "*being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing.*" (v2)

In our New Life in the Spirit, we die to ourselves daily, but our souls do not live in a vacuum. We are renewed in the gifts of our Baptism. We learn to turn to Scripture, the Sacraments, our community and a deepening prayer life, to give us growth and lead us to transformation into the likeness of Christ. We learn to do on earth what we are destined for in heaven – to ever praise God Almighty with His angels and saints. "*I will proclaim your name to the assembly; in the community I will praise you: 'You who fear the Lord, give praise... give honor; show reverence!'*" (Ps 22:23-24)

DIRECTIONS

1. Observe fasting and abstinence during Holy week.
2. Consider others better than yourselves.

TO COMMENT

on our newsletter, or for other questions,
e-mail wordministry@bldnewark.com.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Follow the Spirit 2004 Conference. April 23-25 at the East Brunswick Hilton. This annual charismatic event features workshops, liturgies, prayers for healing, penance service, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and uplifting, Spirit-filled music. Speakers include Bishop Sam Jacobs, Sr. Ann Shields, Molly Kelly and David Thorp. BLD Mission will be serving this year, supported by ME classes 16 and 18. Fee is \$55 for adults, \$15 for youth and children. *Free registration for first-time attendees, when registering with a returning conference attendee.* Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes.

Family Encounter. Reserve the weekend: July 30-August 1, South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size for FE #11; sign up early!* Application forms are with Secretariat.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 9	Good Friday (No Worship)
April 16-18	Trenton LSS 4
April 23-25	Aspirants' Retreat
April 23-25	NJCCC Follow the Spirit 2004 (<i>see pg 3</i>)
May 1-2	Long Island LSS 8
May 7	Healing Mass
May 8	DLC Meeting
May 14-16	SPE 6, Ramada Inn, S. Plainfield NJ
May 14-16	Long Island ME 10
Jun 4	Healing Mass
Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, PA
Jun 6	SPE 6 Grand Reunion
Jun 11-13	Long Island SE 5
Jun 12	DLC Meeting
Jun 18-20	ME 5
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS 10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50th Anniversary
Jun 26	Trenton Community Day

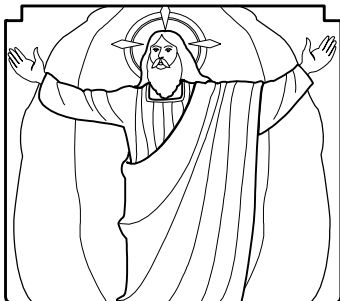
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

3/12	\$3,648
3/19	3,404
3/26	4,269
13-wk avg	3,766

EXPENSES

13-wk avg	\$3,866
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Thank you for your generosity!

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!!!



BIRTHDAYS

4/03	Nick Raagas, LSS6
4/04	Francis Ogbonna, Mk 10 Vickie Nworu, LSS20
4/05	Chrissy Sun, Mk 10 Pat Santos, LSS15 Alexandra Briones, YE8 Andrea Briones, YE8 Christine Ann Pena, YE9
4/06	Lani Hernandez, LSS19 Andrea Pinto, SPE5
4/07	Effie Col, LSS9 Cecil Salonga, LSS17
4/08	Cora Pidlaolan, LSS3 Benjamin Florentino, Mk 10 Carlo Pena, YE9
4/09	Calvin Ombrete, Mk 10 Ed Eusebio, LSS4
4/10	Jeff Magadia, YE10
4/11	Keem Espejon, LSS7
4/12	Fred Salar, LSS18 Maricel Solema, Mk 10 Maricris Solema, Mk 10 Renzi Razal, YE1
4/13	Lita Alfaro, LSS11 Adriel Estiler, Mk 10
4/14	Nick Feliciano, LSS8 Sean Olaso, Mk 10 Justin Lucero, Mk 10
4/15	Angel Cristobal, YE10
4/16	Liz Perez, YE5

ANNIVERSARIES

4/05	Fr. Eustace Edomobi, LSS16-Newark
4/06	Willy and Myrna De Luna, LSS8
4/07	Jun and Betsy Enriquez, ME21
4/08	Nonong and Soc Punzalan, LSS8 Mario and Cecil Salonga, LSS17
4/11	Fred and Les Atienza, LSS10
4/12	Joe and Cecil Canlas, LSS6
4/14	Babot and Tess Farinas, LSS6

Silence in church

A Mark 10 parent, wanting to remind the little children, asked them, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping!"

Pope's Easter Message**Against Terrorism, Christ's Love**

John Paul II in his Easter Message presented the "culture of life and love" proposed by the risen Christ as the way to "render vain the logic of death" of terrorism and violence. He implored for divine comfort for "the families of the many victims of violence," in his address delivered before imparting the traditional blessing "*urbi et orbi*" (to the city of Rome and the world).

Some 100,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square to hear the Holy Father's address after he presided at the Easter Mass. "Men and women of the third millennium: Christ is risen, Christ is alive among us!" exclaimed the Pontiff.

May humanity find "the strength to face the inhuman, and unfortunately growing, phenomenon of terrorism, which rejects life and brings anguish and uncertainty to the daily lives of so many hardworking and peaceful people," he said.

"May the work of national and international institutions hasten the overcoming of the present difficulties and favor progress toward a more effective and peaceful world order.

"May world leaders be confirmed and sustained in their efforts to resolve satisfactorily the continuing conflicts that cause bloodshed in certain regions of Africa, Iraq and the Holy Land.

May Jews, Christians and Muslims, "who consider themselves children of Abraham," discover "the brotherhood that they share and that prompts in them designs of cooperation and peace." (Source: Zenit.org, April 11)

LSS 22 Yields Good Harvest

70 couples and singles completed the LSS 22 weekend which was successfully held at the Consolata Mission in Somerset, NJ from April 3-4.

The LSS 22 pastoral team included Fr. Paul Lehman, Spiritual Director, and the following sharers: Nick/Winnie Feliciano and Margaret Aliparo (God's Love); Caesar/Vicky Rasalan and Eric Escobinas (New Life); George/Cathy del Fierro and JayJay Castaneda (Transformation); Rene/Sally Castaneda (Healing & Reconciliation); and Frank/Sally Belarmino (Growth).

The list of LSS 22 graduates is on page 4.

COUNSELS**Walk By Faith, Not By Sight**

WORD: Acts 5:12-16; Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; Rv 1:9-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31

ORDER: *Do not be afraid.* (Rv 1:17c)
Do not be unbelieving, but believe. (Jn 20:27)

REFLECTION: "*Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed.*" (Jn 20:29) This "beatitude" is not one of the classic eight beatitudes in Matthew's account of the Sermon of the Mount (Mt 5:3-11). Nor is it in Luke's less familiar four beatitudes and four "woes" (Lk 6:20-26). A stand-alone in the Gospel of John, this beatitude is most consoling to those of us who believe in Jesus Christ, 2,000 years after His life and times.

On the first Easter Sunday, the disciples hid from the Jews in fear behind the locked doors of an upper room in Jerusalem. Their behavior during the preceding three days was less than impressive. The treasurer of the group sold their Lord for 30 pieces of silver and committed suicide. They fled and abandoned Him upon His arrest in Gethsemane. The lead apostle denied Jesus three times, cursing and swearing that he didn't even know "the man." While the female disciples stood faithfully by Jesus at Calvary, the men cowered in their holes, their hopes in ruin with the death of Jesus.

Imagine their shock when Jesus suddenly appeared before them very much alive. They probably experienced mixed feelings at the sight of the Lord: joy that He had risen, mixed with fear of His rebuke. But all He said to them was: "*Peace be with you.*" (vv 19,21) Christ's peace puts an end to fear and anxiety, and reassures us of God's love and friendship. This peace of our risen Lord is revealed to us each Sunday when we gather together for the Eucharist. **We live Christ's Resurrection when we believe and keep His peace in our heart.**

The apostle Thomas was not present to see the Risen Lord and to receive His peace. This doubter

☞ Page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." (John 20:29)

Father Paul's Easter Message

When we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus we are without doubt celebrating a victory, a victory for Jesus as well as for ourselves. The liturgy for Holy Saturday puts on the lips of Jesus: "Death, you shall die in me; hell, you shall be destroyed in me."

Only sinners who have inherited original sin are supposed to die. All the rules were broken when Jesus died. In embracing death, He destroyed not the fact of death, but the "sting" of death with its consequences of eternal damnation. We can be free to live a life of holiness here in this world and be assured of eternal life in heaven hereafter.

What exactly is this resurrected life that Jesus Himself experienced and which we, too, hope to experience? We can gain a faint insight into this reality by recalling the dialogue that Jesus had with the Sadducees who surprisingly denied the reality of a resurrection and life after death. They tried to trap Him into a dilemma by presenting to him the case of a woman who eventually had seven husbands, with no offspring. Which of the seven would be husband in heaven? Jesus answered that those who take part in the future resurrection "*neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven.*" (Mk 12:25) He does not say that we become angels, but are like angels. In our resurrected state, we will still have our bodies, but the warfare between body and spirit is completely eliminated.

We can all resonate with the struggle St. Paul talked about being waged in his human nature: "*I see in my members another principle at war with the law of my mind.*" (Rom 7:23). If we allow the victory of the risen Jesus to embrace us, we will some day have "spiritualized" bodies. The Holy Father in speaking of this reality says, "Spiritualization means not only that the spirit will dominate the body, but that it will fully permeate the body, and that the forces of the spirit will permeate the energies of the body." All this because Jesus embraced death and destroyed the opposition between soul and body that had entered our human nature because of original sin. He thus made possible the realization of our full human potential.

In our struggle with the heaviness of bodily temptation, we begin to experience that victory of Jesus only as we "die" to self. We "put to death" whatever is not of God - sin and all the attractions of sin. It is an ongoing daily fight, won primarily by the victorious Jesus who invites over and over our surrender to His loving mercy.

Forgiveness And Gifts

As immigrants with two young children and little support network, my husband and I juggled full time work with raising a family. Perhaps due to our busy work schedules, we pushed religion to whatever was left of our seemingly scarce time.

When the boys became young men and said goodbye to lead their adult lives away from home, we found ourselves alone yet with little to say to each other. In addition, unresolved conflicts during our 31 years of marriage easily became magnified with very little provocation. I had always wanted to age graciously, but in our situation, it seemed impossible. I envied couples who looked at each other with much affection. In our hearts, we separately tried to establish a relationship with the Lord and separately prayed for a happy marriage.

Then a business associate invited us to attend the ME 22 weekend last November. This led us to attend LSS 22 early this month. Words are inadequate to describe our experience. God showered on us many graces in the last 5 weeks. We were blessed with LSS shepherds who were like older siblings. They showed us patience, maturity, and wisdom. Like peeling an onion, we opened up little by little to one another. We shared and reflected on our childhood experiences and the scars left by imperfect childhoods, the conflicts that eroded our relationship, and the wall that separated our spirits.

At our 3rd shepherding session, something miraculous happened. Like a plant that obtains sunlight, water and good soil from natural sources but grows solely by God's grace, we too received the grace of forgiveness, after vigilant shepherding and prayers by good people. The sacrament of reconciliation provided the cleansing that unburdened our hearts. At the LSS weekend, we were open vessels to the sharers' testimonies, relating to their childhood traumas and adult conflicts. What brave heroes they are!

Finally, we can truly say that we have forgiven each other and everyone who had caused us pain. We asked the Lord forgiveness for our many offenses in life. A lifetime is not sufficient to repay the Lord's kindness.

My husband and I were slain in the Holy Spirit during the baptism. We received the gift of tongues. We still feel the novelty of the experience when we praise the Lord privately. We are like babes learning a new skill. We now pray together. We are extremely humbled by God's gift of new life to us. Yes, we have learned that in a good marriage, God is part of the equation. Finally, I know we will grow old graciously, always having God's praise in our lips.

In the Spirit of Transparency

Discern “Giftedness” for Community Work

Our Lord’s Divine Providence addresses every need of community as members bring gifts with them to carry out the work in community. Since not all gifts are poured on one person or group, a community must discern the “giftedness” of members to make everyone fruitful, contribute to God’s work and become effective in its work.

Some are teachers, others evangelizers, a number worship leaders. Others are gifted governors, prophets, coaches, disciplers and intercessors. As varied as members and gifts are, God has a purpose and a role for every member. Since roles are founded on “giftedness”, they are not based on position or designation in community. One emerged as governor and another discerned as ministry coordinator may or may not necessarily be teacher, evangelizer, worship leader or even intercessor.

Every man is born with innate gifts, and can be developed to be multi-gifted through training, education and exposure. If gifts can be acquired, they can also be improved. However, they may also weaken and be lost; thus the need to grow and mature into one’s “giftedness.”

A false notion of humility and the perception that his gift is ordinary and possessed by everyone in community can be a block in identifying and developing a gift. In the same way, a domineering attitude that allows one to believe that he has all the gifts to carry out community work may cause one to unintentionally usurp the role of others. Such focus on self makes one complacent with the little that he has and as such, loses it. It can also blind one causing him not to see the “giftedness” of others and even prevent them from discovering God’s given gifts.

Through prayer and reflection, one may come to a limited knowledge of his gifts. However a more complete and objective picture can only be attained when an especially anointed group in community engages in prayerful discernment to surface gifts that God has endowed on His people.

Because complementarity of gifts is a basis of communion, a community founded on the gifts of its members will only be one effective tool of the Lord in His vineyard. Let us discern “giftedness” for community work and unwrap, discover and develop the unique and beautiful ways God has enriched each of us.

He gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to the extent of the full stature of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Follow the Spirit 2004 Conference next weekend.

April 23-25 at the East Brunswick Hilton. This annual charismatic event features workshops, liturgies, prayers for healing, penance service, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and uplifting, Spirit-filled music. Speakers include Bishop Sam Jacobs, Sr. Ann Shields, Molly Kelly and David Thorp. The BLD Mission apostolate will be serving this year, supported by ME classes 16 and 18. Fee is \$55 for adults, \$15 for youth and children. *Free registration for first-time attendees, when registering with a returning conference attendee.* Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes.

Teachings resume on May 1st at St. Leo, 1-6pm:

For LSS 1-21 - EWJ 1 of 3, Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel

For LSS 1-20 - CMP1 Part 1 (Love, Faith), Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

For LSS 1-22 - CDFP Overview, Intro to the Word, Basics of Prayer

All covenanted members - Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part 1.

Christian Counseling Training. The community will be offering Christian Counseling training to LSS shepherds and coordinators beginning on May 1st. Please await further information from the DCS or Teaching Ministry on the rest of the schedule of Christian Counseling teachings.

Serving at the Soup Kitchen with the Missionaries of Charity on May 8 will be members of ME 20 and ME 14. Here’s the rest of this year’s service schedule, every second Saturday of the month from 8:30 to 11 am:

- June 12 ME 13 and 18
- July 10 ME 3 and 22
- Aug 14 ME 6 and 21
- Sept 11 ME 12 and 16
- Oct 9 ME 4, 7 and 8
- Nov 13 ME 5, 9 and 10
- Dec 11 ME 11 and 17

Directions to Missionaries of Charity Convent can be found at www.bldnewark.com.

Family Encounter. Reserve the weekend: July 30-August 1, South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size for FE #11; sign up early!* Application forms are with Secretariat.

Would you “Counsel the doubtful”? Develop the Gift of Counsel.

**Come to our May 1st Teaching
for covenanted disciples!**

Counselors from page 1

must have fled farther and faster than the rest, and was still safely in hiding that Easter night. His friends told him, "We have seen the Lord!" (v25) But he could not believe until he had seen the Lord and His wounds.

We have never seen, yet we believe. This reality is a great miracle — a true testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism, which confers on us the supernatural virtue of faith. Men and women down the centuries, without ever having laid eyes on Jesus or heard His words directly, have fought, suffered and given their lives in witness to their faith. We too are called daily to be "martyrs" — witnesses to our faith in Christ.

On that first Easter Sunday Jesus sent forth His disciples to be witnesses of His peace and His life-giving love. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (v21) This sacred commission is repeated for us with the ending words of the Mass: *Itē Misa est.* Jesus gives all His disciples the power to participate in the process of forgiving and being forgiven, so they can continue His mission of peace.

We live up to this commission every time we bring back to Jesus our brethren who strayed again into grievous sin. The community is a place where we experience the Lord's grace of reconciliation and peace. The fact that our priests have a very important role in the reconciliation process in no way belittles the community's role as ambassadors of Christ.

As the home of Christ's peace, our task is to make all the members feel accepted and loved as people whom God has forgiven, whose sins are no longer remembered and held against them. Every one of us is His son and daughter, in whom His Holy Spirit dwells.

DIRECTIONS

- Be peacemakers.
- Trust in the Lord who has bestowed His anointing on our community.

LSS 22 Graduates (see page 1)

Doy/Celia Adan; Marilou Agpalo; Rosario Baroy; Mol/JC Barredo; Ricci Buelo; June/Geng Bustos; Candida Callego; Lito/Millie Constantino; Marvin/Jennifer Daclan; Tom/Norie Derowitsch; Daniel/Nelda Dwyer; Rey/Cora Guerra; Jean/Maire Jean-Bart; Oscar/Sandy Joson; Nkechi Korie; Florfina Maqueda; Jack McWade; Tony/Teresa Nwaneri; Jojo/Adelia Orosa; Tim/Charie Paule; Aulina Presendieu; Roy/Julie Ratcliffe; Corazon Remigio; Hector Rodriguez; Ray/Tessie Salmo; Bill Talbot; Eric/Jaina Vallarta; Ramon/Angie Vargas; Paul/Christine Verzosa; Micael Benjamin; Rowena Borja; Jillian Cruz; James Cuevas; Anne Estalilla; Elaine Francisco; Elgy Garcia; Joanne Garcia; Cheryl Guinto; Mhyllanie Guinto; Leonor Lu; Paul Magahis; Maris Manansala; Thomas Mariadson; Cris Medina; Mark Ong; Alex Panganiban; Pam Pascual; Mike Punzalan; Arc Razal; Renna Razal; Rowena Sy and Val Valonzo.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 23-25	Aspirants' Retreat
April 23-25	NJCCC Follow the Spirit 2004 (see page 3)
May 1	Teachings at St. Leo (see page 3)
May 1-2	Long Island LSS 8
May 7	Healing Mass
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Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, PA
Jun 6	SPE 6 Grand Reunion
Jun 11-13	Long Island SE 5
Jun 12	DLC Meeting
Jun 18-20	ME 5
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS 10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary
Jun 26	Trenton Community Day

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .

BIRTHDAYS



4/16	Sherwin Fabe, Mk 10 Elizabeth Perez, YE 5
4/17	Libby Gutierrez, LSS14 Remy Hernandez, LSS20 Boy Navarro, LSS17 Mercy Osemeha, LSS18
4/18	Justin Mendonez, LSS21 Eddie Olegario, LSS3
4/19	Vic Arceo, LSS19
4/21	Jose Vibar, LSS17 Jeanelle Nacion, Mk 10 Maita de la Fuente, LSS2T
4/22	Cielo Arribe, LSS21 Bong Montemayor, LSS5 Kristine Duma YE 3

ANNIVERSARIES

4/18	Lawrence & Joy Anyanwu, LSS21
4/20	Ike and Vickie Nworu, LSS20
4/22	Serge & Mahyeen Bernatchez, LSS10

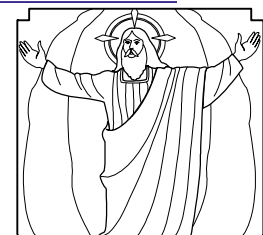
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

3/19	\$3,404
3/26	4,269
4/02	3,997
14-wk avg	3,782

EXPENSES

14-wk avg	\$3,872
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Thank you for your generosity!



Yielding to the Spirit in Trenton

At the BLD Trenton Life in Spirit Seminar #4 last weekend, twenty-six participants basked in the awesome breath, power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Spiritual Director, Fr. Pete Literal, ushered in the weekend seminar at the Friday Invocation Mass, saying, "The Holy Spirit wants to live in you and He will if you just yield yourselves to Him." First-time sharers Rey & Sylvia Duma gave their testimony, along with Raul & Fe Fernando, Richard & Lee De la Fuente, and Noel & Letty Trillana.

The Baptism in the Spirit brought gifts to the participants, specially the gift of tongues. The weekend closed with Mass and the commissioning of the graduates, "You are the light of the world." (Mt 5:14)

Pontiff exhorts Philippine Government

The Pope recommended "the path of dialogue" as a means of resolving conflicts in the southern Philippines, where Islamic separatists have used terrorist tactics to "cause so much suffering to the civilian population."

The government must "eliminate the social and cultural causes of terrorism," he said. He addressed those in governance: "Building a society based on human dignity can only be achieved when those in authority espouse the principles of right governance and honesty in their personal and public lives, and offer unconditional service to their fellow citizens for the common good."

Amid calls for tougher tactics against terrorists, the Pontiff argued that "the ends of justice in today's world seem better served by not resorting to the death penalties." He explained: "While civil societies have a duty to be just, they also have an obligation to be merciful."

Recalling his prior trips to the Philippines in 1981 and in 1995 for World Youth Day, the Holy Father said, "The Philippines are truly a point of light for the evangelization of the Asian continent." (Source: CWNews.com, Apr. 19)

COUNSELS

Do You Love Me?

WORD: Acts 5:27-32, 40b-41 • Ps 30:2,4-6,11-13
• Rv 5:11-14 • Jn 21:1-19

ORDER: Feed my lambs; tend my sheep; feed my sheep. Follow me!

REFLECTION: Early in the morning after they had gone fishing, Jesus made breakfast for his disciples at the shore. A compelling dialogue between Jesus and Peter followed, and tremendous healing took place. The last time they were together was under bitterly difficult circumstances, when Peter had denied Jesus three times.

Now they have reunited and Jesus challenged Peter's friendship, commitment and love. Three times He asked Peter, *Do you love me?* Each time Peter responded with the words, *Lord, you know that I love you.* Jesus asked Peter three times to drive home the implications of Christian love. If indeed you love me as you say you do, this is how your love must show itself. For each affirmation of Peter's love, Jesus instructed him to be a shepherd: *Feed my lambs*, provide them with food; *tend my sheep*, watch over them. *Feed my sheep*, make sure they are safe.

Love for our brethren in Christ is the natural and logical result of our love for God. *Do you love me? Then feed my sheep.* Christ loved us and gave His life for us. The only way we can even begin to repay this debt of love is by loving others in turn. Sadly there are many people who claim to love Christ with their whole heart yet would do nothing to prove it. There are those who say they are followers of Christ but their fear of man is greater than the
(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"You changed my mourning into dancing."

(Ps 30:12)

Need To Spend Time In Discernment

Scripture tells us, "Disciple all nations." Our community has responded to this order with a formation program that seeks to mold our members into Christian disciples who reflect the character and ways of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has opened its doors to those who would receive Christ in their hearts unconditionally. It has been the instrument for transformation and a deepening faith, and a venue to exercise the countless gifts God has poured on them through a commitment and covenant. Our community has been a true blessing to all as God's instrument of healing and character formation.

After 12 years of progressive work for the Lord by our community, though, it appears that our disciples somehow fail to go very far in their pilgrimage of faith. Quite a number have failed to develop their potential for community work and leadership, with some falling through cracks in the system altogether.

Active covenanted disciples are dwindling in numbers. Leaders cannot seem to transcend their own personal circumstances and are unable to collectively approach community affairs as one united body. Where have we failed and where do we need to change? What should we do to address such a predicament?

We need to ask ourselves if our formation program expects to generate Christian disciples only or if it also hopes to produce Christian servant leaders. Good and holy disciples form the very foundation of community, but do not necessarily become effective Christian servant leaders.

We as a body should move swiftly into discernment and ask God how He wants us to approach the issues that confront us as a community and as part of the bigger church. We need to go beyond living and managing our affairs according to old patterns in community, but be flexible and adaptable to our changing needs. What may have been good in the past may not necessarily apply to our affairs today. We need to wake up, acknowledge our mistakes and the areas where we might have gone ahead of the Lord, not to make people accountable but set our paths according to His will.

Is the problem with our formation program or simply our hardened hearts, or even the way we empower, equip and anoint our members?

We must spend quiet time in community prayer and ask our Lord to freely rebuild our community. We need to be more discerning in our ways and remain united in Him.

"Have no anxiety but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:6-7)

Growing Good Corn

Why We Uphold Each Other In Community

James Bender's book, "How To Talk Well", relates the story of a farmer who grew award-winning corn. Each year he entered his corn in the state fair it won a blue ribbon.

One year a newspaper reporter discovered that the farmer shared his seed corn with his neighbors. "How can you afford to share your best seed corn with your neighbors when they are entering in competition with yours each year?" the reporter asked.

"Why sir," said the farmer, "didn't you know? The wind picks up pollen from the ripening corn and swirls it from field to field. If my neighbors grow inferior corn, cross-pollination will steadily degrade the quality of my corn. If I am to grow good corn, I must help my neighbors grow good corn."

He is much aware of *the connectedness of life*. His corn cannot improve unless his neighbor's corn also improves.

So it is with our lives. Those who choose to live in peace must help their neighbors to live in peace. Those who choose to live well must help others to live well, for the value of life is measured by the lives it touches. And those who choose to be happy must help others to find happiness, for the welfare of each is bound up with the welfare of all. It is when we give that we receive...and much more.

So it is with community life. Consider 2 situations that point to this "connectedness of life" within our ministries.

ENTHUSIASM - good, sincere witnessing at our Word sharing circles; commitment and concern in ministry work will inspire and uphold other members.

LUKEWARMNESS - absence, tardiness, lack of contribution may bring down morale, spread doubt, suspicion and "degrade" good works in ministry.

We pray then that, as we help sow and grow small seeds of love and unity in our circles, the Lord grant the increase in our personal growth as well.

Prayer Intentions for April

Every month, the Holy Father chooses two intentions: one general, the other specifically missionary. We are challenged to reflect on how the Papal Prayer Intentions directly apply to our life in the community.

The general intention for April is: "That solid preparation of the candidates for holy orders and permanent training of ordained ministers may be carefully provided for."

The missionary intention is: "That the missionary spirit 'ad gentes' may become a theme of reflection and a matter of constant commitment in the ordinary pastoral activity of the Christian community."

In the Spirit of Transparency

Group Deliberation & Discernment

(A Scriptural Lesson - Part 1 of 2)

A Christian community is not defined by the absence of contention, but by the unrelenting efforts of its leaders and members to unite themselves with God's will. Diversity and unity are equally important attributes of God's design of creation: God made every single human being unique, yet in His image and likeness. Each has his own free will, yet freedom is achieved only from man's surrender to God's will. Man is of different tribes and nations, but belongs to one family under Christ, with God as our Father.

In our community, every member is vital. Hence, the community must encourage each member's active participation in its life and work. Such participation invariably brings about differences, and at times, conflict. This reality is amply treated in the Scriptures, through accounts of numerous differences and conflicts among the disciples and within the early church. For this reason, Scripture also provides valuable lessons on how to deal with differences and conflict.

This week, we will focus on Acts 15 to gain insights on how to resolve conflict through group deliberation and discernment.

Lesson #1: (a) Avoid foolish and ignorant quarrels (2 Tm 2:23); **(b) When agreement is not possible, seek the help of those in authority.** Acts 15 describes how some converted Pharisees from Jerusalem caused disturbance, dissension and debate within the church in Antioch when they taught that Gentile converts must completely observe the Mosaic law in order to be saved (1-2, 24). Paul and Barnabas defended the gospel by vigorously opposing this old covenant teaching. In order to restore peace to the church, the leaders decided to send a delegation that included Paul and Barnabas to the apostles and presbyters in Jerusalem to seek a resolution to the issue.

Lesson #2: (a) Clearly define the problem; (b) Thoroughly debate the issues, not the persons. In Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas reported to the church what God had done during their first missionary journey to bring salvation to the Gentiles. Some converted Pharisees in the assembly stood up and insisted on the application of the Mosaic law to Gentile converts. Thus, they directed attention to the problem that brought Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem. The apostles and the presbyters then met together to discuss and to debate the issue. We note that their debate, which was lengthy (v7), was constructive and not acrimonious, as they were confined to issues and did not attack persons.

Three more lessons will be explained in our next issue. Our community would be truly Spirit-led if we diligently applied these lessons from the Word during our group deliberations and discernment.

Ministry Announcements

Huff n' Puff Dads II. Men's 40+ basketball tomorrow, Saturday 9-11:30am at Boland Hall.

LSS 22 Reunion Sunday, April 25 Boland Hall 12:30-5pm. With Sunday Mass at 1pm.

Christian Counseling Training. This program for ministry coordinators and LSS shepherds starts May 1st. The rest of the schedule of Christian Counseling teachings will be announced later.

Teachings on May 1st at St. Leo, 1-6pm:

LSS 1-21 - EWJ 1of 3, Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel

LSS 1-20 -CMP1Part 1 (Love, Faith), Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

LSS 1-22 - CDFP Overview, Intro to the Word, Basics of Prayer

All covenanted members - Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part 1.

Soup Kitchen Schedule at the Missionaries of Charity Convent (directions at www.bldnewark.com).

Every second Saturday of the month, 8:30-11am:

- May 8 ME 14 and 20
- June 12 ME 13 and 18
- July 10 ME 3 and 22
- Aug 14 ME 6 and 21
- Sept 11 ME 12 and 16
- Oct 9 ME 4, 7 and 8
- Nov 13 ME 5, 9 and 10
- Dec 11 ME 11 and 17

Newark's Eleventh Family Encounter. July 30-Aug 1 in South Plainfield NJ. *Limited class size; please sign up early!* Application forms are with Secretariat.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

03/26	\$ 4,269
04/02	3,997
04/16	4,366
15-wk avg	3,820

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

15-wk avg	\$ 4,111
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Would you "Counsel the doubtful"?

Develop the Gift of Counsel.

Come to our May 1st Teaching for all covenanted disciples!

Counsels *from page 1*

fear of the Lord, conveniently disregarding His teachings for political correctness. They would endorse gay marriages and abortion; ban prayers or even the mention of God's Name in public places. When we are faced with situations where we cannot obey both God and man, we are commanded to obey God and trust in His word, and not in man's word or law, as admonished by St. Peter and the apostles. *"We must obey God rather than any human authority."* (Acts 5: 29)

There are those who claim to be friends of Christ, but refuse to befriend God's children. They simply will not lovingly and gently nurture and care for them as a Shepherd cares for his sheep. Yet Christ lays the responsibility of all to care for one another. He says in John 13:34-35, *"As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* All of us in BLD, then - from the DCS to the newest member - are called to a special task: to care for and to love one another.

If you love me, then tend my sheep. As long as we persist in seeing the necessary tasks of community as the singular responsibility of our elders, we will always be linked to the notion that we are a professional organization that employs people to do the caring. So ministry work becomes just another job. And when someone is in need, or spiritually depleted, we call in the professionals, our elders. That is not the way Christ sees it. Christ calls on all who profess love for him to love others. It is not a job, but a special calling. *Do you love me? Then love my sheep, feed them.*

If we claim to be disciples of Christ, He literally becomes our way of life. Every action and every decision we make is made in the light of "What would Jesus do." God is not interested in lively promises. Our good intentions will not count unless they are performed.

A disciple of Jesus must follow Him. To follow Jesus means that by the power of the Holy Spirit living in us, we must imitate His example. His life is the pattern for living our own. We are called to serve one another as Jesus did. If Jesus asks us, *"Do you love me, do you really love me?"* and if our answer is YES, then we must feed His lambs, tend His sheep, feed His sheep, and follow Him!

DIRECTIONS

- Obey God rather than men.
- Find and recognize Jesus in our surroundings.
- Change our wrong ways and attitudes, for the greater glory of God.

RESERVE THE DATE

June 19, 2004 Saturday 1-6 PM

(Hint: For friends of Father Paul)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 23-25	Aspirants' Retreat
April 25	LSS 22 Reunion (<i>see page 3</i>)
May 1	Teachings at St. Leo (<i>see page 3</i>)
May 1-2	Long Island LSS 8
May 7	Healing Mass
May 8	DLC Meeting
May 14-16	SPE 6, Ramada Inn, S. Plainfield NJ
May 14-16	Long Island ME 10
Jun 4	Healing Mass
Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House PA
Jun 6	SPE 6 Grand Reunion
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary

*May the blessing of the Lord
be upon you!*

BIRTHDAYS



04/23	Gigi Cabunag, LSS6 Loring Demegillo, LSS11 Juliene Martin, Jn 6 April Santos, YE 8
04/24	Ruby David, LSS16 Rudy Luyao, LSS8
04/25	Vic Lim, LSS9 Linda Viola, LSS6 Neil Lopez, Mk 10
04/26	Alan Cam, LSS17 Teresa Nwaneri, ME21
04/27	Zita Cruz, LSS14
04/28	Olive Encarnacion, LSS9 Evelyn Francisco, LSS10 Val Gabisan, LSS4 Michelle Lim, Mk 10
04/29	Flory Mangasi, LSS19 Paul Vibar, Mk 10

ANNIVERSARIES

04/24	Bong & Ruby David, LSS16
04/23	Nelson & Noemi Ilagan, LSS 14
04/28	Dodee and Susan Aglibut, LSS12 Trif and Effie Col, LSS9

What is GAWAD KALINGA?

Visit www.gawadkalinga.org



35 attend Aspirants' Retreat

Thirty-five committed disciples from Newark, Albany and Washington DC aspiring to covenanting with the Lord participated in a closed retreat last weekend, reserving their full attention to Him and His Word. The Spirit of the Lord came upon them through the teachings on true discipleship by Fr. Paul Lehman, our Spiritual Director and the witness of covenanted disciples who proclaimed the Lord's victory in their lives as disciples of Jesus in the BLD community.

The Teaching Ministry coordinated the retreat with Praise, Technical and Discipling ministries. At the end, the aspirants shared on their experience and resolved to follow the path of a true disciple in the BLD community. They will now undergo the discipling process as they continue discerning their call to discipleship.

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you." (Jn 15:16)

The Aspirants are: Tates Abad, Alan/Tess Cam, Gary/Mil Camacho, Melvin/Lourdes De La Cruz, Eduardo/Francia Edquilag, Bert/Lita Guererro, Paby/Pauline Ibarrola, Roger/Fe Isidro, Max/Nadine Jalandoni, Bobi/Genie Luardo, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jose/Helen Navarro, Danilo/Grace Palomares, Louie/Choly Relucio, Manolo/Mely Romero, Mario/Cecilia Salonga, Florentina Santos, Jake Tibi and Allan/Naida Villanueva.

Other News

- The **LSS 22 Reunion** took place last Sunday (see page 2).
- It was a very busy weekend for our Praise Ministry as they also represented BLD at the joyous celebration of the **125th anniversary of St. Leo Parish**, our host. Joreen Baquilod, our precocious Youth singer down Broadway, also regaled the crowd with a couple of beautiful songs.
- The Mission Ministry and members of ME 16 and 18 represented BLD at this year's Spirit-filled **NJ Catholic Charismatic Conference**. They carry back the theme and message of the weekend, of God's plan to bring us to eternal salvation by sending us Christ Jesus, our Savior. Immersion in the Holy Spirit, prayer and the Sacraments will bring us personal sanctification and servant hearts, and help us be *the light of the world and the salt of the earth*.

COUNSELS

Imitating The Good Shepherd

WORD: Acts 13:14, 43-52; Ps 100:1-3, 5;
Rev: 9, 14-17; Jn 10:27-30

ORDER: Serve Jesus with joy.

Listen to Jesus' voice when reading the Scriptures.

REFLECTION: *"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish."*
(Jn 10:27-28)

The very first image the early Church had of Jesus was that of the Good Shepherd... two clasped embracing hands giving love and comfort to the sheep. Similarly in my case as a child, I remember seeing a portrait of Jesus with His sheep following Him closely and one little lamb cuddled on His arm.

Now that I am a grown Christian, I realize that portrait is supposed to be, what I am about ... what we should all be about if God has entrusted us with any kind of influence or direction in people's lives. Though we are indeed sheep ourselves, we are all called to be shepherds as well, to tend the flock entrusted to us; beginning first and foremost with our spouse if we are married, with our children if we have any, with our parents, with our siblings, relatives and friends and certainly with our ME or LSS classmates and all our brothers and sisters in the community.

"I have made you a light to the Gentiles, that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth." (Acts 13:47) The calling to be instruments of salvation, to be the Good shepherd like Jesus, is not only for our DCS, ministry coordinators, class shepherds or our LSS shepherds. In all times and in all places, we are asked to speak, to act and to love like Jesus. *page 4* ☞

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

"For the Lamb who is in the center of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Rev 7:17)

Continued from last week

Group Deliberation & Discernment

(Lessons from Acts 15 - Conclusion)

Lesson #3: Discern God's will through His word and action. After the debates, Peter directed the attention of apostles and presbyters to what he believed was God's will on the issue. He reminded them how God used Peter in the early days to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. He probably repeated his vision from the Lord that led him to baptize Cornelius and his household (Acts 10:9-16), and recalled how God granted the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles as He did to the Jews, making no distinction between them. He pointed out that the granting of the Holy Spirit to all believers was not by circumcision or observance of Mosaic law: *"By faith, He purified their hearts."* He asked, *"Why, then, are you now putting God to the test by placing on the shoulders of the disciples (Gentile converts) a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we were able to bear?"* He concluded by proclaiming, *"On the contrary, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus."*

Lesson #4: (a) Listen attentively to God's Word; (b) seek confirmation from the Scriptures and from reliable witnesses; (c) decide in accord to God's discerned will. *"The whole assembly fell silent, and they listened."* Paul and Barnabas confirmed the truth of the revelation received by Peter by recounting the witness of the Holy Spirit throughout their first missionary journey. James, citing from Amos 9:11-12, added the agreement of the prophets to Peter's discernment, then finally proposed the resolution to the issue, which was *"to stop troubling the Gentiles who turn to God."* While the decision proposed essentially supported the position taken by Paul & Barnabas, the basis of the decision was clearly what they believed to be God's will.

Lesson #5: (a) On issues of significance to the community, obtain the agreement of the body to the decision; (b) Communicate the decision to all those who will be affected by it. While the narrative is silent on whether the whole church expressly agreed to the decision, it is obvious that the "whole assembly" was involved in the process. We could therefore assume that they agreed to the decision. Nonetheless, the narrative specifically mentions the agreement of the whole church in selecting the disciples who were to accompany Paul in communicating their decision. In their letter to the brethren in Antioch, the church in Jerusalem boldly proclaimed that the decision taken was *"of the Holy Spirit and of us."*

As we profess to be a Spirit-led community, we would do well to diligently apply these lessons from the Word during our group deliberations and discernment.

Shepherds, healed by the lambs

We knew it was coming, but when our first shepherding assignment came, a strong feeling of unworthiness and lack of confidence overcame us. We felt like navigators on uncharted waters with massive waves surging all around us, threatening to capsize our small boat. We began to pray, "Lord You are all that we have; send your mighty Advocate to calm these restless waters, to quench these doubts." We started to fast and pray, lifting our lambs morning, noon and night.

We started poring over the materials, reviewing the repentance and forgiveness sessions over and over again. As we did so, we discovered certain areas in our lives that still needed healing, some in parallel shepherd to lamb. Deep-seated hate for a father who caused a lot of hurt to a mother dying early; unwillingness to face recently discovered sister from an unknown mother; lack of paternal affection and compassion; youthful years lost in taking care of a sick mother - these were among entrenched hurts and emotions not previously realized. In walking the lambs through their suffering, deep-rooted anger and bitter roots, we unconsciously examined ourselves and by the end of the LSS weekend, we recognized areas in our lives that still needed healing.

Throughout our shepherding, as we asked the Holy Spirit to come upon us, to our wonderful amazement words of wisdom and knowledge and scriptural passages just flowed out of our mouths. Deep personal experiences were unabashedly shared with our lambs as we witnessed to the victory of the Lord in our lives. We reveled in the Lord's mercy and compassion as He allowed hurts, anger and unforgiveness to be released. Surging waves of doubt were replaced with a much stronger faith. We felt the Lord's guiding hand leading us to the calm waters of His mercy and compassion.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want, He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His namesake." (Ps 23:1-3)

35 attend LSS reunion

The graduates were joined by their class shepherd, LSS shepherds and many more in the community at the LSS 22 reunion held last Sunday at Boland Hall. In his homily during the Mass, Father Noel encouraged the graduates to respond to the command of our Lord to *"Feed my lamb ... Tend my sheep ... Feed my sheep."*

At the teaching portion, there was genuine joy, peace, excitement and love as the class divided into groups and tested their mastery of the Bible. We praise and thank the Lord for all who came despite the cold and rainy weather, and for sending His Holy Spirit in our midst!

In the Spirit of Transparency

Let God's Word Be Alive In Community Worship

The role of community to consistently bring God and His message to everyone is one important task that is upon all who are discerned worship leaders. Being an emissary of His Word means praising and worshipping God above all and bringing others to His mighty presence by allowing the living waters to flow out of one's heart and bringing love, healing, strength and new hope to every man.

A discerned worship leader without the innate gifts of exhortation and prophecy often believes the task can be accomplished through research, reason and a preponderance of ideas. As such, instead of conveying hope, faith and love, the abstract logic becomes predominant. On the other hand, one who is gifted may be so self-centered that his prayer and reflection become a performance; his words may impress but not heal, show brilliance and deep knowledge but little dependence on God and His leadings. Thus, the task of assigning communal worship leaders should, on a continuing basis, be done in a very prayerful and discerning way.

The prayer and reflection of a true worship leader should nourish God's people, in generous but humble witness to what has been freely received. They come from deep within their hearts and arise out of and revert back to peace and serenity. The words are simple yet humble, loving and truthful. The exhortations are not intellectually complex yet they refresh hearts and reveal communion as they bring God's love and life. Such leaders witness to their authentic experience as they share their hope, as well as their brokenness and failures, amidst the love God has poured on them.

Most importantly, God speaks through the worship leader whose prayer penetrates the deep, hidden and silent corners of the hearts of those present. God's people go back to their homes touched, complete and restored back to wholeness. They are refreshed, vibrant and made alive as they partake of the Word, the Bread of Life. They are able to worship in spirit and in truth and share with others the God Who overflows from within!

Let God's Word be alive in community worship. Let our worship lead to peace and to building up one another and community.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Col 3:16-17)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christian Counseling Teachings by our Elijah House graduates. Series starts tomorrow 1-6 pm at St. Leo. Prayer Counseling/ Healing and Deliverance. *For all covenanted disciples.*

Teachings next Saturday May 1st at St. Leo, 1-6pm:

LSS 1-21 - EWJ 1of 3, Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel

LSS 1-20 - CMP1Part 1 (Love, Faith), Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

LSS 1-22 - CDFP Overview, Intro to the Word, Basics of Prayer

All covenanted members - Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part 1.

Fr. John Hampsch Recollection on the Sacraments. Saturday, May 1 St. Antoninus Church 9am-5pm. Fr. Bill Halbing will concelebrate the Charismatic Mass at 10am on Sunday, May 2. *All BLD members not attending CDFP teachings are invited.* Contact Sister Eileen at 973-623-0258.

Soup Kitchen at the Missionaries of Charity Convent 8:30-11am second Saturday of each month. ME 14 and 20 will be serving on May 8. Directions at www.bldnewark.com.

Our forthcoming Encounters. Please spread the word to sign up early. *Class sizes are limited.* Application forms with Secretariat or download from www.bldnewark.com.

- **ME #23** June 4-6 in Easton PA. Deadline to apply is May 23.
- **FE #11** July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

Congratulations to the Pastor,
Staff and Parishioners
on the 125th Anniversary
of the Founding of St. Leo Parish!
And to Father Beaubrun Ardouin
on his recent installation
as Pastor of St. Leo Parish.

Men's basketball continued last Saturday at Boland Hall, as men over 40 trying to get back in shape warmed up with some prayer and a lot of stretching before their game. Please watch the CN for the next workout, and a similar program planned for the ladies.

RESERVE THE DATE: JUNE 19, 2004
SATURDAY 1-6 PM.
(Hint: For friends of Father Paul).

Counsels (from page 1)

Our template is supposed to be that of a shepherd full of compassion, of whom people say, "He or she sure makes me feel loved."

The sheep hear His voice and follow Him. They live because they do this. Just as we are able to recognize a human voice because of our personal relations we have with the person, we can also recognize God's voice if we have an intimate relationship with Him. And we develop this relationship, not by just reading the scriptures, but by waiting on Him and listening to His voice when reading the Scriptures. Only then will we be able to truly recognize His voice, follow Him and serve Him with joy and cries of gladness in our hearts.

The Gospel, a short passage from Jesus' proclamation that He is the Good Shepherd, prompts us to reflect on Jesus' care and assurance. He knows us, He gives us eternal life, He keeps us in His hand. This is the kind of shepherd whom we follow – One who gives far more than He demands.

The Gospel of John continuously repeats the theme that Jesus must obey the will of the Father; for He and the Father are One. "The Father and I are one." (Jn 10:30) What could be a more profound statement? "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." (Jn 14:9) This identity between Jesus and the Father suggests that the protection Jesus provides for His sheep is the same protection that comes from the Father. "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand." (Jn 10:29) Jesus does not proclaim this on His own authority, but rather because the Father has appointed Him to this role. He knows us.

No matter what demands our discipleship or ministry makes on us (not the least the demand of dying to self), we are assured that Jesus will never let us "perish." Such reassurance gives the hope and courage we need to be faithful to Jesus' call to follow Him.

DIRECTION: Be a light to the world, an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Collections

4/02	\$3,997	<i>Thank you for your generosity!</i>
4/16	4,366	
4/23	3,310	
16-wk average	\$3,770	<u>Expenses</u>
		16-wk average \$3,984

**We welcome contributions to the Covenant News.
We appreciate your effort in writing your articles,
and prayerfully give thanks.**

**We cannot assure that your contribution,
solicited or not, will be published.**

**The article is subject to any edits or revisions
by our editorial staff.**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- May 1 Teachings at St. Leo (see page 3)
- May 1-2 Long Island LSS 8
- May 7 Healing Mass
- May 8 DLC Meeting
- May 14-16 SPE 6, Ramada Inn, S. Plainfield NJ
- May 14-16 Long Island ME 10
- June 4 Healing Mass
- June 4-6 ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, PA
- June 6 SPE 6 Grand Reunion
- June 11-13 Long Island SE 5
- June 12 DLC Meeting
- June 18-20 Trenton ME 5
- June 18-20 Seattle LSS 10
- June 19 Fr. Paul's 50th Anniversary
- June 26 Trenton Community Day

*May the blessings of
the Lord be upon you...*



BIRTHDAYS

- 04/30 Stephanie Rigor, Jn 6
- 05/01 Leni Chan, LSS16
Efren Cruz, LSS7
Joe Pascoguin, LSS20
Camille Avestruz, YE 9
- 05/02 Gerry Canlas, LSS7
Matt Cruzada, LSS14
Danny Labung, LSS15
Gian Solema, YE 9
- 05/03 Totie Salonga, LSS17
- 05/04 Fe Isidro, LSS17
Nathan Osemeha, Mk10
- 05/05 Dee Lim, LSS9
Naida Villanueva, LSS17
Bryan Rigor, Mk10
- 05/06 Ike Nworu, LSS20
Rory Olaso, LSS2

ANNIVERSARIES

- 04/30 Frank & Atet Mendonez, LSS20
Aldo & Meg Pangilinan, LSS13
- 05/01 Romy & Leni Chan, LSS16
Gil & Lucille Jose, LSS21
- 05/03 Ben & Letty Chua, LSS13
- 05/04 Pete & Betty De la Cruz, LSS2
- 05/05 Rey & Sylvia Duma, LSS9
Rene & Ditas Tolentino, LSS15
- 05/06 Danny & Cora Labung, LSS15
Reggie & Fil Malabanan, LSS21



Celebrating 50 Years of Royal Priesthood

June 19 is D-day for our community as we celebrate in thanksgiving Fr. Paul's 50th anniversary of his ordination as priest. We are inviting family and friends of Fr. Paul from and within the Archdiocese of Newark, our various outreaches and districts. We will also be formally inviting Archbishop Myers, Bishop Serratelli, Bishop Da Cunha, and Cardinal McCarrick to attend the celebration.

The venue will be St. Leo's in Irvington New Jersey where the thanksgiving will begin with a mass at 1:00 pm. There will be a program of songs, dances and testimonies from various BLD ministries and representatives of Fr. Paul's family, parish, and outreaches.

In lieu of gifts, we are requesting that donations be made to the BLD Fund for *Gawad Kalinga* in the Philippines for the sole purpose of providing free housing to the homeless in the Philippines. The *Gawad Kalinga* project provides us with an excellent vehicle to pursue our mission of ministering to the poorest of the poor in the Philippines, as the *Gawad Kalinga* program includes the building of Christian communities all over the Philippines. Although we have not set any official goals in terms of number of homes, we are hoping that we can raise enough funds to build a village of 30 homes for the poor, which we plan to name, *Fr. Paul Lehman/BLD Newark Village*.

Overall coordinators are Bong & Merle Encarnacion with Manny & Judy San Luis as the program coordinators.

"Open your hearts and let Christ speak to you. Dedicate time habitually to prayer and meditation of the Gospel."

— Pope John Paul II to the Youth

COUNSELS

The Love That Binds Us All

WORD: Acts 14: 21-27; Ps 145: 8-13;
Rev 21: 1-5; Jn 13: 31-35

ORDER: *Love one another as I have loved you.*

REFLECTION: At the Last Supper, we see Jesus and His disciples as our Lord gave them His legacy and inheritance, a commandment, yet a true gift when He said: *"My children, I will be with you only a little while longer. I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

What Jesus left His disciples and all of who believe in Him was not an imposition, but a gift, as we cannot imagine how this world would be without His love. God has glorified Jesus by loving him, and Jesus has glorified the disciples by loving them. Now, Jesus tells the disciples that he has glorified them by loving them, and they are to glorify Jesus by loving one another.

What is the love Jesus wants us to have in our hearts? Christ, as our model, shows us that we must love our neighbor not because he deserves it but because he needs our love in order to be happy and remain with God. It's easy to love the people with whom you agree and who do not annoy you. But that is not what He commanded us to do. Jesus in His lifetime always loved the poor, the sick, the disadvantaged, the wicked and outcasts. He even loved His executioners and asked the Father to forgive them for they knew not what

☐ Page 4)

God's Promise of the Week

"The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. The Lord is good to all and compassionate toward all his works." (Ps 145: 8-9)

Can We Abide Without Pruning?

Being in the community for over three years now, my journey with the Spirit has made me thirst for His word to an utmost degree of excitement, jubilating in every bit of enlightenment from the Father, arousing an urgency in me to serve our Savior. In my initial enthusiasm to serve Him, I did not expect to encounter His pruning shears. I simply wanted serve Him, praise him, and pray to Him. I no longer seek that Friday night “out with the boys”. Instead, I spend it with raised hands. I no longer drive a sports car but am perfectly happy driving a van, cruising within legal limits singing praise songs. Yet, what more do you want of me, Lord?

It was exciting, serving, praising and being taught by His word, until I came across John 15:2. *“He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.”*

Halt the presses! Is this right, Lord; are you sure, Lord? In John 15, the Lord uses the metaphor of the grape vinedresser to tell us how the Father, the vinedresser, wants to us to be more fruitful; to do good deeds, to spread His word and therefore be more like Christ.

According to ‘The Farmers’ Almanac’, too little pruning produces weak growth and results in small clusters. Proper pruning results in good crops of large clusters of grapes or fruits. Without pruning, the vine simply produces less fruits and eventually dies. In order to bear more fruit, which equates to good deeds in the spiritual realm, we must allow God’s will to rule in our lives.

I did not realize it but the Lord was slowly pruning me. Now it seems He is pruning me with sharper shears and I am beginning to feel the pain. In stages, I lost that desire for social recognition that was replaced by the desire to praise and serve. As I lost all worldly embellishments, I felt I was being used to bring others to Him. I lost that high-paying job that seemed to assure our financial stability. Now, I am beginning to shed that self-absorbing pride.

St. Paul who lost all he had including his identity, tells us of his gain in Christ as he writes his final letter from prison, *“for his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ”... “that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”* (Phil 3: part 8, 10-11).

Our Lady of Fatima

The month of May is the month we honor mothers, most especially Our Lady, the Mother of all.

May brings fond memories of knowing the Blessed Mother through our *Flores de Mayo*, rosary devotions, novenas and hymns to our Lady of Fatima. My mother instilled in me an intimate devotion to the Blessed Mother which I truly cherish to this day.

There were many nights that I would come home late from work and would stop by the shrine of Our Lady of Fatima just to spend time in quiet prayer. This shrine was my refuge where I sought Our Lady’s comfort. I felt she was communicating her love to me through her compassionate eyes and whispers of assurances into my heart. She was a very real Mother to me.

Mary lived a pure and sinless life, always in the fullness of the God’s grace. God holds her in high esteem, bestowing on her blessings far in excess of any other being. Mary intercedes for us from her place of honor in heaven, helping us to grow in virtue and holiness. She heeds our prayers in a special way as our greatest intercessor, always standing in the gap for us.

I remember the day when my intercession to our Lady of Fatima was miraculously answered. The powerful revelation of God’s love occurred when I was diagnosed with cancer. I felt in my heart the love communication of God through my friends who prayed the 2000 Hail Mary’s with me. My friends saw visions of a miracle which they vividly described as a “round cell surrounded by healthy cells”! This was the same exact description of the cancer cell as described by my doctor!

God was pleased with the sight of so many people faithfully praying for me. The Lord revealed the powerful intercession of Our Blessed Mother when the final result of my nine biopsies came back negative for cancer cells! She came to me in a vision of typed messages, heavenly scents, appearance of three red roses in the midst of white roses, that morning of my birthday, the day after I celebrated my miraculous healing with family and friends. This time, it was Mama Mary who gave me the red roses.

Though trials come my way, I rise above them in faith, the faith that my mother had instilled in me when I was a little girl. As a mother of two, I do the same to my two boys and I am determined to share my devotion to the Blessed Mother and the Lord with anyone I meet. *“When I am poor, I am rich, when I am weak, I am strong. I keep the Lord always before me; with the Lord at my right, I shall not be shaken”*, Psalm 16:8.

God's Commandments and Love

John 14: 21-26

How do you SEE God's commandments? Most of us see them as limitations on our free will. When Jesus became man, he expanded upon these commandments. He turned them from rules of 'don't do this' or 'don't do that' into positive ways for living. He laid out a road map towards God's Divine Plan! He lived His Father's will as defined to Moses in the Commandments! He fulfilled the spirit of the commandments by living his life with love. In Jesus' example and way of life, God's commandments have a new meaning. They are not merely rules of "Don't"; but, rather, directions to the way of love!

Like a shepherd leading a lamb, Jesus teaches and shares God's words. You SEE Jesus tirelessly feeding a multitude of hungry people to hear His Father's words. As an intercessor, you stay late into the night praying for someone seriously sick, deeply troubled or lost. You SEE Jesus interceding for someone who desperately needs His Father's healing touch. As a service minister, you tirelessly serve your BLD brothers and sisters after a long night of prayer services. You SEE Jesus attending to the needs of those hungry people, who sought Him, and listened to His words. As a sharer in a seminar, you boldly tell your once arrogant failures, weaknesses and trials. Through the sharer's story, it is as if you SEE Jesus being falsely accused. As a doctor, nurse, administrator or logistics person in a medical mission, you lose your sense of time and tirelessly attend to the needs of desperate families. You SEE Jesus attending to the concerns of an anxious crowd, eager to catch a glimpse sight of His unselfish love. What motivates a shepherd to teach and share God's words? What compels an intercessor to lose sleep in order to pray for a needy person? What makes a volunteer cheerfully serve a brother or sister and forget his own needs? What persuades a sharer to shamelessly reveal and declare his weaknesses before others? Why do doctors, nurses, administrators and ordinary people freely give their time, treasure and talent? The answer is that it can only be for the love of God.

Love for God is acting as Jesus did. He loved, cared and attended to our needs. Through his actions, he allows us to experience His Father's divine plan. Experiencing Jesus in our lives enables Him to love and dwell in us. Jesus is calling us to act as part of the love that He and His Father share: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" John 14:23. What a powerful promise!

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

DLC meeting tomorrow. Boland Hall 2-5pm. Please pray for our community leadership.

Soup Kitchen at the Missionaries of Charity Convent. ME 14 and 20 will be serving 8:30-11am tomorrow. Directions at www.bldnewark.com.

Summer Picnic 2004 for all Mark 10 children and their families. Van Saun Park, Paramus NJ 10am-4pm Saturday, June 5. RSVP deadline May 28. Call Juancho/Carie Ciocon 732 -346-1339; Cherry/Reuben Vibar 908-283-0411 or -3041.

Our forthcoming Encounters. Please spread the word to sign up early. Class sizes are limited. Application forms with Secretariat or download from www.bldnewark.com.

- **ME #23** June 4-6 in Easton PA. Deadline to apply is May 23.
- **FE #11** July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

Message to the Charismatic Renewal

The way of spiritual renewal is "a permanent school of conversion and holiness.

"Communicate the fascination of the Gospel and the beauty of the new life in the Spirit.

"Dear members of Renewal in the Spirit, be witnesses of the 'reasons of the Spirit.' This is your mission in a society where often human reason does not seem to be penetrated with the wisdom that comes from on High."

Excerpts from the Holy Father's May 2 address to the Italian charismatic movement at their annual congress that focused on prayer and evangelization.

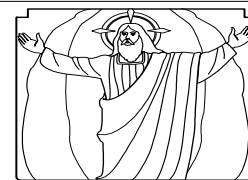
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

4/16	\$4,366
4/23	3,101
4/30	4,330
17-wk avg	3,803

EXPENSES

17-wk avg	\$3,825
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Thank you for your generosity!

We are meant to be a "home" for Our Almighty God! God wants to live within us and through us, to touch the world with His love and mercy. It is through our acts of love that we are obedient to God's commandments. Our actions open the doors to His blessings and enable us to fulfill our prophetic calling.

Counsels from page 1

they were doing. He loved them because in doing so he was able to remove them from their miseries and sin. He loved them up to the Cross that He redeemed them from sure death. This is the love we ought to give one another. Love that gives death to self, yet will set us free and give us new life, even to eternity. To imitate His death does not mean to be physically nailed to the cross with Him. It is stepping into the unknown with Him. It is acts of self-giving, non-controlling service to others, not expecting anything in return. It is transcending the shortcomings of others, looking beyond their weaknesses and limitations. He assures us that if such is the path we follow, we will receive life as He did.

Loving your neighbor as yourself did not do away with slavery, or domination of one group by another. Loving your neighbor as yourself did not wipe out economic or religious oppression. Loving your neighbor as yourself did not eradicate oppressive political and military power. A new kind of love was needed. And Jesus was that love. He gave Himself for us sinners. He added the cross. *“Greater love has no one than this, that you lay down your life for a friend.”* (Jn 15:13)

The love Jesus commanded was “new” because it did not depend on “bloodline” or on “feeling.” Loving is doing what Jesus would have done. If we Christians today love one another in the way that He had taught us, what a powerful message that would give to the whole world. There is so much selfishness, hatred, and conflict in the world. Our only response is our own message of love and grace. We bring a little bit of heaven to this earth when we share such love, and our love for each other is a witness to the world of God’s love for us. *“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails-”* 1Cor 13: 4-7.

DIRECTION:

- Be an encouragement to one another, especially those who are having difficulties.
- Pray and fast for discernment.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 8	DLC Meeting (<i>see page 3</i>)
May 8	Single Parents Retreat
May 14-16	SPE 6, Ramada Inn, S Plainfield NJ
May 14-16	Long Island ME 10
Jun 4	Healing Mass
Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, Easton PA
Jun 6	SPE 6 Grand Reunion
Jun 11-13	Long Island SE 5
Jun 12	Disciples’ Assembly
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS 10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul’s 50 th Anniversary
Jun 26	Trenton Community Day
Jul 2	Healing Mass
Jul 9-11	LI YE 5
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE 11, S Plainfield NJ
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME 5

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .



BIRTHDAYS

05/08	Angel Mijares, LSS16 Jen Ompod, YE 9
05/09	Chito Magahis, LSS17
05/10	Tony Avisado, LSS8 Tony Carrera, LSS13 Em Catelo, LSS17 Veluz Eguia, LSS16 Bobi Luardo, LSS17 Beth Valeriano, LSS18
05/11	Frank Venadas, LSS14
05/12	Frank Belarmino, LSS3
05/13	Flor Baculio, LSS20 Luz Cruzada, LSS1 Seattle Fely Escobar, LSS16 Reggie Malabanan, LSS21

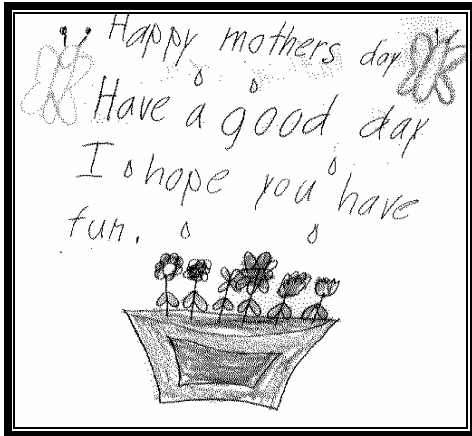
ANNIVERSARIES

05/09	Jun & Emma Avergonzado, LSS 15 Casey & Malyn Tanseco, LSS 6
05/10	Ed & Norie Eguia, LSS 13
05/12	Frank & Beth Valeriano, LSS 18

**THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FR PAUL’S
ORDINATION
JUNE 19, 2004 SATURDAY 1-6 PM AT ST. LEO**

Mothers' Day Supplement

COVENANT NEWS - MAY 14, 2004

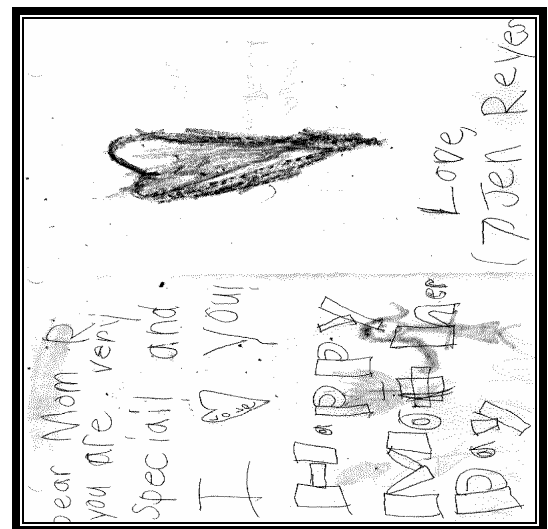


12 years

- ❖ Thank you for Everything. Even tho I always get in trubl.... I still luv u. (E)
- ❖ Your are the best. I will try my best to behave and not yell. I will also thank everything I have. May God guide you and I will pray for you. (Patrick S)
- ❖ Mothers are helpful and they help you get through your life each day. They will always love you no matter what. Mothers help you on anything you're stuck on & they brighten up your day. When they get angry at you, they still love you deep down inside. My mom is always there for me & she just cheers me up. Even when she's mad she still loves me & she still cares for me

& my siblings. Moms are mostly what you need to go on & have a happy life. (Maricris S)

- ❖ My Mom is the one and only thing I need in my life. She's wonderful, she trusts me, she takes care of me, and most of all she gives me love! Other than my dad she is the best thing in the world. That is why I love her more than the end of the world. I never want her to go! (Maricel S)



11 years

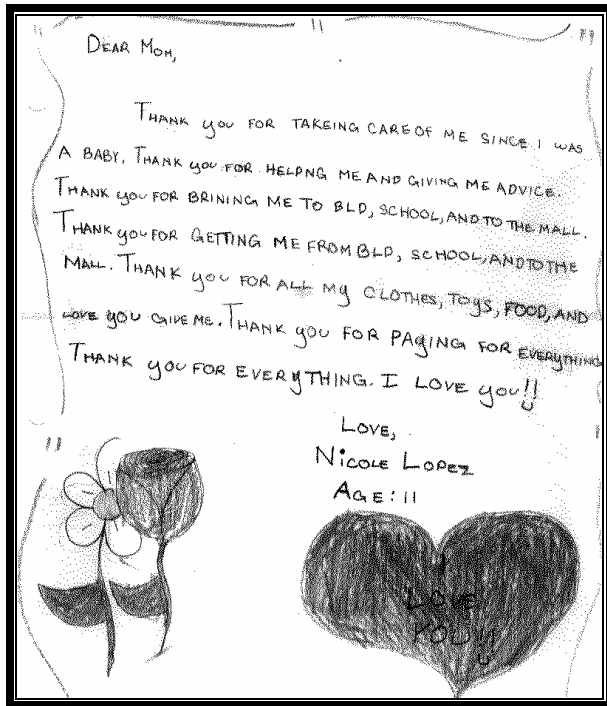
- ❖ I know, it's messy! (Wait... Dad turns 44...) I need a watch... (Joel S)
- ❖ Thank you for making me. Also for loving and caring for me. Love, AJ (F)

- ❖ Roses are red vilotes are blue you are my mom this is from me to you. Hope you have a great time on your special day. God is watching over you. (Glendyll F)
- ❖ I know, it's messy! (Wait... Dad turns 44...) I need a watch... (Joel S)
- ❖ Thank you for everything. (Jocef B)
- ❖ Thank you for making me. Also for loving and caring for me. Love, AJ (F)
- ❖ Roses are red vilotes are blue you are my mom this is from me to you. Hope you have a great time on your special day. God is watching over you. (Glendyll F)

want to try making you happy by dong what you want. You also taught me to do right from wrong. You taught me God. I thank you for all you've done. Mom I love you and always will. God bless you. (Kobi R)

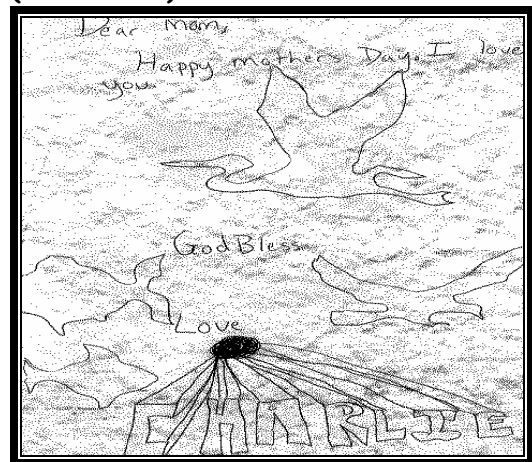


10 years



- ❖ You are a wonderful Mom. I'm so happy to have you as a mother, I love you. You give me so much love I'll do anything to make you happy. I'm blessed to be your daughter. The more love you give me the more and more I love you. (Kathrina S)
- ❖ Mommy, you make my heart full. You make my world go round. Love me as I love you and never let me go. Please love me forever and I will always love you. Your loving son (Francis O)

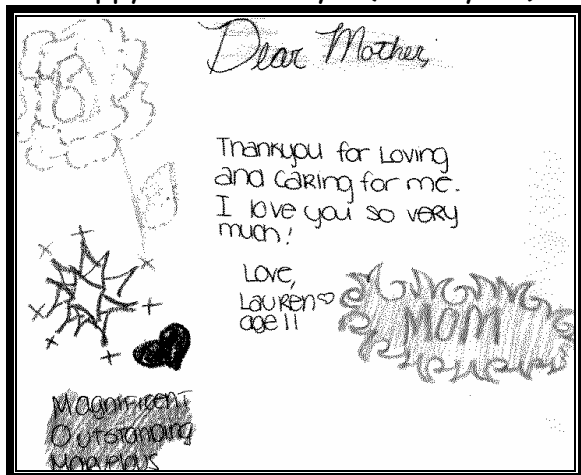
- ❖ Thank you mom for bringing me into this world. I would not have made it this far without you. I thank you mom. All you have done for me and you don't want me to do anything for you. No matter what I do you always forgive me. Mom, you are always there for me. This year I



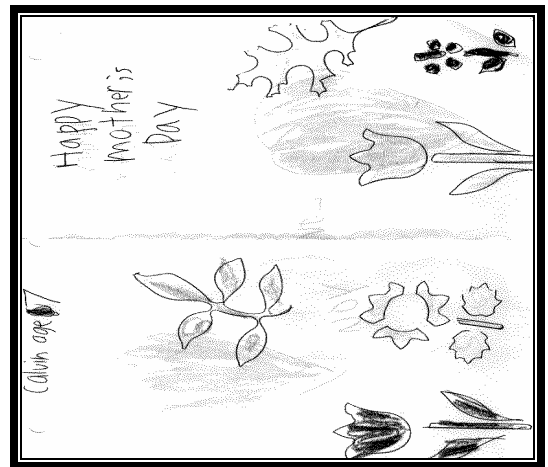
- ❖ Thanks for not getting pist off when I got bad grades. You're the best. (Justin R)
- ❖ Thank you for everything. And for the things you bought me. God bless you. (Theanyi C)
- ❖ Thank you for loving me and caring about me. Thanks for helping me when I needed help. I love you very much. (Patricia G)
- ❖ You're sweet. I love u bunches. (Erika F)
- ❖ You are the number one mom in the whole world! I love you and I always know you are there for me when I need you. Thank you for always being by my side when I need you. You are very special to me. You will always be the best mom there is. I love you and I wouldn't make it through life without you. I am blessed to have you as a mother. Thank you for being the best mom there is. God blesses each and every one of us for having wonderful people living in our lives. (Ariana A)

9 years

- ❖ I love you a whole lot. (Rachelle C)
- ❖ Happy Mother Days. (Jesraye F)

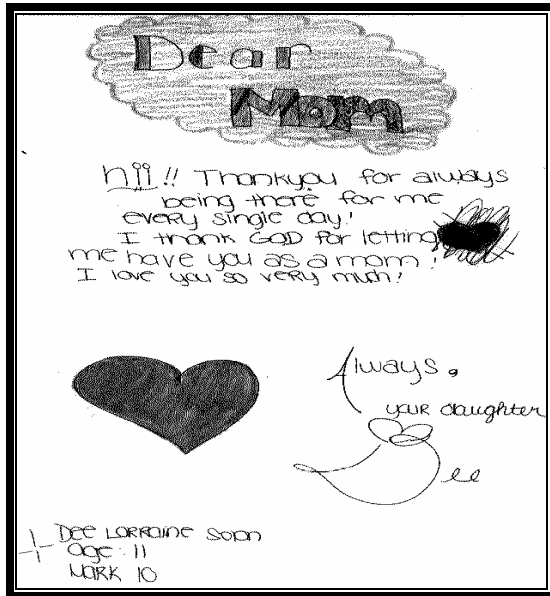


- ❖ I really love you. And I know that you'll always be the best mother in the world. I love it when you're proud of me. I also love when you're happy. I know that you're too escited, but I still love. I love the way that you take care of me, Kevin, and dad. Its good that you work at the hospital because we need money for more goods. Me, Kevin, and dad will always pray for you. And make sure that you have a great mother's day with me, Kevin and our lovely dad. (Ashley C)



- ❖ Mother's are very special. There are mother's different nationalities, religions, but they're still our mothers no matter what and they'll still love us no matter what. My mother is special because she raises me, feeds me, and cares for me everyday. If I have to go somewhere, I'm there! Only because my mom cares for me to bring me somewhere I need to be. I love my mom no matter what and everyone should love their own mother because our mothers care! (Jamie P)

- ❖ Thank you for giving me food and shelter, for being there when I needed u. You took care of me for my life I think your great. Your a star. (Elise E)



- ❖ Even though I can't afford a bouquet of flowers I still love you! I always put you in my prayers that I pray to the Lord. You are a part of my heart, if someone takes me away from you, it would feel as if my heart is broke in half because you hold half of my heart. You are the No. 1 mom in the whole world. Even though you and Daddy are divorced and no one could ever replace you. (DV)
- ❖ I love you and hope you have a good Mothers Day! (Gerard)



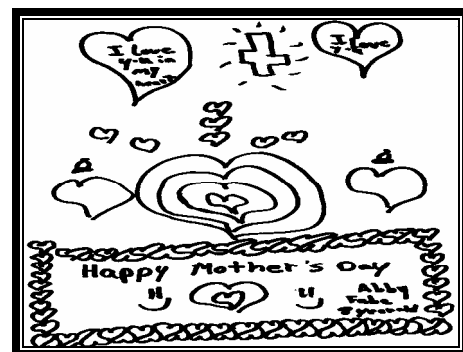
8 years

- ❖ Happy Mother Day. (Rodel C)
- ❖ I love you and stuff!!! (Sean)
- ❖ I hope you have a great time on Mother's Day and my first communion. I'm so exited and I hope you are too. May Jesus make sure you are safe! (Avery A)
- ❖ Mothers, they love you! They will always be there when you need them. They will never leave you! Mothers are the best! (Elana P)

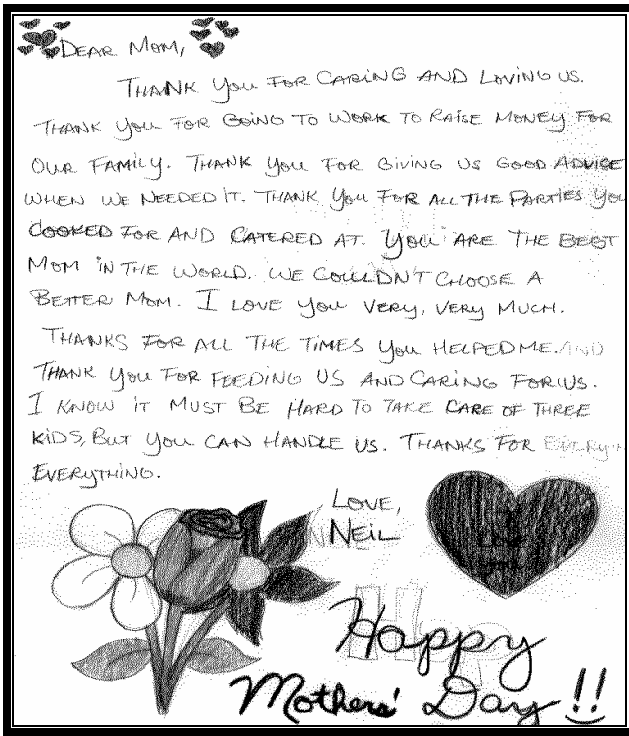


7 years

- ❖ Happy Mother's Mommy. I love you so much. I love you. I hope you have a great Mothers Day! (Tiffany)
- ❖ Have a good day. I hope you have fun. (Matthew T)



- ❖ Sorry for everything I did ☹ Thank you for everything I did ☺ (Mikey)



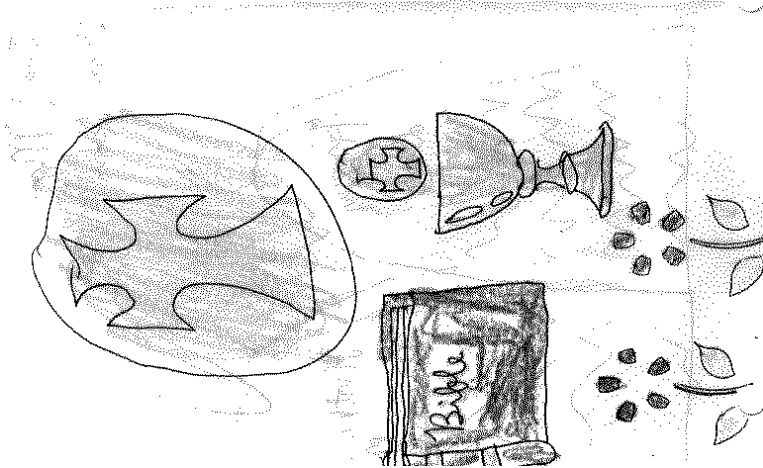
**Lord
God,
Please
Bless**

**Our
Mark 10
Ministry
And All
Our
Children!**

Dear Mom,
I'm sorry for giving a hard time
I'm sorry for always coming
with bad stories, I'm sorry for
complaining and misbehaving.
And Happy Mother's day!



John M. Com





DLC Works In Unity

The District Leadership Conference (DLC) held its monthly meeting last Saturday at Boland Hall, with most of our Stewards and Coordinators in attendance. The DLC tackled a busy agenda of current and pressing community issues, both spiritual and temporal, which are reported below.

The discernment process for ministry assignments of disciples completing basic formation will be reviewed, to include input from ministry coordinators and the disciples themselves. The Rockland prayer group has scheduled its first Marriage Encounter for December 10. The community will be consulted on adopting the *Gawad Kalinga* poverty alleviation program in the Philippines as a main thrust of our mission to the poor. In this regard, the 50th anniversary celebration of Fr. Paul Lehman's ordination to the priesthood is intended to benefit the *Gawad Kalinga* housing for the poor program (see last week's CN). Fr. Paul expressed confidence with the certain although slow progress of the revision of the Covenant of Communion.

Faced again with increases in office lease and other venue costs, the Board of Trustees has created a Task Force that will evaluate the feasibility of BLD Newark owning a property to house its many needs. The Treasury Ministry likewise reported its new setup in order to meet its various responsibilities, including a timely budget process and prompt financial reporting. The DCS explained the monthly rotation of the presiding steward responsibility among themselves.

A fibrillator will soon be available during community gatherings for use in medical emergencies. Prophecies will be written down and submitted to the DCS. Many disciples joined hands to offer a memorial to our departed steward Winston Alcruz. This memorial is a room named after Winston, which will be located at the soon-to-be-built new wing of the BLD Covenant House in Cavite, Philippines.

Mothers' Day Special Supplement.
See Insert

COUNSELS

Live the Word of God

WORD: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29; Ps 67:2-3, 5-6, 8; Rev 21:10-14, 22-23; Jn 14:23-29

ORDER: Love me and keep my word. Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid. (Jn 14:23, 27)

REFLECTION:

"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." (Jn 14:23) In the Gospel this Sunday, John emphasizes the necessity of obedience to God's Word. The more we obey God, the more we shall get to know, understand, and love Him. And the more we love Him, the more we become transformed, as He promised to love us in return and dwell in us. Imagine what kind of witnesses we can become for Christ!

Jesus also promised His apostles that He would not leave them alone. How? He would ask the Father to send in His name the Advocate- the Holy Spirit, as the first fruit of the redemption Jesus won for us by His death and resurrection. The Spirit is given to teach us and remind us of all the wondrous promises of God, the most important of which is to make Jesus present in us. The Holy Spirit is the very presence of God within us. He empowers us to live in obedience to God's will. He uses us to help build Christ's Church on earth.

Jesus' final gift to His disciples was His peace: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid." (Jn 14:27) The peace of Jesus is the peace of God that surpasses all understanding (Phil 4:7). It comes from an unshakable trust in the faithfulness of our God. No experience in life: n sorrow, no danger, no suffering can take it away from us. When the peace of Christ controls our hearts, we have a deep inner contentment as we strive to obey God's commands. We

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you."

(John 14:26)

John Paul II: Hopes for A Church of Communion

In this stirring message from the Holy Father, we see the many and strong parallels in his call, between the Church and our community. Substitute steward/coordinator for bishop, disciple for priest, ministry for vocation and the Pope is speaking directly to BLD.

He uses terms that are very familiar to us: renewal and unity, communion and mission, pastoral relationships, collaboration and cooperation; one heart and one mind; gifts and charisms, seeds being sown and the power of prayer.

The Holy Father puts a strong correlation between unity and holiness. Is this some message to us, directing us in our constant search for that elusive unity among brethren and among ministries in the community? Do we remember to promote growth in personal holiness with as much zeal as we seek unity?

John Paul II hopes the Church in the United States will be one of “communion,” and he encourages bishops to an ever closer relationship with their priests.

The Pope said that this “communion” is based on the “close relationship between the Church’s holiness and her unity.” It is a spirituality that “I am convinced we must foster at the dawn of this new millennium, if we wish to be faithful to God’s plan and respond to the world’s deepest yearnings”. “Like her holiness, the Church’s unity is an unfailing gift of God and a constant summons to an ever more perfect communion in faith, hope and love.”

The Holy Father added that “This mystery of unity in diversity is especially evident in the bishop’s celebration of the Eucharist, when he is surrounded by the presbyterate, ministers, religious and the whole People of God. In the Eucharist, that ‘holy communion’ which is the very soul of the Church is both expressed and brought about.”

He said that “The bishop, as the icon of Christ the Good Shepherd, present in the midst of his holy people, has the primary duty of promoting and encouraging such a spirituality. This spirituality of communion, which bishops are called personally to exemplify, will naturally lead to a pastoral style which is ever more open to collaboration with all”

The Holy Father proceeded to speak about the consequences of this communion. “It demands of you, in the first place, an ever closer relationship with your priests.” This means that “each bishop should constantly strive to relate to them as a father and brother who loves them, listens to them, welcomes them, corrects them, supports them, seeks their cooperation and, as much as possible, is concerned for their human, spiritual, ministerial and financial well-being. As a

spiritual father and brother to his priests, the bishop should do everything in his power to encourage them in fidelity to their vocation and to the demands of leading a life worthy of the calling they have received.” In this connection, John Paul II addressed “a word of acknowledgment and praise for the dedication and faithful work carried out by so many committed priests in the United States, especially those engaged in meeting the daily challenges and demands associated with parish ministry.”

He said that in the second place, “strengthening a spirituality of communion and mission will demand a constant effort to renew the bonds of fraternal unity within the presbyterate. As the spiritual values which unite priests, these should be the basis for the renewal of the priestly ministry and the promotion of unity in the apostolate, so that under the guidance of its priests the community of disciples may truly be of one heart and one mind.”

The Pope added: third, a “spirituality of communion will naturally bear fruit in the development of a diocesan spirituality grounded in the particular gifts and charisms bestowed by the Holy Spirit for the upbuilding of each local Church. An authentic diocesan spirit will also inspire and motivate the whole Christian community to a greater sense of responsibility for the fruitful carrying out of the Church’s mission through its rich network of communities, institutions and apostolates.”

Fourth, he continued, it “is in major and minor seminaries that the seeds of a spirituality of communion and mission, and of a healthy priesthood are sown. The bishops are “to ensure that the seminaries form mature and balanced personalities, men capable of establishing sound human and pastoral relationships, knowledgeable in theology, solid in the spiritual life, and in love with the Church.”

”The challenges of ecclesial life increasingly call for the priest to be, in every sense, a man of communion, committed to an effective cooperation with others in the service of the ecclesial community. I am personally convinced that prayer is the primary force that inspires and forms priestly vocations. The more the problem of vocations is confronted in the context of prayer, the more prayer will help those whom God has called to hear his voice.”

To promote this “spirituality of communion and mission,” the Pope suggested to the bishops that in the daily exercise of their episcopal ministry, they “be builders of communion in personal dialogue and personal encounter with your priests, deacons, men and women religious and the lay faithful of your local Churches. This is the sure path that will enable them to grow in that holiness which is the hidden source and the infallible measure of the Church’s apostolic activity and missionary zeal.” (Zenit.org)

*You are invited to a
Community Thanksgiving to
The 50th Anniversary of the
Ordination to Priesthood of*

*Fr. Paul J. Lehman
May 29, 1954*

*In the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of
Newark*

June 19, 2004 * 1:00-6:00 PM
St. Leo's Parish of Irvington, NJ
103 Myrtle Avenue * Irvington, NJ
07111

Thanksgiving Program

**1:00-2:15pm Eucharistic
Celebration: St. Leo's Church**

**2:30-5:30pm Presentations,
Testimonials & Fellowship**

**5:30-6:00pm Closing Prayers/
Adjournment**

**In lieu of gifts, Fr. Paul requests that
Donations be made to the**

BLD Fund for Gawad Kalinga

**Information about this Poverty
Alleviation Program**

**Will be presented during the
celebration**

**This Thanksgiving is organized by the BLD
Newark**

**Community in collaboration with its sister
community of**

**BLD Long Island, Trenton, Albany &
Washington DC**

Ministry Announcements

Teachings:

Tomorrow, May 15 at St. Antoninus, 1-6pm
LSS 1-20 - CMP1 (Overcoming World Flesh Devil, Body
and Blood, Community Service)

LSS 1-21 - EWJ (Mark, Matthew)

LSS 1-22 - CDFP Overview (Intro to the Word, Basics
of prayer)

All covenanted disciples - Christian Counseling, Elijah
House Part II

May 21 at St. Leo, after LWG

Singles/SPE Ministry - EWJ (Jesus in the OT)

Intercessory Ministry - Formation Teaching

May 28 at St. Leo, after LWG

Service Ministry - Formation Teaching

CID Day of Renewal

What: Church Teaching on Sexuality

When: May 22 Saturday 9:30am-5pm

Where: St. Antoninus

Who: David Hajduk and Fr. Paul Lehman. Mr. Hajduk
has 10 years experience in youth ministry and catechetics,
an M.A. in Systematic Theology from Seton Hall and is
with the Religious Studies Department at Delbarton School
in Morristown NJ.

Summer Picnic 2004 for all Mark 10 children and their
families. Van Saun Park, Paramus NJ 10am-4pm Saturday,
June 5. RSVP deadline May 28. Call Juancho/Carie Ciocon
732 -346-1339; Cherry/Reuben Vibar 908-283-0411 or -
3041.

Our forthcoming Encounters. Please spread the word
to sign up early. *Class sizes are limited.* Application forms
with Secretariat or download from www.bldnewark.com.

- **ME #23** June 4-6 in Easton PA. *Deadline to
apply is May 23.*
- **FE #11** July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

4/23 \$3,101
4/30 4,330
5/07 3,561
18-wk.Avg 3,790

*Thank you for
your generosity!*

EXPENSES: 18-wk.Avg \$4,190

***TO COMMENT on our
newsletter, or for other
questions, e-mail
wordministry@bldnewark.com.***

Counsels *from page 1*

experience abiding joy as we draw close to God and prepare a dwelling place for Him in our hearts. For our heavenly Father wants to live in us, so that through us, the world may know His love and mercy.

How can we achieve the peace of Christ? St. Augustine suggests the following:

First, we need silence of the mind. The silence of the mind is in contrast to noise of the mind, which includes worry. We worry a lot...about the bills that need to be paid, the food we are to eat, our children's tuition, getting old, retirement. Remember, that God is in control, and because of His love, He wants only what is good for us. We have to let go of our useless anxieties.

Second, we need simplicity of the heart. The opposite of simplicity is a cluttered heart that has so many attachments. These attachments could be persons or things: a large house, expensive cars, diamonds and gold, luxurious vacations. We need to let go of these attachments, and adhere ourselves only to the One who really matters: God.

Third, we need serenity of the soul. Living in sin is living outside of God's grace. A soul tormented by sin will never be at peace. An essential component of peace is righteousness. There is no peace for the wicked.

Thus, peace is the chain of love. We will not be able to love if we are living in sin, if our hearts are possessed with so many attachments to persons and things, if our minds are cluttered and too noisy with worry. St Augustine says, "When you have achieved silence of the mind, simplicity of heart and serenity of soul, then you will have peace."

Do we keep God's Word, which is the power of God for the salvation of those who believe? Do we actively participate in the life and mission of the Church? Do we think less of ourselves and give to God what actually belongs to Him?

DIRECTIONS:

- Do not place unnecessary burden on one another.
- Be of one accord within your ministry.
- Give due respect to those who are in authority, for all authority comes from God.

ECSL appoints Cluster Shepherds

In twin circulars dated May 4, 2004 and in accordance with the recent re-clustering of the BLD West Coast Directorate into 3 sub-clusters, the Executive Council of Servant Leaders appointed Mon and Malou Alano as shepherd for Sacramento-Oakland-Reno, and Mike and Mitch Montero as shepherd for Seattle-Vancouver. The new cluster shepherds will both be assisted by Tony and Nes Camillo, former WCD Coordinator, to ensure the smooth turnover of pending district matters.

We pray that the new cluster shepherds be empowered with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to enable them to accomplish the many tasks ahead.

Community Calendar

May 14-16	SPE 6, Ramada Inn, S Plainfield NJ
May 14-16	Long Island ME 10
May 22	CID Day of Renewal, St. Antoninus 9:30am-5pm
Jun 4	Healing Mass
Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, Easton PA
Jun 6	SPE 6 Grand Reunion
Jun 11-13	Long Island SE 5
Jun 12	Disciples' Assembly
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS 10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary
Jun 26	Trenton Community Day
Jul 2	Healing Mass
Jul 9-11	LI YE 5
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE 11, S Plainfield NJ
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME 5

BIRTHDAYS

05/14	Sabrina Guiao, Mk 10
	Kevin Larobis, Mk 10
05/15	Kristian De La Cruz, Mk 10
	Dodong Demegillo, LSS11
	Winnie Feliciano, LSS8
05/16	Precy Narciso, LSS8
05/17	Flor Maqueda, SPE5
05/18	Susan Aglibut, LSS12
	Boboy Guzman, LSS18
05/19	June Bustos, ME18
	Dens Mantes, LSS11
05/20	Sue Bueser, LSS18
	Norma Lacsamana, LSS7

ANNIVERSARIES

05/14	Larry & Leni De Guzman, LSS19-Newark
05/17	Joel & Lani Hernandez, LSS19
	Oliver & Marissa Rangel, LSS19
05/20	Fil & Evelyn Taino, LSS18

We welcome contributions to the Covenant News.

We appreciate your effort in writing your articles, and prayerfully give thanks.

We cannot assure that your contribution, solicited or not, will be published.

The article is subject to any edits or revisions by our editorial staff.



Volume 10 Issue 22

Bulletin Edition

June 6, 2004

The Pentecost Vigil

“Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.” (Acts 2:3-4)

The Filipino Apostolate of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement, to celebrate the birthday of the Church, sponsored a Pentecost vigil this past Saturday, May 29th, at St. Aedan’s Church in Jersey City from 7:30 p.m. to 12:00 midnight, attended by different Filipino charismatic prayer groups in the Archdiocese of Newark.

During his homily, Fr. Jerry Rabanal, the spiritual director of the Filipino Apostolate, called for unity among Filipino Catholics so we can be a powerful voice in the service of the Lord. Various prayer groups took turns in leading the prayers accompanied by their own praise ministry.

Our own community lead the praise and worship at 11:00 p.m. and was represented by the Mission and Praise ministries with members of some ME classes. Those who stayed until that time experienced a very powerful and enlightening worship led by our mission stewards, Rene and Sally Castaneda, supported by our praise ministry.

This is one of those experiences that is difficult to express in words lest anything we say may be an understatement. It was simply another moment in our spiritual life where we were so touched by the presence of the Holy Spirit, indeed a very special way to celebrate the birth of our Church.

Other News...on page 3

During the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception

let us pray to Mary for her intercession.

COUNSELS

Source of Love and Truth

WORD: Prv.8:22-31; Ps.8:4-9; Rom.5:1-5; Jn.16:12-15

ORDER: “ *Glorify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to God who is, who was and who is to come.*” (Rev.1:8)

REFLECTION: In St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, we have a clear statement of the faith of the infant Church, in the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. That there are three Persons in one God, each one infinite in power, in glory, in wisdom, is a fact we accept because the Triune God has revealed it to us. No intelligent Christian, or for that matter, no intelligent human being, who hears of this mystery, can even think of questioning this truth once he or she admits its existence has been revealed by God, “ who cannot deceive or be deceived.”

As Christians, we accept without question that there are three Persons in One God and we bow down in humble adoration before them. But there is another mystery in the Blessed Trinity which cause us to wonder in amazement. It is the mystery of this Triune God’s love for us. St. Paul’s words in today’s reading shows us the three divine Persons cooperating on our behalf. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit each have a part in the work of enabling us finite, fragile and fickle creatures, to share in their infinite happiness.

But why? They are infinitely perfect and happy in themselves, they need nothing from us. Here again is where our small, finite intelligence fails us. We can understand human love and human generosity which is hardly ever without (© Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“ But when he comes, the Spirit of Truth, he will guide you to all truth.” (Jn.16: 13a)

Feature Article

Widow's Mite- a Faith Inspired Giving

“If your faith has not impacted your wallet, then one must question the depth of your faith”
A Christian Theologian

Mk 12:41-44 and Lk 21:1-4 tell of a poor widow who gave two mites to the treasury of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Jesus used her offering, *all she had to live on* as an occasion to bring to focus true giving, faith and sacrifice. The mite is about the size of a dime and is the smallest of Roman coins. It circulated in Judea beginning in 103 BC, continuing into the early first century AD.

One need not be poor to know that they are deprived of material goods and other essentials, living below human standards. The effects of poverty are both personal and social. Moreover, there are challenges attendant to being so. There is the frustration of not being able to provide or the humiliation of having to be dependent on others for daily sustenance or the fear of victimization. Often times, being poor is not a conscious personal choice. It is forced upon us by life's circumstances. The widow in our Scripture passages contributed numerically less than what others had shared. Her gift, however, far exceeded what others gave in God's scale of value. She gave out of her need; “all she had to live on.” whereas others gave out of their abundance. What she gave was priceless. The two coins contributed to the treasury were of infinite value because she gave her all. Jesus was touched by the lavishness of the widow's gift, for she gave her heart. *“My son, give me the gift of your heart”* (Proverbs 23:26).

In essence, hers was sacrificial giving for she gave EVERYTHING and withheld nothing. Her generous giving revealed her deep faith in the Lord. She knows that faith is what counts. She believes that He will not fail her. She believes that God who *“so loved the world, that he gave his ONLY begotten Son”* (Jn3.16) will provide for her needs. Her childlike trust in the Lord and her steadfast faith in Him call for “giving her all.” Giving any other way would be less pleasing and desirable, maybe even worthless.

Jesus knows what motivates our giving. He knows what and how much we hold back from Him. Are we giving our time, talent and treasure cheerfully, regularly, generously, whole heartedly? Only ourselves and Jesus know whether our giving reflects a true and faithful devotion to the One who gave His life that we may have life eternal

Beatitudes - Beyond Cosmetic TV Makeovers

If you are familiar with the TV makeovers, you are aware of the fast, almost magical transformation that happens to a person within a very short period of time during the makeovers. A rapid change of hairstyle, make-up, dress, that change the looks of a person. Similarly, our Lord's process of having a transforming ‘makeover’ happens during His Sermon of the Mount, starting with the lessons on Beatitudes, Mt 5:3-12:

Unlike the makeovers, the Beatitudes are beyond the cosmetic side. Our Master intends this to deeply convert and change our inner beings. Our Lord sends this message to his disciples after he went up to the mountain, just as many other serious ‘encounters’ and miracles were written in the Gospel.

Just like in the makeovers, the idea and message within the Beatitudes is unbelievable, almost foolish to the world. Almost like the seeming foolishness of listening to Jesus calling “blessed” the poor, the mourning, the meek, the hungry, the merciful, the peacemakers, the pure in heart, and the persecuted. Yet this is the exact message and wisdom from God for those who desire “beyond the skin makeovers”, a life changing attitude, a transforming message of Christ Jesus:

1 Corinthians 1:18,27-30: *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things-and the things that are not-to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God-that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

Are we poor? In Christ we have the kingdom. Are we mourning? In Christ we have comfort. Are we meek? In Christ we inherit the earth. Are we hungry and thirsty? In Christ, our righteousness, we are filled. Are we merciful? In Christ we have mercy. Are we pure in heart? In Christ, we shall see God. Are we peacemakers? In Christ, we are children of God. Are we persecuted? In Christ we shall be rewarded in heaven.

So we see that the Beatitudes are just like a “beyond the cosmetic ‘makeover’”. It is the transforming message of faith from Jesus, the foolishness to this world but the wisdom of God. We see this now through the eyes of faith. One day, we will see it with our own eyes in the kingdom of heaven.

Other News...

Youth Ministry welcomes new leaders, thanks outgoing ones

The Youth Ministry announced the emergence of two new District Youth Coordinators who will serve for the next two years. Mart Razal and David De La Fuente were introduced last Friday, May 28, 2004, in the Youth Assembly where the community enthusiastically received them. Mart Razal will serve as DYC for Formation while David De La Fuente will serve in Management. They were nominated by their peers because they exhibited the qualities of leadership and enthusiasm to serve. They will be joining Grace De Luna in Mission, Elaine Canlas in Evangelization, and Stephanie Ikalina in Pastoral.

The Ministry at the same time recognized the valuable contributions of the outgoing servant leaders, Phoebe Garcia of Management and Liz Perez of Formation, who continued to serve despite their very busy schedules as full time college students.

Together with the Youth leadership, they helped organize and facilitate the Youth Encounters 8, 9, and 10 and Youth Life in the Spirit Seminars 9 and 10. They were also personally involved in the Youth Leadership Conference last November and the very successful Youth Rally last March. Their lasting legacy will be their strong and solid witnessing of servant heartedness and love for their peers that is so infectious it resulted in over sixty youth members to be eligible for nomination in the Emergence process this year.

"Be eager to present yourself as acceptable to God, a workman who causes no disgrace, imparting the word of truth without deviation." 2 Tim 8:15

We welcome contributions to the Covenant News.

- We appreciate your effort in writing your articles, and prayerfully give thanks.
- We cannot assure that your contribution, solicited or not, will be published.
- The article is subject to any edits or revisions by our editorial staff.

What do you think of the CN?

Please send all comments to

wordministry@bldnewark.com

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Teachings tomorrow, June 5 at St. Antoninus, 1-6pm
All covenanted members - Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part III:

- Prenatal Sins & Wounds
- Generational Sin
- Performance Orientation
- Parental Inversion & Substitute Mate
- Small Groups

LSS 1-17 - Apologetics, Mary, Sacramentals, Trinity, Salvation

LSS 1-18 - Healing and Deliverance

LSS 1-19 - Spiritual Warfare

June 25th after LWG

Singles/SPE Ministry - EWJ, Development of the Gospel

Intercessory Ministry - Formation Teaching

Service Ministry - Formation Teaching

Our forthcoming Encounters. Please spread the word to sign up early. Class sizes are limited. Application forms with Secretariat or download from www.bldnewark.com.

- **YE #11** July 9-11 in Easton PA.
- **FE #11** July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

Play and help. Golf Fundraising Drive started last Wednesday. Held every 3rd Wednesday, the next outing will be on June 16. Contact Sam Olaso 201-400-2698 or Dee Lim 973-226-5779.

"Open your hearts and let Christ speak to you. Dedicate time habitually to prayer and meditation of the Gospel." — Pope John Paul II to the Youth

On Pentecost, Pope John Paul II urged us to pray for **"a copious effusion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit!"**

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS

5/14	\$ 3,236
5/21	4,026
5/28	3,873
21-wk avg	3,778

EXPENSES

21-wk avg \$4,552



Thank you for your generosity!

Counsels from page 1

a tinge of selfish interest, and which at its best is temporary and very limited in quality and quantity. But God's love for us is infinite. It is completely and entirely without self-interest. It is not a limited gift but the promise of an unending state of happiness, if we do what is asked of us during our few years of probation in this world.

We know the fact that it has been clearly and very definitely revealed to us that God loves us with an infinite love. The three Persons of the Blessed Trinity have proved and are still proving this fact to us. We cannot in this life understand why, but we can and must show our gratitude for this fact of divine generosity and love.

Today, as we honor the three divine Persons, our central thought should concentrate on gratitude to each of the three: the loving Father who planned not only our creation but our elevation to adopted sonship; the all-obedient loving Son, who carried out the Father's plan, sharing with us our humanity so that we could share in the divinity; the Holy Spirit, fruit of the love of Father and Son, who has come to dwell in the Church and in each individual member, in order to fill our hearts with a true love of God.

We know we are unworthy of this divine generosity. That should not and must not stop us from availing of this divine generosity. We can show our gratitude in one way only, that is by appreciating our privilege and by striving to show our appreciation of it in our daily lives. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit know all our human weaknesses, they knew them before they arranged to make us shares in their own eternal happiness. They know also that it is those of us who try and try again to rise above our human weaknesses, who will finally share heaven with them.

Today, the feast day of the Blessed Trinity, let us thank, from our hearts, the three divine persons for all they have done and are continuing to do for us. Let us resolve to make ourselves less unworthy of their divine love, by doing what they ask of us, by living our faith in charity and by keeping ever before our minds the hope of the eternal reward, so generously offered to us

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Boast of your affliction for the glory of God. (Rom.5:2-3)
- 2) Let your words, actions and decisions be guided by the Spirit of Truth so that you will be led to all truth. (Jn.16:13)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jun 4-6	ME 23, St. Frances Retreat House, Easton PA
Jun 5	Teachings (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jun 11-13	Long Island SE 5
Jun 12	Disciples' Assembly
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS 10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary
Jun 25	Teachings (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jun 25-27	Albany LSS
Jun 26	Trenton Community Day
Jul 2	Healing Mass
Jul 9-11	YE 11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 9-11	Long Island YE 5
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE 11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME 5

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!!!



BIRTHDAYS

06/04	Pangga Alcudia, YE 9
06/05	Ernie Doropan, LSS12 Tony Nwaneri, ME21 Kathleen Pormento, YE 0 Chuck Tanseco, YE 1 Jackie Purisima, YCR4
06/07	Bebot Baquilod, LSS2 Mark Bustos, YE 7
06/08	Vic Malantic, LSS20
06/09	Ralph Almonte, LSS4 Bong David, LSS16
06/10	Manny San Luis, LSS4 Tess Tope, LSS20

ANNIVERSARIES

06/04	George & Cathy Del Fierro, LSS
06/05	Audie & Vulet Chong, LSS20 Rudy & Lorie Lizardo, ME20
06/06	Jun & Zeny Isidro, LSS15
06/08	Benru & Elsa Etcubanas, LSS5 Mel & Remy Hernandez, LSS20
06/09	Joven & Lisa Soriano, LSS15
06/10	Noel & Marilyn Alejan, LSS7 Nong & Tricia Bustos, LSS14 Gary & Mil Camacho, LSS17 Danny & Grace Palomares, LSS17 Patrick & Eunice Ukaegbu, LSS19



ME 23: A Weekend of Joy

31 couples, a priest and a nun attended the Spirit-filled ME 23 last weekend at the St. Francis Retreat House in Easton, PA. Aided by the anointed testimonies and teaching of the pastoral team- Rene & Sally Castaneda, Casey & Malyn Tanseco and Fr. Paul Lehman- the candidates opened up to the love and healing grace of the Lord, who brought smiles on their faces and joy in their eyes.

Nestor & BecBec Laxina are the ME 23 class shepherds. The ME 23 class members are: Ray-Fely Africa, Dan-Beth Alip, Eddie-Pearl Antonio, Onwuka-Obioma Anyanwu, Mon-Neth Arceo, Gene-Alice Bautista, Tony-Marlene Brillantes, Roel-Annie Casino, Epim-Nim Col, Tito-Anne Cruz, Gon-Maria Daulo, Marc-Therese Disla, Fr. Al Ezenwata, J.R.-Judy Garcia, Seb-Evangeline Gubor, Ad-Nancy Hernandez, Larry-Carina Ibarrola, Ricky-Evelyn Laguatan, Jack-Tess Lopez, Ronnie-Mila Macaisa, Ricky-Joan Maniego, Angel-Evelyn Matos, Camille-Margaret Milfort, James-Malou Minano, Bert-Isabel Relevo, Aton-Ningning Reyes, Ramon-Dulce Samonte, Jun-Luchie Schroth, Phil-Ghe Songco, Emil-Willy Tan, Sister Camillus Uzor, Jojo-Chi-Chi Velasco, and Brian-Cheryl Vista.

Father Dave Celebrates 1st BLD Mass

Grace filled Boland Hall last Friday as the newly-ordained Fr. Dave Sison celebrated his first mass in BLD, with Fr. Eustace as concelebrant. Fr. Dave's homily stirred the hearts of the community as he exhorted them "to be the faithful witnesses of Jesus...to share Jesus with others...to live like Jesus, so that those who do not yet know Jesus will say: in you, I found Jesus." (See page 2 for Fr. Dave's homily).

Fr. Dave and Fr. Eustace also blessed the following new servants of the Lord:

BLD Rockland- Outreach Shepherds: Mon & Bingle Chan; Core Group: Ralph & Lucy Almonte-Evangelization; Boyet & Mita Miranda - Formation; Eric & Claire Macalintal- Management; Poch & Vicky Gatchalian- Pastoral.

SPE 6 Class Shepherds- Bobby & Dolly Fernandez; ME 24 Class Shepherds- Tony & Linda Avisado

Youth Core members: David de la Fuente, Mark Razal

COUNSELS

The Body and Blood of Christ - Corpus Christi

WORD: Gn 14:18-20; Ps 110:1-4; 1
Cor 11:23-26; Lk 9:11b-17

ORDER: Jesus says "Eat my Body and drink my Blood and do this in remembrance of me".
(1Cor 11:24-25)

REFLECTION:

In the community teaching Encounters with Jesus, we learned about Melchizedek as a type of Jesus. A "type" is something or someone that prefigures the person to come. Modern commentators' most common view of Melchizedek is that of a historical figure, a normal human being that God used as a type. We will attempt to use "types", "pre-figurements" and "foreshadows" to highlight the perfect priesthood and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From our first reading in Genesis 14, which was explained further in the book of Hebrews, we learned that Melchizedek means king of righteousness. He was the king of Salem (or shalom), which means peace. He was the priest of God Most High and he brought out "bread and wine" as an offering, instead of animal sacrifices that an ordinary Levitical priest would offer. Melchizedek then blessed Abraham, implying that he was superior to Abraham.

The different readings all point to a single priest who cannot die, a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek, a priest offering bread and wine, foreshadowing the Eucharist. This priest is our Lord Jesus, "our priest in heaven ministering now in the sanctuary and he's got something to offer and he's continually

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"For as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes."

(1 COR 11:26)

Fr. Dave's Homily (06/22/03): Feast of Corpus Christi

"This is my Body... This is my Blood, which will be given up for you. Do this in memory of me"

Pope Urban IV instituted the feast of Corpus Christi in 1264 to assure us of the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. In connection with this feast, I would like to share with you the story of a surgeon whose patient was a young boy with a heart ailment. The surgeon said, "Tomorrow morning, I'll open up your heart." The boy interrupted, "You'll find Jesus there." The surgeon continued, annoyed: "I'll cut your heart open to see how much damage has been done..." "But when you open up my heart, you'll find Jesus in there," said the boy.

The surgeon looked to the parents, who sat quietly, "when I see how much damage has been done, I'll sew your heart and chest back up, and I'll plan what to do next." The boy responded, "You'll find Jesus in my heart. The Bible says He lives there. The hymns all say He lives there. You'll find Him in my heart." The surgeon had had enough. "I'll tell you what I'll find in your heart. I'll find damaged muscle, low blood supply, and weakened vessels. And I'll find out if I can make you well." The boy again said, "You'll find Jesus there too. He lives there."

The surgeon recorded his notes from the surgery: damaged aorta, damaged pulmonary vein, widespread muscle degeneration. No hope for a transplant, no hope for cure. Therapy: painkillers and bed rest. Prognosis: death within one year." He stopped and asked aloud, "Why?" Why did You do this? You've put him here. You've put him in this pain; and You've cursed him to early death. Why?"

The Lord answered, "The boy, My lamb, was not meant for your flock for long, for he is a part of my flock and will forever be. Here, in My flock, he will feel no pain, and will be comforted as you cannot imagine. His parents will one day join him here, and they will know peace, and my flock will continue to grow."

The surgeon tearfully complained, "You created that boy, and You made that heart. He'll be dead in months. Why?" The Lord answered, "The boy, My lamb, shall return to My flock, for he has done his duty: I did not put My lamb with your flock to lose him, but to retrieve another lost lamb." The surgeon wept.

The surgeon sat beside the boy's bed; the boy's parents sat across from him. The boy awoke and whispered, "Did you cut open my heart?" "Yes", the surgeon said. "What did you find?" the boy asked. "I found Jesus there," the surgeon said.

In the gospel, we read the same words that we hear in the mass during consecration, when the bread and the wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ. Jesus is truly present in the mass, for we hear His words through the mouth of the priest, "*This is My body... This*

is My blood." Jesus does not say that this is the symbol of my body and blood. Jesus comes down upon us and comes to us in a real manner when we receive His body and blood.

I often envied the apostles and early Christians for they personally saw and lived with Jesus and witnessed His miracles. But you and I are as blessed, for Jesus Christ continues to be with us through the sacrament of the Eucharist. He has chosen to live among us. He dwells in the Tabernacle. There, we can show Him our adoration and love. Jesus is always ready to welcome us, if we allow ourselves to have time with Him. We perceive His presence with the faith that rises from our soul. Our faith allows us to say, like the surgeon in the story, "I found Jesus".

But there are times when we experience hardships and difficulties, when we feel alone and cannot see God, like the man in "Footprints in the Sand". That man complained to God saying, "Lord, why was it that when I am in highest point of my life, when I am happy, I see two sets of footprints, but when I am experiencing hardships and difficulties, I only see one set of footprints? Where were You when I needed You the most?" Jesus said to him, "My son, I never left you. In your moments of trials and difficulties, when you see only one set of footprints, it was because I carried you."

Let us pray that we may have faith that Jesus is present when we are happy and everything is going well in our life, as well as when we are down and are in the midst of trials and difficulties.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, give me strength. Hear me, Jesus, hide me in Thy wounds, that I may never leave Thy side. From all the evil that surrounds me, defend me. And when the call of death arrives, bid me come to Thee. That I may praise Thee with Thy Saints forever.

Let us pray that we can witness His presence to others, that others may say, "In you, I FOUND JESUS."

Holy Father's June Intentions

General intention: That all Christians may be constantly more aware of their personal and community responsibility to bear witness to God's love for humanity and for every man and woman.

Missionary intention: That religious freedom - a fundamental right of mankind - may meet with ever growing respect in Asian countries.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

In 1674, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was contemplating the five wounds of Jesus in front of an exposed Blessed Sacrament. According to her, she then saw the five wounds of Jesus shining like five suns issuing flames like a furnace from all sides, but most especially from His adorable Heart.

St. Margaret Mary said that Jesus grieved over the great number of horrible sins heaped upon him by the ingratitude of mankind. She recounted that He said these words, "Behold this Heart, Which has loved men so much, that It has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming Itself, in order to testify to them Its love; and in return I received from the greater number nothing but ingratitude by reason of their irreverence and sacrileges, and by the coldness and contempt which they show Me in this Sacrament of Love. But what I feel most keenly is that it is hearts which are consecrated to Me that treat Me thus. Therefore, I ask of thee that the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi be set apart for a special feast to honor My Heart."

In order to make reparation for our faults, Jesus asks us to receive the Holy Communion as often as possible, particularly on first Fridays, and to spend an hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the outpouring of God's mercy and love for us. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:16-17).

Our devotion to the Sacred Heart is a response to His invitation to walk with Him in the light. As we celebrate the Paschal Mystery, we participate in His suffering. When we take and drink His body and blood, we become one with Him. Our faithfulness with the holy hour will nourish our souls, allowing us to be grateful for His love and mercy.

"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one." (John 10:27-30)

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

5/21	\$4,026
5/28	3,873
6/04	3,361
22-wk.Avg	3,759

*Thank you for
your generosity!*

EXPENSES: 22-wk.Avg \$4,345

Ministry Announcements

Disciples' Assembly tomorrow. All committed and covenanted members are asked to attend the assembly, 1-4pm at Boland Hall. *Please come on time!*

50 Years of Priesthood. Come and join our thanksgiving celebration of Fr. Paul's golden milestone. June 19 Saturday 1-6pm at St. Leo's Church.

Teachings:

June 25 after LWG:

Singles/SPE Ministry: EWJ, Development of the Gospel

Intercessory Ministry: Formation Teaching

Service Ministry: Formation Teaching

July 3rd teachings are all CANCELLED.

July 16th at St. Leo's, after LWG:

John 6: John 6 Teaching

Mark 10: Mark 10 Teaching

July 17th at St. Antoninus, 1-6pm (Except for Elijah House 1-8pm):

All covenanted members: Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part IV.

LSS 1-22: NCR, GIP-Prayer, Praise & Worship

LSS 1-21: Intro to Intercession, Intro to Commitment, EWJ - Luke & John

July 23rd at St. Antoninus:

Singles/SPE Ministries: EWJ - Mark

Intercessory Ministry: Intercessory Formation Teaching

Service Ministry: Service Formation Teaching

Our forthcoming Encounters. Please spread the word to sign up early. *Class sizes are limited.* Application forms with Secretariat or download from www.bldnewark.com.

- YE #11 July 9-11 in Easton PA.
- FE #11 July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

Golf outing on June 16. Our Golf Fundraising is held every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Sam Olasso 201-400-2698 or Dee Lim 973-226-5779.

Counsels from page 1

offering it. He's just not bleeding and dying and suffering any more. He's not killing any more animals, but he's continually offering the once and for all sacrifice which is he himself; but it's a continual sacrifice. It's a perpetual offering. He's not dying, but he's still offering. That's exactly what the Catholic Church teaches about the Mass" (S. Hahn).

Another event that foreshadows the Eucharist is Luke's account of the multiplication of the bread, our Gospel reading. Jesus is teaching the disciples and the people to trust in God's omnipotence. Jesus knows fully how deficient our flesh is. This is confirmed by St. Paul's letter to the Galatians (Gal 5:19-21): "*The works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissension, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like.*" St. Paul also warns us in Rom 8:5-6 that: "*Those who live according to the flesh are concerned with the things of the flesh... The concern of the flesh is death...*". But just as those who ate the manna in the wilderness died, and those who ate the bread and fish will crave for more, our Lord Jesus had replaced these imperfect offerings, as a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek, with a perfect offering, the Holy Eucharist. The "deficiency of the flesh" was replaced by a "perfect flesh". The concern of the flesh, which is death, was replaced by life: "*unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you*" (Jn 6:53). Jesus knows that our world needs life, not death, so he promised us: "*The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world*".

The Lord has given us His "perfect flesh" as an offering, to give us life everlasting. Are we still concerned about the things of the flesh? What kind of offering do we have to respond to His precious love for the Church? How do we support the Body of Christ, our community, and our missions? Do we understand the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist?

The greatest gift that our Savior has given us is his body and blood, to convince us of the truth of God's love for all of us. How do we respond to his love?

DIRECTIONS:

- Give to the Lord what is right and not what is left.
- Learn and adhere to the teachings of the Catholic Church regarding the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

A morning affirmation: "*Today, I will follow the Spirit in everything I do and say.*"

Community Calendar

Jun 11-13	Long Island SE5
Jun 12	Disciples' Assembly (see page 3)
Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary (see page 3)
Jun 25	Teachings (see page 3)
Jun 25-27	Albany LSS
Jun 26	ME26 Grand Reunion Trenton Community Day
Jul 2	Healing Mass
Jul 2-4	Seattle FE4
Jul 9-11	YE11 (see page 3)
Jul 9-11	Long Island YE5
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5

BIRTHDAYS

6/11	Bobut Gongob, LSS19
6/12	Josie Magahis, LSS17 Charlene Paule, Mk10
6/13	Wilma Antonio, LSS18 Tony Yanza, LSS13 Chi Ekweghariri, YE 9 Demelina Valonzo, Mk10
6/14	Leonida Cruz, LSS11 Chuck Okereke, ME21 Vicki Rasalan, LSS2 Jerome Garcia, YE 2
6/15	Mike Luzzi, LSS14
6/16	Frank Mendonoz, LSS20 PJ Luardo, YCR 4
6/17	Zaldy Espinosa, LSS12 Kay Mendoza, YE 6

ANNIVERSARIES

6/12	Richard & Lee de la Fuente, LSS1
6/14	Lando & Dory Bonifacio, LSS8 Ike & Ely Alimario, LSS17

Prophecy received May 28

"I give you GIFTS. But these gifts are not for you to keep. Use your gifts to build up my Church. Use your gifts to help your brethren. The FRUIT of your new life are yours. My peace, my love, my joy... these gifts are for you and for your community."

GK 777 Poverty Alleviation Program. Visit www.gawadkalinga.com



We celebrate Fr. Paul's 50th



Please join us tomorrow, June 19 at St Leo's church for worship, thanksgiving and fellowship as Fr. Paul Lehman, our beloved Spiritual director, celebrates his 50th anniversary of priesthood

The program is as follows:

1:00-2:15 Eucharistic Celebration

2:30-5:30 Presentations, Testimonials & Fellowship

5:30-6:00 Closing Prayers/Adjournment

SEE GREETINGS TO FR. PAUL IN INSERT.

continued on page 2

Disciples say Yes!

A record turnout of 136 disciples attended our quarterly Disciples' Assembly at Boland Hall last Saturday. After the opening worship, Word sharing circles formed to reflect on the Word. The clear Order emerged from the day's Gospel: *Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes'*.

The body deliberated on current district and global issues, among them the right exercise of community prophesying (*see related article on page 3*), mission immersion and a revised formation program, financial matters, the Rockland outreach and upcoming events. The DSL reported on the Covenant of Communion, accreditation of new teachers, the reconfigured West Coast directorate and other global/cluster issues.

The zeal and commitment of disciples was evident as prayer leaders stayed on after the assembly for a forum on Excellence in Worship, and the praise ministry even later for its weekly practice. Along with the amazing turnout and focused enthusiasm of the assembly, it truly was a lived experience of *disciples meaning Yes!* to their pledge to serve the Lord in community.

COUNSELS

The Meaning Of Discipleship

WORD: Zec 12:10-11, 13:1; Ps 63:2-6, 8-9; Gal 3:26-29; Lk 9:18-24

ORDER: *"If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."* (Lk 9:23)

REFLECTION: To help us better understand the message of this Gospel, let us ponder the connection between Jesus asking, *"Who do you say that I am?"* and his invitation to follow Him.

Personal relationship with Jesus

"The Messiah of God." This was what St. Peter felt in his heart about Jesus and he backed up this declaration by following Jesus until his own death. As Jesus turns to each one of us and asks, *"Who am I to you?"* we should look into our hearts and confirm if we really know, trust, believe in and are close to Him. He wants to find out how deep is our love for Him. We must have a personal relationship with Him because this will be the foundation of following Him. Confession of our love is not enough unless we live it and there is genuine forgiveness and compassion in our hearts.

Denial of ourselves

To deny ourselves is to disown or not acknowledge our self-interest or importance. *continued on page 4*

God's Promise for the Week

"Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." (Lk 9:24)

WE LOVE YOU, FATHER PAUL!

We are blessed with new teachers

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

CSL CIRCULAR NO. 06-2004-171

DATE: June 9, 2004

TO: THE PRESIDING STEWARD
NEWARK DISTRICT COUNCIL OF STEWARDS

CC: DISTRICT SERVANT LEADER
FROM: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF SERVANT
LEADERS

SUBJECT: REGULARIZATION AND
ACCREDITATION OF BLD TEACHERS

Resolution No. 0608-01-32

Series of 2004

Whereas, the District Council of Stewards of the BLD District of Newark has recommended the regularization of their District and Community Instructors in accordance with the CSL Resolution No. 0319-01-05, and the District Servant Leader of the Newark Cluster has favorably endorsed such recommendation;

Whereas, the Formation Apostolate and the ECSL have deliberated and found said recommendation in order;

Resolved, therefore as it is hereby resolved that the following are accredited as district and community instructors:

District Instructors:

Romy Cuy	Jess Olaso
Dading Cuy	Mita Olaso
Bing Espinoza	Caesar Rasalan
Zaldy Espinoza	Tony Rosal
Sundee Ikalina	Lilibeth Zanduetta
Nene Ikalina	

Community Instructors:

Rene Castaneda	Annie Felibrico
Sally Castaneda	Ollie Felibrico
Cathy del Fiero	Noel Trillana
George del Fiero	Letty Trillana

FOR THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF SERVANT LEADERS,
KIKO & AIDA JOSEF
Presiding Servant Leader

“And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ.” (Eph 4:11-12)

Pope declares Year of the Eucharist

“I am happy to announce a special year of the Eucharist,” Pope John Paul announced during his Corpus Christi homily on June 10. He said he convoked the “Year of the Eucharist” because the program he presented to the Church at the start of the millennium is based on “starting afresh from Christ.” It seeks to “make every community grow in faith and love toward the mystery of the Body and Blood of the Lord.”

The Holy Father’s 14th encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* published in April 2003, is a reflection on the eucharistic mystery and its relationship to the Church. In it he stressed that the Church cannot “realize her own vocation without cultivating a steadfast relationship with the Eucharist.”

He referred to his apostolic letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* in which he invited the faithful to “start afresh from Christ,” contemplating the countenance of the Incarnate Word, really present in the Sacrament. It will aid the faithful to grow in the art of prayer and the “high degree” of the Christian life needed for the new evangelization.

The Pope convoked the special Year for next October with the World Eucharist Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico, to end with the next ordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2005. The subject of the Synod will be “The Eucharist: source and summit of the life and mission of the Church.”

Fr. Paul *from page 1*

Since 1996, we have been blessed with the faith-filled leadership of Fr. Lehman. He bonded us in love by his examples of humility, holiness and compassion. It is in this light that the initial plan to throw a big and extravagant party for him was dropped and in its place a simple celebration planned. Touched by the extreme poverty he had seen in the Philippines, he declined a lavish affair in his honor but asked the community to instead focus its efforts to helping the poorest and most needy.

How can we help? In lieu of gifts, we are requested that donations be made to the BLD Fund for the “Gawad Kalinga 777” program. Through our financial contributions, it is the hope that a village of 35 or more homes would be built, the village to be called the “Father Paul Lehman Village.” We all can be part of Fr. Paul’s dream. What better gift is there to someone who taught us what loving Christ is all about?

We praise and thank God for the blessing of Fr. Paul in our community. We are indeed very grateful for all the many good things that he has been to us. *Congratulations, Fr. Paul!*

Prophecy in Community

Deuteronomy 18:20 says, "If a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak... he shall die." The Lord also warns: "Listen not to the words of your prophets who fill you with emptiness...they speak not from the mouth of the Lord. I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied...I am against the prophets who borrow speeches to pronounce oracles... They do this people no good at all." (Jer 23:16-32)

These are strong words from the Old Testament prophets, but even St. Paul wrote, "Guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid profane babbling." (1 Tim 6:20) Nevertheless, the Apostle urges us, "Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good." (1 Thes 5:19-21)

Thus, today's Christians are called to discern the message and the spirit of each prophecy. In addition, Matthew 7:15-16 provides a guideline for testing the prophet as well. "Beware of false prophets... By their fruits you will know them." And the Lord continued, "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, did we not prophesy in your name?... Then I will declare to them solemnly, I never knew you. Depart from me.'" (vv 22-23)

But what are these fruits by which we shall know a prophet? Galatians 5:22 speaks of the fruit of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Are these fruits predominant in the lives of the prophet? Does his conversation center on God's righteousness or on the things of this world? Does he promote peace instead of strife? Is he gentle and patient, or does he lose his temper easily? Does his joy spill over to others, or does he continually complain of the things that do not please him? Does he show love and tolerance for those that oppose him? Is he meek, giving God the glory for his talents and gifts, or does he talk proudly of what he or his group is doing?

In examining the lives of prophets by this biblical standard, we must be careful. Matthew 7:2 cautions us, "As you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you." Certainly, we are admonished to be on guard for false prophets. However, we also must not go to the extreme as to become narrow-minded and closed to possible truth the Lord may have for us through our brother or sister in community. In the end, there must be mutual love and support between those exercising prophetic gifts and those receiving prophecies, that the Lord may be glorified.

Ministry Announcements

Tomorrow we celebrate 50 Years of Priesthood! Come and join us for Mass, fellowship and thanksgiving for Fr. Paul's golden milestone, 1-6pm at St. Leo's Church.

Huff 'n Puff basketball resumes tomorrow 9am at Boland Hall.

Teachings:

June 25 after LWG

Singles/SPE Ministry: EWJ, Development of the Gospel

Intercessory Ministry: Formation Teaching

Service Ministry: Formation Teaching

All July 3 teachings are CANCELLED.

July 16 at St. Leo's, after LWG

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

July 17 at St. Antoninus 1-6pm

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LSS 1-21: Intro to Intercession; Intro to Commitment;

EWJ - Luke & John

All covenanted members: Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part IV (1-8pm)

July 23 at St. Antoninus

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- **FE #11** July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ

Golf outing on June 16. Our Golf Fundraising is held every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Contact Sam Olasso 201-400-2698 or Dee Lim 973-226-5779.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

5/28	\$ 3,873
6/04	3,361
6/11	4,533
23-wk avg	3,793

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

23-wk avg \$ 4,063

Counsels *from page 1*

knowledge or lofty attainment, we should always be humble because it is easier to run to Jesus, be close to Him, feel His presence and love Him. Any self-interest in our service to the Lord will hinder our responding wholeheartedly to His will. To forsake ourselves and put the interest of others ahead of us is the fulfillment of Jesus' role and mission

Taking up of our cross

As we strive to get close to the Lord, there is always the struggle in accepting pain and suffering. We are probably fazed by the thought that Jesus' suffering is too much for us to bear. We tend to say, "Here I am Lord, but send somebody else." We compromise and come halfway so as not to suffer, and are afraid to leave our shell of comfort and control. We must realize that pain is part of life in this world. It is God's way of strengthening us. And it is in death that we are born to a new life. It is only in our willingness to accept suffering that it becomes easier to bear. We have this breathtaking promise by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 11:29-30: *"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."*

Following Jesus

This denotes two things: Leaving all behind, and doing His job or witnessing.

Leaving all behind is a figurative speech because we really cannot leave our families, jobs etc. What it means is detachment. We should be able to enjoy the comforts of life but be ready to endure discomfort when asked by God. We should be able to strive for success but be ready to stop when called by God. We should be able to possess material things but be ready to let go when told by God. Detachment means we should not let our hearts be enslaved by earthly things but set our hearts only on Jesus.

Witnessing for Jesus is working for Him. We must finish the work He started for us. We must guide other people to salvation, starting with our family, relatives and friends. Through our service in the various ministries of BLD, we must minister to our brothers and sisters. We can encourage other people to change their ways by how we live our lives rather than with what we have to say. The key is to make ourselves available as the Lord's instruments by living a holy life and helping to spread His word and His love.

Even as Christ invites each one of us to be His disciple, He gives us the freedom to stay or leave. However, it behooves us to be guided by St. Peter's words in John 6:68, *"Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."*

DIRECTIONS

- Deny yourself. *"Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves."* (Phil 2:3)
- Reflect on who Jesus is to you.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jun 18-20	Seattle LSS10
Jun 19	Fr. Paul's 50 th Anniversary (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jun 25	Teachings (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jun 25-27	Albany LSS
Jun 26	Huff 'n Puff Basketball, Boland Hall 9am ME23 Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 1-6pm SPE6 Grand Reunion, Building Annex 1-6pm Trenton Community Day
Jul 2	Healing Mass
Jul 2-4	Seattle FE4
Jul 9-11	YE11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5

*May the blessing of the Lord
be upon you!*



BIRTHDAYS

06/19	Joey Viola, LSS6 Charles Masisado, Mk 10
06/20	Fely Cruz, LSS11
06/20	Ver Limtian, LSS14 Chika Ekweghariri, YCR4
06/21	Rodaje Janet, LSS11 Ogechi Ukaegbu, Jn 6
06/22	Jonathan Tan, Mk 10
06/24	Mita Olaso, LSS11 Tess Tolentino, LSS21 Tita Valonzo, LSS11 Steve Banom, YE 9 Jamie Pagdonsolan, Mk10 Danny Tan, Mk 10 Tiffany Anyanwu, Mk 10

ANNIVERSARIES

06/18	Tony & Teresa Nwaneri, ME21
06/19	Nora & Nieto Lopez, LSS19 Randy & Beth Trinidad, LSS10
06/21	Ver & Addie Limtian, LSS14
06/23	Marian & Fe Pakula, LSS14 Manolo & Mely Romero, LSS17
06/24	Ernie & Nelia Doropan, LSS12 Angel & Tessie Mijares, LSS16

GK 777 Poverty Alleviation Program
Visit www.gawadkalinga.com



Man and nature smile on Fr. Paul

Family, friends and the BLD community joined our Spiritual Director, Fr. Paul Lehman, last Saturday at St. Leo Church in celebrating his 50th sacerdotal anniversary. It truly was a golden affair to remember, with sunny warmth not only in the gorgeous weather but also in the smiles and hearts of everyone.

The afternoon started with Thanksgiving Mass concelebrated by Fr. Paul and eight other priests. In his homily, Fr. Paul reflected on his role as a priest who points out and leads his flock to what is transcendent and invisible in life. We frequent the Sacraments not in guilty introspection but because Jesus is there. Without Jesus in us, we get lost, discouraged and cannot transcend our weaknesses. Having a supernatural outlook also makes us see beyond the human limitations of brethren in community. To be covenanted, he said, is to completely give one's life to the Lord in the community and the wider Church.

After Mass, the assembly moved to the school cafeteria, ringing with praise songs by our youth. Entertaining presentations from various groups were followed by toasts that visibly touched the honoree. Fr. Sison called him the Godfather of BLD seminarians, Fr. Bettinger lauded him as a perfect example of humanity. Young David de la Fuente exclaimed, "In you we found Jesus." Noel Trillana compared him to wine that gets better with age, bringing thunderous applause from the community.

The community's "gift" to Fr. Paul highlighted the afternoon. An unexpectedly large sum of \$50,000 in collections and pledges was announced, earmarked for the "Fr. Paul Lehman Village" of 50 homes for the poor through the *Gawad Kalinga* program. In response, Fr. Paul thanked BLD for the fidelity shown to him all these years. "I am extremely honored by your love, service and generosity," he told the jubilant community. "Continue your work with the Lord and keep your vision high."

COUNSELS

One Heart and One Mind United in Christ

WORD: 1Kg 19:16b, 19-21; Ps 16:12, 5, 7-10, 11; Gal 5:1, 13-18; Lk 9:51-62

ORDER: *Follow me; go and proclaim the Kingdom of God.* (Lk 9:59-60)


Love your neighbor as yourself. (Gal 5:14)

REFLECTION: Our theme for this week is: "We are God's witnesses of unity as we follow Jesus unconditionally." To follow Jesus is to do so wholeheartedly – there is no middle ground.

The Gospel for this week focuses on various calls or invitations of Jesus to the three possible disciples. During the first encounter, the man said, "I'll follow you wherever you go." And Jesus, instead of welcoming him, looks into the heart of the man and tells him, in effect, "Are you willing to give up everything, including the comfort of home, a place to lay your head, to follow me?"

In the next instance, it is Jesus who asks another person to follow him. The man says he will, but there are family responsibilities that come first. But the call of Jesus is uncompromising. Nothing is allowed to be used as an excuse, even family responsibility. The demands of Jesus were too hard for him as they are for us.

The third encounter seems to be with a person most familiar to all of us. "Yes, I will do the will of God," he says. "I will follow the narrow way of Jesus, but first I must spend time with those I love." Jesus knows the human heart. He who set his face toward Jerusalem and the fulfillment of the Father's

page 4 

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

"You will show me the path to life, fullness of joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever." (Ps 16:11)

Why Confess to a Priest?

The fundamental objection so often urged against the Sacrament of Penance first came from the Scribes when Christ said to the sick man of the palsy; "*Courage, child, your sins are forgiven.*" (Mt 9:2) In the healing of the paralytic, Christ wrought a miracle to show that He had power to forgive sins and that this power is exerted not only in heaven but also on earth.

This power, moreover, He transmitted to Peter and the other Apostles, saying, "*Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*" (Mt 18:18)

Confession to a priest is an essential part of the sacrament of Penance. The Church prescribes, "After having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess mortal sins at least once a year." (CCC 1457) As to venial sins, the church strongly recommends confession without it being strictly necessary. Priests are to encourage the faithful to come to the sacrament of Penance and make themselves available to celebrate this sacrament each time Christians reasonably ask for it. Every priest who hears confession is bound under very severe penalties to observe absolute secrecy by the sacramental seal." What the penitent has made known to the priest remains "sealed" by the sacrament.

It is not true that for Catholics the mere "telling of one's sin" suffices to obtain their forgiveness. Without sincere sorrow and purpose of amendment, confession avails nothing, the pronouncement of absolution is of no effect, and the guilt of the sinner is greater than before.

What can we do to get rid of our guilt? We can (1) quit denying our guilt and recognize that we have sinned, (2) admit our guilt to God and ask His forgiveness, and (3) let go of our guilt and believe God has forgiven us. This can be difficult when a sin has taken root and grown over many years, when it is very serious, or when it involves others.

Indeed regular confession helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit. By receiving more frequently through this Sacrament the gift of the Father's mercy, we are spurred to be merciful as He is merciful (Luke 6:36).

Let us remember that, in view of the tremendous price Jesus paid on the cross, He is willing and able to forgive every sin. Even though our faith is weak, our conscience is sensitive, and our memory comes to haunt us, God's Word declares that sins confessed are sins forgiven.

To Build Grace Upon Grace

Six days after our thanksgiving for Fr. Paul's 50 years of priestly ministry, our spirits are still soaring. Do you feel the same way?

And it's not only because of the "rich grace" of 50 *Gawad Kalinga* Homes that the district cluster pledged to build in Fr. Paul Lehman's name.

Moreover, we are profoundly awed by the intangible blessings, the "humble grace" of selfless servanthood, compassion for the poor and strong sense of community that the Lord so visibly released among our members. The project was organized, launched and implemented purely from the power of love, as everyone contributed their time, talent, treasures and persons not from compulsion by authority, but by *agape* love and a strong desire to glorify God by honoring one of His faithful servants.

There is no doubt that Fr. Paul's lifelong service is by itself significant and deserving of recognition. But that singular event also reveals to us another magnitude that pertains uniquely to our community. We have just become part of a major milestone, participants to a turning point in the journey of our covenant community towards the Lord's vision of transcendence for us. The Lord has given us a spark that could be transformed into a mighty flame engulfing the hearts and minds not only of the district cluster, but also the world around us. The Lord will come with that fire to refine and purify the sons and daughters of God, and to liberate the oppressed from the bondage of poverty.

We have to seize the moment, capture that "spirit" which so moved the community to such great outpouring of love. Let there be no shortcoming, no misunderstanding, no difference of opinion - however great or small - that would take us away from the sure path which the Lord has placed before us. Let nothing weaken our unity, diffuse our resolve or distract us from our focus on the Lord.

But first, we must help each other appreciate *the rich and humble graces* that we have received from God. Then, let us live the humble grace perseveringly in our lives. Anointed leaders and members alike, we as community can help the Lord's cause so much. Proclaim the Word, share this great news to all, build a great community upon the foundation given us that is the Lord Himself.

BLD recognizes Winston Alcruz

On the occasion of the BLD Foundation Day, the Community honored our dear departed brother Winston Alcruz with a posthumous Certificate of Recognition given at the Manila District Eucharistic Mass last June 16. The award cited Winston's "unselfish service to the Community as former District Steward and Community Teacher of BLD Newark."

What Have You Done So Far?

Our Spiritual Director's exhortation during the mass that celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination as priest was loud and clear. What resonated in the hearts of people, and has continued to echo in my mind, was his question, *"What have you done as a Lay Association of the Faithful?"*

This encouragement from our Spiritual Director may have been a rhetorical question, but was an order to pursue our definite plans as an Association of the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Newark. It was not too far from the very words of Jesus in Mt 20:3-4, *"Going about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.'"* Such order from our Lord should be of great concern to all of us. The call to His service is not only to pastors, clergy, men and women in the religious life. God has called every man to contribute to the work of the Church, even spiritual communities.

Vatican II made an earnest plea in the Lord's name to all lay people to give a glad, generous and prompt response to the impulse of the Holy Spirit and to the voice of Christ, Who is giving everyone an urgent invitation. That same order was once more upon us through our Spiritual Director when he said: "EVANGELIZE!"

"What have you done so far?" Have we as a community responded to God's call amidst our present accountabilities and needs or have we given in to our heart's desire towards nesting and complacency? *"Why do you stand idle all day?"* (v6)

Sometime ago, some concerned disciples asked a similar question, "What are our plans in pursuing our anointing as a Lay Association of the Faithful?" Our Lord has used our community in touching countless souls. We have tried our best to form and disciple them according to the ways of Jesus. We have equipped them for spiritual combat, but have we allowed them to give more of themselves and be fruitful in our Lord's vineyard?

"What have you done so far?" As disciples and as a community, we have been called by name. We cannot withhold our response. *"If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been posed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it!"* (1 Cor 9:16)

"Start on the way! Don't be content to discuss; don't wait for occasions to do good that perhaps will never come. The hour of action has arrived!"
(Pope John Paul II, 6/7/04)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Huff 'n Puff basketball resumes tomorrow 9am at Boland Hall.

ME 23 Grand Reunion tomorrow Boland Hall 1-5pm. Please come, welcome and meet our new members.

Teachings:

All July 3 teachings are CANCELLED.

July 16 at St. Leo, after LWG

- John 6 Teaching
- Mark 10 Teaching

July 17 at St. Antoninus 1-6pm

- LSS 1-22: NCR; GIP- Prayer, Praise & Worship
- LSS 1-21: Intro to Intercession; Intro to Commitment; EWJ - Luke & John
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July 23 at St. Leo, after LWG

- Singles/SPE Ministries: EWJ - Mark
- Intercessory Ministry: Formation Teaching
- Service Ministry: Formation Teaching

Upcoming Encounters. *Please spread the word to sign up early.* Class sizes are limited. Forms are with Secretariat or at www.bldnewark.com / www.bldsinglesnewark.org.

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Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Plan to come!*

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. *Please mark your calendars.*

NFP Teaching Saturday August 7, venue and time to be announced. Dave Owens of the Archdiocese of Newark will give the *teaching on Natural Family Planning* to BLD members from the Newark district cluster, including Singles Ministry members, newly married couples and other interested medical professionals. Contact our Mission Stewards.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Collections

6/04	\$3,361	<i>Thank you for your generosity!</i>
6/11	4,533	
6/18	4,236	Expenses
24-wk average	3,812	24-wk average \$4,304

Counsels (from page 1)

will, accepts no empty excuses. Life with Christ is not shared by the many other loyalties that take us away from the call to obey the will of God.

The Gospel basically tells us that the cost of discipleship is steep and the reasons for evading the call are as numerous as the sands in the sea and the stars in the sky. The demands of discipleship call for a total commitment. Total commitment to Jesus is required so we can follow Him unconditionally. The priorities of those three people who desired to be disciples of Jesus were not right. Jesus required their undivided attention, but they were more concerned with possessions, personal gain, their livelihood and their families. A person who does not put Jesus first cannot be a true follower. And to follow Jesus unconditionally commands our unswerving love — placing the hand on the plow and not looking back. Not looking back, not longing for what enslaves us, even the relationship to a person close to us. Christ asks for our whole person. And when that surrender occurs, then we can become God's witnesses as we follow Jesus unconditionally.

As a community, we can be effective witnesses for Him when we are united, becoming one heart and one mind. "One heart and one mind" — this phrase seems very familiar as it is often referred to especially in the DCS. In reality, becoming one heart and one mind is the very essence of relationships in the whole community — we should mirror the unity of the Triune God. In fact, before Jesus' physical departure from His disciples, Jesus prayed to the Father "that all of them may be one, just as We are one; I in them and Thou in Me." (Jn17:21)

The goal is for us to become one heart and one mind. So as a community of disciples, we are encouraged to become one heart and one mind in order to achieve and preserve unity. Jesus wants us to have unity at all times — the kind of unity that is rooted in one important source which is the Word of God that comes from the Father; obeyed, lived and mirrored in the life of the Lord Jesus and inspired and shared by the Holy Spirit. And how do we keep unity within the body? By praying for one another, by loving one another unconditionally and by exercising unlimited forgiveness toward one another. Only when we become one heart and one mind in Jesus can we continue to experience peace and harmony amidst diversity in our gifts as a community.

DIRECTIONS

- Live by the Spirit and not by the flesh. (Gal 5:16)
- Serve one another through love. (v 13b)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jun 25-27 Albany LSS
Jun 26 Huff 'n Puff Basketball, Boland Hall 9am
ME23 Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 1-6pm
SPE6 Grand Reunion, Building Annex 1-6pm
Trenton Community Day
Jul 2 Healing Mass
Jul 2-4 Seattle FE4
Jul 9-11 YE11 (see page 3)
Jul 9-11 Long Island YE5
Jul 10 DLC Meeting
Jul 17 Teaching (see page 3)
Jul 23-25 SE 11 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1 FE11 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1 Trenton ME5

*May the blessings of
the Lord be upon you...*



BIRTHDAYS

- 06/25 Lawrence Anyanwu, ME21
Jan-Beatrice Almazan, Mk 10
Mel Lim, YE9
06/26 Hum Flores, LSS18
06/27 Babie Alberto, LSS1
Ruben Amarante, LSS1
Soc Punzalan, LSS10
Lally Reyes, LSS19
06/29 Gerry Garcia, LSS3
Pauline Ibarrola, LSS17
Patrick Arcales, YE 10
Rhia Eusebio, YE 10
Oleen Solon, YE 10
06/30 Jonathan Ciocon, Mk 10
07/01 Ling Garcia, LSS20
Espie Lising, LSS5
Monica Tolentino, YE 8

ANNIVERSARIES

- 06/25 Tony & Tates Abad, LSS17
Jojo & Tet Almazan, LSS3
Jun & Jane Entrada, LSS4
06/26 Joey & Cynthia Reyes, LSS15
06/27 Babie & Ency Alberto, LSS1
06/28 Ray & Lucille Ermita, LSS13
Boboy & Maris Guzman, LSS18
06/29 Fidel & Alegria Lim, LSS21
07/01 Gus & Jane Enciso, LSS17



ME # 23 Grand Reunion

The class of ME # 23 held their grand reunion last Saturday afternoon at the Boland Hall in St. Antoninus Parish. The event, as always, began with a spirit filled worship led by their class shepherds, Nestor and Becbec Laxina.

George and Cathy Del Fierro, DCS Formation Stewards, welcomed the class and gave them a brief overview regarding their growth in the community, with emphasis on the 5 W's, namely: Worship, Wisdom-Living Word, Witnessing, Work-Service and Warfare-Intercession.

A wonderful presentation of songs and dances prepared by ME # 23 brought smiles and joy to the delight of the guests. Each couple was again given the opportunity to share their experiences before, during and after the marriage encounter weekend.

All couples agreed that going forward, God would always be the center of their lives. One word described their feeling that day - love.

"I give you a new command: Love each other. You must love each other as I have loved you. All people will know that you are my followers if you love each other." (Jn 13:34-35)

Other News

Grand Reunion: Solo Parents Encounter #6

Last Saturday afternoon, June 26, 2003, at the Building Annex at St. Leo's, the Solo Parents of Encounter # 6 held their Grand Reunion. Their very able shepherds, Bobby and Dolly Fernandez, led the spirit-filled praise and worship. The new solo parents shared on how a multitude of blessings from the Lord renewed their lives. They expressed their thanks to their sponsors, coordinators and to the entire community who brought the love of Jesus to them. As always, this gathering would not be complete without the abundance of food. As a show of gratitude, a well-choreographed dance was performed by the class.

COUNSELS

Why We Rejoice

WORD: Is 66:10-14; Ps 66:1-7, 16, 20; Gal 6:14-18; Lk 10:1-12, 17-20

ORDER: *"Never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Gal 6:14)

REFLECTION: *Rejoice! Be glad! Exult!* These are words we hear in the First Reading; words that lift us up after listening to last week's talk on the demands of discipleship. In discernment with our global community, our reflection for this month is on the theme: **Jesus Christ, by His victory on the cross, has empowered us to carry out His mission.**

"The Lord's power shall be known to his servants." (Is 66:14c) Christ wants His disciples to carry out His mission detached of anxieties and fears. What is needed on our part is trust in the Lord. How often we come across and repeat this phrase, but perhaps a few of us really come to realize what's required to live it and to profit by it.

Trust in the Lord. We often have recourse to Him when we face troubles that seem beyond our powers to solve. We lift up heavy hearts and shackled hands, crying out for help, "Lord, see your helpless servant, drowning in fear. You alone have the power to get me out of this. *I trust in You!*"

The Psalmist teaches us to express this trust in constant praise, not in time of need *"Come and see the works of God. He rules by His might. Let us rejoice in Him."* (Ps 66)

The best lesson for us disciples in community comes from the lips of the Lord Jesus. Luke 10:1 is quite a mouthful for the BLD servant who (Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week


"Behold, I have given you the power to 'tread upon serpents' and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you." (Lk 10:19)

Confidence in Mission

The task of helping to build up God's church is difficult, yet fulfilling. As workers in His vineyard, we will expect to be misunderstood, even by those working with us. We will expect to encounter difficulties and challenges that may seem impossible to overcome. We will be discouraged when all our efforts are not fruitful. We may even face constant attack from an invisible enemy. We may not see the results of our labor and the full reward may not come until all our work is completed.

As we begin our mission in the formation of the Rockland DIP, we feel a sense of awe and apprehension at the magnitude of this service to God and His people. As far as our work is concerned, God is calling each of us to a particular service that will spiritually nourish us the most; the type of ministry we feel most compassionate about; the projects that energize us, not drain us. However, we must not fall into the all-too-common trap of believing that following God's call will always be delightful, or without disappointments. We were not called because of our qualifications, character, or even potential. God's call, as we have discovered, is as broad and unpredictable as it is unmerited.

We may be fearful because we do not know what lies ahead of us. Jesus said to his Apostles, *"Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves, so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves."* (Matthew 10:16) As disciples of Christ, we need to be filled with a faith that understands, not a faith that only takes calculated risks or seeks rewards; but a faith that responds to a call from outside and is confirmed from within, a call that must remain unclear and even frightening.

Again, our response to God's call doesn't provide us with easy answers for our life struggles, complete security, or the assurance of acceptance from others. It certainly has provided us, however, with many questions. We are not called to certainty, but simply faithfulness along the journey. There is no reason to fear the uncertainties that lie ahead despite the enormity of our mission when we have the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit in us. *"When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."* (Matthew 10:19-20) 

Pillars of the Church

The 29th day of June commemorates the two great apostles, martyrs, and missionaries, the Pillars of the Church, Saints Peter and Paul. The confession of St. Peter ("Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God") is commemorated on the 18th of January and the conversion of Paul (on the road to Damascus) on January 25th.

Peter was a native of Galilee, poor and unlearned, a common man (Acts 4:13), a fisherman on Lake Genesareth, who married and traveled with his wife (1Corinthians 9:5). He spoke Aramaic. Peter was introduced to Jesus by his brother, Andrew. Though of irresolute character, he clings with greatest fidelity, firmness of faith, an inward love to the Savior whom Peter affirmed three times to feed and defend His flock. He was chosen and prepared by the Lord to be the Rock on which He would build His Church. He was recognized as the head and Prince of His apostles. Peter was believed to be responsible for the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. Nero martyred Peter by inverted crucifixion in Rome. Thru Peter, we see that the grace of the Holy Spirit can make us rise above our limitations in the service of Christ.

Paul on the other hand was a citizen of Rome, a teacher, unmarried, a Greek member of the intelligentsia, a profound thinker with a great mind and spirit. He had persecuted Christians before he was struck blind on the road to Damascus. He was also convicted in introducing Christianity to the Gentiles. He embarked on a number of missionary journeys. With untiring love for the Church, St. Paul wrote fourteen canonical Epistles and other letters. He died in Rome by beheading, as said to be due him as a Roman citizen. Surely the Lord did not come for the righteous but for the sinners to repent and make straight their path.

Because the two apostles were co-founders of the bishopric of Rome, the coat of arms of the Pope combines the upside-down cross of St. Peter with the sword of St. Paul.

Realizing God's presence as we go forward to follow His calling to establish a new district is what makes doing His work possible. Let our hearts be responsive to Him. Let us rejoice when God asks us to proceed in the work of His kingdom. Let us not focus on the problems or failures that lie ahead, but on God's assurance of victory

In the Spirit of Transparency

The Need to be Fruitful

Looking deep into our community, one may see its beauty in various ways. One thing that has dawned upon some of us is a community that is not too far behind from the New York Philharmonic Orchestra where each instrument is beautiful when allowed to play, yet becomes even better when each is given the right turn and weight to share and contribute to a masterpiece. To some it is like Longwood Gardens, full of flowers, trees, plants and shrubs, each one giving life to one another, providing witness to the beauty of God and His creation.

Since its inception, our community has been blessed with members – unique and gifted, an embodiment of God’s grace and love. They differ, some with innate traits of a leader, others as submitted followers; some so committed, dedicated and persevering; a number not so quick, precise and focused in their participation. But God has blessed community with the grace to transcend such diversity. Each has become a treasure to community. Each has been transformed to be a gift to one another.

As we matured to be disciplined Christians and became one body in our Lord, what comes to heart is whether we were able to move out of our comfort zones in community work. We need to ask ourselves whether we, as a community, have truly become a gift to the world, generative and apostolic in our work. God’s order, “*go into the world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature*” Mark 16:15, still stands! What have we done in response to Jesus? What good is an army of God that continues to hone its spiritual armament, day after day, yet is not able to experience spiritual combat in the mission field?

Looking once more into community has revealed innumerable talents, with hearts of Christ that are allowed to gestate and await a mandate and commission that may never be forthcoming. **It’s our community’s responsibility to enable all those whom God has brought into community to bear fruit.** Otherwise, we would have failed tremendously in our vocation. God provides the resources for His work and it is only fitting we start to look into more serious ways of how we can share our blessings with the world and be more fruitful. May we not be the fig tree in Mark 11 that withered to its roots for failing to bear fruit.

United as a body, let us bring our gifts to new mission fields and be more fruitful.

Our Lord is still waiting for our response to our new mission as a Lay Association of the Faithful. Jesus said, “*why do you stand here idle all day; you go into my vineyard*”, Mt 20: 6-7.

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We welcome contributions to the Covenant News.

- We appreciate your effort in writing your articles, and prayerfully give thanks.
- We cannot assure that your contribution, solicited or not, will be published.
- The article is subject to any edits or revisions by our editorial staff.

Counsels from page 1

goes on mission. "The Lord appointed seventy-two others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit." Here is a sobering reminder that it is Jesus Who appoints us to our tasks; it is Jesus Who intends what our task is; it is Jesus Who, after sending us on ahead, will complete the task that we, on our own, cannot accomplish.

Upon reflection, we see what the missionary life is all about: to change hearts and bring them, like us, to a growing love of the Lord. With sincere and humble hearts, we are led to accept and obey authority in community. We are grateful not only for our gifts and charisms, but also for all our servant leaders. When we focus on Christ the Giver, we gain true appreciation of all His gifts which at times are not gift-wrapped and apparent, but may be disguised behind the rags of human frailties – both ours and others.

When we thus acknowledge the Lord, we have a better focus on our appointed tasks and ministries. We do not seek to belong to "glamour" ministries and assignments but recognize that routine and drudgery need to be done. We are willing to leave the warmth and closeness of our Encounter classes, and find it as easy to go serve in the inner city as in beautiful Encounter surroundings. We accept unconditionally the demands, harsh and emotionally unrewarding as they may be, of our appointed ministries. We are as happy and thankful at the sight of changed hearts on an encounter weekend, as for brethren in the Service ministry scurrying about to attend to others' needs.

It is trust in the Lord Jesus that sustains us in difficulties and protects us from harm. He affirms us, "Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals" (Luke 10:4a). There is urgency in our mission; single-mindedness is required of us; we should avoid attachments and diversions. "Greet no one along the way" (v 4b). Even customary greetings should not distract from the fulfillment of the task; neither should our desire for fellowship and approval from our mission and ministry work.

When we are surrendered to the divine will and know Who empowers us, we rejoice when our work bears fruit. Christ's victory on the Cross inspires us. We are to guard that our elation does not turn into inflation to disordered self-esteem. The Lord reminds us of why we truly must rejoice: that the true reward awaiting the disciple is eternal life and happiness in heaven. ✍

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jul 2-4	Seattle FE4
Jul 9-11	YE11 (see page 3)
Jul 9-11	Long Island YE5
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 17	Teaching (see page 3)
Jul 23-25	SE 11 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!!!



BIRTHDAYS

Jul 2 Ency Alberto, LSS1	Jul 5 Erwin Eusebio, Mk10
Abigail Casals, YCR1	Julie Ico, LSS5
Rizza Obrero, YLSS6	Zeny Isidro, LSS15
Leilani Solema, Jn6	Al Pena, LSS2
Jul 3 Cora Fadri, LSS2	Zachary Larobis, Mk10
Anne Gamilla, LSS10	Jul 6 Pauline Montemayor, YLSS5
Nikkie Narciso, YE2	Shy Ronquillo, LSS17
Nicole Lopez, Mk 10	Jul 7 Linda Saguil, LSS14
Choly Relucio, LSS10	Victor San Luis, YLSS4
Raul Gutierrez, Mk10	Janzen Velasco, Mk 10
Jul 4 Les Atienza, LSS10	Jul 8 Melvin De Leon, YLSS6
Rod Beltran, LSS14	Baby Nacion, LSS17
Patrick Maulion, Mk10	
Julita Trillana, LSS7	

ANNIVERSARIES

Jul 2	Ely & Blessie Noblesala, LSS14
Jul 4	Emil & Baby Canlas, LSS7
Jul 6	Nes & Es Tambor, LSS1
	Frank & Malou Venadas, LSS14

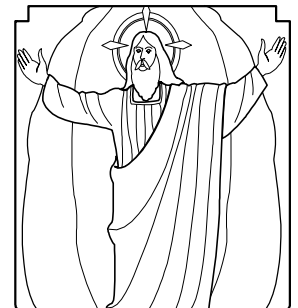
The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS

6/11	\$4,533
6/18	4,236
6/25	3,326
25-wk avg	3,729

EXPENSES

25-wk avg	\$4,221
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Thank you for your generosity!

DIRECTIONS

- Trust in the Lord.
- Focus on the Giver not the gifts.
- Accept His mission without condition.



They have become Disciples of Jesus!

Fifteen new covenanted disciples were commissioned during the Eucharistic Celebration last July 2. They are: Dodong and Loring Demegillo, Jun and Fely Escobar, Robin and Amy Guiao, Jun and Zeny Isidro, Jun and Norma Luna, Raffy and Maris Obrera, Chie Francisco, Beth Trinidad and Eric Mance. These disciples have completed the CDFP requirements for covenanting, which include submission to instructions on, and discipline of God's Word and Church teachings, mission exposure and 6 months of group sessions with their respective disciplers from the Discipling Ministry. The sessions were comprised of discussions and teachings on self, group and community norms and values.

We pray that the hearts of these new disciples will be set ablaze with a desire to live their covenant faithfully and share it freely with others. May their eagerness to share their faith bring a missionary dedication to our community. We ask Mary the Mother of God, a model of true discipleship, to guide these disciples and all other covenanted disciples in our community in the holy work of evangelizing and shepherding other members towards a personal relationship with Jesus through personal witnessing of Christian love and faith, service and worship.

And like the disciples walking that Easter morning to Emmaus, may all members of BLD "*feel their hearts burning*" (Lk 24:32) through the presence of Jesus in their lives and enable them, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to help others discover His great love for all of us. We pray that the fire of Jesus enkindled in us by God's Spirit may lead more and more BLD members to become disciples firmly rooted and formed in the character of Christ our Savior.

COUNSELS

We serve Christ when we serve our neighbor

WORD: Dt 30:10 – 14; Ps 69: 14- 37; Col 1: 15- 20;
Lk 10: 25- 37

ORDER: Love your neighbor as yourself

REFLECTION:

Tonight's Gospel on the Good Samaritan is an often-told and cherished parable of our Lord showing us in dramatic terms the actual practice of the commandment: Love your neighbor.

The details are simple: a man is mugged and left for dead by the side of the road. A Pharisee and later a Levite, both ostensibly men of God, passed by the man. Then a Samaritan came and immediately attended to the man, cleaned his wounds with oil and wine and took him to an inn to convalesce. The Samaritan left two high-value coins to the inn caretaker to continue nursing him back to health, with the advice that he would give him more when he returns.

Another interpretation of this tale casts it in a different light. The man is us, fallen into sin and on the way to oblivion. The Samaritan is none other than Jesus, our Savior. The inn where He took us is the Church and the two coins He left were the Sacred Scripture and the Holy Traditions. The story ends of course with the promise of His Second Coming.

The story is equally powerful in its original intent and, as with most of our Lord's parables, more complex with a closer reading. For the Jews at that time, the Samaritans were second-class

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"For the Lord hears the poor, and his own who are in bonds he spurns not".

(Ps 69:23)

Here I Am

“*He touched my mouth with it. See, he said now that this has touched your lips your wickedness is removed, your sin purged. Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send? Who will go for us? Here I am, I said send me.*” Is 6:7-8. In spite of Isaiah’s faithfulness to the Lord, one of the seraphim touched his mouth with an ember to remove his wickedness, and then accepted his call for discipleship. Let us recall the day we were called by the Lord to this community and our journey towards discipleship. Can we relate the calling of Isaiah to our own calling and acceptance? If so, do we know and understand the cost of discipleship?

What are the true qualities of a Disciple of Christ?” In Matt 5:13 and Lk14: 25-35 both are addressing discipleship. The first Gospel, would speak about the resoluteness of every Christian who wants to follow Christ; the later, would tell us what are the true qualities of a disciple.. To be a Christian, and even more to be a disciple, means to place Christ in the center of our life. We must love him above everything. Anything else can take only second place. Christ spoke about the cross “*whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps.*” Lk 9:23. Christ does not want to frighten anybody, but wants to make sure that true discipleship is not easy, but rather will demand all our efforts, something to be thought over before one starts. The Lord does not look for big numbers but for quality. Can Christ not require equally much or more from us? When we want to be his disciple, we cannot take our steps lightly. It must be a total commitment.

We must calculate our efforts and costs that we may not run the risk of becoming a fallen Christian. Whatever we do we shall not do hastily but with deliberation. In Lk 14:26, we are asked by the Lord to turn our back on our very self and give our own life,



abdicate our own free decisions and do only what God wants us to do. We give up everything for the sake of total surrender to Christ.

With this costs, are we ready to say “Here I am Lord, send me?”

The Sweet Yoke

We too often feel heavy laden- our burdens seems to be constantly heavy and our grief is incessantly great. Guilt in our conscience and a sense of sin in our soul, often prove an intolerable burden. Losses, enemies, temptations, and the inward conflict, often troubles the soul. However, Christ promise to be with us during those troubled times will bring a glimmer of hope. He will sustain us by speaking peace to our troubled heart. His love will enable us to leave our intricate affairs in His hands. And by His grace, Christ will provide the strength in our soul; enabling us to live in the present and furnish hope in the future.

Jesus tells us, “*Come to me; all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.*”

(Matthew 11: 28-30) Our merciful God, caring and loving as ever even in our sinfulness and stubbornness, is calling us to take refuge in Him and find solace in His grace.

When we learn to lift up to God everything in our life, when we let our Master’s hand show us the way, no burden or trial is too stiff to tackle. In the shelter of His love, we become calm and restful. We feel safe.

But how can we attain such bliss amidst our suffering and trials? This seems difficult to do. But we can do it- simply by remembering that our life here on earth is all about Jesus. Everything worthwhile in life is about Jesus. With an active prayer life, we become close to Him. We need to experience the wonderful workings of our Lord in our daily lives. We need to recognize what God has done for us. When we focus on God’s actions in our own lives, we realize how good He has been to us and so we respond by living a life that would please Him. We become better Christians. We then strive for a life that is a living celebration of what God has done for us- rejoicing in the many blessings that we, oftentimes, take for granted.

Everyday, we must invoke the Holy Spirit to give us the divine determination to follow Jesus, to constantly seek His will in everything that we do. When we allow Jesus to occupy our hearts and minds, accepting the sweet yoke He offers, only then can we find true rest.

Seattle Families encounter Jesus

The fourth Seattle Family Encounter took place last weekend at scenic Camp Berachah in Auburn WA. Fr. Pete Literal ministered to nine families assisted by the Sotelo and Canlas family sharers.

Most of the participants were emboldened enough to witness at the end how the encounter has taught them to become open, express forgiveness and see Jesus in the other members of their family. Blocks that became walls over the years and prevented communication were turned into bridges of acceptance and other loving virtues.

The FE graduates rewarded the sponsoring class, intercessors and all others who served generously with expressions of gratitude. But everyone chose to give all the thanks and glory to God. "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15)



Application for New York Rockland's 1st Marriage Encounter is now available.

Application can be obtained from MLA or contact Mon/Bingle Chan; Boyet/Mita Miranda; Eric/Claire Macalintal; Poch/Vicky Gatchalian or Ralph/Lucy Almonte

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

6/18	\$4,236
6/25	3,326
7/02	3,654
26-wk.Avg	3,787

*Thank you for
your generosity!*

EXPENSES: 26-wk.Avg \$4,400

*"Proclaim with
firmness, as a
real service to
society, the truth
on marriage and
the family
established by
God."*

(Pope John Paul II, 6/17/04)



Ministry Announcements

TEACHINGS

July 16 at St. Leo, after LWG

John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching

July 17 at St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-22: NCR; GIP- Prayer, Praise & Worship

LSS 1-21: Intro to Intercession; Intro to Commitment; EWJ - Luke & John

All covenanted members: Christian Counseling, Elijah House Part IV (1-8pm)

July 23 at St. Leo, after LWG

Singles/SPE Ministries: EWJ - Mark
Intercessory Ministry: Formation Teaching
Service Ministry: Formation Teaching

Upcoming Encounters. Please spread the word to sign up early. *Class sizes are limited.* Forms are with Secretariat or at www.bldnewark.com / www.bldsinglesnewark.org.

- SE #13 July 23-25 in Garrison NY. *Deadline to apply is June 30.*
- FE #11 July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

August is the month for vacations and the family. There will be no community teachings. Covenant News will be in "summer mode" (2-page newsletter).

Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Please plan to come!*

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. *Reserve the date.*

NFP Teaching Saturday August 7, venue and time to be announced. Dave Owens of the Archdiocese of Newark will give the teaching on Natural Family Planning to BLD members from the Newark district cluster, including Singles Ministry members, newly married couples and other interested medical professionals. Contact our Mission Stewards.

Counsels *from page 1*

citizens, even enemies, for they had intermarried with foreigners and taken some of their traditions, thus contaminating the Holy Seed. To the lawyer, to consider the Samaritan as a neighbor on the same level as the priest and the Levite was outrageous and scandalous. But Jesus, to drive home the universality of His teaching, makes the Samaritan the good guy, the true practitioner of His law on love.

Notice however that in replying to the question, Jesus had the lawyer say: not the Samaritan but the one who showed mercy. This lends to at least two meanings. First, doing an act of kindness transforms us. It liberates us from our individual identities and we become equal children in the eyes of God. Even today, this acknowledgement of the goodness of acts of mercy transcends borders and national laws. That's why in combat areas anywhere in the world, the International Red Cross is granted safe passage to give aid and relief to civilians and the wounded in both sides of a war. There are Good Samaritan laws in a lot of states in the US, including New Jersey, whereby anyone is protected from litigation when rendering acts of mercy in life-or-death situations.

Secondly, the lawyer's answer is not to the question whom to consider our neighbor, for clearly the neighbor who needs loving here is the hapless, half-dead victim. It answers rather the question how do we become neighbors ourselves to anyone who needs our help. How do we get out of ourselves and focus on the plight of another person, probably a stranger, possibly an enemy?

How do we indeed become neighbors? The easy answer is to render acts of charity, which is not entirely wrong. But charity in our times has come to mean just giving money to the poor. St. John Chrysostom said rather harshly: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them" and that which is due to the poor in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity.

In another, older sense of the word, charity meant the bond that links us together as members of the Body of Christ. In this definition it becomes none other but a life based on Christian love. Love of neighbor is set to the standard of love for ourselves. But this self-love should be guided and ruled by the love for Christ. Thus in Christ, God becomes our neighbor. Through Christ, we become equal children of God and brothers of each other and of Christ. Therefore, love of our neighbor, love

Community Calendar

Jul 9-11	YE11, Easton PA
Jul 9-11	Long Island YE5
Jul 10	DLC Meeting
Jul 17	Teaching (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 23-25	SE 11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5

BIRTHDAYS

07/09	Roger Isidro, LSS17 Christian Ikalina, Mk 10 John Demegillo, YLSS9
07/10	Lando Bonifacio, LSS8 Rey Perez, LSS13 Benjamin Cruz, Mk10
07/13	Vic Napenas, LSS19 Ray Salmo, LSS22 Lauren Lopina, Mk 10 Erika Flores, Mk 10 Ian Laxina, YLSS9

ANNIVERSARIES

07/09	Rene & Lourdes Reyes, LSS22
07/10	Ikoy & Susan Borja, LSS12 Tino & Aida Garcia, LSS8 Eddie & Espie Lising, LSS5 Rey & Rose Zoleta, LSS6
07/12	Lito & Gigi Vibar, LSS1 Rudy & Rita Santos, LSS18
07/15	Benny & Sally Santiago, LSS13

of oneself and love of God in Christ become one and inseparable.

St. Rose of Lima puts it another way: "We must not fail to help our neighbors because through them we serve Jesus. " We must welcome every opportunity to be able to say, "Brother let me be your servant. Let me be as Christ to you."

DIRECTIONS:

Support our mission initiatives, soup kitchens, nursing home visitation, medical mission, and public discipleship.



YE#11 accepts Jesus as Best Friend

“Jesus, you are my best friend. You will always be. Nothing will ever change that.” At the Eleventh Youth Encounter held in Easton, PA last weekend, the 41 candidates came to realize the truth behind these words, which comprised the chorus of the class theme song.

On the first night of the retreat, it was clear that the candidates did not know what to expect – either from the facilitators or from each other. Molecules of doubt peppered the air, and one could hear the beating of anxious hearts.

But through the Lord’s good graces, fear and doubt became trust and openness. The candidates learned about God’s affirming love and the importance of being oneself, under the direction of Fr. Aloysius Ezenwata and the YE facilitators, Pheobe Garcia, Liz Perez, Mart Razal and Eugene Vibar. The Holy Spirit filled their hearts as they sang, danced and laughed. They forged bonds with each other to last a lifetime. YE#11 had become the event of the year!

Congratulations to the graduates of YE#11: Chris Alonso, Nmamdi Anyanwu, Amor Ausan, Ronick Biason, Mel Biason, Marc Brillantes, Jill Bustos, Jeff Campomanes, Erica Canlas, Kitty Carmen, Angie Casino, Rochelle Castro, Kevin De La Cruz, Miguel De Leon, Wawie Espina, Cherrie Francisco, Leanne Galvez, Melissa Garcia, Kevin Gongob, Mary Ann Guinto, Taira Jean-Bart, Woodley Jean-Phillipe, Cara Joson, Dan Kavanagh, Marie Lazaro, Athena Lim, Daven Lopina, Leslie Mescallado, Jeff Narciso, Karimah Newton, Charisse Ompod, Awe Opeyemi, Oliver Orosa, Steph Rigor, Jojo Roldan, Angeli Sion, Amanda Smith, Josh Tan, Margo Tolentino, Jon Uy and Jonel Villacorta.

Our new DLC Steering Committee:

- Evangelization - Nick/Island Raagas
- Formation - Lito/Gigi Vibar
- Management - Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo
- Mission - Tony/Zeny Garcia
- Pastoral - Al/Aimee Pena

We thank the outgoing committee for their good work, and pray for all leaders of our community.

COUNSELS

Balancing Prayers And Service

WORD: Gn 8:1-10a; Ps 15: 2-5; Col 1:24-28; Lk 10:38-42

ORDER: Do not be anxious and worried about many things. (Lk 10:41)

REFLECTION:

The Gospel story of Martha and Mary illustrates how we, as people with varying personalities, should love God.

Some of us are active and never able to sit still; others are thoughtful, willing to sit back and think things through. Martha is described as very activity-oriented, her sister Mary as with the more thoughtful nature. But it’s not the intent of Luke’s Gospel to make us identify ourselves as either a worker like Martha or a worshipper like Mary. The Lord wants each of us to imitate Mary in our worship and Martha in our work, and to achieve a balance in both. Balancing prayers and service is the underlying message of our theme this week: **We carry out Christ’s mission seeking His presence and guided by His word.**

We all know that serving other people in the Lord’s Name is the highest work we can pursue. It is something both vital to the growth of the Church and necessary for our personal spiritual growth. But in the process of being a modern day Good Samaritan, it is easy to lose focus on Jesus when we become too preoccupied with service. In the Gospel, Martha shared her gift of service and hospitality which was good, but Mary chose to be with Christ by listening, receiving His word and dwelling in them. This delighted Jesus. He said, *“There is need of only one thing.*

continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

“There is a need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.” (Lk 10:42)

The True Family of Jesus

Deep down, people yearn to be part of a family. God created us to be part of a family. Those who come from big families understand what being part of a large family is all about. Those who do not have any, or much family may miss the interaction that family members share. But the ultimate family is not our earthly family, or being part of a company, or involved in a group of some kind, but being part of the family of God.

It is impossible for us to exist alone. If we tried, we would surely miss the fullness and the grace that our heavenly Father is willing to bestow. When a person has true dependence on the Lord, he does not become God's only begotten son. He is one among God's millions of sons. He cannot lock himself up and be his Father's only son. The very nature of the life we have received does not allow this. In the physical family, we may be an only child without any brother or sister. But since the day we believed in the Lord, we are bound in fellowship with our other brothers and sisters. Because we are only one among many, there is the need for us to know them; there is the need for us to fellowship with them and to be related to them. If we are born of God, we will be drawn towards those who are also born of God. If we shut ourselves off from them, questions and doubts may arise as to whether or not we are a child of God at all.

In being part of the family of God, we are part of an eternal family, one that will live on beyond this life. God is our Creator, the head of our eternal family. We are to honor those who are part of this Divine family. We should respect other members of the family. We must be loyal to our family. We need to be obedient to the rules of the family as laid out in God's Word. We need to be faithful to serve the family with our time, talents and treasure. There is no greater family to be part of since this family will live on for eternity.

Our heavenly Father, the head of this family, loves us unconditionally and is waiting for us to come back to the family. It is time to stop running from our family and come back home where we belong.

"Jesus said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother.'" (Mt 12:49-50)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

6/25	\$ 3,326
7/02	3,654
7/09	3,827
27-wk avg	3,788

*Thank you for your
generosity!*

EXPENSES

27-wk avg \$ 4,344

St. Bridget of Sweden



St. Bridget was born in 1303 to a royal and religious family. She came to cherish her faith early in life, manifesting a decided inclination for spiritual things and extraordinary religious illuminations. God favored her at the age of ten with a vision of the "Crucified,"

and the Lord's Sacred Passion and unspeakable torments on Calvary became the subject of her meditation.

Her mother died when Bridget was 12, and despite her wish to consecrate her virginity to the Lord, she entered an arranged marriage two years later in obedience to her father. She became the mother of eight children, the youngest of whom later became St. Catherine of Sweden.

Widowed after 28 years, Bridget divided her estate among her children and the poor, clothed herself in coarse garment and began to live an ascetic life, eating very little, sleeping short hours, and praying continually. She followed a strict rule, even reducing herself to begging, and practiced every possible kind of charitable work especially to the poor and infirm. She waited on them with great care, sometimes even washing their feet and kissing them. Bridget's humility, poverty and austerity prepared her for the grace by which the Lord, so to say, planted His cross in the very center of her heart.

She built a convent at Vadstena and founded the Order of the Most Holy Savior using the rule of St. Augustine. In Rome, she founded hospices for pilgrims, the poor and the sick. She labored much for the reform of religious life and the return of the papacy from Avignon to Rome. God bestowed on her extraordinary graces and knowledge of His Sacred Mysteries. Our Lord revealed fifteen prayers to her, with 21 promises to anyone who recited them everyday for a whole year. Bridget was almost 70 when she was stricken with a serious illness, which she bore patiently for a year for the love of Jesus on the Cross. Her son and daughter, Catherine, were with her at her deathbed in Rome in 1373.

St. Bridget teaches us to love Jesus Crucified. She encourages us to contemplate His agony and crucifixion in all our suffering, persecution and sorrow, for He endured in far greater measure to obtain for us meritorious strength and graces. When our soul is oppressed with sin, we may look up with confidence to our Savior Who suffered and died for our redemption.

If we imitate the virtues of St. Bridget and the sufferings of Christ, they will also bring consolation to our soul and a foretaste of eternal joy.

In the Spirit of Transparency

Restlessness In Community

Are you feeling a little restless about life in community? You may have valid reasons. Maybe community life is not full, is slowly regressing or it just does not give any sense of fulfillment. Maybe you feel some dryness in your prayer life, even in our Friday worship.

Could it be you and your misguided values and principles? Maybe it's your wrong sense of leadership and concept of how things should be done in community. But in all these, it could also be God Who is making you and the others restless.

About a year ago, we received a new anointing when the Archdiocese of Newark designated our community as a Lay Association of the Faithful. To this blessing, we have yet to respond and present our plans to the Archdiocese. It is not surprising then that restlessness persists in community because we have remained quite cold and indifferent to our new anointing. Through such restlessness, God is waking us up toward His new plans for us. He wants us to set our affiliations, fellowship and relationships to correspond to the needs and directions of the Church. God also wants our Covenant of Communion to be revisited and revised. On these two points, **what have we done so far?**

God has used us as a charismatic covenant community in sowing God's Word in the hearts of people through our present mission programs and charisms. But He wants us to look towards another direction. It is not that we are failing to fight spiritual battles for Him but He has brought us into a new chapter in our work for Him. He wants us to go and bear fruit as an Association of the Faithful.

There are plenty of issues and challenges in our everyday life in community. But Jesus is calling all of us to join Him in the battle for which He gave His life - the battle for souls of men and women - not only within the confines of community but in the more complex structure of the Archdiocese of Newark. He wants us to transcend our comfort zones and fight the battles that too few of God's people are actively involved in.

God's call for us to be a Lay Association of the Faithful is clear. He wants us to serve Him in even greater assignments. He wants us to fight the bigger battles more than the little ones we think are so important. He calls us to commit ourselves to His service through the Archdiocese.

Restlessness in community promises to be a thing of the past, if today we hear His Word and follow it! So LISTEN and PRAY!

Ministry Announcements

Teachings :

Tonight after worship

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

Youth Teaching (*Being Catholic: What Does it Mean?*)

Tomorrow, July 17 at St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-22: NCR; GIP- Prayer, Praise & Worship

LSS 1-21: Intro to Intercession; Intro to

Commitment; EWJ - Luke & John

All covenanted members: Christian Counseling, Elijah

House Part IV (1-8pm)

July 23, at St. Leo after the worship

Singles/SPE Ministries: EWJ - Mark

Intercessory Ministry: Formation Teaching

Upcoming Encounters. Please spread the word to sign up early. *Class sizes are limited.* Forms are with Secretariat or at www.bldnewark.com / www.bldsinglesnewark.org.

- SE #13 July 23-25 in Garrison NY.
- FE #11 July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.

All graduates and their parents. Please be counted among the *Class of 2004* that the community will honor and bless soon. Contact Alan and Tess Cam (201) 659-5417 or atetscam@hotmail.com.

August is the month for vacations and the family. There will be no community teachings. Covenant News will be in "summer mode" (2-page newsletter).

NFP Teaching Saturday August 7, venue and time to be announced. Dave Owens of the Archdiocese of Newark will give the teaching on Natural Family Planning to BLD members from the Newark district cluster, including Singles Ministry members, newly married couples and other interested medical professionals. Contact our Mission Stewards.

Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Please plan to come!*

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. *Reserve the date.*

Counsels *from page 1*

Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.” (v42)

That *one thing* is our relationship with Jesus and God. We can become so busy with everyday things that we neglect what is most important. We want to offer God the very best and we should. But sometimes we cross the line between serving to please Jesus and striving to impress people. We can easily move away from ministry in God’s name into working to make a name for ourselves. Our motivation can quickly switch from following God’s will to kowtowing to the will and whim of the people. “*Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.*” (Mt 6:33a) It is God’s agenda not ours that is to be followed because the essence of Christian life is not doing, but rather it is in dying to one’s own needs and being available to listen and respond to others’ needs.

The Gospel provides a compelling message to our community. Through God’s guidance, BLD Newark has grown from a prayer group, to a covenanted community, and to what it is today - a Lay Association of the Faithful, an appointment it received in June 2003 from the Archdiocese of Newark in recognition of its commitment to the Gospel, service to holy Mother Church and its accomplishment of Christ’s mission. In retrospect, can we claim that BLD Newark’s vision and mission remain relevant in addressing today’s issues and contemporary culture? Or have we become too focused on being what it once was and not open enough to being what it can be or what it should be?

We must pray for discernment on what God wants our community to be in the context of its status as a Lay Association of the Faithful. *We must choose the better way*, seeking God and listening to Him. Does our mission need to take into account new demands, redefined needs and the changing external environment? Does it respond adequately to the pressing needs of our time? Does our vision need to evolve to better define challenges foreseen in the future? And finally, do we need to refocus our energies from issues of maintenance to directions that will ultimately lead to the accomplishment of Christ’s mission for us?

We lay at the Lord’s feet, awaiting His message on the need to align our mission to the expectations of the Archdiocese that come with the status bestowed upon us. We should always seek God’s will through His Word which provides us guidance, strength and direction to accomplish Christ’s mission. Like Mary, we must listen, listen.

DIRECTIONS

- Live a balanced life of prayer, Word, Sacraments, service and community.
- Listen always to the Word of God in making decisions and directions for the community.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

(July)	Teachings (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul.18-24	Home of the Mother Boys’ Summer Camp
Jul.24-31	Home of the Mother Girls’ Summer Camp
Jul 23-25	SE 13 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 (<i>see page 3</i>)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5
Aug.7	DLC Meeting
Aug 7	NFP Teaching (<i>see page 3</i>)
Aug 13-15	FE#2 Trenton
Aug 13-15	FE#5 Long Island
Aug 21	Community Day (<i>see page 3</i>)
Sep.11	Disciples Assembly
Sep 12	DCS/DLC Recollection (<i>see page 3</i>)

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

BIRTHDAYS



7/16	Helen Madrigal, LSS13 Mita Miranda, LSS5 Chibundu Anyanwu, Mk 10
7/17	Jay –Jay Castaneda, LSS6 Genie Luardo, LSS17 Jillian Bustos, YCR3 Jeremy Munante, Mk 10
7/18	Sol Cruz, LSS10 Alex De Venecia, SPE5 Jun Enriquez, ME21 Mila Malantic, LSS20
7/19	Dading Cuy, LSS10 Boyie Huelgas, LSS1 Theresa Murante, Mk 10
7/20	Ding Fadri, LSS2 Mel Nano, LSS18 Lani Restaino, LSS18 Ditas Reyes, LSS15
7/22	Ed Bueser, LSS18 Sal Russo, LSS13

ANNIVERSARIES

7/18	Juancho & Carie Ciocon, LSS7
7/21	Eric & Theo Amador, LSS15
7/22	Carlos & Fe Masisado, LSS21 Glen & Luz Santos, LSS19



God plants youthful seed in Iloilo

Sixty-six young people made up the class of the First Youth Encounter in the BLD Iloilo district-in-process held last weekend. A contingent of youth and parents from BLD Newark went with Fr. Paul Lehman who was the YE Spiritual Director, and served as facilitators, praise coordinator and auxies in general. They were joined by members from nearby Bacolod which administers the Iloilo DIP, and members from their own Singles ministry.

From the ranks of this enthusiastic YE1 class will come committed leaders who will serve God in and through the community. They perhaps will follow the lead of our youth in Newark who evangelized and served the Lord with gladness at the other side of the globe. One grateful witness was our BLD Spiritual Director, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo who presided and gave a stirring homily at Sunday Mass, and later hosted our contingent and local members at dinner.

We shall hear more about this historic event next week from the returning participants.

Pope Reflects on Psalm 118

Fulfilling the will of God is the strength of the believer, John Paul II said at his general audience last Wednesday. "On this path he will find peace of soul and will succeed in going through the dark tangle of trials, attaining true joy."

Knowing that "he must carry the cross every day and ascend to Calvary... the just man keeps his faithfulness intact. Peace of mind is (his) strength; his constancy, in obedience to the divine commandments, is the source of his serenity."

The Pope quoted St. Augustine who wondered why God exhorts mankind to happiness when it is our most profound desire. "Although all aspire to blessedness, the majority do not know how to attain it." He then answered that the path "is none other than the Law of the Lord." (Source: VIS 7/21/04)

COUNSELS


Persevering In The Spirit

WORD: Gn 18:20-32; Ps 138:1-3; 6-8;
Col 2:12-14; Lk 11:1-13

ORDER: "And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Lk 11: 9)

REFLECTION: In the first reading, the encounter between the Lord and Abraham is quite a wonderful story. God is envisioned in very human terms like a human king. He takes His servant Abraham into His confidence and shares with Him his plans to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham is troubled by the question of justice toward the innocent inhabitants of the city, so he enters into a bargaining session with God. We learn from Abraham how to approach God. His attitude of candor, persistence and humility may not have obtained the ultimate deliverance of Sodom and Gomorrah, but it did reveal to Abraham God's compassion in withholding judgment and His justice in executing it.

The Psalm confirms the nature of God who is great in kindness and true to every promise. God will answer when we call; He will complete the work of salvation begun in us. We need have no hesitation to petition such a God. We have only to carefully discern for what it is we ask.

The second reading gives us a rush of striking images and a summary of the Christ Redemption. We were held prisoners by our sins and like the Colossians, there was no hope of union with the all-holy God. However, the decree of guilt, the bond that condemned us to this awful separation from God, has been rendered null and void. page 4 

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

"The Father in Heaven gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him." (Lk11:13b)

Why Jesus Used Parables

During His earthly ministry, as Jesus went about preaching and teaching, He frequently used parables. Certainly many of our most often remembered sayings of Jesus are His parables. The word “parable” comes from the Greek *parabole* which means to place beside, to cast alongside with a view to comparison. It puts the known next to the unknown so that we may learn. The stories often are drawn from nature or common human circumstances from which spiritual lessons can be learned. One says eloquently, “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.”

Jesus’ own explanation of His purpose in using parables to make His message clearer is somewhat of a surprise. “*Why do you speak to them in parables?*” His very own disciples asked Him. And Jesus answered them, “*Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because ‘they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.’ But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear.*” (Mt 13:10-16)

Parables then were Jesus’ way of effectively separating the truth seekers from the curiosity seekers. It was to CONCEAL His message from the hardened hearts in the multitude. The curiosity seeker could easily be discouraged and sent away, and has no desire to know Him. He simply does not have a humble heart and a listening ear. He is convinced of his own knowledge. He does not take the time or make the effort to search for the truth. He has all excuses.

Another purpose of His parables was to REVEAL. Jesus spoke and taught in simple language that the unbeliever would know, so he would understand and believe. The receptive hearts would harvest the joy of understanding more fully the mysteries of His Kingdom, drawing him into a deeper relationship with the Lord.

We must have a desire to find the true meaning behind what is taught in Jesus’ parables. Our ears and eyes have been opened by God. He gave us His assurance from John 14:26, “*The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name--he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you.*”

The true believers are those who make the most effort to seek and to know Christ more. *Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear.*

St. Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556)

St. Ignatius, founder of the Jesuits, was born in 1491 at Loyola in Cantabria, Spain. He was the youngest son of a Basque nobleman of ancient family. As a young man, he spent his early years at a court, and later joined the army where he distinguished himself by his valor. He was later wounded in battle.

During the long time of his recovery he did much reading of the life of Christ and the saints, which “affected his conversion from worldliness to piety.” He decided to devote himself to be a soldier of Christ. After a period of prayer and solitude, Ignatius made a pilgrimage to Rome and to the Holy Land and gave himself to studies at various European universities.

In Paris, Ignatius inspired seven other students who, in 1534, bound themselves to be Missionaries to the Moslems in Palestine. These became the nucleus of what would become the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), who today are considered in many respects as the army of the Church as they placed themselves unconditionally at the disposition of the Holy Father. St. Ignatius exercised a most fruitful ministry both by his written works and in the training of his disciples who were renowned for their contribution to the renewal of the Church through the Ignatian “Spiritual Exercises.” St. Ignatius was called to his heavenly home on July 31, 1556.

As we look around the world today, we see military men called to active duty in many countries of the world. Some have died in active duty, fighting to defend an earthly king, the interests of the fatherland or what they hold dear.

By our baptism and confirmation we are all called to be soldiers of Christ. As BLD community we are called to devote ourselves to something more than fighting for an earthly king. We are in a battlefield, called to daily active duty of prayer and devotion to the Church. St. Paul reminds us that we do not wage war as the world does (2 Cor 10: 3), yet we can demolish strongholds with our divine weapons – prayer and fasting.

There are battles to be won or lost; but ours is a war we must win because our eternal salvation is at stake, and our Savior Jesus Christ has already won victory for us. “*Put on the armor of God*” (Eph 6:11), and take your stand against the devil’s schemes.

As we honor St Ignatius, let us ask for Grace to realize that we are soldiers of Christ; Fortitude to fight gallantly against the devil, the flesh and the world; and Strength to be constant in prayer and in love for one another.

In the Spirit of Transparency

And Who Is My Neighbor?

This is a question that continues to be asked. After some meditation, the question that comes to heart is, "Who becomes neighbor... Who comes near... Who proves to have in himself the love, mercy and compassion of God?"

The parable of the Good Samaritan brings to us the truth that God does not bear with external formalities as an easy way out not to get involved in the real problems of man. He rejects endless prayers and incense offerings of the religious that supposedly take the place of concrete commitment for the oppressed and suffering (Isaiah 1:11). Jesus said: "Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'" (Mt 9:13)

It is very interesting to note what the priest and the Levite did as they saw the man, stripped and half dead on the street. Both decided to pass the opposite side. They had some reason to avoid the man victimized by robbers. Maybe they were afraid of being assaulted themselves, or of losing ritual purity. But worst of all, it could have been the spiritual values they practiced which were centered on themselves. Their hearts have been hardened; they could not feel for the man's suffering.

Today God reveals to us the many ways by which we detach ourselves from concrete problems which require us to be concerned, more loving and compassionate to our brothers and sisters: "This is none of my business; If I help this time, they will always come back to me and burden me; There are government agencies who are tasked to handle cases like this; This is the duty of the priest, not mine; This is not our community's charism." All these reasons will not stand the scrutiny of God.

In our present day world, God wants us to realize that we have a lot of opportunities to be like the Good Samaritan. As a community, we can do more than just pay lip service. As a Lay Association of the Faithful, we are expected to assist the archdiocese redeem God's people who are oppressed and suffering.

God wants us to ACT NOW in favor of those who suffer. God wants us to have the initiative to commit ourselves to His service. He desires that we will be proactive rather than wait in the sidelines for instructions and guidance.

He reminds us that our religion should be life-giving. Our mission is to bring Christ, the first, real and most authentic "Good Samaritan" to all of humanity. Let us be the NEIGHBOR that brings God's mercy, love and compassion to all, without being asked but from the goodness of our hearts.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Teachings tonight after worship:

- Singles/SPE Ministries: *EWJ - Mark*
- Intercessory Ministry: *Formation Teaching*
- Service Ministry: *Formation Teaching*

Singles Encounter this weekend. *Let us keep in our prayer* the candidates of SE #13 and all who will be serving.

Upcoming Encounters

- **FE #11** July 30-August 1 in South Plainfield NJ.
- **LSS #23** Oct 8-10, Consolata Mission Center in Somerset NJ. Registration now open for encountered couples, singles and solo parents. Contact: Secretariat or LSA at vicdeelim@worldnet.att.net.

August is the month for vacations and the family. There will be no community teachings. Covenant News will be in "summer mode" (2-page newsletter).

NFP Teaching Saturday August 7, venue and time to be announced. Dave Owens of the Archdiocese of Newark will give the teaching on Natural Family Planning to BLD members from the Newark district cluster, including Singles Ministry members, newly married couples and other interested medical professionals. Contact our Mission Stewards.

Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Please plan to come!*

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. *Reserve the date.*

Quotes from John Paul II

"The darkness is rent by the splendor of the Word of God." (7/21/04)

"Marriage and the family constitute an irreplaceable good of society." (6/17/04)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Collections

7/02	\$3,654	<i>Thank you for your generosity!</i>
7/09	3,827	
7/16	4,136	<u>Expenses</u>
28-wk average	3,801	28-wk average \$4,317

Counsels (from page 1)

Jesus became that guilt and was nailed to the cross in our stead. Because He died, our sins died. Because sin has died, we have been forgiven. And now, for the really good news – because He rose from the dead, we have become a new kind of being, fully justified and established in a new loving relationship with God.

The Gospel reading portrays Jesus at prayer, especially at crucial points in His ministry. Prayer gives Him strength and provides him with the guidance He needs on His journeys. In response to a request from His disciples, Jesus teaches them to pray in a way that will identify them as His followers. The prayer Jesus gives His disciples has become the unifying and identifying prayer of Christians.

The Lord's Prayer begins by acknowledging God's sovereignty before moving on to petitions for the community. Far from being a private prayer, the Lord's Prayer expresses the petitions in the plural. We pray for our bread and ask forgiveness for our sins. As a community, we approach God in need and beg for mercy, while striving to offer mercy to others.

St. Luke concludes that the primary prayer of the Christian must be for the Holy Spirit. God, who knows infinitely well how a father should be good to his children, will indeed give the Holy Spirit. Why the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit transforms our gestures and sounds into Jesus' prophetic deeds and words. How can we, insignificant as we are, have the arrogance to think that we can be Christ to others? We trust in the Holy Spirit.

All of us go through trials. We need to focus on the Lord. Our lives have meaning when we allow the Holy Spirit to work through us. When we pray to the Holy Spirit, we are praying that God may justify our existence. No matter how grave our other needs may be, nothing is more important than our need to make Jesus present in the world. And so we pray to God to transform the world into His Kingdom by empowering us to instill Christ in others. We persistently pray to God to give us the Holy Spirit.

DIRECTIONS

- Intercede for each other including our enemies.
- Be persistent and humble in prayer.

Make your Covenant News
a part of your covenant life.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jul 24-31	Home of the Mother Girls' Summer Camp
Jul 23-25	SE 13 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 (see page 3)
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5
Aug 7	DLC Meeting
Aug 7	NFP Teaching (see page 3)
Aug 13-15	FE#2 Trenton
Aug 13-15	FE#5 Long Island
Aug 21	Community Day (see page 3)
Sep 11	Disciples Assembly
Sep 12	DCS/DLC Recollection (see page 3)

*May the blessings of
the Lord be upon you...*



BIRTHDAYS

7/23	Louie Relucio, LSS10 Ariana Abad, Mk 10
7/24	Lucy Almonte, LSS4 Rolly Ocampo, SPE5 Marlo Queyquep, LSS14 Joe Valle, YLSS9
7/25	Criselda Trillana YLSS6
7/26	Alissa Abad, YCR 3 Charisse Ompod, YCR3
7/27	Baby Canlas, LSS7 Arc Razal, LSS22
7/28	Elsa Etcubanas, LSS5 Madonna Razal, LSS19 Gino Pattugalan, YLSS6
7/29	Diana Biasbas, LSS21 Jingjing Salimbangon, LSS15 Jean Villamaria, LSS18 Joseph Valle, YCR1

ANNIVERSARIES

07/24	Tony & Zeny Garcia, LSS5
07/25	Ed & Sue Bueser, LSS 18 Joe & Lani Restaino, LSS18
07/26	Efren & Yollie Cruz, LSS7
07/28	Rene & Sally Castaneda, LSS4



Youth Ministry Formed in Jaro

The BLD Community of Jaro grew tremendously when they held their first Youth Encounter. Answering the Lord's call to bear fruit (John 15:16), the Jaro Community held YE-1 on July 16 to 18 at the Residence Hotel in Iloilo City. It was a special weekend indeed, as it marked the formation of Jaro's Youth Ministry. A team from BLD Newark and BLD Trenton traveled thirteen thousand miles to Iloilo to facilitate this Youth Encounter. Though weary from travel and uncertain of what lay ahead, the pastoral team of Fr. Paul Lehman and facilitators Anthony Duma, Chay Pangilinan, Mark Hernandez and Kris de la Cruz put their trust in God. Though the Jaro team was anxious and uncertain, they too trusted in the Lord, and He came through in a big way.

Sixty six candidates ranging in age from twelve to nineteen participated in the Youth Encounter. Despite the cultural differences between the candidates and the facilitators, they succeeded in reaching out to one another and growing throughout the weekend. These sixty six are the first members of Jaro's Youth Ministry.

The weekend was sponsored by Jaro's Singles Encounter 1 & 2 classes supported by Tito Rey and Tita Sylvia Duma, Ann-Ann Alejan, Anabelle Duma, and Dave de la Fuente of Newark, and Raoul Manlapig (YE-2 Newark) and Eric Tajanlangit (YE-3 Newark), both of whom now live in the Philippines.

The YE weekend concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist by BLD's global spiritual director, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, who began his homily by exhorting the youth to dream and achieve their goals, and the parents to aid their children in achieving their goals. The working team later enjoyed dinner with the Archbishop at his residence.

We praise and thank the Lord for raining His blessings on Jaro!

Counsel

THIS IS LIFE

WORD: Eccl 1:2, 2:21-23; Ps 90:3-6,12-14,17;
Col 3:1-5,9-11; Lk 12:13-21

ORDER: *"Seek what is above."*
(Col 3:2)

REFLECTION: In our Gospel today, Luke 12:13- 21, we hear someone from the crowd complaining about his share of the inheritance to which Jesus replied "Friend, who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?" Jesus went on to caution the crowd saying, "Take care to guard against greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions." Then He told them the parable of the rich man who wanted to replace his barns with bigger ones just to accommodate a bountiful harvest. And for what purpose? To have good things stored up for many years; to rest, eat, drink, be merry! But God said to him, "You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?"

This Gospel narrative reminds me of an account at one of our recent gatherings for ME 22 when one of our classmates, in his awe, remarked: "This is life! No competition for Benzes, palatial homes or vacation trips. THIS...IS...LIFE!" This remark came after a very powerful praise and worship followed by a living word session.

In this materialistic world we are told to seek God, to temper our passions and emotions,

(page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Think of what is above... then you too will appear with him in glory." (Col 3: 2 & 4)

In the Spirit of Transparency

Subsidiarity and Letting Go

The principle of subsidiarity has its origins in Roman Catholic social thought and was developed in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891 by Pope Leo XIII, as an attempt to articulate a middle ground between the perceived excesses of capitalism on the one hand and the various forms of totalitarianism, which subordinate the individual to the state, on the other. It was further developed in Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* of 1931 and the *Economic Justice for All* by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Roman Catholic social thought states "that government should undertake only those initiatives which exceed the capacity of individuals or private groups acting independently. The principle is based upon the autonomy and dignity of the human individual, and holds that all other forms of society, from the family to the state and the international order, should be in the service of the human person."

In the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* it states: "Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them."

Subsidiarity assumes then that men, who are by nature social beings, highlight the importance of small and intermediate-sized communities like the family, the church, and voluntary associations as structures which empower individual action and link the individual to society as a whole.

How then does subsidiarity apply to us as a local community and as part of a global covenant community?

All, especially those who exercise authority and power within the context of the global community, must respect subsidiarity. "In his encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II asserts that "A community of a higher order should not interfere with the life of a community of a lower order, taking over its functions. It should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions; instead it should be able to encourage, help and support the smaller community for the sake of the common good."

As our community evolves and responds to our new anointing as a Lay Association of the Faithful, subsidiarity then involves the process of "letting go" by mother community as a higher authority body and by us, as a branch that has dependence on it.

Let us go deep in prayer and ask God to shed light on the matter of subsidiarity which can mean significant 'change' in community!

Community welcomes latest singles

Fifty smiling and ecstatic graduates of Singles Encounter #13 were welcomed by members of the Singles Ministry, BLD Community and family during Sunday's celebration.

The weekend was led by new facilitators Kim Castaneda, Paul Lazaro, Rey Perez and Lynlee Uy, and of course, our beloved Father Paul Lehman was the spiritual director. They were supported by the vibrant class of SE #12, led by their class shepherds JJ & Abi Castaneda, as well as 25 members of the Singles Ministry that served as auxiliaries and praise for the weekend.

The class shepherds for this group are Francisco (Cookie) & Tess Montemayor, two very familiar faces to the Singles Ministry. The weekend culminated on Sunday with the celebration of the Eucharist with family and close friends in attendance.

The 10 coordinators for SE #13 are Adrian Bautista, Michael Benjamino, Rob Capili, Ross Errazo, Kathleen Marty, Mike Reyes, Kate Lyn Roy, Eugene Vibar, Catrina Vasquez and Chuck Tanseco.

They are joined by the rest of the class, Paula Leonor, Carlo Pena, Amy Lin, Erika Luthke, Jacinto Andres, Adrian Arias, Magalis Balanquet, Brian Basa, Allan Bautista, Marilyn Bernante, Mark Bustos, Angelo Calilap, Monica Canlas, Rudy Chery, Alvin David, Benson Del Rosario, Doyle Dionisio, Joanne Garcia, Liza Gatmaitan, Kris Hernandez, Alan Katigbak, Kay Mendoza, Pauline Montemayor, Angie Perez, John Rafanan, Michael Reyes, Marcus (YoYo) Rivera, Leif Rodriguez, Jep Santos, Kim Samonte, Mark Serrano, Rowena Sy, Rouinna Sypher, Mimi Tanseco, Koy Torralba, Allen Veluz, Jen Viray, Mai Alava, Theresa Almaria and Nicole Manansala.

THIRTEEN THOUSAND MILES

I used to dislike going to the Philippines. But this trip seemed different. Something deep inside me told me to go. I remember reading my brother's email just before I left. "We wish you well as you travel 13,000 miles to spread the Good News." It became clear to me. I was on a mission!

He revealed Himself through the beauty of Boracay and most specially through holy masses celebrated by Father Paul in his hotel room. There were only a few of us there, yet we could truly feel God was in our midst.

As in every weekend, whatever we lacked the Lord provided. The praise ministry did not own a set of drums; but a day before the encounter weekend, by the Lord's miracle, a drum set was provided us. On Friday, the first day of the encounter weekend, I woke up with a fever. Later that day as I was singing praise songs with the facilitators, I felt the fever slowly leave me.

We had worried about the candidates. Would they think American jokes are funny? Would they understand the facilitators? But when the weekend came, we saw that they had no problem understanding us. The candidates transformed from complete strangers to the closest of friends in merely a weekend.

This is why I traveled thirteen thousand miles. After every encounter weekend, I feel that I've experienced something that cannot be outdone; but God continues to prove me wrong each time.

Family Encounter this weekend. Let us keep in our prayer the families of FE 11 and all who will be serving.

It's summertime, August is the month for vacations and the family.

- Covenant News is in "summer mode" (2-page newsletter).
- There are no community teachings.

August 6 DLC meeting immediately after Healing Mass.

Steering Committee seeks full attendance; otherwise, ministry coordinators/class shepherds are asked to send representatives and submit their names to litogigi@vibar.com.

NFP Teaching next Saturday August 7 St. Antoninus 1-5pm. Damon Owens of the Archdiocese of Newark will give the teaching on Natural Family Planning to BLD members from the Newark district cluster, including Singles Ministry members, newly married couples and other interested medical professionals. Contact our Mission Stewards.

All graduates and their parents. Please be counted among the Class of 2004 that the community will honor and bless soon. Contact Alan and Tess Cam (201) 659-5417 atetscam@hotmail.com.

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. Reserve the date.

LSS #23 Oct 8-10, Consolata Mission Center in Somerset NJ. Registration now open for encountered couples, singles and solo parents. Contact: Secretariat or LSA at vicdeelim@worldnet.att.net.

Ministry Announcements

Transfiguration

The three evangelists, Mark, Matthew & Luke, all write an account of Jesus' transfiguration. They all foretold of the resurrection, the glory of Jesus as a servant, and the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Son of Man. These extraordinary visions and apparitions give privileged glimpses into the divine realm. The messages of the evangelists contain many startling supernatural qualities which call us, as readers, to wake up! The evangelists beckon us to see the divine presence and activity that surrounds us!

During our ME sponsorship, I interceded for candidates in front of the Blessed Sacrament and experienced the presence of God. I believe it was a foretaste of Christ's transfiguration. In my eagerness for the candidates to surrender themselves to God, my prayer was so intent and personal that I saw the faces of the couples we sponsored in repentance. Joy and peace was God's gift to them as He met them with a warm embrace. This made me burst into laughter, and enabled me to pray and praise God in tongues. I could not explain clearly what transpired until my classmates and shepherd who were present told me of my 'gift of laughter'. This significant moment in my life was my own personal transfiguration. In this moment, I recognized God in His wholeness, felt His suffering and fully understood His message of love and forgiveness. This momentous culmination of my faith is not an end but continues to make my faith stronger and is a source of strength during difficult times. This experience awoke me to the divine presence of the Lord in my daily life.

To help us see the divine presence and activity which is around us, let us meditate on the following questions:

- Do you see Faith more as a gift or a duty?
- What is the distinction between faith and merit?
- How do we relate transfiguration in our life: present and future?
- Do we see Christ as our intercessor?
- How is prayer in the life of Jesus and our own lives?
- How do you see and recognize Jesus as the Son, Servant and Prophet?

moderating our attraction to pleasures, balancing the use of created goods. In today's Gospel,

Jesus warns us of the danger of desiring material possession over and above our God. Jesus went further to say in Luke 14:33 that "every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple."

We are not only to avoid sin but act meritoriously. Titus 2: 11 to 13 says "For the grace of God has appeared, saying all and training us to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age, as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of the great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ." When we practice temperance, we display the virtues of sobriety, chastity, continence, humility, gentleness, clemency, modesty and lack of greed. In the Gospel story, the rich man lacked these virtues and thus, he is not rich in what matters to God.

The central theme to practicing the virtue of temperance is the recognition and acceptance of our spiritual poverty; our nothingness before God, our total reliance upon His providence. When we accumulate material things, we acquire a false sense of happiness, comfort and security, thinking we can depend on these possessions for everything.

However, as Jesus warned, true disciples know that not only can material possessions disappear overnight but their very life could also end abruptly. Practicing temperance is not limited to material things. It also requires courage to forsake what is socially and politically correct! Luke 12: 20 may sound too drastic and harsh; however it only emphasizes the fact that the Lord must be first in our value system, above all else! True joy and security comes only from God.

Both as individuals and as a community, we are ordered to "SEEK WHAT IS ABOVE", Col 3: 1. It asks us to put to death the things that separate us from God. In seeking what is above, we are to share not only our burdens, but our blessings. We are directed to spend at least one hour a day with the Lord and to be in constant state of grace because the Lord can call us at any time.

The practice of the cardinal virtues, particularly that of temperance, is essential to our spiritual life. However, it is easier said than done. Having been weakened by original sin, each of us has difficulty living a virtuous life. Therefore, we need the abundant graces our Lord offers through prayer and the frequent reception of the sacraments. Looking to the example of the saints and invoking their prayers also strengthen our resolution for holiness. We must never forget our Lord's challenge: "You must be made perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Once we meet this challenge, we can safely exclaim...THIS...IS...LIFE!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR JULY - SEPTEMBER 2004

Jul 30-Aug 1	FE11 in South Plainfield, NJ
Jul 30-Aug 1	Trenton ME5
Aug 7	DLC Meeting
Aug 7	NFP Teaching (see page 3)
Aug 13-15	FE#2 Trenton
Aug 13-15	FE#5 Long Island
Aug 21	Community Day (see page 3)
Sep 11	Disciples Assembly
Sep 12	DCS/DLC Recollection (see page 3)

Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. Please plan to come!

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS COLLECTIONS

7/09	\$3,827
7/16	4,136
7/23	3,029
29-wk avg	3,774

EXPENSES

29-wk avg.	\$4,208
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A note from Evelyn Alcrux

In memory of Winston, a project to construct a room at the BLD Covenant House in Dasmarinas, Cavite was initiated by his ME 1 classmates. The collection amounted to \$4,025.00.

On behalf of my whole family, I would like to thank all who responded to this undertaking for your generous support. What a wonderful, thoughtful, and lasting gift; it remembers and honors Winston in the way he would have liked to be remembered.

DIRECTION:

- Spend at least an hour a day with the Lord
- Be in a constant state of grace for the Lord could call you at any time.



FE # 11 Yields Abundant Harvest

18 families responded to the Lord's invitation to attend Newark's 11th Family Encounter held in South Plainfield, NJ last weekend. Fr. Paul Lehman, spiritual director, assisted by the Almonte and Escobinas families as sharers, facilitated the weekend. The Raagas family was discerned as the class family shepherd.

We rejoice with the Lord and the members of the FE 10 for the blessings of the encounter:

Alejan, Noel/Marilyn and Ann-Ann; **Alejandro**, Ludgero/Ligaya and Cheryl; **Arribe**, Rene/Cielo, Christel and Reciel; **Ausan**, Rosemarie, Manny and Amor; **Avisado**, Reggie/Orange, Tina and Monica; **Campomanes**, Ramon/Arsenia, Raymond and Jeffrey; **Del Fierro**, George/Cathy, Katrina, Georgie, Sara and Jordan; **Gabat**, Philip/Aida, Philip and Ralph; **Lim**, Fidel/Alegria, Melissa, Margarete, Michelle and Mae; **Lopina**, Antonio/Marian, Jake, Daven and Lauren; **Malabanan**, Regalado/Filipina, Eugene and Jay; **Martin**, Oddie/Jho, Jay-R, Julianne; **Masisado**, Carlos/Maria Fe, Chris, Tin and Charles; **Nacion**, Jaz/Mercedes, Jansen, Jaja and Jeanelle; **Nworu**, Innocent/Vicky, Nasa, Mike, Tochi and Neou; **Salmo**, Reginaldo/Teresita, Kevin, Patrick and Nicholas; **Santos**, Ricardo/Leonarda, Omar, Nikki and Mark; **Solema**, Isagani/Brenda, Gian, Leilani, Maricel and Maricris.

BLD Trenton Marriage Encounter #5

"And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance." (Lk 8:15)

The BLD Trenton ME #5 weekend was held at the Ave Maria Retreat House at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, PA from July 30 to August 1, 2004. The Pastoral team consisted of Father Tito Ignacio as the spiritual director, with couple presentors from Newark, Manny & Judy San Luis and Boyie & Stella Huelgas.

(continued on page 2)

COUNSELS

Priorities in Life

WORD: Ws 18:6-9; Ps 33:1,12,18-22; Heb 11:1-2, 8-19; Lk 12:32-48

ORDER: *"Be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of man will come." (Lk 12:40)*

REFLECTION:

As Christians in a predominantly materialistic setting, we may find ourselves asking, "What is there to life?" as we hear the exhortation of Jesus: *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth."* We may wonder why God created so many good and beautiful things when He did not want us build up on them and keep them. Instead, He exhorted us to "store up treasures in heaven" which we do not see, touch nor feel.

There is nothing wrong with money or possessions. In fact, God wants His children to prosper; but the problem comes with the **inordinate love** of what is material. The problem arises when money and possessions come between the Lord's work and us. 1 Timothy 6:9-11 says *"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the LOVE of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness."* There are very few things in life which have eternal value. The priorities that occupy our life become our treasure

(continued on page 2)

God's Promise for the Week

"When much has been given a man, much will be required of him." (Lk 12:48b)

Counsels *from page*

and ultimately our treasure defines our heart: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” We brought nothing into this world and we do not have the power to take anything out.

Treasures in heaven are quite abstract that they elude man’s understanding and appreciation. Our goal then would be to store up good works, which in time will transform us and make us more to the image and likeness of Jesus. Our focus should be on earning eternal merits to enable us to experience a little of heaven while here on earth and in time behold the Father in His kingdom.

We should love what is of the Spirit, that is, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control that cannot be purchased. They are not the “stuff” this world values, but they are the only things that matter and they last. The richest magnate and the poorest pauper will see their earthy bodies die in the same way and not a dollar from the rich man’s wealth will gain him a second more of earthly life.

God created us for a purpose primarily to give glory to Him, thus the need to achieve and strive toward a God-given goal. We have to replace our worldly passion for what satisfies, with a Christ-centered vitality. We have to depart from the things of the world and the lustful pleasure that abide in them but pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

“Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.” (Lk 12:33-34) Let us take a moment to allow the Word to cut deep into our hearts and honestly evaluate our priorities. God doesn’t look at the external parts of our life; **He looks intently at our heart.**

DIRECTIONS

- Be in a constant state of grace for the Lord could call you at any time.
- Examine your heart to see how much time you are spending on heavenly things versus how much time you are spending on earthly things.

The *Year of the Eucharist* called by John Paul II begins with the International Eucharistic Congress on Oct. 10-17 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Ministry Announcements

NFP Teaching tomorrow August 7 St. Antoninus 1-5pm. Natural Family Planning with Damon Owens of the Archdioceses of Newark.

H.U.G.S. Project Mark 10 is collecting linen, used clothing, and medicine for 38 needy families in Antique. Also money to cover shipping costs. *Please bring to the Mark 10 worship on August 13 and 20.* Thank you for your generosity

LSS #23 Oct 8-10, Consolata Mission Center in Somerset NJ. *First orientation next Friday, Aug 13 after worship.* Contact: Secretariat or LSA at vicdeelim@worldnet.att.net.

All graduates and their parents. Please be counted among the *Class of 2004* that the community will honor and bless soon. Contact Alan and Tess Cam (201) 659-5417 atetscam@hotmail.com.

Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Please plan to come!*

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. *Reserve the date.*

Community Calendar

Aug 7	NFP Teaching
Aug 13-15	FE#2 Trenton
Aug 21	Community Day
Sep 12	DCS/DLC Recollection

BLD Trenton ME #5 *from page 1*

We welcome the 12 couple graduates of ME #5: Armando and Elvira Atienza, William and Lucille Bunoan*, Raul and Remedios Caragay, Herman and Emelie Ho, Jose Maria and Christina Janolo*, Josue and Rosette Lemon, Glen and Josephine Ramos*, Roberto and Agnes Raymundo, Anthony and Arlene Riggio, Alan and Ellen San Rafael*, Ernesto Jr. and Julie Maria Saria, John and Carolina Young (*class coordinators). The class shepherds are Bert and Lith Golamco.

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

07/16	\$ 4,136
07/23	3,029
07/30	3,585
30-wk avg.	3,768

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

30-wk average \$ 4,283



DLC holds post-worship meeting

62 coordinators and shepherds held the first Friday night District Leadership Conference after last week's corporate worship in St. Leo church.

Among the matters discussed were the community's financial report, annual budget and fundraising project intended to cover the expected budget shortfall. To date, the fundraising effort has raised \$16,000. The community hopes to raise another \$30,000 in pledges before the end of the project.

The DLC also discussed the criteria for lay associations described in John Paul II's Encyclical *Christifideles Laici*, as a guide for developing the mission program we should adopt in support of the Archdiocese of Newark. Fr. Paul Lehman reported on the visits he made to *Gawad Kalinga* sites in the Philippines, where the planned homes for the poor may be built, in honor of his 50th sacerdotal anniversary.

Natural Family Planning Presentation

About 20 disciples attended a wonderful teaching and sharing on Natural Family Planning (NFP) last Saturday at St. Antoninus by Mr. & Mrs. Damon Owens of the Family Life Ministries of the Archdiocese of Newark

Based on daily fertility awareness, NFP can be used both to achieve and to avoid or postpone pregnancy. When used to avoid pregnancy, the basic "method" is abstinence from the marital embrace during the fertile time. With the Sympto-Thermal Method, developed by leading obstetricians and gynecologists, a woman observes 2 or 3 fertility signs which occur naturally within her monthly cycle. NFP is natural, safe, has no health risks and touts a 99% effective rate in postponing or achieving pregnancy.

An engaged couple from BLD Singles witnessed on how they integrated NFP to their marriage preparation. Most couples report positive effects of the NFP to their marriages - more passion, greater respect, increased confidence and better communication. Marriages that practice NFP have incredibly low divorce rates of less than 2%.

COUNSELS

Mary, Assumed Into Heaven

WORD:

Rev 11:19a, 12:1-6a, 10ab; Ps 45: 10, 11, 12, 16
1 Cor 15:20-27; Luke 1:39-56

ORDER:

"Proclaim the greatness of the Lord." (Lk 1:36)

REFLECTION: *"God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant could be seen in the temple."* (Rev 11:19a) In this Sunday's readings from the Book of Revelation, we see Mary as the Woman of the Apocalypse. She is likened to the Ark of the Covenant, since she bore the Eternal Word in her Womb. By her obedience, Mary set into motion the accomplishment of God's salvific plan for the world. With special wisdom and grace granted to her by the Most Holy Spirit, she joyfully accepted her role as the divinely chosen God bearer, the mother of the only Son of God.

Mary's role in the life of her Son was that of love, service, self-giving, humility and suffering. She was His first disciple, faithfully observing, meditating and putting into action all the teachings of Christ. With the Assumption, the Lord's promises were fulfilled for Mary beyond imagination. Divine grace deemed that Mary's body and soul be glorified, for her singular life embodies all the virtues that set her apart as gloriously deserving of total participation in the life of the Risen Lord.

From 1849 to 1946, numerous petitions for the dogma of the Assumption poured into Rome. More than a hundred Cardinals, two and a half thousand bishops and archbishops, 32 thousand priests and religious, and

(cont'd on page 2)

God's Promise for the Week

"God who is mighty has done great things for me, holy is His name, His mercy is from age to age on those who fear him" (Lk 1:49-50)

Counsels *from page 1*

millions of lay people responded unanimously to the Encyclical on the Assumption issued by Pope Pius XII. The Pope proclaimed: "The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul to heavenly glory." (Munificentissimus Deus)

The Assumption gives us confidence of the promised joy awaiting the faithful disciples of the Lord, whose bodies will rise at the end of time and dwell with Him in heaven forever. Vatican II reminds us that Mary did not lay aside her salvific duty. By her maternal love, she cares for the brethren of her Son who still journey on earth. Mary is now in the position to exercise fully her "motherhood in the order of grace," without interruption until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. (Lumen Gentium 62) In His generosity, our Father is showering upon us all the necessary graces, virtues and heavenly assistance to enable us to obtain for ourselves all that He has promised to bestow on us.

Just like Mary, we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to "Proclaim the greatness of the Lord." (Lk 1:36) Let us dwell on God's goodness in our lives, allow His infinite mercies to penetrate deep into our hearts, aligning our thoughts, desires, and actions with His holy will. Let us take away strife and lack of love in our midst and promote the virtues of a true community of love. Let us actively participate in the life of the Archdiocese, knowing that God chose Newark as our home for a purpose.

Mary as with the other disciples followed Jesus in His ministry among the poor, the sick and those in need of God's loving help. Let us open our hearts to His plan and let our prayer be, "Lord, guide me and use me according to your purpose." May His Loving Goodness shine forth in all that we do. May we desire to proclaim boldly, "God who is mighty has done great things for me, holy is His name, His mercy is from age to age on those who fear him." (Lk 1:49-50)

DIRECTIONS: Like Mary, let us respond to the Lord in joyful obedience and let us praise and magnify God in all that we do.

Pope visits Lourdes shrine

During his trip to Lourdes this weekend, Pope John Paul II will confer a *golden rose* on the Marian sanctuary. A precious object in itself, the golden rose is a special, rare mark of papal honor traditionally offered in the 11th century to the king or prince. It is a spiritual symbol as well as a gift of intrinsic beauty and value. The rose, of course, is regarded as the most fragrant and beautiful of flowers.

Ministry Announcements

FE 11 Grand Reunion. August 22, Sunday, 12pm-6pm at Boland Hall. *All members are invited to attend!*

H.U.G.S. Project - Mark 10 is collecting linen, used clothing, and medicine for 38 needy families in Antique. Also money to cover shipping costs. *Last collection day is on August 20 at the Mark 10 worship.* Thank you for your generosity.

All graduates and their parents. Please be counted among the *Class of 2004* that the community will honor and bless soon. Contact Alan and Tess Cam (201) 659-5417 atetscam@hotmail.com.

Community Day Saturday, August 21 at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Please plan to come!*

DCS/DLC Recollection Sunday September 12, time and venue to be announced. *Reserve the date.*

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

7/23 \$3,029

7/30 3,585

8/06 3,481

31-wk.Avg 3,759

EXPENSES:

10-wk.Avg \$4,209

Thank you for your generosity!

Community Calendar

Aug 13-15 - FE 2 Trenton

Aug 21 - Community Day

Aug 22 - FE 11 Grand Reunion,
Boland Hall 12-6pm

Sep 12 - DCS/DLC Recollection

Oct 8-10 - LSS#23

Kudos & complaints?

wordministry@bldnewark.com



8 families are restored to Christ

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb.” (Lk 1:41)

On the feast day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, eight families “leaped for joy” as they graduated from BLD Trenton’s second Family Encounter.

FE#2 was held last weekend at the brand-new Family Life Center in the grounds of St. Joseph’s in The Hills Retreat House in Malvern, PA. Fr. Pete Literal, Spiritual Director, said in his Sunday homily, “Today, the Son of man has been glorified in the lives of the families of the FE#2 class.” His statement was later confirmed through the sharings of some family members.

The Trenton community expresses its grateful appreciation to the Perez and Escobinas family sharers, the FE#1 sponsoring class, the auxies, the staff of St. Joseph’s, and all those who supported, prayed and contributed in other ways to the success of the Encounter. Blessings to the eight families of FE#2: Cortez, Duma, Gomez, Ibuna *, Llave, Mance, Manuel and Torralba* families. The Montas will shepherd the class.

May the Holy Spirit guide and protect the new FE graduates as they strive to bring their families ever closer to God and to one another!

** Class Coordinators*

HELP CHARLEY’S VICTIMS

The Category 4 hurricane devastated lives and properties. We can all respond to the victims’ needs through **Catholic Charities**, which under commission by US Bishops represents the Catholic community in times of domestic disaster.

Please act today!

Call 800-919-9338

www.catholiccharitiesusa.org

COUNSELS

Discipline and the True Disciple

WORD: Is 66:18-21; Ps 117:1-2; Heb 12:5-7, 11-13; Lk 13:22-30

ORDER: “Endure your trials as ‘discipline.’” (Heb 12:7)

“Strive to enter through the narrow gate.”

(Lk 13:24)

REFLECTION:

“For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.” (Lk 13:30)

Although intended for the Jewish community because of their rejection of Jesus and His teachings, this statement is very much applicable to our present situation. In this community, there is no ME 1 or ME 23 or in between when it comes to the question of who will be invited to the Kingdom of God. We are all in the same predicament. Some who are last will be first and some who are first will be last. However, Jesus said, “*Strive to enter through the narrow gate.*” (Lk 13:24) This passage stresses the efforts that are required to gain entrance into the Kingdom. Jesus is asking us to let go of the things that come between us and His grace.

Discipline works in every dimension of our life: financial, physical, mental and spiritual. It is also at the spirit of true discipleship. “*For whom the Lord loves, he disciplines.*” (Heb 12:6) During these times of correction, the attitude of total reliance and surrender must be etched in our hearts. “*At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.*” (Heb 12:11) We must prepare our hearts and minds to feel and see only through the eyes of Jesus. Think only of what is true and honorable and just; pure, (☪ Page 2)

God's Promise for the Week

“For whom the Lord loves, He disciplines.”

(Heb 12:6)

Counsels from page 1

lovely and gracious; excellent and worthy of praise. (Phil 4:8)

“Be still before the Lord, wait for God.” (Ps 37:7) We lead busy, loud, fast and nerve-racking lives. We desperately need the inner peace and assurance that only God can give. We develop patience as we learn to live from an eternal perspective. *“For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint. If it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late.”* (Habakkuk 2:3)

We must wait patiently for God to do His work in us. *“I waited, waited for the Lord; who bent down and heard my cry.”* (Ps 40:2) We become impatient when we focus on our own agenda rather than God’s divine purpose. In our community, let it be God’s agenda that will be the core of all our activities. We have to be steadfast in our prayer life, seeking the Lord all the time. *“Look to the Lord in his strength; seek to serve him constantly.”* (1 Chr 16:11) We must take into account all the details of our life and relinquish them to the hands of God.

“Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be dislocated but healed.” (Heb 12:13) We are all wounded in one way or another. We can either allow the pain and discouragement to break our spirit or let God’s grace flow within and heal us. We can endure all trials by reading and reflecting on the lives of the saints. Most of all, we must always turn to Jesus our great High Priest and be healed by Him. The decision is ours.

DIRECTION: Pay attention and do not be discouraged when the Lord disciplines you.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tomorrow is Community Day at Johnson Park in Piscataway NJ. *Please come and bring the whole family!* We shall begin with morning worship at 10am. **Class of 2004.** We shall greet all the graduates, giving thanks to the Lord for their accomplishments.

FE 11 Grand Reunion, Sunday Aug 22 Boland Hall 12-6pm.

DCS/DLC Recollection. Reserve the date, September 12 Sunday 11am-7pm at Boland Hall. Fr. Paul Lehman is Retreat Master. We’ll start promptly with Mass at 11:10. Disciples’ Assembly on September 11 is postponed; DCS will announce new date.

Happy Birthday, Newark!

Our 12th Anniversary Prayer

(We pray as one in thanksgiving to the Lord for His gift of community. We affirm that we are and will always be God’s household of faith.)

God our Father, in your wisdom and love, you established this community within the anvil of your Church in Newark, to bring together families, couples and persons into a communion of life and love under the Lordship of Your Beloved Son, our Savior Jesus Christ — a communion animated and protected by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

This Sunday, we commemorate the 12th year of our foundation. The mustard seed that You have planted and nurtured within the rainforest of Your love has grown into a large tree, on whose branches dwell hundreds of families from many tribes and nations- the young and the old, singles, married, solo and grandparents, lay, priests, deacons and religious.

From Your abundant providence comes the generosity of this community, from Your infinite strength its gifts and fruitfulness, from Your perfect love its solidarity, from Your ever-presence its work and worship, and from Your abiding Word its vision and mission. You have given us Your very Person, Your everything, that we may in turn share what we have so undeservedly received with the people You have given us to love – within the intimacy of the little church of the family, within the fellowship of our community and Holy Mother Church, and with mankind itself, particularly the poor of the earth.

Grant that we may fittingly thank You for our community’s 12th birthday by being a faithful sign of Your love and salvation, by sharing in the life and mission of the Church as a lay association of the faithful, thus being a leaven in the world.

Through the renewal and ongoing transformation of our lives and families, and through the perseverance and fruitfulness of our ministry and mission, may You, our Father, be praised and glorified, through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, in this household of faith, and in all the world, forever and ever. Amen!

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

7/30	\$3,585
8/06	3,481
8/13	4,040
32-wk avg	3,767

EXPENSES

32-wk avg	\$4,360	<i>Thank you for your generosity!</i>
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Josefs complete busy week

Kiko and Aida Josef, the global Pastoral steward and current head of the ECSL, completed a busy schedule with the Newark district last week that went as follows:

- Aug 17 - met with the DCS and DLC (24 in attendance); discussed the revised Covenant of Communion that will be released and presented to all disciples in about 3 weeks; clarified further the role of the DSL.
- Aug 18 - met with Formation group; gave the rationale in changes to our formation program, why discipling in Manila comes before mission immersion; discussed standard teaching syllabus and changes in modules.
- Aug 19 - attended Friday worship and fellowship
- Aug 20 - attended our Community Day
- Aug 21 - conducted teaching on Servant Leadership (56 in attendance) - principles, barriers; Jesus as our Model and other biblical examples; conflict-handling; shared leadership, mentors; and dimensions of the acronymic dictum, "SERVE others to EQUIP them for TEAM ministry?"

We thank and praise the Lord for the good work of his servant leaders!

FE #11 holds grand reunion

It was truly a fun day at St. Leo's Boland Hall for the Family Encounter # 11 Grand Reunion on a beautiful afternoon last Sunday.

As always, prayers and singing to give praises and thanks to our Lord started the reunion. A program ensued led by the Martin family, head coordinator, and the Raagas family class shepherds, featuring creative skits on "Blocks and Bridges" joyfully performed by the families themselves. Delicious food and desserts from the Lord's bounty were in abundance.

All but one of the 18 families making up the class made it to the event, giving witness to the renewed family life they now live and enjoy. Praise be to our Lord Jesus Christ.

COUNSELS

Exaltation in Humility

WORD: Sir 3:17-18, 20, 28-29; Ps 68:4-7, 10-11; Heb 12:18-19, 22-24a; Lk 14:1, 7-14

ORDER: "Conduct your affairs with humility." (Sir 3:17)

REFLECTION: Before Christ came into this world, humility was not revered as a virtue but rather was scorned as low and dishonorable. It was considered a quality fitting only for slaves. Leaders strived for places of honor and prestige and sought to be praised by others. Hosts would seat their guests according to their importance or status. Jesus tells his followers in Luke 14:10, to forgo such honors and take the lowest place.

There was also this custom of reciprocity, inviting only those who could return the favor. Our Lord advises his disciples in Luke 14:13-14, "Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." This means for us to host people of any standing, choosing those who cannot repay the favor.

In Sirach 3:17-18, we read: "My son, conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts. Humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with God." This is how Jesus lived. He was a carpenter and lived among the poor.

page 4

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." (Lk 14:11)

A letter from our Spiritual Director

On Natural Family Planning (NFP)

Dear brothers and sisters,

I take this opportunity to remind ourselves of the Catholic Church's position on the practice of artificial contraception within the Sacrament of marriage. I am not merely reacting to the poor turnout for the NFP program last August 7. I do realize that there were many events going on, meetings, vacations, etc. This I understand. I am concerned, as your spiritual director, about a missed opportunity and the possible confusion regarding the Church's teaching on artificial birth control. I know that those who attended used the opportunity to question and understand the Church's position. I am well aware of the questioning that goes on, even in the Church itself. We learn to live with our limitations, as we struggle to learn and follow the ideal life of Christian holiness.

As explicitly stated in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, "Each and every marriage must remain open to the transmission of life." (#11) I wish we had the space to explain the difference between artificial birth control and the use of the infertile periods to avoid contraception. The intention in both may be identical, but the acts are radically diverse. The exercise of marriage rights should be not only unitive but procreative. In other words, the husband and wife *surrender completely* to one another, not holding back the gift of fertility.

The question arises about the exercise of one's conscience in this area. We must follow the dictates of our conscience. However, conscience is formed by truth, not by a subjective decision to do or not to do something. I am writing this to help us all to think correctly according to God's plan for our lives. Some may object: "Why not leave people who have formed their conscience in opposition to the Church's teaching in good faith? Why disturb them?"

In answer we admit there may be occasions when we pastorally discern to leave people in good faith - except in those situations that will ultimately harm the individual and society. The consequences for those practicing artificial birth control, even in good faith, are outlined in *Humanae Vitae* and the constant teaching of the Church.

I would ask the teaching ministry to explicitly include this in the BLD formation program. I personally plan to include this teaching more explicitly during the ME module on marriage spirituality. I also hope to bring back the couple, Damon and Melanie Owens, who gave such an

excellent presentation on NFP the last time.

If we as Catholics and members of BLD are truly counter-culture, then the challenge for each one of us is to align our thinking with the teachings of the Catholic Church, even as we struggle to understand it. As we grow in understanding and live in the truth, this may mean sacrifice, the sacrifice of responsible parenthood. Marriage then progressively becomes the perfect model of Jesus' sacrificial love for his church for whom he gave up his life. May each one of us, married and single, learn to die to self and live a holy life to the fullest extent possible in this mortal existence.

Father Paul Lehman

August 10, 2004

SEPTEMBER TEACHINGS

Sept 4 St. Antoninus 1-6 pm

LSS1-22: Basic Bible Seminar (Book of Books, Approaches, Word of God & Response)

LSS1-18: Shepherds Training Part I

All Covenanted: Witness Development Program

LSS 18 (Time 1-8pm): CMP I (Love, Faith, World/Flesh/Devil, Renewing the mind, Walking in the Spirit, Body and Blood, Service & Community)

Sept 11 St. Antoninus 1-8 pm

LSS 18: CMP II (Discipline, Speech, Witnessing, Giving, Suffering, Discernment, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

Sept 17 St. Leo after LWG

John 6 and Mark 10 Teachings

Sept 18 St. Antoninus 1-6 pm

LSS22-23: Christian Parenting Part 1

LSS1-18: Shepherds Training Part II

LSS20: CMP II (Part I- Discipline, Speech, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

Sept 24 St. Leo after LWG

Singles/Solo Parents: EWJ-Matthew

Service and Intercessory Ministries: Formation Teachings

OUR 2004 BLD **GRADUATES**

PRE-K (11)

Abad	Anton
Antonio	Ashley
Anyanwu	Chiemezie
Arceo	Nicholas
Cebedo	Ken
Chan	John
Febe	Sherwin
Macalintal	Michael
Salar	Dominick
Talbot	Nicholas
Vibar	Paul

KINDERGARTEN (5)

Arceo	Christian
Besa	Kiana Rose
Guiao	Sabrina
Munante	Jeremy
Valonzo	Geralyn

GRADE/MIDDLE SCHOOL (15)

Duma	Catherine
Abad	Alissa
Camposagrado	Ryan
De Guzman	Dustin
Guzman	Gen
Lopez	Alfred
Ogbonna	Amy
Raagas	Nikko

Ekweghariri	Chiamaka
Ekweghariri	Chiemeka
Pagdonsolan	Jeff
Col	Kevin
Solema	Leilani
Reyes	Jayvie
Ogbonna	Christine

HIGH SCHOOL (34)

Aglibut	Ivan
Ausan	Manolito
Calilap	Valerie
Campomanes	Raymond
Casals	Abegail
Castillo	Jed
Castillo	Jason (LI)
Col	Trift
Copungcol	Jeremy (LI)
Cruz	Joseph
De La Cruz	Kris (TT)
De Lara	Rio
De Leon	Mark
De Vera	Hannah
Duma	Anabelle
Entena	Joe
Etcubanas	Michael
Feliciano	Nick
Gomez	Rica (TT)
Koryan	Barnett

Lim	Fidelio
Lopina	Jake
Lumanque	Miguel
Magadia	Jeff
Mangalili	Marianne
Mendonez	Nicole
Nacion	Jansen
Ogbonna	Ronald
Pattugalan	Gino
Punzalan	Isaac
Quintal	Jay Ar (LI)
San Luis	Victor
Tolentino	May
Velasco	Kerwyn

COLLEGE (9)

Cuevas	James
Garcia	Joanne
Malabanan	Eugene
Manansala	Maris
Mananasala	Nicole
Miranda	Ederlina
Ong	Mark
Santiago	Armi
Vibar	Eugene

OTHER

Ogbonna	Jacinta
(M.S. Family Nurse Practitioner)	

What's next for me? "Be not afraid. I go before you always."



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 75 FOR THIS MILESTONE ON THE JOURNEY!

Counsels (from page 1)

“Though he was in the form of God... he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness...he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death.” (Phil 2:6-8) And because of His humility, “God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (vv 9-11)

How well is humility understood, especially in our present culture? The word “humility” comes from the Latin root “humus” which means “dirt.” Does it mean then, that humble people are dirty, having low self-esteem, and considered to be of little value or inferior to others? No. To be humble is simply to look at ourselves in truth, to live without illusion or pretense, seeing ourselves the way our all-knowing God sees us. We must live who we truly are, not misleading people because of our pride. A true disciple is one who accepts his imperfections and weaknesses. He recognizes that others have God-given talents and abilities and he shows trust and confidence in them. He humbly steps aside in favor of another and willingly relinquishes power and authority. The Bible makes it clear that *“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” (Jas 4:6)*

Humility is the principle of a faith-filled life, because the recognition of our absolute nothingness becomes the indispensable means by which we welcome the uplifting love of the Father. God says in James 4:10, *“Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you.”* Jesus, on many occasions, told His disciples that if they want to reign with Him, they have to be willing to follow His footsteps. He reminds us in Matthew 20:28, *“The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* He extends that same invitation to us. Therefore, we must be servants for others. This is the essence of a Christian life: a life laid down, poured out, and lived out on behalf of others. We must serve the poor for they too are worthy of respect, dignity, kindness and love. This could be a difficult task but once humility takes hold of us, our former self-serving ways are transformed into an eagerness to serve others within and outside the community.

Authentic Christian greatness manifests itself in service. Done in humility, it is the ultimate exaltation.

DIRECTIONS

- Humble yourself by performing corporal works of mercy.
- Get involved in our community’s mission fields.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

DCS/DLC Recollection. Reserve the date, September 12 Sunday 11am-7pm at Boland Hall. Fr. Paul Lehman is Retreat Master. We’ll start promptly with Mass at 11:10am.

Disciples’ Assembly on September 11 is postponed; DCS will announce new date.

LSS #23 October 8-10 Consolata Mission Center in Somerset NJ. Attention all shepherds: it’s the season again for *the joy of shepherding!* Those who for valid reasons do not expect to be available, please advise our LSA thru vicdeelim@worldnet.att.net.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Collections		Thank you for your generosity!	
8/06	\$3,481		
8/13	4,040		
8/20	2,849	Expenses	
33-wk average	3,739	33-wk average	\$4,304

Public Discipleship: A Way To Put Faith Into Action.



Enjoy last Saturday’s **Community Day** photos at our website www.bldnewark.COM or www.bldnewark.NET

Note: ☞ please **DO NOT USE** www.bldnewark.ORG



Ad cites “5 moral issues”

A full-page ad appeared Tuesday in USA Today reminding the faithful that Catholic teaching forbids them to vote in favor of abortion, gay marriage, embryonic stem-cell research, human cloning, and euthanasia. And that extends to politicians who don't oppose those issues.

The ad ran in New York and nearby markets by Catholic Answers, and is similar to the voters' guide it has been distributing nationwide and on its Web site.

The “Voter's Guide for Serious Catholics” names no candidates or political parties but says that Catholics “cannot in good conscience vote for candidates who support, endorse, or condone the five key moral issues.”

Cardinal warns of devil's wiles

Cardinal Jorge Medina, former Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, warned that the devil is present in the world and that He uses euphemisms to destroy respect for life and the family.

“The devil is very present, and He uses lies and euphemisms to deceive. He calls abortion the termination of pregnancy and children burdens. He fosters homosexual marriage and laws allowing for divorce, presenting evil as good and making money a god,” said the Chilean cardinal.

The action of the devil could be seen in the convincing of people that polls are the result of truth and kindness. “If more than 50 percent say they are in favor of something, it is automatically accepted, without considering human nature and that not everything can be resolved by voting,” He pointed out.

Likewise, He recalled that the Prince of Darkness is a person, a concrete being, and not an abstract idea, and that He is devoted to “keeping humanity off of the road to salvation, which is in the cross of Christ.” Therefore, He called on young people “to get used to the idea of going against the flow.”

(Source: CWNews.com)

COUNSELS

The Cost of Discipleship

WORD: Wis.9:13-18b; Ps.90:3-6, 12-17;
Phlm.1:9-10, 12-17; Lk.14:25-33

ORDER: *Deny yourself, carry your cross, then follow Jesus.* (Lk.9:23)

REFLECTION: In the past few weeks we have read what it entails to be a disciple of Christ. This Sunday's Gospel tells us of the cost required to follow Jesus. “To be my disciple” implies radical choices, says Jesus in the Gospel.

Jesus is not intoxicated by His success as seen in the great multitudes that follow Him; nor does He incite the crowds to follow Him blindly, not knowing where He leads them. Rather, He “turns” in order to tell us, abruptly and straightforwardly, what following Him requires. No one can simply walk a stretch of the road with Him, letting Him go alone or with others the rest of the way. In order to be His disciple, one must follow Him to the very end, not stopping along the way, as if one could pick and choose among His teachings.

Yet there is nothing of the elitist about this. He speaks to everyone, knowing from experience that the great are no more likely to receive His message (Lk.10:21).

“*If anyone comes to me without hating His father and mother...*” (Lk14:26). This phrase must be understood in the strongest sense of a preference, at once deliberate, absolute, complete and deserving. It is a “devotion”, that is to say an unconditional consecration in the person of Jesus. Neither Jesus nor Luke ignores the commandment of the decalogue on love and duty towards one's family.

page 4

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

“Teach us to number our days and nights aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart” (Ps. 90:12)

“Of Splinters and Beams”

Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own? How can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye, when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye... Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye" Luke 6:41-42.

How quickly judgments form in our hearts. We demand standards from others that we never even try to meet ourselves; and we condemn faults in others, which are shining intensely obvious in our own lives. This is one of our commonest faults in life. Oftentimes, we dig in our heels on some matter of little importance just because we wanted our own way. We easily hold on to our own perspective and remain unyielding toward those whose outlook differs from ours or we consider our position “right” and label those who think or act differently “wrong”. The truth of the matter is: not one of us is good enough to judge any other! Jesus is the only Judge.

When we are confronted with someone who has made a mistake, our first feeling ought **not** to be, “I’ll have nothing more to do with someone who could act like that”, **but** “What can I do to help?” “What can I do to undo the consequences of this mistake?” We have to exercise the power to forgive instead of condemning; regard the sinner with pity born of love instead of disgust born of self-righteousness. Our Christian duty is to try to understand what drove the sinner to sin. We are not to banish sinners from the world but to make them good children of God. God uses His authority to love us into goodness. We must use such authority to understand and always try to mend the person who has made the mistake. *“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves, let each of us please His neighbor, for His good, to edify Him.”* Romans 15:1-2.

We should continue to serve everyone God puts in our path and at the same time, be willing to have the Lord examine our hearts and bring us into deeper repentance and healing. With the Psalmist we can pray: *“Search me, O God and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me”* (Psalm 139:23-24). *Help me to pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding* (Romans 14:19) *and widen my heart so that I can learn to love and respect those who are just not like me in every way.*

New Wine Into Fresh Wineskins

A new concept is always good especially if it contributes positively to an endeavor. Yet if it comprises change, some shy away from it. There are those who like change but others are normally comfortable with their present lives and are therefore resistant to change. A good number want everyone else to change while they stay the same.

Change is necessary for progress. In order to prosper even in the Lord's work, one needs to change and be transformed. Change is good but may be very uncomfortable to many as it means purging our hearts with anything that does not co-exist with Christ. For us to live a new life in Christ there is a need for absolute change. We cannot have new life while having our old ways. Change is necessary. Otherwise, the inevitable occurs and the new life we have in our Lord is lost.

There are some of us who are so used to just making things work, settling for the minimum, just being happy with surviving and not striving to get the best out of every circumstance. We do this despite knowing that “just surviving” will never suffice. We are short-changed as we settle for something that is second best. This is the message of Jesus when He said, “trying to put new wine into old wineskins just does not work.”

In our inner lives, a simple patchwork, a little change here and there, a positive turn only if it suits our comfort zones, will never work. We need a complete turn around. We need to start afresh with a completely new life in Christ. "New wine should be poured into new skins." Otherwise what we have started with a good intention of improving our inner selves will come to naught.

Man's band-aid approach of just holding things together will never be good enough. We need to have new lives in Christ and be spiritually renewed. Such a life definitely necessitates a radical opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit and faithfully living out our new life in Christ.

"No one tears a piece from a new cloak to patch an old one. Otherwise, He will tear the new and the piece from it will not match the old cloak. Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined. Rather, new wine must be poured into fresh wineskins." Luke 5:37-38

As a private Lay Association of the Faithful in the Archdiocese of Newark, we need a fresh start. We need to pour “**new wine**” into fresh wineskins!”

In the Spirit of Transparency

Compassion Beyond Rules

In Luke 6:1-11, the Scribes and Pharisees were enraged when Jesus twice “dispensed” with the Mosaic law of Sabbath rest. First, Jesus defended His apostles’ conduct of gathering grain during Sabbath. Second, Jesus Himself healed a man with a withered hand on another Sabbath! Did Jesus dispense with the Sabbath law in these two gospel instances? What can we learn from Jesus regarding rules in a Christian community?

Jesus did not dispense with the Sabbath Law. In fact, He declared that “*I have come not to abolish but to fulfill (the Law)*” (Matthew 5:17). How did Jesus fulfill the Law? By becoming poor although He was rich so that by His poverty, we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9); by laying down His life for us (John 15:13), so that we might have abundant life (John 10:10); by giving Himself for our sins in order to save us from the present evil age in accord with the Father’s will (Galatians 1:4). Jesus fulfilled the Law by loving us and giving Himself up for us (Galatians 2:20). When He died to atone for our sins, the Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:5) showed us that the highest law is the law of Love. This is why St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, proclaimed “Love is the fulfillment of the Law.”

The gospel clearly shows that Jesus wanted His people to obey His Father’s commandment to keep the Sabbath holy (Exodus 20:8) through compassion— by doing good, not evil, and by saving life, not destroying it (Luke 6:9). From this, we can draw two conclusions. One, the community needs to have fundamental laws or rules if we are to have order in the body. Without these rules, there will be confusion, waste and chaos, and the community will fail and die. Two, such rules must aim primarily to deepen and mature the heart and spirit of the community and to foster the overall well being of its members. An undue focus on efficiency and the strict interpretation of the letter of the law will shackle, if not kill, the heart and spirit of the community.

Remember: our community is body and spirit like its members. The community’s rules must therefore care for both its body and spirit. While rules are needed for order, they are beneficial only if they serve the good of the members (1 Cor 10:23-24). By themselves, rules are not the source of good. Christ is. This truth should direct our focus solely on Christ, who is the end of every law (Romans 10:4) and the source of all life and good. A Christ-centered community, in following its rule of life, shall become a fruitful agent in fostering a balanced spirituality among its members.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

“He said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.’” (Mk 6:31) All class shepherds and ministry coordinators are asked to join the DCS and Fr. Paul Lehman, the Retreat Master, at the **DCS/DLC Recollection** next Sunday 11am-7pm at Boland Hall. **We’ll start promptly with Mass at 11:00 a.m.**

LSS #23 Oct 8-10 Consolata Mission Center in Somerset NJ. *Attention all shepherds: it’s the season again for the joy of shepherding!* Those who for valid reasons do not expect to be available, please advise our LSA thru vicdeelim@worldnet.att.net. (Please note also the Shepherds’ Training at St. Antoninus tomorrow afternoon.)

SEPTEMBER TEACHINGS

Tomorrow, Sept 4 St. Antoninus 1-6 pm

LSS 18 (Time 1-8pm): CMP I (Love, Faith, World/Flesh/Devil, Renewing the mind, Walking in the Spirit, Body and Blood, Service & Community)

LSS1-18: Shepherds Training Part I

LSS1-22: Basic Bible Seminar (Book of Books, Approaches, Word of God & Response)
(**Attention:** Witness Development Program has been **moved to Sept 18.**)

Sept 11 St. Antoninus 1-8 pm

LSS 18: CMP II (Discipline, Speech, Witnessing, Giving, Suffering, Discernment, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

Sept 17 St. Leo after LWG

John 6 and Mark 10 Teachings

Sept 18 St. Antoninus 1-6 pm

LSS1-18: Shepherds Training Part II

LSS20: CMP II (Part I- Discipline, Speech, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

LSS22-23: Christian Parenting Part 1
All Covenanted: Witness Development Program

Sept 24 St. Leo after LWG

Singles/Solo Parents: EWJ-Matthew
Service and Intercessory Ministries:
Formation Teachings

Counsels (from page 1)

Jesus truly loved His relatives, His friends, and even His enemies. But only devotion to the Father and His will had, for Him, an absolute value. Because He had to be in His Father's house, one day at the age of twelve, He abandoned His parents, who were anxious at not finding Him among their company. (Lk.2: 41-51) Later, in the course of His ministry, He continued to teach those who would listen to Him, while His family was outside asking to see Him (Lk.8:19-21).

To be His disciple sometimes involves painful conflicts, not only during times of persecution but also when one must respond to a vocation, a call, and prefer Christ to all those around us. A disciple's life is full of trials, events marked by constraint, uneasiness and suffering. For ages we have spoken of the "cross". In the figurative sense, "to bear one's cross" means to submit to divine will by generously, even heroically, accepting these various trials as a sharing in the cross of Christ. For the Christian, then as now, "to bear one's cross" has a very concrete meaning. The expression evokes the image of Christ, the man of sorrows, walking toward Calvary while staggering under the weight of the instrument of His torment.

To be a disciple, we must renounce "all of one's goods". The importance of this detachment in Luke's eyes is obvious. His ideal is, if not voluntary poverty and destitution, at least the sharing of goods so that they not become master of the person. "You cannot", He says, "serve God and mammon" (Lk.16: 13). "Sell your belongings and give alms" and provide an "inexhaustible treasure in heaven" (Lk.12: 33).

Here again, we emphasize the fact that Jesus stripped Himself of everything, even His grandeur as "Son of God", to share in our human condition, to give himself to us, to allow us to participate in His status as Son, in His inheritance and glory (Phil2: 6-11).

To be Jesus' disciples is to prefer Him to each and every thing and be ready to share with others one's material, intellectual and spiritual goods. It is inescapable for us to take up our cross and renounce our goods, for Jesus clearly announced the demands that devolve on the disciples. All our lives we must become disciples and consequently, we must reflect constantly on the demands of this calling.

We know that the Holy Spirit is given to us, and thus the grace to hold fast until the end of our vocation, to meet all requirements, to bear the cross of the disciple and renounce all our goods. The Holy Spirit has revealed to us the path that leads to salvation.

DIRECTIONS

- Prayerfully discern all activities, as individuals, family and community.
- Pray, fast and give alms to the poor.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Sep 11 DLC Meeting cancelled
- Sep 12 DLC/DCS /DSL Retreat (see page 3)
- Oct 29-31 Youth Crossing Retreat #5, S. Plainfield, NJ
- Nov 5-7 Singles Encounter #14, Graymoor
- Nov 19-21 ME 24 at Don Bosco Shrine
- Nov 13 DLC Meeting, Boland Hall
- Dec 3 ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall
- Dec 11 SPM Christmas Party
- Dec 11 DLC Meeting, Boland Hall

birthdays

- 9/02 JC Barredo, LSS22
Carolyn Trillana, Mk10
Sarah Marcial, Mk 10
Justin Reyes, Mk 10
- 9/03 Emmie Manulat, LSS9
Bulay Minano, YLSS9
- 9/04 Nonoy Acuna, LSS19
Sally Belarmino, LSS3
Ben Chua, LSS13
Jessy Ogbonna, LSS19
Jesraye Flores, Mk 10
Kristine Villanueva, Mk 10
- 9/06 Asia Raagas, YLSS6
Nieto Lopez, LSS19
Ken Cebedo, Mk 10
Benny Rodriguera, LSS19
Malyn Tanseco, LSS6
Reuben Vibar, LSS2
- 9/07 Manolo Romero, LSS17
Ditas Tolentino, LSS15
- 9/09 Susan Fabe, LSS19
Dominick Salar, Mk10
Nile Solon, YLSS9



anniversaries

- 9/01 Oddie & Jho Martin, LSS15
- 9/04 Mat & Luz Talag, LSS8
- 9/05 Ted & Hilda Briones, LSS8
Ed & Myrna Magadia, LSS19
- 9/06 George & Maryann McGehrin, LSS20
Tony & Cely Rosal, LSS10
- 9/08 Romy & Norma Bernal, LSS7
Daniel & Nelda Dwyer, LSS22

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

8/13	\$4,040
8/20	2,849
8/27	3,661
34-wk avg	3,737

EXPENSES

34-wk average \$4,249

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!



Bishop Graces Mass

Bishop Ramon Villena from Nueva Viscaya, Philippines was the main celebrant of the community's First Friday Eucharistic celebration at St. Leo's church last week. He was assisted by Fr. Paul Lehman, Fr. Joseph Kim and deacon Bong David. In his closing remarks, Bishop Villena declared that he was elated to see whole families worshipping together, the congregation fervently participating in loud acclamation and singing, and the youth leading with spirited praise, on a night when one would normally find young people in malls or parties. He commended the community for fostering an environment conducive to the growth of Christian families, one that runs counter to the secular and hedonistic culture around us. Promising to bring the good news about BLD Newark to his own diocese, the good Bishop invoked the Lord's blessings on our community.

Prophecies and New Disciples

In his homily that night, Fr. Paul Lehman encouraged the "silent prophets" among us to boldly proclaim God's word after the quiet period of the corporate worship. Similarly, he asked those whose hearts resonate with the prophetic utterance to voice out their affirmation. He then accepted the pledges of the community's newest disciples: Covenanted - Fe Pakula and Dritz Mance, and Committed - Gayle Alejandro, Rose Ausan, Lesley Calilap, Eric Cruz, Christine German, Mario Queyquep, and Tess Santos.

Salubungan

Finally, the *Salubungan* was held after the Mass, in preparation for the 23rd Life in the Spirit Seminar on October 9-10. Shepherd Coordinators Nes and Becbec Laxina exhorted the shepherds to surrender themselves to the Lord in guiding their lambs, with His words: "I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep." (Jn 10:7) LSS 22 will sponsor the new LSS class, which so far includes 36 couples and 38 singles/solo parents.

COUNSELS

Shepherd and Forgive One Another

WORD: Ex 32:7-11, 13-14; Ps 51: 3-4, 12-13, 17, 19; 1Tim 1:12-17; Lk 15:1-32

ORDER: Be merciful as our Lord is merciful.

REFLECTION:

Forgiveness – there is probably no word more powerful than this. It carries with it a sense of consideration toward someone who has hurt us, a desire to see a wounded relationship healed and more importantly, an emulation of the very nature of God, who is "slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love." *Psalm 103:8*. And yet, for all its worth and power, the words, "I forgive you" is one of the most difficult statements to verbalize.

Unforgiveness has plagued us since the beginning of humankind. It has left wounds in individuals, families, communities, and entire nations. Pope John Paul II stated in his World Day of Peace address: "Forgiveness can seem contrary to human logic, which often yields to the dynamics of conflict and revenge. But forgiveness is inspired by the logic of love, that love which God has for every man and woman." To understand this logic of love, we must allow God to dwell deeply in our hearts. As we yield and bind ourselves to Him, we receive His love and find ourselves able to share that love with others. We forgive just as freely as we have been forgiven. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit are we able to surpass the limitations of human reason and grasp the true meaning of God's love.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus lovingly welcomed public sinners, who found mercy and compassion in Him.

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"I tell you, there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over the sinner who repents." (Lk 15:10)

Forgiveness and Reconciliation - Welcoming Members

Our personal wholeness flows from God's boundless love for all us, which He witnessed through Jesus' death on the cross. As His disciples, we reciprocate by offering ourselves in Christ's love for the wholeness and well being of others: "Love one another as I have loved you" *John 15:12-13*. This great commission to give Christ's love to one another is both an individual and a collective responsibility – one that is best lived in community and in the larger Church.

Throughout Jesus' public life, He showed us what it means to be a loving, forgiving person. In Luke 7:36-50, Jesus connects love to forgiveness. Simon, a Pharisee, invited Jesus to dinner but gave Jesus a cold reception. A sinful woman, who learned that Jesus was in Simon's home, came with an alabaster flask of ointment. Weeping, she bathed Jesus feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and anointed them with the ointment. This sight offended Simon's sensibilities, who asked himself, why was Jesus allowing her to do this?

Jesus replied through the parable of the two debtors, one owing a large sum and the other a small amount. Since the creditor forgave both debtors, Jesus asked, which one will love him more? Simon replied correctly that the one with the larger debt would love the creditor more. Jesus then proceeded to contrast Simon's behavior with the affection Jesus received from the woman. Simon dwelt hypocritically on her sins. Jesus focused on her faith and love. Simon saw only moral ugliness in her. Jesus saw goodness: her inner hunger for love and forgiveness, her potential for spiritual transformation. Love brought her to Jesus. Jesus brought her to greater love. Jesus loosened up the tight-minded Pharisee and succeeded with a detested sinner.

The parable questions us now: have we felt or made others feel unwelcome and unloved in our community? Have we felt, or made others feel isolated, unsupported and left alone? Have we felt, or made others feel as though judged and that nobody *cares*? *There is* spiritual danger to remaining in such state. We must experience love, acceptance and a sense of belonging in the community. An unwelcoming, unloving, unforgiving community cannot be a life-giving community. It cannot be a fruitful vessel of God's love. Our challenge is always to follow the way of Christ, through whom our community can find the wisdom and strength to fulfill its role in the Church.

Let us therefore faithfully witness the Lord's spirit of humility, obedience, servanthood, forgiveness and reconciliation. All members must feel welcome so that our community may be a home for them. Thus will our communion of life and love with God and with one another endure.

Welcoming Jesus

"There was a sinful woman in the city who learned that Jesus was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, she stood behind Him at His feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment." (Luke 7:37-38)

This gospel passage provides us with a visual image of a sinner with Jesus. She knew who Jesus was and sought Jesus for forgiveness and mercy. Her tears indicated her repentance from her sinfulness. She had shown humility and love for the Lord.

The self-righteous Pharisee failed to see the divinity of Jesus. He questioned Jesus' response of compassion and love to the sinner. Jesus replied to the Pharisee: "*So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.*" But to the woman, Jesus said: "*Your sins are forgiven... Your faith has saved you; go in peace.*" (Luke 7:48, 50)

Jesus gave this message to Sr. Faustina: "*The greater the sinner, the greater the right he has to My mercy*"

The Lord created us in His image and out of love for us. "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life*" (*John 3:16*). Because our sins draw us away from His perfect love, Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation after His resurrection. "*Jesus said "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."* And when he had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "*Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.*" (*John 20:21-23*) This sacrament requires recognition of our sinfulness, willingness to confess our sins, repentance from our sinful ways and seeking the Lord's forgiveness.

The Sacrament of Eucharist was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper: "*He took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of Me."* And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "*This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which will be shed for you*" (Luke 22:19-20). When the bread and wine are consecrated by the priest in the Mass, Jesus becomes really and truly present in body, blood, soul and divinity - the Real Presence.

When we are reconciled with Jesus and receive Him in the Holy Eucharist, we welcome Him and are united with Him.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross

Catholic spirituality does not separate the cross from the person of Jesus. That is why you usually see a crucifix in Catholic churches and homes rather than the cross alone.

Today's feast of the exaltation of the cross therefore honors the victory of Jesus who defeated sin and Satan through the instrumentality of the cross and His consequent resurrection.

Those who saw Mel Gibson's passion may recall that Jesus lovingly embraced the cross as he began His way to Calvary. He knew it would be the instrument to win our freedom from sin and death. Why did the death of Jesus win a victory for the human race? The answer is beautifully summed up by St. Thomas Aquinas (*quoted in the Magnificat for September, page 29*): "The passion of Christ freed us from the devil's power because in his action during the passion the devil overreached himself. He went beyond the limits of the power over men allowed to him by God, when he plotted the death of Christ, upon whom, since he was without sin, there lay no debt payable by death."

In other words, we are supposed to die because we are conceived in sin and actually do sin. But Jesus was sinless, and by embracing death, He broke the power of sin. So now death becomes not an end, but entrance into a new life.

Some of the early fathers picture the cross as a chariot upon which Jesus rode into hell to destroy the kingdom of the devil. Or the cross would be pictured as a sword that Jesus used to kill death. We often think of our own personal sufferings and problems as a cross. But even the weakness of our sinfulness can have a positive effect.

In God's very mysterious plan we often come to a realization of God's love and power only after we have sinned and failed. I admit I cannot quite figure that one out. But I know through personal experience and ministry in the Sacrament of Confession that many come to a realization of the power of Jesus' victory only after they have sinned.

That is basically the reason why God even permits sin, because repentance is always a possibility.

Each one of us is called to embrace his or her own cross, in whatever shape or form it may come. When we submit to the loving plans and action of Jesus we are actually embracing His cross, even if it sometimes means the acceptance of our sinful failures.

The power to submit is His gift to us, won by His own death on the cross. Embracing Jesus' cross means embracing His power and promise of future resurrection.

Ministry Announcements

"He said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.'" (Mk 6:31) All class shepherds and ministry coordinators are asked to join the DCS and Fr. Paul Lehman, the Retreat Master, at the **DCS/DLC Recollection on Sunday** 11am-7pm at Boland Hall. We'll start promptly with Mass at 11am.

Winston Alcruz. On his first death anniversary on September 13, our former Steward, brother and friend may be remembered by viewing the room built in his honor and memory at the BLD Covenant House. Find out more at our website www.bldnewark.COM.

LSS 23 shepherding has begun. *Let us keep the Seminar, all the lambs and shepherds in our prayers.*

SEPTEMBER TEACHINGS

Tomorrow, Sept 11 St. Antoninus 1-8 pm

LSS 18: CMP II (Discipline, Speech, Witnessing, Giving, Suffering, Discernment, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

Sept 17 St. Leo after LWG

John 6 and Mark 10 Teachings

Sept 18 St. Antoninus 1-6 pm

LSS1-20: CMP II (Part I- Discipline, Speech, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

LSS1-23: Christian Parenting Part 1

All Covenanted Members: Witness (Sharers)Development Program

Sept 24 St. Leo after LWG

Singles/Solo Parents: EWJ-Matthew

Service and Intercessory Ministries: Formation Teachings

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

8/20 \$2,849

8/27 3,661

9/03 4,110

35-wk.Avg 3,748

*Thank you for
your generosity!*

EXPENSES: 35-wk.Avg \$4,262

Counsels *from page 1*

Throughout His life, He demonstrated the need to go beyond the human capacity to love. He did it so amazingly by dying on the cross for us. He accepted great suffering from the Father, giving us a model on how we should give of ourselves to others.

As children of God, we are invited to share in His concerns for those whom He longs to save. Our faithfulness to the Father should not consist only in welcoming the sinners with joy. Like Jesus, we must have the courage to seek out those who have gone astray and those in need of healing, morally and spiritually, in our families, workplaces and faith communities. God expects us who have experienced His love and forgiveness to pass them on to others. How else can He seek the lost except through us, by the love and mercy we show to others? As we do this, we must hold on to the virtue of humility, letting go of any "holier than thou" attitude that may cling to us. After all, we are all sinners who need God's mercy.

How providential it is to have these readings as we prepare for the upcoming LSS 23! It is an honor and a privilege for the LSS shepherds to be used as instruments in bringing the 'lambs' closer to the Lord. It is an eye-opener for the 'lambs' to realize that God's mercy always abounds and is far greater than our sinfulness. Even when we fail and repeatedly falter, He is always there to pick us up and bring us back into His fold.

The Lord speaks of Himself as a loving shepherd who leaves the 99 in the open country and goes in search of the lost one. "*And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy*" Lk 15:5. Jesus left heavenly comforts and came into our world, our pasture, to smell like sheep! He walked our pathways, protected us from the wolves, faced our temptations, and shared our struggles. The shepherd metaphor shows up more than 500 times in all of Scripture. Isn't this enough evidence that this concept of caring for others was passed on intentionally for us to embrace?

Shepherding is not an easy task. It requires a dedicated commitment of self, time, and energy and the building of open, genuine and trustworthy relationships. We are all called to be shepherds in our own little ways. Let us do our part in bringing everyone back to God's fold and in being reconciled with one other.

DIRECTIONS:

"Be reconciled with one another." This is a week of reconciliation and homecoming. Let us invite everyone to worship, especially those who have not been attending lately.

Community Calendar

- Sep 12 DCS/DLC Recollection (*see page 3*)
- Oct 8-10 LSS 23, La Consolata, Somerset NJ
- Oct 29-31 Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
- Nov 13 DLC Meeting, Boland Hall
- Nov 19-21 ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
- Dec 3 ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall
- Dec 11 SPM Christmas Party
- Dec 11 DLC Meeting, Boland Hall

BIRTHDAYS

- 9/10 Abigail Fabe, Mk 10
Jean Velasco, YLSS6
Beth Alonzo, LSS19
Bong Baculio, LSS20
Mauricio Paredes, LSS21
Edna Reynoso, LSS13
- 9/11 Romy Bernal, LSS21
Annie Estalilla, LSS22
- 9/13 Marie Louise Lazaro, YCR3
Melissa Garcia, YCR3
P.J. Magahis, LSS22
Carlos Masisado, LSS21
Lisa Soriano, LSS15
- 9/14 Jonathan Reyes, YCR4
Mark De los Reyes, LSS21
- 9/15 Meg Pangilinan, LSS13
- 9/16 Jun Luna, LSS16
Oddie Martin, LSS15

ANNIVERSARIES

- 9/10 Mickee & Ronnie Pacia, LSS20
- 9/12 Rudy & Rita Santos, LSS18
- 9/13 Rene & Cielo Arribe, LSS21
- 9/15 King & Arlene Rigor, LSS18



Visit our website:
www.bldnewark.com



Leaders seek “Transcendence”

As our community seeks ways to incorporate itself more into the life of the Church as a Lay Association of the Faithful within the Archdiocese of Newark, the Lord blessed our leadership at a retreat conducted by Fr. Paul Lehman last Sunday at St. Antoninus church. Before the retreat, the participants joined the congregation of St. Antoninus in a joyful, charismatic celebration of Sunday Mass (*see note below from Eileen O’Hara*).

The retreat’s topic of TRANSCENDENCE was applied to SELF, in one’s connectedness with Christ; to COMMUNITY, in one’s connectedness with one another in Christ; and to MISSION, in our community’s connectedness with the mission of Christ.

In discussing how it envisions its evangelization role within the larger Church, the body reflected on the following issues:

- What obstacles must we overcome to reach out in mission beyond the confines of BLD?
- What strengths do we have and need to develop in order to fruitfully share in the mission of the Church?
- What is my role as leader to identify and bring forth the gifts of others?
- What commitments will we make to realize our calling as an association of the faithful and to share in the life/mission of the Church?

The leadership emphasized the need for our community, not only to form believers with the character of Christ, but to find ways to serve Him through others in the local parishes and the poorest of the poor.

“St. A” thanks BLD

On behalf of all the faithful at St. Antoninus, I want to thank you for your solidarity and support in our struggle to stay a viable presence in the midst of the inner city. We are very aware and grateful that the Holy Spirit has done “something beautiful” for us here at St. A’s and having experienced & responded to that over the past 30 years,
continued on page 3

COUNSELS

Trustworthy in All Matters

WORD: Am8:4-7; Ps 113: 1-2,4-8; 1Tm2:1-8; Lk 16:1-13

ORDER: Be trustworthy both in small things and big things.

REFLECTION: The readings focus on trustworthiness as a requirement of Christian stewardship. Webster’s dictionary defines trust as assured reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone or something. It defines a steward as an employee in a large household or estate who has been entrusted with the management of domestic concerns, which includes certain property or resources to be used in accord with the owner’s instructions or purposes.

Each and every one of us is a steward of the Lord. As parents, we are stewards of our children, whom we have been entrusted to love, care, nurture, guide, educate and raise, that they may become good and productive citizens in the land where the Lord settles them, and more importantly, holy and fruitful citizens of God’s kingdom. As workers, professionals and business people, we are stewards of the knowledge, skills, capabilities and material resources that He gave us, in order to provide for our families and our needs, to help fulfill our God-given potential and in the process help to build a prosperous, caring, sharing and peaceful society. As members of His Church and His disciples in this community, we have been entrusted with the Gospel, His flock and His resources, in order to bring the light and goodness of Christ to our
continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

“Never will I forget a thing they have done.”

(Amos 8:7)

Our Lady of Ransom

Many of us have a special devotion to the Blessed Mother. We invoke her name with such a profound feeling of awe, especially since we look to Mary as our quickest way to Jesus and an ever-ready intercessor for all our needs. We pray the Litany of the Most Holy Rosary, absorbing her many attributes with much conviction, acknowledging her majestic presence in our lives while trying to emulate her virtues. Most times we pray a special novena to Mary and designate her with a specific title, to name a few: Our Lady of Fatima, Lourdes, Medjugore, Guadalupe, Perpetual Help, the Rosary and the list goes on. These titles point to the one and only Blessed Virgin Mary. One title of Mary that most of us may not have heard of is that of Our Lady of Ransom.

Early in the 13th century, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in separate visions on the same night to St. Peter Nolasco, to St. Raymond of Penafort, and to King James I of Aragon, Spain. She appeared to carry two bags of coins for use in the redemption of captives seized by the Moors on the seas and in Spain itself; they were being cruelly tormented in their African prisons to make them deny their faith. All the Christians of Europe, and Spain above all, were praying with great fervor to obtain from God the remedy for the great evil that had befallen them. The divine Will was soon manifested. Through the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin, these three servants of God established a work of the most perfect charity, the redemption of captives.

Thus was formed another of her Marian titles: Our Lady of Ransom, a title commemorating the foundation of the *Mercedarian* religious order (from *merced*, the Spanish word for mercy) by St. Peter Nolasco. Our Lady had requested the establishment of an order aimed at ransoming the enslaved Christians. Its complete name is "Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary for the Ransom of Captives." Members of this order took a special vow to act as hostages, if necessary, to free those Christian captives whose faith was in danger from the Moors.

On this Feast Day, our Lady will direct our reflection to her Son who gave His life as ransom for the transgressions of men, our Lord Who delivered us from the darkest slavery and eternal bondage. She inspires us to greater devotion and to live it by our selfless service to all brethren in community and beyond. Through prayer, holy example and good counsel, we can assist the Lord and the Blessed Mother in the salvation of souls, thereby securing our own.

Renounce All For Jesus

The word "renounce" means to give up, abandon, deny, disown, disclaim, disavow ...etc. A word so easy to define and yet so difficult for one to achieve most when it comes to earthly things we are so attached to.

When Jesus first summoned the twelve apostles to proclaim the kingdom of God, He told them, "*Take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic.*" (Lk 9:3) The apostles accepted this mission without bargaining with the Lord for anything else but instead put their total trust in Him.

"If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he can not be my disciple." (Lk 14:26) Each of them accepted a significant risk by leaving behind their families, friends & their livelihood in order to proclaim God's kingdom. It is not that Jesus literally wants his disciples to renounce or not love their own families but instead He simply wanted it fixed in their hearts and minds that God is to be served first and above anyone else (Mt 10:37). Is this too much of a sacrifice being asked from His disciples? How about considering what our Heavenly Father has done for our sake in the sacrifice of His only son, our Lord Jesus Christ? (Jn 3:16) Hard toil, inconveniences, persecution... Nothing hindered the apostles as they stayed focused on the work that Jesus had already began.

In our world of marvel and technology, we face more obstacles in life that not only distract us but to which we can grow such inordinate attachment. Although we may not have received the same power that the Lord bestowed on His early disciples, *He has given us His Holy Spirit* to teach us how to fight, guide, strengthen and empower us. We are not to rely solely on our human abilities but on God's power alone, manifesting His power in our abject weakness. The Lord wants us to know that He is with us to protect us as we step out in faith as among those chosen to be part of His holy people.

There may have been thousands of so-called "*followers*" of the Lord Jesus during His time on earth, but only a handful could actually be called His "*disciples*" who fearlessly faced persecution, and selflessly denied themselves by putting God above everything else while proclaiming the Gospel to mankind. We too can ask ourselves, are we "*followers*" or "*disciples*" of the Lord?

"He must increase; I must decrease." (Jn 3:30) The Baptist inspires us to know our place when Christ comes into our lives.

In the Spirit of Transparency

Are We Ready For The Change?

Greater challenges confront our community amidst the growing needs of the Church. The increasing demand for fruitfulness in mission highlights the need to realign our affairs as a covenant community with our new anointing as a Private Lay Association of the Faithful.

What the realignment means to all of us is **change**, not necessarily in our vision and mission, but in the way we conduct our affairs and the accompanying structure that will allow us to pursue our work for the Lord. We need to review what leadership should be in community in order for us to properly participate in the life of the larger Church. We must reorient disciples on the new direction of community and how we can best serve God's people.

One of the most important facets of community work is the issue of being proactive and adaptable to the needs of the Church. As such, everyone should be vigilant and solicitous in pursuing our charism and mission, carrying them to completion and perfection, rather than being careless, complacent and remiss. All should have perseverance and courage of soul to bear the weaknesses of God's people and initiate greater works in the service of our Lord. We are to be influenced neither by favors nor threat from what our conscience, reason and divine service require. We must be detached from the results of our works, not too puffed up and exalted by success or too cast down by adversity and self-pity. It demands rectitude and severity with kindness and gentleness so that we are not sidetracked from what we judge as more pleasing to our Lord while being accountable to one another.

We need disciples with leadership essentials that direct, guide and act to inspire respect and trust in every member. Our task requires that disciples should have authentic love for one another, the community and what it represents. Their service should not be frills-oriented but focused on the fundamentals of self-giving and self-responsibility. They ought to be able to balance reason and emotion, bring them together towards a freedom of heart for sound and good judgment.

Most importantly we are required to identify and discern key workers who do not only live holy and prayerful lives but are technically equipped to lead community endeavors; not only to draw the goodness in others but within them, be able to form and support a team and give them broad directions for any mission and then empower them to make the best decisions in their own apostolate.

Are we ready for the change?

Ministry Announcements

SEPTEMBER TEACHINGS

Tomorrow Sept 18 St. Antoninus 1-6 pm

LSS1-20: CMP II (Part I- Discipline, Speech, Fraternal Correction, Handling Conflict & Repairing Wrongdoing)

LSS1-23: Christian Parenting Part 1

All Covenanted Members: Witness (Sharers) Development Program

Sept 24 St. Leo after LWG

Singles/Solo Parents: EWJ-Matthew

Service and Intercessory Ministries: Formation Teachings

Mark 10. Parents please leave your children always with ministry core members only at the Annex basement. Sign them in before you leave them and sign them out at pick-up time between 10:30-10:45pm. Starting 9/24, our Annex basement venue will be used *every 4th Friday of the month* by our Singles so *there will be no Mark 10 worship.*

BLD Dinner-Dance 2004

Place: FIESTA, 255 Rt. 17 South, Woodridge NJ

When: Saturday, October 30

Time: Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30

Attire: Semi-Formal

Cost: \$45.00/ person

Ticket distribution starts tonight, Sept. 17 at fellowship.

Table reservation by groups of 10 is first-come-first served, based on PAID tickets for the whole group. (Please arrange your own table groupings.) Contact for information: Sam Olaso 973-927-8331 samo@fcc.net, Robin Guiao 908-756-1746 rguiao@fcrc.com, Alan Cam 201-659-5417 atetscam23@hotmail.com.

St. "A" thank you *from page 1*

we recognize when He moves and we certainly see & applaud the great things you are *allowing Him* to do through you.

We hope we were able to minister to you through our liturgy for that is our gift here...our worship. We delighted in having you join us and I know the Holy Spirit delighted in our coming together to give glory to the Father through the Son. May we continue to support one another, to join together in praise and worship as often as we can. And may the light He lit on this hill 30 years ago shine brighter and become a beacon and haven for all who seriously seek Him.

God bless you,
Eileen & all of us at St. A's

Counsels *from page 1*

children, our friends, to all tribes and nations, for the praise and glory of God the Father.

In the parable of the dishonest steward, we learn that the steward broke his master's trust by squandering the latter's property. To squander means to dissipate, waste or be unfruitful. As a result, the master demanded a full accounting of his stewardship, telling him that he can no longer continue as steward. True to his selfish nature, the steward discounted the debts of his master's debtors in order to ingratiate himself with them.

The Gospel itself teaches us three key lessons. First, all of us will be called to account for our stewardship of the Lord's people, gifts and resources - hence the call to trustworthiness. Second, we are to be trustworthy in great and small matters, in worldly wealth and true, imperishable wealth. Third, the trustworthy steward knows and serves only God, not mammon. The other readings for Sunday reveal to us other essentials of Christian stewardship: integrity and justice, concern for the needy and the poor, and thankfulness, prayer and intercession.

What is the path to trustworthiness? It starts with the choice of service over self-interest. The spirit of service requires us to hold in trust the well-being of the larger entity - our family, our parish, our community, our workplace, our nation. That trust is best served in obedience to the two greatest commandments, which is authentically expressed when we place a higher value on pleasing God and working for the good of others. Stewardship is about humility and servanthood, not self-interest, ownership and control. The proud and arrogant person would primarily be concerned with himself, and not the good of others. The humble steward relies and trusts not on his own abilities and strengths, but on God and God alone. Only God is trustworthy (Jn 3:33). By ourselves, we are weak and broken, hence undeserving of God's trust. Yet He calls us to Christian stewardship (1 Cor 1:26-29).

In power made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9-10), the Lord equips us in and through Christ to respond fruitfully to His call. He aids us to trustworthiness in Christ by renewing our minds in the Holy Spirit, so that we may discern and be united with His perfect will (Rm 12:2). Through Christ who empowers us, we, His stewards, have strength for everything (Phil 4:13). Our reliance on Christ makes us reliable; our trust in Him makes us trustworthy. Those who trust in and are one with the Lord bear much fruit (Jer 17:7-8; Jn 15:5).

DIRECTION: Pray and intercede always, giving thanks for everyone, and for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity. (1Tm 2:1-2)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Oct 8-10	LSS 23, La Consolata, Somerset NJ
Oct 29-31	Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
Nov 13	DLC Meeting, Boland Hall
Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 3	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall
Dec 11	SPM Christmas Party
Dec 11	DLC Meeting, Boland Hall

*May the blessing of the Lord
be upon you!*



BIRTHDAYS

- 9/17 Christine Verzosa, LSS22
Matt Zarraga
- 9/18 Pete De la Cruz, LSS2
Nora Lopez, LSS19
Sonny Solema, LSS20
Zachary Pacia, Mk 10
- 9/19 Genaro Abes, LSS8
Emily Lucero, LSS13
Ramon Mariazeta, Mk 10
Stevie Olaso, YCR4
- 9/20 Fr. Eustace Edomobi, LSS16
Bernadette Ekedede, LSS15
Annie Ochotorena, LSS17
Tonette Pagdonsolan, S20
- 9/21 Marko Luardo, Mk10
- 9/22 Eddie Antonio, LSS18
Romy Cuy, LSS10
Babette Gargaritano, SPE5
Maris Manansala, LSS22
- 9/23 Tony Arambulo, LSS8
Tony Rosal, LSS10
Allan Villanueva, LSS17
Megan Siojo, Mk 10

ANNIVERSARIES

- 9/17 Ruben & Luz Amarante, LSS10
9/18 Keem & Gigi Espejon, LSS7

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

08/27	\$ 3,661
09/03	4,110
09/10	4,220
36-wk avg	3,761

*Thank you for your
generosity!*

EXPENSES

36-wk average \$ 4,174



Volume 10 Issue 38

Bulletin Edition

September 25, 2004

Fr. Paul Villages to begin construction

Last Monday, September 13, representatives of BLD Newark cluster and the CFC/ANCOP met at the CFC House in Union, NJ to sign the Memorandum of Agreement to build the Fr. Paul Lehman *Gawad Kalinga* Villages in the Philippines beginning this year.

In attendance were Sonny and Brenda Aguilang and Rollie Balanza of ANCOP Foundation (USA) Inc; Richard dela Fuente, Frank and Sally Belarmino, and Bong Encarnacion from BLD Newark.

Gawad Kalinga is a project spearheaded by Couples for Christ. ANCOP Foundation is its fund-raising arm.

The agreement covers 50 homes: an initial 30 homes and another 20 homes for the next phase. The construction of the homes is expected to begin within the next two months.

Photos of the event are found at our website www.bldnewark.com

Long Island FE 5 is victorious in the Lord

They journeyed to find Jesus and came to the inn. Thirty-nine people – twenty parents and their nineteen children – found modest accommodations for their Family Encounter this past weekend at the Wingate Inn in Commack, NY.

The new FE class was comprised of the Balagot, Baral, Crudo, Enriquez, Polidora, Romero, Umali families; along with their coordinators: the Miane, Nicdao, and Ramos families. Rene/Cherry Bacani and their children will be the class shepherd.

Stormy weather and venue problems were surmounted. The more intractable problems of deep hurts, unforgiveness, lack of communication and other blocks to being a more loving family were gradually overcome with the ministering of the pastoral team of Fr. Fernando Po, the Villegas and Canlas families; the selfless witness of service and giving by the sponsoring class,

(☞ Page 2)

COUNSELS

Helping the Poor

WORD: Am 6:1a, 4-7; Ps 146:7-10; 1 Tim 6:11-16; Lk 16:19-31

ORDER: *“Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.”* 1 Tm 6:11

REFLECTION: In this Sunday’s Gospel on the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Jesus reveals the dramatic contrast in the circumstances and fate of a rich man and a poor man named Lazarus. In the parable, the rich man was punished and Lazarus was rewarded. We should be careful to note that the rich man was punished not because of his wealth, but because of his selfishness; not for what he did, but rather for what he did not do.

The rich man feasted in luxury every day while Lazarus waited hungry at his door. Lazarus *“would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table.”* Because Lazarus was covered with sores, he was not admitted to the rich man’s home. Ultimately, death brought justice to both men. The rich man suffered in hell, while Lazarus rested at the side of Abraham, which is the Hebrew concept of heaven. The great sin of the rich man was that **he never even noticed or lifted a finger** to help Lazarus, while he himself wallowed in luxury.

In the first reading, the Word of God admonishes us against complacency, or insulating ourselves from other people’s needs. He warns us not to fall into the pit of arrogance and pride and not to be lulled into the false security of wealth and comfort. God wants us to be concerned for others, especially those who cannot help themselves. (☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“Blessed is he who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry.” Ps 146:7

“Aspiring to be Least”

Since our childhood our minds were conditioned towards success, wealth, importance, and power. We grew up with the illusion that more is better, that happiness lies in how much we can accumulate in terms of material possessions and earthly power. But will this lead us to our Father’s House?

In God’s kingdom, who are considered the greatest? We read in Luke 9, verses 46-48: *An argument arose among the disciples about which of them was the greatest. Jesus realized the intention of their hearts and took a child and placed it by his side and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives the one who sent me. For the one who is least among all of you is the one who is the greatest.”*

We must therefore strive to be the least among our brothers and sisters. But what does it mean to be the least? It means we must imitate Jesus. We must be humble, loving and forgiving. It means we must care for the downtrodden and the hopeless, to protect those who cannot protect themselves. To take time out to comfort the sick and bring cheer to the lonely. To favor the well-being of others over our own so that they may know God’s love and saving grace.

Human as we are, how can we possibly accomplish all these? Only by the grace of God; only when we put Jesus at the heart of everything we undertake. It is in prayers, in talking and listening to Jesus that we learn to understand our true mission and be able to accomplish these. Frequent reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist leads us to a closer relationship with our Lord. It enables us to do the acts of charity, sustains us to remain humble and forgiving and reminds us that Jesus, although He is our King, became the least of us in order for us to gain eternal life. We must be faithful in living the Gospel. Our life should be a reflection of God’s compassion, mercy, and humble service to mankind.

(from Page 1)

intercessors, praise and other “auxies”; and not the least, the merciful grace of our Lord God and mighty presence of His Holy Spirit.

“Decide today whom you will serve... As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

(Jos 24:15)

Return to the Vineyard!

Pope John Paul II warns that we are faced with “unrestrained secularism (and) a perspective of life which neglects the search for the ultimate goal and meaning of human existence.”

He mentioned the “tragic consequences of the eclipse of the sense of God... the drift away from the Church; the undermining of family life; the facilitation of abortion and prostitution; a misguided vision of life which seeks pleasure and ‘success’ rather than goodness and wisdom.”

“Christ’s disciples find no time for ‘standing idle in the marketplace,’ nor can they be so absorbed by the internal aspects of parish life that they are distracted from the command to evangelize others actively... They must return to their vineyard burning with a desire to speak of Christ and to show him to the world. The proclamation of the Gospel is a duty that no single believer can ignore.”



BLD Dinner-Dance 2004

Place: FIESTA, 255 Rt. 17 South, Woodridge NJ

When: Saturday, October 30

Time: Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30

Attire: Semi-Formal

Cost: \$45.00/ person

Ticket distribution starts tonight, Sept. 17 at fellowship. Table reservation by groups of 10 is first-come-first served, based on PAID tickets for the whole group. (Please arrange your own table groupings.) Contact for information: Sam Olaso 973-927-8331 samo@fcc.net, Robin Guiao 908-756-1746 rguiao@frc.com, Alan Cam 201-659-5417 atetscam23@hotmail.com.

ARCHANGELS Michael, Raphael and Gabriel


The name “angel” is simply an abbreviation of the Greek *angelos*, meaning “one who is sent” or a “messenger”. As such, the term is sometimes used in scripture to describe men who are sent on a special mission.

An archangel is a chief or ruling angel. The term occurs twice in the New Testament (Jude 5:9; 1Thessalonians 4:16). An archangel is an angel of higher rank and only three are mentioned in the canonical Scriptures; **Michael, Raphael and Gabriel.**

St. **Michael** is the prince of the seraphims. Christian tradition gives to St. Michael four offices: to fight against Satan; to rescue the souls of the faithful from the power of the enemy at the hour of death; to be the champion of God’s people, therefore he was the patron of the Church; and to call men from earth and bring their souls to judgment.

Archangel **Raphael** (“God has healed”) does not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures but only in the Book of Tobias. Regarding the functions attributed to Raphael, we have little more than his declaration to Tobias (Tobit 12). When the latter was occupied in his works of mercy and charity, (Raphael) offered his prayer to the Lord. He was sent by the Lord to heal Tobit of his blindness and to deliver Sara, his son’s wife, from the devil. Here he first appears disguised in human form as the traveling companion of the younger Tobias, calling himself “Azarias the son of the great Ananias.” Commentators, however, identify him with the “angel of the Lord” mentioned in John 5. This conjecture is based both on the significance of the name and on the healing role attributed to Raphael in the Book of Tobias.

St. **Gabriel** was the angel of Annunciation. His four appearances were recorded in the bible. He explains the vision of the horned ram as portending the destruction of the Persian Empire, the prophecy of the “seventy weeks” before the coming of Christ. He foretells to Zachary the birth of the Precursor, and to Mary that of the Savior.

We commonly apply the name “angel” only to good spirits. But **strictly** speaking, all spiritual creatures are angels, including the demons who are estranged from God. An angel, therefore, is a purely spiritual created substance who exists as an individual person with mind and will but, unlike man, has no bodily parts that can be 

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Magnificat 2005. *Don't miss the boat this time!* Subscribe early for next year at our low group rate of only \$14.95 (save \$35.00!). Please subscribe as a group **ONLY**; get together as one group within your ministry or class **PLEASE**. Deadline is November 15, 2004. Contact Benny/Sally Santiago or other members of the Word ministry.

MARK 10

- Parents please leave your children always with ministry core members only at the Annex basement; do not forget to sign them in and out.
- Pick-up time is between 10:30-10:45pm.
- The OCTOBER and NOVEMBER issues of the “Magnificat for Kids” is ready for pick. The low \$10 payment is due from those who have not paid yet.

Starting 9/24, the Annex basement venue will be used *every 4th Friday of the month by our Singles so there will be no Mark 10 worship.*

TEACHINGS

Tonight after LWG

Singles/Solo Parents: EWJ-Matthew
Service and Intercessory Ministries:
Formation Teachings

Oct 15 after worship

John 6 and Mark 10 Teachings

Oct 16 St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-17: Apologetics, Prayer, Church, Sacramentals

LSS 1-23: Christian Parenting II

Covenanted disciples: Prayer Counseling (Elijah)

Oct 22 after worship

Service and Intercessory Ministries:
Formation Teachings

Oct 23 St. Antoninus 10am-7pm

LSS 20: Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat

LSS 23 shepherding and preparations are going on. *Let us keep the Seminar, all the lambs and shepherds in our prayers.*

perceived by the senses.

On the basis of revelation, we distinguish between good and evil spirits. Both were originally good when created by God, and both were mysteriously tested in their loyalty to God. Those who remained faithful merited heaven and forever behold the Trinity. Those who were disobedient were condemned to eternal punishment.

Counsels from page 1

The Kingdom of God has no place for selfishness and indifference.

We need to reflect on our situation today. The hungry, the homeless, the aborted, the abandoned, the poor are all around us. Have we done enough to give food to the hungry and secure justice for the oppressed? Financial success is by itself good. But with wealth comes responsibility. As Christian stewards, we are accountable to God on how we use His gifts. His gifts are not meant for our purposes, but for God's. His will is for us to use His gifts to promote charity and justice.

By God's grace, BLD Newark was appointed by the Archbishop of Newark as a Lay Association of the Faithful. This requires us to be in the frontlines in serving Christ's mission for the Church. It is not accidental that we find ourselves worshipping in the heart of the inner city, and not in some affluent suburb where everything is better. We are in Newark because God wants to engage our community in His mission for the poor, the weak and the hungry. He wants us to share our faith with those who do not yet believe and who have strayed from the faith. Jesus said "As often as you did it for one of my least of the least brothers, you did it for Me." Mt 25: 40.

We may feel that we too are poor, struggling to make ends meet. Thus, we work overtime or have two jobs. We work so hard to be financially secure in our old age that we may feel that whatever we gained is rightfully ours. However, Christ tells us in Deut. 8 :17-18 "You might say to yourselves, It is my own power and the strength of my own hand that has obtained for me this wealth. Remember then, it is the Lord your God , who gives you the power to acquire wealth."

Gratitude is the foundation of stewardship. God gave us our lives, our families, our talent and treasure. Let us express our gratitude to Jesus by living a life of generosity. Let us loosen our grip on the gifts we have received lest we begin to think they are our own. As Christ's disciples, we must embrace all challenges in pursuit of our calling: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life" (1Tm 6:12). Let us keep faith and be "rich in good works" (1Tm 6:18) by sharing our time, talent and treasures with the needy and the oppressed.

DIRECTIONS

Do not be complacent. Share your blessings with others.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct 1-3 Aspirants' Retreat, S. Plainfield Ramada
- Oct 8 LSS Invocation/Healing Mass
- Oct 9-10 LSS 23, La Consolata, Somerset NJ
- Oct 29-31 Youth Crossing Retreat 5,S Plainfield,NJ
- Oct 30 Dinner-Dance (Fund-raiser)
- Oct 31 LSS 23 Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
- Nov 13 DLC Meeting, Boland Hall
- Nov 19-21 ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
- Dec 4 ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
- Dec 11 SPM Christmas Party 6-11pm
- Dec 11 DLC Meeting, Boland Hall

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .



BIRTHDAYS

- 9/24 Jerry Almonte, LSS3
Nestor Laxina, LSS4
Christel Arribe, YLSS9
- 9/25 Filmore Flores, LSS18
Michael Al Ompod, Mk10
Christian Arceo, Mk10
- 9/26 Jonna Montesa, SE12
- 9/27 Ely Alimario, LSS17
Evelyn Nanola, SPE5
Oliver Santos, LSS17
Eugene Vibar, SE13
- 9/28 Norca Altieri, LSS21
Abi Castaneda, LSS17
Kelly Concepcion, LSS13
Tin Tin Masisado, YLSS9
- 9/29 Harvey James Minano, Mk 10
- 9/30 Jessica Rementilla, YCR4
Kim Ciocon, YLSS7

ANNIVERSARIES

- 09/27 Norby & Way Gomez, LSS1
Roger & Fe Isidro, LSS17
- 09/28 Bill & Sandy Talbot, LSS22
- 09/30 Vic & Dee Lim, LSS9

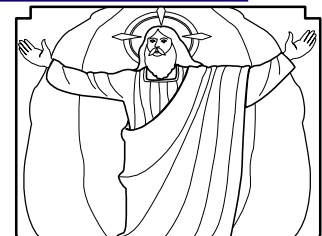
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

- 9/03 \$4,110
- 9/10 4,220
- 9/17 3,725
- 37-wk avg 3,760

EXPENSES

- 37-wk avg \$4,089



Thank you for your generosity!

An article on Abortion

by Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life

Can't Be Right


An honest look at what an abortion is, and at how many victims it claims, is enough to reveal that nothing outweighs its gravity among the many "life issues." Multiple Church documents have confirmed this insight, repeating over and over that the abortion tragedy demands urgent attention and priority.

While some have tried, shamelessly, to obscure and contradict this teaching, many are quite able to understand and accept it. Yet the truth is even deeper than the statement, "Being wrong on abortion outweighs being right on other issues."

The full truth is, if you are wrong on abortion, you can't be right on other issues.

To permit abortion, but then to cry out for the right to work, housing, education, health care, and so forth, is to say that these other rights belong to some people but not to all. They obviously do not belong to those who were snuffed out by abortion.

Therefore, these rights cannot be human rights, because you have already said that not all humans have a claim on them. This trivializes those other rights and puts them on an obscure and questionable foundation.

If you permit abortion, then, on what basis do you defend the other rights? Why do we care for the poor? Because they have a right to food, clothing, and shelter. But why do they have a right to those things? Because they have a right to live. Why are we concerned about unemployment? Because people have a right to make a living. Why do they have that right? Because they have a right to live. It all comes back to that foundational right. Abortion is not the only issue, but neither is the foundation of a house the only part of a house. Take it away,  page 3


COUNSELS

The Power of Little Faith

WORD: Hab 1:2-3, 2:2-4; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9; 2Tim 1:6-8,13-14; Lk 17:5-10

ORDER: *Stir into flame the gift of God that has been given to you*

REFLECTION: Our gospel starts with the apostles asking Jesus to increase their faith, and the Lord answered: "*If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree to be uprooted and thrown to the sea, and it will obey you.*" To understand this short verse in Luke's gospel, we need to look at the version that Matthew 17 and Mark 9 has provided to give us more insight. It started with a boy possessed by a demon that the apostles tried to cast out but they could not. When they brought him to Jesus, the demon left the boy. When they asked Him why they could not do it, Jesus answered, "*If you have faith everything is possible.*" Thus the apostles asked the Lord to increase their faith. The Lord also advised them that they needed to add prayer and fasting to combat some of their powerful enemies.

The next verses of the gospel takes on a very different topic about a servant coming in from working in the fields. The master, instead of asking him to relax and eat with him, told him to prepare the meal and serve first before taking care of his own needs. The master did not thank his servant for doing what he was supposed to, and Jesus said that we likewise should not expect anything, for we are unprofitable servants doing also what is expected of us. These verses are unique to Luke  page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you." (Lk 17:6)

Our Lady of the Rosary

On October 7th, the Catholic Church celebrates a memorial liturgy in honor of Mary as Our Lady of the Rosary. October is also known as the month of the Rosary. The best and surest way to Jesus is the same way He came to us, that is, through Mary.

The word rosary comes from the Latin word “rosarium”, which means a “crown of roses”, a spiritual bouquet given to the Blessed Mother. During the 13th century, Domingo de Guzman, who became known as St. Dominic, came to France at a time when heresy was devastating the faith there. He begged the Blessed Virgin for help. In a vision, she told him to preach devotion to the Holy Rosary. He obeyed and was successful in stopping the heresy. He founded the Order of the Preachers, better known as the Dominicans. From the 15th century onward, the Dominicans were the foremost promoters of Our Lady’s Rosary.

In 1573, St. Pius V, a Dominican pope, established this commemorative feast on the anniversary of the naval victory won on October 7, 1571, by the Christian fleet at Lepanto, off the coast of Greece. The victory was attributed to the help of the Blessed Mother, whose aid was invoked through praying the rosary.

St. Pius V also instituted the 15-mystery format of the Holy Rosary as the official Church-authorized version. This was the format in use for the next 4 centuries. In year 2002, Pope John Paul II added 5 more mysteries to the Rosary called Mysteries of the Light, which focus on the events of Christ’s public ministry.

The Rosary is a simple yet profound way of contemplating the *face of Christ*, of seeing Him with the *eyes of Mary*. This biblically-inspired prayer meditates on the salvific events of Christ’s life and their close association with our Blessed Mother. Through this devotion to our Lady, we can receive the blessings and grace which Christ won for us by the mysteries of His life, passion, death and resurrection. The Rosary is also an effective spiritual weapon against the enemy.

Let us allow ourselves to be transformed to be more like Jesus and Mary, by reflecting on how we can live each mystery in our lives. While we meditate the mysteries of our salvation with the rosary, may we seek to attain holiness and walk on the path of sanctity with our gaze fixed on Jesus. Through the intercession of our Lady of the Rosary, let us foster peace and unity in our family, in our community, in our workplace, in our Church and nation.

Harvest Not Ours To Keep

As Jesus tirelessly ministered to the people, He was moved with compassion for them because they were like “*sheep without a shepherd*” (Mt. 9:37). He saw a people looking for healing for their various afflictions, provisions for their want, hope for their difficult and seemingly meaningless lives. They needed the salvation that comes only from God. Jesus realized the magnitude of the work at hand and said to His disciples, “*The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest*” Luke 10:2

Indeed the harvest continues to be great, but “the laborers are few”. But who are the laborers? The laborers are all those who answered the call of the Lord to a communion of life and love with Him and to preach His gospel to others. In other words, we who are His disciples are the Lord’s laborers.

In this community, we rediscovered our faith by the grace that God worked through His chosen servants: those who sponsored us, shepherded us, taught us, coached us and persevered in praying for us.. Through them we rediscovered the Reason for life, who alone causes us to smile, to love, to listen, to cheer, to console, to forgive, to care for and to serve. The Lord, in His unfathomable love, has reaped for us an abundance of gifts that equip us for servanthood.

We are unworthy recipients of a bountiful spiritual harvest borne of God’s labor of love channeled through His disciples. This harvest is not ours to keep for ourselves; it is meant to be shared with others, so that the Lord’s harvest of souls may continue to multiply. Our Father loves each and every person. He wants to use us as instruments of His grace. Every person we come in contact with is a potential “lamb” searching for the love of the Good Shepherd. We must guide them to His flock, where we must welcome them, be present to them, and let them feel that they belong. And they will indeed know that they belong through our smile, our time, our respect, our attention, our love, our service.

Man is drawn to God by the power of Christ’s love and compassion. A community where God’s love is alive is a fertile ground that yields an abundant harvest of souls: both those who are saved and those called to share in Christ’s saving work. In such a community where self-giving is mutual and constant, the harvest is always great, and the laborers need not be few. Let BLD be such a community.

Solo Parents Retreat on Real Presence

Some 35 members and guests joined the Solo Parents Ministry's bi-annual retreat last week. The spiritual director of the retreat was Fr. Paul Lehman, with Fr. Dave Sison assisting. The theme of the retreat was the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. The day was indeed filled with wisdom and inspiration as Fr. Lehman taught about the Holy Eucharistic as explained in Vatican II's Document of the Liturgy. Fr. Dave Sison completed the teaching in the afternoon and concluded the retreat with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The retreat gave the participants a deeper appreciation for the Sacrament and a better understanding of what goes on during the Mass. In the liturgical celebration, we find Jesus in the celebrant (the ordained minister), in the Eucharistic species, in us through our baptism, and in the Word. A lot of questions were answered regarding Holy Communion. The retreat left the participants with the enduring message that "the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist never ceases". *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).*

Continued from page 1... Can't Be Right

however, and see how well you can build the rest.

The reason that being wrong on abortion makes it impossible to be right on other issues is that the heart and soul of every "issue" is precisely the dignity of the human person, whose right to life is not under the dominion of any other person. A person's dignity comes from the fact that he or she is human, not that someone else decides to grant that right at some point in time. Any human right begins when human life begins; otherwise, it isn't a human right, but rather some kind of benefit bestowed for another reason.

Now if you can take the right to life away from some humans, as abortion does to the children in the womb, then obviously you can take away from those same humans all their other human rights, because none of those other rights made such a claim upon your respect that you had to let those people live to possess it.

This is why the Pope has said that when the right to life is not protected, cries for other human rights are "false and illusory." When one is wrong on abortion, one cannot be right on anything else.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Magnificat 2005. Subscribing for the first time? Renewing? Deadline is November 15, 2004. Our low group rate of only \$14.95 is less than half the normal. Please subscribe as a group ONLY; get together as one group within your ministry or class. Contact Benny/Sally Santiago or other members of the Word ministry.

TEACHINGS

Oct 15 after worship

John 6 and Mark 10 Teachings

Oct 16 St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-17: Apologetics, Prayer, Church, Sacramentals

LSS 1-23: Christian Parenting II

Covenanted disciples: Prayer Counseling (Elijah)

Oct 22 after worship

Service and Intercessory Ministries:
Formation Teachings

Oct 23 St. Antoninus 10am-7pm

LSS 20: Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat

Aspirants' Retreat this weekend and **LSS 23** next. Let us keep both in prayer, and all the aspiring disciples, the shepherds and their lambs. *There's power in our prayers!*

SUPPORT OUR FUND-RAISERS

Golf Outing Oct 16 Saturday 1pm Green Pond Country Club in Bethlehem, PA. \$80 cost per person includes green/cart fees, hotdog/beverage at the turn, picnic buffet after.

Contact: Dee Lim, Sam Olaso, Oddie Martin.

Dinner-Dance Oct 30 Saturday at the Fiesta, 255 Rt 17 South in Woodbridge NJ. Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30. Attire is semi-formal. Cost is \$45 per person. Secure a table for 10 for your group with your paid reservation, first-come-first served. For group and individual tickets, please contact: Sam Olaso 973-927-8331 samo@fcc.net, Robin Guiao 908-756-1746 rguiao@frc.com, Alan Cam 201-659-5417 atetscam23@hotmail.com

Do not be confused. Be certain how the Church teaches that abortion outweighs the "other issues." Visit <http://www.priestsforlife.org/magisterium/bishops/abone.htm>.

Counsels from page 1

and do not appear in the other accounts. From a purely human standpoint, it is very difficult to find the logic and compassion that is being expressed here. The Navarre bible commentary explains that the Lord is not approving this master's abusive and arbitrary behavior but merely showing us how we should relate to God our Creator. It adds that everything from our very existence to the eternal happiness promised to us is one huge gift coming from God.

Man is always in debt to God; so no matter what service we render to Him, he can never repay the gifts God has given him. Many of us can personalize this by our own experiences. When we joined the community, we were so full of joy and we went out doing as much as we can to serve Him. As disciples of Jesus we saw the power of His love transform lives as it did ours during our encounters and seminars. We come home from these events physically tired but spiritually high. Like a servant who worked hard in the fields we expect to rest and relax. But oftentimes, we are surprised by an unexpected bill that comes in the mail that will cause havoc to our budget, by a conflict at work, by a bad medical report or news of a family member in trouble. During these times we may have wondered, why after all we have done are these things still happening to us? When things have settled down, we then begin to realize that it was not what we have done for the Lord that matters, but what He has done for us. He allowed us to be bold in our nothingness to serve Him and our brethren with the gifts of the Holy Spirit that He has given to us. Despite all our labors, there was nothing we could give to add to His glory. It is only His goodness that allows us to witness His mighty hand. It was His grace that enabled us to participate in His work. He said, *"No servant is higher than his Master and no student is better than his Teacher"*. So how can we complain when we could not find rest? Our Master and Teacher has not stopped in His work to save souls. Every hour of every day in some Catholic altar around the world, - He is being broken into pieces so that all of us can be made whole.

DIRECTION:

1. Be bold in witnessing. Acknowledge the LORD's hand and presence in your life especially during WSC.
2. Pray daily to affirm the gifts that God has given you.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Oct 1-3	Aspirants' Retreat, S. Plainfield Ramada
Oct 8	LSS Invocation/Healing Mass
Oct 9-10	LSS 23, La Consolata, Somerset NJ
Oct 11	FE11 Reunion, Lim Residence 1pm
Oct 17	ME23 Reunion, Africa Residence 12:30-6pm
Oct 29-31	Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
Oct 30	Dinner-Dance (Fund-raiser)
Oct 30	LSS 23 Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Nov 13	DLC Meeting, Boland Hall
Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 4	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Dec 11	SPM Christmas Party 6-11pm
Dec 11	DLC Meeting, Boland Hall

*May the blessings of the
Lord be upon you. . .*



BIRTHDAYS

10/1 Betty De la Cruz, LSS2	10/5 Dodee Aglibut, LSS12
Mariz Obrera, LSS16	Gigi Espejon, LSS7
Jun Adlao, Singles	Fe Masisado, LSS21
Bong Bernardino, Singles	Chiemezie Anyanwu, Mk 10
Jolly Dalmacio, Singles	Eme Castillon, Mk10
Lelet Llarena, Singles	Anne Marie Almonte, Singles
10/2 Gary Camacho, LSS17	Grace Paet, Singles
Richie Escobinas, Singles	10/6 Joe Canlas, LSS6
10/3 Ria Huelgas, Singles	Cora Labung, LSS15
Nina Huelgas, Singles	Pauline Enechukwu, SPE3
10/3 Chito Ciocon, LSS6	10/7 Julie Cruz, LSS11
Tessie Concepcion, LSS13	Eddie Flores, LSS6
Gerry Policarpio, LSS14	Eddie Macalino, LSS9
10/4 Auring Bandilla, LSS9	Cherry Vibar, LSS5
Ronald Sypher, SPE4	Andrew Sun, Mk10
Jun Entrada, LSS4	Praxedes Flores, SPE3
Cathy Duma, YCR3	

ANNIVERSARIES

102	Max & Jean Villamaria, LSS 18
105	Albert & Bea Chan, LSS20
106	Gerry & Remy Policarpio, LSS14
107	Ollie & Annie Felibrico, LSS8
	Sam & Rory Olaso, LSS2

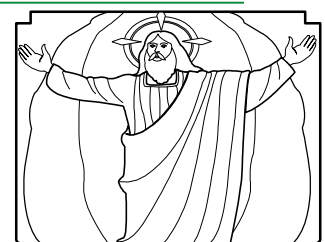
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

9/10	\$4,220
9/17	3,725
9/24	4,235
38-wk avg	3,789

EXPENSES

38-wk avg	\$4,160
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Thank you for your generosity!



Aspirants attend retreat

The community welcomed 29 committed disciples from Newark and Washington, DC at the Aspirants' Retreat held last weekend in South Plainfield, NJ. The aspirants opened their minds and hearts to receive the Word of God and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, humbly heeding the Word in John 15:16: *"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you."*

The teachings on true discipleship were given by Fr. Paul Lehman, our Spiritual Director and given life by the sharing of covenanted members who proclaimed the Lord's victory in their lives as disciples in the BLD community. Members of various ministries served unselfishly, allowing the aspirants to focus on the Lord. Some of the aspirants shared their thoughts and feelings on how the Lord has planned for them to attend the retreat and communicated with them all throughout, beckoning them to closer communion with Him, *"Come and follow me."*

The 29 who will now undergo discipling as they aspire to covenanting are: (from Newark) Tony Abad, Lou & Gayle Alejandro, Rollie & Adel Camposagrado, Romy & Leni Chan, Libby Cruz, Filmore & Humbeline Flores, Libby Gutierrez, Boboy & Maris Guzman, Charlie & Rowena Larobis, Kathy Muslija, King & Arlene Rigor, Fred Salar, Rudy & Rita Santos; (from Washington, DC) Vic & Marivic Arias, Norma De Guzman, Aaron & Marivic De Castro, Francis & Ayete Pejo and Eden Robles.

ECSL announces new Presiding Leader

Bogie and Margie Lorenzo, servant leaders for evangelization, will preside over the Executive Council of Servant Leaders from October 2004 to March 2005. This was announced recently by the ECSL as it thanked the outgoing Presiding SL Kiko and Aida Josef for their fruitful 6-month stewardship just concluded.

The Presiding SL coordinates and supports SL activities, presides over Council meetings and ensures that community-wide concerns are addressed and resolved.

COUNSELS

God's Wondrous Deeds

WORD: 2 Kgs 5:14-17; Ps 98:1-4; 2 Tim 2:8-13; Lk 17:11-19

ORDER: Your faith has saved you. (Lk 17:19)

REFLECTION:

Today's Readings tell of the amazing cure of two lepers. The subjects of the miraculous cures – the powerful Naaman and the outcast Samaritan – were both Gentiles, and faith was a big element in the accounts of their healing. Both humbly recognized their deliverance from the deep scourge that has long afflicted their lives. This joyous recognition led them to seek out and pay homage to their deliverer, and to acknowledge and worship the One True God.

Last week, we echoed the apostles' cry, *"Lord, increase our faith!"* **In gratefully acknowledging God's wondrous deeds, we grow in faith,** our birthright as baptized children of God. Yet, we have mostly lost our sense of wonder, awe and quiet inspiration. Even as children growing up amid technological wonders, we are cut off from the beauty and blessings of nature.

As newly-minted graduates of the LSS, we felt God's mighty presence and looked with love at everything, marveling at the beauty of His creations and exulting deep within our souls, *"Jesus, you are the Living God."* Yet, the passage of time dims the luster of those first moments of encounter. Our faith falters in the face of the confusion and problems of our daily lives. We continue to seek for earth-shaking miracles, but do not see God in the wonder of His creation as we get caught up in the rat race of providing for our daily sustenance and a secure future.

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

(2 Tim 2:13)

On Holiness

In the epistolary form of greeting, St. Paul addressed his readers as *the holy ones* or *the saints* at the beginning of his letters, as we see in Ephesians 1:1. The Christian community regarded its members as sanctified by baptism and Christians are called to make their lives conform to the gift they have already received. He wrote in Hebrews 12:14, “*Strive for peace with everyone, and for that holiness without which no one will see the Lord.*”

St. Thomas defines holiness as that virtue by which a man’s mind applies itself and all its acts to God. He explained two aspects of holiness – *separation* and *firmness* – that derive from the Greek and other etymologies of the word.

Sanctity is the term used for all that is dedicated to the Divine service, whether persons or things. Such must be *pure or separated* from the world, for the mind needs to be withdrawn from the contemplation of inferior things if it is to be set upon the Supreme Truth. It also connotes *firmness or stability*, since it is a question of attachment to Almighty God Who is our Beginning and the ultimate End towards which we must unflinchingly tend. Thus, to keep the Commandments faithfully involves a very real though hidden separation from this world, as it also demands a great strength of character or stability in the service of God.

Our call to holiness is a spiritual blessing that we have received through Christ, Who freely justifies us and claims us for His own. He has reconciled us in his fleshly body through his death, to present us holy, without blemish, and irrefragable before Him.

St. Francis de Sales wrote, “Jesus is the teacher of holiness. I go to Him because I want Him to teach me how to become a saint. Of what use to me is all I learn in school if I do not become holy?” He says further, “All of us can attain to Christian virtue and holiness, no matter in what condition of life we live and no matter what our life work may be.”

The holy man of God, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin spoke of the call and the need for holiness. He said just before he died, in his farewell Mass, “I became convinced some years ago that I could not serve you well unless I aspired to and worked toward the holiness to which the Lord has called us all. So I had to sort out the good and the bad in me. I had to root out the evil tendencies, the mixed motivations and the spiritual apathy so that the Lord could come alive in me and shine in and through me.”

Kudos & complaints?

wordministry@bldnewark.com

Feast on October 12

Our Lady of the Pillar



Next week we celebrate yet again another Feast Day of the Blessed Mother. It is another occasion to reflect on Mary’s central role in God’s plan of human salvation. Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, spouse of the Holy Spirit, is the Father’s most perfect creation, in whom is radiated God’s total glory and splendor. Mary, given to us by Christ as our Mother, will not fail us in our needs but always point us to the ways of her Son.

We can turn to our Lady when we seem to be “hitting a wall” in our ministry and mission works, and she will come to inspire and help us as she did the apostle Saint James. Tradition says that about 44 AD, the saint was preaching in Spain but was making little progress, was dejected and questioning his mission. The Virgin Mary, who was still living in Jerusalem at the time, appeared to him in a vision by the banks of the Ebro to boost his morale. This apparition is unique for it occurred while the Virgin was still among men, before her Assumption into heaven. She was standing on a pillar of jasper carried by angels, which became the precious relic for the country of Spain. That pillar is believed to be the same one venerated in Zaragoza, Spain today.

James built a small chapel at the wish of the Blessed Virgin. It was the first church ever dedicated to the honor of the Virgin Mother. Eight centuries later, a cathedral in honor of St. James was erected at his forgotten gravesite called *Compostella* (starry field), after the unusual star formation that led a local hermit to rediscover

The Basilica of the Pillar is a very large cathedral and the oldest outside of Rome, containing paintings by the famous painter Goya who lived in this area. It is visited daily by thousands of pilgrims, with miraculous healings being reported. A wonderful fullscreen panorama can be seen at the website



<http://www.panoramas.dk/fullscreen2/Anchor-HHHH-49575>.

Pope Clement XII fixed the feast day of Our Lady of the Pillar on October 12, which date also commemorates Columbus’ first sighting of American land.

Devotion to Mary is our certain path to Jesus. She tells us who would serve Him one thing, “*Do whatever He tells you.*” (John 2:5) *Our Lady of the Pillar, pray for us!*

The Fruit of the Spirit

Jesus was foretelling His death on the cross and His glorious resurrection when He said: *"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit."* (Jn 12:23-24)

St. Paul tells us that we share in the death and resurrection of Christ. *"We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin."* (Rom 6:4, 6) In baptism, by the grace of God, we received the new life in the Spirit, freeing us from the slavery of our original sin. We fall into the trap of slavery when we yield to our sinful desires. St. Paul urges us: *"Live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want."* (Gal 5:16-17) We need to seek our Lord's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and by His grace; we are renewed to live a life in the Spirit.

We must remain in God's grace through Jesus. *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower... Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing."* (Jn 15:1-5)

When we keep the commandments we receive *"the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."* (Gal 5:22-23) *"As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you."* (Jn 15:9-12)

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

9/17 \$3,725
9/24 4,235
10/1 3,506
39-wk.Avg 3,782

*Thank you for
your generosity!*

EXPENSES: 39-wk.Avg \$4,189

Ministry Announcements

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TEACHINGS

Oct 15 after worship

John 6 and Mark 10 Teachings

Youth What's in the Scriptures, Part I

Oct 16 St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-17: Apologetics, Prayer, Church, Sacramentals

LSS 1-23: Christian Parenting II

Oct 22 after worship

Service and Intercessory Ministries:
Formation Teachings

Oct 23 St. Antoninus

LSS 20: Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat 10am-7pm

Covenanted disciples: Elijah House Series (Final) 1-6pm

LSS 23 is going on this weekend. *Let us keep in prayer* the shepherds and lambs, the pastoral team, sponsoring class, vigil warriors and all who are serving.

SUPPORT OUR FUND-RAISERS

Golf Outing Oct 16 Saturday 1pm Green Pond Country Club in Bethlehem, PA. Contact: Dee Lim, Sam Olaso, Oddie Martin.

Dinner-Dance Oct 30 Saturday at the Fiesta, 255 Rt 17 South in Woodbridge NJ. Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30. Attire is semi-formal. Cost is \$45 per person. Secure a table for 10 for your group, first-come-first served with your paid reservation. Contact: Sam Olaso 973-927-8331 samo@fcc.net, Robin Guiao 908-756-1746 rguiao@frc.com, Alan Cam 201-659-5417 atetscam23@hotmail.com.



*Make up your mind to
become a saint.
(St. Mary Mazarello)*

Counsels from page 1

But our Father in heaven is faithful and bids us to behold the flowers of the field, the birds of the air, the seas, and the rivers, the clouds up above and the splendor of sunset. For only in beholding and appreciating His wondrous works can we realize that only an all-knowing and powerful God could have created all these. Such constant awareness makes it easier for us to see God's hand even in the ordinary things of life.

We need to constantly acknowledge, as Naaman and the Samaritan did, the True and Living God. *He is Emmanuel, God with us.* And as we seek His help in parenting our children in a Christian way; as we become more compassionate with our brothers and sisters in and out of community; as we venture to spread the Good News of Salvation to others, He will reveal His Presence to us in small miracles – the sudden patience of our spouse, the concern and care of brethren in our ministry, the improvement of the grades of our children, our daily provision being met, our good health, the conversion of others. And our faith will grow.

What is this faith that brings us healing and deliverance? *“Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead,”* St. Paul tells us (2 Tim 2:8). There is no more marvelous deed to stir our faith than the Resurrection. When we acknowledge Christ as our Healer, Savior and Deliverer, and fall at His feet, He stoops down to gather us up, saying tenderly, *“Stand up and go; your faith has saved you.”* (Lk 17:19)

When we try hard to live a holy life but keep falling back to our old sins, we can cry out to Christ passing by, *“Jesus, Master! Have pity on me!”* (v13) He will help us, too, and deliver us from the leprous condition of our sinful nature. This is the Lord's promise to us this week in 2 Timothy 2:13. *Even when we are too weak to have any faith left, He remains faithful to us and will help us, for He cannot disown us who are part of Himself, and He will always carry out His promises to us.*

It is our faith in Jesus that will bring us our salvation. *Stay with us Lord, because our souls are full of darkness and you are the one true light.* (St. Gregory Nazianzus)

DIRECTIONS:

- Give thanks to the Lord in all circumstances.
- Pray for increased faith and the gift of healing.



Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.
(Pope John Paul II)

Community Calendar

Oct 9-10	LSS 23, La Consolata, Somerset NJ
Oct 17	FE11 Reunion, Lim Residence 1pm
Oct 17	ME23 Reunion, Africa Residence 12:30-6pm
Oct 29-31	Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
Oct 30	Dinner-Dance (Fund-raiser)
Oct 30	LSS 23 Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Nov 13	DLC Meeting, Boland Hall
Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 4	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Dec 11	SPM Christmas Party 6-11pm
Dec 11	DLC Meeting, Boland Hall

BIRTHDAYS

10/8	Monica Canlas, Singles
10/9	Max Villamaria, LSS18 Marie Lou Cordero, SPE4 Matthew Talbot, Mk 10 Erica Canlas, YCR3
10/10	Emil Narciso, LSS8 Ashley Antonio, Mk 10 Kristian Espejon, YCR 4 Doyle Dionisio, Singles
10/11	Larry De Guzman, LSS19 Lita Guerrero, LSS17 Stephanie Duma, YCR 3 Kate Lyn Roy, Singles
10/12	Jocef Baquilod, Mk 10
10/13	Jojo Almazan, LSS3 Ed Edquilag, LSS17 Robin Guião, LSS16 Arlene Rigor, LSS18 Michelle Guzman, Mk 10
10/14	Boyett Cruz, LSS14 Sam Olaso, LSS2 Harley Minano, Mk 10

ANNIVERSARIES

10/10	Norie & Miriam Abes, LSS2 Zer & Charlotte Florentino, LSS17 Fred & Purie Salar, LSS18
10/11	Eddie & Wilma Antonio, LSS18
10/12	Romy & Dading Cuy, LSS10
10/13	Geng & June Bustos, LSS2



LSS#23 grads proclaim "The Lord Reigns!"

This past weekend, Oct 9-10, at the La Consolata Mission Center in Somerset, New Jersey, 88 candidates witnessed the awesome power of the Holy Spirit as they opened their hearts to Jesus and experienced His unconditional love. The miracles of healing, the joy and peace in their transformation were evident in the candid sharing of the candidates.

Fr. Paul Lehman, our spiritual director, together with the pastoral team, their class shepherds and the LSA ministry victoriously guided the candidates to a very enriching and grace-filled retreat. The sponsoring class, LSS # 22, the praise ministry, the intercessors and auxies touched the candidates with their cheerful and untiring service throughout the whole weekend.

We welcome the following LSS #23 graduates: Tito/Anne Cruz, Marc/Therese Disla, Nonong/Elvie Igot, James/Malou Minano, Tony/Marlene Brillantes, Maco/Nim Col, Gon/Maria Daulo, J.R./Judy Garcia, Cha-cha Masonsong, Emmy/Chichi Obi, Jun/Luchie Schroth, Nestor/Hermie Dela Cruz, Ronnie/Mila Macaaisa, Ricky/Joan Maniego, Mon/Dulce Samonte, Sis. Camilius Uzor, Ad/Nancy Hernandez, Bert/Isabel Relevo, Sandy/Bill Talbot, Ray/Feli Africa, Onwuaka/Obioma Anyanwu, Mario/Tess Lopez, Pedro/Chona Martinez, Gene/Alice Bautista, Roel/Annie Casino, Seb/Evangeline Gubor, Larry/Carina Ibarrola, Angel Luis/Evelyn Matos, Jojo/Chichi Velasco, Brian Basa, Mark Bustos, Robin Capili, Anthony Duma, Mike Reyes, Eugene Vibar, Angelo Calilap, Alvin David, Carlo Pena, Chuck Tanseco, Kay Torralba, Maan Ugaddan, Amah Lea Alva, Sandy Apostol, Magalis Balanquet, Melanie Canlas, Cristina Hernandez, Paula Leonor, Nicole Manasala, Pauline Montemayor, Rouinna Sypher, Jen Viray, Marilyn Bemante, Nina Huelgas, Rowena Jaico, Kellyne Mendoza, Mimi Tanseco, Aida Tiu, Lino Bawalan, Lory Jacobo, Lyvan Kennedy, Knolma Thomas and Roberto Tiukinhoy.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
(John 15: 7)

COUNSELS

Perseverance Builds Up Faith

WORD: Ex 17:8-13; Ps 121:1-8; 2 Tim 3:14, 4:2;
Lk 18:1-8

ORDER: *Proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching (2 Tim 4:2); remain faithful to what you have learned and believed (2 Tim 3:14).*

REFLECTION:

In our walk with the Lord, we have certainly met some discouraged Christians who have asked the question: "Why should we pray when God already knows what we want?" When faced with doubts and fears, when God does not seem to answer your prayers, when trials and setbacks disappoint you, did this question ever cross your mind?

This Sunday's Gospel according to St. Luke encourages us to "**always pray and not lose heart.**" These were Jesus' words to His disciples to spur them on to remain faithful to prayer despite the uncertainties and worries of their time. We need to remember that God already knows what our needs are and doesn't need our prayers to keep Him up to date on what is happening in our lives. **Instead, prayer is for our benefit. Prayer is to prepare our heart for what God wishes to give us.** What we need is not always what we want but God in His provident mercy gives us what we need. Our whole life must be a prayer to God because it is about following Jesus, being a disciple of Jesus. Prayer is a way of life so it must remain constant, persistent, and persevering. Take

continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"Will not God then secure the rights of His chosen ones who call out to Him day and night" (Lk 18:7)

One Body in Christ

The intimate unity of the Blessed Trinity in One God serves as the basic foundation of unity in our Church. St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians states that the core of our belief in the Triune God is that we come to the Father through Jesus in the love of the Holy Spirit. "*One body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all*", Eph 4:4-6. Also known as the **seven unities**, these verses illustrate that our relationship with God began in faith which reveals to us that we are delivered from our past by Christ's death. Hope grows as we learn about all that God has in store for us and God's love supplies all our needs enabling us to reach out to others.

The unity of our Triune God is the very source of the unity of the Church. The Church comes from the Trinity. It is the universal design of the Father, the mission of the Son and the sanctifying work of the Spirit. It is one with the vast expanse of archdiocesan churches throughout the world and within the diversity of the charisms and ministries within these churches.

It is through this unity that we can draw a clear parallelism for BLD. BLD functions distinctively in its different ministries with each having its own mission statement but united by one common mission of christian discipleship. It is one with a large membership base grouped into various districts, outreaches, apostolates and ministries but united as one body and one spirit in the Name of Christ and through Him with God the Father.

For a community to grow in the fullness of grace and under the operative gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit, it is imperative that it attaches itself to the ecclesial body of Christ through the archdiocesan Church. Through the Church, the community is one with the one Spirit and the one Body of Christ which build it up; it is holy by the power of the same Spirit who sanctifies it; it is catholic because it represents in fullness the mystery of the Lord present in history and working out reconciliation with the Father; and it is apostolic because it places itself within the continuing apostolic tradition of obedience to the command of Jesus and because it is structured with the apostolic mission in view. Through the church, Christ anoints its members with the gifts that lead to growth, renewal and unity with all members of the one body of Christ. Through the Church, we are given the charism to live and work in service.

The challenge of the upcoming elections

There is a web site designed to offer you quick and easy resources to help you apply the strengths of your organization to the challenge of the upcoming Elections.

Your organization may not be "political," but your organization is necessarily involved in the elections, simply because ***your organization influences people.***

If you implement the simple suggestions, you ***will influence many*** with minimal effort, and fully within all legal guidelines for tax-exempt organizations.

Please remember that many elections are so close that ***your membership alone can decide the outcome,*** and you can make that happen with the following resources.

Thank you for your collaboration!

Fr. Frank Pavone

National Director, [Priests for Life](http://priestsforlife.org)

President, National Pro-life Religious Council

Email: mail@priestsforlife.org

Website: www.priestsforlife.org

We were created to be saints out of love

VATICAN CITY, OCT 13, 2004 (VIS) - Today the Pope spoke about the canticle that opens the Letter to the Ephesians, "God my Savior," during the catechesis of the general audience which was held in St. Peter's Square.

John Paul II told the crowd of 16,000 that through this hymn "the faithful can contemplate and savor this great icon of Christ, heart of spirituality and Christian worship, and also the principle of unity and meaning of the universe and of all of history."

Referring to "the salvific work of the Son," he said this "starts from the eternal divine design that Christ is called to fulfill. In this design shines forth, above all, our being chosen (by God) to be 'holy and blameless people' ... in love. It is therefore, a holiness and a moral, existential and interior purity."

God our Father, he continued, "through Christ, destines us to accept the gift of filial dignity, becoming children in the Son and brothers of Jesus. ... Through this path, the Father realizes a radical transformation in us: a complete liberation from evil, 'redemption through the blood' of Christ, the 'remission of sins' through the 'riches of His grace'. ... We are transfigured creatures: our sin has been erased and we fully know the Lord," and this knowledge "introduces us to the 'mystery' of the divine will."

The Pope concluded by emphasizing that this "'mystery' is a transcendent and perfect project; whose content is an admirable salvation plan: 'to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.'"

Christ's New Creation: The New BLD

(A reflection on Eph 2: 19-22)

Through Saint Paul's letter to the Ephesians, our Lord speaks to us about a new phase in our community life - our new anointing. We are now known not only as a Catholic covenant community but also as a Private Association of the Faithful. He says, "*You are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God.*"

With our new anointing, we have become a new family in Christ. We are brought into the inner circle of relationships of the greater church. Where once we just watched from the periphery of actual church work, we are now expected to be in its midst, involved and proactive.

During the time of St. Paul, citizenship was very important in the ancient world. One took a great deal of pride in being a citizen of a prominent city. Citizenship was highly personal and it provided a distinctive identity for the person holding it. As an Association of the Faithful, we may be pursuing essentially what we did in the past, but with greater planning and fervor as we are now expected to give more and more of ourselves. With our benefits come a lot of responsibilities in Christ. Philippians 3:20 says, "*For our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Today the challenge presented to community is to see ourselves as distinct and prominent parts of the Archdiocese of Newark. We are no longer guests who only partake of the great feast but members and workers from whom much is expected. We need to see ourselves more as an integral part of the archdiocese, expected to support its mission and all that it envisions as God's plan for His flock.

With our new anointing as a lay association, we have started a new culture, a new race, a new nation, a new community in Christ. We have become fellow citizens with the saints whose allegiance is to God and His people. Christ Jesus Himself being our cornerstone and in whom we are built will ensure that we grow into a holy temple, a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

The glorious reality of who we have become in Christ has been the topic in community for quite a while. Let us act on it for our Lord has been waiting!

In the spirit of transparency, any member may attend the October 29th DLC meeting and ALL future DLC meetings (pls see announcement) and witness our leaders tackle community issues.

Ministry Announcements

Golf Outing tomorrow Oct 16 1pm Green Pond Country Club in Bethlehem, PA. **Contact:** Dee Lim, Sam Olaso, Oddie Martin. **Pls note: This is a FUN event and NOT A Fund Raiser.**

TEACHINGS

Tomorrow at St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-17: Apologetics, Prayer, Church, Sacramentals

LSS 1-23: Christian Parenting II

Oct 22 after worship

Service and Intercessory Ministries: Formation Teachings

Oct 23 St. Antoninus

LSS 20: Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat 10am-7pm

Covenanted disciples: Elijah House Series (Final) 1-6pm

DLC Invitation. The District Leadership Conference meets on October 29, Friday in the church after our worship. ALL DLC MEMBERS please come or make sure you are represented.

Dinner-Dance Oct 30, Saturday, at the Fiesta, 255 Rt 17 South in Woodbridge NJ. Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30. Attire is semi-formal. Cost is \$45 per person. Secure a table for 10 for your group, first-come-first served with your paid reservation.

Contact: Sam Olaso, Robin Guiao, Alan Cam.

Magnificat 2005. Subscribing for the first time? Renewing? Contact Benny/Sally Santiago or other members of the Word ministry. Our low group rate of only \$14.95 is less than half the normal. Please get together as one group within your ministry or class and **SUBSCRIBE AS A GROUP.** Deadline is November 15, 2004. Cash or checks payable to "Cash."

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

09/24	\$ 4,235
10/01	3,506
10/08	3,487
40-wk avg	3,775

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

40-wk avg	\$ 4,197
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Counsels *from page 1*

a look at the example of St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine. It took her decades of praying before Augustine finally converted from his sinful ways. In the process, not only did God answer her fervent prayers but she too became a saint as she was drawn ever closer to Him through her constant intercession for her son.

Jesus tells us, *“Look, if this dishonest, despicable judge will honor the persistent requests of this widow, how much more will your loving, compassionate Father respond to the sincere and persistent prayers of his beloved children?”* So let us pray—and pray with confidence and with perseverance; *be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient (2 Tim 4:2)*; in good times and in bad. Notice that Jesus does *not* say or imply that God will always respond to our prayers in exactly the way we want Him to; He merely assures us that God *will* respond and ultimately that response will be according to *His* perfect and holy will.

Now that we know why we must pray perseveringly, here are a few tips to help us maintain a deep and focused prayer life:

- Praise and thank first; ask second. A good relationship does not begin with the words, “Give me...”
- Pray to a Person. We pray to a personal God Who loves us just as we are.
- Focus on quality and not on quantity.
- Don’t pray like a parrot, pray like a prophet! Parrots just say words without thinking; prophets reflect on what they’re saying.
- Practice listening. Always expect Someone to speak to you when you pray. We do not have enough quiet time to hear the Lord speak to us. Try spending an hour or two in silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and you will hear Him better!
- Don’t judge the effectiveness of your prayer by how you feel. Remember our first reading? Moses felt exhausted but his prayer was extremely effective.
- Never think that you can change God when you pray. Prayer is supposed to change us, if we allow it to.
- Pray like Jesus, in other words, pray for your enemies and forgive them too!
- Don’t ever give up. The constant message of Our Lady in all her apparitions here on earth is to, “Pray, pray, pray.”

The gospel ends with Jesus asking, *“When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Lk 18:8)*. Let us nurture our faith by praying unceasingly and with an expectant faith and confidence in our Lord’s mercy and kindness. Let us remain steadfast and ready to greet our Lord when He comes again.

DIRECTION:

- Pray and listen unceasingly;
- Remain faithful in learning the Scriptures through our covenant pledge of reading a chapter daily.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Oct 17	FE11 Reunion, Lim Residence 1pm ME23 Reunion, Africa Residence 12:30-6pm
Oct 29	DLC meeting, St Leo church after worship
Oct 29-31	Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
Oct 30	Dinner-Dance – Fun and Fellowship!
Oct 30	LSS 23 Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 4	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Dec 11	SPM Christmas Party 6-11pm Disciples’ Assembly, Boland Hall

*May the blessing of the Lord
be upon you!*



BIRTHDAYS

10/15	Charlotte Luxton, Singles Cholo Miranda, Singles Emeruwa Anyanwu, LSS15 Gerard de la Fuente, LSS4
10/16	Flory Santos, LSS17 Irvin Aglibut, YE10 Randy Aldea, Singles
10/17	Cristina Jacobo, SPE2 Madonna Razal, LSS7 Rennie Razal, LSS19 Margie Ruaya, LSS7 Artemia Tandoc, LSS9 Justin Verzosa, YE9
10/18	Atet Mendonez, LSS20
10/19	Nene Gutierrez, LSS19 Sebastian Tomkowski, YCR4 Nathan Tomkowski, Mk10
10/20	Pam Pascual, LSS22 Chidie Ukaegbu, Mk10
10/21	Fe Pakula, LSS14 Daniel Gumarang, Singles Meia Demegillo, YE10

ANNIVERSARIES

10/15	Roland & Libby Gutierrez, LSS14
10/16	Boyet & Zita Cruz, LSS14
10/18	Joe & Cora Pring, LSS16
10/21	Butching & Edna Reynoso, LSS13 Sal & Marie Russo, LSS19



The Pope on Psalm 48:

TRUE RICHES ARE OBTAINED BEING UNITED TO GOD

In last Wednesday's general audience, the Holy Father talked about Psalm 48 which describes the situation of the just man who "must confront 'evil days because the malice of his foes surrounds him' and men 'boast of the vastness of their riches.' The conclusion reached by the just man is ... that great riches is not an advantage; on the contrary, it is better to be poor and to live as one with God."

The rich man, he continued, "is convinced that he is able to buy everything, even death, trying almost to corrupt it, as he did in order to obtain all other things, success, triumph over others in the social and political sphere, unpunished abuse of power, eating to his heart's content, comforts, pleasures."

The Pope indicated that "the final destiny of the rich man, even for as much money as he is willing to offer, will be unalterable. As all men and women, ... he will die one day ... and will have to leave the gold he loved so much and the material goods so idolatrized on earth."

"Jesus addresses this unsettling question to those who listen to Him: 'What can man give in exchange for his soul?' No exchange is possible because life is a gift from God who 'has in his hand the soul of every living being and the breath of all human flesh.'" (Source: VIS 10/20/04)

BLD Albany's ME8 Nets 6 Couples

6 couples completed BLD Albany's ME8 weekend from Oct. 8-10 at St. Joseph's Provincial House in Albany NY. The Spirit-filled weekend was directed by Fr. Tito Ignacio, with Bobby & Magoo Garcia and Art & Agnes Monta as couple sharers. The ME8 graduates are: William & Tutu Anyaegbunam, Jaime & Sandra Esterling, Christian & Lucia Saavedra, Marco & El Tomakin, Ramon & Olga Tapia and Robert & Violet Warner.

Must read articles:

Page 2: Archbishop John J. Myers – The Moral Choices Faced By Catholic Voters
Insert: Voter's Guide for Serious Catholics

COUNSELS

Humility Before God

WORD: Sir 35: 12-14, 16-18; Psalm 34:2-3, 17-19, 23; 2Tim 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18: 9-14 (30th Sunday In Ordinary Time)

ORDER: Be humble!

REFLECTION: This Sunday's Gospel presents a parable concerning righteousness in the eyes of God. Jesus chose as characters one who is upright and religious, the Pharisee, and one who is despised by everyone, the tax collector. Both men come up to the temple to pray. However, there is a distinct difference in how they pray. The Pharisee thanks the Lord that he is not like the rest of men and proudly trumpets his achievements. He is not praising God, he is praising himself. His wordy prayer is self-centered.

The tax collector on the other hand, acknowledges that he is a sinner and begs the Lord for His mercy. He is not comparing himself to others but to God, and he found himself wanting. More important than the words used by these two men is their attitude of heart. A person can come before the Lord saying the right things, but in fact may be lacking in integrity and sincerity. The Pharisee believed that he would be justified by his own works. But the tax collector won God over through his humility and trust, because "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" James 4: 6. Jesus reminds us that humility has to be the foundation of our prayer.

What a difference these attitudes can make! If we were to ask ourselves with whom in this parable we most easily identify, we would probably say the tax collector. That means we like what he did. But it also means we think we are more like him than we are like the Pharisee.

page 4

Gods Promise For The Week

"The Lord will rescue me from every evil threat and will bring me safe to His Heavenly Kingdom." (2Tim 4:18)

The Moral Choices Faced by Catholic Voters

Most Reverend John J. Myers, *Archbishop of Newark*

[Editor's note: What guidance can we get from our Archbishop as we make our choices in this election? Archbishop Myers, in an article originally published in the *Catholic Advocate* and reprinted in *The Wall St. Journal* (17 September 2004), examined the question of what "proportionate reason" could justify Catholics in voting for pro-abortion candidates. No other issue in American civil life bears comparison with the annual death of "1.3 million yearly abortions plus the killing that would take place if public funds were made available for embryo-destructive research." See insert for a companion article—*A Voter's Guide for Serious Catholics*]

Amid today's political jostling, Catholic citizens are wondering whether they can, in conscience, vote for candidates who support the legalized killing of human beings in the embryonic and fetal stages of development by abortion or in biomedical research.

Responding to requests to clarify the obligations of Catholics on this matter, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, under its prefect, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, released a statement called "On Worthiness to Receive Holy Communion." Although it dealt primarily with the obligations of bishops to deny communion to Catholic politicians in certain circumstances, it included a short note at the end addressing whether Catholics could, in good conscience, vote for candidates who supported the taking of nascent human life in the womb or lab.

Cardinal Ratzinger stated that a "Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in evil, and so unworthy to present himself for Holy Communion, if he were to deliberately vote for a candidate precisely because of a candidate's permissive stand on abortion." But the question of the moment is whether a Catholic may vote for a pro-abortion candidate for other reasons. The cardinal's next sentence answered that question: A Catholic may vote for a pro-abortion Catholic politician only "in the presence of proportionate reasons."

What are "proportionate reasons"? To consider that question, we must first repeat the teaching of the church: The direct killing of innocent human beings at any stage of development, including the embryonic and fetal, is homicidal, gravely sinful and always profoundly wrong. Then we must consider the scope of the evil of abortion today in our country. America suffers 1.3 million abortions each year—a tragedy of epic proportions. Moreover, many supporters of abortion propose making the situation even worse by creating a publicly funded industry in which tens of thousands of human lives are produced each year for the purpose of being "sacrificed" in biomedical research.

Thus for a Catholic citizen to vote for a candidate who supports abortion and embryo-destructive research, one of the following circumstances would have to obtain: either (a) both candidates would have to be in favor of embryo killing on roughly an equal scale or (b) the candidate

with the superior position on abortion and embryo-destructive research would have to be a supporter of objective evils of a gravity and magnitude beyond that of 1.3 million yearly abortions plus the killing that would take place if public funds were made available for embryo-destructive research.

Frankly, it is hard to imagine circumstance (b) in a society such as ours. No candidate advocating the removal of legal protection against killing for any vulnerable group of innocent people other than unborn children would have a chance of winning a major office in our country. Even those who support the death penalty for first-degree murderers are not advocating policies that result in more than a million killings annually.

As Mother Teresa reminded us on all of her visits to the U.S., abortion tears at our national soul. It is a betrayal of our nation's founding principle that recognizes all human beings as "created equal" and "endowed with unalienable rights." What evil could be so grave and widespread as to constitute a "proportionate reason" to support candidates who would preserve and protect the abortion license and even extend it to publicly funded embryo-killing in our nation's labs?

Certainly policies on welfare, national security, the war in Iraq, Social Security or taxes, taken singly or in any combination, do not provide a proportionate reason to vote for a pro-abortion candidate.

Consider, for example, the war in Iraq. Although Pope John Paul II pleaded for an alternative to the use of military force to meet the threat posed by Saddam Hussein, he did not bind the conscience of Catholics to agree with his judgment on the matter, nor did he say that it would be morally wrong for Catholic soldiers to participate in the war. In line with the teaching of the catechism on "just war," he recognized that a final judgment of prudence as to the necessity of military force rests with statesmen, not with ecclesiastical leaders. Catholics may, in good conscience, support the use of force in Iraq or oppose it.

Abortion and embryo-destructive research are different. They are intrinsic and grave evils; no Catholic may legitimately support them. In the context of contemporary American social life, abortion and embryo-destructive research are disproportionate evils. They are the gravest human rights abuses of our domestic politics and what slavery was to the time of Lincoln. Catholics are called by the Gospel of Life to protect the victims of these human rights abuses. They may not legitimately abandon the victims by supporting those who would further their victimization.

Vote, and vote wisely, heeding the guidance of the Church. Encourage your families and friends to do the same. Remember, the teachings of the Church are constant and true. The moral principles contained in the Church guidance would apply to any election anywhere in the world, present and future.

Venerating the Apostles St. Jude and St. Simon

October 28 is the feast day of St. Jude and St. Simon, two of Christ's twelve Apostles, who were ordinary men from less than middle class homes. They would have been destined for obscurity had not the Lord, upon meeting them, called out "Come, follow me." Wisely they accepted His invitation. They lived for three years with the Master, and received from Him incredible power and authority. When they went out to be His witnesses, they preached together in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, spreading the faith and winning the souls of men with wisdom and works of wonder. In the end, they made glorious the name of our Lord with their martyrdom.

St. Jude "Thaddeus" was the brother of St. James the Lesser. He was a nephew of Mary and Joseph; therefore, a blood relative of Jesus Christ. He was known to be a virtuous man, a vessel by plenitude of grace. He had much to show in giving joy to others. In a canonical letter, he wrote, "Grow strong in your holy faith through prayer in the Holy Spirit." St. Jude healed. He exorcised pagan idols, which caused the demons to flee and the statues to crumble. He was clubbed to death then beheaded in first century Persia. His relics lie in Rome.

St. Jude is the patron saint of desperate situations, forgotten causes, hospital workers, hospitals, impossible causes, and lost causes.

St. Simon was called "the Zealot", meaning a devoted follower, having a zeal and obedience for the commandments, willing to give his life and freedom for Christ. He showed pity on those who were tormented and victimized, and had the fervent love of souls. Also, a cousin of Jesus, it was documented that he was present in the Wedding in Cana where Jesus performed His first miracle.

He went forth to evangelize in Egypt and Mesopotamia. As God's Servant, he raised thirty dead men to life. He worked several miracles of healing and recovery. Many places were claimed to have been the site of his martyrdom. He was claimed to have been crucified in Samaria, sawn in half in Suanir, tortured and martyred in Iberia. Still, many locations claim to have his relics.

St. Simon is the patron saint of curriers, sawmen, sawyers, and tanners.

Let us pray: O God, we thank You for the glorious company of the apostles, and especially on this day, we thank You for Simon and Jude. They were faithful and zealous in their mission, so we may with committed devotion make known the love and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEACHINGS TOMORROW

LSS 20: Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden
Retreat 10am-7pm

Covenanted disciples: Elijah House Series(Final) 1-6pm

An Evening of Thanksgiving. Please join Fr. Paul and special guests from 4-7pm this Sunday, Oct 24 at Boland Hall in appreciation of the fruitful *Gawad Kalinga* campaign to help build homes and Christian communities among the poor. Our Singles will lead the celebration. *Please come!*

Parade of Saints. Please join us at the Cafeteria next Friday Oct 29 after worship. *Bring some candies or other treats for the Mark 10 children!*

DLC meets next Friday Oct 29 in the church after worship. DLC MEMBERS please come or make sure you are represented. All other members are welcome as observers.

Dinner-Dance Oct 30 Saturday at the Fiesta, 255 Rt 17 South in Woodbridge NJ. Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30. Attire is semi-formal. Cost is \$45 per person. Secure a table for 10 for your group, first-come-first served with your paid reservation. Contact: Sam Olaso, Robin Guiao, Alan Cam.

Vocations Awareness dinner will be hosted by the Archbishop Nov 9 following Mass at 6:15pm in the Marian chapel of the Cathedral. *High school juniors and seniors* are invited. Please contact Fr. Paul Lehman.

Homeless shelter by the Missionaries of Charity requests donations of clothing, soap and other supplies urgently for their winter needs. Please contact Norie and Miriam Abes.

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College scholarship. Program seeks achievers who qualify for \$25,000 scholarships. Find out more at or contact Oddie Martin at 516-358-3811 or . Deadline is December 15, 2004.

Medical Mission 2005 is tentatively set for Feb 14 to 18, 2005 in the province of Bulacan. Volunteers and donations are requested. The mission coordinators are Nong & Tricia Bustos; Merle Encarnacion, Myrna De Luna and Ding De Borja comprise the Medical Advisory Board.

Counsels (from page 1)

And that is something we need to reflect on.. If we are really like the tax collector, there would be no point for Jesus to tell this parable. He is suggesting, ever so cleverly, that maybe we are sometimes like the Pharisee.

We are nothing and utterly hopeless without God. In His mercy, God redeemed us through Jesus Christ. Why then do we often find ourselves proud like the Pharisee? What deep-rooted attitude in our hearts brings this about? This is what Jesus tries to bring into light. When we are assigned to a ministry we do not like, do we question the decision? Are we too proud to obey, to listen or to understand? Are we able to obey and to pray for our leaders instead? If we want to serve the Lord, we must persist in asking for the virtue of humility. To truly desire this virtue, we should keep in mind that the opposite of humility –pride – is the greatest obstacle to the action of divine grace. Pride is what harms family life, friendship and oneness in spirit in a Christian community. The devil works on our pride to undo the work that the Holy Spirit accomplishes in our life.

If we are not watchful, pride may harm our relationship with our brothers and sisters in community. As disciples of Christ, we must see ourselves not so much as others see us, but as we really are before God. If we do, God in His infinite goodness will accomplish in us the character of a true disciple. When we're imbued with humility, we will not remind God how hard we have worked in our ministry to please Him. We can do without praise or flattery because our strength and hope come from the Lord. We will be able to accept humiliations, admit our own mistakes and be corrected. We will learn the true meaning of obedience, of submission to one another and to those in authority. And more importantly, we will be quick to ask and to give forgiveness.

Our role as a Christian is to strive for perfection, but never to think of ourselves as perfect. Humility has nothing to do with timidity or with a mediocre life lacking in ambition. Humility discovers that everything good in us belongs to God, for from His fullness we have all received, and such profusion of gifts moves us to be grateful.

Direction :

- 1. Acknowledge our sinfulness before the Lord and avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- 2. Be obedient, submit to one another and to those in authority.

PRAYER is a lifting up of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.
(St. Therese of Lisieux)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct 24 GK Thanksgiving (see announcement)
- Oct 29 DLC meeting (see announcement)
- Oct 29 Parade of Saints (see announcement)
- Oct 29-31 Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
- Oct 30 Dinner-Dance (Fund-raiser)
- Oct 30 LSS 23 Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
- Nov 19-21 ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
- Dec 4 ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
- Dec 4 FE 11 Reunion, Bldg Annex 1-6pm
- Dec 11 SPM Christmas Party 6-11pm
- Dec 18 Disciples' Assembly 2pm, venue tba

birthdays

- 10/22 Ron Biason, YE11
Liz Encarnacion, YE8
Becbec Laxina, LSS4
Jes Pacia, YCR 4
Maia Ermita, Singles
- 10/ 23 Ann-Ann Alejan, YE9
Tess Cam, LSS17
Bert Guerrero, LSS17
Lauren Ibanez, YCR 3
- 10/24 Raffy Obrera, LSS16
- 10/26 Roxanne Entrada, YCR4
- 10/27 Maryann Guinto, YE11
Isaac Punzalan ,YE3
Kev Salmo, YE9
Nicholas Arceo, Mk 10
Ashley Canillas, Mk 10
Eleanor Carey, SPE4



anniversaries

- 10/22 Filmore & Hum Flores, LSS18
- 10/25 Nestor & Becbec Laxina, LSS4
- 10/26 Caesar & Vicky Rasalan, LSS2

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS		EXPENSES
10/1	\$3,506	41-wk average \$4,124
10/8	3,487	
10/15	4,029	Thank You for your generosity
41-wk avg	3,781	

The US bishops taught in their 1998 document **Living the Gospel of Life:** "We must exercise that **power (to vote)** in ways that **defend human life**, especially those of **God's children** who are **unborn, disabled** or otherwise **vulnerable.**"



Human riches cannot save us

In this week's general audience, the Pope spoke about the second part of Psalm 48, "Human riches do not save, which condemns the illusion created by the idolatry of riches." He affirmed that the psalm proposes "a realistic and severe meditation on death, the unavoidable end of the human existence.

"Often, we try to ignore this reality in every way possible, putting off thinking about it. But this effort, besides being useless, is also inopportune. Reflecting on death is beneficial because it puts into perspective so many things that we have made absolute, such as money, success and power.

"The psalm suddenly changes. If money cannot 'save' us from death, there is somebody who can redeem us from the dark and dramatic reality, God.

"In this way, a horizon of hope and immortality opens up for the just man. ... God rescues him and snatches the faithful from the hands of death because He is the only one who can conquer death, inevitable for man."

For this reason, the psalmist "invites us 'not to fear' and not to envy the arrogant rich man in his glory because when he dies he will be stripped of everything, and will not be able to take with him his gold or silver, fame or success. However, the faithful will not be abandoned by the Lord Who will show him 'the path of life, the fullness of joy in His presence, endless happiness at His right hand.'" *(Source: VIS 10/27/04)*

Question of the day on Tuesday, November 2:

"Have you voted yet?"

The next President will appoint during his term, new Supreme Court justices whose decisions will affect the moral direction of our nation for at least the next 40 years (read the *five non-negotiable issues* in our Voter's Guide insert last week). Vote wisely, being guided by the values and teachings of the Church (see related article on page 3). Encourage others to vote too. *Pray for godly leaders to be elected.*

COUNSELS

Jesus Knocks On Every Human Heart

WORD: Wis 11:22-12:2; Ps 145:1-2, 8-14; 2 Thes 1:11-2:2; Lk 19:1-10

ORDER: Always pray to be worthy of His calling. (2 Thes 1:11)

REFLECTION:

A famous painting by Holman Hunt entitled "The Light of the World" shows Jesus, lamp in hand, knocking gently on a door, signifying that He knocks on every human heart. But the door has no handle, for as the artist explained, Christ can only knock. It is for the person inside to let Him in; and so the door-handle is on the inside.

When Jesus said, "*Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house*" (Lk 19:5), He was knocking on the door of Zacchaeus' heart. When Jesus looked up and called him by name, Zacchaeus was delighted and joyful. Who wouldn't be? He was sinful, yet loved by the One who introduced Himself as the awaited Messiah. He was touched to the very depth of his soul, and thus opened his heart to Jesus.

Why does Jesus seek us out, knowing we are sinners? Because each of us is good and precious to God. "*For you love all things that are and loathe nothing that you have made; for what you hated, you would not have fashioned.*" (Wis 11:24) When Jesus sought after Zacchaeus, people began to grumble, saying, "*He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner.*" To his own people, *continued on page 4*

God's Promise for the Week

"The Lord lifts up all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down." (Psalm 145:14)

God Is At Work Within Us

“So then, my beloved, obedient as you have always been, not only when I am present but all the more now when I am absent, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work.” (Phil 2:12-13)

Work is necessary for human existence, enabling us to accomplish many of the things that we want to do. When we achieve something through diligent work, we feel good not only about ourselves but also about what we have achieved. But it is God who works to accomplish what really matters in our life.

Salvation is accomplished by God’s initiative. All the works that we may do when added together will simply not be enough to save ourselves. Our problem is sin. Because of it, we will never be able to achieve perfect righteousness no matter how much work we do. And perfect righteousness is what we must achieve in order to earn salvation. So God stepped in and sent Jesus to accomplish what we could not do. He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. Our sin can now be forgiven through his work, not ours. And we can now stand in His perfect righteousness.

So what are we to do? How are we to work out our salvation? In order to answer these questions, we must clearly understand the extent to which our salvation must impact our lives. That can be summed up in one word—completely! Put another way, there is no area in our lives that can be left untouched by our relationship with the Lord. God desires that, over time, every area of our life become transformed. Because of sin our lives are tainted with a false sense of self-fulfillment, blinded by the “I”, unable to see the Him in the great scheme of things. The longer we follow the Lord, the greater we grow into his image. But this will not happen unless we plan for it to happen. We need to take intentional steps in order to grow spiritually. Transformation does not come overnight. Faith enables the grace of God to work within us.

God wants us to offer Him, not occasional acts of devotion, but the everyday lives we live. He wants both our hearts and our minds. He wants us to be fully devoted followers of Jesus. He wants the effect of our salvation to be worked out into every attitude, action, habit and relationship that we have. And the good news is that He is at work in us to enable us to work out that salvation.

Put On Love!

What do we do in a conflict when the approach of turning-the-other-cheek fails? Regrettably we have no perfect answer as most of us are at a loss in dealing with such situations. Most often, even the most prayerful and mild-mannered leaders are found ill-prepared to deal with persons and groups who refuse to concede without a struggle, who cannot seem to submit to authority but insist on their own ways.

Conflict situations occur in community despite our efforts to be under the guidance of God’s Word. Conflict exists whenever and wherever people have contact. When community members organize as distinct bodies and then claim certain rights and prerogatives from those with authority to govern, then we ought to examine our hearts if we are truly serving the Lord or our own desires. When community is plagued by contending views on issues like obedience to authority vs. subsidiarity, the spirit of the law vs. the letter of the law, transparency, accountability, teachability, submission and abuse of authority; then as members of God’s church, we should go down on our knees to pray for one another as there should be no room for such conflicts within God’s flock. Christ espouses only one thing - unity among His brethren just as He and the Father are one.

Conflict is a threat to survival as a community. At the very least, it impedes our God-given task of being His ambassadors to the ends of the earth. If more time and effort are spent in politicking and community intramurals, then everyone ought to shift focus from man to God, from incessant infighting to constant prayerfulness.

Conflicts not properly managed bring about delays, disinterest, inaction, even breakdown of community. They may result in withdrawal of members and their unwillingness to participate in community work. Conflict situations should then be nipped in the bud before they develop into unmanageable proportions and be beyond remedy. No peaceable and procedural means will alleviate their ill effects in community.

Today instead of nurturing conflicts, let us resolve to relinquish the power struggle against others or against what has happened, release the pain and allow ourselves to grieve, look for new things to replace what was lost, reconcile relationships, increase communication and practice forgiveness. Let us reform our lives, turn away from sin and try to do better.

*“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. **And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.**” (Col 3:12-14)*

Voices to guide our choice

Does abortion outweigh other issues that we should consider during this election?

The Holy Father has written, "The common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights — for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture — is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition of all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination." (*Christifideles Laici*, n.38)

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, wrote recently, "There may be a legitimate diversity of opinion even among Catholics about waging war and applying the death penalty, but not however with regard to abortion... Not all moral issues have the same moral weight as abortion and euthanasia."

The US bishops taught in their 1998 document *Living the Gospel of Life*: "We must exercise that power (to vote) in ways that defend human life, especially those of God's children who are unborn, disabled or otherwise vulnerable."

Archbishop John Myers of Newark wrote, "What evil could be so grave and widespread as to constitute a 'proportionate reason' to support candidates who would preserve and protect the abortion license and even extend it to publicly funded embryo-killing in our nation's labs? Certainly policies on welfare, national security, the war in Iraq, Social Security or taxes, taken singly or in any combination, do not provide a proportionate reason to vote for a pro-abortion candidate."

The Lord our God, Almighty Creator, Author of Life commands: "*Thou shall not kill.*"

Other news:

Retreat held for disciples. 32 committed disciples successfully completed the Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat at St. Antoninus Church last Saturday. They were joined by 16 parishioners whose participation Fr. Paul Lehman welcomed as a "good example of looking outside." The biannual retreat, conducted by the Teaching Ministry and with covenanted disciples sharing on the themes, revolves around the disciple's basic calls to *service* and *intercession*.

See what you missed I: Boland Hall was the next stop last Sunday of **GK 777** missionaries and advocates, including the ebullient British philanthropist Dylan Wilk, who presented the visionary project in song, dance, film and spirited witness. We hope to invite them again to share with a larger BLD audience the profound life changes the program is having in Filipinos, lifting them up not only materially but also in their pride, hope and dignity.

Ministry Announcements

Dinner-Dance tomorrow Oct 30 at the Fiesta Banquet Rooms on Route 17 South in Wood Ridge NJ. Doors open at 6:30 pm and sit down dinner is at 7:30. Attire is semi-formal. **Contact:** Sam Olaso, Robin Guiao, Alan Cam.

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Other news : (continued)

See what you missed II: The Elijah House series on **Christian Counseling** wrapped up with 3 teachings last Saturday at St. Antoninus. Noteworthy was the talk on the *slumbering spirit* which may afflict a spirit-filled, servant-hearted disciple whose soul yet remains dormant; or the more serious *captivate spirit* that will not risk life and has disconnected. Recognition, repentance and forgiveness, accompanied by prayer and support, will help one to emerge from this stupor and spiritual morass. We are grateful to our EH teachers for their anointed teachings!

Counsels *from page 1*

Zacchaeus was a notorious sinner and an outcast, being a chief tax collector. Yet, Jesus knew that the goodness God, the Creator, had placed in Zacchaeus was still there.

Jesus enters into a human heart to reveal the goodness in it and to help it to blossom, so that *“God may make you worthy of His call and fulfill by His power every honest intention and work of faith.”* (2 Thes 1:11) Our desire to be good would be fulfilled if we were transformed by God’s amazing grace. Shall we then readily respond to Jesus’ knock, when hearing His Word in our Word Sharing Circles, when partaking of His Body and Blood in the daily Mass; when adoring His presence in the Blessed Sacrament; when we receive His forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and when reaching out in love to a brother in need?

Jesus will enter our hearts when we respond the way Zacchaeus did, who recognized his sinfulness and showed a change of heart. This meant letting go of his self-righteousness, pride and love of money, pleasure and power. He was genuinely repentant, as he promised restitution beyond what was legally required. *“Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over.”* (v8) By opening his heart to Christ, Zacchaeus gained His peace.

Jesus reminds us that we are sinners needing His saving grace. He calls us to abandon our wicked and stubborn ways. Jesus wants to restore our hearts to Him, just as He did with Zacchaeus. He wants to reveal the immense breadth, height, width and depth of the Father’s love for us, just as He did for Zaccheus. He wants to reconcile us with those who have hurt us or whom we have hurt, just as He did for Zaccheus. The same God Who once called Zacchaeus down from the tree now calls us to a deep and personal relationship with Him. He wants to restore our many broken relationships with our families, children, colleagues at work, and fellow servants in this community. When we allow Him to, our faith will be strengthened and grow.

Let us be encouraged by the Lord’s reassuring words: *“Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost.”* (vv 9-10)

DIRECTION:

Seek to heal broken relationships following the “5 R’s of Repentance” — Recognition, Remorse, Repentance, Restitution and Reconciliation.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct 29-31 Youth Crossing Retreat 5, S Plainfield, NJ
Oct 30 Dinner-Dance (*see announcement*)
Oct 31 LSS 23 Reunion, Boland Hall 10am-3pm
Nov 7 ME 23 Reunion, Macaia Residence, Jersey City 1-6pm
Nov 19 DLC meeting
Nov 19-21 ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 4 ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
FE 11 Reunion, Bldg Annex 1-6pm
Dec 11 SPM Christmas Party 6-11 pm
Dec 18 Disciples’ Assembly 2pm, venue tba

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!



BIRTHDAYS

- 10/29 Jonathan Uy, YE11
Fred Avestruz, LSS18
George McGehrin, LSS20
10/30 Lesley Calilap, LSS15
Chris Alonzo, YE11
10/31 Mon Chan, LSS2
11/01 Dimples Canlas, LSS7
Jun Escobar, LSS16
11/02 Naomi Lopez, Mk 10
Michael Relucio, YE7
11/03 Chris Trinidad, YE5
11/04 Carlota Casals, LSS12
Elana Pascoguin, Mk10

ANNIVERSARIES

- 10/29 Romy & Libby Cruz, LSS18
10/30 Andy & Margie Ruaya, LSS7

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

10/08 \$ 3,487

10/15 4,029

10/22 4,036

42-wk avg 3,787*

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

42-wk average \$ 4,200*

Good news and bad news

* The 2 figures above mean we have a year-to-date \$17,000 deficit.

GOOD NEWS: we have enough money to cover this deficit.

BAD NEWS: it’s still out there in some pockets!



**JOHN 6 CROSSING RETREAT,
October 29th - 31st, 2004**

Over and over, the glory of God the Father and the compassion of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, was manifested in the hearts of our children during the John 6 Crossing retreat, as they proclaimed His victory in their lives, “Declaring Their Dependence on Jesus”, and lifting them up to rise and reach to the heavens as they witness the majesty and beauty of His kingdom!


The new members of our John 6 Ministry are: Leah Alata, Paco Almazan, Ray Jose, Michael Arias, May Badiola, Jocef Baquilod, Gordon Bautista, Pia Berdan, Molly Brillantes, Chase Butulan, Ashley Canillas, Kat Chong, Jordan Del Fiero, Stine Dizon, Erwin Eusebio, Olivia Felibrico, Ben Florentino, RJ Gallofin, Stephanie Joston, Abigail Lim, Jeremy Lim, Lala Llave, Alfred Lopez, Neil Lopez, Nikki Lopez, Lauren Lopina, Aiko Mabeza, Meg Mabutas, Matt Mance, Kay Manuel, Charlie Masisado, Dek Morte, Alinoel Navia, Zeke Newton, Ruby Palencia, Em-Em Perez, Erika Reyes, Pat Salmo, Joel Salonga, Leah Samson, Kim Solema, Che-Che Solema, Dee-Dee Solon, Pechu Sypher, Kevin Teves, Aya Titland, Geraldine Uy, Marion Venadas, Melissa Vicencio, Al Yanza.

Let us all welcome them to the community and may the blessings of our Lord, Christ the King, be with them and their families always, Amen!

“They can no longer die, for they are like angels; and they are the children of God because they are the ones who will rise.” Luke 20:36

Charismatics Urged to Promote Eucharist as Bond of Unity

Pope Sends Message to Catholic Fraternity

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 31, 2004 (Zenit.org).- John Paul II expressed his appreciation for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal communities and encouraged them to promote the Eucharist as a bond of unity in a troubled world. The Pope disclosed his hopes in a message read by Archbishop  page 3

COUNSELS

Children of the Resurrection

WORD: 2 Mc.7:1-2, 9-14; Ps. 17: 1,5-6,8,15; 2 Thes.2:16-3:5; Lk.20:27-38

ORDER: *Direct your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ.* (2 Thes 3:3)

REFLECTION: In recounting a discussion with the Sadducees, the Gospel this Sunday reminds us of what Jesus says about the resurrection of the dead and challenges us with respect to our own position on the question.

The episode takes place in Jerusalem which Jesus has finally entered and where His journey here on earth is finished. The location is significant; Jesus speaks of the resurrection in the place where He knows that, a little while later, He will die. Thus, what He says takes on extraordinary power and authority.

For the last time, Luke shows Jesus speaking with the Sadducees. He says only enough about them to explain their intervention: they “deny that there is a resurrection”. They denied the “new” doctrine of the resurrection and attempted to demonstrate the absurdity of the idea by applying it to a case derived from Mosaic law. The issue concerns “levirate marriage” (pertaining to a brother –in-law). It cleverly points out the difficulty of imagining the life of the resurrected, and the problems that any attempt at representation must face. Who has not, at some time or other, wondered about the quality of existence of those who died? Where are they? What do they look like? What relationship do they bear to our memory of them? Such questions are pitfalls when we try to speak about the dead whom we believe to be living. We must completely reject these questions.

Jesus begins by pointing out  page 4

God's Promise for the Week

“The Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one”. (2Thes3:3).

Where are the Other Nine? Where are You?

In Luke 17:11-19 it is said that there were ten lepers who had a life changing encounter with Jesus. All were healed but only one returned to show his gratitude. Luke records that one leper was different from the other nine. Once he realized he was healed, he did three things: he turned back towards Jesus; fell prostrate at the feet of Jesus and gave thanks and praise.

What is so significant about these lepers who were healed? Out of ten, only one returned to give thanks. This one healed leper received something that the others did not. A new spiritual gift was given to him that day, the gift of faith to follow Christ. All people are blessed, but not all follow Christ. This man's thankful heart responded in faith and he was perfected as a disciple of the Lord.

Jesus asked three questions of this man and then blessed him: *Ten were cleansed, where they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God? Then He said "stand up and go; your faith has saved you."* Jesus noted the ingratitude of the other nine lepers. The nine lepers could very well be some of us who, after receiving God's blessings or when our afflictions are healed, or find the call of Jesus too demanding, leave and continue with our old ways.

Oftentimes, we do not realize how blessed we are until we are faced with problems or threatened by a loss. Someone once said that gratitude is the source of all other Christian virtues. If that is the case, then we can conclude that ingratitude may well be the source of many shortcomings as well. When we begin to take for granted what God has done for us, then callousness, pride and preoccupation with one's self result. We should allow the Lord to search our hearts and reveal to us whether we are truly serving Him above all others.

Discipleship requires commitment. True disciples say from their heart, "If Jesus goes with me, I'll go anywhere. I'll do what He wants me to do. I'll be what He wants me to be. When we profess our faith to Him, He brings us to a spiritual maturity allowing us to join him in *seeking to save those who are lost*. Our Lord commands that we do not become stumbling blocks to another's spiritual journey; to prepare our hearts to be ready to rebuke and to forgive; to continue to grow in our faith towards Christ so that His Will may be accomplished in us. Finally, we must be grateful disciples for the grace and spiritual healing He demonstrated towards us when we placed our faith in Him as Lord and Savior.

Feast Day : November 13

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini



If St. Frances Xavier Cabrini were alive today, the passion and zeal of her missionary spirit would find a world very much in need of her witness, courage and absolute trust in God. She would discover women still faced with abuse and inequality, children still hungry for nurturing and attention, immigrants still struggling against prejudice, injustice and intolerance

St. Frances-Xavier Cabrini was born Maria Francesca Cabrini on July 15, 1850 in Lombardy, Italy and was the youngest of thirteen children. She knew early in life she would make religious work her life's vocation. On her confirmation in 1857, she remarked, "...from that moment, I was no longer of this world... I knew the Holy Spirit had come to me."

She took her religious vows in 1877 and became Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini; Xavier, because of her devotion to the great missionary and patron of the missions. In 1880, she founded the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to care for poor children in schools and hospitals, named as such because of her great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The motto she chose for her congregation was, "*I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me.*" (Phil 4:13)

In 1889, Mother Cabrini relocated to New York City at the direction of Pope Leo XIII to minister to the growing number of impoverished immigrants, mostly Italians. For the next 25 years, she traveled throughout North and South America and Europe, founding 67 convents, schools, orphanages and hospitals.

Her immense love for God empowered her to reach out to the poor, the broken-hearted, the needy, and the immigrant. Although her constitution was frail, her spirit was endowed with such strength that knowing the will of God in her regard, she permitted nothing to impede her from accomplishing what seemed beyond her strength.

In 1909, she became an American citizen in Seattle. She died of malaria in Chicago, at the age of 67 in 1917. Her body was laid to rest in the altar of the Mother Cabrini High School in Bronx, New York, which is now a place of pilgrimage. In 1946, she was canonized as the "first American saint" by Pope Pius XII. She is also the Patroness of Immigrants.

Inspired by the grace of God, let us continue her mission by taking positive actions to alleviate the suffering of those most vulnerable, neglected and marginalized. May her work and example be continued in the lives of those who are looking for new 'Mother Cabrinis' in their midst. Like her, let us dedicate our lives to the service and greater glory of God and become bearers of Christ's love in the world.

Charismatic ..(page 1)

Stanislaw Rylko, president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, at the 11th International Conference of the Catholic Fraternity of Charismatic Covenant Communities and Fellowships.

The four-day conference in Fiuggi, Italy, ends Monday. The meeting has brought together 1,200 delegates from 70 nations.

Also attending the event are Cardinal Francis Arinze, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments; Bishop Renato Boccardo, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications; Andrea Riccardi, founder of the Community of Sant'Egidio; and Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement.

The Holy Father's message, signed by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican secretary of state, is addressed to Charismatic communities to express "all his affection" and to impart "his blessing."

The message appeals to Charismatics "to be committed in this Eucharistic Year to take initiatives so that the Eucharist will become increasingly a factor of union and cohesion in the People of God, in this world marked by violence and division," according to the text reported by Vatican Radio.



At the opening of the meeting, Matteo Calisi, president of the Catholic Fraternity, said that the new challenge is to spread the Eucharistic message, confirm the presence of Christ in society, and give hope to a world that is ever more secularized, reported Vatican Radio.

The Catholic Fraternity, an international organization of pontifical right, is composed of more than 50 communities of Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

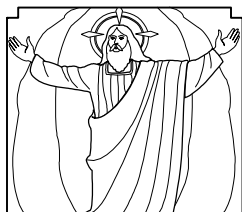
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

10/15	\$4,029
10/22	4,036
10/29	3,203
43-wkavg	3,773

EXPENSES

43-wkavg	\$4,508
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MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Magnificat 2005. November 15 deadline is almost here: don't miss out on our 63% *discounted rates*. Please get together as one group within your ministry or class and **SUBSCRIBE AS A GROUP**. Cash or checks payable to "Cash." Contact Benny/Sally Santiago or other members of the Word ministry.

TEACHINGS

Tomorrow, Nov 6 at St. Antoninus 1-6pm

LSS 1-20: Christian Maturity Program, Part II (Witnessing, Suffering, Speech, Giving)

LSS 1-22: Encounter With Jesus, Part I (Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the Old Testament, Development of the Gospel)

Covenanted disciples: Coaches Development Program (by DSL/DCS)

Nov 12, St. Leo Church after worship

ME # 23 - Understanding Intercession

Nov 19, St. Leo Church after worship

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

Nov 20, St. Antoninus, 1-6 pm

LSS 1-18: Prayer Leadership

LSS 1-20: Christian Servanthood; Understanding Corporate Worship

LSS 1-22: Encounter With Jesus (Mark & Matthew)

"Discipling Plenary Session for all ME 18 Aspirants on November 20 from 1-6 PM at the St. Leo's Building Annex (Mark 10 venue)."

Vocations Awareness dinner will be hosted by the Archbishop Nov 9 following Mass at 6:15pm in the Marian chapel of the Cathedral. *High school juniors and seniors* are invited. Please contact Fr. Paul Lehman.

Homeless shelter by the Missionaries of Charity requests donations of clothing, soap and other supplies urgently for their winter needs. Please contact Norie and Miriam Abes.

Medical Mission 2005 is tentatively set for Feb 14 to 18, 2005 in the province of Bulacan. Volunteers and donations are requested. Contact Nong & Tricia Bustos.

Today Is All We Have, So Love Each Other With All Your Hearts

Marriage Encounter # 24

November 19-21, 2004

A Weekend of Discovery... A Lifetime of Love!

Counsels from page 1

that levirate marriage and marriage in general, is a condition that belongs “to this age”: perpetuating the name of the dead brother (levirate), having children so that the race will never die out (marriage). This does not apply to the “age to come”, because those who are resurrected “are no longer liable to death”! Thus the comparison fails.

Jesus “*was made Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead*” (Rom 1:4). As the Word, He is eternally the Son of God. But His humanity also, by resurrection, is brought to true Life. It is in and through Him that we will be “sons and daughters of the resurrection”. This doctrine, which Paul states explicitly, is present implicitly here. The sure guarantee of our own resurrection is, for faith, the resurrected Christ whom we celebrate in every Eucharist by being brought into communion with Him, sharing sacramentally in His Passover, bringing us more and more into our own resurrection; there we will see what we shall become: “a person with a wholly illuminated soul.”

The passage is clearly more than a doctrinal reminder or a response to objections against resurrection. It sets before us Christ, with whom “*we have grown into a union through a death like His, and shall also be united with Him through the resurrection*” (Rom 6:5). At the same time, we return to God Himself. How this has happened is important. We often look for “proof texts” in the Bible; texts that support a particular argument. Jesus, though, is not trying to prove anything. He shows or invites us to gaze on the one whom scripture reveals, whom Moses calls “the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,” Who after making a covenant with them, saved the patriarchs. He it is, Peter says, who “*has glorified His servant Jesus,*” and by His power, has “*exalted Him at His right hand as leader and savior*” (Acts 3:13; 5:30-31).

Faith in the resurrection comes from an encounter with “*God our Father, Who has loved us and given us everlasting encouragement and good hope through His grace*” (2 Thess.2:16). It is fundamentally rooted in the resurrection of Christ, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep, Who by His Word inspires us to give glory to God always and everywhere.

True witness to faith in the resurrection consists neither in an elaborate philosophical or theological argument with those who do not believe in it. The only witness that is truly in accord with the good news is that of men and women who live for God here and now. Such people can say, with remarkable assurance and simplicity, like Therese of Lisieux at the hour of death, “I am not dying, I am beginning to live.” ☞

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Nov 7	ME 23 Reunion, Macaia Residence, Jersey City 1-6pm
Nov 19	DLC meeting
Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 4	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Dec 4	FE 11 Reunion, Bldg Annex 1-6pm
Dec 18	Disciples' Assembly 2pm, venue tba

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .

BIRTHDAYS



11/05 Sandy Josen, LSS22	11/08 Rachel Guerrero, LSS14
11/06 Rose Ausan, LSS21	Tim Paule, LSS22
Sol Carlos, SPE5	11/09 Wesley Enad, YCR4
Cely Rosal, LSS10	Stephen Salonga, Mk10
Alan Yanza, YE9	Rachelle Camposagrado, Mk10
11/07 Carie Ciocon, LSS7	Judy San Luis, LSS4
Willy De Luna, LSS8	Isabelle Encarnacion, YE8
Miguel de Leon, YE11	11/10 Chito Encarnacion, LSS9
11/08 Stephen Chan, YCR4	Mickee Pacia, LSS20
AJ Flores, Mk10	Leslie Mescallado, YE11
	11/11 Soledad Bool, SPE1

ANNIVERSARIES

11/07 Fred & Suzanne Avestruz, LSS18

An Invitation to Holy Communion

“Oh, the marvelous and hidden grace of this Sacrament that only Christ’s faithful understand, that unbelievers and slaves of sin cannot experience! In it spiritual grace conferred, lost virtue is restored, and the beauty marred by sin is repaired. At times, indeed, its grace is so great that, from the fullness of devotion, not only the mind but also the weak body feels filled with great strength.” (From The Imitation of Christ)

Last Friday's Prophecy: “Help the needy, seek and bring back the lost ones to me.”

DIRECTION:

1. Encourage your hearts and strengthen them in every good deed and word.
2. Let us pray for one another that the Word of the Lord may make progress and be glorified.
3. Be more proactive in our missionary endeavors.



Consultation on BLD Statutes

Responding to the ECSL's request for a global community consultation on the BLD Statutes and Policies/Guidelines, the DCS called for a **Disciples' Assembly on Saturday, Nov. 13 from 4-8pm at St. Leo's Boland Hall**. The drafts of these two documents have been distributed electronically to all disciples for their advance review.

Both the Statutes and Policies/Guidelines used to comprise the Covenant of Communion, which has been under revision for the past two years. Last October 15, 2002, Archbishop John J. Myers sent to Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo the doctrinal evaluation of the Covenant of Communion, which the archdiocese conducted to process its invitation for BLD Newark to become an association of the faithful.

The two key recommendations from the doctrinal evaluation concerned the need to clarify the role and responsibility of the local bishop in the community vis-à-vis the Spiritual Director and the Council of Servant Leaders, and to apply the principle of subsidiarity in the community's statutes.

An early review of the draft documents showed that the changes advocated by the Archdiocese of Newark have in large measure been adopted in the Statutes. However, there are still several inconsistencies in various parts of the statutes that need to be corrected to avoid confusion.

The comments from the disciples of BLD Newark, Long Island, Trenton, Albany, Rockland and Washington DC will be compiled and sent to the ECSL before the end of December. The ECSL will forward all comments unedited to Archbishop Angel Lagdameo and Msgr. Paul Cuison (canon lawyer and BLD Davao district spiritual director), who will decide on the final changes to the two documents.

"God in his omnipotence could not give more, in His wisdom He knew not how to give more, in His riches He had not more to give, than the Eucharist." (St. Augustine)

COUNSELS

Perseverance Will Secure Lives

WORD: Mal 3:19-20a; Ps 98:5-9; 2 Thes 3:7-12; Lk 21:5

ORDER: Bear witness to Christ in all circumstances especially during persecution.

REFLECTION: *PERSEVERE* means "To go on resolutely or stubbornly in spite of opposition, counterinfluence, discouragement or warning, to persist in an undertaking. As Christians, we are reminded to always unite our actions with the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. For that is the purpose of our calling. In addition, it is crucial that we are under God's will. When we are persistent to take matters into our own hands and fail to take care to remain in God's will, we are courting disaster. Removed from the Lord, we are back to where "my personal agenda" is all that matters.

We who responded to God's call are to serve Him and His interest alone. To accomplish this, we must empty ourselves of all our desires or preferences, seeking instead to find His will. This is difficult to do. Unless we do so, however, we may only be serving our own interest, putting our spiritual lives in harm's way. As God's Word in Malachi 3:19 says, "For lo, the day is coming, blazing like an oven, when all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble, And the day that is coming will set them on fire, leaving them neither root nor branch, says the Lord of hosts."

Perseverance in all things of the Lord is a must, whoever you are. "This saying is trustworthy: If we have died
continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"By your perseverance you will secure your lives." (Lk 21:18)

John 6 Crossing : Two Sharings

It Changed My Life – Olivia Felibrico

John 6 Crossing retreat was an eye-opener, because God showed me that He truly loves His children. When my parents told me that they signed me up to join Crossing#5, all that ran through my head was, “My friends are going there too! What, no TV!” At the retreat, I saw a lot of people that I already knew and didn’t know. As each day ended, I got to know them better and proudly say that they are all my friends whom I love. We did many things there that we will never forget...the jumping, “oohing,” singing, crying, and exalting God’s name. We learned to have faith in God, Who is always by our side. God is our best friend and we can always count on Him. We can talk to Him when we have a problem or if we just need to talk to someone. By God’s grace, I felt the Holy Spirit come down upon us. This retreat was the best experience of my life! I will never forget the miraculous stories, teachings, and experiences. But, what I loved most about Crossing is that it changed my life! I appreciate God more than I ever did before. Each night, I now say the rosary, and I wear a scapular around my neck. My God and my best friend, whom I have most faith in, changed my life. I can only love Him more by loving and serving others.

God Reached Our Hearts – Erwin Eusebio

I expected Crossing#5 to change my life. I was excited to finally leave Mark 10, after 12 years, like a caterpillar ready to become a beautiful butterfly. I was ready to move on to John 6. When we got to the retreat, I noticed that every candidate was blushing! I was blushing too which obviously meant we were feeling shy. The youth facilitators were cool, nice, funny, and were definitely “down” with our Lord, Jesus Christ. Crossings#5 was amazing!. It showed me God will always be there. The sharings were so touching, the teachings were inspiring, and the candidates were very cool. One of the retreat’s important lessons is that people hide their true selves behind a mask. If you’re open, you will truly know God. We also learned that Jesus is always there when you need help or are feeling lonely, and He will come through for you. He will never ever leave your side. We will never forget this moment when God reached our hearts and blessed us with His kind loving soul. We shall forever praise His name and exalt Him. We thank God for always being there for us. God is the best! So, Crossing#5, can I get an AMEN!!!

“Lord, that I may see”

Do we truly rejoice in each day that the Lord has made? Do we appreciate the goodness of God in every breath we take? Do we rest in the Spirit when our day’s work seems hopeless? If the answer to these questions is “No”, then sadly, our faith is still weak and doubtful. We need to grow more in our faith and learn to trust God completely.

He shouted, “Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!” The people walking in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent, but he kept calling out all the more, “Son of David, have pity on me!” Then Jesus stopped and ordered that he be brought to Him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He replied, “ Lord, please let me see.” Jesus told him, “ Have sight; your faith has saved you.” He immediately received his sight and followed Him, giving glory to God. When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God. (Luke 18, verses 38-43)

We too, must be strong in our faith, so we may see the full splendor of His everlasting Light. We need to pray daily, meditate on the Scriptures, do works of mercy, and frequently receive the Sacraments. We must strive at all times to live a holy life, abiding by the Word. By our examples, may we bring others to Jesus. Indeed, when we have full faith in the saving grace of Jesus, we can stay happy and confident in the face of any adversity. In spite of the everyday anxieties and uncertainties, our world still illumines with the grandiose beauty of all His works. We see joy and peace around and remain fearless in any situation because we believe that God is with us and will never abandon us.

Perhaps in our community, some of us still cannot see the awesome power of our merciful God. We think too little sometimes of what God can do for us especially in times of hardships. We struggle blindly as we depend on ourselves to solve the problems that beset our lives. But only Jesus can save! The sooner we put our trust in Jesus, the sooner we experience the beauty and serenity of His salvation.

We must avoid sin and its temptations. Sin makes us spiritually blind, pushing us to darkness. Life becomes colorless and dull. We must repent and ask God for forgiveness and let His divine mercy bring us back to light. Jesus will give us fresh eyes that we may see all His glory and blessings here and ultimately for all eternity.

Praise be to God!



Kudos & complaints?
wordministry@bldnewark.com



Use of Authority

The matter of proper use of authority can always elicit some debate in any community gathering. Is it used properly, or is it abused and misused, going well beyond what God has planned?

God raises up leaders for the purpose of serving His flock, "some as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." (Eph 4:11) How should the authority given to God's undershepherds be exercised?

Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, never claimed control over the lives of God's people when He could have easily elevated himself as "lord" over them. He knew his role was to be a servant. He said in 2 Corinthians 1:24, "Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work together for your joy." Paul could have claimed dominion over their faith. Instead he led by example, not by authoritative rule. He said, "I am writing this, that when I come I may not have to be severe in virtue of the authority that the Lord has given me to build up and not to tear down." (2 Cor 13:10)

Jesus Himself set the guideline for the proper use of authority in Luke 22:25-27. "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are addressed as 'Benefactors'; but among you it shall not be so. Rather, let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. For who is greater: the one seated at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one seated at table? I am among you as the one who serves."

As the community grows and raises new leaders, we encourage a periodic self-assessment to ensure that we are true to Christ's definition of leadership. Do we consider everyone vital to the life of community? Do we seek the advice and suggestions of other members? Do we consider our role as that of service, rather than of ownership and control? Do we motivate obedience of members through our discernment, consultation and communication, or do we expect compliance? Are we servants rather than lords or benefactors? Do we give everyone the liberty to speak out, to share what is in their hearts, without fear of reproach or reprimand?

Let the Spirit examine our hearts. Let Him who wants to transform us into His character build us up in Christ!
(Next installment: *Submission to Authority*)

Visit our website at www.bldnewark.COM
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Ministry Announcements

SPECIAL ASSEMBLY TOMORROW. All disciples are asked to convene at St. Leo's Boland Hall, from 4pm-8pm to review the drafts of the BLD Statutes and Policies/Guidelines. The Statutes is the document that will be presented to the Pontifical Council of the Laity in Rome for BLD's application to be an international association of the faithful.

ME 24 Don Bosco Shrine, Nov 19-21. Applications still accepted. See Nestor & BecBec Laxina or Nick & Island Raagas.

Discipling Plenary Session for all ME 18 Aspirants, Nov 20 St. Leo church basement 1-6pm.

Christmas drive for the poor. BLD Mission is appealing for donations of badly-needed supplies by the Missionaries of Charity as they face mounting winter services. *We call on all SPE/SE/ME classes* and all members to respond. Please bring used clean clothes (especially coats), toiletries (soap, lotion and face towels), and basic food items (sugar, salt, salt, oil, coffee, tea, tomato sauce, garlic powder, pepper and other spices). Your gifts will be collected *in the box at the back of the church until December 3.*

TEACHINGS

Nov 19, St. Leo Church after worship

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

Youth Shepherds' Training

Nov 20, St. Antoninus, 1-6 pm

LSS 1-18: Prayer Leadership

LSS 1-20: Christian Servanthood; Understanding Corporate Worship

LSS 1-22: Encounter With Jesus (Mark & Matthew)

Medical Mission 2005 is tentatively set for Feb 14 to 18, 2005 in the province of Bulacan. Volunteers and donations are requested. Contact Nong & Tricia Bustos.

John Paul II: "3 Goals for the Pilgrim"

- CONTEMPLATION to walk on the path of holiness
- COMMUNION to promote the spirituality of unity
- MISSION to be evangelical leaven in every place.

Counsels *from page 1*

with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself." (2 Tim 2:11-13)

The Lord has nurtured our community in His loving arms in the past 12 years of our existence. We've seen many examples of persevering love, from our ordinary members to our leaders. Their faithfulness and perseverance to the calling showed us that it could be done. We have seen their many trials in the community, their families and their work places, yet they have remained focused on the Lord.

However, we oftentimes wonder why our own brethren could become the source or cause of our trials. Shouldn't we who share the same faith in Christ encourage, affirm and upbuild one another? How then can we avoid contributing to each other's difficulties? One way is to keep in step with our Lord by careful examination of our motives before we take action. By patiently and actively seeking His guidance, we will learn how to stay within His will and not stray from it. *"For God is the one who, for His good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work. Do everything without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish."* (Phil 2:13-15a)

St. Paul says in the second reading, *"For you know how one must imitate us. For we did not act in a disorderly way among you, nor did we eat food received free from anyone. On the contrary, in toil and drudgery, night and day we worked... In fact when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat."* (2 Thes 3:7-12)

St. Paul reminds us that we are one body and that we must carry the share of our load. As in the workplace where we were hired for a specific task, we are expected to accomplish our duties to the best of our abilities. We are called to bring Christ to others through our witnessing. St. Francis said, "Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary use words." We were called to witness to the transformation that has happened in our lives.

And finally in the gospel, *"You will be hated by all because of My name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed."* We are reassured by His promise, *"By your perseverance you will secure your lives."* (Lk 21:19)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Rely on the Lord and persevere.
2. Bear witness by sharing the victories of Christ in their lives.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Dec 4	FE 11 Reunion, Bldg Annex 1-6pm
Dec 10-12	ME 1, BLD Rockland
Dec 11	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm

Assembly Tomorrow!

see page 3

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!



BIRTHDAYS

11/12	Rene Reyes, LSS22 Rodel Camposagrado, Mk10
11/13	Pen Perez, LSS13
11/14	Kaye Campomanes, Singles Milagros Cruz, Singles James Koryan, YE2 Jake Lopina, YE9
11/15	Bert Pie, LSS6 Marvin Venadas, YE8 Joel Salonga, Mk10
11/16	Pina Coquia, LSS6 Ed Magadia, LSS19 John Chan, Mk10 Rosemarie Ausan, SPE5
11/17	Erik Entrada, Singles Unicel Flores, Jn 6 Paul Anciano, LSS16
11/18	Amy Guiao, LSS16 Jovy Lucero, LSS13 Bren Solema, LSS20

ANNIVERSARIES

11/12	Matthew & Mercy Osemeha, LSS18
11/15	Boyette & Mita Miranda, LSS5
11/16	August & Carmen Soto, LSS14
11/18	Boy & Des Parker, LSS11

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

10/22	\$ 4,036
10/29	3,203
11/05	3,650
44-wk avg	3,771

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES

44-wk average \$ 4,418

Disciples tackle issues

A special assembly was called last Saturday at Boland Hall in answer to the request of our Spiritual Director, Archbishop Lagdameo, for all districts to review and comment on the drafts of 2 new community documents. What used to be one lengthy Covenant of Communion has been simplified and recast into the BLD global, permanent **Statutes** and the more flexible **Policies and Guidelines** that may be tailored to each district's needs. Comments touched on the use of universal terms and language, the relevance of certain provisions to the peculiarities of our district, and as they impact on the recommended changes by the Archdiocese of Newark after its review of our Covenant last year. The results of the deliberations are being compiled and will be sent to the Council of Servant Leaders in Manila. The **Statutes** is intended for submission to the Pontifical Council of the Laity in Rome for BLD's application to be an international association of the faithful.

Our venue search

The assembly also deliberated on the options the community has as it faces new venue problems, regarding the uncertainty of lease renewals and site restrictions that disrupt our activities. The DCS appointed a new committee in June to look for space for our office, meetings, worship preparation, storage and other needs. As the search expanded to address our bigger needs for our regular worship and teachings, and our periodic retreats, seminars and encounters, it was decided to submit the matter to the larger body of disciples. Seeking discernment from the Word and in prayer, the assembly broke up in smaller groups and later reconvened to report their leadings to the full body. Of these, the majority by far recommended to ask the entire community to persevere in prayer for these intentions, to study the problem further and fully, and to trust the Lord to bless our decision.

Inside: 2 excellent articles from our Youth ministry!

COUNSELS

Christ, Sovereign and King!

WORD: 2 Sm 5:1-3; Ps 122:1-5; Col 1:12-20;
Lk 23:5-43

ORDER: *"Give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones."* (Col 1:12)

REFLECTION:

Jesus, King of the universe! Lord of all of things created, visible and invisible, in the heavens above and on earth below!

Christ's Kingship is a revealed truth of Christian faith, propagated by Pope Pius XI in a 1925 papal document, by which the Feast of Christ the King was added to the Church's liturgical calendar. Its celebration has been fittingly set up for the last Sunday of the liturgical year, before Advent Sunday which follows to usher in the beginning of another year. How wonderful also that the very last Gospel words we hear are of the Lord's merciful assurance of salvation to the repentant thief: *"Today, you will be with me in Paradise."* (Lk 23:43)

Our celebration also challenges us to reflect: How are we making the Lord truly "King" in our lives? It is as thought provoking as the choice for the Gospel reading to honor this Feast. Why this picture from Calvary: the King hangs dying on a cross, in between two criminals, amidst a hostile crowd milling about in derision?

The Gospel choice is yet another profound reminder of the earthly "thrones" from which God has conquered the world through Son Jesus. With the crib of Christmas and the tomb of Easter Sunday, the cross of Calvary completes the glorious Throne from

(cont'd on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Amen, I say to you... you will be with me in Paradise."

(Luke 23:43)

The Youth Experience: Praise Music

There is something about God that stirs up the hearts of our Youth. It is our hope that by contributing to the Covenant News, we the Youth Ministry can capture this fervor in our hearts and share it with you.

Music is a beautiful thing. It has been widely studied, analyzed and used. Whether it is Don Moen or Beethoven performing, we can agree that music is great. But it is all the more beautiful when it is used to glorify God. This is why He created music anyway.

Scientifically, it has been proven that music makes the entire brain work. Socially, it has been agreed that music is a universal language. If we recall the original purpose of music, then both are true, because praising God means giving everything that we have, every cell in our body. Additionally, praise music is prayer - the one true universal language.

For essentially the entire generation of teenagers, music is a staple of life. It is not uncommon for us to hear, "Turn that music down! It's too loud!" or "You call *that* music?" Luckily, for the Youth Ministry, and for all teenage Christians, we have found music that parents (and all Christians) will beg us to turn up: Praise music.

The Youth of BLD are now aware of God's presence in music. He dwells in our praises. To see these young people on fire for God is a phenomenal sight. There are some praise songs that bring us to tears, and there are some that make us want to jump for joy for what God has done. Isn't it interesting to note that King David himself, the author of many of the Psalms, the man after God's own heart, was such a fervent worshipper at a young age? Even as the king of Israel, he proclaimed that he would dance and look foolish for God (2 Samuel 6:21-22)!

It is not uncommon to see the Youth dancing and jumping to praise God. While our worship may not be as refined as others, it is marked by a unique and visible fervor for God that others do not possess. I still have vivid images of seeing Youth dancing and jumping with their hands in the air, singing praise songs. To witness such a sight is breathtaking.

In today's culture, praise music is becoming even more relevant. This newfound popularity has allowed our youth to attend large praise concerts and gatherings. We find praise music on the radio, and thus, we can encounter God every day through music.

Praise music truly gives us "a little piece of heaven." It's a shame that sometimes we take this experience with God for granted.

Kudos & complaints?

wordministry@bldnewark.com

Youth "Testify To Love"

On Saturday, November 6, thirty members of our Youth ministry actively experienced such uplifting music when they attended a praise concert led by Avalon, Mark Schultz and Matthew West at the Felician College in Lodi.

One word alone can describe that beautiful Saturday afternoon: amazing. In the early afternoon, it was odd to see light through the windows while singing and dancing to praise music in a dark auditorium. But this did not prevent us from enjoying these artists whose songs have touched our lives through the radio or worship.

Matthew West began the concert, singing his songs for the first time on the tour in New Jersey. Mark Schultz followed, having the audience actively participate in singing his songs. He later unveiled his latest song's music video, which is about a mother writing her son in the war. Avalon closed the afternoon, wowing the crowd with their beautifully blended voices. They closed the night, leading us in singing "Testify to Love" (a BLD favorite), as well as "I Love You Lord" which we sang *a cappella*. To be part of a sea of thousands of people, young and old, praising the Lord is a breathtaking experience.

Some thoughts

I thought it was a spiritual refreshment. The singers also told stories that helped me put my feet back on the ground and touch base with reality. – MM

OK well it was an amazing concert that just brightened my day since I had a bad week beforehand. Likewise, seeing all those people singing praise songs was just awe-inspiring. I can't wait till next year! – KR

The Avalon concert was a great experience for me. It gave me a chance to praise God in one of my favorite ways and it helped me to bring one of my friends back to God. It was only the 2nd or 3rd song in and my friend was crying like crazy and saying how God had touched her heart. This was truly a testimony to me how God can bring us closer to him through song just like King David. – SI

Pope Laments "Trivial Vulgarization"

Television viewers, especially families, need to gauge whether the shows they watch are in harmony with the Christian view of man and the world, warns the Pope.

He called for "more insistence and courage... to cultivate a taste for the beautiful, accompanying it with sensibility for the good and the true.

"The legitimate needs of information and entertainment must be harmonized with the rights of individuals and families, without ever yielding to the illusions of those who wish to confuse truth with opinion, and taking care to avoid that all the most sacred and profound aspects of family life be exposed to spectacles and trivial vulgarization." (*Zenit.org Nov. 16'04*)

Because Of My Name

In Luke 21:12-19, the Lord repeats this phrase to His disciples. In doing so, He warns us that simply by the fact that we are Christians, we are to face persecution and shall be hated. Do we not glimpse this truth in the disdain, ridicule and discrimination that much of the world directs our way, at our faith and our values?

But Christ gives us such blessed assurances of His irrefutable wisdom and powerful protection. He wants us to persevere and thus secure our lives. *Praised be the Holy Name of Jesus!*

The Presentation of Mary

Mary was born to Joachim and Anne. They were people who loved God and were faithful believers, but they were childless for the first 20 years of their marriage. Anne was barren and prayed often to God for the high honor of becoming a mother, and promised God that she would pledge her child to His Holy Temple if He would bless her with a child. Anne never lost her faith and hope that God would answer her prayer, and after many years, she became the mother of a little girl whom she named Mary.

Joachim and Anne were thankful to God for the gift of their daughter and dedicated Mary to the Temple in Jerusalem where she was presented to the high priest. To reach him at the altar, she had to climb 15 steps symbolizing the 15 Psalms. According to the writings of the Fathers of the Church, the Virgin Mary was received into the Temple by Zaccharias, the High Priest who later became the father of John the Baptist, who was also born of previously barren parents.

The young Mary is depicted with a garland of white roses upon her head, symbolic of her purity, and also used in art as a symbol of the defeat of darkness and sin. A similar garland can be found in depictions of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The rose itself is often called the "queen of flowers" and so became an emblem of Mary, the Queen of Heaven. A wreath of roses is sometimes used to symbolize the Rosary, the great Marian devotional prayer.

We have in Joachim and Anne examples of faith and unselfishness. It was a sacrifice of a faith in God that led Anne to dedicate her daughter completely and willingly, allowing her child to live in the Temple for twelve long years. You would think that a mother who gave birth to a child after being barren for so long would be selfish and cling to her child. Anne, however fulfilled her promise to God and did not withhold her child from God. We see in her an image of our God, Who did not withhold His only-begotten Son from us.

You might ask, how can we be generous toward God, as unselfish as the parents of Mary were? We can strive to increase our faith, strengthen our trust and daily

Ministry Announcements

ME 24 is going on this weekend. *Let us pray for all the couples, the pastoral team and all who will be serving.*

Discipling Plenary Session. ME 18 Aspirants, tomorrow Nov 20 St. Leo church basement 1-6pm.

Christmas drive for the poor. BLD Mission is appealing for donations of badly-needed supplies by the Missionaries of Charity as they face mounting winter services. *We call on all SPE/SE/ME classes and all members to respond. Please bring used clean clothes (especially coats), toiletries (soap, lotion and face towels), and basic food items (sugar, salt, oil, coffee, tea, tomato sauce, garlic powder, pepper and other spices). Your gifts will be collected in the box at the back of the church until December 3.*

Teachings tomorrow Nov 20 at St. Antoninus 1-6 pm:

LSS 1-18: Prayer Leadership

LSS 1-20: Christian Servanthood; Understanding Corporate Worship

LSS 1-22: Encounter With Jesus (Mark & Matthew)



“Start again from Christ and bear witness, in a simple and concrete way, to his merciful love for everyone, especially those on the margins of society, who are defeated by life.”

(Pope John Paul II, November 15)

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS:

10/29 \$3,203

11/05 3,650

11/12 3,404

45-wk.Avg 3,762

Thank you for your generosity!

EXPENSES: 45-wk.Avg \$4,379

to grow in love for Him. As we place Him first in our lives, He will help us forsake earthly riches and seek only the treasures that are eternal. The Presentation of Mary in the Temple is a reminder that personal sacrifices for God can accomplish great and wonderful things

Counsels *from page 1*

which the Father's victorious glory shines forth, restoring us to life in Christ.

St Paul reminds us to give thanks to the Father for making us fit to share in the inheritance of the angels and saints now already with Him in glory (Col 1:12). He addresses all who are members of God's kingdom on earth, His Church - we who have received the light of revelation and are privileged to be counted among this God-King's chosen subjects.

In the First Reading, all the elders and all the tribes came to David and "anointed him king of Israel." (2 Sm 5:1,3) We of the Christian faith also have our anointed Shepherd-King, but His authority and power far exceed that of David's or of any earthly kings or rulers. By the light of our faith, we confess this mighty, preeminent Lord. *"In him were created all things in heaven and on earth... In him all things hold together."* (Col 1:16-17)

In giving honor to the Lord on this Feast Day, we also have much to give thanks for the gift of His call to renewal and transformation in this community. We can reflect on our growth and progress in our New Life as we take stock to see who among the characters in the Gospel scene we identify with.

Disbelieving rulers and soldiers sneered and jeered at the dying Lord. Do we, too, still crucify Him by clinging to lives of fickle forgiveness? to "cafeteria" Catholicism in selective obedience to Church laws on sacramental confession, birth control, pre-marital or adulterous sexual practices? to casual disregard of community norms on Friday worship, Word sharing circles, serving in ministry, and in such disciplines as fraternal correction, teachings, discipling and shepherding?

Our reflection leads us to that one soul who received an overflow of love in response from Christ. The penitent thief, humbly accepting his lot as punishment for his crimes, quickly received the light of grace to see who this Jesus next to Him was: *a King!* He asked the Lord only to be remembered when He enters the kingdom. But Jesus gave him much more: the assurance of Paradise!

As we journey on in this earthly pilgrimage, may we remain in the purifying fire and light of our new, transformed lives, persevering in our witness that indeed, *the Lord reigns in us!*

DIRECTIONS

- Make peace and be reconciled with one another.
- Acknowledge the kingship of Christ, hallowing Him by picking up our cross daily.
- Be open to the call of shepherding (2Sam 5:2b).

Community Calendar

Nov 19-21	ME 24, Don Bosco Shrine
Nov 28	ME 19 Reunion, Boland Hall 1-7pm
Dec 3	Healing Mass; Christmas presentation
Dec 4	FE 11 Reunion, Bldg Annex 1-6pm
Dec 10	Family worship; Christmas presentation
Dec 10-12	ME 1, BLD Rockland
Dec 11	ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
Dec 17	Christmas Mass; Christmas presentation
Dec 18	Disciples' Assembly 2pm, venue tba
Dec 24	NO WORSHIP
Dec 31	NO WORSHIP
Jan 7	Healing Mass

BIRTHDAYS

11/19	Chris Masisado YE9 Ryan Camposagrado, YCR 4
11/20	Dave de La Fuente, YE8 Noel Alejan, LSS7 Rene Arribe, LSS21 Mil Camacho, LSS17 Ernesto Rementilla, YCR4
11/21	Gabby Bonifacio, YE4 Glenn Canlas, LSS14
11/22	Dee Solon, MK10 Cecil Canlas, LSS6 Ronnie Pacia, LSS20
11/23	Des Parker, LSS11
11/24	Neneng Ikalina, LSS12
11/24	Addie Limtian, LSS14 Olivia Felibrico, MK10 Dan Kavanagh, YE11
11/25	Jose Lheena, LSSS20 Rene Tolentino, LSS15 Alvin David, SE13

ANNIVERSARIES

11/19	Arturo & Ilona Montepara, LSS21
11/20	Ding & Emma De Borja, LSS13
11/21	Joe & Bambi Pascoguin, LSS20
11/23	Art & Mel Nano, LSS18

Visit our website:

www.bldnewark.com



Pope consoles typhoon victims

John Paul II sent a message of sympathy to the numerous victims of deadly typhoons in the Philippines. The Holy Father expressed his spiritual closeness to the families of the deceased and to people involved in rescue operations. With total villages suffering total devastation, more than 1,400 have died or disappeared.

In the face of the tragedy, there was great participation nationwide in aid operations and international solidarity has begun to mobilize. The BLD Newark cluster has affirmed its unity with all victims in response to the appeal by our ECSL on behalf of the especially devastated brethren in Aurora province.

Let us *"bear one another's burdens"* (Gal 6:2) as we now reach out to them generously through our prayers and our financial assistance.

Newark joins in Community Prayer

In their memo of December 1st noting the trials and hardships that have besieged us lately, the ECSL enjoined all members to unite in fervently reciting the Community Prayer that it has prepared (*see page 3*).

The community recited the prayer for the first time after last Friday's healing Mass. The ECSL requests us to pray unceasingly until Easter Sunday, for each other, our community and the Greater Church.

"Let us pray this prayer as a Community on any occasion when two or more of us are gathered, and individually as disciples during our daily prayer time. Let us also offer acts of penitence and sacrifice.

"Indeed, our Community is being besieged. Within our families, we encounter sickness and death. Within our Community... misunderstanding and hurt. Within the Greater Church... poverty and calamities.

"We too are being tested. Let us respond like Job and lift up our problems to our God. With humble hearts, let us acknowledge His almighty power. Let us proclaim our unwavering trust in Him."

"By your perseverance you will secure your lives." (Lk 21:19)

COUNSELS

Good News—Emmanuel in Us!


WORD: Is 35:1-6a, 10; Ps 146:6-10;
Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

ORDER: *"Be patient until the coming of the Lord."*
(Jas 5:7a)

REFLECTION: When there is heavy burden in our hearts and our problems seem too much to carry, most of us turn to the Word of God. We turn to the Scriptures during our worship and Word Sharing Circles (WSC) for our heavy burdens, whether they are spiritual, material, relationship or health problems; or difficulties in school, at work or at home. After our worship, most of us go home somewhat relieved. The burdens seem to be lighter. We know that the problems are still there, but somehow they are not as unbearable or hopeless as before.

Similarly, John the Baptist in our Gospel reading had a very heavy problem. He turned to Jesus, because he was confronted with doubts. Even after many years of being the "forerunner or preparer of the Way", John wanted to be assured that Jesus was the Messiah. Another similarity is portrayed in the hardship of the people during Isaiah's time. His people were at war for a long time. Life was hard. They were beginning to lose hope. They were starting to doubt if a Savior was still coming.

The first reading describes not only the wavering faith and doubts of Isaiah's people, but also our own and those of the Baptist. Most of us, in times of troubles and despair, become doubting people whose hands are "feeble", whose knees are "weak" and whose hearts are "frightened." (Is 35:3-4)

page 4 

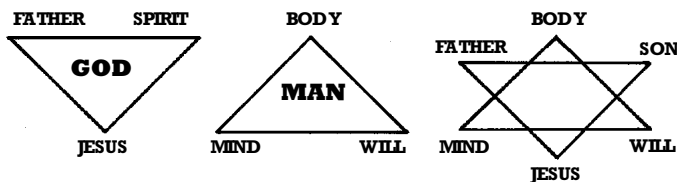
Gods Promise For The Week

"Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared." (Is 35:5)

A Christmas Message from Father Paul

As we begin the celebration of Christmas, I would encourage us to look deeper into the mystery of the Incarnation than we usually do. We easily identify with the traditional scene of the manger and stable that was popularized by St Francis of Assisi. This scene can lead us to the amazing realization that God has become one of us. But why did He do this? The quick answer is that He needed a body that eventually became subject to His redeeming death. This reality without doubt is the central mystery of our Christian faith. The redeeming work of Jesus was and is the central message of the evangelical work of the Church. And we celebrate this truth during the second liturgical season, Lent and Easter.

The first and foundational liturgical season is the one we are celebrating now, Advent and Christmas. The human body of Jesus first broke the natural barrier separating God and Man before it became subject to death and consequent redemption. The death of Jesus broke the barrier of sin that separated us from God. The Incarnation, the taking of a human body by God, broke the barrier separating humanity and divinity. When God became a baby, human nature by that very fact assumed an amazing dignity. It was brought up to a new level. As God came down we were brought up. I hope I can display this through the following diagrams:



When we open our hearts to the bodily presence of Jesus *we begin to shine like a brilliant star*. The body of Jesus has in a sense penetrated and overcome the physical differences between humanity and divinity, and now God is very much at home in our material world and in our own flesh bodies. Humanity because of the sin of Adam is wounded. This wounded nature assumed by Jesus has now become the very means in overcoming the separation between God and man.

Our challenge during this holy season is to open up and allow the presence of Jesus to become more “imbedded” into our minds and hearts, through a renewed determination to a deeper prayer life. If Jesus is within our minds, wills and even our bodies, then we will shine like stars in a world darkened by violence and sin.

“In community life, pastoral care begins and is sustained when leaders pray daily for their members and members pray daily for their leaders.” (ECSL reflection)

In the Spirit of Transparency

God is the Source of All Authority

Where does authority come from? Jesus said, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*” (Mt 28:18) Thus, when confronted with the question, “*By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?*” we respond by referring to Romans 13:1-2 which states: “*Let every person be subordinate to the higher authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been established by God.*”

Our community is presently at the stage of finalizing the revisions to its covenant of communion in order to align it with the teachings of the Catholic Church. The proposed statutes of our community in terms of authority found in paragraph 4:1 state:

“No member possesses authority in his or her personal capacity. Authority is legitimately exercised only when it is used to implement the statutes and policies and guidelines of the BLD Community, and the decisions of (its) governing body. Ecclesial authority is vested on the Diocesan Bishop and on his delegated representative, the District Spiritual Director. Covenantal authority is vested hierarchically on the BLD Community Spiritual Director, the BLD Community Council of Servant Leaders, and the District Council of Stewards.”

Since we pattern our ways according to God’s Word, then every authority assigned to each office within community is by the Lord. We can conclude that such authority, if properly used and exercised, will be sufficient to accomplish the work required of that office. When this authority is misused and not properly exercised, we fail at our God-given work.

Men with extraordinary leadership gifts may appear in our frail understanding as God’s anointed ones. Regrettably, some may bring into these positions of spiritual leadership such habits and dispositions as pride, the drive to control, love of self above others and the inordinate desire to exercise power. They have yet to mature and be sufficiently purged of their inner sinfulness, like gold that needed to be purified in fire. And then there are those who may be spiritual yet with no leadership skills. They need to be equipped as stewards and trained as administrators to lead God’s flock.

Since God is the source of all authority, we are obligated to seek His plan and abide by it. As such we need to be in constant discernment of His Will as to who should lead His flock. And as God allows them to emerge, to dutifully recognize and acknowledge them as His anointed ones.

St. John of the Cross

Juan de Yepes was born in 1542 in Fontiveros, Spain. He lived a life of poverty, a hand-to-mouth kind of existence with his mother and two brothers, one of whom also died of malnutrition, shortly after his father died of a lingering illness when Juan was still a young child. He later took the name Juan dela Cruz or John of the Cross as a Carmelite friar. John was a profound mystic, poet, theologian, spiritual director, administrator and collaborator with Teresa of Avila in reforming the Carmelite order. Many of his contemporaries misunderstood him and this led to his persecution and imprisonment. It was during this time that he wrote his three major poems, the Dark Night of the Soul, The Spiritual Canticle and The Living Flame of Love.

John's poetry is like a personal autobiography. It reveals the story of his spiritual journey in a way that allows us to discover the story of our own journey to God. Fully aware that his experience was indefinable, he asks, "*Who can describe the understanding He gives to loving souls in whom He dwells?*" He felt the overwhelming need to express his experience of the Spirit, to embody it and to charge it with emotion in his poetry. He is passionate as he burns with the fire of Divine love in his writings. He repeatedly declares that God's love is for all and is accessible to all; that our life is an ongoing love story- the story of God inviting us to a deeper transforming relationship with Him. As we respond to this call, we begin to let go of the things that keep us from loving more fully. He advises, "*Where there is no love, put love and you will draw love.*"

John teaches that the heart must be purified of all excessive attachments to find our true home in God. This purification and letting go leads to the dark night of the senses and later on the dark night of the soul. When we answer the divine call to love, the Spirit of God invites us into a dark night where we are stripped of our attachments and compulsions. To be called to transformation is to be plunged into darkness where nothing is palpable, where only faith and trust in God could direct our way. Where there is faith and trust, love grows. Then there is order in the midst of chaos, peace in the midst of turmoil, then darkness becomes light!

St John of the Cross died at the age of 49 in 1591. He was declared a saint in 1726 and 200 years later, proclaimed as a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius XI.

BLD Global Community Prayer



Father God, we praise and thank You for calling us and gathering us together in the Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community. We bless and glorify You, Father, for we know that You hold our Community in the palm of Your hand, close to Your heart. Through our Community, You have made us feel more strongly Your almighty power and loving presence in our lives.

Father, we come to You with our frailties and shortcomings. For the times that our endurance faltered in the face of various trials of this world, we ask for Your mercy and seek Your grace. For the times that our faith in You was weakened by the continuing hardships in our lives, we ask for Your forgiveness and seek Your strength.

Lord Jesus, Your birth and Your resurrection are the two fountains from which we draw faith and endurance to rise above our trials and hardships. By Your coming into this world, You have given us hope. By Your rising from death, You have offered us everlasting life. We thank You for teaching us that only by carrying our own cross can we follow You and by dying to ourselves can we truly live.

Father, You are our living God, ever faithful in all Your ways. Trials may come our way, but we shall not fear for You will never abandon us. With Your Holy Spirit by our side, our Community shall rise victorious.

Lord Jesus continue to bless all the members of the BLD Global Community. Lead us to pray for one another and let the spirit of peace and love reign among us. As we grow in Your Word, inspire us to be living witnesses to the love of Jesus. Embolden us to stand up for Him and defend our faith as we go forth on mission even to hostile and unbelieving territories.

Lord, You are our life and our salvation. As we believe in the humility of Your birth and in the glory of Your rising from death, we claim in faith that there is resurrection for those who hope in You, those who persevere in following You, and those who accept Your reign.

Through the intercession of our Mother Mary, all these we pray, Father, in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **First Marriage Encounter** of our Rockland outreach is going on this weekend. Please keep the candidates and all who are serving them in prayer.
- **Disciples' Assembly cancelled**. Was scheduled for December 18. New date will be announced.
- **Our Christmas Mass next Friday 8pm** will be held at Our Lady of Victories church in Jersey City. This will be our last meeting until January 7 when we shall have our First Friday healing Mass. Directions with Secretariat. Please carpool.
- **Youth Shepherds' Training** on December 17 and January 2 at Boland Hall after worship.

- **Medical Mission 2005** is set for Feb 14 to 18, 2005 in Malolos, Bulacan. *Volunteers and donations?* Please contact Nong and Tricia Bustos.



"THERESE" is in Staten Island!

The movie on the story of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, opened today, December 10 at the UAMovies at Staten Island. This motion picture masterpiece beautifully portrays the ordinary life and the extraordinary soul of the Little Flower. See it this weekend to help ensure a strong box office, so that the film can expand to even more area theaters!

Counsels (from page 1)

During this time of Advent, we should not be dismayed if we sometimes waver in faith. Just like John the Baptist, we have to turn to Jesus, the Word of God, for comfort and reassurance. We have to remember that our Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8). We can look back and remember His actions in the past when *“the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.”* (Mt 11:10) –a sure sign of His presence. We should not forget that this Advent season of waiting for and remembering the birth of our Savior is also a time of anticipating the Second Coming of Christ.

This is a joyful season of hope and fulfillment of God’s promise. We claim this promise for our community every time we meet and proclaim the Word of God: *“They will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.”* (Is 35:10) We echo the word of encouragement from St. James for our members who may be tired and weary: *“You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm... Do not complain.”* (Jas 5:8-9)

As members of this community, we must not only be hearers of the Good News, but also doers and proclaimers. We should be a community of hope, rejoicing in the promise that the Savior has come, and will come again. We should be the fulfillment today of the promise long time ago, to be an Emmanuel (God with us) to those who are in need of healing and comfort. God is with us! God is with our community and this message is enough for us *“to leap like a stag”* with overflowing joy. During all the Advents in our lives, let us proclaim the Good News as we prepare for the coming of Christ. Emmanuel is in you, and you are an Emmanuel for each other.

Have a Blessed Christmas!

DIRECTIONS

- In all humility, consider the other person better than you are (Phil 2:4), instead of judging and complaining.
- Be glad and joyful as we await the Lord’s birth, sharing our blessings with others.

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Collections

11/19	\$3,171
11/26	3,230
12/03	4,650*
48-wk avg	3,757

Thank you for your generosity

Expenses

48-wk average \$4,297

*Christmas Offerings = \$1324

Visit our website at www.bldnewark.com.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Dec 10-12 ME 1, BLD Rockland
- Dec 11 ME Grand Reunion, Boland Hall 12-6pm
- Dec 17 Christmas Mass; Christmas presentation
- Dec 18 YE#11 Reunion/Christmas Party
Biasons' residence. 314 Meadow Run, Stewartsville, NJ 08886. Sat, 1-5 pm
- Dec 24 NO WORSHIP
- Dec 26 ME 15 Reunion, Tolentino Residence, Jersey City, NJ. 2 pm
- Dec 31 NO WORSHIP
- Jan 7 Healing Mass

birthdays

- 12/10 Carlo Badiola, YE9
Katrina Badiola, YE9
Paula Leonor, SE13
- 12/11 Ed Eguia, LSS13
Frank Valeriano, LSS18
Lucia Ortiz, SPE3
Nicholas Talbot, Mk10
- 12/12 Bea Chan, LSS20
Felix Ekweghariri, LSS20
Chinanu Gubor, Mk10
- 12/13 Rudy Santos, LSS18
Rene Castaneda, LSS4
Jean Jean Bart, LSS22
Luz Santos, LSS19
Rudy Santos, LSS18
Paul Verzosa, LSS22
- 12/14 Sarah del Fierro, YE9
Kookie Besa, LSS17
Manny Manguiat, LSS9
Eddie Santos, LSS15
William Talbot, Mk10
- 12/15 Earl Manguiat, Singles
Leticia Almonte, SPE3
Aurora Panginen, SPE3
Myrna De Luna, LSS8
Ervin Manguiat, LSS11
Amy Olegario, LSS3
- 12/16 Jason Bustos, YE6
Adel Camposagrado, LSS18
Annie Felibrico, LSS8
Aida Koryan, LSS2



anniversaries

- 12/15 Mel & Baby de la Cruz, LSS17

“Holiness is not the privilege of a few, but a necessity of all Christians.” (John Paul II)



“Upon this ROCK, I will build my Church!”

The months, the weeks and the days of preparation for the formal establishment of the BLD church in Rockland, in the Archdiocese of New York finally came to fruition last weekend, December 10-12, 2004, as our community’s newest outreach sponsored its first Marriage Encounter Weekend at the Don Bosco Retreat House in West Haverstraw, New York, and harvested seven couples on whom our Lord will build His community.

The first fruits of BLD Rockland ME#1 are: Roland and Grace Cancio, Art & Aileen del Prado, Romy and Rose Dinsay, Archie & Lenore Manio, Sonny & Melissa Naviamos, Victor and Vivian Vuelva and Bobby & Baby Rigor.

The momentous weekend was conducted by Rev Paul Lehman as Spiritual Director with couple sharers, Richard & Lee de la Fuente and Rene & Sally Castaneda.

The successful weekend was a work of selfless servants of our Lord from BLD Newark who have joyfully responded to our Lord’s call to mission. Out of the comforts of their present ministries within BLD Newark, a group of spirit-filled disciples have worked and prayed together with their brethren of BLD Newark in making this endeavor truly a work of God’s hands.

Today God has blessed our community and built our outreach in the Archdiocese of New York as Jesus said, “Upon this ROCK, I will build my Church!” (Mt 16:18)

Tomorrow, we look forward to newer frontiers as we continue to discern God’s will when He said: “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

ALSO IN THE NEWS...

□ After completion of our community’s Christian Development Formation Program, a total of 33 committed disciples sealed their covenant with the Lord during our community’s Eucharistic Celebration of December 3, 2004. We praise God for the bountiful harvest! Welcome and Alleluia! *continued on page 3*

COUNSELS

The Blessings of Obedience

WORD: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-6; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

ORDER: Preach obedience of faith to all nations in honor of His Name.

REFLECTION:

The theme for tonight’s readings tells us that obedience is the shortest path to holiness. An old priest once shared on the occasion of his 50th sacerdotal anniversary that the vows of poverty and chastity were quite easy to overcome but obedience is something he battles with everyday. He presumed that our pride, which was linked directly to the sin of our first parents, was the biggest stumbling block in obeying the Lord and those in authority over us. As we approach the celebration of Christ’s coming we are again provided with models of obedience in our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Joseph. According to the Law of Moses the engagement that took place about a year before the marriage already enjoyed the same legal validity even if the couple had not lived together. Although surprised and shocked upon learning that Mary was pregnant with child, Joseph decided to send her away quietly instead of subjecting her to public shame because he was a “just man” – a man who followed the divine will of God by being honorable and charitable to his neighbors. The Lord was pleased with his obedience when an angel appeared to him in a dream to assure him that this was all part of God’s plan for His people.

St. Augustine and the Church Fathers tell us that all of
continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

“He shall receive a blessing from the Lord,
a reward from God His savior.” (Ps 24:5)

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 29, 2004

Reverend Paul J. Lehman and
Members of the Bukas-Loob Sa Diyos Covenant Community
337 South Orange Avenue
Newark, NJ 07103

Dear Members of Bukas-Loob Sa Diyos,



What a great joy it is for me to send you greetings during this Advent Season as we prepare for Christmas. This is a special year for us as Catholics. Our Holy Father has called us to a deeper union with our Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ who is present to us in the Eucharist. I know of your love for our Lord and I am grateful for your continued prayers before Him in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

This time of year reminds us in a real way that Christ came once and that He will come again. Our need to be prepared to receive him is so very important. In all that you do in your homes, at work, in school, wherever you find yourselves, you must always work to honor the Lord and be prepared for His coming again.

This time of year also reminds us that God spoke His final Word in Jesus Christ and we are saved through Him. The work given to the first followers of Jesus is given to us also. We must always be willing to show our faith by our words and actions by our trust and hope that we are different because we follow Christ.

May God's Word touch your hearts and minds as you gather to celebrate the wonderful things that God has done for us in Christ. Thank you for your good work and love for the Church. May our Lord bless each of the members of the Bukas Loob Sa Diyos with His grace and peace now and throughout the New Year.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely in the Lord,
(Signed)

Most Reverend John J. Myers
Archbishop of Newark

**COVENANT NEWS: A PART OF
YOUR COVENANT LIFE.**

Archbishop Lagdameo's Christmas Message

BUKAS LOOB SA DIYOS Covenant Community
Newark District

M E S S A G E

"Mane Nobiscum Domine ... Remain with us, Lord" (Lk. 24/29). This is the way Pope John Paul II starts his Apostolic Letter declaring October 2004-2005 A Year of the Eucharist. The two disciples journeying to Emmaus, finding their hearts unlocked, their eyes opened, and their minds enlightened by the resurrected Christ, plead with him "Stay with us, Lord."

The disciples' invitation "*Mane Nobiscum, Domine... Stay with us, Lord*" is consistent with the name that has been given Jesus at his birth as Son of Man. He is "Emmanuel," God who is with us, God who draws near to us, God who is unconditionally for us. The Resurrected Christ fulfills the promise of Advent-Christmas.

May every home and family of Bukas Loob sa Diyos shine and glow with the presence of this God who deigns to be present as EUCHARIST that you receive in Holy Communion. Holy Communion enables you to carry Jesus. You thus become "presentors" of Jesus in the places you dwell or work in. Through your witnessing, Jesus becomes a silent presence binding you into a Christian Community in the midst of a large society. In this large society you become with Jesus light, leaven and salt.

In this Year of the Eucharist, invite Jesus to be with you. Like Mary, be "men and women of the Eucharist," celebrating, worshipping and contemplating Jesus in the work that you do. "*Rediscover the gift of the Eucharist as light and strength for your daily lives in the World, in the exercise of your respective professions amid so many different situations. Rediscover this above all in order to experience fully the beauty and the mission of*

+ ANGEL N. LAGDAMEO
Archbishop of Jaro
November 29, 2004



THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

COLLECTIONS

11/26 \$ 3,230
12/03 3,326
12/10 5,004
49-wk avg 3,873

*Thank you for your
generosity!*

EXPENSES

49-wk average \$ 4,253

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE OF JOY AND HOPE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in our BLD Global Community,

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is at hand.”

During this Advent season, we wish to share with you the joy and hope of the coming of Jesus Christ, our Messiah.

We commemorate with heartfelt joy the first coming of Christ. While we know Christ’s first coming as a historical event, which happened more than two thousand years ago, we can also say that Christ’s first coming into our lives was when we first truly believed in Him as our Lord and Savior.

So let us rejoice at every instance Jesus Christ comes into our lives individually and as a Community; not only at Christmas time yearly, but daily whenever we pray, we read His Word, and we gather to celebrate the Eucharist.

We anticipate with expectant hope the second coming of Christ. While we acknowledge Christ’s second coming at the end of the world, “when the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels of heaven”, we can also say that Christ’s second coming is when we come face to face with Him after our journey here on earth.

So let us place our hope on God’s gift of salvation and life in His kingdom. Let us persevere in living a Christian life actively and patiently because the “Messiah is coming to save us – to forgive our sins and bring peace to everyone”.

We pray that you and your loved ones will experience the true meaning of Christ’s first and second coming this Advent season and share your heartfelt joy and expectant hope with others everyday of this coming year.

May all of us be blessed and be His blessings to others as well.

With joy and hope in Christ,
The Executive Council of Servant Leaders

“In community life, pastoral care begins and is sustained when leaders pray daily for their members and members pray daily for their leaders.” (ECSL reflection)

Holy Father’s Intentions for December

General: That children may be considered as precious gifts of God and may be given due respect, understanding and love.

Missionary: That Jesus Christ’s Incarnation may be the model of genuine enculturation of the Gospel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NO Disciples’ Assembly tomorrow. We shall be convening next on January 29; please await further details.

NO Friday worship or gathering is scheduled until our healing Mass on January 7.

Typhoon Victims. As we go into our Christmas break, our Spiritual Director Abp Lagdameo asks that we remember the thousands of our BLD brethren and countrymen who lost homes, properties and loved ones from the calamitous succession of deadly typhoons. He noted the *signs of Emmanuel* in “the hearts of innumerable generous people who are sending their assistance of food, clothing, money and materials for reconstruction.

“The victims will spend their Christmas with the consciousness and gratitude that thousands of their *kapamilya* in the Philippines and abroad are remembering them.

“Let God draw near to them with your hands stretched out to help,” he ended. “Be the hands and hearts of God this Christmas!”

Medical Mission 2005 is set for Feb 14 to 18, 2005 in Malolos, Bulacan. *Volunteers and donations?* Please contact Nong and Tricia Bustos.

ALSO IN THE NEWS... *from page 1*

- Gerry and Dimples Canlas were anointed as incoming shepherds of Newark’s ME-25 class.
- The newly graduated class of ME24 showed their gratitude and appreciation to the sponsoring class of ME23 and other auxies of their encounter weekend in a touching grand reunion held at Boland Hall on Dec. 11. All the couples shared on how the ME opened avenues for continuous dialogue between them and made them realize how the Lord has always been a silent partner in their union. Prayer and reflection, in addition to food and entertainment, marked this wonderful occasion.
- The sick and elderly residents of Windsor House in East Orange, NJ were the objects of the Christmas visitation organized by our Mission apostolate on Dec. 12. Members of ME21, ME22 and the Word Ministry treated the residents to gifts, snacks, and a medley of Christmas songs which they eagerly joined in, bringing the love, peace and joy of the coming of our Lord.

Counsels *from page 1*

the angels in heaven leaped for joy when Mary gave her “*fiat*” and accepted her role to be the Mother of our Savior; but there was a high price to pay for her obedience.

Scripture tells us nothing about Mary trying to explain her pregnancy to Joseph or to anyone else. She remained silent instead of defending her honor and innocence. She preferred to suffer suspicion and shame rather than reveal the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in her. Our blessed Mother showed her obedience by abandoning herself completely and confidently to the love and providence of our Lord.

Like St. Joseph and the Blessed Mother we too are being asked to “pay a price” to saying “yes” to being disciples of Christ in our time. The cost depends on how we follow the teachings of our Lord. For some it is not too high a price because we do not let our discipleship “interfere” or disrupt our former way of life. We still manage to do things our own way hoping that we do not offend the Lord too much. For others, their discipleship may cost them a lot. They may become alienated from friends and relatives who cannot understand the change in them. Some may suffer financially because they have chosen to give up illicit income sources to comply with God’s command. There are also a select few whose crosses and trials become heavier each day as they share in the suffering of Christ.

On this 4th Sunday of Advent, let us be grateful for all the blessings we have received from the Lord. They are blessings that each of us not only appreciate but have graciously shared with the least of our brethren. Throughout the year we have fed the homeless in the Missionaries of Charity soup kitchens. Some of our members have brought joy and peace to our senior citizens in the Nursing Homes. Over 400 homeless adults and poor children will be receiving a gift from our community to show them that someone still cares for them. Our Lord is never outdone in generosity for our medical mission in February received over \$500,000.00 worth of donated medicines and supplies from the Catholic Medical Mission Board. Likewise we cannot overlook the effort of some members who patiently save equipment and supplies to be used in treating our poor countrymen. Even our youth have been touched as a 12 year-old girl saved up her allowance in order to participate in our mission effort. She has contributed towards the purchase of a “nebulizer” to help someone with a breathing problem. Praise the Lord for allowing us to share our time, talent and treasure.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Do not be afraid to follow the Lord’s will like Mary and Joseph.
2. Be obedient to the Word of the Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Dec 24 NO WORSHIP

Dec 31 NO WORSHIP

Jan 7 Healing Mass



May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

BIRTHDAYS



12/17	Eric Amador, LSS15	12/23	Vicky Gatchalian, LSS2
	Eric Escobinas, Singles		Alonzo Africa, Mk10
	Benjamin Patenia, Singles		Nick Punzalan, YE4
12/18	Yollie De La Trinidad, LSS21	12/24	Theresa Bani, SPE5
	Vivie Manulat, Singles		Martin Rios, SPE1
	Rach Rebanal, Singles	12/25	Josh Cruz, YE10
	Justine Madrigal, YCR4	12/26	Tess Montemayor, LSS7
12/19	Monica Avisado, YCR4		Rey Zoleta, LSS6
	Irma Alquiros, LSS9		Awe Opeyemi, YE11
	Ver Nacion, LSS17	12/27	Jemma Reyes, LSS18
	May Antonio, Singles		Gigi Vibar, LSS1
12/20	Doy Adan, LSS22		Elaine Canlas, YE8
	Maricris Mangasi, YE8	12/28	Vionne Peloquin, SPE2
12/21	Grace Palomares, LSS17		Anna Motola, Singles
	Mike Punzalan, LSS22	12/29	Norie Eguia, LSS13
	Fanny Rodriguera, LSS19		Dolly Fernandez, LSS12
	Annabelle Duma, YE8		Jojo Roldan, YE11
12/22	Jun Isidro, LSS15	12/30	Norie Abes, LSS2
	Linda Monserate, LSS8		Rex Gongob, LSS19
	Matthew Osemeha, LSS18	12/31	Linda Avisado, LSS8
	Erlinda Monserate, SPE3		Sally Castaneda, LSS4
			Linda Cruz, LSS10

ANNIVERSARIES

12/17	Jun & Fely Escobar, LSS16
12/19	Bobby & Dolly Fernandez, LSS12
	Vic & Mila Malantic, LSS20
12/20	Chito & Olive Encarnacion, LSS9
	Manny & Nette Manguiat, LSS9
12/21	Ralph & Lucy Almonte, LSS4
	Mauricio & Claudia Paredes, LSS21
12/22	Eric & Claire Macalintal, LSS11
12/23	Alan & Tess Cam, LSS17
	Nonoy & Em Catelo, LSS17
12/26	Lou & Gayle Alejandro, LSS18
	Raffy & Mariz Obrera, LSS16
12/28	Joe & Beth Baluyot, LSS3
	Dodong & Loring Demegillo, LSS11
	Robin & Amy Guiao, LSS16
12/29	Frank & Sally Belarmino, LSS3
	Emmy & Chichi Obi, LSS22
12/30	Rennie & Madonna Razal, LSS19