



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 1

Bulletin Edition

January 2, 2015

NEWS

Hold on to Hope: Leader of Irish Bishops Sends New Year Message

Excerpt/Armagh, Northern Ireland /123114/Zenit.org

The bells ringing out the old year and ringing in the New Year remind us of how quickly time passes. Ever since this time last year, all our lives have changed in one way or another: we've seen new faces and places, met new challenges, embraced new opportunities, encountered new problems. The turn of the year brings with it a mixture of sadness and hope, memories and dreams, regrets and resolutions. Some people won't be sorry to leave 2014 behind; others will face the New Year with uncertainty in terms of family, health, relationships and financial pressures. They ask: will 2015 be a good year?

At Masses on New Year's Day the beautiful Blessing of Aaron from the Book of Numbers is read. Although it is two and a half thousand years old, its verses invoke a timeless message:

"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace." (Nm 6:22-27)

To begin the New Year, blessed by the presence of God, is to hold on to hope, courage and trust even when we might be inclined to fret, fear or be anxious about the future. Our resolutions to change or do better are born out of the conviction that a fresh start is always possible and that conversion is achievable and good for us. Faith in God's presence enables us to say: 2015 will be a better year. With the Lord's face shining upon us in 2015 we can be more present to each moment, each person, every cry for help, every gifted opportunity that awaits us; every day, every hour, every moment can be truly blessed by the love and presence of God.

During the Christmas season many of us have had the opportunity to be with family, to spend time in worship and to reach out in charity to those less

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS EPIPHANY

THEME: **We are guided by the Star in our journey of faith when we find Jesus in one another.**

WORD: Is 60:1-6 / Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-11,12-13
Eph 3:2-3,5-6 / Mt 2:1-12

ORDER: *"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of Men."* (Mk 1:17)

REFLECTION:

The New Year is a fresh beginning that involves a process to change oneself, which is not



easy to do. We should be aware of our continuing need to change for the better and be more loving. And so we offer to God the most precious thing we have – a loving

heart, in the same way that our heavenly Father gives us His own heart through His beloved Son, Jesus. He is Emmanuel, and He always blesses us with His presence and constantly guides us when we call on His name. The community word for this celebrated month is **"Jesus is the guiding Star in our journey of faith."** In special times like Christmas, He pours out His blessings even more abundantly. And we pray for God's continuous guidance so that we can love Him and our neighbor, with all our heart on our earthly journey towards holiness.

The first Sunday of January is the 'Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord' with the Theme: **We are guided by the Star in our journey of faith when we find Jesus in one another.** *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor, the lives of the poor he shall save."

(Ps 72:13)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Walk the Walk...

I put down my pen, grinning! I have completed my final semester's Literature exam. Finally, I am free! Free of endless homework assignments, reviewing for exams. I recalled the first time I had walked through the campus gates, I prayed to God for the strength and courage to say NO to all temptations during college. I told myself that I would emulate the love of Christ to others around me, and evangelize by spreading His Word. However, it would be wrong for me to say that I did not have trouble throughout my first semester of college.

"But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in Him." (1 Jn 2:5) For the past five months, I had been surrounded by partygoers, drinkers, druggies, atheists, etc. It would have been easier for me to walk away and never see them ever again so that I could not be tempted. But I couldn't some were my close friends. Sometimes I felt alone in my little bubble, one who was obeying God by avoiding the college party life. I also made friends with some of the most modest, God-fearing people I have ever met. These were people who I prayed with every week, read the Bible and even shared past storms with. However, some succumbed to temptations. Was I being too harsh on myself? Were my friends, even my fellow Catholic Club and Christian Fellowship members, right in telling me that attending parties and drinking alcohol underage but with the right people was perfectly fine in God's eyes?

"Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did." (1 Jn 2:6) This was the moment in my life when I started my prayer journal and turned to the daily Scripture. Shivers were sent down my spine as I heard God speaking to me through endless Bible verses. ***"Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries. If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their forehead or on their hand, they, too will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath."*** (Rev 14:8-9) ***"The one who has clean hands and a pure heart will receive blessing from the Lord."*** (Ps 24:4-5). ***"All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."*** (Lk 21:4) In response, I wrote, "Lord God, You make it so clear to me what You want for me. I have not set strict guidelines for myself, for there does live a generation of pure hearts and loving souls. Those of Babylon are tempted to sin, and we must keep them from doing so, but I must be patient for those who put in their whole hearts to serving You and only You!"

Heavenly Father, thank you for all the experiences you have put me through and the people You placed in my life. I will continue to obey Your word, and live just as Your son did here on this Earth. Grant me the wisdom to walk Your walk and talk Your talk as Your faithful disciple! I pray in Your most Holy name, Amen.

GOD NEVER CHANGES

"Let what you heard from the beginning remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, then you will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he made us: eternal life."(1 Jn 2:24-25)

Things change. Days pass, seasons turn, years go by, children grow up, friends come and go, fortunes are made and lost. Some changes we celebrate; and some we dread. Some changes leave an indelible mark on our hearts. For better or for worse, change is a fact of life; and it has been for many centuries. The Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, who lived 500 years before Christ, once said, "There is nothing permanent except change."

In the 21st century, the world moves so quickly that it can be difficult to find any stability at all. So then, what can we hold on to when the world is constantly changing around us? The answer, of course, can be found in Scripture where we discover the source of all peace, all constancy, and all permanence. Take a look at 1 John 1:24. There we see the word *remain* used 3 times in one verse. ***"Let what you heard from the beginning remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, then you will remain in the Son and in the Father."*** No changing there...just remaining, staying put, abiding, holding on. Why? Because God never changes! ***"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."*** (Heb 13:8)

When we stop to think about it, what person or place do we know that has never changed? Only God remains the same, now and forever. That is why, if we ever hope to experience the peace that passes all understanding, we must seek Him with our whole heart and hold on to Him with all our strength. God is our Rock (Ps 94:22) when we are overwhelmed, our Guide (Is 58:11) when we are lost, and our Shelter (Ps 32:7) when we are afraid. He leads us with the compassion of a Shepherd (Ez 34:14-16) and is our Healer (Sir 38:9) when we are wounded and hurting. And on top of all of that, God keeps *all* His promises! ***"And this is the promise that he made us: eternal life."*** (1 Jn 2:25) It is an inheritance that is, ***"imperishable, undefiled, and unfading"*** (2 Pt 1:4) because God *never* changes!

"Save us, O God, our savior...That we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in praising you. Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Let all the people say, Amen! Hallelujah." (1 Chr 16:35-36)



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES

I would like to summarize at the beginning of the New Year the address of Pope Francis to the third world congress of Ecclesial movements and new communities, November 22, 2014. BLD is one of more than 30 relatively small Ecclesial communities in the Archdiocese of Newark. It is then important for us to renew and reflect on the basis of our BLD community life and how it fits into the life of the larger church. The holy father made three points in his address which I would like to outline:

- 1) Never lose the freshness of your charism. There is the temptation to become comfortable, and to become hardened in the way of doing things. There is the temptation to “cage” the Holy Spirit. Even if certain “institutionalization” is necessary, external structures do not guarantee the working of the Holy Spirit. (For example the ECSL with the help of a canon lawyer, is rightfully re-examining the BLD statutes to make sure they are in conformity with canon law.) Our basic charism, if I can summarize, can be found in the second chapter of the statutes. There it states that the purpose of the BLD community is to empower the laity for evangelization and to promote the values of the Kingdom of God among couples and individuals through the encounter and renewal programs. I think the holy father would be very pleased with our activities, but as he also says “be open to the surprises of God.”
- 2) “We must resist the temptation of usurping individual freedom. Every person has his or her own time, their path, and we must accompany this journey. Moral or spiritual progress which manipulates a person’s immaturity is only an apparent success, and is destined to fall. The Lord is patient with us.”
- 3) “One other consideration we must never forget is that the most precious good, the seal of the Holy Spirit is communion.....If the world sees divisions, rivalries, backbiting, the terrorism of gossip, please... if these things are seen regardless of the cause, how can we evangelize?” He reminds us that real communion cannot exist unless these movements are integrated with the greater communion of our Holy Mother, the Hierarchical Church. He says further, “when the Church takes up the task of evangelization, she is simply pointing to the source of personal fulfillment” (Enagelii Gaudium).

Perhaps it might be well to read the whole document, not as a criticism of our present activities, but rather as an encouragement to continue with efforts to bring others not only to our encounter and LSS weekends, but to a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus.

COUNSELS *(from page 1)*

Like the magi, we too are on a journey to find God through our relationships with one another. Though we undergo many struggles growing up, we still are able to discover our identity and learn to love ourselves and, most invaluable, other people. We are called to help each other on our journey of faith as a community, as a church. We need to remind each other by God’s word that the journey is well worth the difficulties and the cost. We need to feed each other at the table of the Lord so that we have food in this journey. We need to support each other, especially those among us who are in crisis.

After the merriment of the holidays, we should ask ourselves: How did the light of Christ affect me? How can I continue to live and spread the light of Christmas throughout this New Year? The light of Christ continues to shine in our midst through the very Eucharist we celebrate, whose light illumines our lives amidst the daily challenges that lie ahead. Let us keep the eternal light of Christ alive in us.

We are filled with the Holy Spirit and we are endowed with power. The same spirit connects us to God, making us children of the Father. We are filled with power to serve and love, to forgive, to understand and share, and most of all, to continue the mission of Jesus in our own daily experiences. At His baptism, Jesus is revealed as God’s beloved Son on whom rests His favor. He is God’s Servant, sent to bring justice to the nations and liberty to the captives. Step by step, Jesus was to live out the revelation of His baptism. What really matters is to hear God the Father tell us, “you are my beloved, on you my favor rests.” If we truly believe this, we can face the unknown with a peaceful heart. As someone said, “we do not know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future.” Since the one who holds the future is our loving Father, there is indeed nothing to fear.

The ideal way to respond to God’s call is *unconditionally* and *wholeheartedly*. Jesus chose ordinary men as His co-workers in the huge task of evangelizing the world. In spite of the overwhelming odds they faced, in spite of hostility and persecution, they proclaimed the message of salvation and numberless people were drawn to Christ.

Jesus depends on us for continuing the mission of the first disciples. Like them we are sent by Jesus to spread the Good News, to make it known and to attract others to Christ. As members of our God-given community, Jesus reminds us: “***Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.***” (Mk 1:17) Let us pray that we may be attentive to the light of Christ who draws us and that through the Holy Spirit we may have the courage,

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

hope and trust to continue on our journey of faith to God and our true selves all through the years of our lives. Jesus, the suffering Servant of God, accepted everything for our sake so that we might find meaning in our lives by dedicating ourselves to God just as He did.

To Him be Glory and Honor and Thanksgiving now and forever. Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Commit to follow Jesus in every way in your daily life.
2. Increase your knowledge of God by reading the Holy Scriptures, and be the "bible" to those who hunger for God's word.

*Source: ECSL Monthly Reflection

NEWS (from page 1)

fortunate than ourselves. Might these Christmas instincts inspire our resolutions for the year ahead - to spend more time with family and friends; to build our friendship with God; to reach out to the marginalized?

In his message for New Year's Day - the World Day of Peace - Pope Francis places before us the cruel facts of modern day slavery: that millions of children, women and men throughout the world are deprived of their freedom and forced to live in conditions akin to slavery. He speaks with bluntness about the greed and corruption, which preys upon the dignity of our fellow human beings who are 'trafficked' from place to place and mistreated as objects for exploitation and prostitution. Many of them, because of extreme poverty and helplessness, get caught up into a vicious circle, accepting roles and situations that are beneath their human dignity. And sadly, because of selfishness and global indifference, we can easily remain blind and ignorant of their plight - perhaps even tacitly complicit.

A new year's resolution for Ireland, North and South, might be to raise awareness and do what we can to tackle the global scandal of human trafficking. We might ask questions of ourselves and our public representatives: where is trafficking happening in this country? What are we doing to make Ireland the land of one thousand welcomes and a cold place for human traffickers? Clearly trafficking is a problem to be addressed both nationally and internationally. It begins, however, with personal and public awareness of what trafficking is, and how it can be prevented.

Aaron's blessing prays that the Lord may bless us and keep us all safe in his care. If at the end of 2015, some vulnerable trafficking victims feel "no longer slaves, but our brothers and sisters (Phil 15-16)", then we will be able to say: it has been a very good year!

Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Peace, Pray for us.

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,062	\$148,075
Mission Collections	\$467	\$8,951
Christmas Envelope	\$1,193	\$2,209

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MEDICAL MISSION 2015

February 16-19, 2015,
Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Philippines
For details contact: Mel/Remy Hernandez:
chi1944@hotmail.com

"But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Let us carry the light of Christ, run to the darkness, seek out our deprived brethren and light our world!

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Contacts: yca@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com



Every last Friday of the month
from 9:00 pm to 10:00 pm
St. Mary's Church (DMP)

MARCH FOR LIFE

What: **Bus trip to Washington D.C.**

When: **January 22, 2015 - Thursday**

Departure Place and Time: **Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway, NJ @ 6:30 am. Bus leaves on time.**

Estimated Return time to Divine Mercy Parish: **between 9:00 or 10:00 pm.**

Capacity of Bus: **55 passengers**

Cost: **Free of Charge (prepare \$10.00 for tips & other miscellaneous expenses)**

Reservations: **Strictly First-Come-First-Serve basis for BLD members only (30 youth/singles & 25 adults)**

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Jan 9	Formation
			Jan 16	Management
			Jan 23	Mission
			Jan 30	Pastoral

*May the Lord bless us and keep us! The Lord let His face shine upon us, and be gracious to us!
The Lord look upon us kindly and give us peace!*



COVENANT NEWS

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Volume 21 Issue 2

Bulletin Edition

January 9, 2015

NEWS

YOUTH SALUBUNGAN 2015

The BLD Youth Ministry celebrated its twentieth Salubungan on January 2, 2015, following the Healing Mass. Twenty candidates or lambs, of the upcoming Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #20 sat collectively on the left side of the church and patiently waited to meet their next best friends, their shepherds who sat on the right side pews.



Two members of the District Youth Council, Kristian Quevada (Evangelization) and Jules Almazar (Pastoral), did the introductions. The name of each lamb was called, followed by the name of his or her discerned shepherd(s), so that each lamb/shepherd combo could have a chance to stand up before the congregation and exchange greetings with each other across the aisle.

As the celebration continued, many smiles and laughs were exchanged, and many lambs' hearts were uplifted by meeting their new friends. After the announcement of the pairings, the shepherds recited their Shepherds' Pledge, by which they committed themselves to demonstrating a servant heart. The Praise Ministry then led them in singing the song, *Shepherd of My Soul*, which serves as a reminder that God is the ultimate shepherd.

Following separate briefings for the lambs and the shepherds, the first shepherding session began. This would be the first of many heartfelt sharings and talks, many smiles and tears, and many joys, all leading up to YLSS #20, which will take place at Divine Mercy Parish on March 6-8, 2015.

"Like a shepherd he feeds his flock, in His arm He gathers the lamb, carrying them in his bosom, leading the ewes with care." (Is 40:11)

COUNSELS

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

THEME: We are guided by the Star in our journey of faith when we strive to please God by showing no partiality and acting uprightly.

WORD: Is 42:1-4,6-7/ Ps 29:1-2,3-4,9-10
Acts 10:34-38/ Mk 1:7-11

ORDER: *"I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of justice....a light to the nations." (Isaiah 42:6)*

REFLECTION:

In our Gospel story, the baptism of Jesus is another good example of His desire to be totally identified with us. We see this to be the beginning of Jesus' public ministry - with an act of love and a sign of God's compassion.

When Jesus was baptized, the Father smiled upon Jesus as he came out of the water, saying: *"You*

are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mk 1:11b)



Likewise, God the Father is pleased when we are baptized and makes us part of His people - part of His family. Indeed in baptism we become the children of God, sons and daughters of the Most High.

We are made part of the church, made to be inheritors of the promises, participants in the covenant established by Jesus when He died on the Cross, was buried, and resurrected. Our baptism unites Christ with us and us with Him. Baptism makes us part of Him and it makes us part of His church, which is His Body. *Continued on page 4*

Promise of the Week

"Upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations." (Is 42:1b)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

You belong to God

“Every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus does not belong to God. This is the spirit of the antichrist that, as you heard, is to come, but in fact is already in the world. You belong to God, children, and you have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They belong to the world; accordingly, their teaching belongs to the world, and the world listens to them.

We belong to God, and anyone who knows God listens to us, while anyone who does not belong to God refuses to hear us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.” (1 Jn 4:3-6)

I was baptized in the Holy Spirit for the first time in 1985 and became an active community member for five years while in the Philippines. Before my renewal, I was a short-tempered person, and I believed that I did everything on my own strength. Through this community I learned to be patient and learned to trust God. My prayer life improved and my prayers were answered.

I moved in the U.S. in 1990. Away from home and my community, my faith was tested, and I failed. Despite my sinfulness I continued to pray, I had faith that our Lord God would hear my cry; and He did. *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, on your own intelligence do not rely.”* (Proverbs 3:5)

In 2007 I joined the BLD through the Solo Parents Encounter. That weekend I confessed all my sins. I felt a heavy load was lifted from my chest; and in the state of grace, I felt the Holy Spirit and I felt joy. Then finally, I was able to fully surrender to our Lord God. Since then, I attend the worship and teachings regularly; I read His word daily and reflect on it and share it with a few friends outside BLD. Sometimes I visit the tabernacle and commune with Him in silence, and I go to confession regularly.



Father God, I praise You, and I thank You for calling me once again, for bringing me and my daughter to the BLD community, our extended family. May Your Holy Spirit continue to guide us and strengthen our faith as we serve You. May others see Your light through us. I offer You, Father, our time, talent and treasure for Your greater glory. Amen

WHO IS GOD?

“We know that we belong to God, and the whole world is under the power of the evil one. We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. Children, be on your guard against idols.” (1 Jn 5:19-21)

At this moment, when everything is in chaos, who do we think God is? When our hearts are shattered and our minds are all over the place, who is God? In times of distress or when we are distracted by earthly pleasures, we somehow forget the one God who gives us the strength to overcome all these trials.

How can anyone know God? Are we left to speculation and wishful thinking? No, we know God because God has spoken so that we can hear, and He did this in Jesus. John reminds his readers that Jesus, God’s Son, came into the world to give us understanding and knowledge of the Triune God, who is the One who is true. We can have confidence that He gives us understanding, that He is a God who desires that we know Him. He doesn’t just *speaks* truth; he *is* truth. He is the light in which there is no darkness. To know Him is to know reality, the *really real*, and to begin to come out of the fog that surrounds us in this twisted, broken world. John has repeated the word “true” three times in this verse. He wants to assure us that **“He is the true God and eternal life.”** This is eternal life--to know and live in the One True God who made us, rescued us, and loves us fully. There is no other life, nothing else we were created for, other than to enjoy this eternal life in Him.

In verse 21, John encourages us to **“be on your guard against idols.”** An idol is anything we look to besides Christ to make us happy or give us our identity. We can make anything an idol: having our kids turn out right, keeping our friendships, having enough money, having a meaningful job that the world recognizes as successful, being well thought of, etc. Anytime we believe our lives or our identities depend on something other than God, we have taken hold of an idol.

So even if everything around us is wicked, we must not forget that there is only one true God that we all can rely on. Our trust is not in money or power or pleasure or any other idol, but in the God that guides us along the path into freedom and salvation.

LOVE, BE NOT AFRAID

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love.” (1 Jn 4:18)

Love, do we really know its meaning? To me, love is self-sacrifice, giving yourself for the benefit of others. That is what God showed us when He sacrificed His only-begotten son on the cross to set us free from our sinfulness.

Somehow, we all have experienced God’s love for us. In my case, He recently showed His love when our son was diagnosed with a brain tumor and needed very complicated surgery. This was one of the darkest moments in our life. Needless to say, we were all devastated. We feared for our son, a teenager. How he would handle it? We were scared of the whole situation, and fear consumed us to a great extent. Like for many, fear tested our faith.

This experience made me realize that God never tests our faith for He knows what’s in our hearts. It’s the devil who tests our faith. In the book of Job, it was the devil who challenged God and tested Job’s faith; but God was confident, because He knew what was in Job’s heart.

In our case, we were able to overcome our fears by believing in God’s love for us. We chose to lift up and surrender all our fears and worries to Him. We started to feel calm and confident, trusting that with His love, assurance and affirmation, everything would be fine. He sent us “angels” through the people (friends, family, and acquaintances), who prayed, supported and sent their love for our son and our family. The fear in us disappeared even when we were told after surgery of “permanent” nerve damages (hearing/ facial). God overruled all these as later tests showed there were *no* permanent damages. Praise the Lord!

It may take time for my son to fully recover, but we believe God already healed our son. There may still be a long and bumpy road ahead of us, but God tells us not to be afraid, *“I myself will go along to give you rest.”* (Ex 33:14) God never left us nor will He ever leave us. Have faith, trust in Him and surrender it all to Him. His perfect love for us drives out fear! All we need to do is believe.

To God be honor, glory and praise, Amen!

**Be Not Afraid*, Bob Dufford, SJ

COUNSELS *(from page 1)*

Our themes for the month speak of the Star guiding our journey of faith. This Star that lights our path, and guides our journey of faith, is the reason for this Season of Incarnation. He is Jesus Christ, not just a Star but the Superstar born in a manger. He is the same Star that the three wise men adored and paid homage to during the Feast of Epiphany. He is the most-awaited Messiah, the fulfillment of the prophecies, one of which, the prophet Isaiah is referring to in Isa 42:1b: *“Upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations,”* which is our promise for this week.



The irony of the Gospel story where Jesus, the Superstar, had submitted himself to be baptized, will serve as a perpetual reminder for all humanity of the attitude of Jesus, filled with total humility, as described by St Paul: *“Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, who, 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; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.”* (Phil 2:5-8)

As a community, our readings are reminding us to please God and encouraging us to follow Jesus, the Superstar, by being little “stars” and good stewards of God’s grace. As we follow Jesus, we have to be good witnesses; and our actions and good examples must be pleasing to God, showing no partiality and acting uprightly in all our dealings with our brothers and sisters (our theme). We must continue to learn more about Jesus through a disciplined prayer life and our study of the Scripture. We must continue to put into practice the teachings of the community to be agents of peace and unity, always forgiving and encouraging when we deal with one another. We must learn how to discern and include our Lord Jesus in our plans and decision making. We must always consider serving others without expecting any return, and in all humility.

As we celebrate the baptism of Jesus, which is the beginning of His public ministry, let us ask ourselves, do we have an attitude of a servant or a master? Do we choose and select people that we deal with? Do we have favorites? Do we support the programs of the Church, especially on social justice, no matter how unpopular they may be? Are we advocates of life from conception to death? *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS (from page 3)

As we start following our Star for 2015, let us be reminded that good servants must continue to learn more about their Master, including His visions, and His plans. And it is a pleasure for the servant to do his Master's will. As disciples of Christ, let this be an added New Year's resolution.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Support the right to life advocacy of the Church.
2. Support Church programs on social justice.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MEDICAL MISSION 2015

February 16-19, 2015,

Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Philippines

For details contact: Mel/Remy Hernandez:

chi1944@hotmail.com

"But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Let us carry the light of Christ, run to the darkness, seek out our deprived brethren and light our world!

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Contacts: ycs@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com



Confession

Every last Friday of the month
from 9:00 pm to 10:00 pm
St. Mary's Church (DMP)

MARCH FOR LIFE

What: Bus trip to Washington D.C.

When: January 22, 2015 - Thursday

Departure Place and Time: Divine Mercy Parish,
Rahway, NJ @ 6:30 am. Bus leaves on time.

Estimated Return time to Divine Mercy Parish: between
9:00 or 10:00 pm.

Capacity of Bus: 55 passengers

Cost: Free of Charge (prepare \$10.00 for tips &
other miscellaneous expenses)

Reservations: Strictly First-Come-First-Serve basis for
BLD members only (30 youth/singles & 25 adults)

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,561	\$2,561
Mission Collections	\$143	\$143
Christmas Envelope	\$1,159	\$1,159

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treasury@bldnewark.com

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Jan 17* > Siena Gift Inventory – LSS 1-43
> Christian Maturity Program 1, Part 1 – LSS 1-40
> Advanced to Intercession/
> Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS 1-39
- Jan 23 > Basics of Prayer – ME 44
> Intro to Commitment – ME 43, ME 42, SPE 15
> John 6 Teaching - John 6
- Jan 30 > Intercessory Immersion – ME 41
> Golden Years Teaching – GYM
- Feb 7* > Christian Parenting – ME 44
> Basic Bible Seminar – LSS 1-43
> Christian Maturity Program 1, Part 2 – LSS 1-40
- Feb 20 > LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE
> John 6 Teaching - John 6
- Feb 21* > Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-43
> Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40
> Singles Ministry CDFP – SE

Venue: * & ** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

*** Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Time: Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Jan 16	Management
			Jan 23	Mission
			Jan 30	Pastoral
			Feb 6	Evangelization



May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week!

"Writing a gratitude list leads to a sense of being cared for. When we list what we have to be grateful for, beginning with the things we take for granted, we get a sense of God's goodness operating in our lives."

St Anthony Messenger

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 3

Bulletin Edition

Jan. 16, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Pope Francis: Concern for the Poor Is Rooted in the Gospel, Not Communism

Discusses Ethics Within Social and Economic Systems in New Interview

Vatican City, January 12, 2015 (Zenit.org) [Junno Arocho Esteves](#)

In an interview with Vatican journalists Andrea Tornielli and Giacomo Galeazzi, Pope Francis said that concern for the poor is in the Gospel, and not an invention of communism.

Excerpts from the interview were released by the Italian newspaper, La Stampa, and is part of a new book titled “Papa Francesco - Questa Economia Uccide” (Pope Francis - This Economy Kills).

The book, which profiles the social teaching of the Church “under the direction of Pope Francis”, was released today in Italian.

Among the issues discussed by the Holy Father was the current state of capitalism and globalization. While saying that globalization has helped many out of poverty, the Pope noted that inequalities have arisen.

“When money, instead of man, is at the center of the system, when money becomes an idol, men and women are reduced to simple instruments of a social and economic system, which is characterized, better yet dominated, by profound inequalities,” he said....

Pope Francis also stressed the need for an ethical approach to the economy and politics. Various leaders and heads of State who have visited him, he said, have called for religious leaders to help give them “ethical indications.”

Recalling Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI’s encyclical Caritas in Veritate, the Pope said that the world is in need of “men and women with their arms raised in prayer to God” that “engender genuine development.”

“At the same time I am convinced that we need these men and women to commit themselves on every level, in society, politics, institutions and the economy, to work for the common good,” he said.

“We cannot wait any longer to deal with the structural causes of poverty, in order to heal our society from an illness that can only lead to new crises.”

Continued on page 4

God Calls

THEME: We are guided by the Star in our journey of faith when we follow and remain with Jesus.

WORD: **1 Sm 3:3B-10 / Ps 40:2,4,7-10,
1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20 / Jn 1:35-42**

ORDER: *Come and you will see.*

REFLECTION:

In the reading from the First Book of Samuel, we hear the Lord God calling Samuel. At that time, however, Samuel was not too enlightened about God. Being worldly, he believed that Eli was calling him; but each time it happened, Eli told Samuel that he had not called him. God had to call Samuel three times before Eli realized that it was the Lord God who was calling Samuel.

It is of utmost importance that we think spiritually at all times in our daily lives in order to have a meaningful relationship with God. If we allow ourselves to become too worldly, we risk not hearing God’s calling. But if we allow our hearts to remain in harmony with the grace of God, His Spirit will enlighten our intellect.

Samuel answered his calling from God. As he grew up, the Lord was with him. Samuel learned the word of God, either directly from God speaking to him, or from inspirations of the Holy Spirit, or from the teachings of Eli. Samuel valued those words! He kept them in his heart. He made a genuine effort to use them in his life, in thoughts, in words and in his actions. He answered God’s calling by persevering in living his faith. Just as Samuel grew in the knowledge and understanding of the Lord, we also are called to grow in knowledge and understanding, for it is through spiritual growth that we are sanctified in Christ.

From today’s reading of the Holy Gospel of John, we once more hear of God’s calling revealed to us in the story of the two disciples of John the Baptist who decided to follow Jesus.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“Whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him.” (1 Cor 6:17)

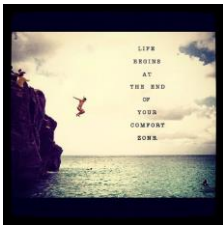
Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

OUR COMFORT ZONE

“Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.”

(Mark 1:38)

I used to believe that practicing one’s faith is a private matter. I always felt uncomfortable hearing faith openly discussed, let alone praying in public. While I adhered to the practice of going to mass every Sunday, it was only out of obligation as a Catholic. Talking about Jesus as Lord and Savior was too evangelical, even to the point of being hypocritical since we are all sinners anyway. Faith was between you and God, something personal.



When we joined this community, my wife and I were so surprised that it was Charismatic in nature. This was the last thing that I would want to do, to express my emotions publicly in worship and prayer. While we enjoyed the

fellowship of the monthly reunions, I always dreaded the sharing and the prayers. But God is awesome and faithful and never abandons us. He knew my fears and insecurities. The Lord touched me and turned my heart of stone into a heart of flesh. I began to soften up, and the walls that had been building up through the years started to crumble. The more aware I became of His mercy, the more I slowly opened up for His grace. My understanding of the mass gradually deepened, and Jesus was not an abstract figure anymore but a real person encountered in the Scriptures and the Eucharist. I came to understand that we are called to have a personal relationship with Christ, and that we have to proclaim the Gospel. I began to actively participate in community life as opposed to being a passive observer. It was through the grace of the Holy Spirit that I was emboldened to be a witness and share Christ to everyone.

Fr. Robert Barron, a theologian and evangelist, once described fear as the root of all sin. It is fear that causes you to reject God’s love and pushes you to put your trust in something other than Him. It is the fear of rejection, fear of being alone, fear of being ridiculed, fear of being materially poor that prevents us from loving and from growing spiritually. It is a false notion, implanted by the devil, that it is safer to be confined within our own comfort zone than to step out in faith. But we can go beyond our fears and insecurities, for God’s grace is sufficient. ***“I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me.”*** (Phil 4:13)

Be Made Clean



A leper comes to Jesus and kneeling down, says to him, ***“If you wish, you can make me clean.”*** (Mk 1:40b) In coming to Jesus, the leper has

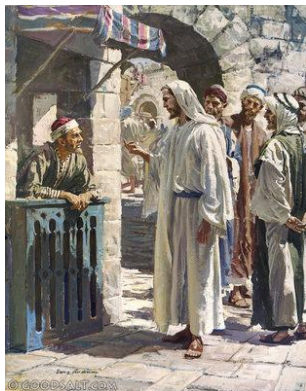
hope, knowing that Jesus has the power to heal. Moreover, his petition is sincere, coming from deep inside his heart. Humbly kneeling down, wanting to worship Jesus, is a sign of his faith in Him. The attitude of the leper affects Jesus deeply. ***“Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, “I do will it. Be made clean’.”*** (Mk 1:41) To anyone who prays like the leper, Jesus is always ready to answer his prayer.

Jesus’ encounter with the leper reveals how completely new his message is in comparison with the Old Testament and rabbinical traditions. Rabbinic rules forbade any approach to a leper. But Jesus permits the leper to approach, then does something unthinkable for a Jew: *He touches him!* Jesus, the healing Savior sent from God, indicates by His touch that He deliberately takes upon Himself the disease of men: *their sins.* ***“He took away our infirmities and bore our diseases.”*** (Mt 8:17b)

When God created the human race, He made them fully alive and healthy, to be fertile, multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28). But they sinned and because of that, the human race became diseased. Therefore, the merciful God sent His son Jesus Christ to restore men back to health. The Son of God aimed at healing not just their bodies, but their souls as well. His mission was not just to heal us but to save us. Being made clean means being made whole before God and reconciled with the community, as well as with ourselves. Being made whole before God means that whatever we do, we will do for His glory (1 Cor 10:31). When we are reconciled with our neighbors, we do not only forgive them but we also try to please them in any way we can (1 Cor 10:33). We should readily forgive ourselves as well, not brooding over our own wrongdoings. Then our emotions, which are strings in the human heart, are freed from stress, anxieties and fears. Human health therefore, comes as an indirect, but precious, consequence of reconciliation: our salvation.

This salvation, which brings with it bodily health, is God’s gift in Christ and is offered to all free of charge. Let us all therefore turn to Jesus, the all-sufficient physician of humanity, yearning for this free gift, which is health in the ultimate sense.

But The Sick Do



In Mark 2:7 it says, ***“Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.”*** Jesus said these words when some scribes and Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors. Obviously Jesus was talking about spiritual sickness. However, those who are physically sick also need a Divine physician.

A few years ago, on my way to work, I noticed that just walking from the parking lot to my workplace, a distance of about 200 feet, I was short of breath. I also experienced the same shortness of breath when climbing about 20 stair steps. It happened off and on, and so I did not pay much attention to it. A few weeks later, it became worse. I went to my primary physician who immediately recommended me to a cardiologist. After a series of tests, I asked the cardiologist if I would need surgery, and he said he didn't know yet, pending more tests. At that time, I already suspected I needed surgery since during my childhood I had rheumatic fever, which caused damage to my heart valve.

One day, praying before the start of mass, I asked the Blessed Mother, “Do I really need this surgery?” I meant the whole package: the surgery, rehab, follow up visits, diet restrictions, taking numerous medications, etc. I asked the Blessed Mother if I would have to go through all of these. After a brief moment, I heard the answer internally, “Yes, for the good of souls.” And so even before a confirmation by the cardiologist, I knew I would have surgery. The doctor eventually confirmed that surgery was necessary. When I was wheeled to the operating room, I just said, “to God be the glory,” not at all scared.

Now five years after surgery, I have taken thousands of pills, undergone numerous tests and blood work plus endoscopy three times, two ablations, one ER visit and a pacemaker implant. But all of these I accept because it's part of the package – Yes, for the good of souls.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

They provide a good example for us, for it is Jesus that we must follow in order to be saved. He is the Lamb of God, the perfect human sacrifice for the redemption of our sins. Jesus shows us the way, the truth and the life. From the Gospel reading, we also learn how Peter came to follow Jesus. His call came through Andrew, who served as God's instrument of grace. Throughout the Holy Bible and even in our own daily lives, we see how the grace of God works through His children to implement His Divine calling. You must answer your calling by living holy lives in harmony with the nature of your renewed human spirit that coexists within you with the indwelling Divine Presence of the Holy Spirit.

The theme of the readings this week is clear: We will be guided by the Star in our journey of faith when we answer the call of God, follow Him and remain in Him. *God calls us.* Those who listen with ears of faith will hear God calling all day long. He calls peoples of all walks of life: adults, children, sick people, people at work, holy people or even sinful people. God never stops calling. With each answered call, we grow in Spirit. Like the Child that grew from potential to actualization in Mary's womb, the call of the Spirit grows within us until it is manifested in the physical world. As the Spirit empowered that Child of God, the divine Spirit entreats all humans, as children of God to listen, to discern, to answer, to accept the strength of God's energy and to be empowered by God's loving embrace. Calling people is a vital part of God's work in the world. There are many different examples of call which show many possibilities. It may be a call to leadership, as in the case of being discerned as a Class Shepherd or ministry leader. Or it may be as simple as a call to be a disciple. Each of us has heard God's call in very specific yet different ways. All of us have heard the voice of God in some dramatic fashion. As I read the scriptures, I get the strong sense that God calls every person in at least two ways.

1. There is the call to salvation. For some it comes quietly over a period of time. For others it comes powerfully and dramatically.
2. There is the call to serve God, to minister in the name of Jesus in the church and in the world. Like the call to salvation, this call takes different shapes for each of us.

Does God call every Christian into ministry today? Yes! But we will experience His call in different ways and will manifest it according to the numerous and diverse spiritual gifts that God has given to each one of us.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Attend Mass and receive the Eucharist often.
2. Attend community formation program and teachings.

NEWS (from page 3)

He also highlighted the Church's tradition of concern for the poor, saying that it stems from the Gospel and the first centuries of Christianity. However, he said that today many misinterpret that same teaching.

"If I repeated some passages from the homilies of the Church Fathers, in the second or third century, about how we must treat the poor, some would accuse me of giving a Marxist homily," he lamented. Citing the teachings of St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom and Blessed Paul VI, the Pope said that the sharing of goods and care for the needy is rooted in the Gospel.

"As we can see, this concern for the poor is in the Gospel, it is within the tradition of the Church, it is not an invention of communism and it must not be turned into an ideology, as has sometimes happened before in the course of history," he said.

"The Church, when it invites us to overcome what I have called 'the globalization of indifference,' is free from any political interest and any ideology."

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MEDICAL MISSION 2015

February 16-19, 2015,
Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Philippines
For details contact: Mel/Remy Hernandez:
chi1944@hotmail.com

"But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Let us carry the light of Christ, run to the darkness, seek out our deprived brethren and light our world!

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ
Contacts: ycs@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

LSS #44 is now open for registration.

Contact persons: Lito and Gigi Vibar:
LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015
LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015



Confession

Every last Friday of the month
from 9:00 pm to 10:00 pm
St. Mary's Church (DMP)

LORD'S PROVISION
PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,207	\$5,768
Mission Collections	\$208	\$351

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

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TEACHING CALENDAR

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- Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40
- Singles Ministry CDFP – SE
- Venue: * & ** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
*** Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium
Time: Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

MARCH FOR LIFE

What: **Bus trip to Washington D.C.**
When: **January 22, 2015 - Thursday**
Departure Place and Time: **Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway, NJ @ 6:30 am. Bus leaves on time.**
Estimated Return time to Divine Mercy Parish: **between 9:00 or 10:00 pm.**
Capacity of Bus: **55 passengers**
Cost: **Free of Charge (prepare \$10.00 for tips & other miscellaneous expenses)**
Reservations: **Strictly First-Come-First-Serve basis for BLD members only (30 youth/singles & 25 adults)**

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Jan 23	Mission
		Jan 30	Pastoral
		Feb 6	Evangelization
		Feb 13	Formation

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 4

Bulletin Edition

January 23, 2015

NEWS

Pope Francis Concludes Apostolic Visit

Thousands Line Streets of Manila to Bid Farewell

Manila/011915/Zenit.org/Junno Arocho Esteves

Pope Francis concluded his apostolic visit to Sri Lanka and the Philippines this morning and is now headed towards Rome. Thousands of Filipinos lined the streets to say goodbye to the Holy Father as he made his way to Villamor Air Base in Manila.

Upon his arrival, the Pope was received by President Benigno Aquino III and spent several minutes in private conversation with him.

Shortly after, he made his way to the airplane accompanied by the President and greeted by some of the faithful, volunteers and authorities who helped organize his visit. His final farewell was to Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Archbishop of Manila, who embraced him.

The Philippine Airlines flight departed Manila at approximately 10:12 a.m. The 15 hour flight is expected to land in Rome's Ciampino Airport at 5:40 p.m., local time.

Shortly after the Pope's departure, Cardinal Tagle along with Bishop Mylo Vergara, head of the Communications Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines expressed their joy at the success of the papal visit.

According to Vatican Radio, Cardinal Tagle expressed his "thanksgiving and gratitude to God", especially for those who helped organize and provide security at the event.

Pope Francis' visit to the Philippines was one of the biggest security operations with an estimated 40,000 police and military personnel deployed in Manila and Tacloban.

"One of the presidential guards," Cardinal Tagle recalled, "approached me in tears, and he said: 'Thank you for mentioning us in the Luneta (Rizal Park)."

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

FOLLOWING JESUS -THE RIGHT WAY-

THEME: We are guided by the Star in our journey of faith when we denounce our worldly attachments and follow Jesus.

**WORD: Jon 3:1-5,10 / Ps 25:4-5,6-7,8-9
1 Cor 7:29-31 / Mk 1:14-20**

ORDER: 1. Repent and believe in the Gospel.
2. Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.

REFLECTION:

The theme for all BLD communities for the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary time focuses us on the way we, as disciples of Christ, should detach ourselves from the things of the world that separate us or distract us from our mission and calling. We are bombarded at every turn by messages urging us to conform to the norms and values of today's world, making it difficult to live our faith. It behooves us to look deeper into our hearts for our purpose and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be able to withstand the continual attack that we encounter everyday aimed at preventing us from reaching our eternal goal.

In the second reading, St. Paul seems to suggest some radical changes to the fundamental things we do on a daily basis: our relationship with our spouse, how we conduct our business, even how we should handle our emotions as though they are not important. I believe that he is not telling us that we should withdraw or neglect our responsibilities in life, but that we should set our priorities so that we do not lose sight of our eternal destiny and how we will account for the way we have lived when we stand before God. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"... he shows the sinners the way. He guides the humble to justice, He teaches the humble his way."

(Ps 25: 8b-9)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

FIGHTING LIES WITH TRUTH

St. Peter warns us to be on our guard because our enemy, the Devil, is prowling around looking for someone to devour. Like any prowler, he looks for an open door or window through which to enter. We unwittingly provide exactly that when we sin. We men have to be especially careful not to be tricked by his lies about pornography.

The enemy will say, "You can look, it's not hurting anyone. Besides, isn't all beauty from God? Aren't you really only admiring God's handiwork? Didn't God make beauty to be admired? It's not a sin. It's OK to look."

This sounds like truth because it contains elements of truth. The problem is: they are interwoven with big fat lies, falsehoods custom designed to give the enemy a way in, an open door. The more we give in, the more the enemy gains a foothold and a sort of *legal right* to oppress us. And not only us, but those around us! Left unchecked, this can block the action of God's grace and love in our lives resulting in the deterioration of the relationship between husband and wife which ultimately leads to the decay and destruction of the family.

Like a general planning an invasion, the enemy spreads misinformation so we will not be alert. We must recognize that he works subtly and individually to numb our consciences. He tells us half-truths that we accept and begin to tell ourselves. He does this to gain a beachhead from which to stage an invasion. Clearly, it is much better to prevent an invasion force from ever landing than to have to fight it back after it has established a stronghold.

What lies or half-truths of the enemy have we accepted? What areas of our conscience have we permitted to be numbed? Have we repented? When the issue is porn or other sins against chastity (artificial birth control, for example), has our repentance led to change, to accountability to a brother or sister in the Lord? If so, it's a good sign that our repentance is sincere. If not, we should prayerfully seek the Lord's guidance on where He wants to heal our consciences and whether He wants us to find an accountability partner.

Here is a website that is very helpful in combating the enemy's lies regarding porn: <http://www.porn-free.org>. Click the link to *Lies of Porn* for a list showing the enemy's lies in one column and the truth destroying each lie in another. As good soldiers in God's army, let us arm ourselves the truth in order to obliterate the lies which assault us and our families.

JESUS, OUR HIGH PRIEST

"Therefore, he is always able to save those who approach God through him, since he lives forever to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25)

"The LORD has sworn and will not waver: 'You are a priest forever in the manner of Melchizedek'" (Ps 110:4). St. Paul, in his letter to the



Hebrews, lifted this verse from the Old Testament because it is the foundation of Christ's role as our permanent and unchangeable high priest. He remains a priest forever. God's oath establishes Christ's role as His representative here on earth. Through Jesus Christ our relationship with God is made clear, and there is nothing

temporary about it. Christ is our mediator through whom we place our petitions before God. And He will surely listen.

Jesus knows what we need. He was fully human. We can be confident that He will intercede for us. Our salvation through Him is also assured as He was designated High Priest by God Himself. As Jesus has said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life."* (Jn 14:6)

Watching the recent events happening in the Philippines, we all saw how the pope was warmly received by the Filipino people. And when individuals were able to speak to the pope, they all made requests for prayer (just as the pope often asks for the same). This is the same as when we ask a priest or religious to intercede for us. We feel that they are closer to God and that somehow our pleas have a better chance to be heard and answered if they come through them. St. Paul's message to the Hebrews serves as a reminder that Christ "lives forever to make intercession" for us. What better way is there than to ask Jesus directly?

Therefore, let us all put our trust and faith in Him. Jesus loves us. There is no question on that. There is also no doubt that He will do what is good for us. For we are all God's children sharing the promise of heaven and life with Him.

JANUARY 22

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of the Unborn

A few years ago, the U.S. Catholic Bishops proclaimed January 22 as an annual “Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of the Unborn.” The selection of this day was made to coincide with the date, back in 1973, that the U.S. Supreme Court made its decision in the case of *Roe v Wade* that legalized abortion in this country.

The Bishops ask all who support life, especially Catholics, to offer up prayers, penances and sacrifices in atonement for what our country still currently



allows to happen—the killing of innocent babies. Additionally, a special Mass may be celebrated—the Mass for Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life,” which is now included in the recently translated Missal.

Although something may be legal, that does not necessarily make it right. History provides many instances when human injustice flourished, enforced by what was then law. Slavery, which was one of them, even led directly to a civil war in which over six hundred thousand American lives were lost. Nowhere will you find that something which is *legal* is more *wrong* than in the case of abortion! Since 1973, it is estimated that fifty six million (56,000,000) babies have been sacrificed at the altar some people call “choice.” The Supreme Court made abortion *legal*. Nothing can make abortion *right*! Who knows how many more will suffer the same fate, not even given a chance to exist.

History, though, has also shown that eventually, man has the capacity to correct the wrongs of the past. Pray that the day comes soon when we as a society choose God’s side, and let LIFE and LOVE prevail...always.



COUNSELS (from page 1)

In the first reading the people of Nineveh turned away from their evil ways after hearing the message of the prophet Jonah, and the Lord did not destroy their city. We, as disciples of Christ, must accept the fact that we are far from perfect; and we must exercise continuous repentance for our transgressions. The bible says that a righteous man sins seven times a day (Prv 24:16). We should regularly ask for absolution and forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The second order was taken from the call Jesus made to the Peter, Andrew, James and John. They were fishermen living within the confined area of the Sea of Galilee. The tools of their trade were their boats and their nets. The fruit of their trade was the fish that they caught and the money they received for selling the fish. They had every reason to believe that this would always be their way of life, until the day Jesus called them to follow Him. They left their boats, nets and family to become disciples of the Master.

The call that Jesus addressed to those two sets of brothers, “Follow me,” is addressed to each one of us. In our case that call may not mean leaving our jobs, if we are fortunate enough to have one, or much less, leaving our families. Yet the call of Jesus to follow Him will always involve giving up something. Just like the first disciples, we too must give up our old ways, leaving behind our old life of darkness and sin. When we let go, the Lord fills the void by opening up new horizons, a new way and a new beginning. His call comes with new challenges and trials in your journey, but He will equip you for the work that you are doing for His kingdom.

Like the first disciples, who were confined to the borders of the Sea of Galilee, our world was limited to family and work. But when we encountered Jesus over 20 years ago here in BLD, our eyes were opened to the need for evangelization and the vastness of the harvest. We were blessed to be able to help spread His kingdom in the establishment of different BLD communities around the United States. We were graced to work with other parishes and nationalities in forming their own faith groups. We never envisioned that we would get involved as laborers in His vineyard, but now we know that it is all part of His divine plan.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation frequently.
2. Live the Gospel in your life.
3. Support evangelization efforts of the community and the Church.

NEWS (from page 1)

When we heard you thanking the military, the police and the people behind the security, we felt that all the tiredness was lifted.”

When asked if the Pope said any final words to him before leaving, Cardinal Tagle said laughingly: “He said: ‘See you in Rome in February!’”

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MEDICAL MISSION 2015

February 16-19, 2015,

Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Philippines

For details contact: Mel/Remy Hernandez:
chi1944@hotmail.com

“But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Let us carry the light of Christ, run to the darkness, seek out our deprived brethren and light our world!

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Contacts: ycs@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

LSS #44 is now open for registration.

Contact persons: Lito and Gigi Vibar:

LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015

LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015

COVENANTED DISCIPLES ASSEMBLY

Date: Saturday, January 24th

Time: 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish Connell Hall, Rahway NJ

Contacts: dcs@bldnewark.com

Main Agenda: 2015 Emergence



Confession

Every last Friday of the month
from 9:00 pm to 10:00 pm
St. Mary's Church (DMP)

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,946	\$8,714
Mission Collections	\$174	\$525

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Jan 23** - Basics of Prayer – **ME 44**
- Intro to Commitment – **ME 43, ME 42, SPE 15**
- John 6 Teaching - **John 6**
- Jan 30** - Intercessory Immersion – **ME 41**
- Golden Years Teaching – **GYM**
- Feb 7*** - Christian Parenting – **ME 44**
- Basic Bible Seminar – **LSS 1-43**
- Christian Maturity Program 1, Part 2 – **LSS 1-40**
- Feb 20** - LSS Orientation – **ME 44, SPE 17, SE**
- John 6 Teaching - **John 6**
- Feb 21*** - Encounter with Jesus – **LSS 1-43**
- Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – **LSS 1-40**
- Singles Ministry CDFP – **SE**
- Venue:** * & ** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
*** Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium
- Time:** Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

PROJECT I DO



Open to all couples who are not married in the Church (Sacrament of Matrimony).

Date: April 22, 2015

Time: 6:30 pm.

Place: **St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ**


Requirements:

- Baptismal certificates
- Confirmation certificates
- License to marry certificate (from City Hall)
- License to re-marry – for civilly married couples (obtained within 30 days before the wedding date.)
- Divorce papers certificate (if previously married (Civil wedding))
- 2 meetings with Fr. Robert.

For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza

(908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432)

Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Jan 30	Pastoral
			Feb 6	Evangelization
			Feb 13	Formation
Feb 20	Pastoral			

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 5

Bulletin Edition

January 30, 2015

NEWS

BLD marches for life

On January 22, community members joined hundreds of thousands of pro-life advocates for the 2015 March For Life in Washington, D.C.. Every year, protestors seek the overturn of the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. The decision removed many of the restrictions on abortion throughout the country. This year's event marked the 42nd anniversary of the case.



Representatives from the married couples, youth, singles, and solo parents ministries boarded a bus around 6:30 in the morning to make the long, 4 hour drive down to the nation's capital. Over 30 members of the community participated to promote respect for life and an end to abortion.



There was a rally at the National Mall, followed by the March itself, which began at approximately 1:00pm.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

CHRIST-LIKE AUTHORITY

THEME: As disciples of Christ we speak with God's authority when our minds and hearts are soaked in His word and in His teaching.

WORD: **DT 18:15-20 / PS 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9**

1 COR 7:32-35/ MK 1:21-28

ORDER: 1. **"Harden not your heart"** (Ps 95:8a)
2. **Adhere to the Lord without distraction.** (1 Cor 7:35)

REFLECTION:

"...On the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes." (Mk 1: 21b-22)

In this Sunday's gospel, Jesus is described as speaking with authority that amazes those who hear him. It is an authority that was so different from what the synagogue was used to hearing from their usual religious leaders: the scribes who interpreted the law of God for the people of God, and the teachers who taught the Israelites how they should live and what they should believe. Both scribes and teachers spoke with authority too. Both were inspiring, but somehow the reality of the word they taught was not part of them in the way it was with Jesus.

There are different types of authority. There is one that is derived from the office that a person holds. Another can be described as arrogant, domineering and life-threatening. Another type can be described as a political authority. When someone delivers a good lecture on a subject that they are an expert in, we could say they are an authority on that topic.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him."

(Dt 18:8)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

BLASPHEMING THE HOLY SPIRIT

“But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin.” (Mk 3:29)

What a chilling caution by Jesus towards the accusing Scribes and listeners then, and equally unmitigated for us now.

In Mark’s narrative, the scene unfolds immediately after Jesus appointed the twelve. The Scribes of Jerusalem appear and lay serious charges against Jesus, who was rapidly gaining attention. To put this in perspective, the Jerusalem Scribes were experts in the Mosaic Law; their authority was of greater weight in comparison to the Galilean Pharisees. Without delay the Scribes brought two charges against Him: ***“He is possessed by Beelzebul,”*** and ***“By the prince of demons he drives out demons.”*** (Mk 3:22)

Jesus refutes their logical absurdity and internal contradiction by way of a parable. He goes on to say that Satan (Beelzebul) cannot cast out Satan; and if he is divided, he cannot stand. I bet the Scribes were dumbfounded with His response.

So why is this type of blasphemy so grievous when we know that God’s love is abundant? Let us turn to the Magisterial teachings to concretize this verse. “There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins, and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit.” CCC 1864. Saint Pope John Paul II in his encyclical on the Holy Spirit states, it “does not properly consist in offending against the Holy Spirit in words; it consists rather in the refusal to accept the salvation which God offers to man through the Holy Spirit, working through the power of the Cross.” Hence the evangelion reverberates for us to repent and believe.

To blaspheme the Holy Spirit is to harden one’s heart so that it becomes tightly shut wherein the grace of God cannot enter. It is one’s *willful defiance* to recognize the saving power of God offered through Jesus and the inner workings of the Holy Spirit. God’s love is not coercive. One of His greatest gifts, but equally perilous, is freewill. Love would not be love if we were not free to choose. Freewill is a natural consequence of God’s love, and so is hell, precisely because we can use our arbitrary freedom to choose other than God. Let us keep in mind that hell is not a product of God’s anger or punishment, but it is corollary to man’s impenitence and persistent rejection of God.

I should like to close with St. Augustine’s book, *City of God*. Two cities exist, the city of man and the city of God. Which city do you belong to? You choose. In the end, God will say, “thy will be done.”

UNITED WE STAND

“If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.” (Mk 3:24)



As a back draft on this verse, Jesus was approached by a man with a withered hand for healing. It so happened that it was a Sabbath. Jesus without any hesitation restored his hand to wellness. The Pharisees abhorred such an act as a violation of the sacredness of Sabbath. They were very restrictive in their interpretation of activities that could be done on a Sabbath, which included even the curing of the sick. This act of Jesus that violated the laws of Sabbath gave them an opportunity to plot His death.

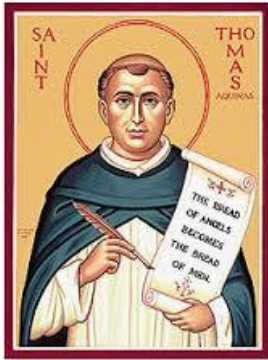
In succeeding verses, Mark records the miracles of Jesus, driving out unclean spirits from people. This strengthened the Pharisees’ resolve that Jesus’ authority to drive away demons must have come from Beelzebul, the prince of demons. Jesus’ response in the Gospel account is straightforward: ***“How can Satan drives out Satan If a Kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.”*** (Mk 3:23b-24)

Jesus, in his wisdom, relied heavily on pure logic that there is no way that His power and authority could have come from Satan, but only from God, the source of all goodness.

Mark 2:27 records that Jesus also said, ***“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”*** The Sabbath day is a day of joy and happiness. On the Sabbath, people should praise and adore God. Performing acts of love and mercy, kindness and compassion to others in the name of the Lord gives glory to God. Sabbath is a holy day, mandated by God when He rested on the seventh day and made it holy (Gn 2:2–3). Observation and remembrance of Sabbath must express the love and goodness of the Lord to His people. It should never be used to defeat or deny people of His love as the Pharisees’ tried to do when they accused Jesus of evil intent and of violating the Sabbath.

Man cannot go against himself; a family splintered by feud or quarrels is doomed to fall apart. Our bodies, like temples, are sacred sites where God dwells. Other people should be able to come to us and draw the goodness of God’s love from us, as our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1Cor 6:19)

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS



In the city of Roccasecca, at the very bottom of Italy, there was a great kingdom, which was ruled by Landulf of Aquino. He was the father of eight children, with Thomas being the youngest son born in the year 1225. Thomas was sent to the Benedictine Abbey of Monte Cassino at the age of five with expectations to pursue abbacy while his older brothers sought to join military services. Thomas was a very quiet student; nothing like his brothers at all; but the Lord granted him great learning skills and the knowledge to achieve excellence in his education. He was transferred to the University in Naples at the age of 11 and studied there for about seven years.

Around the age of 19, he became drawn to the vocation of being a Friar and joined the Dominicans. However, it inevitably led to problems, since his family was completely convinced that he should become abbot of their local monastery. Out of disapproval and enraged with Thomas' decision, they kidnapped and brought him back home to Monte San Giovanni to be held there until he would break. In the family's endeavors to persuade him to reconsider, they practically starved him, even brought prostitutes to his damp and eerie cellar to tempt him and to taint him. Thomas was put to the test. Regardless of what they did, not even man's biggest weakness would sway him. He remained a prisoner for around two years at most, and he used that time to memorize most of the Bible and eventually escaped with his Dominican brothers. Eventually, God rewarded him for his celibacy and faithfulness.

He left home to study under a scholar who is now known as St. Albert Magnus the Great in Cologne where Thomas became known for his nickname, "The Dumb Ox of Sicily." This was due to his introverted character, but he was still a very intelligent student nonetheless. Thomas was even assigned to teach while he was there. Between the study of faith and reasoning he believed that the intelligence of both derive from God and can be combined, that philosophy could bring understanding to theology. His education only lasted around four years, and then he followed Father Albert to Paris where he studied, preached, and earned his doctorate. He died of illness at the monastery of Fossa Nuova in 1274 and was canonized as St. Thomas, the Christian Apostle and was deemed worthy of the title of Doctor Angelicus.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Additionally, there is what we can call a personal authority that speaks powerfully of the inner integrity, vision and values of the person speaking.

Then there is the spiritual authority, one that is gentle, inviting and life-giving, the type of authority that Jesus exercised when He first spoke in the synagogue.

In the gospel passage for this Sunday, Mark tells us that Jesus taught them with authority, an authority to share wisdom, a life enhancing authority that brought wholeness to the man possessed by an unclean spirit, an authority that forgives sins, an authority that comes with a tremendous responsibility. The Jews of Capernaum were astonished at His teachings and they were amazed at His power over the evil spirits that obeyed His command to depart from those that they had afflicted and called Jesus "***the Holy One of God.***"

Jesus also shared this authority with His apostles: Mark says, "***He summoned the Twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits.***" (Mk 6:7)

Despite Jesus' generous sharing of his spiritual authority with His apostles, they began to fight among themselves for political authority. They began to quarrel among themselves about who is the greatest. "***You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant.***" (Mk 10:42-43) Whatever authority is to be exercised by the disciples, it should be like that of their Master, and must be rendered as service to others, rather than for personal glorification.

Similar to the apostles, there are occasions where we too are tempted to use authority, even spiritual authority, for our own benefit, to boost up our own egos and to lord it over others.

Sometimes, our spiritual gifts are used as a symbol of pride and dominance. We need to humbly accept that the more we are empty and insecure within, the more we are tempted to abuse authority, even in the name of God. It is not uncommon to see unfriendly competition among members or leaders of various ministries in any community.

We can likewise speak with authority to the extent we stay connected to Christ who is THE authority. We cannot hope to speak or act with any kind of effectiveness, conviction or success unless we speak God's words, values and vision. We are granted authority by God to speak in His name. We are called by Jesus to go out to preach, to heal, to care for others and to show them God's love. We have to use this power and authority in accordance with the will of God. Jesus gives to us tremendous power and authority and with it, responsibility.

And for those who might have leadership roles in the church, the temptation to misuse authority is even more, we sometimes fail to exercise this authority - ***Continued on page 4***

COUNSELS (from page 1)

the power to speak for God, to help and to heal our brothers and sisters. Others end up using them for their own benefit or for the benefit of their worldly masters.

If we are to exercise our responsibility authoritatively, we have to work and trust our own experience that is filled with God no matter what our state of life is. We have to truly embrace the gift of the spirit that Jesus has given to us and make it happen.

Our BLD community is undergoing a period of emergence. Jesus will give our community one voice and will make clear the servants who will be given authority to lead us in continuing God's works of evangelization and mission. Let us all be open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

And as we marvel at the authority of Jesus, let us ask for the grace that our own authority not be founded on the books we read, our degrees or education or categorized position, but on our continued experience of God. As His children we have a spiritual authority rooted in God, not like a large imposing tree that suppresses all other shrubs under its shadow, not allowing any form of life around it. It should be an elegant, slender tree that welcomes different forms of life to flourish around it, one that is gentle, life giving and full of compassion.

Jesus' authority is that elegant slender tree.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Show compassion, be forgiving.
2. Surrender your worries and anxieties to the Lord. Focus on serving Him.

NEWS (from page 1)

Though the ground was muddy, it was a blessedly clear and warm day, unlike in previous years. From the National Mall, BLD members marched with their pro-life brethren on Constitution Ave, singing praise songs and holding up pro-life signs. The annual pro-choice counter-protest was also there, but they could not deter the marchers. Chants upholding life and decrying Roe v. Wade echoed up and down the street, as different groups, united in the pro-life movement, took up the calls.



In front of the Supreme Court building, a small stage was set up so marchers could share how abortion affected their lives and their loved ones. Officially, the 2015 March For Life ended there, roughly a mile and a half from the National Mall. However, though the crowd dispersed, the March simply continued in their lives as it did on the BLD bus, in constant prayers for an end to abortion.

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,073	\$11,787
Mission Collections	\$3,130	\$3,655

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Jan 30 ~	Intercessory Immersion – ME 41 Golden Years Teaching – GYM
Feb 7*	Christian Parenting – ME 44 Basic Bible Seminar – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program 1, Part 2 – LSS 1-40
Feb 20	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE John 6 Teaching - John 6
Feb 21*	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40 Singles Ministry CDFP – SE
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MEDICAL MISSION 2015

February 16-19, 2015,

Koronadal City, South Cotabato, Philippines

For details contact: Mel/Remy Hernandez:

chi1944@hotmail.com

"But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Contacts: yca@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

LSS #44 is now open for registration.

Contact persons: Lito and Gigi Vibar:

LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015

LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Feb 6	Evangelization
		Feb 13	Formation
		Feb 20	Management
		Feb 27	Mission



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 6

Bulletin Edition

February 6, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Pope's Morning Homily: Obeying God's Will is the Path to Holiness

Reflects on the Grace of Accepting the Will of the Father During Morning Mass

Rome/012715/Zenit.org/Junno Arocho Esteves

Obedience to the will of God is the path of holiness. This was the main theme of Pope Francis' homily during his daily morning Mass at Casa Santa Marta.

Today's first reading from the Letter to the Hebrews explained that the sacrifices of old were not enough "for it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sins." According to [Vatican Radio](#), the Holy Father said that Christ's death on the Cross showed that the sacrifice that pleases God is not of an animal but the offering of "one's own will to do the will of the Father."

The Pope also reflected on today's responsorial psalm, which stated: "Here I am Lord; I come to do your will."

"This is the path of holiness, of the Christian," he said. "That the plan of God may be done, that the salvation of God may be done."

"The opposite of this began in Paradise with Adam's disobedience. And that disobedience brought evil to the whole of humanity. Our sins are also acts of disobedience to God, of not doing his will. Instead, the Lord teaches us that this is the path, there is no other."

The Holy Father said that while this path began in Heaven, with Jesus' 'yes' in obeying the will of the Father, on earth it began with the Blessed Virgin Mary's 'yes' in accepting God's will to bring the Savior into the world.

Continued on page 4

POWER & AUTHORITY

THEME: As disciples of Christ we speak with God's authority when prayer is our way of life.

WORD: Jb 7:1-4,6-7; Ps 147:1-2,3-4,5-6
1Cor 9:16-19,22-23; Mk 1:29-39

ORDER: "Go on to the nearby villages and preach there also." (Mark 1:38)

REFLECTION:

The 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time marks the beginning of the fulfilment of God's will in the life of Jesus Christ. It was the launching of a salvation drive that would give substance to the reason why Jesus was sent down from heaven. There are also two facts that are encapsulated in Mark's Gospel. Firstly, Jesus needs no authority to back up his teaching for He is the authority Himself. Secondly, Jesus shows He has power and authority even against unclean spirits.

If people were amazed at His teaching, they were awestruck when He commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man in the synagogue (v.25). Mark probably included this event to establish the credentials of Jesus as "the Holy One of God" (v.24) by showing that even the spiritual underworld recognized Him as the Son of God. And this event became the talk of the town throughout Galilee (v.28). Jesus did not only speak with authority in introducing a new doctrine of faith, but He acted with authority when He cast out the demon from a man.

The question now is: what is in it for us? For one, the authority of Jesus is still very much alive today.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." (Ps 147:3)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

HEALING OUR AFFLICTIONS

“Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.” (Mk 5:34b)



How many years do we struggle with affliction before we find that the cure was in faith all along? My sisters and brothers, we are blessed because Jesus saves us and heals us. If only we would press in, seek Him, touch Him and allow the exchange of faith for pain to take place. In this scripture verse, we see a woman who has struggled with the issue of hemorrhage for 12 years. She was an outcast and rejected by society because of her condition. Searching for help from doctors only made her situation worse. Propelled by faith, though sick and weak, she was determined. She pressed into the crowd to find healing from Jesus. Desperately, she managed to touch the edge of His garment, and her healing was instantaneous. The miracle of faith had occurred! Just as this happened, Jesus turned and asked who touched His garment. She approached Him trembling, and in fear fell down before Him. Her testimony of faith, mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus was witnessed by the crowd. Jesus said to her, *“Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction”* (Mk 5:34b).

Imagine this scene. Now imagine yourself doing this in utter desperation, as if your life depended on it. Would you do the same? Are you exercising your faith with action?

We are a broken people full of affliction with pain inflicted on us intentionally or unintentionally. I held on to my personal issues (afflictions) for years and sought help from many different human resources. No human being could help me at all. I became anxious about my situation; I felt alone. It was not a good place to be. It wasn't until I hit rock bottom and became desperate, that I wholeheartedly sought the Lord, my Deliverer, my Jesus. Only then was I ready to surrender those *afflictions* in faith. It was not instantaneous, but life-changing healing had nonetheless occurred. My experiences at BLD have allowed me to be give testimony to my faith in action. There are new miracles daily. I promised myself not to go back, but to press into Jesus and to “Go in peace and be cured of my [your] affliction” just as Jesus said. Amen.

FAITH HEALS

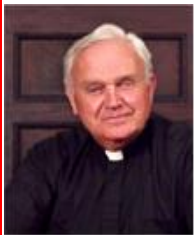
“There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, 'If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured.' Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.” (Mk 5:25-29)

On January 30, my husband went for carotid surgery. What would have been a routine two-hour procedure ended up with complications, and I almost lost him. He woke up after surgery, but he became unconscious and unresponsive when his breathing tube was removed. Measures were immediately implemented to prevent the occurrence of a stroke. He was brought back to the OR for a second round of surgery.

I felt total anguish and helplessness about the unknowns of a life-changing event. The need to absolutely surrender everything to the Almighty Father was the only choice for me. Loving thoughts of my husband playing the piano with my grandson kept replaying. I cried my heart out and asked, “Lord, will You ever allow me to see them play the piano again?” About 30 friends and family poured into the hospital's waiting area while a prayer chain was quickly activated through social media, phone calls and text messages. Soon hundreds of people were interceding and praying for him.

After further tests and another 4 hours of unconsciousness, he finally woke up. The medical team could not figure out what went wrong. They all admitted that my husband gave them the biggest scare of their careers. My nephew, who is an OR nurse, later testified that he saw my husband's body lying on the operating table. He had a glazed look in his eyes and appeared like he didn't have a soul.

My husband later admitted that he had a near-death experience. During the time when he was unconscious, he felt his body float up to the ceiling. Then the room became empty and very bright. He was enveloped in warmth and felt a lot of love and an overwhelming sense of peace. He said it was a very beautiful feeling but was short-lived. He then heard the doctors wake him up. Other physicians who later visited him shook their heads in puzzlement. I could only attest and witness to the miracle that FAITH HEALS. Just like the bleeding woman, I reached out to the Lord with faith in my heart through everyone's intercessions for my husband to be healed and be brought back to us. I give thanks to the Lord for giving my husband the gift of a second chance at life.



FR. PAUL SPEAKS



As we approach the challenging time of Lent, (Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18) we who are serious about the spiritual life, enter this period of the Church year with a determination to make these weeks spiritually productive. If we take the liturgical seasons of the Church year as a personal challenge, we will profit in some way through our determination to use the time well. Most of us want to use the time productively, and will often line up a number of programs to begin, such as more prayer, Mass attendance, “giving something up” etc. This is all well and good, but the end result of Lent is not primarily self-mastery, as productive as this may be. The goal of Lent is in some way to experience the death and resurrection of Jesus in my own life. This goal is closely connected with the renewal of our Baptism which is sacramental dying and rising with Jesus.

One of the problems of *accomplishing* something during Lent could be a sense that *I* have done something for God. Then instead of growth we have only deepened our pride. Instead of *decreasing* as John the Baptist did, we have only *increased* in our own estimation. Then our Lenten resolutions result in the exact opposite of what should be happening in us.

It would be better to *fail*, in the sense of recognizing our inabilities rather than *succeed* in the sense of inflating our egos. This powerlessness reveals our basic need for God. We are absolutely dependent upon Him for everything, the planning as well as the execution of our good intentions. I would like to quote from Fr. Thomas Keating in *Reflections on the Unknowable*: “When we feel that we are suspended on top of nothing and not grounded anywhere, when we’re confused, have no place to go, and feel that God is far away, that we are separated from God, or even that we are alienated from God, we have been given the dispositions that arise in the dark nights through God’s immense love.” Powerlessness is the greatest power there is because it enables one to simply be more and more a channel of God’s power and love.

If the season of Lent and the programs we line up result in a humbler submission to the action of God’s grace, if we recognize better only God’s strength to accomplish even our smallest good intentions, then we may have come ever so slightly into a deeper relationship with the all-powerful God. With St. Paul we can say “*when I am weak, then I am strong*” (2Cor 12:10b).

COUNSELS (from page 1)

This flows from the time when Christ created His Church to be the vehicle of His continuing mission in the world. He promised to remain present in His Church for all time (Mt 28:20), lovingly guiding it through the presence of the Holy Spirit. To ensure the success of this mission, Christ gave the Church today the ability to teach, govern and sanctify with Christ’s own authority. The Apostles appointed successors to ensure that the Gospel would continue to be handed on faithfully as “the lasting source of all life for the Church” (Lumen Gentium 20, CCC860).

This authority gave the Church the ability to teach without error about the essentials of salvation: “*Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.*” (Mt 16:18). The scope of this authority covers the official teachings of the Church on matters of faith, morals, and worship (Liturgy and Sacraments). It is on the basis of His continuing presence that the Church cannot lead people astray with her official teachings despite what may seem to be the individual errors in judgment that have caused scandals within the Church.

Hence we, the pilgrim Church, must draw on the gift of faith and the free assent of our will to the whole truth revealed by God and nourished by His Word. We can assume our rightful place in His Kingdom since “*he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him*” (Eph 1:4).

As time is relatively short and we are all living on borrowed time, we must maximize our time spent so that we may all grow as disciples of Christ. Out of His love, our Lord gave us His Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds that we may grow in His truth and in the knowledge of His great love for each of us. This we can do by heeding His word for us to love God above all else and our neighbors as well. However, it is easier said than done, because we cannot possibly go as we are commanded to do without the most important component of mission: the transformation of the inner man. And this can only happen if we will turn our lives around and place our lives in the hands of Jesus. This means that we must not “harden our hearts” and cross over from trusting ourselves to trusting Jesus Christ.

DIRECTION:

- Preach the gospel through your witnessing.

NEWS (from page 3)

However, the Jesuit Pope noted, accepting God's will "isn't easy". He recalled Jesus temptation in the desert as well as in the Mount of Olives, where Christ accepted the torments that awaited him. Saying that "many options are presented to us on a tray", the Holy Father said that in order to discover what the will of God is, one must ask for the grace.

Posing a question to the faithful present, the Pope asked whether one prays for the desire to do God's will or look for a compromise.

Pope Francis concluded his homily by highlighting three essential prayers: to pray to know God's will, to pray for the desire to do His will, and once known, to pray for the strength to do his will.

"May the Lord give us the grace, to all of us, that one day we may say that which He said to that group, that crowd that followed him, those who were sitting around him, as we heard in the Gospel: 'This is my mother and my brothers,'" he said. "Those who do the will of God are my brother, my sister and mother.' Doing the will of God makes us a part of Jesus' family, it makes us a mother, father, sister, brother."

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**MEDICAL MISSION 2015
IS CANCELLED!**

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR
March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ
Contacts: ycs@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

LSS #44 is now open for registration.

Contact persons: Lito and Gigi Vibar:
LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015
LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015



Confession

Every last Friday of the month
from 9:00 pm to 10:00 pm
St. Mary's Church (DMP)

Marshaling



Schedule

Date	Apostolate
Feb 13	Formation
Feb 20	Management
Feb 27	Mission
Mar 6	Pastoral

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,855	\$14,642
Mission Collections	\$421	\$4,076

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

Thank you for your continued support!
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TEACHING CALENDAR

Feb 7*	Basic Bible Seminar – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program 1, Part 2 – LSS 1-40
Feb 20	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE John 6 Teaching - John 6
Feb 21*	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40 Singles Ministry CDFP – SE
Feb 27	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE Intercessory Immersion – LSS 41 Golden Years Ministry Teaching Service Immersion (Christian Servanthood 1) – LSS42
Mar 7	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 43 Christian Maturity Program II Part 2 - LSS 1-40 Apologetics – LSS 1-39

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time: Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PROJECT I DO

Open to all couples who are not married in the
Church
(Sacrament of Matrimony).



Date: **April 22, 2015**
Time: **6:30 pm.**
Place: **St. Mary's Church,
Rahway NJ**

Requirements:

- Baptismal certificates
- Confirmation certificates
- License to marry certificate (from City Hall)
- License to re-marry – for civilly married couples (obtained within 30 days before the wedding date.)
- Divorce papers certificate (if previously married (Civil wedding)
- 2 meetings with Fr. Robert.

For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza
(908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432)

Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 7

Bulletin Edition

February 13, 2015

NEWS

Pope Francis: 'The Sick Are the Flesh of Christ'

Pontiff Leads Faithful in Prayer for the Sick and for Victims of Human Trafficking During Angelus Address

Excerpt/Rome/020815/Zenit.org/ Junno Arocho Esteves

The care of the sick is "an integral part of the mission of the Church." These were the words said by Pope Francis during his Sunday Angelus address from the window of the Apostolic Palace.

Speaking on today's Gospel on the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law, the Holy Father reflected on Jesus' care for those wounded in both body and spirit. This care, he said, is an invitation to all Christians to "reflect on the meaning and value of sickness."

The Pope noted that this Wednesday is the World Day of the Sick and took the occasion to bless the initiative. He also called for prayers for the president of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers, who is gravely ill and hospitalized in Poland.

"Let us say a prayer for him, for his health because it was he who prepared this World Day. And he accompanies us with his suffering in this day. Let us pray for Archbishop Zimowski," the Pope said.

The 78 year old Pontiff continued his address saying that Christ's work of salvation did not end with his earthly life but continues through the Church. "Sending his disciples in mission, Jesus confers upon them a dual mandate: announce the Gospel of salvation and heal the sick," he said. "Faithful to this teaching, the Church has always considered the care of the sick as an integral part of its mission."

"The poor and the suffering you will always have with you", Jesus warns and the Church continuously finds them on the street, considering the sick as a privileged path to encounter Christ, to welcome and serve Him.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

IMITATING JESUS

THEME: As disciples of Christ we speak with God's authority when we treat others with mercy and compassion.

WORD: **Lv 13: 1-2,44-46/Ps 32:1-2,5,11
1 Cor 10:31-11:1/Mk 1:40-45**

ORDER: *"Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."* (1 Cor. 10:31)

REFLECTION:

The Scripture readings for this Sunday are quite straightforward with the message that the Lord wants to convey to us: that we are, in the spiritual sense, people with chronic and enduring skin afflictions similar to the disease of leprosy. Just as in our first reading from Leviticus and because of our fallen sinful nature, we are *"Unclean, unclean!"* (Lv 13:45) and must be quarantined and dwell apart from the rest. However, unlike the prescriptions in the Old Testament for dealing with such conditions, we are to imitate the example of Jesus in our Gospel when he showed compassion to the leper and went out of his way not only heal him (*"...Be made clean."* [vs. 41]) but also to fulfill the Mosaic law and restore the cured man into the community.

We relate this to our theme this week which states: As disciples of Christ we speak with God's authority when we treat others with mercy and compassion.

All of us are unclean, and yet don't we treat others as if we were better than they are, as if we were somehow *more clean*? Don't we stay away from those we dislike or disagree with? Aren't we afraid or uncomfortable with those who are not like us, those who dress or talk or look or smell different?

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Blessed is he whose fault is taken away, whose sin is covered." (Ps 32:1)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

GOD'S CREATION: Meaning and Purpose

"Then God said: Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky...This is the story of the heavens and the earth at their creation." (Gen 1:20-2:4a)*



The first creation story is a rich narrative. It addresses human dignity, the nuptial mystery (how the creation of man and woman in God's image and likeness and their fruitful relationship reflects the mystery of God's relationship with us), and the harmony of creation and our need to "exercise dominion" over it as stewards. But let us focus here on the seventh day of creation as key to the meaning and purpose of creation.

Scripture scholars recognize the symbolic numerical structure of this creation story, particularly its creation over a week. This need not be interpreted too literally, for seven is a deeply symbolic number in scripture, signifying perfection. In the end, the meaning of the story is that the harmony and beauty of creation has its origins in the orderly creative act of God. The world was not made by chance; it is the product of the Word (*Logos*) of God (Jn 1:1-3), who is love itself (1 Jn 4:7-16).

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger further notes that the words "God said" occur ten times, which tells us that this creation story anticipates the Decalogue, and likewise the Decalogue echoes creation. Ultimately, both creation and the Decalogue are ordered to entering into God's rest, God's peace, God's presence. That is why creation culminates in God's rest on the seventh day. It is the worship of the one God that frees us from idolatry and the slavery of sin, and allows us to recognize the logic and meaning of creation (CCC 2097). Creation "fulfills its purpose and assumes its significance when it is lived, ever new, with a view to worship."

So we must worship God not simply in song, but by living morally. This means taking care of people, especially the poor, and exercising stewardship over creation. In the name of profit, people, who are made in God's image and likeness, and the natural resources of God's creation can be exploited. The more we worship God in the Holy Spirit and in the truth of the Gospel, the more we will be able to bring about freedom and harmony and peace.

We are taught to pray for God's will to be done "on earth as it is in heaven." This creation story tells us that God designs the world to be life-giving, harmonious, peaceful, orderly. We are invited by faith to preach the Gospel "to all creation" (Mk 16:15), and in so doing "order" the world to be on earth as it is in heaven.

SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE



I still remember the day when I stood before the Altar of God and solemnly vowed to love the woman I chose to be my partner for the rest of my life. That was more than 25 years ago, and today we remain as one in the presence of the Church and our community as a striking testimony to what God's grace, conferred in the Sacrament of Matrimony, can accomplish in a husband and wife. Carefully guarding and using the divine treasure that was poured out upon us during that fateful day, we can only humbly look up to God's goodness, watchfulness, faithfulness and plan for us. That two unique individuals can live this long together is, in itself, a miracle.

We live in a world today that has great need of the *living sermon* and what examples of fidelity, truthfulness, and love can do. To say that living together was easy, spontaneous, and free-flowing, would be plainly and simply untrue. The married way may not always been easy and the road can be long, rugged, and winding and you will have to persevere and endure suffering. Marriage brings a sacramental grace that allows two human beings to carry their cross together, not separately. You learn to give more than you get and learn to put yourself in the other's shoes.

It is "couple power," the first lesson I learned during the first hour of our marriage encounter. Facing life together made us dauntless in the face of many problems, big and small, struggles and overwhelming difficulties known only to ourselves and hidden from others that could have made our marriage something entirely different than what it has actually been.

We have every reason to believe that our marriage, as imperfect as it is, still resembles Christ's love for His spotless Bride, the Church. We have discovered, and continue to learn, that in our married life, we can help each other grow in holiness and patience and that true peace, dignity, happiness and oneness are realities within our reach, together, in Christ alone.

The History of Saint Valentine



It is a truth universally known that on February 14th, couples across the planet celebrate a day of love. Sending flowers, giving cards and letters, buying presents—these are all Valentine’s Day traditions. Traditions as such helped Valentine’s Day become one of largest commercial holidays in the modern world, but where did the holiday even originate?

In the 5th century, Pope Gelasius I declared February 14th as Saint Valentine’s Day and included the saint among those “whose names are justly revered among men, but whose acts are known only to God.” Who was this saint, and what did he have to do with romance? Saint Valentine was a defiant priest of the 3rd century. However, not much is known about him. Under the rule of Roman Emperor Claudius II, marriage was banned altogether. The emperor’s frequent battles required young soldiers to leave their families for a long time, causing them to become tepid and homesick. As love was reducing the will and power of his army, Claudius prohibited marriage. Thinking the ban was inequitable, Valentine defied the Roman ruler and continued to marry young men and women privately. Eventually, the priest was discovered and arrested for his actions.

The young couples wed by Valentine supposedly visited the priest’s cell, appreciatively leaving him letters and flowers. Because not much is known about his life, there are various stories about what happened during Valentine’s confinement. One story states that he performed a miracle on the judge Asterius’ blind daughter. Valentine allegedly prayed with the blind girl and eventually cured her blindness, causing Asterius to convert to Christianity. It is said by some that the judge’s daughter had received a letter from Valentine, which he signed, “from your Valentine,” thus creating the phrase that is now often used in cards.

In another story, Valentine supposedly fell in love with his jailer’s daughter, who visited him during his confinement, while imprisoned. It is believed that he gave this girl the letter which he signed, “from your Valentine,” on his execution day, February 14th.

Although he suffered an odious execution of beating, stoning, and decapitation, Valentine was recognized as a martyr by the Christian people. He was later canonized and declared the patron of love. Through the centuries, Saint Valentine’s Day has become more and more of a commercial holiday, but the saint’s belief in love and marriage is still carried on by the holiday’s traditions.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jesus was not reluctant to heal the leper. On the contrary, our Lord was moved with compassion and **“he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, ‘I do will it. Be made clean.’”** (Mk 1:41) Going against every fiber of our human thinking, every attitude and action prescribed by law at that time, He actually touched the leper. But there is a second part to the healing touch of Jesus. He told the leper, **“See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed.”** (vs. 44)

What is prescribed for us so that we may be able to remain pure and clean? Yes, it is the Sacrament of Reconciliation, from which we receive sanctifying grace. The more holy and pure our soul, the more we will treat each other with love, with kindness, and with mercy. The more we strive to imitate Jesus, the more we will be ready to serve one another with humility and respect. As disciples of Christ we should go to Confession and receive absolution regularly, at least once a month if possible.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be imitators of Christ by being kind and merciful to everyone.
2. Be humble in your service to others.

A LOVE ACAPPELLA



I’ve always wanted
To be able to play an
instrument
A piano or a guitar...
Even a harmonica



But alas it seems
When it comes to music
Whistling is the only thing
With which I’ve been gifted

So if I can’t praise God with do-re-mi
Thought I’d just praise Him with a-b-c...

But now I’ve come to realize
That what would truly please
Him Is way more than notes ...

Way more than words.
That the best praise there is
Is with life, simply sung ...
As a Praise and Love
Acappella



NEWS

(from page 1)

To care for a sick person, to welcome him and serve him is to serve Christ. The sick are the flesh of Christ!"

The Holy Father went on to say that people's sufferings raises existential questions on the meaning of life and death; questions, he said, that the pastoral action of the Church must respond to "in the light of faith" and through the mystery of the Cross.

"Each one of us is called to bring the light of the Gospel and the strength of grace to those who suffer and to those who assist them - family members, doctors, nurses - so that the service to the sick may be fulfilled ever more with humanity, with generous dedication, and with evangelical love, with tenderness," he stressed.

Prior to reciting the Angelus prayer, the Pope called on the faithful to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary so that those who suffer from sickness can experience "the power of God's love and the comfort of His paternal tenderness."

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Contacts: yca@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

LSS #44 is now open for registration.

Contact persons: Lito and Gigi Vibar:

LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015

LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015

WOMEN'S COMMISSION DAY OF REFLECTION

"Behold Your Mother..."

Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ

Contacts: Ray/Tess Salmo (raycsalmo@aol.com)

For details: go to www.rcan.org/womcom, call 973-497-4545 or email catholicwomen@rcan.org

Marshaling		Schedule	
		Date	Apostolate
		Feb 20	Management
		Feb 27	Mission
		Mar 6	Pastoral
Mar 13	Evangelization		



LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,561	\$17,203
Mission Collections	\$55	\$4,131

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

Thank you for your continued support!

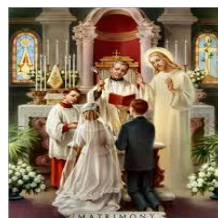
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Feb 20	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE John 6 Teaching - John 6
Feb 21*	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40 Singles Ministry CDFP – SE
Feb 27	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE Intercessory Immersion – LSS 41 Golden Years Ministry Teaching Service Immersion (Christian Servanthood 1) – LSS42
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Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PROJECT I DO



Open to all couples who are not married in the Church (Sacrament of Matrimony).

Date: April 22, 2015

Time: 6:30 pm.

Place: St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ

Requirements:

- Baptismal certificates
- Confirmation certificates
- License to marry certificate (from City Hall)
- License to re-marry – for civilly married couples (obtained within 30 days before the wedding date.)
- Divorce papers certificate (if previously married (Civil wedding))
- 2 meetings with Fr. Robert.

For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza (908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432). Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015

Confession



Every last Friday of the month from 9:00 pm to 10:00 pm
St. Mary's Church (DMP)

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 8

Bulletin Edition

February 20, 2015

NEWS

Pope highlights challenges faced by the marginalized

- by Deborah Castellano Lubov (Zenit.org)

VATICAN CITY, February 16, 2015 (Zenit.org) - Pope Francis has highlighted how helping the poor is a call to our humanity, which not only helps them, but us too.

In Rome on the occasion of their pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles, the Holy Father welcomed the Pro Petri Sede Association, praised their nourishing their faith and manifesting their fidelity to the Successor of Saint Peter, and lauded their serving the poor. The "Pro Petri Sede" Association is made up of members from Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. The association annually offers economic assistance for the needs of the Holy See.

Thanking them for their service, the Pope said: "The growing number of marginalized people who live in great precariousness challenges us and calls for an impetus of solidarity to give them the material and spiritual support of which they are in need."



He went on to say how helping the poor helps us. "In the throes of their difficulties," he said, "they are often witnesses of what is essential, of family values; they are capable of sharing with one who is poorer than they are and they know how to rejoice."

Warning them that indifference and egoism are always lurking, the Jesuit Pope reminded them that to forget the poor is not Christian. "Care of the poor," he said, "enriches us, putting us on a path of humility and truth." Their presence, he said, is a call to our common humanity, to the fragility of life, to our dependence on God and on brothers.

The Pontiff invited those gathered to ask the Lord to give them merciful and poor hearts, "which know their own poverties and which spend themselves for others," and exhorted them to pray insistently for peace, "that political leaders might find ways of dialogue and reconciliation."

Continued, page 4

COUNSELS

Repent and Believe

THEME: As disciples of Christ we speak with God's authority when we repent, believe in the Gospel and resist temptation.

WORD: Gn 9:8-15 / Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
1 Pt 3:18-22 / Mk 1:12-15

ORDER: **"Repent and believe in the Gospel."**
(Mk 1:15)

REFLECTION:



"This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mk 1:15)

Brothers and Sisters, if we forget the value of repentance, we allow ourselves to remain in sin. If we let ourselves be fooled into thinking that we no longer sin, or that our sins are too small to be called venial, we have been deceived. If we become too proud to admit our faults and failings, we push away God from our lives. Sin destroys our relationship with God. ***"For the wages of sin is death"*** (Rom 6:23a).

In Revelation 3:19-20 it says ***"Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me."***

Our Lord is knocking at our door right now, but how do we open the door? We need first and foremost to acknowledge our sinfulness and make a willful decision to change. Let us make it a habit, at the end of the day, to do an examination of conscience. This should be followed by repenting for the sins we have committed and asking forgiveness from the Lord. At the earliest opportunity, we should confess our sins through the sacrament of reconciliation. Finally, we should *Continued, page 3*

Promise of the Week

"He guides the humble in righteousness, and teaches the humble his way." (Ps 25:9)



Gossip, the Sin No One Confesses

Ash Wednesday is a day of mercy that ushers in the Lenten season. As a holy day proclaiming God's mercy, we should understand this call to join in His mercy in two senses: first, we ourselves are in need of God's mercy, and can approach God with hope. Second, we are invited to be people of mercy.

We read in Joel (2:12-28), the proclamation of God's mercy and the offer of hope that God will relent. Joel tells us that even amidst crises and amidst our infidelity, God invites us to return to Him with our whole heart, to be converted (cf. Jl 2:12-13). We know that God does indeed relent and extend his mercy and forgiveness to all who believe in and receive Jesus. He is true to what the prophets proclaim: He is slow to anger and rich in kindness.

But the second reading for Ash Wednesday (2 Cor 5:20-6:2) invites us to not simply receive God's mercy, but to proclaim it to others. In its original context, Paul is defending the trustworthiness of his ministry, for other "superapostles" have been challenging him in Corinth (2 Cor 11:5-6). So Paul defends his credentials by asserting that the proclamation that he and his team (Timothy, Sylvanus, and others) brings is rooted in God's ministry of reconciliation, as manifest in the life, teachings, and deeds of Jesus. In Christ, God is reconciling the world to Himself (2 Cor 5:19). Hence, because Paul preaches something that is dear to Jesus and to the apostles, Paul can be trusted as a true ambassador of God.

Today, we too must recognize that we all are ambassadors of Christ who invite all to **"be reconciled to God"** (2 Cor 5:20). On Ash Wednesday, the so-called "Ashes and Palms" Catholics come out in huge numbers, providing us a golden opportunity to evangelize them. We may be tempted to look down on such believers for only worshipping occasionally, but if we take this holy day and its readings seriously, then we cannot complain or judge. Now is the day of salvation for all of us (2 Cor 6:2); so as we strive to be reconciled and converted to God, we should also invite "Ashes and Palms" Catholics and lapsed Catholics to do the same.

Everyone is in need of God's mercy. Everyone needs to be converted. The verse before the Gospel tells devout and lapsed Catholics alike: **"If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."** (Ps 95:8). On Ash Wednesday, we are invited to be attentive to God's offer of mercy to all of us, to receive God's mercy and to proclaim it to each other.

To gossip is to unnecessarily reveal information about another, whether true or false, about a person, that could harm their reputation. It is a very fine line between gossip and conversation, that often we don't realize that we have engaged in gossip at all; which is why gossip is often the sin that no one bothers to confess.

Scene 1:

Monica saw her friend Sophia after Friday P&W. She tells Sophia to pray for Trisha. Sophia, curious to know what happened to their friend, pressed Monica for details. Although Monica was not comfortable telling Sophia, she decides to tell her anyway.

"I saw Trisha's sister, and she told me Trisha & Ricky might be breaking up. Trisha had an affair with an ex-boyfriend and Ricky found out. He has moved out of their house and is threatening divorce. She even mentioned something about an abortion years ago. Anyway, please just pray for them."

Scene 2:

On the drive home after the P&W fellowship Sophia's husband, asks "What were you and Monica talking about?"

"Monica was just telling me to pray for Trisha" she answered. "Ricky caught her having an affair and they may be headed for divorce. You and Ricky have common friends from college... So tell me, what do you know is going on?"

"Well Ricky is not really the ideal husband he appears to be. He has a temper and it seems that he can be very abusive to Trish and the kids, especially when he's drunk. I even heard from some friends that Ricky has been spending a lot of time in Vegas, squandering the family fortune on gambling, women, and drugs."

Sophia responds, "Unbelievable! I guess moving to San Francisco and leaving BLD didn't turn out well for them. Maybe that's why their kids are not doing well either. Remember when Lisa visited last Christmas and told us how Trisha's eldest daughter got pregnant and then got an abortion, while their youngest, Anton, is in rehab because of drugs?"

The familiar scenes above, although fictional, show how easily gossip slips into conversations. Christ Himself reminds us...

"I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak."

(Mt 12:36)



True Fasting

Fasting is an ancient spiritual practice wherein people abstain from food and water. It was done mainly to stir up the zeal, renew the dedication, and increase the love for God, by humbling ourselves and realizing our dependence on Him. Among human needs and activities, eating is most fundamental. Thus, when God tested Adam and Eve, it was through abstaining from eating a specific food. Redemption was made appropriately by Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the second Adam, by giving us His body as our food and His blood as our drink.

Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert to prepare Himself for His mission. He wanted to pray, fast, and be alone with God. In fasting we initially, become hungry for food. But let this hunger sink deeper and let the feeling become a hunger for God. Let our thoughts focus only on God so that we will know Him better and His will for us.

Fasting is symbolic of sharing in the death of Christ. Its connotation is abstention from food because food is the sustenance of life and its absence is a token of death.

The road to holiness articulates that we should also fast from worldly things so that we may die to the world and gain Christ.



Isaiah 58:1-10 tells us that we should not fast so that people will feel sorry for us and think we are pious. We should not worship “worship”. Just because we pray and fast, we think we are better than other people. It also tells us to stop corruption and to stop taking advantage of people, especially the poor. At the same time fasting should be the occasion for forgiveness, for sharing our blessings with the needy, and for promoting and advocating justice for everyone.

“One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.” (Mt 4:4) Thus, true fasting is not only abstaining from food and worldly things but also by being humble, and by following what Isaiah 58:1-10 tells us. (It is worth noting that the Catholic Church in the United States requires only 2 days of fasting – Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The obligatory fasting is for persons who are 18 to 59 years old. When fasting, only one full meal and 2 small meals are allowed.)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

make a firm resolution to avoid sin and reconcile with the people we have hurt and those who have hurt us the most. **“If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.”** (1 Jn 1:9)



The Holy Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert and there for 40 days, He fasted and was tempted by Satan. Last Wednesday being Ash Wednesday, ushered in the season of Lent and also signaled Lent’s 40 days till Palm Sunday. This is an opportune time to fast, pray and to strengthen our resolve not to commit sin, to persevere in our vows to be holy, and to increase our willpower to avoid temptations. Fasting is a spiritual exercise; it is effective as it conditions the body and the spirit, not only against gluttony, but against all other sins that we are often guilty of. Fasting is flesh against spirit. In Galatians 5:17, St. Paul says **“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.”**

It further says, **“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”**

So while we battle the flesh in the trenches, we lift up our eyes to the cross, because if we only focus on the difficulties, the hardships and our weaknesses, we run the danger of losing hope and eventually giving in to sin which the Devil wants to happen. So we lift up our minds to the truth of the Gospel, to the times of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord. We believe in the Gospel. We believe that we have a covenant with our God through our Baptism when we became children of the Father, heirs to His Kingdom. We believe in Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer - that He died on the cross and on the third day rose again. In CCC 214 it says: “In all his works God displays not only his kindness, goodness, **Continued, page 4**

COUNSELS (from page 3)

grace, and steadfast love, but also his trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness, and truth. Our God is an awesome God.”

Brothers and sisters, this Lenten season, let us recommit ourselves to the faith we profess to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Let us shake off the dust that has been collecting in our bodies, and run the race to the Kingdom God has prepared for us, like there is no tomorrow. Let us renew the discipline needed to follow Jesus all the way to the cross. Let us keep singing His praise, let us worship Him forever with our lives.

All glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Directions:

1. Avail of the sacrament of reconciliation often.
2. Do a daily examination of conscience.
3. Reconcile with the people you have hurt and those who have hurt you the most.

NEWS (from page 1)

The Holy Father concluded, entrusting them to the intercession of Mary, Saint Peter, and their nations’ saints, and imparting his Apostolic Blessing.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 - Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ
 Contacts: ycs@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

LSS #44 is now open for registration.

Contact persons: Lito and Gigi Vibar:
LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015

LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015

WOMEN’S COMMISSION DAY OF REFLECTION


“Behold Your Mother...”

Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ

Contacts: Ray/Tess Salmo (raycsalmo@aol.com)

For details: go to www.rcan.org/womcom, call 973-497-4545 or email catholicwomen@rcan.org

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Feb 27	Mission
			Mar 6	Pastoral
			Mar 13	Evangelization
			Mar 20	Formation

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,452	\$19,655
Mission Collections	\$1,052	\$5,183

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Feb 21*	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40 Singles Ministry CDFP – SE
Feb 27	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE Intercessory Immersion – LSS 41 Golden Years Ministry Teaching Service Immersion (Christian Servanthood 1) – LSS42
Mar 7	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 43 Christian Maturity Program II Part 2 - LSS 1-40 Apologetics – LSS 1-39
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PROJECT “I DO”

Open to all couples who are not married in the Church
 (Sacrament of Matrimony).

April 22, 2015, Time: 6:30 pm, St. Mary’s Church, Rahway NJ

Requirements:

- Baptismal and Confirmation certificates
- License to marry certificate (from City Hall)
- License to re-marry – for civilly married couples (obtained within 30 days before the wedding date.)
- Divorce papers certificate (if previously married to someone else, as in another civil ceremony)
- 2 meetings with Fr. Robert.

For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza (908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432). Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015

PRAYER HEALING 1 RETREAT

March 14 (Saturday), 7:00 AM – 9:00 PM

March 15 (Sunday), 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) at
samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS).

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 9

Bulletin Edition

Feb. 27, 2014

Pope Francis: 'Lent is a Time of Spiritual Combat'

Rome, Feb. 22, 2015 (Zenit.org) Junno Arocho Esteves

The Lenten season is a time of spiritual combat in which “we have our gaze fixed upon Easter, which is the definitive victory of Jesus against the Evil One.” With these words, Pope Francis addressed the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square on the First Sunday of Lent.

The Holy Father reflected on today's Gospel which recalls Jesus' 40 days in the desert where He was tempted by Satan. During that time, the Pope said, Christ engaged in “close combat” and was victorious over temptation.

“The Church reminds us of that mystery at the beginning of Lent, so that it may give us the perspective and the meaning of this time, which is a time of combat,” he said. “A spiritual combat against the spirit of evil; and while we cross the Lenten “desert”, we have our gaze fixed upon Easter, which is the definitive victory of Jesus against the Evil One, against sin and against death.”

Francis went on to say that the meaning of the First Sunday of Lent is to place ourselves on the path of Christ, who is “the road that leads to life.”

Continuing his address, the Pope reflected on the significance of the desert, a place where both the voice of God and the voice of the Tempter can be heard. The Holy Father stressed that like Jesus, Christians must know Scripture; “otherwise we do not know how to respond to the attacks of the Evil One.”

The 78 year old Pontiff reminded the faithful once again to carry a pocket-sized Gospel and meditate upon it every day.

“Always have the Gospel in hand,” he said. “The Lenten desert helps us to say no to worldliness, to the 'idols', it helps us to make courageous choices in accordance with the Gospel *Continued on page 3*

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS WHY LISTEN?

THEME: We are a reflection of God's love when we listen to His voice.

WORD: Gen 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18 / Ps 114:10, 15-19 / Rom 8:31-34 / Mk 9:2-10

ORDER: *“This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him.”* (Mark 9:7b)

REFLECTION:

Our Order for this week sounds simple enough: “Listen to him.” But what does this really mean for a disciple of Christ in the BLD community?

We don't just take the word of anyone, much less accept it. But if it's someone who speaks with authority, people listen (Mark 1:22-27). Today's Gospel passage portrays a Voice coming from heaven, from Him Who has supreme authority.

Listening to someone in authority can be a problem --- children to parents, at the workplace, in civil matters, in religion. The enticements of the world, our love of pleasure, even our egos can dim the clarion call from above. The BLD disciple formation program instructs and inclines us to listen to the Lord, to be discerning. We learn to recognize God's voice and to hear His call, in prayer, Scripture and prophecy; we deepen our understanding in reflection and our Word sharing circles.

Twice in the first Reading, God and His messenger called to Abraham; twice he replied, *Here I am!* Our father in faith shows us how our response should be to God's call – immediate, ready and unquestioning. We often do not, cannot act this way because of fear. We think, *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“I will bless you abundantly... and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing –all this because you obeyed my command.” (Genesis 22:17)

Are We Holy?

Have you ever wondered whether or not you were truly holy? “*Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy*” says God.” (Leviticus 19:2). To ask ourselves on whether or not we are holy, we must first understand what is “Holiness”.

The Biblical word “Holy” has two meanings. The first meaning of holy is apartness” or “separateness”. That which is holy is set apart from common things. It is different, it is “other”. God is the “holy other”. He is absolutely distinct and different from anything else in creation.

The second meaning of God’s holiness refers to His purity. There is no moral blemish, no stain of wickedness within Him. He is morally excellent and ethically perfect. It is not enough to say that God is holy, we also have to say that He acts holy. In other words, we say that God is also holy in His actions.

Now God wants those He saves to be just like Him. He wants us to be holy. First, like God, this means we are to be separate, apart. We are to be different, separate from the world. This means also that we are to be pure, without blemish, without the stain of sin.

Sin is what separates us from the holiness of God. Sin is also something for us to understand before we can be holy. Sin has six different stages, and applying these stages to the first sin in the Bible, Adam & Eve, it will help us to see where we fall short on holiness.

1. **Knowledge:** they were told about the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
2. **Curiosity:** they became curious about the tree and wondered what the fruit would do.
3. **Desire:** they began to want to eat the fruit of the tree.
4. **Lust or Strong desire:** they really wanted to eat the fruit.
5. **Decision:** they made the decision to eat from the tree.
6. **Action:** they took and ate the fruit from the tree.

Somewhere between stages 3 & 4 Adam & Eve fell into sin.

God wants us to be holy like He is. This means we are to stop ourselves from going to stages 3 and 4 in sin. We are to avoid any situation that tempts us and causes us to fall. We are to strive to never get beyond stages 1 and 2.

As we enter the Holy season of Lent, let us reflect upon our lives and ask God’s Holy Spirit to help →

Worthy in God’s Sight

Psalms 19:15 “*Let the words of my mouth be acceptable, the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord my rock and my redeemer.*”

The spoken word – a very powerful tool; stronger than a lance and can easily pierce the heart of man. We always hear the advice given by the elders ‘... not to let the sun set without settling any disagreements between husbands and wives...’. Similarly, as we are taught in BLD, talk eye to eye to your spouse, holding each other’s hands and forgive each other for any hurts that were handed out. This will make for a more harmonious and loving marriage.

I have to admit, I have not practiced this in our almost 30 years of married life. Why? I know how hurtful spoken words can be, especially those spoken in anger. In the heat of the moment, there is a tendency to unearth old misdeeds and not editing words spoken. Thus, instead of saying something hurtful, I would rather I keep my mouth shut. There starts the ‘silent treatment’. This silence though can last even as far as a month, until I am ready to discuss the problem in a more rationale way. So, one would ask, is this better?

Similarly, between husbands and wives, there are broken relationships between community members because of spoken words. There is no intention to say something hurtful but sometimes words come across differently. Members end up shying-away from community work because of this. One would rather not be an active member of the community and just watch from the sideline - an attitude of somebody too cautious or one of being too afraid to hurt.

The heart does not think but definitely can feel. This psalm should be taken to heart as it is a beautiful prayer –

- That whatever will be uttered will be pleasing to the Lord, always spoken in a very loving way
- That words will be pleasing to the other person, helping him/her to stand up and move forward

Dearest Lord Jesus, grant me the grace to learn how to keep a tight rein on my mouth. Let the words that will come out be pleasing to You and to the people around me. Let my words know how to be merciful, compassionate, forgiving and thankful. Let me be worthy to be called Your child. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

us identify areas that need to be purified, then can we truly say we are “*Holy as God is Holy.*”

Fruitful Word

*“So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth;
It shall not return to me empty, but shall do what
pleases me, achieving the end for which I sent it.”*
(Isaiah 55:11)

Chapter 55 of the Book of Isaiah is in invitation to holiness. We are exhorted to do good and be under the graces of God the almighty. The first part talks about God’s ways and thoughts being higher than ours and the latter part delves on the promise of salvation.

The instruction itself carries in it an order—an order not simply to listen but to spread His word so that when we face Him, the words He left to us are not gone for naught but are returned with the promise of deliverance for others. We are all enjoined not only to invite others but also to convince them that the banquet God has prepared is for all to partake.

Another underlying message is that the words that come from God’s mouth, not even Satan can defy. What God instructs us to do, His words, carry the full weight of salvation and its promise of redemption. So you can say, “We can take it to the bank.”

There are also two messages delivered by this phrase. In the Old Testament, the chosen people are always physically and spiritually tormented. This message promises two things to them; the first is that they will be delivered from all oppressors and second is that they will be forgiven for their sins through God’s word.

Finally, this phrase brings two messages; 1) It is God’s intention that we be saved and that His word is not returned empty; and 2) through His might and unquestionable power we are all saved and enjoy the benefits of being God’s legitimate children.

Pope Francis: ... (from page 1)

and to strengthen solidarity among the brothers.”

Before leading the faithful in the Angelus prayer, the Holy Father encouraged the faithful to enter into the “Lenten desert” without fear, saying that “we are not alone: we are with Jesus, with the Father and with the Holy Spirit.

“Lent, he said, “is an appropriate time that should lead us to be ever more aware of how much the Holy Spirit, received in Baptism, has worked and can work in us. And in the end of the Lenten itinerary, in the Easter Vigil, we can renew with greater awareness the Baptismal covenant and the commitments that flow from it.”

COUNSELS (from page 1)

will a great sacrifice be asked of me? What might I lose that’s dear to me? We become calculating. What will be my reward; what can I expect in return?

To cast our lot with the Lord, we are daunted by human reaction, by rejection and even violence. But even without asking, we can trust in God’s justice. To Abraham’s faithfulness, He promised: **“Because you obeyed my command... I will bless you abundantly.”** (Genesis 22:17) And God’s loving mercy is beyond our understanding. Having spared Abraham’s son as sacrificial offering, He did not spare His only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, as the one acceptable propitiation for our sins.

O Lord I am Your servant. In the face of affliction and contradictions, we can remain resolute in our faith, persevering in obedience. **“I will pay my vows to the Lord; I will offer a sacrifice of praise and call on His Name.”** (Psalms 116: 17-18)

Listening to the Lord opens our eyes and our lives to such depths of His merciful love, that we can’t help but be assured of His tender care and protection. **“If God is for us, who can be against us? If God acquits us, who will condemn? He handed His Son over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with Him? It is Christ Jesus who sits at the right hand of God and intercedes for us.”** (Roman 8: 31-34) Our worship becomes purer, our tasks in ministry and mission become easier and more joyful.

Finally, God does not merely react, dispensing reward for faithfulness and punishment for evil deeds. Indeed, He loves us first and always, anticipating our needs, knowing when trials threaten to overwhelm us. This is the lesson in the Gospel account of Christ’s Transfiguration. Knowing that the disciples’ faith was being shaken by His impending Passion and Death, Jesus allowed them to experience an exhilarating foretaste of His divinity and the majestic glory that belongs to Him and is promised to those who remain faithful to Him.

“From the cloud came a voice, ‘This is my beloved Son.’” (Mark 9:7) Like His Baptism, the Transfiguration was a glorious manifestation of the divinity of the Son. **“Listen to Him,”** commanded the Voice of the Father. Let us also heed the words of the Blessed Mother, **“Do whatever He tells you.”** (John 2:12)

DIRECTIONS:

- Make a conscious effort to develop a listening heart through prayer.
- Obey when called and respond readily, ‘Here I am.’

TEACHING CALENDAR

Feb 21*	Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-43 Christian Maturity Program II, Part 1 – LSS 1-40 Singles Ministry CDFP – SE
Feb 27	LSS Orientation – ME 44, SPE 17, SE Intercessory Immersion – LSS 41 Golden Years Ministry Teaching Service Immersion (Christian Servanthood 1) – LSS42
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Venue	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.

www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

YOUTH LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

March 6-8, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Contacts: ycs@bldnewark.com/dyc@bldnewark.com

PRAYER HEALING I RETREAT

March 14 (Saturday), 7:00 AM – 9:00 PM

March 15 (Sunday), 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) at samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

LSS #44 is now open for registration and is fast approaching.

Please intercede for all candidates.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people and enkindle in them the fire of Your Love

For details, please contact: Lito and Gigi Vibar: LitoGigi@Vibar.com or LSA@BLDnewark.com

Salubungan ~ March 6, 2015

LSS #44 ~ April 10-12, 2015

EMERGENCE

Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Connell Hall, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For details please email: dceo@bldnewark.com

Please pray for all the nominators, nominees and the community - that the Lord blesses us with a Spirit-filled emergence process.

Be a Living Word

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,100	21,755
Mission Collections	27	5,210

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

Date	Apostolate
Mar 6	Pastoral
Mar 13	Evangelization
Mar 20	Formation
Mar 27	Management

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

WOMEN'S COMMISSION DAY OF REFLECTION

"Behold Your Mother..."

Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ

Contacts: Ray/Tess Salmo (raycsalmo@aol.com)

For details: go to www.rcan.org/womcom, call 973-497-4545 or email catholicwomen@rcan.org

Come, Reflect & Prepare Yourself on Christ's Passion!

You are invited to **Divine Mercy Parish Tenebrae** (Shadow) in its 7th Year - supported by BLD Praise

April 1, 2015 (HOLY WEDNESDAY)

7:30 PM – Divine Mercy Parish Church

A Way to Prepare for the Holy Triduum
Uniquely includes Ancient readings, Scriptures, Latin and Sacred Hymn and Contemporary Christian Praise Songs!

PROJECT "I DO"

Open to all couples who are not married in the Church (Sacrament of Matrimony).

April 22, 2015, Time: 6:30 pm., St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ
Requirements:

- Baptismal and Confirmation certificates
- License to marry certificate (from City Hall)
- License to re-marry – for civilly married couples (obtained within 30 days before the wedding date.)
- Divorce papers certificate (if previously married to someone else, as in another civil ceremony)
- 2 meetings with Fr. Robert.

For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza (908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432). Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 10

Bulletin Edition

March 6, 2015

Prayer for Peace in the Philippines

Bishops Launch 'Oratio Imperata' Following Killings in Mindanao

Rome, February 25, 2015/Zenit.org/Staff Reporter.

The Bishops of the Philippines have launched what is called an *Oratio Imperata* for peace in Mindanao. It follows a massacre on January 25 in Mamasapano, on the island of Mindanao.

An *Oratio Imperata* is normally used to pray for deliverance from natural calamities or conflicts and wars.

"The situation of the country and the world right now calls on all of us to turn to the Lord in humble supplication and gather our people to pray. As the nation continues to grieve over the tragedy in Mamasapano and the family of nations is threatened by war and terror from extremist groups, our best contribution to the nation and to the world is to encourage people to pray," said Archbishop Socrates Villegas, President of the Bishops' Conference.

Hopefully this prayer can calm the anxieties of our long suffering people and touch the hearts of the enemies of peace."

Prayer:

Lord of Peace, we come to You in our need. Create in us an awareness of the massive forces of violence and terrorism that threaten our world today. Grant us a sense of urgency to activate the forces of goodness, of justice, of love and of peace in our communities.

Where there is armed conflict, let us stretch out our arms to our brothers and sisters.

Where there is abundance and luxury, let there be simple lifestyle and sharing.

Where there is poverty and misery, let there be dignified living and constant striving for just structures.

Where there is selfish ambition, let there be humble service.

Where there is injustice, let there be humble atonement.

Where there is despair, let there be hope in the Good News.

Where there are wounds of division, let there be unity and wholeness.

Where there are lies and deceit, let Your Truth set us all of us free.

Where there are thoughts of vengeance, let there be healing and forgiveness.

Continued on page 4

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS

THE POWER OF GOD'S PERFECT LOVE

THEME: We are a reflection of God's love when we allow Him to cleanse us of our imperfections.

**WORD: Ex 20:1-17; Ps 19:8-11
1 Cor 1:22-25; Jn 2:13-25**

ORDER: "Stop making my Father's house a marketplace." (Jn 2:16b)

REFLECTION:

Words have a tremendous power over us. They could stir our imagination, arouse our emotions, and inspire us to action. So, it is not surprising that God too uses words to communicate to us. God's words always bear fruit. They are filled with power, truth, peace and salvation. And His Word shall not return to Him void but will achieve the purpose for which it was sent (Is 55: 11).

The story of Mt. Sinai in the first reading tells of God's love for His people when He gave the Ten Commandments to Moses. He wanted the people to know who He is and what He expects of them if they are to experience covenant. Although God's laws are right, trustworthy, more precious than gold and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb (Ps 19:10) as the Psalmist puts it, it was incomplete and "**only a shadow of the good things to come**" (Heb 10:1a).

The story of the cleansing of the temple in the Gospel demonstrates how seriously Jesus took His mission. As we contemplate His action of driving out the money changers, the merchants and animals being sold to worshippers, we call to mind the words of scripture "**Zeal for your house consumes me**" (Ps 69:10).

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul ... giving wisdom to the simple." (Ps 19:8)

FORGIVE & FORGET

Just recently, a phrase from a praise song got stuck in my head, repeated itself over and over: "We'll see Jesus face to face." So I started reflecting on what that would be like. I thought of songs like *There Will Be a Day* by Jeremy Camp and *I Can Only Imagine*, which I like very much because it anticipates someday being in His presence.

But then I thought, what if God changes the timetable on me? Rather than wait for the day I leave this earthly life, what if tomorrow He knocks on my door for a visit? So I pictured myself asking for *proof*, which He then provides and I am quickly convinced.

After some pleasantries, I invite Him in, we chat, we eat and we spend a really great day together. In the evening, He then would say that He had to go but that He had one more thing on His mind to ask me about; He wondered, "Now that you've seen Me face to face, what now? What are you going to do next, like say tomorrow?"

After having spent the day with God, I wonder to myself, "What could top that?" And then I realize all the things I still have to do. At the top of the list, loving Him and my neighbor are still there; but among the top five on the list, these are there too: asking for forgiveness, granting forgiveness, and beginning life anew. Forgiveness seems obvious, but beginning life anew? What would that involve? Then I realize it's about letting go of the things of the past – the wrongs, the hurts, the frustrations, the mistakes, the judgments, the unfulfilled expectations – of myself and of others - and really starting anew.

Often, in my various relationships, with my spouse, my children, relatives and friends, the first thoughts to resurface in my mind are of our negative history. Starting anew means forgetting about those things so that history's negative impact on our relationship is diminished, perhaps even eradicated. It's about giving them a fresh chance, as many chances as possible, as many as it might take, so that all we would be doing is moving forward. But it also involves not forgetting about the traps and pitfalls which I have had an active part in creating, and about being remorseful and resolving not to let these things happen again. So it really is about forgiving and forgetting... and learning and loving.

After spending that day with God, I pray that that is exactly what I will be doing for the remainder of my life. And it seems to me that I shouldn't wait. I really need to start today, because these words from St. Luke will always hold true: *"Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."* (Lk 6:37b-38)

And as for these remaining days...well, they will get the fullest measure possible if I start forgiving, forgetting, learning and loving...TODAY

WHAT IF TODAY...

What if today we started
To really listen to Jesus?
What if today we started
To truly heed His word?

To learn from our past?
To change what will be?

What if we gave hugs to loved ones
Instead of simple hello's - goodbye's?
Or said a heartfelt thank you
Not presume they already knew?

Then wouldn't we feel better?
Then wouldn't life be brighter?

What if today...?

What if today became
That which had always been, some day?
Help others now
And not say, "Maybe tomorrow"

Wouldn't you feel richer,
Helping those who are poorer?

What if today...?

Why not seek reconciliation?
Why not show compassion?
Love with pure emotion?
Love God with all passion?

Isn't that what life is for?
With our lives, give Him honor?

Yes, I think I'll start today
Even just a little each day
So that each tomorrow,
In love, I'll surely grow

Yes, I just did...
I just started...
... Today!



ST. KATHERINE DREXEL

St. Katharine Drexel is an American-born Saint and founder of Xavier University in New Orleans, the first Catholic university in the United States for African Americans.

If your father is an international banker and you ride in a private railroad car, you are not likely to be drawn into a life of voluntary poverty. But if your mother opens your home to the poor three days each week and your father spends half an hour each evening in prayer, it is not impossible that you will devote your life to the poor and give away millions of dollars. Katharine Drexel did just that.

Born in Philadelphia in 1858, she had an excellent education and traveled widely. As a rich girl, she had a grand debut into society. But when she nursed her stepmother through a three-year terminal illness, she saw that all the Drexel money could not buy safety from pain or death, and her life took a profound turn.

She had always been interested in the plight of the Indians, having been appalled by what she read in Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor*. While on a European tour, she met Pope Leo XIII and asked him to send more missionaries to Wyoming for her friend Bishop James O'Connor. The pope replied, "Why don't you become a missionary?" His answer shocked her into considering new possibilities. Back home, Katharine visited the Dakotas, met the Sioux leader Red Cloud and began her systematic aid to Indian missions. She could easily have married, but after much discussion with Bishop O'Connor, she wrote in 1889, "The feast of St. Joseph brought me the grace to give the remainder of my life to the Indians and the Colored." Newspaper headlines screamed "Gives Up Seven Million!"

After three and a half years of training, she and her first band of nuns (Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored) opened a boarding school in Santa Fe. A string of foundations followed. By 1942 she had a system of black Catholic schools in 13 states, plus 40 mission centers and 23 rural schools. Segregationists harassed her work, even burning a school in Pennsylvania. In all, she established 50 missions for Indians in 16 states.

Two saints met when Katharine was advised by Mother Cabrini about the "politics" of getting her Order's Rule approved in Rome. Her crowning achievement was the founding of Xavier University in New Orleans, the first Catholic university in the United States for African Americans. →

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jesus criticizes the established norms of worship and exalts justice, forgiveness and unconditional love.

Jesus is the fulfilment of the law, the cornerstone of God's plan for salvation, yet as St. Paul tells us in the second reading, a stumbling block for those Jews who requested a sign and mocked Jesus' statement about raising the temple. They presumed that Jesus meant the physical construction of the temple when he said "*destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up*" (Jn 2:19). Jesus was referring to His own bodily resurrection. He is the new temple in which true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. He is the word made flesh, so powerful that in Him, we have been given a share in His divinity and the promise of eternal life to all who believe in Him.

We are now in the middle of Lent, and our theme for the week reminds us that: **We are a reflection of God's love when we allow Him to cleanse us of our imperfections.** As disciples of Christ, we all want to feel and live in the love of God by accepting His decrees. To accept and obey our loving God means that we are to undergo a transformation of heart. We are to change and live in such a way that people may see goodness in us and will come to believe that God is love and alive in us.

As Jesus cleansed the temple, He desires to cleanse and purify us of our sins and to make us living temples of His Holy Spirit. Let us make God's Word the foundation of our lives, for God promises that if we abide in His Word and in Jesus, His eternal Word, we will be changed and healed.

Reflection Questions:

1. What are your plans during Lent to renew your commitment to be right before God?
2. What are the things that need cleansing in your life?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Follow the Ten commandments.
2. Focus on Jesus and His love.
3. Observe reverence in Church.

At 77, she suffered a heart attack and was forced to retire. Apparently her life was over. But now came almost 20 years of quiet, intense prayer from a small room overlooking the sanctuary. Small notebooks and slips of paper record her various prayers, ceaseless aspirations and meditation. She died at 96 and was canonized in 2000.

NEWS (from page 1)

Help us to be committed to the Gospel of peace. In spite of our differences in faith traditions and ethnic roots, teach us Your spirit of mercy and compassion. For it is only in loving imitation of you, Lord of Peace, that we can discover the healing springs of life that will bring about new birth to our earth a new era of peace and a new harmony among all, forever and ever. Amen.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

2015 EMERGENCE

March 7th, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm,

Connell Hall, Rahway NJ

Eucharistic Celebration at 10:00 am



EMERGENCE COMMITMENT PRAYER

Abba Father, we praise You for You are the source of all goodness and love. We thank You for uniting us, the BLD members, into a community of love.

During this period of discernment for our next Servant Leaders and District Stewards, we place ourselves, the Nominees, the Nominators and all those participating in the BLD General Emergence process, under the power and light of Your Holy Spirit.

Dear Jesus, we especially pray for Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo, our Community Spiritual Director, District Spiritual Directors, the Executive Council of Servant Leaders (ECSL), District Servant leaders (DSL), Shepherds of District Clusters, the District Council of Stewards (DCS), the Community Committee on Emergence Overseers (CCEO) and the District Committees on Emergence Overseers (DCEOs), that they may be guided by Your wisdom in all the decisions they make and that they may carry out their emergence functions with humility and compassion.

We unite ourselves with all our brothers and sisters in other ministries, homesteads and Districts of the BLD Global Community in praying for the on-going General Emergence Process.

We commit to be attentive to Your voice by immersing ourselves in Your Word daily; to fast, pray and offer sacrifices so that Your will shall prevail with peace, love and joy amongst us during this important process of discernment for the new leaders of our BLD Global Community.

Mary, our mother, intercede with the Lord that He may instill in all of us a great desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to yield to His Word, to give freely of ourselves, and to love and serve one another as we seek His wisdom and truth in this process. This we pray, in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,624	\$25,379
Mission Collections	-	\$5,210

Thank you for your continued support!
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Mar 7	Encounter with Jesus (Gospels of Luke & John) – LSS 43 Christian Maturity Program II Part 2 - LSS 1-40 Apologetics – LSS 1-39
Apr 18	New Creation Realities/Growth In Prayer – LSS 1-44 Encounter with Jesus (Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel) – LSS 1-43 Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-40 Healing And Deliverance – LSS 1-40
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Adult Life in the Spirit Seminar #44

April 10-12, 2015

For details, contact: Lito/Gigi Vibar: LitoGigi@Vibar.com

PROJECT "I DO"

Open to all couples who are not married in the Church
April 22, 2015, 6:30 pm., St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ
For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza (908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432). Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015

PRAYER HEALING 1 RETREAT

June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM 7 PM

Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) at

samrory@ymail.com

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.
Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

Divine Mercy Parish Tenebrae (Shadow)

in its 7th Year - supported by BLD Praise

April 1, 2015 (HOLY WEDNESDAY)

7:30 PM – Divine Mercy Parish Church

A Way to Prepare for the Holy Triduum
Uniquely includes Ancient readings, Scriptures, Latin and Sacred Hymn and Contemporary Christian Praise Songs!

Come, Reflect and Prepare Yourself on Christ's Passion!

MARSHALING SCHEDULE – MARCH 13TH

EVANGELIZATION



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 11

Bulletin Edition

March 13, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

YLSS # 20, A Weekend to Remember!

While the Holy Spirit exuded its presence throughout the BLD Emergence, it also asserted its spiritual and healing prowess in the Youth ministry during the Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #20 last weekend. The ministry was blessed with 29 willing candidates (20 from BLD Newark YM, 5 from St. Antoninus and 4 from DMP CCD Formation).



Welcome Graduates of YLSS #20: Jonathan Alegria, Nate Alegria, Celeste Alesna, Beatrice Almazan, Nina Almazar, Gil Austria, Amarilis Baez, Stephen Canillas, Ken Cebedo, John Chan, Michelle Cruz, Kevin Flores, JJ Gomez, Natalia Guerra, Chudi Ibida, Bertina Joseph, Sean Lee, Joanna Lizardo, Angelo Manaois, Stephanie Narine, Jerill Nieves, Ally Nisay, Obi Onyiuke, Rhystan Pangilinan, Amanda Reyes, Dominick Salar, Madeline Tanchinco, Jimmy Vargas, and Paul Vibar.

God's hand was indeed at work and evident in the sacrificial service provided by one body with many parts. The weekend was so blessed with our Pastoral Team led by our Spiritual Director, Fr. Paul Lehman, the sharers and presentors: Christian Ikalina, Dana DeCastro, Jules Almazar, Flores family (Filmore, Hum, Erika, Jesraye, Kyle and Aaron), AJ Reyes, Anthony Lucero and Kyle Flores.

Continued on page 4

RESPONDING TO GOD'S LOVE

THEME: We are a reflection of God's love when we believe in Him and live in His truth.
WORD: 2 Chr 36:14-16,19-23 ~ Ps 137:1-2,3,4-5,6 Eph 2:4-10 ~ Jn 3:14-21
ORDER: Believe in Him so that you may have eternal life. (Jn 3:16- paraphrased)

REFLECTION:

In the Second Book of Chronicles, we read of God's compassion and mercy towards His chosen people, despite their sinfulness and infidelity. Although God allowed the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans and the exile to Babylon of the Jews, He did not allow them to perish. By awakening in them a deep yearning for His love, He drew them back to Himself and called them to repentance. In forgiveness God inspired Cyrus, the King of Persia, to issue a decree permitting the exiles to return to Jerusalem and help rebuild the temple.

In the Second Reading, St. Paul elaborates on the free gift of divine love, shown to us in Christ. He tells us that God loved us even when we were dead through our transgressions. He also adds that we have been saved through faith, not because of works, but because of God's great love for us. He shows us that our relationship with God is not one in which there is an equal giving and receiving. Instead it is a relationship of free love on the part of God, Who gives Himself to us without our being able to give Him anything in exchange. So, then, you might ask, "How are we supposed to respond to such love?"

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Whoever believes in him will not be condemned." (John 3:18)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Proud to be His “Humble” Servant

One of the articles in the CN that came out a couple of weeks ago reflected on the sin of gossip and how those who are guilty of it often don't even realize it. The same thing can be said of the sin of self-righteousness. Saturday's gospel about the Pharisee and the tax collector (Lk 18:10-14) illustrates this point very clearly. In fact, if asked, most people would usually identify with the humble tax collector. Even after being in BLD for many years, I find it not very difficult to imagine myself in the Pharisee's shoes. What do you suppose a modern-day Pharisee might be thinking?

- How many times I have told family and friends that thanks to BLD I now live a God-centered life, unlike other people I know who haven't changed, still caught up in their old ways, still "sinners." Don't these people realize that joining BLD can be the best decision they ever make?
- How many times have I said that I feel so blessed that I found BLD, a community of believers, just like me? As a result, now I go only to BLD events and only with my fellow believers. Why even associate with those other people, when I have BLD?
- How many times have I said that I feel so blessed, unlike some of my ME classmates who no longer go to Praise & Worship while my wife and I have attended religiously all these years? How many times have I said I feel so blessed because I fully participate in my BLD ministry, while the other members don't even show up?
- How many times have I watched people *not* do enough for their parish and wondered why they don't give or do more when I know for sure they can? Don't these people realize that all these things are for the Lord and His church?
- I used to be like those people; but since my spiritual conversion, I'm not anymore. Yes, now I am pleased to be able to say that I have become His humble servant.

Does any of that sound a little too familiar? The point is that there is a fine line between someone who *thinks* he/she is being a humble servant and someone who truly *is*, and that it takes a special kind of vigilance and spiritual maturity not to step over that line and become like the Pharisee, proud of his humility. Unfortunately, the more we grow spiritually, the more good we do, and the more generous we are, the more susceptible we become to the temptation of self-righteousness, the temptation to think like the Pharisee.

***“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled,
and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”***

(Lk 14:11)

The Naaman in Me

But his servants came up and reasoned with him. “My father,” they said, “if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, ‘Wash and be clean,’ should you do as he said.”

(2 Kgs 5:13)

Like Naaman, we always look for the “extraordinary” in things. The more mind-blowing, the more miraculous, the better we think something is. That's why the Israelites couldn't accept Jesus as their Savior, he wasn't flashy, wasn't extraordinary like David's bravery or Solomon's wisdom. He was the son of a carpenter, born in a stable; how could He save the world? Personally, I have experienced the Naaman in me many times and continue to struggle with it.

A few years ago my wife and I started to feel a void in our spiritual lives. We were searching for something to fill that void and get our spiritual life back. Then my brother and his wife started inviting us to attend an ME weekend. But did I say yes to his many invitations, of course not! I was looking for something different, something “extraordinary.” I didn't think a marriage encounter retreat could be the extraordinary event that would transform our spiritual lives.

After several years of convincing, we finally said yes. And when we got there, I was expecting some miraculous transformation, some kind of epiphany or flash-of-lightning moment; but there was nothing! I thought maybe the LSS would be it, especially after hearing some of the stories, but no, not at that one either. In fact nothing happened to me: no gift of tongues, no “slain-by-the-Spirit” experience, nothing at all. I am sure my shepherd was pretty disappointed. I went home feeling the same, nothing had changed. Of course, only years later did I start to realize how wrong I was.

I finally realized that God's healing power does not come from doing extraordinary works. That being a loving husband to my wife, a good father to my kids, and doing all the other ordinary things I do in my daily life, the way God planned it, is what it's all about...nothing fancy, nothing extraordinary.

Fr. Escriva said it best when he wrote; “How great a thing it is to be accompanying God through the faithful fulfillment of your ordinary daily duties, coming through struggles which fill Our Lord with joy, and which are known only to him and to each one of us. Rest assured that you will usually find few opportunities for dazzling deeds, one reason being that they seldom occur. On the other hand, you will not lack opportunities, in the small and ordinary things around you, of showing your love for Christ.” Amen!

SAINT DOMINIC



As my shepherd says: “You know how there’s an app for everything? Well there’s a patron saint for almost everything as well!” His analogy rings true when talking about St. Dominic, the Patron Saint of Astronomers. Finding this out made me wonder: “How does one even become a patron of *astronomers*?” So

in order to understand this, we have to find out about his upbringing and what he did. St. Dominic was born in 1170 and from a young age was committed to a career in the Church. Ordained at the age of 25, he was known to be extremely studious and charitable. During his time, St. Dominic helped reform the Cistercians and established institutes for women as well as for preaching friars. He founded an organization for the conversion of Albigensians (an heretical sect) and had it approved by Pope Honorius III. This organization eventually became the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) whose motto was: “To praise, to bless, to preach.” He spent the last few years of his life dedicating himself to his organization. Their goal prioritized conversion among many people. The Order of Preachers was remarkably successful due to the fact that they had a new approach. They utilized St. Dominic’s idea of merging the intellectual life with the common and with popular needs.

St. Dominic passed away on August 6th after being forced by illness to return home from a preaching tour in Hungary. His feast day was originally August 4th but was moved to August 8th after some reforms during the Second Vatican Council. His belief that knowledge would open people’s eyes to the truth about the Lord greatly affected all his causes and organizations. In the year 1234, St. Dominic was canonized. He was named the Patron of Astronomers and is often depicted with a star over his head because it is said, that when he was baptized, his mother saw a star shining from his chest. St. Dominic lived a life of humility and the pursuit of knowledge; and on his feast day, many people pray for guidance and light. Being in BLD, hearing the word “feast” makes us think about all of the good foods we long for and love to eat; but on the Feast of St. Dominic, we follow his example by longing for knowledge and enlightenment.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

St. John tells us in the Gospel Reading that the means of responding to such love is to believe in the saving power of Christ. ***“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.”*** (Jn 3:16) The Lord expects us to believe in Him who hangs on the Cross – the Redeemer. ***“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”*** (Jn 3:14-15) Believing in Jesus means something more than going to Mass on Sunday and something more than saying the right words and even something more than a particular feeling of faith. Believing means to accept the person of Christ: to have the intimate, unwavering conviction that by the virtue of the Cross we too shall be wholly glorified in eternity. It is recognizing Him as the Son of God, genuinely sharing in His life and surrendering ourselves out of love and, therefore, becoming like Him.

“Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (Jn 3:18) Faith brings us out of darkness into the light and sets us on the road to salvation. Therefore, we must share in the very life of the Savior, choosing it as the model of our own actions and pledging to live according to His example.

While faith is a supernatural free gift, it is also a virtue, a good habit, which every Christian should practice and develop. We need to make explicit acts of faith in order to make this virtue grow. Live in the light so that your works may be clearly seen as done in God (cf. Jn 3:21). We must respond to God’s love by actively proclaiming his word, professing his life, and witnessing to his glory.

Are we like Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night, afraid of what people might think had they seen him associating with Jesus? Are we those Catholics who are afraid to stand up for their religion when it is insulted and attacked? Are we the Nicodemus who, through fear of losing acceptance in a group of worthless esteem, are prepared to forego the esteem of God and the promise of salvation? Do we think it is enough to render good works for others, while excluding God in what we do?

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

We may be assisting others in their material needs, but what spiritual value can it have if we don't do it for the love of Jesus? During this season of Lent, let us dig deeper into our hearts and find out where we really stand. Do we stand in the light or do we stand in darkness? Or are we standing half and half, one foot in the Light of God and one foot in the darkness of this world?

DIRECTION:

- **Live your covenant faithfully so that your works may be clearly seen as done in God.**

NEWS (from page 1)

The "Ate and Kuya" of Singles Ministry were there to give support to their younger brothers and sisters, along with the Liturgical Ministry, ME #40

Immersion Couples, Eileen O'Hara from St. Antoninus, Lito Vibar for DMP CCD Group, the YE #21 Sponsoring class, Youth Auxies, Youth Adult Core and Adult Auxies. The new generation of DYC and Praise Coordinators stepped up for their first major retreat.



As one conduit of God's Love commented, "The best Life in the Spirit Seminar I have ever seen or experienced." The weekend was a success, as the lambs were open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which rained upon them like tongues of fire.

Indeed, God saw all that He had made, and it was very good (Gn 1:31).

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Mar 20	Formation
			Mar 27	Management
			Apr 3	Mission
			Apr 10	Pastoral

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,502	\$27,881
Mission Collections	\$200	\$5,410

Thank you for your continued support!
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Apr 18	New Creation Realities/Growth In Prayer – LSS 1-44 Encounter with Jesus (Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel) – LSS 1-43 Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-40 Healing And Deliverance – LSS 1-40
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
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samrory@gmail.com

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.
Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

Divine Mercy Parish Tenebrae (Shadow)

in its 7th Year - supported by BLD Praise

April 1, 2015 (HOLY WEDNESDAY)

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A Way to Prepare for the Holy Triduum

Uniquely includes Ancient readings, Scriptures, Latin and Sacred Hymn and Contemporary Christian Praise Songs!

Come, Reflect and Prepare Yourself on Christ's Passion!

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 ~5 PM) – Sun (6/28/2015 ~ 5PM)

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Basking Ridge NJ, 07920; (908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 12

Bulletin Edition

March 20, 2015

Pope Francis: You Are Called to Bring Christian Values Where You Work

Vatican City/031615/Zenit.org/ Deborah Castellano Lubov

Francis made this statement Saturday afternoon when he met members of the Rome-based lay association 'Seguimi' ('Follow Me') on Saturday on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

"You are called to permeate Christian values in the environments in which you work with the witness and the word, meeting people in their concrete situations, so that they have full dignity and are reached by salvation in Christ," the Pope stressed in his address.

"I encourage you to be lay on the front line," he continued, "to feel an active part in the mission of the Church, to live your own secularity dedicating to the realities of the earthly city: the family, the professions, social life in the different expressions."

If you do this, he stressed, like leaven, you can help live the Gospel through a witness of faith, hope and charity.

So many times, even in the Church, he noted, we believe we are good Christians because we do social works and well-organized charity work.

While acknowledging these are good things, he underscored: "We must not forget that the sap that brings life and transforms hearts is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ."

"Let Him, the Lord, occupy the center of your heart and of your work. And remaining firmly united to him as branches to the vine, you can go to the suburbs of the world," he stressed.

A program of Christian life for the laity, with clear and challenging objectives, Francis said, is an effective way to walk in the world. He noted there are many ways of participation and commitment which all people can achieve this.

COUNSELS

BE LIKE JESUS!

THEME: **We are a reflection of God's love when we follow the Lord and serve Him in His people.**

WORD: **Jer 31:31-34 / Ps 51:3-4,12-13,14-15
Heb 5:7-9 / Jn 12:20-33**

ORDER: **"Whoever serves me must follow me."
(Jn 12:26)**

REFLECTION:

The first reading from Jeremiah shifts the focus of the covenant from the nation of Israel to the individual person's heart. **"I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God and they shall be my people"** (Jer 31:33b). The new covenant does not give a new set of rules, but it tells us that it is now written in our hearts. We will learn from and respond to God directly as He speaks directly and individually to each one of us.

This Sunday's Gospel reading underlines the paradox at the heart of Christian faith and life. Only by death comes life, it is when a man buries his personal aims and ambitions to follow God's call that he begins to be of real use to God. By dying to his personal desires and ambitions, a man becomes a servant of God. Those who serve others motivated by the love of Christ are the people whom the world remembers because the love of Christ is the only true wealth of life.

How does it translate in community? In the Gospel, Jesus says, **"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 12:24.) In our renewal, we have shed most of our old self, and we are now new creations in Christ.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"... I will be their God and they shall be my people." (Jer 31:33)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

FORGIVENESS

Jesus said to his disciples: ***“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful”*** (Lk 6:36).

Out of the ten synonyms of “mercy” cited in the Thesaurus, three words struck me: compassion, forgiveness, and sympathy. From these synonyms, how do we practice mercy in our daily encounters with our family, friends or strangers? When we encounter a homeless person, do we show contempt because the person does not meet our standards of being “human” or compassion, by going out of our way to offer money or food? When a loved one hurts us intentionally, do we easily accept the person’s request for reconciliation, or do we hold the person in contempt and continue to let bitterness rule our heart and mind? When an acquaintance or co-worker encounters a trial in life, do we reach out with compassion; or do we simply ignore what happened, thinking and even judging, that it was his fault and that he is deserving of such a fate.

“Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven”(Lk 6:37). How do we measure ourselves against these instructions from our Lord? How do we keep our thoughts clean and pure so that we avoid judging others and show compassion and support instead? When the grades on our children’s report cards do not meet our measure or standards, do we immediately express our dismay and show a demeaning attitude instead of providing them with a positive encouragement that builds confidence for them to do better? Indeed, cultivating compassion, forgiveness and sympathy requires a conscious effort of setting aside our own self-righteousness and pride.

“Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap” (Lk 6:38a). Reflecting on this verse, do we sometimes wonder why others are more blessed when we feel that we are more deserving because of our superior charitable works and prayers? Is this self-righteous mentality hindering us from being generous and merciful? How do we let go of this pride and simply share our blessings without hesitation and need for appreciation and recognition?

“For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you” (Lk 6:38b). Yes, let us remember these words of wisdom: We are equal in God’s eyes and as His children, let us live harmoniously through forgiveness and mercy, and accept each other’s shortcomings with understanding and compassion.

Keeping the Sabbath HOLY

In Genesis 2:1-3a we read: ***“Thus the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing; he rested... God blessed the seventh day and made it holy.”*** The Sabbath was created by God not for Himself but for man to know that he should stop working, turn to the Creator, and worship! Since seven is a deeply symbolic number in Scripture, signifying perfection, God wanted us to exercise our role as priest, as we are anointed at baptism. With the Third Commandment given through Moses on Mount Sinai, God calls us to ***“remember the sabbath day—keep it holy...You shall not do any work”*** (Ex 20:8,10a).

Should we then just sit around twiddling our thumbs? No! We should turn our minds to the things of heaven, to our Creator! We should meet in the church to sing songs of praise, to bring our Love offering, and to thank Him for all He has provided during the previous week.

We should rest our bodies and our minds from the concerns of our daily work, which can be burdensome. We should pray for one another, petition for our sick, care for the needy, and inspire and encourage them to participate in worship and by sharing the word of God with them. We should continue the Great Commission by bringing the Gospel (Good News) and the love of God to the ends of the earth.

In Matthew 5:17, Jesus said ***“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.”*** Yet in Mark 2:27-28, He reminded us that ***“The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. That is why the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath”***

Is this a contradiction? No! Jesus healed the sick on the Sabbath. He proclaimed the Gospel. He chased demons on the Sabbath! But He also let His disciples pick the grains from the field on the Sabbath day because they were hungry and needed food for their bodies, which are the temple of God, just as King David and his men did when they ate the consecrated food in the temple. Anything done in the spirit of giving glory to God is keeping the Sabbath holy.

Let us on the Sabbath day stand in front of Him, to whom all glory and praise is due, and worship!



SAINT JOSEPH



St Joseph is known as The Foster Father of Jesus, Patron Saint of the Universal Church, and the Patron of a Happy Death. A carpenter by trade, St Joseph is the patron saint of carpenters and as well as of workers. He is also known to be the Patron Saint of countries like Belgium, Canada, China, Italy, Peru, Russia and Vietnam.

We find very few passages in the Bible about St. Joseph. He is characterized as obedient, faithful, meek and humble, but fearless. Betrothed to a very young pregnant woman he never touched, he took Mary into his protection (Lk 2:4-5). His unflinching trust and obedience to God exemplified servanthood and courage.

In Pope Francis' Coat of Arms, on the lower right is a Spikenard Flower, the symbol of St Joseph, along with a star on the lower left, the symbol of Mother Mary. Bearing these on his Papal Shield shows his devotion to the Holy Family.

His Holiness called him "A strong man of silence" as he shared with us in his homily while in the Philippines his "St. Joseph sleeping Statue." He reminded us that St. Joseph rested with God every night and it was in those quiet moments when God revealed to him His divine plan.

Pope Francis challenged us to be like St. Joseph, "Resting with The Lord, rising up with Mary and Jesus and being a prophetic voice."

God entrusted Jesus and Mary to Joseph to make a home and be the protector of the Holy Family. Guided by God, his persistent selfless obedience stands out. The Pope reminded us, that as Christians, all of us are called by God to make a home for Christ in our hearts, our families and in our community.

His Holiness' final word to the people in the Philippines was to protect the family, and he reminded us that 2000 years ago the Holy Family too was in constant threat by adversaries similar to what we experience in today's society. Following the examples of Jesus, Mary and Joseph who showed us the unique role of each individual in the family, united in prayer and deriving our strength from God, all things are possible and these trials will never prevail.

St. Joseph's humility, meekness and obedience made him the perfect man to care for and watch over God's chosen family.

St Joseph, protector of The Church, pray for us and our families, Amen!

Philippine Star, Pope's final homily in Philippines: Protect the family

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Then, there are disciples who are always available, never inconvenienced, who never count the cost: those who give their love to the children (Mark 10 and John 6), and those who care for the elderly. There are disciples who accept a terminal disease with serenity, even joy. For some people, the loss of life is literal; they are ready to be called to martyrdom for the gospel.

Jesus also tells us "*Whoever serves me must follow me*" (Jn 12:26). Like the rich young man in Matthew, we ask individually, where else do we need to grow to follow Him? We must have the love and hunger for the Scriptures, not to be biblical scholars, but to help us live the Gospel. We need to have our quiet moments with Jesus daily, to listen for His message, so we become attuned to His voice in our silence. We learn from the shared reflections from the internet, but we must discover the joy of His words in our own individual reflections.

We need to regularly partake of the Sacraments that Jesus gave us to give us the strength to live in this secular world. In the Sacraments, we feel the physical connection and the assurance that Jesus Christ loves us. He gave His life to save us; and now He is living at our side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free us.

We need to know why we stay and serve in community. Community fills us spiritually, but it also covertly fulfills our desire to be recognized and be relevant. When we get hurt or pruned we cannot be the whisperers and grumblers that sow division that weakens and destroys community. Let us grow to be charitable and lovingly correct our brethren, so we can all be effective evangelizers in our actions. We need to be reconciled with each other within and outside of community; let us be like the psalmist who asks for more than forgiveness. Let us ask for total removal of sin, with the offense blotted from memory, as if it never occurred, and ask for a renewed spirit.

There is a great destiny before us. Yes, we are called to serve, but we also need to grow in our love and adoration for Jesus. The gospels ask us to follow Jesus, to be more like Jesus, to be holy as Jesus.

But we all have to remember, as St. Paul tells us today, "*He learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him*" (Heb 5:8). It didn't come easy to Jesus either. He had said, "*I am troubled now.*" He knew what was coming and He Himself had to die to His own desire to "*let this Cup pass from me*" yet, He obeyed the Father.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

May we make ourselves a true temple of the Spirit, a place of prayer and encounter with Christ so that we can truly reflect the image of Christ within us. And then no one will say to us, "We want to see Jesus!" because he already sees Jesus in all of us.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Bear your sufferings with serenity and joy in your heart.
2. Offer sacrifice through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
3. Go to reconciliation.

NEWS (from page 1)

"Be vigilant on your spiritual journey and help yourself to practice more and mutual charity," he said, noting this requires being able to defend one's self from "selfishness individualistic" in order to be "true witnesses of the Gospel."

The Holy Father concluded, imparting his blessing and telling them not to forget to pray for him.

A GOD-MOMENT REFLECTION

Singles Ministry: Missionary Heart at Hamilton Nursing Home

My weekend started meaningful with the Friday worship and it was followed by the Nursing home visit.

I was asked to share my insights/reflection/experience during the visit since it was my first time, but definitely not my last. As we walked into the conference room where the residents were, I felt really sad because I know it's not easy for them to be away from their families.

When we started the short worship, I felt better since I saw some of them were trying to interact, and some of them were really happy to see us especially when we sang songs of praise. We may not have given them the same happiness as when their families visit, but somehow, I'm sure our visit made them feel that they are not alone.

It is a very humbling experience to be in that room especially sharing God's word with them and letting them know that they are loved and that there are people praying for them.

So I encourage everyone who hasn't been to a nursing home to come next time and be a blessing to other people.

Thank you. "A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal." (Steve Maraboli)

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Mar 27	Management
			Apr 3	Mission
			Apr 17	Evangelization

LORD'S PROVISION
PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,595	\$31,476
Mission Collections	\$81	\$5,476

Thank you for your continued support!
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Apr 18	New Creation Realities/Growth In Prayer – LSS 1-44 Encounter with Jesus (Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel) – LSS 1-43 Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-40 Healing And Deliverance – LSS 1-40
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

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April 10-12, 2015

For details, contact: Lito/Gigi Vibar: LitoGigi@Vibar.com

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Open to all couples who are not married in the Church
April 22, 2015, 6:30 pm., St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ
For more details, contact Ray/Susie Atienza (908-463-0449 or 908-463-0432). Deadline for submission. March 31, 2015

PRAYER HEALING 1 RETREAT

June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM 7 PM

Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) at samrory@gmail.com

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.
Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

Divine Mercy Parish Tenebrae (Shadow)

in its 7th Year - supported by BLD Praise

April 1, 2015 (HOLY WEDNESDAY)

7:00 PM – Divine Mercy Parish Church

A Way to Prepare for the Holy Triduum
Uniquely includes Ancient readings, Scriptures, Latin and Sacred Hymn and Contemporary Christian Praise Songs!

Come, Reflect and Prepare Yourself on Christ's Passion!

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 ~5 PM) – Sun (6/28/2015 ~ 5PM)

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries
3575 Basking Ridge NJ, 07920; (908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 13

Bulletin Edition

March 27, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Teaching Ministry offers TDP

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”
(Mt 28:19-20)

Last weekend, twenty-nine (29) aspiring teachers answered the call of the New Evangelization and completed their TDP (Teacher’s Development Program) at Divine Mercy Auditorium.

Fifteen (15) from BLD Newark: Cindy Alegria, Rose Chavez, Gale de Leon, Libby Maljian, Patrick Mcgrail, Efrain Ortiz, Wanda Ortiz, Emma Pepino, Mike Pepino, Jean Richard, Marie Richard, George Rodriguez, Sari Rodriguez, Alyssa Sta. Ana and Lucille Vizcayno.

Eight (8) from our BLD Newark Youth Ministry: Jules Almazar, Dana de Castro, Kyle Flores, Kevin Larobis, Zac Larobis, Anthony Lucero, Andrew Olazo and Kristian Quevada.

Three (3) from Albany: Sofia Almonte, Ofie Rebanal and Raphy Rebanal and three (3) from BLD North Carolina: Rummel Balbastro - Youth, Tom Siatom and Bea Syquia.

It was a weekend of mentoring, discovering and exploring in which everyone was given a chance to demonstrate their special gifts of teaching in their own unique way. Special thanks and gratitude go to their shepherds, for their persistent encouragement to develop this special gift and to all the teachers, the praise and the auxies who tirelessly served and shared their time, talents and treasure to make this a fruitful and Spirit filled weekend.

TRULY THE SON OF GOD!

THEME: We are a reflection of God’s love when we follow the Lord and serve Him in His people.

WORD: Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9,17-18,19-20,23-24
Phil 2:6-11; Mk 14:1-15:47

ORDER: *“Every knee should bend...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”*
(Phil 2:10-11)

REFLECTION:

The gospel according to Mark dominates this Palm Sunday’s liturgy and introduces us to one of the most violent contrasts of Jesus’ mission on earth: a contrast of Jesus divinity vs. humanity. When Jesus divested himself totally of His divinity, even to the point of utter loneliness in His prayer at Gethsemane and of absolute abandonment on the cross, we heard the acclamation by the Roman centurion: *“Truly this man was the Son of God!”* Yet another witness exclaimed that this man is evidently human, even to the point of crying out, *“in a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi lema sabachthani?’ which is translated, ‘My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?’”* These are the last recorded words of Jesus in Mark’s gospel reflecting that this man is that human!

Throughout Mark’s gospel Jesus continuously appears to be human, much more than He does in other evangelists. As an example, Jesus could be very angry and give “a stern warning” even in the midst of His miracles (Mk 1:25&43). Jesus could be only half awake and half asleep when first aroused during the storm at sea (Mk 1:44). Another example is when the silence is broken by Peter’s confession: “You are the Messiah,” yet at once Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about Him (Mk 8:29-30). *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“...you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”(Mk 1:62)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

God does not condemn

Then neither do I condemn you.



In John 8:11b, Jesus tells the woman who had committed adultery that he does not condemn her and admonishes her to sin no more. Scott Lewis, in his commentary on John, points out that this story is more about non-condemnation than forgiveness. Jesus did not condemn the woman; rather it was the crowd that sought out her punishment. They were eager to mete out the punishment that was [listed] in Leviticus, and to put Jesus on the spot. At this time, the Romans had occupied Jerusalem. It was against Roman law to kill; however, under Jewish law the punishment for adultery was death by stoning, and either choice was a pitfall. I didn't understand the nuances of the Pharisees' accusation of the woman but still marveled at the way that Jesus resolved the situation without bloodshed. The crowd on the other hand, who just minutes before had gathered around Jesus to listen to His teaching, was eager to hear her be condemned.

Later in John Jesus says, ***"I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world."*** (Jn 12:47b) Jesus never condemns us; it is however our own turning away from God's word that does. Rejection of Jesus' love and teachings will cause judgment; the word that He spoke and that we did not accept judges us (Jn 12:48b). It is ironic that Jesus, who was convicted of no crime, was condemned. Both Pilate and Herod found him innocent, and yet the crowd demanded that Jesus be condemned to die by crucifixion (Lk 23:14-21).

Looking back I realize that, as a child, I always saw the story of the woman caught in adultery as a story of redemption. Jesus does not condemn us no matter what we have done. As an adult, I reflect again and suddenly realize that in so many ways I am part of the crowd, eager to see justice and quick to condemn without compassion. But then I also see God's love and realize how blessed I am because, even when I am convicted, I am never condemned since Jesus has already paid the price for my sins.

I had no inkling of the layered meaning that these choices presented, but even as a child, I had always thought of Jesus as a loving person, one who would never cause the death of anyone.



A JOY DRENCHED ESSENCE

For the longest while, I've been looking for the words that most accurately describe the feeling of finding Christ, of finding Him, not just once, but many times such as in the warmth of the spring sunshine, or in the hop in my step when I think of Him, or even in the midst of a harsh storm when I become aware that His peace resides deep within.

I also find Him, many times, in BLD. Often when I stop to think about it, I realize that my family's involvement in the community has been rewarded by many great moments: when He enables us to shepherd and touch others' lives, when I see old and young alike, truly enjoying worshipping God, when I see my very own kids, with *mucho gusto*, playing music and praising Him.

According to some language cd's that my wife and I listen to, "That's great!" translates into Italian as *"Fantastico!"* That's what all those moments are... *fantastic* moments. *"Fantastico"* because somehow, that word seems to say more than just "that's great."

Still, recently, I discovered an even better word than *fantastico* to describe that elated feeling. And somewhat ironically enough, it's in a novel written by a Jewish Rabbi back in the 1930's, about another Jewish Rabbi in first century Palestine, who had lost and then rediscovered God. He described finding God, as a "JOY DRENCHED ESSENCE".

And I think we find that in BLD.

A year ago, someone from our ME class was diagnosed with a very aggressive lymphoma; and I thought that BLD would not be the same at all without seeing him and his wife during his 6-month treatment. And even though that treatment had not yet started, I felt like I missed them already. But I soon found myself savoring even more that "JOY DRENCHED ESSENCE" that I knew would be there the next time I was to see them again in person, and especially when they returned to where they belong – with us in BLD. Well, it happened last November, at a Thanksgiving mass for his recovery; it was truly a "JOY DRENCHED" reunion.

But super *fantastico* moments don't happen only on special BLD occasions. Already this year, it was there at the March for Life when the young crowds were cheering for Life.

MISSION POSSIBLE



*Every day it seems
And especially during Lent,
We are faced with this query:*

*“Your mission, should you choose to accept it,
Is to praise and love God.”*

So... will you praise Him?

*In your thoughts?
In your actions?
Will you praise Him?*

*As you wake up?
As your day unfolds?
When you rest as it ends?*

*Will you praise and love Him?
Despite the world’s noises?
How about in its quiet places?
... In your heart?*

*Will you praise Jesus?
by thinking of what He has said and what He has
done
by talking with Him, by listening to Him,
by thanking and by following Him?*

*But really, every day, these are questions
We must ask ourselves ...and answer*

*Am I loving Him by loving my neighbor?
Am I contrite when I am unable?*

*Because while we want to think
That finding me and self-actualization are what we
need
That’s only truly realized when we pursue,
...Not just ourselves...*

*First, we must find God, 'cause then we’d realize
That life is lived to its fullest when we answer:
“Yes Lord, I love You,
and I will praise You in all that I do.
And YES LORD!
... I ACCEPT THIS MISSION!”*

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jesus is not the kind of Messiah that people presumed Him would be. Some scholars refer to this phenomenon as the “messianic secret” in Mark’s gospel.

Jesus’ ministry continues until His messianic entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. In Mark’s gospel, the tone is subdued, especially when compared to the other gospels; and the triumphant procession ends abruptly. Jesus enters the temple, alone, with only the twelve. **“He looked around at everything, and since it was already late, went out to Bethany...”** (Mk 11:11)

Only after Jesus’ death amid desolation and mockery does the Roman centurion acclaim Him the “Son of God.” On the lips of a pagan this phrase must be taken in its obvious meaning: Jesus is divine. It frequently has a different connotation, however, when read in the Hebrew Bible. At this point, Jesus’ messianic mission reaches to the entire world. The Jewish Messiah, confessed by Peter, is the divine Savior of all people. **“Every knee should bend...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”** (Phil 2:10-11)

What convinces all men and women of Jesus’ divinity are those extraordinary virtues of humility, patience, forbearance, peace, strength, interior integrity, and total self-giving, which He possessed. The Suffering Servant of Isaiah prepared the Jews for the messianic role of Jesus. Even though the Servant was shamed by people spitting on his face and pulling on his beard, he still declared: **“I am not disgraced... knowing that I shall not be put to shame.”** (Is 50:7)

Jesus’ divinity in Mark’s gospel is ultimately established, not by His miracles, but by His humanity in its total weakness. Then it became evident, in a way understandable to all sincere men and women, that Jesus was sustained by a power beyond human control, that this power was rooted in the depths of His being; it came from Jesus Himself. If so, what Jesus revealed was more than just a power. It was a Divine Person. “Clearly this man is the Son of God!”

Almighty and ever living God, You have given the human race Jesus Christ our Savior as a model of humility. He fulfilled Your will by becoming man and giving His life on the cross. Help us to bear witness and be a reflection of Your love as we follow Jesus and serve Him in His people. Allow us to follow His examples even in suffering and make us worthy to share in His Resurrection. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be humble and obedient like Jesus.
2. Participate in observance of the Holy Week.

A JOY DRENCHED (from page 3)

It was there upon seeing the Youth these past few months, eagerly YLSS-shepherding in the classrooms and nooks and crannies of St. Mary's. It was there at each Friday worship, when despite the snow and the cold of winter, the community was lifted up by faith-filled prayer leaders, still joyful despite problems besetting them, even life threatening illnesses.

This year, it seems that challenges continue to happen and trouble still lurks. Three months into 2015, both in BLD and elsewhere, I've already been to too many funeral wakes. And yet, through the anxieties and the mourning, clinging to Jesus has this promise: that ultimately, we will experience HIS JOY DRENCHED ESSENCE.

Lord, grant us the strength to always believe in that promise.

NEWS (from page 1)

Congratulations once again and many blessings to all. May The Master Teacher continue to guide each one of us as we continue to faithfully serve Him through our witnessing in this new vocation to which we all have been called.

"He said to them, 'Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.'" (Mk 16:15)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

The Divine Mercy Parish cordially invites you to a Study Program on
"The Eucharist" by Fr. Robert Barron, the Source and Summit of our Christian Faith
 A 4 week session every Wednesday night

Dates: **April 8, 15, 22, 29**
 Time: **7:30 PM- 9:00 pm**
 Venue: **DMP Connell Hall.**
Registration is FREE.
 Please register now, space is limited.
 Study guide booklets will be purchased upon registration, cost is \$10.00.
 Contacts: **Ray/Susie Atienza- 908-463-0449/908-463-0432**

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Apr 3	Mission
			Apr 10	Pastoral
			Apr 17	Evangelization
			Apr 24	Formation

LORD'S PROVISION
PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$1,255	\$32,731
Mission Collections	\$75	\$5,566

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 14

Bulletin Edition

April 10, 2015

Pope Francis' Urbi et Orbi Message



“Love has triumphed over hatred, life has conquered death, light has dispelled the darkness!”

Excerpt/Vatican City/040515/Zenit.org/Junno Arocho Esteves)

Jesus Christ is Risen!

Love has triumphed over hatred, life has conquered death, light has dispelled the darkness!

Out of love for us, Jesus Christ stripped Himself of His divine glory, emptied Himself, took on the form of a slave and humbled Himself even to death, death on a cross. For this reason God exalted Him and made Him Lord of the universe. Jesus is Lord!

By His Death and Resurrection, Jesus shows everyone *the way* to life and happiness: this way is *humility*, which involves *humiliation*. This is the path which leads to glory. *Only those who humble themselves can go towards the “things that are above”, towards God* (cf. Col 3:1-4). The proud look “down from above”; the humble look “up from below”.

On Easter morning, alerted by the women, Peter and John ran to the tomb. They found it open and empty. Then they drew near and “*bent down*” in order to enter it. To enter into the mystery, we need to “*bend down*”, to abase ourselves. Only those who abase themselves understand the glorification of Jesus and are able to follow Him on His way.

The world proposes that we put ourselves forward at all costs, that we compete, that we prevail... But Christians, by the grace of Christ, dead and risen, are *the seeds of another humanity*, in which we seek to live in service to one another, not to be arrogant, but rather respectful and ready to help.

Continued on page 4

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS EASTER FAITH

THEME: **We seek what is above when we believe in Jesus, though have not seen Him.**

WORD: Acts 4:32-35/Ps 118:2-4,13,15, 22-24
1 Jn 5:1-6 / Jn 20:19-31

ORDER: **“Do not be unbelieving, but believe.”
(Jn 20:27)**

REFLECTION:



On the first Easter, Jesus Christ rose from the dead to a life that never ends, bringing God's pure light to a world of darkness. This Sunday's Gospel narrates how the Risen Lord broke into the darkness that enshrouded the Apostles' faith, enlightening them to the truth of God in Christ.

The Apostles' faith died too

The Apostles left everything behind to heed Jesus' call to follow Him and become fishers of men. Their faith grew as they got to know Jesus in His preaching, teaching, miracles and holiness of life. Yet when Jesus was arrested, “*they all left him and fled*” (Mk 14:50). Jesus' death shattered their hope that He would be the one to redeem Israel (Lk 24:21). Even after news of the empty tomb and other disciples seeing Jesus (Jn 20:6-8,18; Lk 24:33-35), they remained in fear within the tomb of their locked doors.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“You may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.”

(John 20:31)

PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

What is a promise? Webster's Dictionary defines it as "a pledge that one will or will not do something; a basis or cause for high hopes or expectation." We often use that word in statements we make to our children or to other people to shore up or support what we say. And when we fail to keep our word or promise it reveals something about our character.

God's promises are unlike our promises. God always keeps His word. He never fails to do what He says He will or will not do. When He makes a promise or gives you His word, you can believe it; He will keep it; it will come to pass.

God gives us a promise concerning the Holy Spirit. He gives us His word through His son Jesus. In fact, He gives us His word concerning the Holy Spirit going all the way back to the New Covenant in Ezekiel 36: 26-27. ***"I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you... I will put my spirit within you so that you walk in my statutes, observe my ordinances, and keep them."*** This New Covenant promise is the foundational promise of the Holy Spirit. God promised to send His Holy Spirit upon His people so that they might live life the way He intended, in His power and in His Glory. Paul wrote in Rom. 6:3 that we ***"were baptized into Christ Jesus."*** It is in Christ that we may live a life in the power of the Holy Spirit, a life guided, empowered and led by the Spirit.

What's at stake with the promise of the Holy Spirit? The promise is that the Father will send the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name. It is Jesus' character that is at stake in the promise of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' word is at stake; His work, His life within us is at stake.

The promise of the Holy Spirit has to do with how we live our Christian life. The Spirit is our guide, our leader, our revealer, our illuminator. The Spirit is our life. He is the help we need to understand that we are sinners or not perfect. The Spirit is the help we need to know, to serve, and to love God. He is the help we need to be born again. The help we need every moment of our lives.

May each and every one of us claim the promise that God made through His Son, Jesus Christ, and live a life in His holy Spirit, a life full of grace and peace.

What do we do now?

"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, 'What are we to do, my brothers?'" (Acts 2:37)

Having been in the community for the past 2 years, I wonder to myself what my life would have been if I had passed up another invitation for an encounter weekend, as I had done so many times before. I still remember the time when my life was played out like a regular routine or drill: taking care of the kids, attending to the family's needs, going to work, etc. It was all so simple and completely predictable. Because of my good relationship with my family and the spiritual closeness I was living with the Lord, I thought I had everything I needed to sustain me for the rest of my life. *Father, please forgive me; for I have failed to recognize Your deep Love for me and have neglected to see the real beauty of Your creation and to hear Your call to service.*

Like those who testified against Jesus, we too are guilty of His sufferings and death each time we commit sin. I began to recognize the many times I hesitated to extend myself to those around me who are in need: to my family, when I missed opportunities to spend more time with them by immersing myself in my work; to my church, when I failed to reach out more and share my time, treasures, and talents for the glory of our Lord; to my brothers and sisters who I've met along the way, when I could have been more helpful in their times of need; or when I failed to defend, live, and proclaim the Word of God.

Each one of us is being called to serve and be a good witness to His true Faith and Love for us. As He called His apostles and disciples before and after His resurrection, Jesus continues to invite us to take part in His Body, His Church. The Church is universal, but guided by the Holy Spirit, it speaks only *one* language, the language of the truth of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ. All that has happened, from the beginning of time until now, and what is to come tomorrow, is all part of His perfect plan for us. In the end, it will be Jesus to whom we must give an account. With all that He has given us and all that we know of Him, ***"What are we to do, my brothers?"***

Show Me the Path

“You will show me the path to life, bounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever.” (Ps 16:11)

Some of us have a vision of our future, perhaps consisting of choosing the right college, where to spend summer vacation, which school to send our children, the type of job we will work in, or when we plan to retire. These are our short-term and long-term goals, which may include goals within a span of 1 year, 5 years, or 10 years. However, may I turn the question around and ask, “Where does God see us in 5 years?”

How many of us confide in God and ask Him to show us the path, His path, and where He wants to lead us? Sometimes we do not know God’s way, but God will certainly show us the way if we just listen to Him. He is around all the time. But are we in tune with him? In our prayer life, let us be proactive, continually asking where Our Lord wants us to be instead of being reactive, asking Our Lord to fix a problem due to our own unawareness of His path.

Here are some ways we may be proactive in following God’s path for us. If we do the following, then surely, God will show us our path in life:

1. **Soak up His Word. Read the daily Mass readings.** Read passages or chapters from the Bible daily. He will speak to us through His Word.
2. **Pray for the intercession of Our Blessed Mother Mary:** to Jesus through Mary. She will help us find God’s path.
3. **Be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.** When those promptings keep knocking at the door of our hearts, then for sure, we should pray and seek the courage to answer His call.

Let us be obedient to His will, just as Jesus was obedient to His Father’s will even when He knew He would suffer and die on the cross for us, so that we may have everlasting life. Let us imitate Jesus’ prayer in Matthew 26:39: *“My Father...not as I will, but as you will.”* Doubts may come, but we have to trust and believe that His way is the only way. In return, we will receive the graces and glory and share in the joy of Jesus’ resurrection.

Listen to Him and He will show you the path. He gave up His own life for us. What more love could He show us? Let us return the favor by being His disciples and following where He leads.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

The Risen Lord resurrects the Apostles’ faith

The Risen Lord did not stand at the door and knock (Rev 3:20). He stood among the apostles despite locked doors (John 20:19,26). He gave them His peace (v.19,21,26) to vanquish fear. He showed them His hands and side (v.20,27) as proof that He was the Crucified and Risen Lord, appealing to their faith and reason, which St. John Paul II said “are the two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth.” The Lord commissioned them, breathed on them the Holy Spirit and empowered them to forgive sins (v.21-23).

The Apostles’ reactions

The disciples rejoiced when they saw Jesus. They promptly testified to Thomas that *“we have seen the Lord”* (John 20:25). But Thomas asked to see and touch the Lord’s wounds before he would believe. Why? His friends’ testimony went against his personal knowledge that Jesus was arrested, crucified, died and was buried. And his friends were not exactly fully trustworthy: one denied Jesus, they all deserted Him in His time of need. To redeem Thomas, the Lord appeared a second time. He invited Thomas to look at and touch His wounds. Seeing the proof he had asked for, Thomas gave his free and absolute assent to God, calling Jesus, *“my Lord and my God!”* (v.28).

Lessons for us

Jesus’ words, *“Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed”* (John 20:29) are directed to us who live in the age of the Holy Spirit. Just as the Spirit raised Jesus from the dead (Romans 8:11), He will give life and strength to our faith too. *“No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the holy Spirit”* (1Cor 12:3). *“The Spirit is the one that testifies and the Spirit is truth”* (1 John 5:6).

DIRECTION:

- Have faith in the love of God and obey His commandments.

“Outside of the cross of Jesus Christ, there is no hope in this world. That Cross and Resurrection at the core of the Gospel is the only hope for humanity. Wherever you go, ask God for wisdom on how to get that Gospel in, even in the toughest situations of life.” -Ravi Zacharias

NEWS (from page 1)

This is not weakness, but true strength! Those who bear within them God's power, His love and His justice, do not need to employ violence; they speak and act with the power of truth, beauty and love.

From the Risen Lord we ask the grace not to succumb to the pride which fuels violence and war, but to have the humble courage of pardon and peace.

We ask Jesus, the Victor over death, to lighten the sufferings of our many brothers and sisters who are persecuted for His name, and of all those who suffer injustice as a result of ongoing conflicts and violence. There are many!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PRAYER HEALING I RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM 7 PM
Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) Sam/Rory Olaso samrory@ymail.com

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS. Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

The Divine Mercy Parish cordially invites you to a Study Program on
“The Eucharist” by Fr. Robert Barron, the Source and Summit of our Christian Faith
 A 4 week session every Wednesday night

Dates: **April 8, 15, 22, 29**
 Time: **7:30 PM- 9:00 pm**
 Venue: **DMP Connell Hall.**
Registration is FREE.
 Please register now, space is limited.
 Study guide booklets will be purchased upon registration, cost is \$10.00.
 Contact Persons: **Ray/Susie Atienza-(908-463-0449)**
(908-463-0432)



Moments

- Happy moments* **Praise God**
- Difficult moments* **Seek God**
- Quiet moments* **Worship God**
- Painful moments* **Trust God**
- Every moment* **Thank God**

LORD'S PROVISION

MARCH 27, 2015

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,776	\$36,507
Mission Collections	\$37	\$5,603

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

Thank you for your continued support!
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Apr 18 New Creation Realities/Growth In Prayer – LSS 1-44
 Encounter with Jesus (Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel) – LSS 1-43
 Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-40
 Healing And Deliverance – LSS 1-40

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time: Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY TEACHING
May 9, 2015 ~ 12:00-4:00 PM
Connell Hall, Rahway, NJ

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

“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.” (John 15:16)

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 45

When: May 29-31, 2015
 Where: Hotel Executive Suites
 30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008
 Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

SINGLE ENCOUNTER 34

When: May 22-24, 2015
 Where: Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY 10524
 Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos: 908.208.2191 ~ justin.bustos@gmail.com or Danny/Cora Labung: 559.776.8324/dancorlab@gmail.com/danlab7@gmail.com

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 ~5 PM) – Sun (6/28/2015 ~ 5PM)
 Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries
 3575 Basking Ridge NJ,07920; (908) 647-1777
 Cost: \$160/person
 Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Apr 10	Mission
			Apr 17	Pastoral
			Apr 24	Evangelization
			May 1	Formation

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 15

Bulletin Edition

April 17, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

LSS rocks with Divine Mercy



Divine Mercy Sunday, at the auditorium of Divine Mercy Parish, started with a loud chorus of *Alleluias* from the lambs, their shepherds and all who took part in LSS #44 this past weekend. The previous day, insightful teachings from Fr. Paul and sharings from both young and older community members touched many hearts, bringing tears to more than a few eyes. Then, during the Seminar's Healing and Reconciliation, there were more tears which later turned into joyful tears as healing and reconciliation began for the lambs and their loved ones, even those who were only there in spirit. As for the Baptism itself, the Holy Spirit once again brought His awesome Power, making it seem like an early arrival of Pentecost.

Soon after those Sunday-morning *Alleluias* rocked the place, more talks and sharings completed a truly triumphant weekend. By noon, the seemingly ageless Fr. Paul Lehman was already getting many of the participants to share their experiences - each one profound; each one received by BLD members there with well wishes and warm applause.

The immediate challenge on Sunday had been to finish on time; and with the help of many, many volunteers, to whom sincerest gratitude is extended, LSS 44 closed in record time.

Ultimate thanks belongs to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who because of His Divine Mercy, now surely rocks in everyone's hearts. *Continuation on page 4*

"TOUCH ME AND SEE"

THEME: We seek what is above when we open our minds to understand Scriptures.

WORD: Acts 3:13-15,17-19/Ps 4:2,4,7-8,9
1Jn 2:1-5/Lk 24:35-48

ORDER: "*Repent... and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away.*" (Acts 3:19)

REFLECTION:

Whenever we open our spirits and hearts to Jesus, we allow Him to touch us inwardly and we respond to His invitation: "*Touch me and see*" (Lk 24:39). During this personal encounter with Jesus, our hearts burn within us, burn with love for one another, as our Risen King, the Living Word, through the power of the Holy Spirit, opens up the meaning of Sacred Scripture to us and brings us to the fullness of truth.

Conversely, disillusionment can make a person blind to Jesus and His Scripture. This is clearly illustrated in the Road to Emmaus story. Cleofas and the other unnamed, downtrodden disciple had believed that Jesus was an earthly or political Messiah. Thus, when Jesus was arrested and crucified, they *left Jerusalem*, where they had experienced so much pain. As Jesus drew near on the road to Emmaus, their disillusionment prevented them from recognizing Him. However, the Risen Jesus would not allow them to be lost, so He walked and conversed with them on the road, opening the Scriptures to them, explaining all that had been written about the Messiah. The two disciples listened attentively, spent time and broke bread with Jesus (a manifestation of how they opened their hearts to Jesus), thus their **eyes were opened** and their **hearts burned within them** (Lk 24:31-32), burned with love for Jesus. They finally recognized the Risen Jesus, prompting their return to the community in Jerusalem and sharing the Good News of Jesus' Resurrection with the other disciples.

Continuation on page 3

Promise of the Week

"But whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him." (1 Jn 2:5)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

PRAY, TRUST, & BE BOLD

“With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all.”

(Acts 4:33)

Put yourself in the middle of the scenes the apostles witnessed two thousand years ago. Look at the welcome accorded Jesus on Palm Sunday and then, a few days afterward, a complete turn-around, and you find yourself surrounded by a crowd shouting, “crucify him!” The following Sunday, you are part of the group trying to convince themselves that He really rose from the dead. You witness what Peter and John do for a crippled beggar. Notice how true the apostles are in their mission of bringing the Good News to the people they meet, baptizing thousands into the faith in the process. See how they teach the scriptures to everybody, sharing the sacrifice of Jesus’ death on the cross. What are you feeling when you realize they do this just so you can have everlasting life with the Father?

Together with you, Jesus’ disciples suffer through His trial and death only to find extreme joy in His resurrection. You witness how Jesus embraces His death

- Together with you, the apostles receive the Advocate to guide and protect them.
- Together with you, they take on the mission to be the salt of the earth.

John 20:21 says: ***“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”*** Don’t you want to be His disciple and continue the mission begun by the apostles? “How do I do this,” you ask?

- Emulate Jesus in that He prayed to His Father unceasingly.
- Have faith; trust in God that He will provide you the words to speak about His Son.
- Be bold! Let the Holy Spirit guide you.
- Do everything in His name and for His glory.
- Be Christ-like by being a merciful and loving neighbor.

Dearest Lord, use me in whatever small way to be a soldier for Jesus and spread the Good News. Let my face show the love and peace that I’ve found in Jesus. Let my embrace be a symbol of mercy and an act of forgiveness I can give to my enemies. In Jesus name, AMEN.

GO TELL

“But during the night, the angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, led them out, and said, ‘Go and take your place in the temple area, and tell the people everything about this life.’”

(Acts 5:19-20)

This passage is taken from St. Luke’s account of the disciples’ trial before the Sanhedrin.

The Sadducees, filled with envy, imprisoned them. But the Lord rescued the apostles and sent His angels to bring them out of the darkness and solitude of their prison cells. They were *led* by the angels, and with this they were instructed to ***“Go ..., and tell the people everything about this life.”*** (Acts 5:20)

How many of us were led by angels out of our own personal prison cells of darkness, anxiety, self-doubt, unforgiveness and desperation and brought into this community of light? For God nothing is impossible (Lk 1:37). We can all testify to this. We know how our lives have been radically changed from the first time we set foot through the doors of our encounters until right now. As we often hear during the encounters, we are here, not by coincidence, but by God’s divine design for our lives.

It was the Lord that brought us to the recognition of our past sins, and it was He who opened up our minds to the possibility of a life in Him.

We are living the Lord’s will as we allow Him to shape us through the community’s encounters and renewal programs. The Lord has the power to save; do you believe that? By the words and actions of the people and circumstances that He puts in our lives, we are slowly being transformed. Without our knowing it, we are molded and changed to become the Lord’s *living stones*. By the humility that has been planted by the Holy Spirit in our hearts, we are becoming people who bring Jesus to others.

“...and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Pt 2:5)

With this realization comes a calling. It compels us to take our places at the temple, and ***“tell the people everything about this life”*** (Acts 5:20), this life that we do not deserve, but which has been given to us out of LOVE. By our baptism, we are compelled to witness to others about the beauty of a life in Jesus. What are you waiting for? Go out and tell the world!

SUCH LOVE

The word “love” is often misused so that the true meaning is lost. Sometimes people say, “I love you,” with little thought or when they want to get something. This devalues its authentic meaning. The dictionary defines love as a feeling of warm affection and concern for the well-being of another person. You say that you love someone when their happiness is very important to you, so that you behave in a kind and caring way toward them. But there is so much more to love than that. What is the true meaning of love? Scripture describes love in many ways.



“In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.” (1 Jn 4:10)

“Since you have purified yourselves by obedience to the truth for sincere mutual love, love one another intensely from a pure heart.” (1 Jn 3:18-19)

“let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.” (1 Pt 1:22)

Love is not just a feeling or emotion. Nor is it about what we like or don’t like. Love is a choice, a choice that comes with responsibility. Man’s concupiscence tempts us to sin against God, because we are weak and stubborn. Often our human desire leads us to disobey God because we are selfish and arrogant. God gave us free will so that we might choose either to love Him or to rebel.

Revelation 3:20 says: ***“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me.”*** Will you open the door? Will you choose God? Whoever chooses God chooses love which will abide forever. It is only when we surrender to our Lord and live in full, deep relationship with Jesus that God can affirm in us the genuine meaning of love.

The Holy Spirit empowers our love to become pure, clear, substantial, and tangible. ***“God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.”*** (1Jn 4:16) Because we love Him, He remains in us and we become capable of sharing His love with others. This happens because God is the very source of love and loving Him is the highest and greatest purpose of our existence.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Each one of us has our own Road to Emmaus story to share. The unnamed disciple could be any one of us. There may have been moments in our journey that we thought of leaving the community because of disappointments or disagreements and moments when Jesus came to us unnoticed and unacknowledged because we were drowned by our own self-righteousness and pride.

I could relate to those moments in Jerusalem when Jesus’ disciples recognized Him, rediscovered God’s love, as well as saw, heard, and experienced Jesus’ victory in their lives. During our community’s encounters, LSS, and retreats, when I opened my heart and spirit to Jesus and responded to His invitation to *touch Him and see*, He slowly but powerfully revealed to me the mystery of the Catholic Faith and by His grace, I was able to accept the Catholic Teachings with conviction. Now I am at home in the very Church I once, in my ignorance and pride, strongly criticized. Finally, I was one in heart and mind with my wife and children and with all of you. As Jesus prayed to the Father the night before He died, ***“That they may be one, as you Father, are in me and I in you, that they may also be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.”*** (Jn 17:21)

I was, indeed, a witness of God’s Saving Love! I cannot count the number of times I thanked the Lord for the BLD community and for you for being instrumental to my conversion.

However, as I immersed myself deeper into our community, I also uncovered its brokenness, leading me to disappointments due to my lofty expectations of the people around me. Sometimes, I found myself struggling in the midst of conflicts. I lost vision, direction, inspiration, and hope, which led to confusion and doubt. During these moments, I wanted to walk away and questioned the Lord whether I was really in the right place. Once again, I felt isolated and distant.

Yet, it is when we are “on the road”, during our moments of separation, that we encounter the Risen Christ, Who transforms our lives, heals our pain and renews our energy and vision. As with the disciples at Emmaus, Jesus reignited my love for the community and for all of you as I listened and reflected on His Word, spent time with Him in prayer, and received Him in the Holy Communion frequently.

Truly, our source of solace, comfort and hope is God’s presence in our Christian journey. From Jerusalem to Emmaus, Jesus is ever present to guide and inspire us through the Holy Spirit. His Word gives us direction; His sanctifying grace of repentance humbles us; and His Eucharistic Presence gives us new life and strength. These graces enable us to see and understand

COUNSELS (from page 3)

the truth and live in harmony with one another; and it is through God's grace that I am still here sharing Jesus' victory in my life and joyfully serving the Lord with all of you, despite the many challenges of community life.

We've all witnessed the **living presence** of Jesus in our lives. We've met Jesus in the Scriptures, recognized Him in the breaking of the bread of the Eucharist, and received His gift of repentance through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. God reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18). Hence, as ambassadors of our Risen Christ, let us continually avail ourselves of His graces, so we may remain in His love and strive for peace and unity in our community. This way, the rest of the world will know that our community is God's community, that we are God's children. This is one of the greatest ways we can bear witness to the Suffering and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May the face of the Risen Christ always shine on us!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist frequently.
2. Hear, read, reflect, and live the Word of God persistently.
3. Share your conversion story.

NEWS (from page 1)

The 40 graduates of LSS 44 are:

From ME 44: Joel & Joyce Javier, John & Claire Mejorada, Ryan & Maris Manguiat, Carl & Nikki Punla, Jim & Brige Reyes, Hermie & Beth Torres, Jun & Gemma Victorino

From Singles: Kyle Abinales, Jillian Bustos, John Cam, Jennifer Faura, Marielle Go, Julius Lizardo, Alize Rodriguez, Nicole Tse, Charles Birri, Brian Ortiz, Jiezhelle Lizardo, Mark Francisco

From Solo Parents: Dakila Romano, Betty Zywicki, Marivic Alcantara

From St. Antoninus: Josephine Robertiello, May Jen Apiado, Rose De Verteuil, Kay De Verteuil, Cassilda Boyd, Marjorie Dorsaint, Diane D'Agustine, Veronica Deckert,

In-fillers: Arnold & Cely Ocaya, Emy Pattugalan

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PRAYER HEALING 1 RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam/Rory Olaso samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

MARCH 27, 2015

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,635	\$39,142
Mission Collections	-	\$5,603
Easter Envelope	\$805	\$805

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Apr 18	New Creation Realities/Growth In Prayer – LSS 1-44 Encounter with Jesus (Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the OT, Development of the Gospel) – LSS 1-43 Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-40 Healing And Deliverance – LSS 1-40
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY TEACHING

May 9, 2015 - 12:00-4:00 PM

CConnell Hall, Rahway, NJ

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 45

When: May 29-31, 2015

Where: Hotel Executive Suites

30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

SINGLE ENCOUNTER 34

When: May 22-24, 2015

Where: Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY 10524

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos: 908.208.2191 ~

justin.bustos@gmail.com or Danny/Cora Labung: 559.776.8324/dancorlab@gmail.com/danlab7@gmail.com

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 ~5 PM) – Sun (6/28/2015 ~ 5PM)

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Basking Ridge NJ,07920; (908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Apr 24	Evangelization
			May 1	Formation
			May 8	Management
			May 15	Mission



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 16

Bulletin Edition

April 24, 2015

Pope's Morning Homily: Follow the Examples of Saints to Avoid Temptation of Worldliness

Reflects on Danger of Material Interests During Homily at Casa Santa Marta

Rome, April 20, 2015 (Zenit.org) [Junno Arocho Esteves](#)

In his homily at Casa Santa Marta this morning, Pope Francis said that Christians are called to follow the example of the saints and martyrs, who did not give in to the temptation of seeking power.

According to [Vatican Radio](#), the Holy Father reflected on today's Gospel of St. John, in which a crowd seeks Jesus "not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled."

This attitude of self-interests, the Pope said is often seen in the Gospels, even among Jesus' own disciples.

"The sons of Zebedee who wanted to be *prime minister* and the other the *minister of the economy*, to have power," he noted. "That unction to bring to the poor good news, the liberation to prisoners, sight to the blind, freedom for the oppressed and announce a year of grace, as it becomes dark, it is lost and transforms into something of power."

This temptation, the Pope continued, was also given to Jesus by the devil in the desert. The danger lies in passing from religious wonder to profiteering from it.

"This was also a proposal of the devil to Jesus in the temptations," he said.

"One on bread, precisely. The other on the spectacle: 'Let us make a beautiful spectacle so that all the people will believe in you.' And the third, apostasy: that is, the adoration of the idols. And this is a daily temptation of Christians, ours, of all of us who are in the Church: the temptation not of the power, of the strength of the Spirit, but the temptation of worldly power. Thus one falls in that religious tepidness which brings you to worldliness, that tepidness that ends, when it grows, grows, grows, in that attitude that Jesus calls hypocrisy."

The 78 year old Pontiff went on to say that Jesus calls on all to awaken with the witness of martyrs and saints who remind us of our mission to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

Continuation on page 4

COUNSELS

ONE FLOCK, ONE SHEPHERD

THEME: We seek what is above when we lay down our life for others.

WORD: Acts 4:8-12; Ps 118:1, 8-9,21-23,26,28,29; 1 John 3:1-2; John 10:11-18

ORDER: See what love the Father has bestowed on us.

REFLECTION:

From the earliest days the apostles encountered hostility from the Jewish leaders just as Jesus Himself had. Even so, the First Reading shows "*Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 4:8) fearlessly proclaiming to them the risen Christ; that he had cured a man, crippled from birth, through the power of One whom the Sanhedrin had thought was silenced forever when they forced Pilate to crucify Him. By rejecting Christ as the true Messiah, they had fulfilled the Messianic prophecy: "*The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.*" (Ps 118:22)

In the Second Reading, John invites us through faith, to rejoice in our status in this life as God's adopted children because of His wonderful love for us (1 Jn 3:1). Yes, "*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.*" (Jn 3:16)

St. John's Gospel theme of self-giving to the point of death, gives us the Lord's description of Himself under the well-known image of the good shepherd, who not only cares for his flock but is willing to die to protect the life of that flock.

Jesus, our Good Shepherd continues to care and die for us even after He has gone from our physical sight. He is constantly giving Himself to us in the sacraments especially in the Eucharist, nourishing us with His Precious Body and Blood. He still heals the sick, a ministry which He had already begun with His apostles, when Peter cured a crippled man: *Continuation on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"They will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd." (Jn 10:16)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

HELP

“Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ He replied, ‘How can I, unless someone instructs me?’ So he invited Philip to get in and sit with him.”

(Acts 8:30-31)

The Ethiopian, whom Philip met on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, must have been a great and knowledgeable man, since he served as the Nubian queen’s treasurer. Though he was a man of position, he was also humble. He readily admitted that he did not understand what he was reading in the Book of Isaiah and needed someone to help him discern its meaning. Philip explained the scripture to the Ethiopian and helped him to understand how it applied to Jesus. Ultimately, Philip baptized the Ethiopian and continued on his way home rejoicing.

How often do I hesitate to ask for help because I think that if I do, it will make me seem less of a man, weak, incompetent or incapable? My pride gets in the way, so I begrudgingly perform tasks and sulk about no one helping me. I become my own worst enemy. Even our Lord Jesus Christ accepted the help of Simon of Cyrene in carrying His cross on His way to Calvary. I am a man of no position and a sinner, and yet I do not know how to ask for help or accept it when offered. Help is a gift that should be freely and lovingly given, and graciously and humbly accepted. Many times I have prayed for God’s help during the trials along my life’s journey. The type of help I expected was for the trial to go away and life to be good again. Instead, His help came in quiet and subtle ways: a word of encouragement from a friend, words from scripture, a small act of kindness from a stranger. These acts strung together would eventually help to lead me through the rough and dark times and into rejoicing.

God our Father is always there to support and sustain us, and we should never hesitate to seek His help even though it may come in unexpected ways. But in order for us to hear His counsels, we must be open to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to lead us in this life toward ultimately rejoicing with our Risen Lord in eternity.

Who are You, Sir?

“On his journey, as he was nearing Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed around him.”

(Acts 9:3)

So the bible story goes describing the dramatic conversion of St. Paul from a feared and relentless persecutor of the early Christians to the fearless preacher and tireless defender of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I had my “Aha moment” during my marriage encounter weekend 5 ½ years ago. But the conversion took place very discreetly, so silently in fact, that I did not even notice it! It just dawned on me when I started looking forward to Friday worship instead of dreading the 50-mile drive to Rahway each week.

“...I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.” (Acts 9:5)

Really? Am I persecuting Jesus? Lent is officially over, and we are in the triumphant season of Easter! But have I truly stopped persecuting Jesus? Persecution is such a strong word, that we automatically exclude ourselves from any such activity. I tend to justify as “okay” the small things I do contrary to our faith. But are they?

I sometimes think back to my pre-BLD days, those days of blissful ignorance! I remember those days when I thought salvation could be had for the bare minimum, those days when serving God meant Sunday mass and almost nothing else, those days when loving my neighbor meant a select group of people, those days when spreading the Good News was a mission reserved only for priests and religious. Could I ever again be satisfied being a “Sunday Catholic”?

Transformation in Christ is the fruit of conversion. Sometimes it happens swiftly and completely as it did for St. Paul. More often it happens quietly and gradually, over time. Our struggles and failures may cause us to look at our lives and wonder if we actually have been transformed in Christ, but in our hearts we know the truth. We never again need to ask the question, “Who are You, Sir?”

Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth – in a word, to know himself, so that by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves. – Saint John Paul II

TAUGHT BY GOD

“Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.” (Jn 6:46)

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.” (Jn 1:1-3a) The Catechism tells us that, “God, who creates and conserves all things by his Word, provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities” (CCC 54). Eventually, God revealed Himself to us man to man. By the power of the Incarnation, the supernatural became natural, the extraordinary became ordinary in the person of Jesus Christ who reveals God the Father (cf John 1:18). ***“It is written in the prophets: ‘They shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me.”*** (Jn 6:45)

But this scripture verse was a tall order to fill. ***“More tortuous than all else is the human heart, beyond remedy; who can understand it?”*** (Jeremiah 17:9) Knowing man’s concupiscent nature, Jesus instituted the holy sacraments to make us holy as God is holy. It is disturbing to think what the world would be like without the Seven Sacraments. What kind of faith and hope could we have for the end of our lives? Just look around and you see it, the hopelessness and despair. By His passion and death on the cross, Jesus manifested to all of us in clear, dramatic and unforgettable ways the appearance and ugliness of evil and sin.

God did not let it end there. God the Father showed us the power of His divine love which conquers death by the resurrection of Jesus. He raised Jesus up and ***“exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior to grant Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins.”*** (Acts 5:31) Then He sent the Holy Spirit to lead us to the whole truth. ***“When you look for me, you will find. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart.”*** (Jer 29:13) “For he wishes to give eternal life to all those who seek salvation by patience in well-doing” (CCC 55). Salvation is entrance into God’s kingdom (Mt 19:25; Mk 10:26; Lk 13:23; 18:26).

Jesus offers us the opportunity to hear and see and know God: ***“Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.”*** (Jn 14:11a) ***“The Father and I are one.”*** (Jn 10:30)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

“...in his name this man stands before you healed.” (Acts 4:10) He is always ready to go after us when we stray too far, His voice constantly reaching out to us: in missions, retreats, sicknesses, crosses and other various ways, calling us back to the safety of His fold.

John 10:16a says, ***“I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead.”*** This is a direct appeal to us to cooperate with Jesus in this work. He Himself installed Peter to pasture His flock (Jn 21:15-17). He calls us in turn to become caring shepherds to others. There will be times when we can be called upon to sacrifice our finances, our comforts, our own welfare, and even our own lives for their sake. We should be able to take risks in order to change the lives of others which will change our own as well. But the faithful performance of such can result in a withering of the heart when one is not motivated by love.

The Lord gives us opportunities to show how we appreciate all He has done for us. The very fact of living a Christian life in its entirety is, of itself, a powerful example to those outside the fold. A devout Christian will not stop at good example only. If he truly loves God, he must truly love his neighbor and must want him to have a share in his God-given gifts. He must strive, by every available means, to lead his neighbor on the road back to God. Prayer will be his most potent weapon for the conversion of those who are wandering aimlessly far from God. He must be deeply rooted in the Word, learning all about the truths of his faith, helping them see the light of salvation (Acts 13:47).

The first strong motive in responding to His call is the example of Jesus Himself. Humble and obedient to the Father, He did not ask, “How much?” He gave Himself, His all. He did not ask, “How far?” He went all the way, crucifying our sins to the cross. Another motive is the immense love of God. ***“See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God.”*** (1Jn 3:1) How, then, can we not love God as our Father and all men and women as our brothers and sisters?

Through the various programs in the BLD Community, we are formed into expert witnesses to our faith and for our God in building His church. In the weekly Word sharing circles, we open ourselves up to the experience of God, His reality, His power and His love. Undertaking the role of leaders or shepherds to those under our care, inspires in us the desire to follow the One who holds us in His own heart. We are truly blessed for this, our good fortune!

Can we honestly say that we are truly followers of our Good Shepherd in our care, concern and selfless service to those other children of God who are still outside the fold?

Continuation on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Give thanks to the Lord by sharing your blessings with others.
2. Like Jesus, be a good shepherd to others.

NEWS (from page 1)

“The people understand Jesus’ reproach and tell him: ‘But what should we fulfil to do the works of God? Jesus says to them: ‘This is the work of God: that you believe in the One who He has sent’, that is, faith in Him, only in Him, trust in Him and not in other things that bring us far from Him. This is the work of God: that you believe in the One who He has sent, in Him,” the Pope said.

Concluding his homily, Pope Francis prayed that Christ may give the faithful the grace to not fall into a spirit of worldliness. It is a spirit, he said, “that behind or under a varnish of Christianity, brings us to become pagans.”

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LSS #44 REUNION

April 26, 2015 - 1:00-5:00 PM

Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

MARK 10'S

MAY CROWNING OF MOTHER MARY

Friday, May 15, 2015

Before Praise & Worship

St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ

PRAYER HEALING 1 RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam/Rory Olasso samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

When: July 10-12, 2015

Where: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contact Persons: Kristian Quevada (Cell 732-910-9924)

Charlie/Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)

Oliver/Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

When: July 24-26, 2015

Where: Malvern Retreat House

315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355

Contact Persons:

Dodge/Celle Lizardo~marichelle72@yahoo.com/201-790-6653

Ed/Susan Fabe~edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657

LORD'S PROVISION LAST WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,676	\$42,818
Mission Collections	--	\$5,603

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

May 2
Sienna Gift Inventory – LSS 1-44
Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit – LSS 1-43
Advanced Intercession – LSS 1-40
Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS 1-40
Singles Ministry CDFP – Singles Ministry/SE

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time: Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY TEACHING

The Inner Castle - My Dwelling Place

"BUILDING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES THROUGH FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICE OF CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER"

May 9, 2015 - 12:00-4:00 PM

CConnell Hall, Rahway, NJ

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 45

When: May 29-31, 2015

Where: Hotel Executive Suites

30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

SINGLE ENCOUNTER 34

When: May 22-24, 2015

Where: Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY 10524

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos: 908.208.2191 ~

justin.bustos@gmail.com or Danny/Cora Labung:

559.776.8324/dancorlab@gmail.com/danlab7@gmail.com

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 ~5 PM) – Sun (6/28/2015 ~ 5PM)

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ,07920

(908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin &Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			May 1	Formation
			May 8	Management
			May 15	Mission
			May 22	Pastoral

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 17

Bulletin Edition

May 1, 2015

NEWS

Pope Recalls One-Year Anniversary of St. John Paul II's Canonization During Regina Coeli Address

- Also Remembers Victims of Nepal Earthquake
Vatican City, April 26, 2015 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)) [Deborah Castellano Lubov](http://www.zenit.org)

Speaking to the faithful today before and after the recitation of the Regina Coeli, the Pope reminded those gathered that this fourth Sunday of Easter is called "Good Shepherd Sunday," which annually invites us to reflect on this role of Jesus, who 'laid down His life for His flock.'

Today also marks the 52nd World Day of Prayer for the Vocations, for which the Holy Father, during Mass this morning in St. Peter's Basilica, ordained new priests for the Diocese of Rome.

"It becomes quite clear what it means that Jesus is 'the Good Shepherd,'" Francis stressed, saying, "He gives life, He offered His life as a sacrifice for all of us: for you, for you, for you, for me, for everyone! And this is the Good Shepherd!"

"Christ is the true shepherd," the Pope said. "In the figure of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we contemplate God's providence, His paternal concern for each of us."

"He does not leave us alone!"

"Faced with this love of God," the Holy Father said, "we experience great joy and we are open to gratitude for what we have received for free."

However, the Pontiff stated, it is not enough to contemplate and give thanks, but one must follow the Good Shepherd.

"In particular, those who have the mission as leaders in the Church - priests, bishops, popes - are called not to take on the mentality of 'manager,' but that of the servant, in imitation of Jesus who, stripping himself, has saved us with His mercy."

He said the newly ordained priests are also called to this style of pastoral life.

After reciting the Regina Coeli, the Holy Father, who just yesterday issued a telegram expressing his condolences for the earthquake in Nepal which has claimed nearly 2,000 lives, said, "I want to assure my closeness to people affected by a strong earthquake in Nepal and neighboring countries," and called on the faithful to join him in saying a Hail Mary.

Also greeting the numerous pilgrims gathered in the square, Francis gave a special greeting to ... *Continued page 4*

COUNSELS

Bearing Fruit

THEME: We, followers of Jesus, bear much fruit when we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him.

WORD: Acts 9:26-31 / Ps 22:26-27,28,30,31-32 / 1 Jn 3:18-24 / Jn 15:1-8

ORDER: "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 15:5)

REFLECTION:



The grape vine is a plant that requires special attention and for it to bear fruit certain procedures are meticulously followed to ensure productivity. The most important of these procedures is the intense preparation of the ground on which the vine is planted, which needs to be on clean soil. Vines usually have two kinds of branches – those that bear fruit and those that don't, and the non-fruit bearing branches are carefully pruned in order to conserve the strength of the vine and promote fruit in the fruit-bearing branches.

The analogy of the vine and vineyard is what Jesus was trying to impress upon the children of Israel in offering Himself as the True Vine which comes from God that brings abundant life and results in great fruitfulness. He used this imagery to describe the kind of life that He was offering those who are united with Him or will choose to unite themselves to Him – a life that will produce the fruit of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:17). Jesus was trying to help the Jews understand that their lives could never bear fruit if they choose to reject Him and the fruit He was offering, the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). ... *Continued page 3*

Promise of the Week

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you." (Jn 15:7)

Sung to the tune of...
“Of All the Things”
(by Dennis Lambert)



Of all the things I've ever done
Finding **God** will prove to be
the most important one
I would never trade the tears
the conversations no one hears
My trust in Him in all that I do now

Of all the kites that ever flew
Most came tumbling down
except the one He sent up for me
I don't wanna change a thing
break the spell or cut the string
when happiness is mine
and coming true... **with Him**

But sometimes I forget
to say how much I love Him
Purposely I bet
cause I'm just so happy thinking of Him

So in this world of odds and ends
I'd rather have a part of God
than all of my earthbound things
Jesus taught me how to feel
What is false and what is real
of all the things I ever wanna do...
I think I'll start and end with loving Him

He has taught me how to feel
What **HIS LOVE** is, and that it's real
of all the things I'm ever gonna do
I think I'll start and end with loving Him



A Stewardship Prayer

(source: the Franciscans at St. Anthony Shrine, Boston MA)

Receive my offering O Lord.

It is not charity
because You are not a beggar.

It is not a contribution
because You have no need for it.

It is not my leftovers
because You want more than that.

My gift, O Lord,
represents my gratitude, my love...
for whatever I have,

it is because You have given it to me.

How Can This Be?

Unveiling the Mysteries

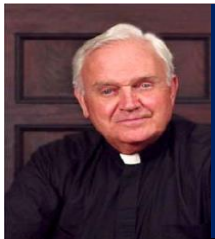
Have you ever noticed that our Blessed Mother's first words in the Gospel of St. Luke are repeated, in one form or another, throughout the gospels? Luke 1:34a reads, "*But Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be?'*"



How can this be? The people of Nazareth were thinking much the same thing when they asked, "*Is he not the carpenter's son?*" (Mt 13:55a), after hearing Jesus speak with remarkable authority and wisdom. I imagine that His disciples asked themselves the same question as they gathered up twelve basketfuls of leftovers after having served five thousand men with only five loaves and two fish. And then there was Nicodemus - a leader of the community, a well-educated man - but when Jesus told him that he must be born again, he was completely baffled. "*How can this happen?*" (Jn 3:9). Perhaps most disheartening for Jesus was the people's response when He said, "*I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world*" (Jn 6:51). Again, they wondered, "*How can this be?*" and many of them "*returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him*" (Jn 6:66).

These are some of the most essential mysteries of our faith: the mystery of the Incarnation and the divinity of Jesus, of rebirth in the Spirit and of the Eucharist. Jesus had devoted the major portion of His ministry to answering these difficult questions as He unveiled the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. Because Mary was not challenging the angel when she asked, "How can this be?" God gave her the grace to take Him at His word. But sadly, Jesus often came up against closed minds and hardened hearts. To use a modern expression, He wanted them to think "outside the box," but old ideas die hard; and His efforts to enlighten the people were not always well received. St. Matthew devotes the entire chapter thirteen to Jesus's teachings regarding the Kingdom of God. In the final verses of this chapter, Jesus returns to Nazareth and again meets resistance. "*And he did not work many mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith*" (Mt 13:58).

Every day, the readings of the Church give us the opportunity to sit at the feet of the Master and listen as He unveils the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. If we listen with open hearts, doubts and questions won't lead us to turn away. We can stand beside Peter and say, "*Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life*" (Jn 6:68).



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

“Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned.” (Jn 15:6). What Jesus was actually saying was that just because they were Jews doesn’t mean that they were already saved. They had to become branches of the True Vine of God. Similarly, just because we are Catholics and go to Church on Sundays and holy days of obligation, doesn’t mean we are already saved. What actually saves us is an intimate relationship with Jesus Who is the True Vine. When we speak of intimacy, it means seeing ourselves as a branch grafted to the Vine. This is the only way for our lives to bear fruit, giving us access to all the richness and glory of the Kingdom of God, and the promise made to the Jews - the same promise made to us now: *“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.”* (Jn 15:7).

The key to living a fruitful life is to abide in Jesus, and that means putting our complete trust and confidence in Him. In other words, we are to place our lives in the palm of His hands. Those who have the courage to do so will receive whatever they ask of the Father through Jesus. What this Gospel passage is telling us, is that as Christians we are likened to a branch that is either fruit-bearing or non-fruit-bearing. There is no middle ground, and bearing healthy fruit requires pruning. This means that we have to turn away from things that strain our relationship with Christ and block the flow of grace into our lives. These could be anything that displeases God and causes us to sin: our attitude, character, arrogance, indifference, doubt, unbelief and pride. To abide in Christ is to look at our lives with deep introspection, that we may discover where we stand in our relationship with God and why our lives have not turned out the way we expected.

God does not watch us from a distance but from where we can reach Him, and is available when we need Him. But we can only benefit from His kindness, compassion and generosity when, like the branch, we are connected to the **True Vine**. A good disciple can expect two things in life. One is that being connected to Christ enriches our lives because it makes us fruitful. The other is that abiding in Christ brings glory to God. *“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and become my disciples.”* (Jn 15:8). This is the greatest glory of the Christian life - to live a life that is pleasing to God.



During the month of May Catholics traditionally honor Mary, the mother of God. Marian devotions predominate during May centering around “Mothers’ Day” and even first Communion. The rosary is a favorite all year round. It can be used as a vocal prayer, but primarily it is a method of mental prayer. The mental prayer aspect can be looked at in a number of different ways. When for instance St. Ignatius of Loyola uses the word “contemplation” he is using it almost in an opposite sense than St. John of the Cross. Ignatius will emphasize the “composition of place”, picturing the events in the life of Jesus or Mary in one’s imagination. This Ignatian method could be used with the rosary, picturing the events announced at the beginning of the particular decade. Since there are now four “mysteries” for the total rosary, we can picture forty different events for rosary meditation. There are many printed leaflets that can guide us in the use of the mysteries. This use of the imagination can lead to a deep sense of presence. If we are led more to the method of John of the Cross, we may focus our minds more on a presence than on a picture. We could pray for the virtue on which the mystery contains. There are so many different “methods” of the rosary that can deepen our prayer life.

Catholics are often accused of over emphasizing devotion to Mary, because it detracts from the centrality of Jesus in the Christian life. Our position is just the opposite. Devotion to Mary leads to a solid devotion to Jesus. There is more than a devotional aspect in our relationship with Mary. Theologically Mary has been included in the divine plan of salvation. This inclusion is God’s idea not the Catholic Church’s idea. At the important moment of the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel to Mary, she in a sense, gave the “go ahead” to the divine plan. Her consent was sought and received. Thus began her role as mediatrix, subordinate and under the divine mediation of her Son. She, at the foot of the cross, consented to the horrible death of her Son and thus joined her consent to His as co-redemptrix. Even now each grace given to us as the redeeming act of Jesus is also accompanied by the prayer of Mary, and thus continues her role in our salvation whether we avert to it or not.

In honoring Mary we honor God’s plan. When we say “Mary”, Mary says “Jesus”. Even though God’s plan takes effect whether we know it or not, the more we consent and honor Mary, the more closely is our salvation assured.

...Continued page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, may I be one with You in all that I say and do. Draw me close that I may glorify You and bear fruit for Your kingdom. Inflammate my heart with Your love and remove from me anything that would make me unfruitful in loving and serving You as my All in All.

Reflection Questions 1. Reflect on the areas in your life that prevent you from abiding in Christ.



2. What resolutions have you made to remove the blocks that hinder you from abiding in Christ and enjoying the immense benefit of living a fruitful Christian life?

NEWS

(from page 1)

any Poles present: "I greet with affection all the pilgrims from Rome, Italy and from various countries, especially those coming in large numbers from Poland to mark the first anniversary of the canonization of John Paul II. Beloved, always resound in your hearts his call: 'Open the doors to Christ' (that he said in the strong and holy voice he has). "May the Lord bless you and your families and Madonna protect you."

The Pontiff concluded, wishing all the faithful a good Sunday and lunch, and asking them to pray for him.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARK 10'S: MAY CROWNING OF MOTHER MARY

Friday, May 15, 2015, Before Praise & Worship
St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ

PRAYER HEALING 1 RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM - 9 PM - June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam/Rory Oloso samrory@gmail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22 - July 10-12, 2015

Where: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contact Persons: Kristian Quevada (Cell 732-910-9924)

Charlie/Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)

Oliver/Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22 - July 24-26, 2015

Where: Malvern Retreat House

315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355

Contact Persons:

Dodge/Celle Lizardo-fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

Ed/Susan Fabe-edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015

Time: 7:00 pm to 12:00am

Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION LAST WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,540	\$45,358
Mission Collections	\$67	\$5,670

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

May 2	Sienna Gift Inventory - LSS 1-44 Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS 1-43 Advanced Intercession - LSS 1-40 Orientation to Spiritual Warfare - LSS 1-40 Singles Ministry CDFP - Singles Ministry/SE
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY TEACHING The Inner Castle - My Dwelling Place

"BUILDING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES THROUGH FOUNDATIONAL
PRACTICE OF CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER"

May 9, 2015 - 12:00-4:00 PM
Connell Hall, Rahway, NJ

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 45 - May 29-31, 2015

Where: Hotel Executive Suites

30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

SINGLE ENCOUNTER 34 - May 22-24, 2015

Where: Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY 10524

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos: 908.208.2191 -

justin.bustos@gmail.com or Danny/Cora Labung:

559.776.8324/dancorlab@gmail.com/danlab7@gmail.com

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 - 5 PM) - Sun (6/28/2015 - 5PM)


Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

(908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			May 8	Management
			May 15	Mission
			May 22	Pastoral
			May 29	Evangelization



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 18

Bulletin Edition

May 8, 2015

Pope Francis: We Must Become Living Branches in the Church

Says Christians Grow in Friendship with Christ Through Sacraments During Regina Coeli Address

Rome/050315/ZENIT.org/Junno Arocho Esteves

Christians are called to be like the branches on a vine and “bring fruits of this common belonging to Christ and to the Church” to the world.

This was the central theme of Pope Francis’ address to the faithful gathered in St. Peter’s Square this morning prior to the recitation of the Regina Coeli.

The Holy Father reflected on today’s Gospel, in which Jesus tells his disciples that “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.”

Drawing from Christ’s words, the Pope said that those who are not in communion with Jesus become sterile, even “harmful for the community.”

“With this image He teaches us to remain in Him, to be united to Him, even though He cannot be physically present,” the Pope said.

“Jesus is the Life, and through Him - like the sap in the tree - passes the same love of God to the branches, the Holy Spirit. Thus, we are the branches, and through this parable Jesus wants us to understand the importance of remaining united to Him.”

Continuing his address, the Pope explained that branches, like Christians, are not self-sufficient but rather, depend on the vine where they find their source of life. The gift of life for Christians, he said, stems from our Baptism.

“We must remain faithful to Baptism and grow in friendship with the Lord through prayer, daily prayer, through the listening and docility of His Word- to read the Gospel - in the participation of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation,” he exhorted.

“The fruits of this profound union with Jesus are marvelous: our whole person is transformed by the grace of the Spirit: courage, intelligence, will, affections, even the body, because we are unity of spirit and body.”

Continued page 2

COUNSELS

FAITHFULNESS THROUGH LOVE

THEME: We, followers of Jesus, bear much fruit when we keep His word and love one another.

WORD: Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48/Ps 98:1,2-3,3-4
1 Jn 4:7-10/Jn 15:9-17

ORDER: “Love one another as I love you.” (John 15:12)

REFLECTION:

When our Lord Jesus’ time here on earth was coming to an end, He told His disciples in John 15:12, “*This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.*” He wanted His disciples to remain united and determined to spread the Gospel. This command is the reason why they became one family, then grew into a community of believers, and now have become His church which reaches to the far corners of the world.

This is the same commandment that He has given us: love one another, so we remain as one family, belonging to one community, helping to expand His global church of believers.

This love has proven to be so great and so powerful that it can break every barrier that causes disunity, division and even war. Our Lord Jesus not only gave His disciples this command but most importantly, He clearly exemplified this kind of love by laying down His life for His disciples, whom he called His friends, and for all of humanity. He lived His own word. It is only this kind of love that can bring true peace, joy, hope and strength because it is pure, unselfish, unconditional and infinite. It is, and should always be, the basic foundation of every family, every community and our universal church.

This command “to love one another” sounds so simple and easy to do.

Continued page 3

Promise of the Week

“Whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.” (John 15-16b)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

MY PEACE I GIVE TO YOU

“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.” (John 14:27)

As I reflect on this verse, I find great comfort in knowing that the Holy Spirit has promised us His Peace. I am in the midst of recovering from an illness. The physical pain seems so unbearable at times. My head hurts from a migraine headache. My body feels weak from the effects of the flu. My back hurts. I feel chills all over my body. And while suffering through this physical pain, I also have to care for my young children. They are still so dependent on me for most of their needs. As I change diapers, feed the baby, put the other on her potty, bathe and clothe them, all while experiencing this physical pain, I am reminded that my suffering is not in vain. I am reminded by the Holy Spirit that I can offer up my suffering for the most hardened of hearts. I do not know how God will use my suffering to help another soul, but it gives me peace knowing that my suffering will not be in vain.

Our Lord says in John 14:27: The world would tell us often that suffering is not good. The world tells us we should alleviate suffering as soon as possible. If you experience physical pain, there are a ton of pain killers for it. If someone in the hospital is suffering, the world is quick to euthanize so as to end the suffering. But the Holy Spirit reminds us not to be afraid and not to let our hearts be troubled. Our suffering is a wonderful gift. Jesus is allowing us to kiss His cross and to experience His suffering on Calvary. God is giving us the opportunity to unite our suffering with His on the cross. The world doesn't understand this, but we Christians are so blessed to have a God that truly knows what suffering is! So if you are suffering, just remember that God gives His toughest battles to His strongest soldiers. Whatever battles we face, big or small, may the peace of the Holy Spirit be with us always.

* * * * *

NEWS

(from page 1)

The 78 year old Pontiff called on the faithful to receive this new way of life, which leads to caring and loving others, especially the poorest and those suffering most.

Concluding his address, Pope Francis encouraged those present to become “living branches in the Church.” He also conveyed the importance of giving witness to faith in a coherent way: “a coherence of life and thought, of life and faith - aware that all of us, according to our particular vocation, participates in the unique salvific mission of the Lord, Jesus Christ.”

I Am The Vine

“I am the true vine, and my father is the vinegrower.” (John 15:1)

It seems straight-forward enough, but have we really tried to reflect on the meaning of this familiar verse from John's Gospel?

Jesus calls himself the *True Vine*. Jesus is fully aware of the false vines we've attached ourselves to, vines that bear rotten fruit, or vines that lead to self-destruction or false hopes. These may be vines in the form of relationships that nurture immorality, dishonesty, and infidelity; or vines in the form of bad practices that breed vices and habits that undermine our core values; or vines of pride that hide the meaning of genuine service. The *True Vine* on the other hand, promises us abundance in life, so that if we remain in Him and bear much fruit.

“He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does He prunes so that it bears more fruit.” This second verse of John 15 describes the Father's role in the vine-to-branch relationship, the Jesus-to-us relationship. Simply, the story provides us practical lessons from the vine.

- If our lives consistently bear *no* fruit, God will intervene to discipline us. Hebrews 12:5-6 says, *“My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord, or lose heart when reprovved by him, for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines; he scourges every son he acknowledges.”* The Father may discipline us when we're doing something wrong. In turn, we feel guilty and sad about it when we recognize that we have failed to bear good fruit. When we are disciplined, repentance should come as a way to atone for our wrongdoings. God is the source of the discipline, and He always acts out of love.
- And if our lives only bear *some* fruit, God will intervene to prune us. The Father may also prune us when we are doing something right. We may believe that we trust and follow our Lord, and yet we only bear *some* fruit. When we are pruned, we become more open to God and enter into an even deeper relationship with Him through Jesus, the Vine.
- And lastly, if our lives bear a *lot* of fruit, God will invite you to abide still more deeply in Him, to remain and stay closely connected to Him. God continues to pursue us during our disciplining and pruning until finally we understand what Jesus meant in John 15:5, *“Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.”*

Now it's up to us to respond in obedience and trust, to live in His presence, bear good fruit, and experience joyful abundance.

HE ANSWERS

“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.” (John 15:16)



These were the parting words our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to His disciples: He chose them to do His work and not the other way around. He also advised them that God the Father would always listen to their prayers and answer them. Very powerful words if we examine them closely.

Jesus chose His disciples freely, independently, but knowing that they would carry His word wisely. For He knew that these disciples would carry

His word to the ends of the earth and even to their death. Such is the character of the disciples who later were fortified with the Holy Spirit.

He also told them that whatever they asked in His name would be granted. This was the promise that He made to them. As children of God and co-inheritors with Jesus, we can also apply the same to ourselves. Just as He instructed them to spread His word, He wants us to do the same. We can do this not only orally but most especially through our actions, by being living witnesses to Christ's holiness.

At Mass last Sunday, the priest asked the First Communicants how Christ wants us to respond in exchange for receiving His body. One of the children said, “by doing good to others.” Clearly we can see how the Spirit works in their young minds.

And finally, on the promise of being heard and received, we all are enjoined to ask the Father for what we need, to be patient and steadfast in our prayers, and to be cognizant of what we ask, so that all we do may be for His greater glory.

Forty years ago I (figuratively) lost my family. Twenty years later, God gave me a renewed life and family. Ten years thereafter, He brought me closer to Him through BLD. It was a long time coming, but now that I am nearing the twilight of my life, I couldn't ask for anything else. Such is His love for me and mine for Him.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

Let us be reminded though that what our Lord Jesus really meant was for us to love one another not just once in a while, or sometimes, or most of the time, but always and constantly.

How can we make the Spirit of Love alive in our hearts? In the first reading, the apostles accepted the Gentiles in order to show that God shows no partiality. So as a community, we should also remain inclusive by demonstrating our openness as we welcome anyone who wants to have a closer relationship with God.

Our love for one another is manifested whenever we get together and pray for each other. Our willingness to accept our ministry assignments is another way of showing our love for all, realizing that everyone plays an important role in community building and that together, we collectively perform our mission to share God's love with others. It is only our love and faith that can defeat or remove our fear or reluctance to accept ministry assignments offered to us. Our faith includes our belief that God qualifies those whom He calls to serve Him.

We love one another when we complement each other by helping and supporting our community activities; when we care and feel for each other; when we share in our success or failure, our joy or sorrow, our strength or weakness, our triumph or struggle; when choices are made for the good of all; and when ideas are shared out of love for others.

A good measure of our love for one another is the way we interact with each other as individuals and as members of different ministries. 1Peter 5:5b, says to ***“clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for: ‘God opposes the proud but bestows favor on the humble.’”*** We follow this through our openness to the suggestions of others, our gentleness and patience when dealing with each other, our respect for everyone's boundaries of responsibilities, our willingness to break through the barriers of pride and self-righteousness, and most of all, our determination to make a conscious effort to live in the fruits of the Holy Spirit that bring peace and joy to our community.

Why do we need to make the Spirit of Love alive always in our hearts? Without love, there can only be disunity. In Matthew 12:25, the Lord warned us that ***“Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and no town or house divided against itself will stand.”*** The Lord called on us for a reason. In John 15:16, He tells us that: ***“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.” ...***

As His disciples and as one community, we are called to bear fruits that will remain. Our fruitfulness is

Continued page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

dependent upon how much love we have for each other. This includes our willingness and determination to seek and help those who are lost in their spiritual journey, and we should not give up on our efforts.

We believe that God is love. How we feel about each other is a reflection on our community as a whole. It is only our love for each other that can make us realize the fulfillment of our commissioning as God's chosen community.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Bear no grudges and forgive readily.
2. Pray for and support each other.
3. As members of the community, be united.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARK 10'S: MAY CROWNING OF MOTHER MARY

Friday, May 15, 2015, Before Praise & Worship
St. Mary's Church, Rahway NJ

PRAYER HEALING & RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM - 9 PM - June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class#/district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam/Rory Oloso samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22 - July 10-12, 2015

Where: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contact Persons: Kristian Quevada (Cell 732-910-9924)
Charlie/Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)
Oliver/Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22 - July 24-26, 2015

Where: Malvern Retreat House

315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355

Contact Persons:

Dodge/Celle Lizardo-fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

Ed/Susan Fabe-edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015

Time: 7:00 pm to 12:00am

Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

Girls & Boys Encounters
(Ages 8-13)
Camp Kateri
Hawthorne, Florida
July 19th - 25th
\$250 per person

Older Girls & Boys Hiking
(grades 9-12)
Blairsville, Georgia
July 27 - August 2
\$250 per person

LORD'S PROVISION LAST WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,374	\$47,732
Mission Collections	\$49	\$5,719

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

May 15	John 6 Teaching
May 22	Intercessory Immersion GYM Teaching
May 29	CDFP Overview/Introduction to Word - ME 45 Christian Servanthood III - LSS 41/LSS 42 Singles Ministry CDFP - Singles Ministry/SE
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY TEACHING

The Inner Castle - My Dwelling Place

"BUILDING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES THROUGH FOUNDATIONAL
PRACTICE OF CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER"

May 9, 2015 - 12:30-5:00 PM

CConnell Hall, Rahway, NJ

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30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

SINGLE ENCOUNTER 34 - May 22-24, 2015

Where: Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY 10524

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos: 908.208.2191 ~

justin.bustos@gmail.com or Danny/Cora Labung:
559.776.8324/dancorlab@gmail.com/danlab7@gmail.com

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 - 5 PM) - Sun (6/28/2015 - 5PM)

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

(908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			May 15	Mission
			May 22	Pastoral
			May 29	Evangelization
			June 5	Formation

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 19

Bulletin Edition

May 15, 2015

NEWS

60 BLD members learn more about contemplative prayer

Another successful Community Teaching Seminar was held at Connell Hall, last Saturday, May 9th, 2015. Father Paul Lehman lectured on “Contemplative Praying” and Patrick McGrail from the Singles Ministry, presented an overview of the “Cloud of Unknowing,” an anonymous work of Christian mysticism written in the latter half of the 14th century. This text from the Middle Ages is considered as the spiritual guide on contemplative prayer.

Also, Father expounded a bit more on the book The Interior Castle (or The Mansions), written by St. Teresa of Ávila in 1577, as a guide for spiritual development through service and prayer. This was inspired by her vision of the soul as a crystal globe in the shape of a castle containing seven mansions, which she interpreted as the journey of faith through seven stages, ending in union with God.

Fr. Paul had started with the definition and meaning of “Lectio Divina.” - a form of prayer that is Spirit led and used primarily in our quiet or personal prayer time, hence, the word “contemplative.”

There was a good mix of attendees from married couples, singles and solo parents, among the 60 who attended (although not an overwhelming number, victorious nonetheless).. Interactions were very engaging and there were many questions.

Below are some comments from some of those who were there:

- “It was an overwhelming success that we did not anticipate. The topic was well received and very appropriate for BLD, being that it is a charismatic group.”

- “There was a lively exchange between presenters and the attendees. Questions were asked and answered.”

- “The presentation was very good, but would have been more effective if broken down into several teachings. There’s just so much information... and certainly deep. The teaching itself is really great.”

COUNSELS

The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

THEME: We, followers of Jesus, bear much fruit when we believe and proclaim the Gospel.

WORD: Acts 1:1-11 / Ps 47:2-3, 6-9 /

Eph 1:17-23 or Eph 4:1-13 / Mk 16:15-20

ORDER: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.” (Mk 16:15)

REFLECTION:



Imagine this scene in Acts 1:9-11: “... as they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud took him from their sight”... ‘Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky?’”

What does this scene remind you of?

It is the airport departure scene. For many of us, immigrants to the United States, or who have family and friends who have migrated to and worked in some foreign country, this scene is very familiar to us. It is the poignant picture of a family member sadly left behind, while Mom, Dad, brother, sister or relative leaves for a foreign country to work. There is of course the prospect of a better life for those left behind because of the financial support to be sent. Arrangements have been made so that the children are left in the care of the grandparents or some close family member. Then there are also the instructions to the children to study well, to behave and to take care of each other while the parents are working overseas. Then there is the promise of a return in a few months or a few years or a petition to the new country and all would be reunited again.

But for the apostles who were not used to this set-up, they were left “standing there looking at the sky.” But the Lord Jesus, like a true, loving and ... *Continued page 3*

Promise of the Week

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” (Acts 1:8)

The Traveler for the Lord

The chronicles of the travels of St. Paul are a manifestation of one the greatest miracles in the conversion of mankind to Christianity. His deeds are very difficult to emulate, considering the difficulties, during his time, to travel to distant places to spread God's word. His is a story of great faith that has brought about the conversion of so many. It is a faith that exemplifies love, courage and perseverance.

Why is his message so powerful? It is a message of truth and love from our Lord Jesus. It is about the greatest story ever told. The Book of Acts has stories of many who were drawn to the Lord due to the power of the message from God through the efforts of St. Paul.

The new life in us was transmitted to us through the efforts of the early disciples like St. Paul, and today, by modern day missionaries such as the ministers of the Church - from the Pope, to all priests and religious - all dedicated to carrying and sharing the light of the love of Christ. It is the light that is being carried to the world's darkest corners to illuminate the hearts of so many.



Our BLD community is just one of the many religious groups that share the same vision, to carry on the same mission of love. Like St. Paul, our faith in God should be the driving force that helps us conquer our fear to be the messengers of the most powerful message of love and sacrifice for the salvation of mankind.

We have a great advantage over the early disciples as we can avail ourselves of modern means of travel and technology. Today, technology allows us to send the same message out, traveling at the speed of sound, or maybe even the speed of light. We can send this message to multitudes and to the farthest corners of the world in just a few seconds.

God has blessed our community with many workers who have professed their faith in our Lord, and are continuously doing His will. Can we be more like St. Paul? We have to believe we can if we profess the same faith with the same love, courage and perseverance, inspired by the love of God. Then each of us can be considered as a "Traveler for the Lord."

My Constant Reminder

"But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes he will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation." (Jn 16:7-8)



With regards leaving, there are 2 parties involved – the one who is leaving and the one who is left behind. And both will have apprehensions about the change that will happen.

For the one leaving, it is the fear of the unknown, for it will be a totally new territory that he/she will be faced with. Go back in time when you made that decision to migrate to this country, leaving everything behind and starting life anew. There was excitement, but deep in your heart, there was also a fear of how to start life anew, away from what you had been used to.

For the one left behind, it is the fear of losing someone whose presence used to always be there and now will be gone. Whatever that presence means will now be replaced by emptiness. Can that emptiness be filled by somebody else? Will it be easy to find a replacement to fill that empty gap? There are those who are able to move on and live again. But, there are also those whose feelings of emptiness remain, and life just becomes a day to day struggle.

This must have been what the apostles were faced with at the time, before His arrest, that Jesus was talking to them about in the verse above. He was telling them about what was to happen. But, He reassured them that He would NOT be gone completely but another Being would replace Him. In this scenario, although the feeling of the party being left behind (Jesus' apostles in this case) is the same (that of loss and emptiness), the One who is leaving, Jesus, has no apprehension whatsoever. He knows that even if He will physically leave, the Holy Spirit will be with the apostles guiding them constantly. His presence will be the constant reminder that Jesus is with them.

Dearest Lord, whenever I make a decision to leave, or a loved one decides to leave me behind, please constantly remind me about the Advocate. Fill my heart with peace and love that can only come from the Holy Spirit, so that I will never feel all alone and lost. Guide me, that all my decisions will be the result of a true discernment of Your will. Constantly hold my hand that I will be guided, away from the enemy and not commit sins against You. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

Entrusted to Us

“When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the pain because of her joy that a child has been born into the world.” (Jn 16:21)

I remember the first time I opened my eyes after a caesarian operation, I asked myself two things:

1. What have I agreed to with my husband as the name of our first born? (as I seem to remember him whispering his suggestion to me and my just nodding in agreement); and,
2. Do I have the knowledge, the strength and the wisdom to raise this child into the world?

The second question was the one that carried the most responsibility, and at that point in time, all I could do was to say a prayer, *Lord, I know that this child is a gift from You. You have entrusted me to take care of him and mold him to be like You. May I be worthy of that trust. Grant me the grace to be able to carry on and raise him well.*

Since then the Good Lord has entrusted to us 3 lambs to take care of and raise in a place called the United States of America, where democracy and freedom, commercialism and capitalism, and openness are normal buzzwords heard on the streets and on TV, making parenting very challenging. There were no courses one could enroll in called Parenting 101. There were also not enough reading materials to guide a new parent on how to raise kids amidst this environment. If there was one constant during their growing-up years, it was for my husband and I to pray, asking the Good Lord to always teach us to be good parents.

Today, these lambs are now out of the house and are building careers of their own in locations far from home, away from New Jersey, the state that they grew up in, and away from Papa and Mama, the parents who nurtured them growing up. Looking back, they grew up to be good kids – parent loving, and loving each other as siblings. Since we are now physically far from each other, we’ve been able to keep in touch via the *family chat text*. There has been one constant though, in these exchanges – the reminder that prayer should always be in each of our lives (our conjugal prayers are always littered with intercessions for the kids). Of course, they now have separate *family chat texts* of their own.

Dearest Lord, in John 15:4, You said, *“Remain in me, as I remain in you.”* We as parents clung to You as branches, ensuring that we become vines too to our lambs. We’ve tried to show them what being with the Lord means. The Blessed Sacrament has always been a ‘safe haven’ for the family, something that our kids had emulated. Lord Jesus, send your ministering angels to protect them from harm. In Jesus name, we pray.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

caring Father, made all the necessary arrangements and preparations to take care of His children when the time came for His Ascension and He had to go.

1. Jesus rose from the dead to give new life to His children. The Lord’s Easter rising opened the door to His Ascension.
2. He spent time with them. Acts 1:3, *“...appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.”*
3. He explained to them in John 16:7 why He had to leave. *“...it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”*
4. In John 14:28, He explained to them what was happening. *“I am going away and I will come back to you. If you love me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father; for the Father is greater than I.”*

As if this were not enough, Jesus assured us that we would not be left alone. He promised us the best guardian, best caregiver of our lives, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who came at Pentecost, a week after the Lord’s Ascension.



The good news of the Ascension is the assurance that our Savior *“will return in the same way that you see him going into heaven.”* This tells us that there is Life after death. In John 14:2-3, the Lord lovingly promises us that *“In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself.”*

While the Lord is preparing this dwelling place for us, He has also called us to do the same here on earth, to open dwelling places within our hearts and in our lives to the people around us. This calling is very real in us today. We are called to a new life through the renewal movement of the BLD community. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit were reawakened within us through the Life in the Spirit Seminar. After undergoing the formation program and staying within the community, we are now enjoined to go out and evangelize the world and to welcome everyone into the community of the Lord where there are many dwelling places.

The Ascension should strengthen and nourish our desire for our grand reunion with our Father in heaven. It is in heaven that the Lord lovingly awaits us for our final homecoming, to be reunited with Him and all the angels and saints.

Direction: Testify to the gospel in deed and in truth.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



PRAYER HEALING I RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM - 9 PM - June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class #, district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam/Rory Olaso

samrory@gmail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

When: July 10-12, 2015

Where: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contact Persons: Kristian Quevada (Cell 732-910-9924)

Charlie/Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)

Oliver/Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

When: July 24-26, 2015

Where: Malvern Retreat House

315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355

Contact Persons:

Dodge/Celle Lizardo-fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

Ed/Susan Fabe-edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657

Divine Mercy Parish invites everyone to a

PENTECOST VIGIL

When: Saturday, May 23, 2015,
7pm

Followed by Praise and Worship
(Bilingual) and light snacks at
the school auditorium.



This year's Pentecost Vigil is spearheaded by the Hispanic prayer group of the Parish, as well as other DMP prayer groups. The BLD Community, through the DMP Mission Ministry will be supporting both the Mass and the Praise and Worship. **Your presence is greatly appreciated**

HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

Girls & Boys Encounters
(Ages 8-13)
Camp Kateri
Hawthorne, Florida
July 19th - 25th
\$250 per person

Older Girls & Boys Hiking
(grades 9-12)
Blairsville, Georgia
July 27 - August 2
\$250 per person



Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION LAST WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,316	\$51,048
Mission Collections	\$75	\$5,794
Nepal Collection	\$1,531	\$1,531

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

May 22	Intercessory Immersion GYM Teaching
May 29*	CDFP Overview/Introduction to Word - ME 45 Christian Servanthood III - LSS 41 / 42 Singles Ministry CDFP - Singles Ministry/SE
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 45

When: May 29-31, 2015

Where: Hotel Executive Suites

30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008

Contacts: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

SINGLES ENCOUNTER 34

When: May 22-24, 2015

Where: Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY 10524

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos: 908.208.2191 ~

justin.bustos@gmail.com or Danny/Cora Labung:

559.776.8324/dancorlab@gmail.com/danlab7@gmail.com

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri (6/26/2015 - 5 PM) - Sun (6/28/2015 - 5PM)

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

(908) 647-1777

Cost: \$160/person

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am

Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

Fundraising launch is at this Friday, May 15ths

Red Carpet Event

- journal photo ops, fine music, hors d'oeuvres, knick-knacks and more!!! (at the school auditorium, after Praise & Worship)

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		May 22	Pastoral
		May 29	Evangelization
		June 5	Formation
		June 12	Management



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 20

Bulletin Edition

May 22, 2015

NEWS

2015 Dinner Dance “Red Carpet”

May 15th 2015, Friday night saw a bustling community all abuzz and dressed to the nines as members from all ages, from the Mark 10 to the Golden Years ministries posed for photos on the red carpet, and caught the excitement of what was a special treat for the community. The formal launch of the 2015 BLD-Newark Dinner Dance - the community's major fundraising event for the year slated for September 12, 2015 drew in the whole community, which basked in the night's festival of smiles, fine music and a colorful spread of hors d'oeuvres.

This extravaganza hosted by the Dinner Dance Team jumpstarted solicitations for ads for the 2015 Dinner Dance commemorative journal. The community's apostolates and ministry members turned up en masse to sign up and waited patiently in long lines to strike a pose for their official journal photos taken by the community's resident professional photographer against a rich BLD backdrop, complete with klieg lights and, of course, a red carpet. The members opened up their hearts and reveled in the unity of the Holy Spirit spreading love and joy all around with their presence, generosity, faithfulness and love of the Lord and community. One can only marvel how the Holy Spirit has touched the community as all generations mingled and melded into one body. **“But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body. If one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.”** (1 Corinthians 12: 20, 26)



COUNSELS

Come Holy Spirit, Come

THEME: We, followers of Jesus, bear much fruit when we use the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our day-to-day lives.

WORD: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34; 1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13; Jn 20:19-23

ORDER: *“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”* (John 20: 21b)

REFLECTION:

Do we really need the Holy Spirit in our lives?

In the past few weeks we heard the different accounts on the boldness and zeal of the apostles after receiving the Holy Spirit. In John 16:7 & 13a it says, **“But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ...when He comes, the Spirit of truth, He will guide you to all truth...”** Jesus, with all His love and compassion promised the Holy Spirit to His apostles for He knew then, their faith was not as firm and strong.

We are not different from the apostles. We need to invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit to deepen our faith through the work of the Holy Spirit. He guides and protects by stirring our paths clear of any obstacles especially in times of challenges and pain. Our human flaws can dissuade us from choosing the right choices as the evil powers of this world incessantly rivals with the greatest gift of God, the Holy Spirit.

Before Jesus was glorified into heaven, He exhorted His followers to receive the *“rivers of living water.”* When we believe in **Continued on page 3**

Promise of the Week

“Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” (John 20:22b-23)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Feed my lambs ... tend my sheep

When we were called to be the Shepherds of an ME class, we did a lot of soul searching because we almost embarked on a threefold denial of our love for Jesus by giving these reasons for not accepting His call: (1) We did not want to leave the ministry we were in because of the relationships we had established; (2) we thought it was too soon to leave the programs we have started in our ministry (3) we did not want to leave our comfort zone and felt we were not ready to shepherd the spiritual growth of many couples.

In John 21:15-17, Jesus gave Peter a threefold command to **“feed my sheep.”** Each time Jesus said, **“Feed my sheep,”** it was in response to Peter’s threefold declaration of love which was meant to counteract his earlier threefold denial of his love for Christ.

The three commands, although translated the same, are slightly different: (1) “Pasture (tend) the lambs” in Greek denotes continuous tending, feeding and caring for animals. We are referred to as sheep throughout Scripture. Jesus is both our Good Shepherd and The Door of the sheepfold. By describing His people as lambs, He is emphasizing their nature as immature and vulnerable and needs tending and care; (2) “Tend my sheep.” Jesus was emphasizing tending the sheep in a supervisory capacity, not only feeding but ruling over them; (3) “pasture (tend) the sheep” clarifies the job of the shepherd of the flock of God. They are to tend, care for, and provide spiritual food for God’s people, in continual action to nourish and care for their souls, bringing them into the fullness of spiritual maturity.

The food with which shepherds are to feed the flock of God is no other than the Word of God. Peter declares that Christians are to desire the Word so that by it, we can mature in our salvation (1 Peter 2:2).

Reflecting on this passage made us focus on following Christ, on listening to His call. We needed to rest our hearts on God’s grace alone because we knew our own efforts will eventually fail us. We soon realized that God gave us the best couples we could ever pastor and shepherd. They have enriched our lives more than we could expect and imagine. The many months of shared laughter and tears while serving the Lord with these wonderful couples have got to be the best times of our lives. Despite our imperfections, we are able to go about our work as heirs to the throne of God’s grace, as his very own sons and daughters. As we continue to feed our flock on God’s word, we are able to declare, as Peter did, our love for the Lord Jesus.

PRAYER UNITES

As disciples of Christ, we are united with Him and Abba Father through the Power of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel of John Chapter 17, we read about how Jesus prayed to Abba Father. In particular we see this unity unfold as John recalls the actions of Jesus as we read, **“I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me”** (John 17:20-21). Jesus’ prayer of unity forever unites us with Him and Abba Father and not only his first apostles but the entire body of Christ. Often we are hurt by others yet so many times we hear about or experience ourselves the healing that takes place after prayer. As such when we pray for one another in our intercessory prayers we join together with other prayer warriors to unite ourselves with the needs of the person for whom we are praying for or with. As we discern the Lord’s will for our lives and align our prayers to that perfect will, our prayer becomes pure and simple of heart.



A pure and true prayer never separates us but always unites us to the unified love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In our prayer we are in union with all that the three persons of the One God represents. In that perfect love we are chosen by God to come before the throne so that at the end of time the world

will know that Jesus was sent by the Father to redeem us and bring us back to the Father in a covenant relationship that never will be broken again. Our differences will no longer exist and our animosities towards others will have no place in the Heaven that the Lord prays for in this Chapter 17 of John. The unbelieving world will recognize the unity of all believers in the one Triune God for whom calls us out of darkness and into the light so that Jesus’ prayer will be complete in us at the end of time. Prayer always unites!



Choose to Give

“In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort we must help the weak, and keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35)

God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. (James 1:17) He is the perfect and excellent giver who does not expect anything in return. Is there anything we can give compared to what He has given us? He gave us His life to save us, to show how much He loved us.

In giving, we resemble and imitate God. There is love in giving. Mama Mary, the Mother of Jesus is a great example of giving beyond compare! She had to give in to what her Son had to do. She stood with Him in His journey to Calvary with her heart aching and bleeding.

At home, we witness this kind of giving through our parents. When their children want something, even if they are about to put the food into their mouth, they will still give it to their children. They sacrifice many things to give everything to their children. They do not mind having old and worn clothing just to be able to buy new ones for their children. What about those who work abroad? In order to give what the family needs, they do not mind being away from home just to give the comforts of life to their children.

And when we give, we give “till it hurts” or above and beyond what is comfortable for us. It requires much self-denial and self-crucifixion. Every act of giving diminishes our selfish and sinful nature. The more God’s grace takes control of our hearts and the more God remains in our hearts. Giving is telling God that we trust Him to provide for all our needs. Conquering the fear that we do not have enough or being unsure if we can afford it but still give, reflects our relationship with God here on earth. It indicates that we know that our eternal destiny is in God’s kingdom, and that is far more important for us. The Lord loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 2:7) When we think about other’s first and give with all our heart and mind, we are glorifying and pleasing God. And, knowing that we are pleasing God gives us blissful joy in our hearts.

Do we ask if it's better to give than to receive, or would we rather ask ourselves **how** we can give to be able to follow Jesus? We can always give and share with others with our *talent, time* and *treasure*. Let us all choose to give.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jesus as our Lord and Savior, the river of living water flows from Him (John 7:38). As the scripture says, the apostles waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit in the upper room where the first novena occurred. When the day of the Pentecost was fulfilled, all who were present in the upper room received the tongues of fire. The gift of tongues was heard in angelic tone and voice. Glossolalia, in Greek, was one of the special events that unified the people of God, driven by the charisma of the Holy Spirit. Our affirmative response to the invitation for the Life in the Spirit Seminar, gave us the same opportunity to experience the charismatic outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

In the epistle of St. Paul to the people of Corinth, Ephesus and to the Romans, the gift of the Holy Spirit is the first fruit of our redemption. It is a grace we receive as down payment for the redemptive love of God. If we detach our connection with the Holy Spirit, it evokes fear at the mightiest. Our innermost being becomes restless and without peace. In essence, discipleship without the grace of the Holy Spirit is dead- it dies down to fruitlessness. However if we clutch on to the virtues of humility and love, discipleship will bear much fruit.

If we are to cling to true discipleship, we have to share the cross of Jesus. In our spiritual journey, we face challenges and difficulties despite our hearts’ desire to follow Jesus. The trials and sufferings are mercies in disguise. It brings us closer to God, bending down on our knees with trust and perseverance. It strengthens our faith knowing that our God is a loving and faithful God.

Rejoice! Pentecost is also a day of thanksgiving. We express our gratitude to God, for we are in awe to have been invited to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is a grace that enables us to partake in the mission of the body of Christ, the Church. When we embody the presence and works of the Holy Spirit, we live our life to the fullest, a truly Christian life. ***“If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ ... All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”*** (Romans 8:9 & 14)

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit descends upon you; then you are to be My witness in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:4-5; 8) This great commission given to the apostles also applies to all of us. We too are apostles ***Continued on page 3***

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Divine Mercy Parish invites everyone to a



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Followed by Praise and Worship
(Bilingual) and light snacks at
the school auditorium.

The BLD Community, through the DMP Mission Ministry will be supporting both the Mass and the Praise and Worship. **Your presence is greatly appreciated.**

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER 45

May 29-31, 2015 ~ Where: Hotel Executive Suites
30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ 07008

Contacts: Nong/Tricia Bustos MLA@bldnewark.com

PRAYER HEALING I RETREAT

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Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class #, district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam/Rory Olasso

samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri-Sun, June 26-28, 2015 Cost: \$160/person

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries (908) 647-1777

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

July 10-12, 2015 ~ Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contacts: Kristian Quevada (732-910-9924)

Charlie/Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)

Oliver/Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

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July 24-26, 2015 ~ Malvern Retreat House

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July 27 - August 2
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COUNSELS (from page 3)

and must carry on the apostolic work to proclaim the Good News. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" was Jesus' command in John 20:21. To become active agents of evangelization, St. Teresa of Avila expressed this plainly in one of her writings, "Christ Has No Body."

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which He looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands....feet....eyes, you are His body.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

Bukas Loob sa Diyos is so blessed with prayerful people because it is through these constant prayers that we are able to sustain the Christian life in the community. Our class reunions, retreats and teachings encourage us to nurture our life as believers and doers of the Word. As Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, "If we feed ourselves with the Spirit of Truth, we can transcend our spirituality to a contemplative life allowing us to express the characteristics of our faith: missionary, contemplative and universal."

Tonight, let us examine ourselves and submit to these questions: Have I inclined to the renewing of the mind, determined to follow Jesus? Was I steadfast in walking in the Spirit as I encounter the different dimensions of all walks of life?

DIRECTIONS

1. Share our spiritual gifts and talents for the common good and not for selfish gains.
2. Believe that the Holy Spirit will accomplish the works of God in us.

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,713	54,761
Mission Collections	98	5,892
Nepal Collections	133	1,664

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

June 19	John 6 Teaching Post Encounter Track – ME 45
June 20*	Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 1 – ME 1-43 Shepherd's Training – LSS 1-40
June 26	Intercessory Immersion Golden Years Ministry Teaching
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 – 5:00 PM



Date	Apostolate
May 29	Evangelization
June 05	Formation
June 12	Management
June 19	Mission

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 21

Bulletin Edition

May 29, 2015

NEWS

BLD is victorious!



Last weekend, May 22-24, eighteen young adults said YES to a weekend with God at Graymoor Spiritual Life Center. They could have been somewhere else doing their usuals, but God handpicked each one of them and brought them together for Singles Encounter #34 weekend. It was facilitated by Paolo Nolasco, Molly Brilliantes, Patrick McGrail, and Jennifer Ompod with Deacon Serge Bernatchez as the spiritual director. The SE34 is likewise blessed with the guidance of their class shepherds, Tito Lito and Tita Elaine Fernando.

It was an event full of emotions which were clearly visible on the participants' faces. The weekend was victorious with the help of the auxies, praise members, and the SE33 sponsoring class who had been on the same spot just six months ago. The weekend showed God's amazing grace because without His divine intervention, SE34 would not have been such a resounding success.

The Singles Ministry is happy to welcome its newest members: Cristina Aldecoa, Renato Andoy, Deliana Arias, Angela Crisafulli*, Ryan DeLeon, Abigail Fabe, Erika, Flores, Fernando Faura, Jezreel Gaudiel, Jiezhelle Lizardo, Justin Lucero*, Adriana Reyes*, Andrew Reyes, Justin Reyes, Anthony Ryan, Meldrick Umahon, Stephany Urzua and Justin Victorino.*

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

THEME: We, followers of Jesus, bear much fruit when we go out and make disciples of all nations.

WORD: Dt 4:32-34,39-40 & Ps 33:4-5,6,9,18-20,22 Rom 8:14-17 & Mt 28:16-20

ORDER: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Mt 28:19)

REFLECTION:



"The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of Christian life. God alone can make it known to us by revealing himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (CCC 261) Jesus Christ revealed this immense mystery to us just before he ascended to Heaven when He commanded us to: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit." (Mt 28:19)

Fr. Don Miller, OFM, a Franciscan, reflects on the character of the Blessed Trinity as our God being a loving community, an "eternal dance of love." Therefore, if we are made according to God's image, we should reflect the Blessed Trinity's distinct nature, to interact with one another and be one. By the grace of our Trinitarian Baptism, we are called to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity, a community of love, as we enter the community of the Risen One, the Church.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Behold, I am with you always until the end of the age." (Mt 28:20b)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Guilty No More

“Lord, your mercy reaches to heaven; your fidelity, to the clouds. Your justice is like the highest mountains; your judgments, like the mighty deep; human being and beast you sustain, Lord.”

(Psalm 36:6-7)

Since my mother’s passing a year and a half ago, phone calls back home to the Philippines have become less frequent. I used to call very often and talk to my mom to cheer her up and to assure her of my love. Now that she’s gone, I only call home on special occasions like Christmas, New Year’s and birthdays; and I often talk to my younger sister. Just before Easter, I called so we could update each other on what is happening with our families. When I asked how our niece has been since giving birth to a baby boy out of wedlock a few months after graduating from college, the question triggered an outburst of emotions that my sister had been keeping bottled up inside. She expressed bitterness and frustration over our niece’s *indiscretion* and regretted putting her through college. My sister has not spoken to our niece and she vowed not to help her out again... ever!

We’ve all been guilty of unforgiveness at some point in our lives. We often try to justify our actions, saying that *we* have been the victim; *we* have been wronged. There may also be sins of omission, which we knowingly or unknowingly commit. It is when we fail to be a light to others who we know are in the dark (as in Mt. 5:16), or when we fail to exhort one another (as in Hebrew 3:13). I must admit that I would have agreed with my sister and added even more fuel to the fire had I not been in this community. Instead, I let the Holy Spirit lead me to respond, “Our God is a merciful God. He forgives those who forgive. If you love God and if you want to receive His blessings, you must find it in your heart to forgive our niece.” (see Mt 6:14-15; Mk 11:25.)

Heavenly Father, thank you for using my sister to open my eyes to my own weaknesses. You are a merciful and forgiving God. Give me a heart that is always ready to forgive and always repentant so that I can look forward to saying “guilty no more.” This I pray in Jesus’ Name, Amen



**Blessings on Your
61st Sacerdotal Anniversary
Father Paul!**

May 29

EYES OF LOVE

In Mark 10:51-52, Jesus asks a blind beggar, “*What do you want me to do for you?*” *The blind man replied to him, ‘Master, I want to see.’ Jesus told him, ‘Go your way; your faith has saved you.’ Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.”*

In this passage we reflect on the story of Bartimaeus, a blind man, sitting by the side of the road begging. “*On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, ‘Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.’ Many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, ‘Son of David, have pity on me.’*” (Mk 10:47-48)

Bartimaeus shouted “*Jesus, Son of David,*” which was a name reserved for the Messiah. With these words, Bartimaeus proclaimed that Jesus *was* the Messiah and showed us the big difference in faith between himself and the crowd, who simply called Him, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus stopped and invited Bartimaeus to come to Him. This showed that Jesus wanted to hear Bartimaeus’s request. “*What do you want me to do for you?*” asked Jesus. Bartimaeus’ answer was confident; “*Master, I want to see.*” Bartimaeus showed his trust and faith that Jesus could cure him.

This is the kind of trust that Bartimaeus teaches us, the kind of faith that you and I must have. We must believe that Jesus is able to help us through our darkest moments. Whatever the situations may be, we can reach out and speak to Jesus. Bartimaeus was a poor blind man who came to Jesus to ask for help, and he did not hold back when others told him to be silent. In the same way, each of us needs to come and invite Jesus into our lives and to persevere even when others try to discourage us.

Jesus did not come into the world to rule over it but to save us and die for you and me.

Lord, I thank You for Bartimaeus. Through his confidence in You, I have grown in my own faith. I know that I can come to You with all of my worries and know that You are carrying me through. Jesus, I invite You to dwell in my heart and to quell my insecurities. Jesus, help me to have faith like Bartimaeus, to know and believe that there is nothing You won’t do to show Your love for me. Amen!

FOR REWARD or FOR GLORY OF GOD

“Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age... and eternal life in the age to come.” (Mk.10:29-30)

What is the best investment you can make with your life? Mark’s gospel presents us with a paradox. We lose what we keep and gain what we give away. When we lose our lives for Christ, we gain a priceless treasure and an inheritance which lasts forever. Whatever we give to God comes back a hundredfold.

Right after the wealthy young man (Mk 10: 17-22) refused Jesus’ invitation to follow Him, Peter rather crudely wanted to know what he and the other disciples would get because they had given up everything to follow Him. Jesus spoke with utter honesty. Those who left everything for His sake, would receive a hundred times more in this life as well as unending life in the age to come.

It is easy to feel what Peter and the other disciples were feeling. In a community as large as BLD, there always seems to be so much to do and never enough workers in the vineyard. Some members feel stretched to the limit and wonder what to do. Many are asked to help but feel unready or not gifted to do God’s work.

It is only with *faith and trust in God* that we can follow Christ. When we accept the challenges of spreading the Good News, we will receive all we need from God through the Holy Spirit. When we let go of our insecurities and allow God’s power to flow through us, only then can we accomplish God’s work, not only in community, but everywhere He sends us.

Jesus promised His disciples the blessings and joy of rich fellowship with the community of believers. No earthly goods or possessions can rival the joy of knowing God and the peace He grants His disciples. Jesus never said that following Him would be easy or that it would bring recognition. Most of the time the opposite happens. But the Lord wants to fill our hearts with the vision of heaven and with His joy and peace.

We have been called to this community by God for a reason. The reason may be different for each of us, but the one truth is that God needs each and every one of us to bring His message to others.

Let our prayer be, *“Lord I want to follow You as your disciple and to love You wholeheartedly with all that I have. Fill my heart with faith, hope and love that I may always find peace and joy in Your presence. Amen!”*

COUNSELS (from page 1)

The BLD is not a community unique from all other Christian communities, for though they may have different missions, all are called to obedience and service to the Church. We were all called to renewal through the BLD for a special reason. Through this community, God has gifted us with the character of the Holy Trinity. He has recreated us into a new person, given us wisdom through teachings, and He has removed our heavy loads and allowed our inherent goodness and holiness to shine. These gifts are instruments that have been given to us so that we may bear fruit as we *“Go...and make disciples of all nations.”*

It is not a coincidence that tonight marks the start of the ME#45 weekend. A weekend where the Blessed Trinity will not only bring the participants healing and peace but also offer them the opportunity to grow more spiritually and become holier couples and families. The Newark community has been blessed with dedicated and committed disciples whose faithfulness to the Lord’s calling has been very fruitful in giving birth to new communities and disciples on the East and West coasts of the United States. Many have also gone back to their respective parishes with greater fervor and zeal to serve the Lord’s people through His Church.

As disciples of Jesus, let us remain faithful to our calling and continue to bear much fruit by spreading His word, bringing others into His light, and making them His disciples. Let us call especially on the younger members of this community. We must pass the anointing to them and start teaching and training them to do the work of the Lord, to bring their peers to a renewed life in Christ through this community.

Let us recognize that it is our young people, living out there in the world, who will become the next generation of evangelizers and witnesses for the Lord. It is they who can re-ignite the fire that we once saw blazing through this community, making weekends like this one overflow with candidates. Together with them, let us not shy away from this calling to evangelize and bear more fruit, always remembering Jesus’ promise to us: *“...and behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”* (Mt 28:20)

DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Evangelize through your life witnessing.**
- 2. Invite friends and families to the community encounters.**

NEWS (from page 1)

Let's continue to pray to the Holy Spirit for the newest additions to the Singles Ministry. Thank you Lord! You deserve all the glory and honor!

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

(Heb 11:6)

*SE34 class coordinators

CONGRATULATIONS! NEW BLD LEADERS EFFECTIVE JULY 2015

BLD Newark Cluster DSL

Manny & Arlene Mangalonzo

BLD Albany DCS

Evangelization	Raphy & Ofie Rabanal
Formation	Jorge & Josie Barlin
Management	To be appointed
Pastoral	To be appointed

BLD Charlotte DCS

Evangelization	Cesar & Ava Gordola
Formation	Bert & Lith Golamco
Management	Tomas & Erlinda Siaton
Pastoral	To be appointed

BLD Newark DCS

Evangelization	Manny & Judy San Luis
Formation	Jovy & Emily Lucero
Management	Gerry & Dimples Canlas
Mission	Nong & Tricia Bustos
Pastoral	Sam & Rory Olaso


BLD Rockland DCS

Evangelization	Joemar & Angie Miane
Formation	Boyet & Mita Miranda
Management	Eric & Claire Macalintal
Mission	Jerry & Cora Mercatelli
Pastoral	Emil & Thelma De Guzman

BLD Washington DCS

Evangelization	Jesse & Elaine De Leon
Formation	Aron & Marivic De Castro
Management	James & Grace Uy
Mission	Lem & Becky Ramos
Pastoral	Ed & Lou Masil

“Obey your leaders and defer to them, for they keep watch over you and will have to give an account, that they may fulfill their task with joy and not with sorrow, for that would be of no advantage to you.” (Hebrew 13:17)

	Date	Apostolate
	June 5	Formation
	June 12	Management
	June 19	Mission
	June 26	Pastoral

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	2,549	57,310
Mission Collections	---	5,892

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

June 19	John 6 Teaching Post Encounter Track – ME 45
June 20*	Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 1 – ME 1-43 Shepherd's Training – LSS 1-40
June 26	Intercessory Immersion Golden Years Ministry Teaching
Venue:	Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time:	Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PRAYER HEALING & RETREAT

When: June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class #, district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam & Rory Olaso

samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri–Sun, June 26-28, 2015 Cost: \$160 & person

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries (908) 647-1777

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

July 10-12, 2015 ~ Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contacts: Kristian Quevada (732-910-9924)

Charlie & Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)

Oliver & Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

July 24-26, 2015 ~ Malvern Retreat House

315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355

Contact: Ed/Susan Fabe~edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657

Dodge/Celle Lizardo~fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

Girls & Boys Encounters
(Ages 8-13)
Camp Kateri
Hawthorne, Florida
July 19th - 25th
\$250 per person

Older Girls & Boys Hiking
(grades 9-12)
Blairsville, Georgia
July 27 - August 2
\$250 per person



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 22

Bulletin Edition

June 5, 2015

NEWS

God blesses our community

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Mt 19:20)

On the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, God has blessed us with 15 couples and one priest as the newest members of our BLD community, who comprise our **ME #45** class. Once again, God is with us as He blessed our efforts in making disciples of all nations through our openness to all whom He calls to become members of our community of believers.

Let us welcome the following members of **ME #45** with the love of Christ and with our prayers so their journey will continue with His divine guidance through their class shepherds, Filmore & Humbeline Flores.

Rev. Fr. Albert Nzeh, Rey & Malyn Alam, Joseph & Joann Aliotta, Carlos & Donna Austria, Luis Canarte & Cristina Galarza, Nestor & Rosalie Clarin*, Rene & Ludy De Gracia, Antonio & Fe Escoto, Manny & Gina Malabag, Paul & Pinky Martinez*, Vincent & Paule McKenzie, York & Denise Miguel, Martin & Frances Ohiro*, Rey & Elma Pineda, Arnel & Maribel Torres*, and Pros & Minda Villarica.

Continued on page 3

COUNSELS

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

THEME: Our faith is deepened when we regularly receive the Holy Eucharist.

**WORD: Ex 24:3-8/Ps 116:12-13,15-16,17-18
Heb 9:11-15/Mk 14:12-16,22-26**

ORDER: “Take it; this is my body...This is my blood of the covenant which will be shed for many.”(Mk 14:22b, 24)

REFLECTION:

Holy Communion is one of the most powerful treasures that our Lord Jesus Christ left us before going back to heaven. And yet, it is a sacrament we often take for granted. Our theme for this week is a good reminder for us to step back and have a fuller appreciation of the power of the Holy Eucharist - **Our faith is deepened when we regularly receive the Holy Eucharist.**

Of the seven sacraments instituted by Christ that we, Roman Catholics, fervently and diligently observe, Holy Communion is one of the most difficult to grasp.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“...those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.”(Hb 9:15b)



Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

TO TEST AND HEAL

“When you did not hesitate to get up and leave your dinner in order to go and bury the dead, I was sent to put you to the test. At the same time, however, God commissioned me to heal you...” (Tb 12:13-14)



God’s Word in the Book of Tobit truly strikes me with so much awe. It opens my eyes to perceive, recognize and accept the meaning of everything occurring in life. The Lord assures – there is always a *reason for them* – all will come to pass. I must never despair of God’s mercy. *The Lord Jesus*

admonishes that I must die to my old, immature, egoistic self to transcend life.

On July 10, 2013, my Dermatologist’s infamous words of diagnosis reached me and thus started changing my lifestyle – a rare chronic condition, brought about by a lowering of my immune system which was characterized by tense blistering eruptions on my skin. Since it means the possibilities of complications leading to death, my condition must be well-managed.

It rendered me to live in worry and fear and almost shattered my life completely in a span of two years. It also almost left nothing for me to hope for from God and thus nothing to live for. I wanted to bail myself out of it, but seemingly helpless to do so. *I got stuck on the cross-road of indecisiveness – to continue in my life’s emotional state or to move on to life.*

Lord Jesus, thank You for clearing out my skepticism and doubts in my past life. I resented to have taken morbid pleasure in them. I now desire to strengthen my faith in You and resolve to profit in Your Word.

Thank You for the riches of Your grace that will propel my faith to a new level. I trust that I shall attain a divine communion with You – an Easter of unending joy – after all of life’s sufferings and pain is past.

“Father in heaven, keep my eyes always open to Your glorious and magnificent plans and that I, who receive salvation through Your Word, may be Your child in deed as well as in name. I pray that my renewed faith may be able to preach and teach and continue to bear witness to the truths of the Gospel. Amen.”

TRUE CHARACTER

But she said to me, “It was given to me as a bonus over and above my wages.” Yet I would not believe her and told her to give it back to its owners. I flushed with anger at her over this. So she retorted: ***“Where are your charitable deeds now? Where are your righteous acts? Your true character is finally showing itself!”*** (Tb 2:14)

A few months ago I had an accident and went through major surgery. The cause of the accident was so ordinary. Prior to the accident I had no health issues at all. I could say almost I was in perfect health.

Then this accident happened. After the major surgery, I went through a lot of painful rehabilitation and will take several months to get me back to normal. Then to make matters worse, my doctor also said it’s likely I will have some form of pain and numbness all the time.

Suffice to say it’s a very stressful time for me. As I was recovering at home after the surgery, I started to get furious at my whole situation. As the days went on, my anger became worse. I started taking it out on my family and even my co-workers.

Instead of looking at how fortunate I was that the accident did no real damage and count my blessings, I was focusing on why this happened to me.

Just like Tobit who went blind through no fault of his own because he decided to sleep under a tree, my true character started to show.

Writing this made me realize that I can’t allow what happened to me change me for the worse. I am reminded of the words from Saint Claude De La Colombiere, and I quote:

“When I see a Christian grief-stricken at the trials God sends him I say to myself: here is a man who is grieved by his own happiness. He is asking God to be delivered from something he ought to be thanking Him for. I am quite sure nothing more advantageous could happen to him than what causes him so much grief. If we could discover the designs of Providence, it is certain we would long for the evils we are now so unwilling to suffer. It is true that sudden great misfortune at the moment it comes may appear to overwhelm you and not allow you the opportunity there and then of profiting by it. But wait awhile and you will see that by it God is preparing you to receive the greatest marks of His favor. But for this accident you would not, perhaps, become less good than you are, but you would not have become holy. It was only this final step that prevented you from attaining the perfect freedom of the love of God. The misfortune which has befallen you will soon do what all your exercises of piety would never have been able to do.”



FR. PAUL SPEAKS SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Two feasts that should converge and complement one another are the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Feast of the Divine Mercy. Both are moveable feasts. The feast of the Divine Mercy is actually the Sunday after Easter, the octave day of Easter. The feast of the Sacred Heart is always on the Friday following the Feast Of Corpus Christi (this year June 12).

Both feasts are dependent on the date of Easter which is determined by the full moon after March 21st. If we examine the image of the Sacred Heart, the heart of Jesus is made visible. We actually see the heart depicted in picture or statue form. Love, even in our secular world, is often connoted by the image of a heart. The feast of the Divine Mercy conceals the heart of Jesus. Yet in reality where does Divine Mercy come from?

There is a scriptural basis for both. Criticisms that can come forth center on the seemingly non-scriptural foundation for either one of these devotions. Yet, John's gospel tells us that when Jesus died, the soldier plunged a spear into the side of Jesus, and out flowed blood and water, deeply witnessing the death of Jesus and His spiritual legacy of Baptism and Eucharist. The white rays of the image of the divine mercy reflect the waters of baptism. The red rays reflect the Eucharistic elements of the Body and Blood of Jesus. The devotion to the Divine Mercy in one sense conceals the source of mercy, the Sacred Heart, even though the rays of mercy flow from the now concealed Heart of Jesus.

As we celebrate a new plateau in our BLD community by welcoming a new DCS and a new DSL, let us beg the heart of Jesus and His mercy upon our future efforts and ministries. Things change, but the work of God is always here. Whatever good has been accomplished in the past and whatever good we pray for in the future has been and will be is the work of the beloved Sacred Heart of Jesus, and His Divine Mercy. Welcome the new leadership, and remember that whatever is "successful" is always the work of the sovereign action of God.

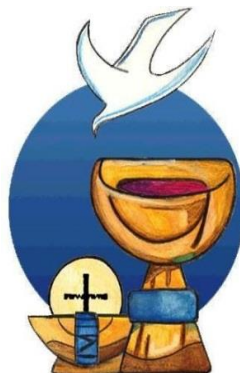
NEWS (from page 1)

The presence of our Lord among us is manifested through the loving service of many who served before and during the ME weekend, including our pastoral team led by Msgr. Paul Schetelick, Jovy & Emily Lucero, and Boyie & Stella Huelgas; the sponsoring class of ME #44; the Liturgy, Praise, MLA and other ministries and ME classes; our entire community for their prayers and support.

As the Psalmist says, **"Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own."**

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Most Christian denominations recognize the special presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, but the Roman Catholic Church teaches that when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we literally receive His Body and Blood.



Although no visible changes actually occur to be perceived by our human eyes, or tasted by our tongue, we are taught to believe that the ordinary bread and wine (or the consecrated host that we receive) are actually and truly miraculously transformed into the Body and Blood of Jesus through what is referred to as

transubstantiation.

Doubtless, it is easier to comprehend and accept beyond doubt, the other sacraments – Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, Marriage, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick. But transubstantiation, a challenge to our human understanding, is arguably one of the biggest tests of our faith. Instituting the Holy Eucharist was the last major act of our Lord Jesus Christ at the Last Supper before His death on the cross. He wanted us to remember Him through this sacrament. That took place more than 2,000 years ago, but every mass celebrated throughout the world serves as a faithful remembrance of this precious act of our Lord (Mk 14:22-24).

In keeping with the Lord's command, as covenanted disciples of BLD, we commit ourselves to the 4th of our 8 pledges, that is "to regularly receive the sacraments of our Faith, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation, as we bear witness to the power of God's grace in our lives." But we fail to stress that more important than regularity and frequency in receiving the Eucharist, is the disposition of our hearts and souls - before, during and after receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus.

Holy Communion requires suitable spiritual and physical preparation. Just as we clean, re-arrange and fix our homes to welcome an important guest, receiving the Eucharist - God himself - into our person, requires at least the same degree of preparation. As Roman Catholics, we prepare ourselves for Holy Communion by making a good confession through the Sacrament of Penance, if we are aware of having committed a grave sin. We are also encouraged to go into fasting and prayer. And to welcome our important visitor, we dress in our 'Sunday best', though regrettably, you may find many churchgoers failing to observe the proper decorum, and are more appropriately dressed for the beach than for church!

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

The above are but some of the physical aspects of the preparation. But more important is the focus on the spiritual preparation, remembering that the Sacred Host is not merely a symbol of our Lord, but is literally the Body and Blood of Jesus. We are therefore to receive Him in Holy Communion with reverence, devotion, humility and deep faith. *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”* (Hb 11:1)

And, when we do receive Jesus in the Eucharist, He makes each of us His temple, His sanctuary, His shrine. *“Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit”* (1 Cor. 6:19a). It is said that we are what we eat, and so when we eat the Sacred Host, we become more like God and share in the divinity of Jesus.

As we consume the substance of bread and wine as Jesus Himself in the Eucharist, we become partakers of the divine nature and become like Him. As members of BLD, the more we receive Jesus in Communion, the more our faith is deepened and we become empowered as should be as one community.

Lastly, we should never neglect to thank God for such a wonderful blessing of receiving Him in Holy Communion. Then we can claim with conviction His promise for us this week, *“... those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.”* (Hb 9:15).

PROPHECIES

1. My children come to the table of renewal and partake of My Body and Blood and you will have new life in Me.
2. When you eat My Body and drink My Blood, you become one with Me, The Father and The Holy Spirit.
3. Receive My Body and Blood, so that you will have the grace to endure and overcome.
4. My great love for you is embodied in My Body and Blood. When you take it bring Me to your neighbors as well.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			June 12	Management
			June 19	Mission
			June 26	Pastoral
			July 3	Evangelization

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,207	\$59,517
Mission Collections	\$41	\$6,046

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

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- June 19** John 6 Teaching
Post Encounter Track – ME 45
- June 20*** Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 1 – ME 1-43
Shepherd's Training – LSS 1-40
- June 26** Intercessory Immersion
Golden Years Ministry Teaching
- Venue:** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms,
Rahway, NJ
- Time:** Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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When: June 13, 7 AM – 9 PM ~ June 14, 7 AM - 7 PM

Where: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

For group and individual sign-ups, please send complete name of attendees, encounter class #, district, and e-mail address of each (or the contact person) to Sam & Rory Olaso

samrory@ymail.com.

Participants must be a graduate of the LSS.

Registration fee is \$50 to cover food, snacks & handouts.

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Dates: Fri-Sun, June 26-28, 2015 Cost: \$160 & person

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries (908) 647-1777

3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

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July 10-12, 2015 ~ Fellowship Deaconry Ministries

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HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

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July 19th - 25th
\$250 per person

Older Girls & Boys Hiking
(grades 9-12)
Blairsville, Georgia
July 27 - August 2
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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 23

Bulletin Edition

June 12, 2015

NEWS

ASPIRANTS RETREAT

“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)



On the weekend of June 5-7, twenty-four of our brothers and sisters in Christ headed to the Archdiocesan Youth Retreat Center in Kearny, NJ, for the Aspirants’ Retreat. Although they came with varying expectations, by the grace of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, everyone came out armed with a new fire. Some found their calling; some gathered new insights to enrich their faith; while some got the direction they so desperately needed in order to rediscover Jesus.

So evident was the transformation that one could not help but be moved by the powerful sharings and reflections of the candidates. The candidates were a harmonious mix of married couples, singles and solo parents who came from BLD Newark, Long Island, and Washington D.C. They are:

(Washington DC) Celina Tolentino; (Long Island) Jerry & Beth Remegio, Bi Paraiso and Des Despeda; (Singles) Danah Alburo, Brian Calingo, James Calingo, Patrick McGrail and Samantha Olaso; (ME 40) Jun & Tess Galvez, William & Caroline Lagrada, Orlando & Marichelle Lizardo, Archie & Lelet Quevada, Jun & Juliet Songco, Hermie & Mila Tindoy, and Michael & Carmen Weiner. *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS

DEEPENED FAITH

THEME: Our faith is deepened when we allow the word of God to grow in our hearts.

WORD: **Ez 17:22-24; Ps 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16; 2 Cor 5:6-10; Mk 4:26-34**

ORDER: **“Make the withered tree bloom.” (Ez 17:24b)**

REFLECTION:

As I reflected on the readings for this Sunday, I realized that they could be looked at from two different perspectives.

In the *natural* sense, they reminded me of the view out my back window this past winter. In my garden I saw nothing but snow and ice on the plot of land where I’ve always planted my tomato plants. And as I looked at our old fig tree, which can be traced back a hundred years to my wife’s Italian grandparents, I wondered if it would survive the bitter winds and the ice building up around its roots despite my careful planning to protect it last fall. Now I recall those thoughts and many more that I had this past winter, as I look out at my garden on this beautiful day in June.

In the *spiritual* sense, could the blooming of the “withered tree,” in our Order for this week from Ezekiel 17:24b, become a reality in my life? There have been times in my past when I felt like a withered tree, ready to fall and collapse at the very next request or need of my spouse, my family, my neighbor, or community member. Yet despite my human failings and weaknesses, the Lord often has come to my rescue as He deepened His Love for me, and as I deepened my love for Him. The more I delved into His word, the more He revealed Himself to me through the thoughts and reflections I received from Him in His Word. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” (Ps 92:14)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Shepherding is Loving Christ

A Reflection on John 21:1-19


After eating breakfast, Jesus asked Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Peter affirmed his love for Jesus. He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus asked this question to Peter three times. We know that Peter denied the Lord three times and it was three times that Jesus gave him a chance to affirm his love. Jesus gave Peter a chance to



wipe out the memory of the threefold denial by a threefold declaration of love. What has love for Jesus brought Peter? First, it brought him a task. After Peter affirmed his love for Jesus, He said to him, "Feed my sheep." This means that the greatest proof of his love for Jesus is to love others.

Second, love for Jesus brought Peter a cross. The day came when Peter died for his Lord. Peter also was nailed to a cross but asked to be nailed to it head downward for he felt unworthy to die in the same way as Jesus. Thus Peter's affirmation of his love for Jesus brought him a task and a cross. To love the Lord always involves responsibility and sacrifice.

Our Lord asks us the same question He asked Peter. "Do you love me more than these?" Like Peter, can we also say to Him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you?" While it may be easy for us to affirm our love for Jesus, let us not lose sight of what loving Him entails. Love for Him always involves responsibility and sacrifice. Many of us fail in this aspect. One of the reasons perhaps is because of our romantic notion of love. Yet, loving Jesus is not like lying down on the bed of roses. To love Jesus means to do His will and take up His cross unreservedly.

When Peter told Jesus that he loved Him, Jesus commissioned him to feed His sheep. To say that we love the Lord is to follow His command. We don't need to be theologians to fulfill this sacred task. We don't need to go to the ends of the earth to proclaim God's love. The task of shepherding means we guide those entrusted to our care from going astray. It means nourishing them with the Word of God, bringing them closer to Christ, and helping them grow spiritually. The task of shepherding means searching out those who are lost and leading them back to Christ. The task of shepherding means being with someone who needs a shoulder to cry on, giving encouragement to those who are disheartened, showing compassion to those who are suffering, being patient with those struggling to change to become better persons. 

RANDOM KINDNESS

"Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." (Mt 5:16)

I recently met a single lady, in her mid-forties, who lives alone in a subsidized apartment in New York City. She was referred for an evaluation due to her emotional and mental problems. She had been sexually and physically abused by her mother's live-in boyfriend during her childhood. The evaluation took much longer than expected because of her severe stuttering. Appropriate treatment was initiated. During the course of her treatment, I explored more about her day-to-day interests. One of them was music. I shared with her that I love to sing, especially when I attend the BLD worship on Fridays. When I told her about my interest, she asked me if I could sing to her. I agreed as long as she would sing with me. After a short "rehearsal" with her, we sang together, "How could anyone ever tell you that you're less than beautiful," a five-line song composed for abused women. While we were singing, I observed that she was no longer stuttering which made her happy. She promised to sing as often as she could and to learn the song that I wrote down for her to memorize. Several weeks later in her course of treatment, after her session, she volunteered to sing and invited me to sing with her. Of course, I agreed.

This experience reminded me of what Mother Theresa shared with all of us, that we do not need to do great things but to do little things with great love.

"O divine Spirit, I wish to be like a feather before you so that your breath may carry me wherever it pleases." - St. Katherine Drexel

Now, Jesus is asking us, "***Do you love me more than these?***" When we say we love Him, it means we are ready to love others even though our love is not reciprocated. We will continue to persevere even if our efforts seem to bear no fruits. We won't give up even though our intentions are misunderstood. We will be generous even if our gifts are not accepted. We will continue to serve even if we are persecuted, because to love the Lord is to take care of those He loves, drawing them closer to Him whatever it takes, no matter the cost.

NEW CREATION

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

We live in a world in which we are surrounded by rebellious, disinterested people who are bent on living their lives regardless what anyone else says, God included. In surroundings like these, the peace of God is like a compass for our souls, leading us in the direction that the Holy Spirit intends for our lives. God grants us this internal compass, so that we might not lose our way as He works at transforming us.

Before becoming a new creation, I sometimes lived my life without giving a second thought to how my actions would affect others. But since I've entered into a personal relationship with Jesus, I tend to be more considerate, compassionate and forgiving. I've developed a deeper understanding of myself; and as a result of my surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ in my life, He has brought me to a place where I experience His blessed peace on an ongoing basis. Instead of anxiety, anger, or depression, the peace of God has become the norm for me. Although there are still times when others may bring me to a boiling point; through God's grace and the guidance of His Holy Spirit, I now have greater self-control and a much more forgiving heart.

The transformation from my old self is continuous and requires nurturing. I've developed new habits to keep myself from backsliding into my old way of life. I try to attend Mass and receive Communion daily. When I realize I've sinned, I quickly repent and cannot wait to reconcile myself to my Lord. But above all, I forgive and pray for those who hurt me. My will has been renewed, and it no longer opposes God's will for my life, nor holds unforgiveness toward others for long. Sometimes, my new life and habits are hard to sustain because of the spiritual warfare swirling about us. But because of my trust in God and His Spirit's comfort and guidance, I continue walking with Jesus, knowing He's changing me into a better person.

Lord, thank you for moving in my life and in my family, for continually confirming Your covenant with us. Thank you Lord for working all things after the counsel of Your own will and together for our good and Your Glory.

COUNSELS *(from page 1)*

And this is very evident as I read and reflect on the scripture readings for this 11th Sunday in Ordinary time.

Naturally, the readings encourage me as the new growing season begins because they remind me how my tomato plants matured and grew through the weeks of my watering, weeding, and harvesting. And now my fig tree is spouting new leaves and will be bearing new fruit in the weeks to come. *Spiritually*, the readings remind me how God's kingdom includes the planting of His word in us so that we may bear much fruit and “it shall put forth branches and bear fruit, and become a majestic cedar” (Ezekiel 17:23). As we mature in the Lord, we “shall flourish like the palm tree” and “shall bear fruit even in old age” (Ps 92 verses 13 & 15). The evidence of our growth in the Lord is how we use the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in upbuilding the community. We become more and more like the Lord, as described in our second reading to the Corinthians from Paul, when we allow the word of God to grow in our hearts. We desire more of the Lord in our lives as we “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7). Our lifelong goal is “to go home to the Lord” (2 Cor 5:8) and our eternal destiny will be judged by what we “did in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Cor 5:10b).

Finally Jesus, through St. Mark's Gospel, explains in parables this Kingdom of God to the agrarian people of the time. He shares with them imagery which makes clear how they can grow in His Kingdom. He shows them that the children of God are like the plant that yields fruit from the “scattered seed” (Mk 4:26), and like the tiny mustard seed that becomes “the largest of plants” (Mk 4:32). As our Theme for the week says, “Our faith is deepened when we allow the word of God to grow in our hearts.” And this week's Promise, “They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God,” will be fulfilled in our lifetime and for generations to come, as God continues to plant the seed and sow the fruit of His own harvest in our lives. Believe it, brothers and sisters, that the Lord will “make the withered tree bloom” (Ez 17:24b) and that the Lord will make our withered lives bloom if “we allow the word of God to grow in our hearts” every day. Know that the more we live our covenant pledges, the more fruit we will produce to the Lord's delight and pleasure! Amen!

DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Be fruitful as disciples of the community by living your covenant pledges.**
- 2. Use the gifts of the Holy Spirit to upbuild the community.**

NEWS (from page 1)

The Teaching Ministry highly values the powerful support of the Praise Ministry, the Discipling Ministry, DCS, the shepherds, and the sharers. We very much appreciate Fr. Paul Lehman who shared his treasure chest of wisdom and knowledge so unselfishly.

We thank God for a miracle weekend!

“The Lord came and stood there, calling out as before: ‘Samuel, Samuel!’ Samuel answered, ‘Speak Lord for your servant is listening’.” (1 Sm 3:10)

BLD VISION

- We are a community of disciples inspired by the Holy Spirit to be living witnesses for transformation in Christ to bring about a world of justice, human development and true peace.

BLD MISSION

In response to the challenges of our particular place, time and culture:

For our families:

- We will evangelize families and build communities of faith through encounters, Life in the Spirit Seminars and discipleship formation.
- We will give formation on personal and family prayer, pro-life values, Catholic social teachings and stewardship.

For our communities:

- We will actively participate in the life and mission of the Church in accord with our God-given gifts.

For our country:

- We will work on poverty alleviation through scholarships, housing for the poor and advocacies for life, environment and good governance.

Five (5) W's of Community Life

- Worship** – let us be faithful in giving honor and praise to the Lord by living out our pledge of personal, conjugal, family and community prayer.
- Word** – know the LORD through reading and reflecting on the gospel. Seek direction and guidance through the words in the Scripture.
- Witness** – let others see Jesus in you – see Jesus in every person you meet.
- Work** – giving a full day's work for a full day's pay – exercising Christian values and ethics.
- Warfare** – recognize that the enemy is like a roaring lion ready to devour, not sitting on the sidelines waiting for us to fall but aggressively seeking our destruction. Intercede daily for the needs and concerns of our family.

	Date	Apostolate
	June 19	Mission
	June 26	Pastoral
	July 3	Evangelization
	July 10	Formation

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,576	\$62,093
Mission Collections	\$30	\$6,076

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

Please click [HERE](#) for 2014 Financial Activities

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- June 19** John 6 Teaching
Post Encounter Track – ME 45
- June 20*** Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 1 – ME 1-43
Shepherd's Training – LSS 1-40
- June 26** Intercessory Immersion
Golden Years Ministry Teaching
- Venue:** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
- Time:** Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ME 45 GRAND REUNION

June 28 ~ 12:30 – 5 pm

Divine Mercy Connell Hall, Rahway NJ

“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His faithful love endures forever.” (Ps 107:1)

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri–Sun, June 26-28, 2015 Cost: \$160 & person
Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries (908) 647-1777
3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920
Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

July 10-12, 2015 ~ Fellowship Deaconry Ministries
3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
Contacts: Kristian Quevada (732-910-9924)
Charlie & Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)
Oliver & Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

July 24-26, 2015 ~ Malvern Retreat House
315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355
Contact: Ed/Susan Fabe~edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657
Dodge/Celle Lizardo~fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

Girls & Boys Encounters (Ages 8-13)
Camp Kateri
Hawthorne, Florida
July 19th – 25th
\$250 per person

Older Girls & Boys Hiking (grades 9-12)
Blairsville, Georgia
July 27 – August 2
\$250 per person



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 24

Bulletin Edition

June 19, 2015

NEWS

PRAYER HEALING RETREAT

“Dig deep and lay your foundations upon the rock.”
(Luke 6:48)



The Prayer Healing Retreat was blessed with 21 attendees who have expressed their gratitude to the Lord for helping them to dig deeper and identify the root causes of an individual's struggles in building a closer relationship with God and others.

The attendees found inner healing through the teachings of our Prayer Counselors (Noel & Letty Trillana, Lee dela Fuente, Merle Encarnacion, Lith Golamco, Blandie Montemayor, Jemma Reyes), the group sessions, live counseling and pray-overs. The retreat was also blessed with the presence of Fr. Robert Lamirez and Fr. Joe Saltarin, who officiated the Eucharistic Celebrations, and the love and support of the community through the Liturgy, Praise, and Technical Ministries and auxies from other ministries who offered their time to serve during the retreat.

The attendees were Julius Baltonado, Venina Barcega, Maira Bolos, Burton Concepcion, Mariellerose Go, Rosemarie Go, Nelson Ilagan, Agnes Lukaszewicz, Jack & Emmie McWade, John & Claire Mejrada, Lisa Mejos, Michael Moore, Butch & Malu Morales, Paolo Nolasco, Liz Ortiz, Jim Reyes, Ruth Ureta, and Pauleene Yap.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

GOD CARES

THEME: Our faith is deepened when we remain steadfast in the midst of a storm.

WORD: Jb 38:1,8-11/Ps 107:23-24,25-26,28-31
2 Cor 5:14-17/Mk 4:35-41

ORDER: *“Quiet. Be still.”* (Mk 4: 39)

REFLECTION:

As a back drop of this biblical account, Jesus ordered His disciples to cross to the other side of the sea, the Sea of Galilee. Suddenly, they encountered a violent squall, a windstorm the power of which is almost equivalent to a hurricane. It was so strong that the waves were breaking over and filling up the boat. Filled with great fear, they woke up Jesus, who was asleep at the back of the boat. They admonished Him by saying, *“Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”* (Mk 4:38) It was an expression of desperation that their Master seemingly had forsaken them.

Like the disciples, we too go through many storms in our life such as the tragic loss of a loved one, serious illness, family issues caused by separation, strained relationships, unemployment, financial problems and a lot more. In communities such as ours, we could be confronted with issues, sometimes perceived as divisive that could potentially shake us up, even our faith in God. Understandably, we could be stricken with worries and confusion.

When Pope Francis visited the Philippines, a small 12 year old street girl, Glysell Iris Palomar, wept as she sadly asked the Pope, “Why does God allow children to suffer so much? Children like her were abandoned and have become victims of drugs or prostitution.”

Continued on page 4

Promise of 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)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Don't let grace go to waste!



The Blessed Virgin Mary was greeted by St. Gabriel the Archangel with the words, "Hail Mary full of Grace." What is grace? For the Blessed Virgin Mary, it was her innate holiness and God's indwelling and love. It is slightly different for us because of the sin of Adam and Eve. Grace is the indwelling and love of God bestowed on us through the merits of Jesus Christ. It is the love of God given to us who are undeserving.

We acquire Sanctifying Grace initially through Baptism and then through the reception of the sacraments. Our grace is not static. It increases as we continue to perform good acts, go to Mass and receive the sacraments particularly of Penance and Holy Communion. Grace increases as our self diminishes. And as grace increases, our degree of happiness in heaven will also increase, because our beatific vision will increase.

What does grace do to us? First, grace sanctifies us. It makes us holy and favorable to God. He makes His dwelling in our soul, and we feel His great love. Second, grace strengthens our will. It makes us resist the temptations of sin and enables us to be compassionate, forgiving, and to perform good deeds. Third, it enlightens our minds to discern between good and evil. Fourth, it beautifies our soul. We become beautiful because God is beautiful and He lives in us. Fifth, grace inspires us to pray, to draw closer, and to know God more. It makes us depend, trust, hope, praise, and thank God.

We must also do our best to preserve Sanctifying Grace. We can lose grace when we sin. Sin can weaken and entirely destroy grace. Without Sanctifying Grace, all our good acts are meaningless. This explains the meaning of the words of Jesus, ***"To the one who has, more will be given; from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away"*** (Mk 4:25). Three important things to remember: first, we must preserve our sanctifying grace until the end of our life on earth; second, we must recover it immediately if we have lost it by mortal sin; and third, we must seek to grow it with every opportunity we encounter in our lives. Remember that it is a divine gift of love from God for our salvation and that of our neighbor, so do not let His grace go to waste.

THY WILL BE DONE

Countless times, I have said "Lord, thy will be done," but I felt I was saying it without really meaning it. This perspective changed when our family was invited to be the youth family prayer leader. I was so touched by the gospel reading: ***"Come, follow me"*** (Mt 19:21).

Jesus Christ was inviting me to come and follow Him so I can see His goodness. Days after the worship, His words, "Come, follow me," still lingered in my mind as if I was being convicted. I felt guilty, unworthy, sad and confused about what was going on.

One night, something happened to me. I just started praying, and my wife heard me and said that I was praying in tongues. I had never had the gift of tongues and I thanked God for it. That same night, I was hospitalized for high blood pressure and stayed in the hospital for 2 days. The doctors were trying to rule out anything physical, but in my heart I felt that what was going on was a manifestation of something spiritual.

The whole ordeal made me realize that the Lord was really calling me to come and follow Him. God was telling me to change my ways, especially my prayer life, which included going to Mass. He was pruning me to be a better person and a good follower of Christ.

I struggled trying to understand what the Lord wanted me to do, but with the help and support of my wife and BLD friends especially our ME class shepherds and classmates, slowly I was able to comprehend what the Lord wants. Now, I find solace in going to church every day, praying the Rosary, reading Magnificat, the Bible, and spiritual books and praying regularly.

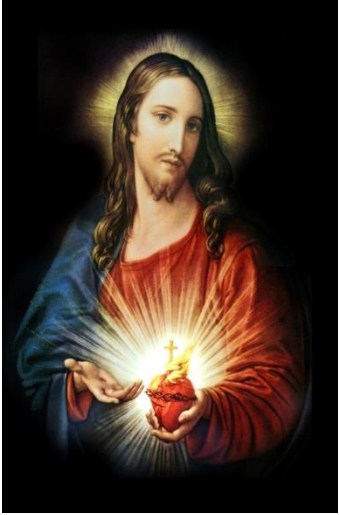
I have become a better person with a better relationship with my kids, trying to be more involved as a father to them. Also at work, I have become more patient with my co-workers. I am more conscious of my health. My blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol are under control; my sleeping habits are better; and I am able to breathe easier.

When I am off from work on Fridays, I go to BLD and get more involved by participating in my ministry activities. We recently attended the LSS again, and that experience has completed my transformation to a new and improved person. Thy will be done, Lord, I pray!!!

Now these words are *so* much more meaningful.

O SACRED HEART

COUNSELS (from page 1)



In most written stories, the author tries to make his protagonist relatable. This is so that the reader is able to sympathize or empathize with him (or her) when he is confronted by conflict. The main character is then remembered more because of the way the audience *felt* about him. How does something like this relate to God?

The Pope was so moved by her question that, with teary eyes, he replied, “*those on the margins cry, those who have fallen by the wayside cry, those who are discarded cry, but those living a life without need, don’t know how to cry.*” It is only when we learn to cry with the suffering that we can begin to understand and love them. In tears, when we cry, we are drawn closer to God.

As we go through the sea of trouble, chaos and disorder, thoughts of this nature would lead us to say, “My Lord, are we to drown for all you care?” Or even say, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” In His sleep, Jesus was seen by His disciples as unconcerned, as a Savior who is distant from us and unperturbed by the tragedies and harsh realities of life. These negativities could easily adversely affect or even negate and destroy our faith.

After Jesus was awoken, the first thing He did was rebuke the wind and command the sea: “***Quite! Be still!***” (Mk 4:39) As quickly as the storm came, it ceased in an instant.

God always determines the course of our own sea of life because He holds our destiny in the palm of His hand. As humans with limited understanding, we only see the smaller picture, not the bigger realm of His great plan for us.

In the gospel, Jesus shows the disciples, as He also does for us, that He is sovereign to all, mighty even against the forces of nature.

Then, Jesus turned to His disciples and questioned their faith. “***Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?***” (Mk 4:40) The reason Jesus questioned their faith was because the disciples feared the power of the storm more than they feared the power of God in Jesus. So when Jesus calmed the storm, He did so because He wanted His disciples to see something about Him that they hadn’t quite seen yet. It was the unveiling to them of the true identity of Jesus as God, a mighty savior and a sovereign God.

What the disciples needed to see and we need to understand is that *God* was in the same boat with them. In our most serious predicament, affliction or oppression, He is there with us also. Our God identifies Himself with the plight of humanity and demonstrates His power to overcome even the greatest of dangers. What seems impossible to us is possible to God, if we call upon Him.

God, like the author, tries to relate to the audience which, in this case, is every human being on earth. How does God do this? He becomes human. As it says in Philippians 2:7b-8, “***Coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.***” This is because He wants us to relate to Him in a way that could not be accomplished if He were to remain a godly figure only. He wants us to be able to lift our problems to Him, knowing that He understands us. It’s much easier to relate to a human, like Jesus, and we tend to feel sympathy towards Him in the gospel.

On the Friday that follows the Second Sunday after Pentecost the Church celebrates the Feast of the Sacred Heart. We Catholics put a lot of effort into this by beginning a Novena to the Sacred Heart on the Feast of Corpus Christi, which is the Thursday of the week before. Then on the day itself, we make an Act of Reparation to gain absolute indulgence. People become devoted to the Sacred Heart because, from the earliest days of our religion, people were intrigued by the concept. To be devoted to the Sacred Heart is to be devoted to Christ Himself in such a way that we get to meditate on the actions He has done during His earthly life and the ways He is known to love: His divine love, His love that feeds His human will, and His love that affects His interior life. Our ultimate goal, in consecrating ourselves to the Sacred Heart, is to gain what was promised to us by Jesus. He generally promises us peace in our lives and an abundance of blessings. I believe a truly devoted person shouldn’t do it just for the promised blessings, but do it because He loved us first with all His heart, and we should return that love.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

So the question is, does He care? The answer is a clear yes, absolutely and without a doubt. He asks us to go forward with His courage, His strength, to be steadfast in our faith in Him in the midst of the storm. He wants us to remain close to Him, giving us the awareness of our great need for Him as a Savior. When He sends His command to the raging water, *“Quite! Be still!”* in effect, we are being asked to slow down, to calm our spirit, to be silent, and enjoy, in meditation, His awesome presence in our lives. Jesus then allows us to feel and taste the stillness and the calming serenity of His peace.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Spend time in meditation with the Lord.
2. Practice contemplative prayer (lectio divina and centering prayer).

NEWS (from page 1)

As the attendees cling to God’s promise in Ez 36:26; *“I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh,”* we believe that the Lord will allow the inner healing that they have experienced to endure forever in their lives.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ME 45 GRAND REUNION

June 28, 2015 ~ 12:30 – 5 pm

Divine Mercy Connell Hall, Rahway NJ

“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His faithful love endures forever.” (Ps 107:1)

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am

Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 8, 2015

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

River Road, Piscataway, NJ 08854

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Red Team (Last Names: A-C)

Blue Team (Last Names: D-G),

Green Team (Last Names: H-P)

Yellow Team (Last Names: Q-Z)

For questions, please email Sundee/Neneng Ikalina:

fla@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,253	\$65,346
Mission Collections	\$39	\$6,115

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

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

June 20* Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 1 – ME 1-43
Shepherd's Training – LSS 1-40

June 26 Intercessory Immersion
Golden Years Ministry Teaching

July 3 Introduction to CDFP Program - ME 45

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms,
Rahway, NJ

Time: Friday after worship, *Saturday 1:00 – 5:00 PM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SOLO PARENT ENCOUNTER #17

Dates: Fri-Sun, June 26-28, 2015 Cost: \$160 & person

Venue: Fellowship Deaconry Ministries (908) 647-1777
3575 Valley Road Basking Ridge NJ, 07920

Contact Persons: Delfin & Letty Salon (732) 995-0794

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

July 10-12, 2015 ~ Fellowship Deaconry Ministries
3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contacts: Kristian Quevada (732-910-9924)

Charlie & Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)

Oliver & Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

July 24-26, 2015 ~ Malvern Retreat House

315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355

Contact: Ed/Susan Fabe~edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657
Dodge/Celle Lizardo~fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

Girls & Boys Encounters
(Ages 8-13)
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\$250 per person

Older Girls & Boys Hiking
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July 27 - August 2
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	Date	Apostolate
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	July 10	Formation
	July 17	Management

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 25

Bulletin Edition

June 26, 2015

NEWS

POPE AFFIRMS “IGNORANCE OF SCRIPTURE IS IGNORANCE OF CHRIST”

Tells members of Catholic Biblical Federation they must experience the Word in order to proclaim it

Rome, June 19, 2015 (ZENIT.org)

Quoting St. Jerome, Pope Francis is affirming that ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.

He said that this morning when he received in audience the members of the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF), which has recently elected Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, metropolitan archbishop of Manila, Philippines, as its new president.

The Federation is currently holding its 10th plenary assembly dedicated to the theme “That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you”, drawn from the First Epistle of St. John; reflecting on Sacred Scripture as the source of evangelisation, it commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of the dogmatic Constitution on the Divine Revelation Dei Verbum.

“To be able to proclaim the word of truth, we ourselves must have had the experience of the Word: we must have listened, contemplated, almost touched it with our own hands,” writes the Holy Father in the discourse he handed to those present.

“Christians, who are the People of God, ‘that you may proclaim the excellencies of him’, must, as the dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation Dei Verbum suggests, first of all venerate, read, listen, proclaim, preach, study and spread the Word of God. The Church, who proclaims the Word every day, receiving nourishment and inspiration from it, makes herself the beneficiary and excellent witness of the efficiency and strength inherent in that same Word of God. Neither we, nor our efforts, but rather the Holy Spirit works through those who dedicate themselves to pastoral ministry, and He does the same for the listeners, preparing them to listen to the Word and to receive its message of life.”

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

The Healing Love of Jesus

THEME: Our faith is deepened when we bring the healing love of Jesus to others.

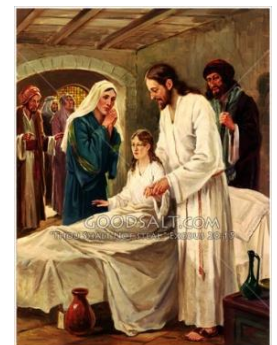
WORD: Wis 1:13-15; 2:23-24/Ps 30:2,4,5-6, 11-13
2 Cor 8:7, 9, 13-15/Mk 5:21- 43

ORDER: “Do not be afraid; just have faith.” (Mk 5:36)

REFLECTION:

This Sunday’s readings touch upon the core of our human condition – sickness, suffering, healing and the role of faith in God’s plan of salvation. As Catholics we believe that *“God formed us to be imperishable; the image of his own nature he made us”* (Wisdom 2:23). In the gospel, St Mark indicates that by deciding in expectant faith to establish a relationship of trust with God, Jairus and the hemorrhaging woman were rewarded with hope that the healing they sought [Jairus for his ill daughter; the woman for her affliction with blood] would be granted to them through the healing touch of Jesus the Son of the very God whose Hands had formed them in the womb. They were certain that the promised imperishability in their own situation had already started.

The primary story is about Jairus’ plea to Jesus to heal his 12 year old daughter, who was near death. Then inserted or “sandwiched” [a writing technique common to the gospel genre and frequently used by Mark] within this story was one about the woman afflicted with hemorrhages for 12 years. Jarius’ story starts with Jesus landing on the shore and having a large crowd gather around Him.



Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“...your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.” (Mk 5:34)

OUR HOPE IS IN YOU

Look left and right and I can guarantee that you will find someone that has been broken by the world that we live in. That broken person may even be you. You may not have skin that stretches over your bones from starvation, or have been a victim of a tragedy, but you have been broken because life decided that it wanted to become a bully and kick you down. Sometimes, it's so easy to just get back up. But other times, it feels like you are being abused and pushed down further and further, if that was even possible. Getting back up is like dirt being kicked in your face because finding your way back onto the path you were once on is so much more difficult than trying to stay on it ever was. It feels like the more you struggle, the more you lose. I suppose that's why people lose hope.



“How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few.” (Mt 7:14) It is a blessing that I can say that I have always found my way back to God. Some people, however, struggle a lot more than I do.

When I see people starting to lose hope, I always tell them: God gives His hardest battles to His strongest soldiers. There is *nothing* in this world that you cannot accomplish with our God: the God that ever is, was, and will be, that can move mountains and calm storms, which gave up His only Son to die on the cross so that we might one day be with Him.

“The LORD is with me; I am not afraid; what can mortals do against me?” (Ps 118:6) When times of trouble come our way, all seems lost. But the Lord works in mysterious ways and He has a perfectly crafted plan for us all. No matter what happens, we must always stand firm knowing that He is by our side, and place our hope in Him.

Abba Father, we know that You are here. We pray that You give us the strength to persevere during difficult times and the faith to always place our hope in You. “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.” (Ps 23:4a) Amen!

YOU MUST BE KIDDING, LORD

“I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

(Is 49: 6b)

Have you ever given any thought to how things happen in your lifetime? How have these things brought you to where you are today? I know that God has a plan for each of us; but when He takes me down paths I do not understand, I think, “You must be kidding me, Lord!”



After graduating from high school, I felt that God was calling me to the priesthood. Four years passed before I realized that this was not the path God had chosen for me. What He wanted was for me to use this experience to get to know and love Him better and to apply this knowledge and love to whatever plan He chose for me, even though I had no real idea what that might be.

I didn't always listen to what God wanted me to do, even to the point of not going to Mass on Sundays. But then God nudged me again and got me back on track. He made me see how much better my life would be having Him at the center of it.

I eventually realized that I could best serve God as a husband and father. After many happy years of marriage, I heard about marriage encounter during a Life in the Spirit Seminar in my parish. God was telling me that this would be good for me and my wife. Again I thought to myself, “You must be kidding, Lord.” I even tried to tell Him that He was wrong, but He would not take “no” for an answer. We went to the ME, and it turned out to be a beautiful turning point in our lives and in our marriage.

Since then, what we have learned and experienced at BLD through the teachings and Friday night Worship, we have been able to apply to our daily lives. We help out more in our parish through Choir, Food Pantry, volunteering to lector at Mass, and being there for others.

As I look back, I can see that the Lord was not kidding when he laid out a path for me, and I know He still leads me every day of my life. ***“For now the Lord has spoken who formed me as His servant from the womb.”*** (Is 49: 5a)

THE ROAD TO LIFE

Life is good. Life is beautiful. Life is too short. These are some of the most common figures of speech we hear every day. But what does life mean to us? The meaning of life touches on so many interrelated issues from cultural, religious and spiritual influences. But in one word, what can we say that life is? I could say, life is a purpose, or maybe life is existence, or better yet, life is God. So in a simple answer, life is the purpose of our existence in God. But how do we live our life? What is the road to life? People tend to live life how they choose it to be. For some they choose to be wealthy, others may choose to be successful or to be known and famous. Some provide financial help to their family and some provide guidance or inspiration to others. For some, they just want to live a simple life.

We know the road to life has many choices, and the decisions we make matter. Our path is programmed by the decisions and choices we make in life. But since God has given us a free will, we do things according to our own desires, likes and wants. Often times, simple things tend to get complicated because of the wrong decisions we make. Does it really matter whether we walk with God? ***“How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few.”*** (Mt 7:14) Truly the road to life is hard if we don't allow God to let our life be guided by Him. Trials, problems, and worries may come, and we could easily give up, thinking it's the end of the world. If we allow God to lead us, we would realize these tribulations help us to be stronger and challenge us to be a better person. Sometimes trials help us to get closer to God through prayer, giving Him our full trust and faith that he will resolve the burden we carry. If God is with us, the road to life is simple. Let us follow God and live the life He wants us to live, realizing the true purpose of life is to serve God.

NEWS (from page 1)

“However, there are places where the Word of God has not yet been proclaimed or, although proclaimed, has not been received as the Word of salvation”, the Pope remarks.

“There are places where the Word of God is emptied of its authority. The lack of the support or vigour of the Word leads to a weakening of the Christian communities of ancient tradition and curbs the spiritual growth and missionary fervour of the young Churches. We are all responsible if ‘the message will run the risk of losing its freshness and will cease to have the freshness of the Gospel’. However, it remains valid to encourage a special pastoral effort to emphasize the central position of the Word of God in ecclesial life, promoting the Biblical inspiration of all pastoral ministry.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jairus, one of the rulers of the local synagogue, came forward and at Jesus' feet, begged Him to “lay his hands” to heal his daughter. Jesus's response was immediate as He took off with Jairus to go to his daughter. The disciples and the crowd followed. In this crowd was a woman of faith who had an “issue of blood” for 12 years, which not only made her suffer physically, but worse, she suffered the stigma of being “unclean” under Mosaic law (in Leviticus 15). Under this law, her husband (and maybe children) could not eat food she has cooked, could not sit on chairs she had sat on or lie on the bed she had lain on. They could not touch her without becoming unclean themselves! Worst of all, she wasn't allowed into worship services. She was all alone and suffered a life which felt certainly like death for 12 years.

But she heard about Jesus and His miracles and quickly responded in expectant faith, believing that just by merely touching His clothes, she could be healed. So coming from behind the crowd she touched His cloak. Jesus felt power go out from Him, and He turned around and said: “Who touched my clothes?” At this, His disciples looked at each other and at Him perplexed that He would ask this question since the crowd was pressing and jostling into Him. Yet Jesus continued to look around; and the trembling woman came forward, fell at his feet and told Him the truth. Then finally Jesus looked at her and called her “Daughter” and said “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.” At long last after 12 long years of suffering, she was made well and ritually clean at the same time and therefore restored back to her life. Here was a prime example of someone who had expectant faith. Not only did she believe in who Jesus was, the Healer and Holy One, but she expected that if she touched Him, she would be healed. She reached out to Him in expectant faith, and that, Jesus said, was what healed her.

Continuing on with Jairus' story - messengers from Jairus' house came with sad news that his daughter had died. Jesus counseled Jairus: “Do not be afraid; just have faith.” When they reached the house, Jesus went into the room of the little girl with Peter, James and John and shut the door. Inside, He took her hand (in clear contravention of the Mosaic law in Numbers 5 that states that touching a corpse defiles the living person) and said to her, “Talitha kum...Little girl, I say to you, arise!” The girl arose immediately and walked around. Her father and mother were utterly astounded. His touch turned Mosaic law on its head for the Son of God was not made unclean but worked a miracle to restore the little girl back to life.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 1)

“Moved by so much suffering Christ not only allows Himself to be touched by the sick, but He makes their miseries His own. [Making good on God’s promise in Isaiah 53] ‘He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.’ But He did not heal all the sick. His healings were signs of the coming of the Kingdom of God. They announced a more radical healing: the victory over sin and death through His Passover.” (CCC 1505) Sickness and death are not from God but are the result of the envy of the devil, and those of us who commit sin and thus belong to His company experience it (Wisdom 12:24).

Lord Jesus most importantly sees our need to have a personal relationship with Father God just as He saw the hemorrhaging woman’s need for the Father’s touch when He called her daughter. When we have an intimate personal relationship with the Lord we become wonderfully receptive of His great love for us, secure in the conviction that we could always call on Him in expectant faith to give us His healing power and cleansing touch. Through salvation, He reverses the law of sin, sickness and death to give us life and teach us the way to holiness. As the Psalmist said: He preserves us from the pit, and changes our mourning into dancing. Love flows from Him unceasingly and He gives it away freely to everyone who needs it, because in the Kingdom of God there is not only healing and salvation but also equality. This was, is and always will be the Father’s response to His sons and daughters who ask in prayer.

Now let’s ask ourselves: Have we witnessed Jesus’s healing love to others? Have we ministered to the needs of others in humility and love? Have we shown love to our neighbors through our service and prayers? Finally by spreading His healing love, has our faith been deepened? If we haven’t done so already, now is a good time to start. Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be an instrument of healing to others.
2. Always trust in God and be at peace.

NEWS (from page 4)

We must ensure that the habitual activities of all Christian communities, in the parishes, associations and movements, truly have at heart the personal encounter with Christ communicated to us in His Word since, as St. Jerome teaches, “*ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ*”.

	Date	Apostolate
	July 3	Evangelization
	July 10	Formation
	July 17	Management
	July 24	Mission

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,969	\$68,315
Mission Collections	\$99	\$6,214

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

Thank you for your continued support!
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TEACHING CALENDAR

Introduction to CDFP Program

July 3, 2015 - After Worship
Room 103 - For ME 45

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ME 45 GRAND REUNION

June 28, 2015 ~ 12:30 - 5 pm
Divine Mercy Connell Hall, Rahway NJ

YOUTH ENCOUNTER 22

July 10-12, 2015 ~ Fellowship Deaconry Ministries
3575 Valley Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
Contacts: Kristian Quevada (732-910-9924)
Charlie & Weng Larobis (732-887-9786)
Oliver & Marissa Rangel (848-219-1449)

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

July 24-26, 2015 ~ Malvern Retreat House
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Contact: Ed/Susan Fabe~edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657
Dodge/Celle Lizardo~fetwentyone@gmail.com/201-790-6653

HOME OF THE MOTHER Summer Encounters 2015

Girls & Boys Encounters (Ages 8-13) Camp Kateri Hawthorne, Florida July 19th - 25th \$250 per person	Older Girls & Boys Hiking (grades 9-12) Blairsville, Georgia July 27 - August 2 \$250 per person
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SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

BLD COMMUNITY DAY! 23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 8, 2015
Venue: Johnson Park, River Road Piscataway, NJ 08854
Time: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Red Team (Last Names: A-C)

Blue Team (Last Names: D-G),

Green Team (Last Names: H-P)

Yellow Team (Last Names: Q-Z)

Contacts: Sundee/Neneng Ikalina: fla@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 26

Bulletin Edition

July 3, 2015

NEWS

BLD receives another blessing

“Indeed, the grace of the Lord has been abundant, along with the faith and love that are in Jesus Christ”

1 Timothy 1:14



The beautiful and grace-filled Solo Parents Encounter #17 took place last weekend, June 26 to 28. It all happened at the Fellowship Deaconry Ministries, Basking Ridge, New Jersey, where twenty-four candidates were welcomed into BLD. SPE Praise joined with the Praise Ministry offered heartwarming songs of worship. Tears turned to smiles as sharers Nemia Ybanez, Norma Calara, Milet Perez, Portia de Jesus, Libby Maljian and Miles Dionisio gave their testimonies about the power of love and the power of God in their lives. SPE16, though small in numbers, did BIG things, led by their shepherds Delfin and Letty Salon. SPE core and auxies, along with ministry heads, Bobby and Dolly Fernandez, were in full support. And of course, Monsignor Schetelick effectively communicated the faith and truths of the bible, and reminded all of us that, if one desires to have God’s love, it must begin with ‘ME’.

Presenting the Graduates of SPE17: Mayjen Amolat-Apiado, Martin Barotilla, Jan Jan Cebedo, Anna Crocco, Jen Dimen, Marjorie Dorsaint, Nora Eidson, Mannie Espejon, Clarisse Eynoux, Violy Lee, Ressie Lim, Ana Luna, Lisa Mejos, Francis Meo, Mike Moore, Evelyn Nuguid, Mariter Ompod, Eva Otabil, Inday Rangel, Tony Ryan, Rick San Juan, Angie Vales, Ester Villafior, Fora Ybanez. Class Shepherds: Vic and Becky Napenas (ME19).

COUNSELS

SUFFICIENT GRACE

THEME: The grace of ‘God is sufficient when we humbly acknowledge our weaknesses for the sake of Christ.

**WORD: Ez 2:2-5/Ps 123:1-2,2,3-4
2 Cor 12:7-10/Mk 6:1-6**

ORDER: “But you... whether they heed or resist... they shall know that a prophet has been among them.”(Ez 2:5)

REFLECTION:

Prophets are sent by God like Ezekiel and St. Paul who were chosen to speak for God and are imbued with the Spirit of God. But, God knew that everyone might not listen to them, because it upsets their convenient little world. The fact that St. Paul prayed to be relieved of his “thorn” (2 Cor 12:8) attests to the suffering it caused him. Nevertheless, his faith enabled him to accept his pain and struggle as a “teachable moment” through which he and others would learn of the power of God’s grace. The fact that God continued to raise up prophets to “defy the might of this world’s unjust empires” attests to the bounteousness of the divine mercy; the fact that the voices of these men and women often went unheeded attests to the continuing stubbornness of the human heart.

Appropriately God the Father sent Jesus who was seen as a prophet and healer. Jesus had already tasted popularity in various towns and villages where He had been preaching about the kingdom of God and working miracles. However, in His hometown, they could not really put their faith in Him. They could not get over their familiarity with Him, only the carpenter’s son, who grew up down the street and seemed to be nothing special, just like themselves, a Nazarean.

Jesus was rejected by His own people and unable to do remarkable things. *Continued on page 2*

Promise of the Week

“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness. I will rather boast most gladly of my weakness, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me.”(2 Cor 12:9)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Their lack of faith limited the benefits they received from Jesus Christ who would have wanted to pour out His deeds in abundance on His town mates.

Often in our lives we see God in wonders for we do not expect them. We do not allow God to be God to us. We have limited expectation of Him because we imagine that He is like us. We need an expectant faith, which if genuine, can even move mountains. As a community of believers we are prophets in this time, to continue the mission of Christ, we are commanded to persevere in witnessing to the Word of God both in word and in deed, whether convenient or not. We can only accept the Gospel in faith and proclaim it in word and deed if we read, study, and live the Word of God. By living the mission of Christ, we will endure hardships, persecution and constraints. The Lord rewarded people with great faith by doing great things for them. You want great things to happen to you? Open your heart to the action of God. Ask Him to act as God in you. Do not limit the work of God by your lack of faith. Yield to His will and action and rely on God's promise: **"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."** (2 Cor 12)

"My grace is sufficient for you." Our Lord directly say this word to us so that we should be filled with fortitude and with the hope when we see the trials that awaits us. Our weakness will help us rejoice at Christ power. It will teach us to love and to feel the need to be always very close to Jesus. Our failures, our unfulfilled plans will lead us to exclaim, 'When I am weak, then I am strong, for Christ is with me.'

Let the word of God come across, it is the witness of love for Christ in our neighbor, as well as witness of our lives, which will attract others and encourage them to enter the "door of faith" Faith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy.

PRAYER:

Almighty Father, we acknowledge our weakness and our fear, for we recognized that we are unable to do Your command because of persecution. Strengthen us as we rely on You, Lord. In everything we say and do, be our source of inspiration for all we encounter in daily life. Manifest Your power within us. Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Serve the Lord with a humble and obedient heart despite the hardships and constraints.
2. Rest your spirits by listening to the Lord through the daily reading of scriptures to discover and understand His messages.

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,875	\$71,190
Mission Collections	\$22	\$6,236

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

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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SUMMER VACATION BIBLE STUDY

QUICK JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE, BY JEFF CAVINS

JULY 25 - SEP 12, 2015

Please register now, space is limited!

Register with Study Booklet for \$ 5.00 only.

For reservations/information email Ray/Susie Atienza:

aentertainmentdj@yahoo.com

	Date	Apostolate
	July 10	Formation
	July 17	Management
	July 24	Mission
	July 31	Pastoral

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 27

Bulletin Edition

July 10, 2015

NEWS

Pope Francis: Persecuted Christians Are Our Brothers, Our Martyrs

Excerpt/Rome, July 03, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Junno Arocho Esteves

Pope Francis met today with 30,000 members of the Renewal in the Spirit Movement in St. Peter's Square this evening. The meeting with the Holy Father kicks off the 38th National Convocation of the Renewal in the Spirit. They will reflect on the theme: "Ways of Unity and of Peace: Voices of Prayer for the Martyrs of Today and for a Spiritual Ecumenism."

Among those present were Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Church; Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity; Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, President of the Italian Episcopal Conference. Also present were several Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs, Bishops from the Anglican & Lutheran Churches and Pentecostal pastors.

The group held hands in prayers as the hymn *Amazing Grace* was sung. The Pope then followed with a prayer "Father send us your Holy Spirit, that Jesus has promised us. May he guides us towards unity," the Holy Father said.

"History has divided us. Jesus, help us to go on the path of unity, on this reconciled diversity. Lord, you always do what you promise, give unity to all Christians."

During his address, the Holy Father praised the Charismatic movement's zeal in helping the faithful encounter the Holy Spirit in their lives. He also called on them to continue promoting Christian unity, as well as remembering the many Christian martyrs today. The Pope said that the sufferings of those who shed their blood for Christ unites all Christians.

"A few months ago, 23 Egyptian Copts who were beheaded on the shores of Libya. In that moment, they said the name of Jesus. "Oh, but they are not Catholic!" But they are Christians! They are brothers! They are our martyrs! This is the ecumenism of blood!" he exclaimed.

"And 50 years ago Blessed Paul VI, at the canonization of the young martyrs of Uganda, made reference to this: that for the same reason, their Anglican catechist companions also shed their blood. They were Christians, they were martyrs. Forgive me, do not be scandalized, but they are our martyrs because they gave their lives for Christ! And this is the ecumenism of blood!"

The event included music by various musicians, including Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli.

COUNSELS

TELL THE WORLD OF HIS LOVE

THEME: **The grace of God is sufficient when we depend on Him to go on mission.**

WORD: Am 7:12-15/Ps 85:9-10,11-12,13-14
Eph 1:3-14/Mk 6:7-13

ORDER: **"Take nothing for the journey but a walking stick."** (Mk 6:8)

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus calls His twelve apostles from their worldly involvements and sends them off two by two to proclaim the kingdom of God. He gave the apostles the power and authority to speak and act in His name. He instructed them to do the works which He Himself did, to cast out evil spirits, heal the sick, and share the word of God the Father to others. But with this, they were also instructed to travel light, with no provisions that might weigh them down and impede their work. Jesus wanted them to be dependent on Him and not on themselves. The twelve apostles were instructed by Jesus to **"take nothing for the journey but a walking stick"** (Mk 6:8a). It is believed that the *walking stick* is a symbolism that represents *the word of God*. Therefore, the twelve were told to go out bringing with them only the message they had received from Jesus: the word of God.

Commissioning the twelve, Jesus instructed them to go poorly, with **"no food, no sack, no money in their belts"** (Mk 6:8b). Doing so made them vulnerable and stripped them of their self-reliance. All their needs would be taken care of by the Lord through others. By relying on others, they were weakest and most susceptible. Thus, they had no choice but to trust and be open to love. To survive, they had to trust in others' hospitality.

The disciples were asked to go in pairs. Jesus did not want them to rely on themselves.

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

"The Lord himself will give his benefits; our land shall yield its increase. Justice shall walk before him and prepare the way of his steps." (Ps 85:13-14)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

They worked in pairs so they could mutually help one another and because *two* represented a **community**. They received authority over unclean spirits, to help others who were suffering and to open the door for others to experience the love of God. The twelve were to announce the Good News of God to the people, preaching a call to repentance, be catalysts for change among the people and yield conversions. They were exhorted to invite people into their community: to know God, to love, serve and to follow God. (Sound familiar?) It is through the genuineness of the apostles' witness that other people's hearts were turned. It is their willingness to become vulnerable in the simple act of truly believing in the Lord, that people's doubts were extinguished, causing them to turn their hearts, to believe and accept Jesus' teachings. In the end, those influenced by them would in turn influence others.

Jesus also said, *"Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake the dust off your feet in testimony against them"* (Mark 6:11). He said this because He knew that some people might not yet be ready for the Gospel. Similarly, this was also emphasized in the first reading when Amos was instructed never again to prophesy in Bethel. Jesus knows that in the course of our mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God, we may encounter some resistance, some unfriendly territories. We are cautioned not to let this deter us, but simply to *"shake the dust off our feet"* (Mk 6:11) and move on. Amos and the twelve apostles were persistent in their teaching, undeterred by the lack of human comforts, security and safety. They were focused and faithful, allowing the grace of God to work mightily in their lives.

Tonight's readings invite each and every one of us to reflect on our own participation in Jesus' mission. What is our role in it? What have we done or are doing that would further the great mission that has been appointed to us? We are challenged to envision our lives as an integral part of the Church, bringing Life to people and making present the reign of God in our world. Like the early apostles, we are to engage and confront the evil of our world with the energizing power of Jesus. Our job is to till the soil and make it fertile, that the Holy Spirit might work through people's lives and cause the seeds of faith to grow. We are to trust that the Lord will equip us with the right words, the right actions, the right circumstances. Perhaps at times, we might feel a bit like Amos, ill-equipped for the task at hand. Yet, trusting in the Lord's promise that *"The Lord Himself will give His benefits; our land shall yield its increase. Justice shall walk before Him and prepare the way of His steps"* (Ps 85:13-14), we are encouraged. Holding on to this promise, let us forge on. With open spirits, being truly "bukas loob" let us fulfill our mission, and tell the world of His love!

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$1,991	\$73,181
Mission Collections	\$112	\$6,348

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

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SUMMER VACATION BIBLE STUDY QUICK JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE, BY JEFF CAVINS JULY 25 - SEP 12, 2015

Please register now, space is limited!
Register with Study Booklet for \$5.00 only.
For reservations/information email Ray/Susie Atienza:
aentertainmentdj@yahoo.com

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			July 17	Management
			July 24	Mission
			July 31	Pastoral
			Aug 7	Evangelization

DIRECTIONS:

1. Evangelize families & build communities of faith through Encounters, Life in the Spirit Seminars and Discipleship Formation.
2. Participate in the life and mission of the Church.
3. Work on poverty alleviation through scholarships, housing for the poor.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 28

Bulletin Edition

July 17, 2015

NEWS

43 teenagers take a leap of faith

From July 10-12, 2015 at the Fellowship Deaconry in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, 43 teenagers took a leap of faith together at the Youth Encounter #22. On their spiritual journey, these candidates learned more about themselves, their new YE family, and of course, God.



In just a matter of three days, these candidates transformed from a group of complete strangers to a close-knit family of friends. Those few hours spent together allowed them to laugh together, cry together, share the storms of their past, and express their love and affirmation for one another. They learned to depend on one another, to trust in each other, and to confide in each other about anything. Once they started sharing and doing activities, they kept it going and going. And in their moments of family bonding, they experienced deep feelings. Through Jesus, they have become a true family of brothers and sisters in Christ. Through Him, they are “Rolling in the Deep” on their roller-coaster and prayerful moments. Through Him, they are “Unstoppable”!

The Study Team led these candidates to a closer relationship to God and each other. This year’s facilitators were Sean Olaso, Kipsy Quevada, Dana DeCastro, Kevin Larobis, with Justin Lucero as overseer. They were assisted by this year’s understudies: Jules Almazar, Zach Larobis, Anthony Lucero, and Andrew Olazo. The candidates will continue to be guided and supported by their shepherds Kristianne Lopez, Gerard Rangel, and Tito William and Tita

Continued on page 2

COUNSELS

COME AWAY AND REST

THEME: The grace of God is sufficient when we quiet our spirits to listen to His voice.

WORD: Jer 23:1-6/Ps 23:1-3,3-4,5-6
Eph 2:13-18/Mk 6:30-34

ORDER: *“Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.”* (Mk 6:31)

REFLECTION:

Mark’s Gospel in this Sunday’s scripture reading shows Jesus’ compassion and concern for His apostles, tired as they were after their apostolic mission. Seeing how much they needed rest, Jesus invited His apostles, saying, *“Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while”* (Mk 6:31). And so they went away in a boat to a solitary place where they could have time for themselves to regain their strength as well as prayerfully internalize their experiences.

The Book of Genesis tells us that the work of Creation took God six days. On the seventh day He rested. When God gave His chosen people the Ten Commandments, He made sure that one day of the week was for rest, the Lord’s day. If we want to continue to be good shepherds to our family and to one another, we have to be healthy: physically, psychologically, and spiritually. Spending time in rest and relaxation will go a long way in this regard.

“Remember the Sabbath day-keep it holy.” (Ex 20:8)
In Deuteronomy 5:12-14, it says: *“Take care to keep holy the Sabbath day as the Lord, your God, commands you. Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.”* No work may be done then, whether by you, or your son or daughter.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest,” says Jesus (Mt 11:28). We can so easily be overwhelmed by the challenges we face every day.

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

*“In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
besides restful water he leads me, he
refreshes my soul.”* (Psalm 23:2-3)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

We need to take a break from our routines and give ourselves time with God, and we must also give Him time to speak to us.

How wonderful it is to know that no matter how difficult things get, we can always turn to the Lord for refreshment and strength. Shame to us if we do not know how to be still, to listen, and to feel how much God loves us.

Whoever wants to accomplish great things in his spiritual life has to give himself such spiritual breaks, times of being alone with Christ—through prayers, reading sacred scripture, participating in the sacraments of Reconciliation, and Holy Eucharist. Even spending time on retreats, encounters, and seminars is not a waste of time or money, but time well spent. We should spend a little more time in prayer and allow the Lord to speak to us in a less stressful environment.

Once in a while, we all need to reflect on the ways that we see Jesus in our lives and in the people around us. Even during difficult and challenging times, we know that Jesus is with us, walking with us and even carrying us when He needs to. At times we all look for signs that the Lord is speaking to us. We must never forget that we do not need signs—all we need is *FAITH* and *OBEDIENCE* to Him because Jesus is our True Shepherd who wants to own our lives, our families, and our church. If we let Him be our Shepherd, we will never be wanting for anything (Ps 23:1). God does not ask anything else of us. Our faith and our obedience are such great gifts that allow us to experience Jesus' presence, being our True Shepherd in so many ways.

Relaxation is an occasion to seek Christ. Rest is needed to gain strength and to think clearly. Hopefully all these things will make our lives and the people around us content and happy. Simple, quiet time most especially in contemplative prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament is all that is needed to allow the love of God to fill us and radiate in us because Jesus is our ultimate *Stress Reliever* who offers us consolation, hope, and peace.

We will know when we have begun to have a deep life through reflection when we start to notice three wonderful things in our lives: *praise*, *thanksgiving*, and *joy*. If we are able to give praise and thanksgiving to God in good times and in bad, and experience a joy that no one can take away from us, then God has deeply touched our lives. That is how we know *for sure* that the experience, the grace, and the power of the Lord are now in our lives.

God of compassion and mercy, thank you for the privilege to share time with You. You have offered us this beautiful opportunity of spending time with You to have peace of mind, soul, and spirit.

DIRECTION:

- Rest your spirits by listening to the Lord through daily reading of the Scriptures to discover and understand His messages.

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,048	\$76,229
Mission Collections	\$151	\$6,499

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FAMILY ENCOUNTER 22

July 24-26, 2015 ~ Malvern Retreat House
315 South Warren Avenue, Malvern, PA 19355
Contact: Ed/Susan Fabe~edsan89@comcast.net/732-343-5657

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015 ~ Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium
Invocation Mass (Oct 2nd) ~ Seminar Proper (Oct 3rd & 4th)
Salubungan – August 28th

BLD COMMUNITY DAY! 23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 8, 2015
Venue: Johnson Park, River Road Piscataway, NJ 08854
Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Red Team (A-C), **Blue Team** (D-G), **Green Team** (H-P)
Yellow Team (Q-Z)

SUMMER VACATION BIBLE STUDY

JULY 25 - SEP 12, 2015

Please register now, space is limited!

Register with Study Booklet for \$ 5.00 only.

For reservations/information email Ray/Susie Atienza:

asentertainmentdj@yahoo.com

	Date	Apostolate
	July 24	Mission
July 31	Pastoral	
Aug 7	Evangelization	
Aug 14	Formation	

NEWS (from page 1)

Mary Sumandal. Msgr. Paul Schetlick, the Spiritual Director, was also a fundamental member of the Study Team.

Congratulations to this year's candidates: Isabel Agapito, Michelle Akinwyntan, Chibundu Anyanwu, Ryan Bautista, Marielle Brilliantes*, Joaquin Cariaso, Jack Cruz, Angenica DeCastro, Xavier Delfierro, Thomas Digiuseppe, Bobby Emmanuel, Sherwin Fabe*, Spencer Fabe, Rufus Gomez, Kathryn Guiang, Chudi Ibida, Bertina Joseph*, Briege Julien, Kim Labang, Michael Lavell, Nathaniel Laya*, Rodolfo Laya, Eric Christian Libang, Anabelle Malamug*, Christian Malamug, Ashley Manansala, Katrina Manigbas, Camille Martinez, Joshua Mendoza*, Mary Grace Morales*, Zach Parnell, Christian Pasigna, Karl Pepino, Michael Rangel*, Kerry Regis, Amanda Reyes*, Paolo Rivera, Frankie Rodriguez Jr., DJ Severt Jr., Isabella Somera*, Sydney Tse, Audrey Urmaza, and Jason Yanto* (class coordinators with asterisks*).



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 29

Bulletin Edition

July 24, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Bishops: It's Time for US to End Use of Death Penalty

Affirm Church Teaching: If Society Can Protect Itself Without Ending a Human Life, It Should. Today, We Have This Capacity.

July 21, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Staff Reporter

The bishops chairing two committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) renewed the bishops' opposition to the death penalty in a message last week. The message commemorated the 10th anniversary of the bishops' Catholic Campaign to End the Use of the Death Penalty and their accompanying message, "A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death."

"Our faith tradition offers a unique perspective on crime and punishment, one grounded in mercy and healing, not punishment for its own sake. No matter how heinous the crime, if society can protect itself without ending a human life, it should do so. Today, we have this capability," wrote Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley, OFM Cap., of Boston, chair of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, and Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami, chair of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

The bishops cited progress over the last decade, including several states abolishing the death penalty, other states enacting moratoria, and death sentences being at their lowest level since the reinstatement of the death penalty in 1976. The bishops also noted Pope Francis' call for an end to the use of the death penalty.

"Pope Francis, like his predecessors, provides a clear and prophetic voice for life and mercy in calling for all people of good will to work to end the use of the death penalty," Archbishop Wenski said of the message. "In anticipation of Pope Francis's visit to the United States in September, we join our voices with his and continue our call for a culture of life. As a people of life, we say it is time for the U.S. to abandon use of the death penalty."

MULTIPLIERS OF FAITH

THEME: The grace of God is sufficient when we rely on His Divine provisions.

WORD: 2 Kgs 4:42-44/Ps 145:10-11,15-16,17-18 Eph 4:1-6/Jn 6:1-15

ORDER: "Live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love." (Eph 4:1-2)

REFLECTION:

Jesus' Multiplication of the Loaves and Fish is a familiar story but it is also rare, being the only miracle recorded by all four evangelist writers.

Four times it was written to impart invaluable lessons of the utter lavishness of God's faithfulness and love for us. It is a foretaste of something greater than the miracle itself: our Lord Jesus Christ's Eucharistic generosity, the Bread of Life so that anyone who believes in Him shall thirst and hunger no more.

Our compassionate Christ sees our human condition and understands that even the works of discipleship can break our human spirit.

Philip would not buy into Jesus' suggestion to get food to feed the five thousand hungry men, not counting the women and children, because it could be very expensive and they could not afford it.

Remember Andrew who first introduced his brother Simon to Jesus, his discipleship is remembered as constantly bringing people to Christ. "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish." (Jn 6:9a) But even he was overwhelmed by the enormity of the task of feeding the thousands.

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

"The eyes of all look hopefully to you, and you give them their food in due season, you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." (Ps 145:15-16)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

“But what good are these for so many?” (Jn 6:9b)

Drawn from obscurity, there was the boy, unnamed and with not a spoken word, sheepishly gave his basket to Jesus. We can only guess what was written in his heart, “Lord this is all I have.” And Jesus took it and blessed it.


Miracles seem to happen in situations of scarcity and difficulty. Mother Teresa’s undying devotion to our Eucharistic Lord saw her meager resources multiplied as she ministered to the dying children in the slums of Calcutta. Who would have guessed that after many years, this community would have 45 times more encountered classes than it began with (which was none). Imagine what we would have become had we not reconsidered joining this community. We mustered enough courage to offer our basket of mediocrity before our Lord.

Bring what you have to the Lord. He is inviting us to offer Him all that we have, our littleness, difficulties, fears, challenges and anything born out of our poverty and weaknesses. Cry out your concerns. “I have very limited ability and little to contribute to this community.” Give up your thoughts and rely on Christ’s ability. “There are so few of us in our apostolates. What else can we hope to do?” The Lord of the Harvest sees your needs. “I am spiritually dry and burnt out.” God’s well never runs dry. God’s grace is never scarce; but our ability to receive it is. Miracles do not happen when we give up just when there is only one more effort needed to make it happen. That is, to come before our Lord and allow Him to run our lives.

Is it not a wonderful thing that Our Lord associates Himself with our brokenness, with our want of talent and treasures, with our lack of trust? And yet He does so. With Him nothing is impossible. With His blessings, we are assured of His omnipotence.

Think of Christ frequently and believe that, whoever you are, if Jesus thought you were worth dying for, it is surely worth your while to come and bring yourself and all that you have to God. God brought us here to this community to make use of us for the conversion of thousands, but we must be fed first before we can feed others.

This Gospel’s miraculous story is a sign of the great mystery of God’s love which is renewed every day at the Holy Mass. All those who partake of His banquet become the living instruments of His presence, love, and compassion.

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Christian life. The **“living bread which came down from heaven”** (Jn 6:51) is the only One who can appease the hunger of human beings from every home and every corner of the earth. 

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,249	\$79,478
Mission Collections	\$118	\$6,617

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

LSS Orientation – July 31st

Salubungan – August 28th

Invocation Mass (Oct 2nd)

Seminar Proper (Oct 3rd & 4th)

Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com

BLD COMMUNITY DAY! 23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 8, 2015

Venue: Johnson Park, River Road Piscataway, NJ 08854

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Red Team (A-C), **Blue Team** (D-G), **Green Team** (H-P)
Yellow Team (Q-Z)

Contact Persons: Sundee/Neneng Ikalina: fla@bldnewark.com

	Date	Apostolate
	July 31	Pastoral
	Aug 7	Evangelization
	Aug 14	Formation
	Aug 21	Management

In the Eucharist, we bring the ordinary works of our hands, bread and wine, and add to them the offering our ordinary lives. These are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ and the cup of eternal salvation. He not only feeds us, but empowers us to feed the rest of the world. “*God loves us,*” says Augustine, “*for what we are becoming.*” We hope to become the bread that we eat.

Fr. Cantalamessa, a preacher of the papal household, said something that is true and encouraging. “*We become multipliers of Faith.*” We become disciples of hope, disciples of possibilities. That is why Pope John Paul II, now St John Paul, in the last days of his pontificate, proclaimed a special Year of the Eucharist, so that in meditating more on this astounding gift, we would be prompted to quit holding back. God has given us *all* and asks for *all* in return, not so He can take it away, but rather so He can multiply.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Receive the Holy Eucharist as often as possible, even daily.
2. Stand firm and hold fast to the teachings of the church.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 30

Bulletin Edition

July 31, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

CHANNELS OF GRACE

God richly blesses our community

“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15)

The Family Encounter No. 22 was held in Malvern, PA from July 24-26, 2015. The spiritually-full weekend was successfully attended by seven and a half families namely: Buhain Family, Gaudiel Family, Francisco Family, Monje Family, Morales Family, Osemeha Family, Torres Family and Fr. Joe Saltarin.



God’s presence was felt as the families of FE #22 put their hearts and souls into each activity. Everyone involved during this weekend was heartily moved after witnessing such precious family moments. It is such an amazing experience to see that the grace of the Holy Spirit is working through the families not only among the candidates, but also in the sponsoring class and other participants. The weekend became even more intimate through the sharing of the Olaso and Rangel families, along with the awe-inspiring talk of Monsignor Paul Schetelick.

The FE #22 weekend was a rewarding and invigorating experience through the generous contributions of time, talent and resources of the District Counsel of Servants, Treasury Ministry, Praise

THEME: We will never hunger or thirst when we put away our sinful old selves and accomplish our God-given tasks.

WORD: Ex 16:2-4,12-15/Ps 78:3-4,23-24,25,54
Eph 4:17,20-24/Jn 6:24-35

ORDER: “...Put away the old self of your former way of life...and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self...” (Eph 4:22-24)

REFLECTION:

“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.’” (Jn 6:35)

In today’s readings, we are made to realize how the Father has abundantly provided for His people’s needs, from the time the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt and walked through the barren desert, and continuing to our very own journey to the mansions that He has prepared for all of us.

In response to the Israelites’ grumblings, the Lord sent them quail and manna to satisfy their physical hunger. He fed them, even making sure that they had enough for the Sabbath when they could do no work. It was His way of letting them know His presence in their midst as they walked the forty years until they settled in the land where He wanted them to live. Through Moses, He spoke to them and blessed them with His directions and plans. Throughout the hundreds of years that followed, He consistently communicated with His people through the prophets He sent to them, exhorting them with words of

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

“I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” (Jn 6:35)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS (from page 1)

wisdom and promises of deliverance or punishment and how to conduct their lives in accordance with their covenant. What the prophets declared were fulfilled when the Blessed Virgin gave her fiat and Christ, the Son of God, was made flesh through her.

Despite our infidelity to Him and our impulse to sin, the Father sent His only begotten Son to atone for our sins and to lead us back to Him, so we may become heirs once more to His eternal kingdom. Jesus Christ became man and lived among us to show us the example of how we might truly live in obedience to the Father's will, even accepting death on a cross, so that He could fulfill the Father's mission. Christ established the Sacrament of the Eucharist, enabling us to be enriched always with His body and blood. His presence in the Eucharist is our reminder of His great love for us. He wants to nourish us physically and spiritually; and so He exhorts us to read and reflect on His word, to attend regular prayer and worship, to receive frequently the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, and to do works of love and mercy. That way, we may be renewed in the spirit of our minds and led to put on our new self. With His grace received through these sacraments, we will never thirst for any earthly satisfaction and will be strengthened to complete the purpose He has for our life here on earth

Lord Jesus, You willingly accepted death on the cross for our salvation. Enthuse us to be united with You in all our ways so we may be worthy to receive You, Body and Blood, in the Eucharist. Fortify us and lead us to the path of life, so we may accomplish our mission and we may in time reach our true home with you where we will forever be giving glory, honor and worship to Your name. Amen

DIRECTION:

- **Avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.**

NEWS (from page 1)

Ministry, ME Classes, Singles Ministry, Youth Ministry, Secretariat, Liturgy Ministry, Teaching Ministry, Intercessory Ministry, all the auxies and the entire BLD community which supported the sponsoring class's fundraising activities. Through collective prayers, support and Christian love, Family Encounter #22 was indeed a community success! God has richly blessed this community as we all continue to serve for His victory! To God be The Glory!

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,508	\$81,986
Mission Collections	\$37	\$6,654

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

Thank you for your continued support!
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

BASICS OF PRAYER

August 7, 2015 - After Worship
Divine Mercy Parish - Room 203

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Salubungan: August 28th

Invocation Mass: Oct 2nd

Seminar Proper: Oct 3rd & 4th

Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com

SAVE THE DATE!!!

2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

BLD COMMUNITY DAY! 23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: **Saturday, August 8, 2015**
Venue: **Johnson Park, River Road Piscataway, NJ 08854**
Time: **8:30 AM – 5:00 PM**

Red Team (Last Names: A-C)

Blue Team (Last Names: D-G),

Green Team (Last Names: H-P)

Yellow Team (Last Names: Q-Z)

Contacts: Sundee/Neneng Ikalina: fla@bldnewark.com

Be a "Living Word"

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Aug 7	Evangelization
		Aug 14	Formation
		Aug 21	Management
		Aug 28	Mission

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 31

Bulletin Edition

August 7, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Pope: Don't Be Too Embarrassed to Go to Confession

Invites Us to Remember That the One Who Awaits Us There Is the Immensely Merciful Father

Excerpt/Rome/080215/ZENIT.org/Kathleen Naab

Pope Francis today in the Angelus address referred to an annual feast celebrated each Aug. 2 in Assisi, the Feast of Pardon, and exhorted the faithful to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation and receive Communion.

The Feast of Pardon attracts thousands to Assisi each Aug. 2. The feast originates with the account of St. Francis of Assisi



persuading Pope Honorius III to grant a plenary indulgence to all those who visit the Portiuncula on Aug. 2 and confess their sins.

The feast "is a strong call to draw close to the Lord in the sacrament of mercy and also to receive Communion," the Pope said.

The Holy Father went on to acknowledge that there are people "who are afraid of approaching confession."

He said this is because they forget that there, "we do not find a severe judge, but rather the immensely merciful Father."

"It's true that when we go to the confessional," the Pontiff said, "we feel a bit of embarrassment, and that happens to everyone, to all of us, but we have to recall that this shame is also a grace that prepares us for the embrace of the Father, who always forgives and always forgives everything."

THEME: **We will never hunger or thirst when we partake of the Holy Eucharist.**

WORD: **1 Kgs 19:4-8 ~ Ps 34:2-3,4-5,6-7,8-9
Eph 4:30-5:2 ~ Jn 6:41-51**

ORDER: **"Taste and see that the Lord is good."
(Ps 34:9a)**

REFLECTION:

Have you ever reached a point in your life when you felt helpless and sapped of energy? This is clearly what happened to the prophet Elijah in the 1st reading. He sought rest and refuge by going to the mountain and searching for God, who alone could give him renewed faith and courage. Sure enough, it was as he slept under the broom tree that God gave him the strength he needed to continue on his journey.

As Christian disciples, we too grow weary and need rest to revive our energies and continue living to the fullest the life God has given us. The second reading, St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians, gives helpful insight on how to live the kind of life expected of us. **"All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ."** (Eph 4:31-32)

When faced with hardships, we tend to snap at our neighbor and behave uncharitably, rationalizing our frustrations and disappointments. Yet, as Christian disciples, we should strive to respond with the response of Christ Himself, which is to live "like Him" and to live "in Him." His life was marked with kindness, compassion, unconditional love and forgiveness.

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven, whoever eats this bread will live forever." (Jn 6:51)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS (from page 1)

His is the perfect example we all should aspire to. But it is the kind of lifestyle that needs constant support and nourishment from the Holy Eucharist, because this is the Bread of Life, the source of our spiritual sustenance.

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever” (Jn 6:51a). As we unite ourselves to Christ through regularly partaking of His body and blood in the Holy Eucharist, we receive the Bread of Life, which is His life in us. We then start to have new life – new inspiration and vision through the Word of God. Our faith is renewed and we are given the strength to live out this faith.

The Jews in the Gospel were scandalized and expressed disbelief because they regarded Jesus merely as the son of Mary & Joseph, a carpenter, and as one of them, in reality. We are likewise inclined to complain about all sorts of things, sometimes even about nothing in particular. The Jews failed to see beyond their complaint. They failed to see the bigger picture, the implied invitation to align their will to His as Bread of Life, source of all sustenance. In fact, Jesus declares in the Gospel that no one can come to Him unless drawn by the Father. Neither can we come to Jesus on our own without God’s help.

The Bread of Life is the Word of God. It is the food that will sustain us in our faith journey through life, just as it sustained Elijah in the 1st reading. And as His Word shapes our lives, it will empower us to live the kind of life St. Paul exhorts us to follow in the 2nd Reading - to live a life of love, exemplified by Christ’s love for us, forgiving one another as readily as God forgives us.

Lord Jesus, draw us to Yourself, that we may respond positively to the challenges of life, and allow You, the Bread of Life, to nourish, sustain, and refresh our spirits. When we partake of the Holy Eucharist and receive Your Body, which is real food, and Your Blood, which is real drink, may we grow in imitation of You. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. When you partake of the Holy Eucharist, does it satisfy your hunger and thirst for God? How does it lighten your burden(s)?
2. Was there ever a time when you were strengthened or nourished by your community brother or sister? In what way?

DIRECTION:

- **Unite your hearts and minds with Jesus Christ through the Holy Eucharist, daily prayers and reading of the Word.**

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,191	\$85,177
Mission Collections	\$34	\$6,688

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

BASICS OF PRAYER

August 7, 2015 - After Worship

Room 203 -For ME 45/SPE 17

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

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Contacts: Sundee/Neneng Ikalina: fla@bldnewark.com

Be a “Living Word”

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Aug 14	Formation
		Aug 21	Management
		Aug 28	Mission
		Sep 4	Pastoral





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 32

Bulletin Edition

August 14, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Feed and Abide

BLD Newark celebrates 23 years



“I love You, Lord, my strength,” the congregation proclaimed during Mass at BLD Newark’s 23rd Annual Community Day celebration at Johnson Park in Piscataway. Under clear skies and a warm summer sun, hundreds of community members began the day by worshipping the Lord, who provided another opportunity for us to love one another through praise, service, and fellowship.

Since its inception in 1992, BLD Newark has centered all its activities on the Eucharistic celebration, God’s gift of Himself to us. In his homily, Fr. Paul Lehman echoed this sentiment, saying that although Community Day isn’t necessarily a spiritual event, it allows us participate in an opportunity to love one another. In this way, Community Day becomes not only the commemoration of BLD Newark’s anniversary, but also a way for us to invite the Lord to come into our lives. The day reminds us that God works with us, in us, and through us – even when we’re simply eating hot dogs or playing volleyball. In short, Community Day is a way for us to remember that ***“we are co-workers; [we] are God’s field, God’s building”*** (1 Cor 3:9).

A casual stroll around Johnson Park last Saturday would have allowed one to witness BLD members working together and serving one another selflessly for His greater glory. As early as 7 a.m., Community Day coordinators, led by BLD Newark’s Family Life Apostolate, arrived at the park to set up the picnic area, a grilling station, a food tent, Praise equipment, and games.

As the **Red, Blue, Green,** and **Yellow** teams battled for first place in puzzle solving, tug of war, and volleyball, relay races, and trivia questions, various ministries entertained the crowd with presentations. Highlights included ME#45’s dance to Aretha Franklin’s “I Say a Little Prayer” and the Singles Ministry’s rendition of the classic praise song “This is the Day.”

Although the **Red** team emerged as Community Day champions, the entire community exemplified what it means to be victors in Christ through praise, service, and fellowship. Truly, BLD Newark embodies last Saturday’s Responsorial Psalm: **“I love You, Lord, my strength.”**

THEME: **We will never hunger or thirst when we feed on His Word.**

WORD: Prv 9:1-6 ~ Ps 34:2-3,4-5,6-7
Eph 5:15-20 ~ Jn 6:51-58

ORDER: ***“Come, eat of my food, and drink of the wine I have mixed! Forsake foolishness that you may live; advance in the way of understanding.”*** (Prv 9:5-6)

REFLECTION:

The Bread of Life, which God has willed for all of us, gives us eternal life, sustains, nourishes and unites us as one Body and identifies us as one with Christ and the Father. Coupled with God’s Word, we will never be hungry and thirsty.

“Do not continue in ignorance, but try to understand what the will of the Lord is.”

We might claim that we are living in the Spirit, understanding and abiding God’s will, yet we straddle between God’s ways and the general character of the world around us. We are lacking in faith and far from what God expects. Though we may be giving it our all and are trying our hardest to work things out with the best intentions and to the best advantage, we may not be pleasing to God.

The life that pleases God is the life that believes in the Truth, acts on it and stands by it even if it favors those against us. As followers of Christ, we need to act wisely by knowing God’s will and to act on the Truth as it is in Jesus.

“And do not get drunk on wine, in which lies debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.”

The exhortation is not to live under the dangerous intoxicating influence of the spirit of power, authority, pride and arrogance as these can overwhelm us and make us feel way above the Law, and thus make us the law ourselves. We see those in authority abuse their power and legislate for their benefit at the expense of their constituents. We may encounter spiritual leaders who act far ...*Continued on page 2*

Promise of the Week

“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him on the last day.” (Jn 6:54)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

beyond the reason why they are in such roles, and only for personal aggrandizement. Theirs is to perpetuate personal glory and not to propagate God's Work.

Our Lord says, we should live in the Holy Spirit through His Word, not alone, but as a Church. We ought to confess and put away all known sins in our lives (1Jn 1:5-9) and yield our lives and our total selves to God (Rom 12:1-2). We need to be filled with God's grace and all about Him that we must empty our hearts of anything that separates us from God (Gal 2:20). Most importantly, we need to share a common worship by focusing on the One True God, forsake foolishness so that we may understand God's will. God calls us to eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood that we may have eternal life (Jn 6:51-58).

In order to better understand God's will, there must be a perfect consecration to God. We need to forsake foolishness so that we may live our life in Christ and advance in the way of understanding His will for us. We ought to follow the written Word of God and take diligent steps of daily obedience to God's teachings. We must be conscious of our nothingness and inability to accomplish anything in life without God's will, an utter failure unless God wills, guides, plans and works in us and with us and for us. Our soul must lay down its own will and present oneself before God as much as to say, "I give up my way and will forever to be Thine alone; to love and serve Thee; to do Thy whole will now and forever."

The offer of Jesus to all His followers to feed through Him and through His Word, is a manifestation of His love and intimacy. Jesus once said: *"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."* This implies an ongoing intimate relationship of love and trust: God, you and me, I in Them. It is an intimacy of contact and of togetherness, joined through eating His flesh, drinking His blood and abiding in His Word. Thus whoever eats this Bread, whoever enters into a relationship of spiritual identity with God and His Word, will live forever in the Spirit.

Jesus is the Bread of Life - offered, broken and shared - so that we may have eternal life. Our Heavenly Father wants us to follow the model of Jesus, be One with Him through His Body and Blood, feed and abide by His Word, so we too are able to give our lives to His service - offered, broken and shared... so that we may be His instruments in bringing His people into His never ending kingdom of peace, joy and total fulfillment. The Living Word is God's will for us. It sustains and satisfies.

Directions:

For us to abide by our Lord's order, we are exhorted:

1. not to continue in ignorance, but try to understand what is the will of the Lord; and,
2. to read the Bible every day.

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,962	\$88,139
Mission Collections	\$105	\$6,793

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Regular Teachings resume
Saturday, September 19, 2015

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

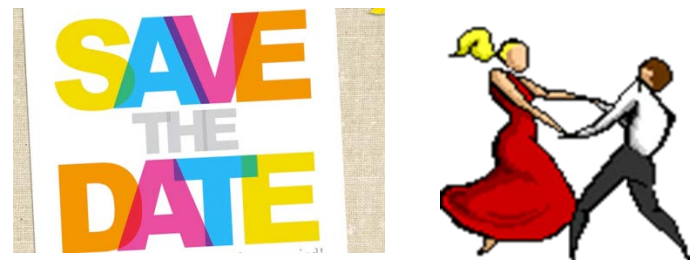
LSS Orientation: August 21st

Salubungan: August 28th

Invocation Mass: Oct 2nd

Seminar Proper: Oct 3rd & 4th

Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com



2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am

Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ

Tickets must be purchased in Advance!

No tickets will be sold at the door!



- Check out the Word Ministry blog:

<http://bldnewarkwordministry.weebly.com>

Bible 101: (Basic Instruction Before Leaving Earth)

Total # of Books = 73 OT - 46 / NT - 27

ONE Gospel - four narratives (Mt, Mk, Lk & Jn)

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Aug 21	Management
		Aug 28	Mission
		Sep 4	Pastoral
		Sep 11	Evangelization



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 33

Bulletin Edition

August 21, 2015

NEWS

BLD Newark thanks the Lord for 23 years..., and counting...

On August 23, 2015, BLD Newark will be celebrating its 23rd year. From its humble beginnings in 1992, to 23 years later, BLD Newark has grown into the vibrant, God fearing and loving Community that it is today. It has striven to be the Catholic Christian light that Jesus asks all of us to be... in the Archdiocese of Newark and beyond.



Outreaches / DIPS / Districts whose roots are from BLD Newark:

BLD Reno, Nevada ~ **BLD** Long Island, New York ~ **BLD** Seattle, Washington ~ **BLD** Albany, New York ~ **BLD** San Francisco, California ~ **BLD** Los Angeles, California ~ **BLD** Washington, DC ~ **BLD** Trenton, New Jersey ~ **BLD** Phoenix, Arizona ~ **BLD** Allentown, Pennsylvania ~ **BLD** Rockland, New York ~ **BLD** Las Vegas, Nevada ~ **BLD** Charlotte, North Carolina

New Jersey Churches BLD Newark has helped in the past:

1. Blessed Sacrament Church, Newark, NJ
2. Divine Mercy Church, Rahway, NJ
3. Saint Andrew's Church, Bayonne, NJ
4. Saint Antoninus Church, Newark, NJ

Former Homes of BLD Newark

1. Saint Theresa's Church, Kenilworth, NJ
2. Saint Joseph's Church, West Orange, NJ
3. CYO, Kearny, NJ
4. Blessed Sacrament Church, Newark, NJ
5. Saint Leo's Church, Irvington, NJ

Current Spiritual Home (2006-present)

Divine Mercy Parish (Saint Mary's Church), Rahway, NJ

THANK YOU LORD!

FOR ALL THE LIVES YOU HAVE ENRICHED.

YOU ARE THE SOURCE OF IT ALL...

WE LOVE YOU AND WE THANK YOU!!!!



COUNSELS

We Will Serve the Lord, Who is Our God

THEME: **We will never hunger or thirst when we are steadfast in following Jesus.**

WORD: **Jos 24:1-2a,15-17,18b ~ Ps 34:2-3,16-17, 18-19,20-21~ Eph 5:21-32 ~ Jn 6:60-69**

ORDER: **"...serve the Lord for He is our God."
(Jos 24:18b)**

REFLECTION:

During the first part of Jesus' ministry, people were attracted by His teaching and the miracles He performed. Many attached themselves to Him, some of them tightly, some loosely. Then came a time when their loyalty was tested. This marked the turning point of His public ministry where most of His followers turned away from Him. Jesus' revelation that He was the Bread of Life confused them. The teaching was beyond their comprehension. It even offended Jesus' own disciples to the extent that many abandoned Him never to return. John relates that Jesus turned to the twelve disciples closest to Him and asked if they too would like to leave. In response, Peter said *"Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."* Behind Peter's declaration of faith were the twelve apostles, similar to the First reading where Joshua affirmed his tribe's dedication and loyalty to God. They would serve Him and Him alone, Jos 24:18b

Jesus was surrounded by disciples like us. He taught His followers and the crowds of would-be disciples at every occasion. Like the early disciples, we too try to understand and believe every word and message He gives us. But His teachings are hard. Jesus says that God expects so much of us, that it is not enough that we abide by His commandments. More than anything, He wants us to offer ourselves in servanthood by way of a single-hearted service to His Church so that we may be one as He is with the Almighty Father and the Holy Spirit. St. Paul affirms this in his letter to the Ephesians Chapter 6. By using the structure of marriage between man and ...*Continued on page 2*

Promise of the Week

"The Lord is close to the broken hearted and those who are crushed in spirit He saves." (Ps 34:19)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

woman, he directs our thoughts to the unity of marriage to what it symbolizes, which is love, reverence and loyalty to God.

Jesus loved His church so much that He gave up His life for it. By implication, this means being faithful to Him as He is faithful to us – in the good times of our lives as well as in the bad. In a marriage relationship both husband and wife are called to defer to one another out of reverence for Jesus. For the wife, this means willingly following her husband's leadership in Christ. For the husband, it means putting aside his own interest in order to care for his wife.

Christ served His disciples even as much as washing their feet, truly an act of humility and submission. Husbands are called to do no less with their wives. Christ loved his church by teaching her, honoring her, suffering for her, being humiliated for her, providing for her and even dying for her. A husband is to do for his bride exactly what Christ did for His bride, the church. A husband may not be called to die physically for his wife but he is called to die to himself. He is called to die to his needs just as Jesus glorified the Father by submitting to the will of the Father.

It is hard to be a disciple. The real difficulty of being a disciple is that it demands an act of surrender to Christ, which exacts a moral standard at the highest level. Jesus said His words are Spirit and life. Whoever listens to the Word and makes it his own belongs to the Word and shares in its riches. This is a Truth repeated in various ways in the Bible. "...*whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life.*" (Jn 5:24). Even Paul expresses this Truth when he wrote to the Thessalonians who had been saved by the Word. He said "*And you became imitators of us and of the Lord receiving the word... with joy from the Holy Spirit.*" (1 Thes 1:6) - in the strength of which we become imitators of Christ and models for others, completely converted to God. Praise the Lord for giving us the grace to know Him more and to experience Him in ministry and when we serve the people that He brings to us in our mission works.

Let us pray that God will give us the strength to live the life of Jesus learning to think like Him, to speak like Him, to share in His desires and ideals, to act like Him in the practice of the virtues set forth by Him in word and example. Let the challenge of Joshua stir us into serving the Lord. Take the plunge of faith believing that Jesus is the ultimate Word of the Father. In the end, we will find that when we are steadfast in following Jesus we will never hunger or thirst.

Directions: Serve the Lord with meekness and humility, deferring to one another, out of reverence for Christ.

TEACHING CALENDAR

Regular Teachings resume
Saturday, September 19, 2015



- Check out the Word Ministry blog:
bldnewarkwordministry.weebly.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,671	\$90,810
Mission Collections	\$65	\$6,858

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

LSS Orientation: August 21st

Salubungan: August 28th

Invocation Mass: Oct 2nd

Seminar Proper: Oct 3rd & 4th

Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com



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for the BLD
Newark visit of

Archbishop
Angel Lagdameo

@ Divine Mercy Parish

Sunday, September 20

2:30 pm Assembly, DMP Auditorium

2:45 pm or 3:00 pm - Talk/Teaching

7:00 pm - Eucharistic Celebration

8:00 pm - 10:00 pm - Fellowship

Wednesday, September 23

8:00 pm - Eucharistic Celebration

- followed by Fellowship

at the school auditorium

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Aug 28	Mission
		Sep 4	Pastoral
		Sep 11	Evangelization
		Sep 18	Formation

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 34

Bulletin Edition

August 28, 2015

NEWS

Disciple lives on beyond memories

Last Sunday, August 23, BLD Newark celebrated its 23rd birthday. At a funeral mass the next day, it said good bye to one of its staunchest disciples for almost all of those years. Maria “Becbec” Laxina, a beloved and much admired member of ME 4, passed away last August 19th, after a long battle with cancer.

Almost everyone in the BLD Newark Community knows about her courageous struggle, beating doctors’ odds time and time again. And through all the ups and downs, she declared a love for God that surpassed any and all doubts, inspiring many others, friends, as well as strangers. Even as recently as last January, she was there with BLD at the **March for Life** in Washington DC, expressing that love, and fighting for more than just her life.

In a moving eulogy, her daughter described how her mother was loved by all those around her. And no one was exempt: from old classmates to young nursing students; co-workers and care-givers; by a family, husband and children, blessed with her singing and dancing, her laughter and love.

Through the years, many have been moved by Tita Becbec’s witnessing, her life serving as a testament to the redemptive character of Christian suffering. And in facing and surmounting many of cancer’s challenges, powerfully teaching what prayer, perseverance and faith can do.

In his homily, the Mass’s main celebrant, Monsignor Paul Schetelick pointed out how the Lord’s Kingdom was not waiting for Tita Becbec, but that it was here all along, and that she is now there too, because of Faith focused on His Kingdom. Although some questions seem unanswerable, Fr. Paul exclaimed that it is that same Kingdom that is here for the rest of us - not later, but now!

The Church was full – a testimony to how beloved Tita Becbec was and is; it was full – with BLD as well as non BLD. The two-day wake over the weekend saw countless others saying goodbye. At the conclusion of his homily, in four words, Monsignor Paul probably best summed up why – he quoted what he thought Tita Becbec would be saying to everyone. In beautiful Tagalog, he spoke for her -

“Mahal na mahal kita.”

In the lessons we have all learned from her, she indeed lives on beyond memories.

COUNSELS

Honor God with Our Hearts and Be Doers of His Word.

THEME: **We will never hunger nor thirst when we honor God with our hearts, not just with our lips.**

WORD: Dt 4:1-2,6-8 ~ Ps 15:2-3,3-4,4-5
Jas 1:17-18,21b-22,27 ~ Mk 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

ORDER: **“Be doers of the word and not hearers only...” (Jas 1:22)**

REFLECTION:

In tonight’s Gospel, Jesus talks about the Pharisees and the Scribes and how they cling to human traditions, the traditions of the elders. They practice traditions for the sake of outward appearance and honor the Lord with their lips and not with their hearts. They teach human doctrines and speak of the Lord but with human precepts. They speak God’s Words but only following them according to their own convenience. They saw sin in everything and threatened the people with punishment!

Men look on the outward appearance and pass judgment, but God looks on the heart. We can see why Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for concerning themselves with outward appearances only and leaving out the more important matter of cleaning their hearts. Their hearts were full of themselves and had no room for God. Many of these practices and customs had lost their meaning and made peoples’ lives difficult. Jesus concerned Himself with the condition of the person’s heart. Was the person “unclean” because of eating with dirty hands? Or, was the person defiling himself through sinful thoughts, words, and deeds that all started in the very heart of that person?

Let us consider for a moment how the Pharisees live their lives. They were so concerned with not defiling themselves with “unclean” things which included unwashed hands, utensils and articles of food. But that was more of a ceremonial uncleanness. If the person followed the steps contained within this law, they would be unclean until the next meal. This cleansing was only an outwardly act and had nothing to do with the person’s heart.

Now, consider how we live our lives. ...Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

“Whoever walks without blame, doing what is right, speaking truth from the heart... Whoever acts like this shall never be shaken.” (Ps 15:2 & 5b)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Do we ONLY worship God on Sunday masses and BLD Friday worship? What do we do on the other days of the week? Are we living in sin or distancing ourselves from God? Are we starving ourselves spiritually all week long? We would be “unclean” until the next worship!

I don't think Jesus would be telling us to disregard the sound wisdom on how food items are prepared and pre-meal hygiene. I think He is telling us that we absolutely need to be as concerned about our spiritual health as we are about our physical health. We need to be just as careful about what comes out of the deep recesses of our hearts as we do about what we put into our bodies. What we put into our bodies does not corrupt us. *“Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.”* (Mk 7:15)

We go to church every Sunday and listen to sermons and the Word of God but do we practice them? We hear and nod our heads but when we walk away, we seem to forget what was so urgent and important to us only moments before. Being a hearer and following traditions do not automatically guarantee that we are a doer of the Word. Although we are often faithful hearers of the Word, we are not always faithful doers. Too often the Word steps on our toes but doesn't change our hearts.

In the parable found in Matthew 21:28-32, a father asks his two sons to go work in his vineyard. One says he won't, but then he does. The other says he will, but then he doesn't. *“Which of these two,”* Jesus asks, *“did the will of his father?”* Obviously, it was the one who went to work in the vineyard. It's not what you say but what you do that matters. You can hear a thousand sermons, and know everything about the bible and its theology, but if you never put it into practice what's the point? In other words, *“Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves.”* (Jas 1:22)

Do we put more concern and effort into our appearance and diet than we do in advancing our relationship with God and following His words? James says that faith without works is dead. In other words, true faith produces action. We need to allow God's Word to be the center by which we assess the condition of our hearts, to see if there are any defiling things within us that we need to confess and ask for His forgiveness. When we do so, He is faithful to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

“Whoever walks without blame, doing what is right, speaking truth from the heart... Whoever acts like this shall never be shaken.” (Ps 15:2 & 5b). Once we do this, we will know and have faith to do something, to be more active ... according to His Word.

Directions: Support the mission work of the Church.

TEACHING CALENDAR

Regular Teachings resume
Saturday, September 19, 2015

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,147	\$93,957
Mission Collections	\$40	\$6,898

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ
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for the BLD Newark
visit of
**Archbishop
Angel Lagdameo**
@ Divine Mercy Parish

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2:45 pm or 3:00 pm - Talk/Teaching
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at the school auditorium

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Invocation Mass: Oct 2 / Seminar Proper: Oct 3 & 4
Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com

John 6 Crossing #16

(for children 12-14 years old)

October 9-11, 2015

Contact Persons: Tony/Marlene Brillantes:
brillantes@optonline.net / (732)491-6973 / (732)491-6974



Disciples' Assembly
Saturday, 1- 5 pm
October 24, 2015

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 4	Pastoral
		Sep 11	Evangelization
		Sep 18	Formation
		Sep 23	Management

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 35

Bulletin Edition

September 4, 2015

NEWS

National Bible Week Is One Way to Bring Bible Into Family as Pope Suggests

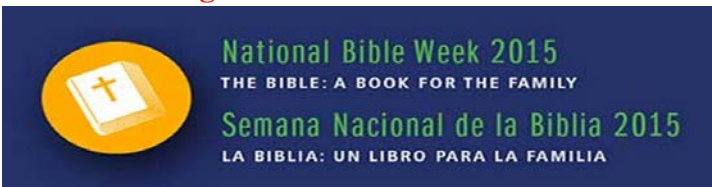
- United States of America, August 26, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Staff Reporter

One way for families to live out the exhortation Pope Francis made today at the general audience of fostering love for God's Word in the family is to participate in **National Bible Week** this November, which will mark the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Dei Verbum.

The November 15-21 event has resources provided in English and Spanish and available on the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The theme of the observance is "The Bible: A Book for the Family/ La Biblia: Un Libro para la Familia."

The Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation Dei Verbum will celebrate its 50th anniversary on November 18, 2015. National Bible Week logos and a variety of resources that highlight the Bible in Catholic life are available online:

www.usccb.org/bible/national-bible-week/index.cfm



Resources for families include "Enthroning the Bible in the Family" (*Cómo entronizar la Biblia en la familia*), "Making the Word of God a Part of Your Home" (*Cómo hacer que la Palabra de Dios sea parte fundamental del hogar*), "Ever Ancient, Ever New: The Art and Practice of Lectio Divina" (*Siempre Antigua, Siempre Nueva: El Arte y la Práctica de Lectio Divina*) and "Sharing the Word of God at Home" (*Compartiendo la Palabra de Dios en el Hogar*).

Resources for parishes include a faith formation session on reading and understanding the Bible, a guide for starting and maintaining a parish Bible study, a family retreat, tips for using the Bible in catechesis and prayer, and a Scripture vigil on the themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine will act as a clearinghouse for activities undertaken by dioceses and other groups, including the Association of Catholic Publishers, the American Bible Society and the Catholic Biblical Federation.

COUNSELS

Those Who Trust and Serve God Are Open to His Will

THEME: **We are open to God's will when we show no partiality in adhering to our faith..**

WORD: **Is 35:4-7a ~ Ps 146:7,8-9,9-10
Jas 2:1-5 ~ Mk 7:31-37**

ORDER: **"Be opened." (Mk 7:34)**

REFLECTION:

At the heart of our Gospel (Mk 7:31-37) is a seemingly small but very important word for all of us in the BLD community. The word is "Ephphatha", an Aramaic word meaning, "be opened." It is an action word, written the same way Jesus pronounced it, so that it will sound even more alive to us today. Remarkably, the Filipino translation is exactly the very name of our community, "**Bukas Loob sa Diyos.**"



In examining the context in which the Gospel story is told, we find Jesus travelling through the "Decapolis," a region between the coast of Tyre and Sidon and Galilee, therefore a non-Jewish area. The people there brought to Him a deaf man so that He could heal him – evidently His fame had spread that far. Jesus took him aside, touched his ears and tongue, and then, looking up to the heavens, and with a deep sigh said, "Ephphatha." And immediately, the man began to hear and speak fluently (Mk 7:35). Literally, the meaning of the word Ephphatha is "be opened", or be cured of the physical handicap because of which the man had been isolated from and ostracized by society. Consequently, the recovery of his speech and hearing became instruments of his "openness" to others and to the world. This "openness," which began with the healing of his sense organs, caused a major change in his person and life, enabling him to communicate and relate in a new way to the events and the people around Him.

"Openness," however has a deeper ...Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

The God of Jacob "... keeps faith forever; secures justice for the oppressed... gives bread to the hungry."

(Ps 146:6b-7a)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

meaning for us in the BLD family. The word "openness" is meant to heal us of our spiritual blindness and deafness caused by our sinfulness, arrogance, pride, confusion and partiality (Ps 146) in dealing with our brothers and sisters, especially the lowly (Jas 2:1,5). These hinder us from hearing the voice of God, the voice of Love speaking in our hearts, which enables us to speak the language of love and to communicate with God and our fellowmen in and outside the community.

The Lord's exhortation demonstrates not only His majesty as our God (Is 35:4), but it also affirms His personal concern to save us. He heals the broken hearted, lifts up the humble, and takes pleasure in those who fear and hope in His mercy. Beyond gold and silver, heeding God's call to believe and "be opened" is like receiving abundant blessings and riches, including developing an understanding of the Triune God in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and of Christ, our Hope of glory living in us and source of the mighty strength of our inner being and through Whose blood we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins.

When we go into 'high praise' during our worship evenings, we are reminded of that special event in the Decapolis when the Lord said, "be opened!" And in the silence of our hearts, we go deeper into prayer and invite the Lord to convey His special message for us and our Community that evening, "*Speak Lord, for your servant is listening!*" (1 Sm 3:10).

We are blessed to be members of the **Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community** which helps us to seek God constantly and reminds us to stay open to receive God's mercy and grace, as He leads us on the right path and to the fullness of joy in His presence. Truly, all we need is to OPEN our hearts in faith to Him and surely, He will OPEN the door of heaven for us!

Prayer: Thank You Almighty Father for allowing us to serve You in the BLD Community and to share our faith journey with our brothers and sisters in Your presence. Thank You for constantly reminding us to "be opened" and for healing us of our deafness to Your voice and blindness to Your light. Thank You for Your Divine presence in our BLD family. It gives us the Hope that sustains us in the deepest and toughest moments of our community life. To You Lord, we are eternally grateful. Amen.

Directions:

- Look up to the Lord and be open to new ideas, approaches or programs.
- Be warm, compassionate and understanding in your dealings with your brothers and sisters.

TEACHING CALENDAR

Friday, September 11, 2015 - Intercessory Immersion (LSS1-42) ~ Service Immersion (LSS43) ~ John 6

Saturday, September 19, 2015 - Regular Teachings begin
EWJ / CMP 1 (Singles) ~ Christian Parenting (ME 44/45/SPE 18) ~
EWJ: Matthew & Mark (LSS1-43) ~ Shepherds' Training (LSS1-40)

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,988	\$96,945
Mission Collections	\$61	\$6,959

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall), Somerset, NJ
Tickets must be purchased in Advance!
No tickets will be sold at the door!



**for the BLD Newark
visit of**

**Archbishop
Angel Lagdameo**

@ Divine Mercy Parish

Sunday, September 20

2:30 pm Assembly, DMP Auditorium
2:45 pm or 3:00 pm - Talk/Teaching
7:00 pm - Eucharistic Celebration
8:00 pm - 10:00 pm - Fellowship

Wednesday, September 23

8:00 pm - Eucharistic Celebration
- followed by Fellowship
at the school auditorium

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Invocation Mass: Oct 2 / Seminar Proper: Oct 3 & 4
Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com

John 6 Crossing #16

(for children 12-14 years old)

October 9-11, 2015

Contact Persons: Tony/Marlene Brillantes:
brillantes@optonline.net / (732)491-6973 / (732)491-6974



Disciples' Assembly
Saturday, 1- 5 pm
October 24, 2015

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 11	Evangelization
		Sep 18	Formation
		Sep 23	Management
	Oct 2	Mission	

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 36

Bulletin Edition

September 11, 2015

NEWS

Pope's Morning Homily: God Brings Peace and Reconciliation in the 'Little Things'

- Rome, September 08, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Junno Arocho Esteves

God brings peace and reconciliation to His people in the 'little things' and in accompanying them along the path of life. This was the central theme of Pope Francis' homily this morning during Mass at Casa Santa Marta.

Dressed in a white and blue chasuble to commemorate the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Father reminded the faithful that Christians are called to reflect on this aspect of humility in which God accompanies his people.

Through Jesus Christ, he said, God seeks to make peace and reconcile his people in a "special way": by accompanying them through the little things in life that appear on our path in life.

The 78 year old Pontiff referred to the first reading from the prophet Micah which states: "You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; Whose origin is from of old, from ancient times." God, he said, always uses the most humble things to do great works.

This however, he explained, is not done magically but through an extensive history of salvation, evidenced by today's Gospel from St. Matthew which lists the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

"The Lord did not want to pacify and reconcile with a magic wand: today - boom! - all done!" the Pope exclaimed. "No. He began to walk with his people and when we heard this passage from the Gospel of Matthew: that is a bit boring no? This one became the father of this, this one became the father of this one, this became the father of this one... It is a list: but it is the path of God! The path of God among men, good and evil, because in this list there are saints and there are criminal sinners as well. There is so much sin here. But God is not frightened: He walks. He walks with his people."

It is in this history, the Pope continued, that God begins to sow in His people the hope in the Messiah. "The people dreamed of liberation. The people of Israel had this dream because it was promised to them, to be liberated, to be pacified and reconciled. Joseph dreams: Joseph's dream is a bit like the summary of the dream of this whole history of God with his people. But Joseph is not the only one with dreams: God dreams....*Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS

Concrete Actions of Love

THEME: **We are open to God's will when we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Christ.**

WORD: **Is 50:5-9a ~ Ps 116:1-2,3-4,5-6,8-9
Jas 2:14-18 ~ Mk 8:27-35**

ORDER: **"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." (Mk 8:34b)**

REFLECTION:

In the past, our ancestors of faith thought that our God is an angry and jealous God. God, because of his love and mercy for us, sent His only Son to be human like us, that He may reveal to us Who He really is. In this Sunday's reading we hear Jesus ask His disciples **"Who do you say I am?"** Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit answered **"You are the Christ, the Messiah."**



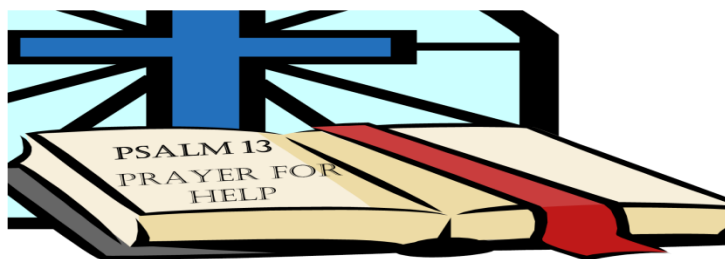
Even with God's divine revelation Peter still did not understand what this truly means. For our God is BIG, bigger than our human understanding, bigger than our imagination. Bigger than the wisdom of the whole universe put together. How can we fathom then His innermost thoughts? In John 14:6 Jesus said **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."** Meaning no one can really know God the Father except we know Jesus! Jesus's life story points to only ONE message... that GOD is LOVE. His patience and tenderness toward His disciples and His compassion to the peoples' suffering showed how God truly understands our human plight.

He is also the God of Truth. The main message of this Sunday's reading attests to this. **"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."** (Mk 8:34b). He does not sugar coat His invitation to be His disciple. Therefore Jesus is telling us that the path ...*Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

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

Good to Me



How long, Lord... must I carry sorrow in my soul... How long will my enemy triumph over me? Look upon me...! Give light to my eyes lest I sleep in death... lest my foes rejoice at my downfall... I trust in your mercy. Grant my heart joy in your salvation, I will sing to the Lord, for he has dealt bountifully with me!" (Ps 13:1-6)

Pondering on God's word through the Psalmist, I join his lament of having felt forgotten by God and feel one with his expression of fear that the enemy will interpret his death as divine judgment.

Two years ago, I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder, the exact cause of which is unknown; and since then, my lifestyle has completely changed. Feeling lost and threatened it was difficult for me to think of joy in life. I recall St. Paul who commands us to console one another for we shall always be with the Lord as it is always His will to be one with us. St. Paul also reminds us that death is a new beginning through the Resurrection of Jesus with hope of entering into the eternal joy, in God's presence to enjoy the vision of eternal glory forever. Like the Psalmist, I patiently waited for deliverance; but slowly began to despair as I felt that my troubles would never end.

God in his love always wants to speak and show Himself to us. His longing to connect cannot be contained. No situation on earth can stymie or defeat that love. Every possible human misery, oppression and captivity is definitely met and answered through the presence of Jesus. All I have to do is simply be receptive of His message and let His Word break into my heart.

The psalm ends with "GOOD....TO ME" ("...he has dealt bountifully with me!" Ps 13:6) - a confession of complete trust in God and a statement of thankfulness and praise to God emanating from the psalmist, and now, myself too, for the deliverance enjoyed from having been seriously ill at one time.

Lord enthroned in heaven, I lift my eyes unto You. I am truly amazed as You never tire to speak to me; even in the midst of my deep agony, sorrow and pain, You show Yourself to me. Keep my eyes always open that I may see You, and grant me the grace to fully place my faith in You every day. Thank You for Your relentless love affording me relief from temporary miseries into eternal joy in Your presence. Amen.

What's in Your Heart?

"A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks." (Luke 6:45).

What does it mean to bear good fruit? Earlier in this chapter, we saw Jesus summoning His disciples, discerning twelve of them to receive the title of "apostle." We also saw how Jesus gathered a multitude of followers who had come to accept His powers of healing.



Afterwards, Jesus turns towards His disciples, offering to them not only a cleansing of their ailments but a cleansing of their minds and hearts. Using parables, He preached to them about how to live moral and spiritual lives; and the lessons He imparts are still as valid and applicable today as they were during His time.

Jesus preached about the values in evincing love for enemies, the dangers of judging others and the importance of bearing good fruit. The symbol of a tree bearing fruit is well known to us in Community. This hypothetical tree and its fruit exemplify how a person's words and actions are a product of subconscious drives that reside within his heart. The feelings and motivation held within a person's heart (the "goodness" or "evilness" of the tree) will affect his words and actions (the fruit). Should a person act or speak based on evil or vile intent, one can see how those malevolent words and actions would ordinarily bring about further problems and disharmony. It could be that these malevolent words or acts were influenced by the temptations or the encouragement of the devil. However, should a person's heart be filled with goodness, one shall be able to see the fruit of his labor in his actions and words that bring about goodness and spread God's love to all. As such, each tree is recognized by its own fruit, and in the same way, people are characterized by the fruit of their words and actions.

This Gospel verse is a call to action for all people, to show us how true indeed are the lessons that Jesus teaches us. These parables transcend time and space, surviving through history and are still as true today as they were during His time. They cause us to reflect on whether the fruit we grow are truly a result of our inward drives. How does the fruit relate to the feelings in our hearts?

What's in my heart?





FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

With the return of impending winter and shorter days we can begin a new moment in our personal lives and the life of the community. Labor Day reminds us that a new season has begun. The return to so called normalcy may trigger a certain sadness, expressed in such remarks as "Where did the summer go?"

There are, however, some new moments shortly ahead. Our global spiritual director, Archbishop Lagdameo will be visiting, teaching and celebrating liturgy with us. With all of this anticipation it is well to be reminded again of the basics and that our life as Catholics as well as membership in BLD should be a steady advance in holiness and the perfect adherence to God's Will.

How many times have you heard that? It is my opinion that most of us are serious about discerning God's Will. Most of us are in situations that for the moment express God's perfect Will for us. Most of our adults are married. Our singles are studying or looking for that perfect spouse. Our youth are in school. If we are faithful to our duties of the state of life we are in, we can grow in holiness.

However I believe there are many other neglected moments in our day that just happen and could be "sanctified" or "offered up". The only real way we can really judge is to ask how eagerly we desire to do the Will of God, not only in obvious and major matters, but in every insignificant detail of our everyday hum drum life.

Some personal indicators to look at:

- 1) Do you realize that God is always with you and always acting in such a way in you that you may experience his love? Do you pause periodically even outside of prayer periods to make an act of faith in that personal love for you?
- 2) God reveals himself in the most common moments of life, and not just during major decisions. Do we pause to see and listen?
- 3) Disappointing and annoying moments can be grace filled opportunities. Do we try to see God's Will in some way reaching out to us in these moments instead of being annoyed or having a pity party?
- 4) A spiritual author, Jean Pierre de Caussade, called these moments "sacraments", not one of the seven, but truly signs of God's love and presence, and offering us an opportunity to welcome His grace filled nearness.

Each day, each second is a new moment. Embrace God's Will in each precious second.

of love is always a path of suffering. Our God is a Suffering Servant - Messiah! God's love for us cost Him extreme suffering, from betrayal of His friends, rejection of the temple elders, to death on the cross. He took upon himself God's wrath, a just due for our sinfulness. His precious blood, shed as a sacrificial lamb offering for our sins, elevated us to the higher status of being His friends, His brothers and sisters, God's adopted sons and daughters. His redemptive suffering gained for us eternal life with Him.

Brothers and sisters through Jesus' example, we are called to love God and one another. This love should be supported by concrete action of love. And the only way to show our love is through our actions of taking the path of suffering. **"So also faith of itself, if it does not have works is dead."** (Jas 2:17).

Deny yourself of comfort and rest when your spouse or children need help. Deny yourself of pride when someone else needs your forgiveness and tender words. Deny yourself of enjoyment and convenience when your parish community is asking for help as a Eucharistic minister, catechist, or volunteer in parish gatherings. Deny yourself of ministry friends' company when our BLD community is calling you to serve in another ministry. The need of others must come first before our need. Be bold to say **"yes"** to serve God wherever He wants us to serve, even if it involves so much sacrifice of time and resources. Let us lose ourselves in our love for Jesus Who has given His all - His divinity and human life for us. Deny ourselves of a day's work wage when this interferes with our Sunday's worship, our daily prayers and communing with God. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and yet lose his soul?

Carry your cross every day, diligently, faithfully. A life filled with struggles, pain and difficulties often leads to a more meaningful, thankful and purpose-filled life. For the cross of loving God and one another lead to victory and freedom from sin and death; it leads to eternal life with our God.

Jesus, You asked **"Who do you say I am?"**

My Lord, You are my God, my Savior from my sinful and miserable life of fear, constant troubles and strife. You are my Father I can call on in times of troubles and great need. My Friend I can lean on when my world does not make any sense. Make my faith in You strong and help me to live in the victory of my cross by denying my selfishness, rejecting sins and by accepting Your will in my life. Teach me how to worship You and praise You. Teach me how to carry my cross and to follow You alone. Help me to live my life as a suffering servant and then let me live my life with You eternally in heaven where I will experience true peace, true love and true joy. Amen.

Directions:

1. Be witnesses of God's love with your works.
2. Serve the Lord through the community, forsaking your convenience.

There is no greater joy in life than finding God, every day, in the everyday.



NEWS

(from page 1)

God our Father has dreams, and dreams beautiful things for his people, for each one of us, because He is a Father and in being a Father, He thinks and dreams of the best for his children."

The Jesuit Pope said that today's Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a decisive moment in the history of salvation. A feast, he concluded, that invites us to pray for the grace of unity, peace and reconciliation.

"We continue the celebration now, the remembrance of the Lord in the 'little things': a little piece of bread, a little bit of wine...in the 'little things'. But in this little thing there is everything. There is the dream of God, there is His love, there is His peace, there is His reconciliation, there is Jesus.

9/11: The Catholic Church Remembers Intercessions for September 11 - Patriot Day (USCCB)

For the Church, that she may continue to provide care and healing for all, especially those affected by the attacks on September 11, 2001, we pray to the Lord...

For all victims of violence and terrorism around the world, and for their families, that they may find comfort and peace, we pray to the Lord...

For the safety of our service men and women abroad, for civil servants who protect us and keep us safe, and for all who live with war and violence, we pray to the Lord...

For our leaders and for the leaders of nations, that they may work together to address the problems that provide fertile ground for the growth of terrorism, we pray to the Lord...

For the ability to forgive and for an end to all hatred, beginning in our own hearts, we pray to the Lord...

TEACHING CALENDAR

Friday, September 11, 2015

Teachings after Worship: Intercessory Immersion
Service Immersion ~ John 6 Teaching

Saturday, September 19, 2015

EWJ / CMP 1 (Singles / 9am-5pm)
Teachings starting at 1pm:
Christian Parenting (ME 45/SPE 17)
EWJ: Matthew & Mark (LSS 1-44)
Shepherds' Training (LSS 1-40)

Selected Footnotes and Cross References

To add to your understanding, look these up, from Sunday's readings (source - NABRE):

Cross References

Is 50:6 + Mt 26:67 / 27:30
Ps 116:8 + Rev 21:4
Jas 2:14 + Mt 25:31-46

From the footnotes

Mk 8:27-30 ~ "This episode is the turning point in Mark's account of Jesus in his public ministry."

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,720	\$99,665
Mission Collections	\$55	\$7,014

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

this is
tomo
rrow



The 2015 BLD NEWARK Dinner Dance

Saturday, September 12, 2015 ~ 7:00 pm to 12:00am
Venue: Ukrainian Cultural Center (Hall)
135 Davidson Avenue, Somerset, NJ 08873
- off of exit 10 (formerly exit 6) on Rte 287



for the BLD Newark
visit of

Archbishop
Angel Lagdameo

@ Divine Mercy Parish

Sunday, September 20

2:30 pm Assembly, DMP Auditorium
2:45 pm or 3:00 pm - Talk/Teaching
7:00 pm - Eucharistic Celebration
8:00 pm - 10:00 pm - Fellowship

Wednesday, September 23

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- followed by Fellowship
at the school auditorium

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Invocation Mass: Oct 2 / Seminar Proper: Oct 3 & 4
Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com

John 6 Crossing #16

(for children 12-14 years old)

October 9-11, 2015

Contact Persons: Tony/Marlene Brillantes:
brillantes@optonline.net / (732)491-6973 / (732)491-6974



Disciples' Assembly
Saturday, 1- 5 pm
October 24, 2015

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 18	Formation
		Sep 23	Management
		Oct 2	Mission
		Oct 9	Pastoral

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 37

Bulletin Edition

September 18, 2015

BLD Newark smiles & dances HOLYWOOD Night away

Last Saturday night, about 500 BLD Newark members and family and friends gathered at the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Somerset New Jersey in a dinner dance fundraiser to remember. In an extraordinary turnout, BLD, both new and old were there.

There were old encounter classmates reunited. There were BLD friends from other districts. The newest Newark encounter classes too were well represented. Younger family members joined in the celebration as well.

The fundraiser was the culmination of more than half a year's planning by the dinner dance sponsoring class, ME38. Amazing too was the spirit of cooperation amongst them and the host of volunteers, including singers and dancers, who served alongside them - from the other ME classes, Solo Parents, John 6 and Mark 10 ministries. Not to be outdone, some of the Singles and Youth helped out too, as they sang and made rounds amongst the tables successfully seeking additional donations for what everyone knows is a truly great cause – BLD Newark.

The party started at 7 pm, and for much of the night, BLD partied. *Hollywood Night* was so good that by the time thanks to our Father God were being said close to midnight, there was still a sizeable crowd there. As is characteristic of any BLD success story, it would not have been possible without many helping hands, and the Community truly extends its gratitude - to everyone who was there; to BLD's leadership; to the tireless Dinner Dance committee; to the hosts of the evening and the night's DJ crew; to the many supporters of the commemorative journal; and most importantly, to Jesus, He Who blessed the event, Who makes our hearts smile and our feet dance each and every holy day... and holy(wood) night.

Continued on page 2

COUNSELS

JESUS CALLS YOU TO FOLLOW

THEME: We are open to God's will when we are the least of all and the servant of all.

WORD: Wisdom 2:12, 17-20; Psalms 54:3-4, 6, 8; James 3:16-4:3; Mark 9:30-37

ORDER: *"Be the last of all and the servant of all."*
(Mark 9:35c)

REFLECTION:

In last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus clarified His identity to His confused disciples. He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the scribes. He would be put to death and rise after three days. It was difficult for them to accept our God as a "Suffering Servant," that they, too, had to follow Him and suffer.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus reiterated His death and resurrection. He highlighted the characteristic of "Servanthood", a love-relationship that implied powerlessness, helplessness, and defenselessness. We are to be susceptible to harm or attack, physically, emotionally, or spiritually. It is a discipleship that did not provide for any privileged position, but rendered man with nothing; a servant of all, who must carry the cross, be persecuted and die for his neighbor just as Jesus did.

Jesus took the opportunity to teach His disciples that He was a "Servant King", a "Servant Messiah". Unfortunately, Jesus' disciples had difficulty grasping the true meaning of discipleship. Mark revealed that "they had been discussing among themselves on who was the greatest". They were arguing as to who would be second in command

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

*"God is my helper; the Lord sustains my life."
(Psalms 54:4)*

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Contrite Heart

How many times did we hear the cliché “Looks are deceiving” or “Don’t judge the book by its cover.” Similarly, it makes me wonder, “How do we know if someone has a contrite heart?”

The word “contrite” is translated from a Hebrew word whose root is “Dakka” basically means crushed (literally into powder, pulverized). Pride has been pulverized and as a result is humbled through and through. A contrite heart is one in which the natural pride has been completely humbled by the consciousness of guilt.

“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. He said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ The others at table said to themselves, ‘Who is this who even forgives sins?’ But he said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”(Luke 7:47-50)

Like the sinful woman who bathed Your feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair I plead for your forgiveness, O Lord. How I’d wish I could show great love and humility. When the woman lets her hair loose, she knew it was grounds to be shamed and sent away. But she also knew that there is love far greater than law. She knew that men despise that which is broken but God will not. You will not overlook it. You will not refuse or reject it. Her faith tells her that only Jesus can free her from sin and guilt. Jesus grant her the peace, mercy and healing because she showed deep repentance and atonement for her sins through her actions. The heart reveals the true intentions and attitudes on how we act and relate to other people. But only God can probe the true intentions of our heart. Only God can change our hearts and make them clean and whole through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Come, O Holy Spirit purify my heart and mind and fill me with the power of God’s love and goodness. God, You search me and You know me. Help me to align my heart and mind to You, O Lord. Come, Holy Spirit, strip me off my garment of pride and other harmful worldly pleasures. Clothe me O Lord with humility and meekness of heart. I implore Your mercy and healing for the faults I have committed and ask for Your forgiveness. With a contrite heart and a broken spirit You will not treat me with contempt and rejection. You will save me in Your love. May I never hesitate to return many times over to confess my sins knowing that the Lord is near when our hearts are broken and our spirits are crushed. Lord, grant that You rule the restlessness of my heart and calm me from all cares. My words are known to you before I speak O Lord. Make each word I speak a work of kindness done in Your name, Lord Jesus Christ I pray, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

News: BLD Newark smiles...

Continued from page 1



BLD Newark members, family and friends are all smiles in these two group selfies taken last Saturday night at the Ukrainian Cultural Center, in Somerset New Jersey. About 500 guests enjoyed an evening of great food, presentations and dancing at **Hollywood Night**, BLD Newark’s 2015 Dinner Dance Fundraiser.

AWESOME HUMILITY

“Brothers and sisters: 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; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:6-8)

Poor human beings. We like to boast. “This is my wife, that pretty lady!” “This is my new Mercedes. It is fast.” “I just got a promotion.” Sometimes our boasting is even under the guise of false humility. “This is my small 3-car-garage home.” Anything to attract attention towards “me, myself, and I”. How can we expect to understand Christ’s humility? We see ourselves as the center of the universe, on top of the pyramid, receiving everybody’s services. Christ, on the other hand, turns the pyramid upside down and declares that he comes to serve and not to be served.

We might try to comprehend the nature of God’s love and awesome humility by observing a waterfall.



In his Canticle of Creation, St. Francis of Assisi praises the Lord for “Sister Water”, who he describes as “humble”. Water coming down from a mountaintop continues to flow until it reaches flat ground; but even there, it continues to go lower to the lowest possible level and deep into the ground.

God’s love and humility is in some ways similar but is even greater, of course. God the Father sent us His only begotten Son, Jesus. The Word was in the beginning, was with God and was God, through whom all things were made (cf. John 1:1-3). Yet He emptied Himself of His divine glory, descending down from heaven and taking on the form of a slave, for He accepted death on a Cross, “the punishment of slaves who were least among men, thus making Him a true brother of suffering humanity, sinful and rejected” (Saint John Paul II). What an awesome humility!

Inspired by the confidence that Jesus took upon Himself our sins and nailed them to the cross, we should not be afraid to turn to Jesus, for He continues to reach down to us, meeting us at whatever level we are at, even if we are at our lowest level in the midst of the most sinful time of our life. He is there, opening His arms, calling us back to Him.

COUNSELS *(from page 1)*

in God’s kingdom, who would wield the greatest power. Sadly, they saw Jesus as the conquering King, who would liberate Israel and establish an earthly kingdom.

In the first reading, the wicked discussed killing a just person, who they found to be obnoxious to them and who had confronted them for their wrongdoings. With cynicism, they sought to see what would happen to Jesus, if He were truly the Son of God. They wanted to see proof of His gentleness and try His patience, for according to His own words, God would take care of Him.

In the second reading, Saint James addressed the issues which caused disorder such as unwholesome practices, wars and conflicts, jealousy and selfish ambition. Similarly in any community, when jealousy and selfish ambition exist, chaos and harsh practices occur.

This Sunday’s readings remind us to witness to the world with our Christian mind and heart. Jesus commands us to be humble, accepting others as better than ourselves, allowing our brother to be first and for us to be the last of all. We must surrender our will to God so that we will be like Him, a servant of all.

In our Community, we have shared the teachings of Jesus Christ and have been trying our utmost to follow Him. Jesus wants all of us to be God-conscious rather than be preoccupied with status and the honor and benefits that go with it. His plan for us is to be His servant, who cares and loves His people without reserve nor conditions. We must be willing to give up all. Just like Him, we are expected to serve even those without power nor influence. We must be most vulnerable, helping even those who persecute us.

Lord Jesus, we are no different from Your disciples, who failed to understand and accept Your teachings. Guide us with Your wisdom that we may humbly serve one another in love without jealousy and selfish ambition. As we work in Your vineyard, let us serve with a joyful and pure heart. Help us to continue treating each other fairly, giving everyone due respect and dignity. Lead us to understand and practice Your word: ***“If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.”*** (Mark 9:35)

DIRECTIONS

1. Serve without jealousy and selfish ambitions.
2. Accept any ministry task with joy and a pure heart.

TEACHING CALENDAR

Saturday, September 19, 2015

EWJ/CMP1 (Singles / 9am-5pm)

Teachings starting at 1pm:

Christian Parenting (ME 45/SPE 17)

EWJ: Matthew & Mark (LSS 1-44)

Shepherds' Training (LSS 1-40)

A Prayer to Our Lady of Sorrows

O most holy Virgin, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ: by the overwhelming grief you experienced when you witnessed the martyrdom, the crucifixion, and death of your divine Son, look upon me with eyes of compassion, and awaken in my heart a tender commiseration for those sufferings, as well as a sincere detestation of my sins, in order that being disengaged from all undue affection for the passing joys of this earth, I may sigh after the eternal Jerusalem, and that henceforward all my thoughts and all my actions may be directed towards this one most desirable object. Honor, glory, and love to our divine Lord Jesus, and to the holy and immaculate Mother of God. Amen.

BLD VISION

- We are a community of disciples inspired by the Holy Spirit to be living witnesses for transformation in Christ to bring about a world of justice, human development and true peace

BLD MISSION

In response to the challenges of our particular place, time and culture:

For our families:

- We will evangelize families and build communities of faith through encounters, Life in the Spirit Seminars and discipleship formation.
- We will give formation on personal and family prayer, pro-life values, Catholic social teachings and stewardship.

For our communities:

- We will actively participate in the life and mission of the Church in accord with our God-given gifts.

For our country:

- We will work on poverty alleviation through scholarships, housing for the poor and advocacies for life, environment and good governance.

Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam

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LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,033	102,698
Mission Collections	17	7,031

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Sep 23	Management
			Oct 02	Mission
			Oct 09	Pastoral
			Oct 16	Evangelization

Be a Living Word

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



for the BLD Newark
visit of

Archbishop

Angel Lagdameo

@ Divine Mercy Parish

Sept. 20, Sunday

2:30 Assembly, Auditorium

3:30 Talk/Teaching

6:30 Eucharistic Celebration

8-10 Fellowship

Sept. 23, Wednesday

8pm Eucharistic Celebration

Followed by Fellowship at the auditorium

NO WORSHIP ON FRIDAY, SEPT. 25

**Upcoming DLC
Meetings and
Pastoral Hours**

Monday, September 28

Monday, November 23

7:30 pm

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR #45

October 2-4, 2015

Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Invocation Mass: Oct 2 / Seminar Proper: Oct 3 & 4

Contact Persons: Lito/Gigi Vibar: lsa@bldnewark.com

John 6 Crossing #16

(for children 12-14 years old)

October 9-11, 2015

Contact Persons: Tony/Marlene Brillantes:

brillantes@optonline.net / (732)491-6973 / (732)491-6974



Disciples' Assembly

Saturday, 1-5 pm

October 24, 2015



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 38

Bulletin Edition

October 2, 2015

NEWS

NEWS

Pope and Archbishop thrill many in BLD



Last week, two very important people in the lives of every BLD member visited the New York-New Jersey area.

After joining the 25th Anniversary Celebration of BLD Toronto earlier in the week, BLD Global Spiritual Director Angel Lagdameo arrived in New Jersey on Sunday September 20, for a pastoral visit with BLD Newark. That visit started later that afternoon with a two-and-a-half hour teaching, followed by Eucharistic Celebration and fellowship at Divine Mercy Parish in Rahway, NJ. In the teaching, Archbishop Lagdameo spoke eloquently on the Theology of Obedience and Servant Leadership. Three nights later, the Archbishop joined the Community again for Mass and fellowship, also at Divine Mercy.

On Tuesday, Sept 22, Pope Francis arrived from Cuba for his much anticipated first visit to the United States. Then, over the next 5 days, it seemed that America was fascinated by anything and everything that the Holy Father said and did. Thousands waited hours just to catch a glimpse of him passing by, and the media coverage was exhaustive. Yet, through it all - the attention, adulation and scrutiny, Pope Francis maintained a core sense of humility that truly shined.

For many, the Pope's visit seemed to awaken an infectious Catholic fervor that hopefully will last. Both his and Archbishop Lagdameo's messages surely must find their way into each and every one of BLD Newark's hearts.

Some members share their thoughts...

From the moment Pope Francis stepped out of the plane in Washington DC (Tuesday, Sept 22) till the farewells at the airport in Philadelphia the following Sunday, the visit from our Holy Father seemed to capture the attention of almost all Americans, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. At the forefront of it all were BLD members – watching the intense media coverage and braving the crowds in the three cities he had visited.

There was much to digest from the things he said and did. Steadfast and consistent was his message of love, of taking care of the environment, of concern for the poor, refugees and immigrants, and of protecting the unborn. There were many moments to remember, some of which, a few BLD members share below:

- * From a member of ME 27 – Pope Francis making a loud statement, simply by waving at cheering crowds from the back seat, not of a limo or an SUV, but of a small Fiat.
- * Someone from SPE 12 was similarly impressed by his choice of ground transportation and had this to add – that it represented his simple and humble ways. The Fiat was often the smallest car in motorcades and processions, and yet meant even more because of the role Mother Mary's Fiat (Latin for "let it be done") played in the story of salvation.
- * "We can all be together" a BLD veteran from ME 13/SPE 10 chimed in. He was particularly touched by a scene he saw, where a young autistic man helped someone who was blind, to receive the Holy Eucharist, right up to guiding the blind man in the transfer of the host from hand to mouth.
- * Many described the few precious seconds of actually seeing Pope Francis as "So worth it," including a group from ME 40 who were there at the Central Park procession; and had gone, despite concerns about security and traffic. Some time during their four hour wait, they had befriended ...*Continued on page 2*

Pope Francis Quote

"...only the enduring allure of goodness and love remains truly convincing."

(Pope Francis in his address to the joint session of the United States Congress.)

Some members share... *Continued from page 1*

a person from Peru, whose dream was to see the Pope. She had gone even though she did not have a ticket; she apparently also did not know English. Someone must have been looking out for her because the group had one extra which they gladly shared.

Pope Francis concluded his US visit with a Mass at the 2015 World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. A member of ME 19 who was there wrote this:

It was a powerful witnessing of the one million people who joined the Pope for this Sunday Mass! Pope Francis highlighted that God's love is for everyone and not limited to a specific group. "To raise doubts about the working of the Spirit, to give impression that it cannot take place in those who are not 'part of our group' or who are not 'like us' is a perversion of faith".

The Pope also emphasized that marriage between a man and a woman and the family that comes from that union, reflects God's love. He said that families are a domestic church, where little gestures of tenderness, compassion and affection are learned. All this reminded me of what Mother Teresa said, "We are not called to do great things, but to do small things with great love." It is in the family where we can start doing small acts of love and kindness, and then share it with others.

In these trying times, let us pray for peace, love and unity for all families.

At the end of the Mass, the Pope made a heartfelt plea not to forget to pray for him. What a gesture of humility from a holy man who sees himself as a lowly servant of God.

We all came home with joyful and grateful hearts for the gift of his presence. It was a day well-spent, filled with God's grace and blessings. Thank you Lord, for Pope Francis!



Archbishop Lagdameo delivers teachings



"BLD, you keep the faith alive!"

On that high note, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo began his teachings for BLD during his pastoral visit with the Newark Community cluster, Sunday, Sept 20. Then for the next few hours, a full Divine Mercy auditorium listened attentively as he expounded on two important topics: the Theology of Obedience and Servant Leadership.

In his typical yet engaging homespun style, his Eminence first painted the portraits of obedience, as seen in each of the four Gospels. From Matthew, he cited how Jesus was the beloved disciple of the Father, Who, in His work against fellow Jews was obedient, even up until the point of death. In Mark, He was willing to suffer and die in order to convert the Gentiles. St Luke showed Jesus as One Who received the Master's Spirit, while St John emphasized His role as the Good Shepherd. Citing how Jesus simply said "Follow me" to the apostles, the Archbishop then exhorted everyone in the audience to obey, even if not everything is clear and understood. He talked about the submission of the intellect and will for a higher purpose, as determined by God, but also by leaders of BLD.

He touched on the "Spirituality of Imperfection" and the importance of knowing ourselves in order to know God, with an examination of conscience as key to that knowledge. Additionally, he instructed everyone to not be complacent but to always look for ways to improve; and to find time for solitude, silence and contemplation.

On Servant Leadership, he called it "the most attractive power in the world," and enumerated several aspects characteristic of it. A servant leader is a reluctant draftee, chosen to serve. He must relinquish the right to control and see servanthood as an end in itself. He exemplifies humility, is caring and reflects love. He has "dirty shoulders" from allowing others to stand tall on his; he is found in places others do not want to go to, doing things others do not wish to do.

Twice, once in his talk and later in His homily during the Mass, he related simple stories of kindness where the recipients of good deeds called out, "Sir, are you Jesus?" Via those stories, he emphasized that we must be Jesus to others.

In that homily at the Mass,

Continued on page 4

MERCY CAME TO US

It was the first time that I would be far away from my family. My flight was just a day after the first birthday of my second son; a sad day for us especially for my wife and two kids. Faced with the uncertainties of my job then, we made this very big decision in our young married life that I had to leave home and work abroad in order for us to become financially stable. A very hard decision indeed considering that I was to be gone for at least three years.

Several months into my contract, I got very sick. I was sent to a couple doctors in the area, only to be told that nothing was wrong with me and sent back with a prescription for fever and pain. Even with the medications, I felt my condition worsen so much so that I started skipping work for days. I notified the office about it but my boss couldn't care less. He thought I was just making it all up. I started feeling self-pity, thinking and debating about all the what ifs and what's going to happen; and with my family so far away, I realized then how much I missed them. I prayed every day for God's healing and mercy, that He would cure me of whatever it was that was making me sick and make me healthy again. I felt so alone and hopeless. After a month, I informed my boss that I wanted to go home so I can seek proper treatment. God's mercy came to me and for some reason, my boss sent me to the best clinic in the city for evaluation and treatment. *"... for he afflicts and shows mercy, casts down to the depths of Hades, brings up from the great abyss."* (Tobit 13:2)

The clinic did extensive tests and lab works and took some biopsy samples. Praise God the test results found nothing serious and the biopsy was negative. I was given the appropriate medications and after few days was sent back to our work villa. God is good and His mercy endures forever. I gave thanks to God for another chance at life. I finished my contract and returned home to my family, realizing that money is not everything and that this is where I should be. I am thankful for God's mercy for He was with us when we needed Him. ... *"For slaves we are, but in our slavery our God has not abandoned us"* (Ezra 9:9a)



MOURNING TO JOY

We have God's blessings to be with people that impact our lives. We have positive, as well as other experiences that influence our outlook in life. I was blessed to have that time with such a person.

People often talk about other persons with superlative adjectives, while others describe their experiences, in mostly negative tones. In both cases, it makes one wonder, "Can somebody really be that perfect or that bad?" As for me, I'll keep this real.

My mom was a very complex person. I would probably end up writing a book, if I had to relate the many high & low points in her life. She knew how to make lemonade out of lemons.

She had humble beginnings. In her elementary years, she had to cross a river with her siblings to go to school and cross that same river at the end of the day to go back home. It was a constant struggle, but she had the tenacity for achievements. She was the only one out of eight siblings that graduated with a college degree.

Her strong will, was a trait that I got from her which shaped the relationship we had. In our last discussion, about forgiveness, she said that it's impossible to forgive as how Jesus wants us to, because of memories of past hurts. Just as with previous discussions though, we engaged in interesting exchanges of ideas. Similarly to those other times, things heated up as we tried to convince each other that the other was wrong; but after much discussion, she eventually got it - that one can forgive and forget with Christ's miracle thru prayer.

This is just a short scenario of our mother daughter relationship. It was never boring. Yet, despite our heavy discussions, I know and feel that there was always love between us, for every time we needed to bounce off a decision on someone, we choose each other to discuss it with.

Ultimately, what my mom and I had was a deep respect and love, not just because she was my mother or I'm her daughter but because we shared a strong friendship. So when she passed away eight months ago, I didn't just lose a mother, I lost my best friend.

My mom was a self-taught musician, and a singer and dancer too. With her talents, God must be smiling, for she is now finally free to do what she loves to do, in His presence. So every time I think of missing her, my mourning turns to joy!

Archbishop Lagdameo delivers... *(from page 2)*
 the Archbishop first gave thanks to BLD Newark for its assistance to calamity victims in the Philippines. His words then focused on the constant call to discipleship - how it is personal, irrevocable and gratuitous. That it's for the service of God's people, and often involves a difficult mission, later made easy by a focus on who it is undertaken for.

Among the more memorable moments was when he loudly proclaimed that "it's okay to be not okay". Although human tendency is to present the façade of always being okay, he explained that at times, honesty and the resulting impetus from the need for help and change, present opportunities for God to be there.

The Archbishop's visit concluded Wednesday evening, Sept 23, with a Mass and fellowship, also at Divine Mercy Parish. Taking advantage of the opportunity, during the homily he addressed another teaching to BLD, this time, talking about "Marian Discipleship." Using the platform of the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, he touched on the significant events in the Gospels involving Mary, from the infancy narratives in Luke to Jesus's instruction to the beloved disciple in John, to "behold your mother." In talking about Mary, the Archbishop was then able to add meaning and depth to discipleship.

Although seemingly, ever so brief, the Archbishop's visit shed much light on significant issues faced by our Community. But he also presented BLD with the challenge to expand where it does not yet have a foothold, specifically mentioning Africa. Our work of being obedient true disciples, evangelizing and spreading the Good News now continues.

Papa

He has been called Papa Francesco; so, in honor of Pope Francis, here goes...

In today's world
 Where it seems that
 If we're not doing this thing
 Then we should be doing that other thing

Where it seems that
 We must always be busy
 Here is one thing to remember
 PAPA - Pause And Pray Always

When you find yourself
 Caught up in the rush
 Trying to do
 So much of everything

We actually accomplish more
 If at times we do this
 PAPA - Pause and Pray Amen!

In this day and age
 Despite GPS, computers and cellphones
 It's still so easy to get lost
 When we abandon that single most important connection

Continued ==>>>

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,136	\$105,834
Mission Collections	\$88	\$7,119
Mass w/Archbishop Lagdameo (9/20 & 9/23)	\$3,659	\$3,659

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

John 6 Crossing #16

(for children 12-14 years old)

October 9-11, 2015

Contact Persons: Tony/Marlene Brillantes:

brillantes@optonline.net / (732)491-6973 / (732)491-6974

**Upcoming DLC
 Meeting and
 Pastoral Hour**

**Monday, November 23
 7:30 pm**

Singles Encounter #35

November 6-8, 2015

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos - 908-208-2191

Lito/Elaine Fernando- 908-548-3640 / 908-294-1757

Marriage Encounter #46

November 13-15, 2015

Contact Persons: Fil/Hum Flores (ME 45 Class Shepherds)

201-841-5472 / 201-390-6043

Efren/Yollie Cruz (MLA)

201-562-5071/201-988-7625



Disciples' Assembly

Saturday, 1- 5 pm

October 24, 2015

Date	Apostolate
Oct 9	Evangelization
Oct 16	Formation
Oct 23	Management
Oct 30	Mission



All of the technology we now have

None of it can replace

The True Source and the Basis

Of every moment we are given

Life is simply too short

To forgo its true treasures

But every day, we can receive

Life's Truest Treasure of all

For He is there each time we do this

PAPA - Pause And Pray Always!

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 39

Bulletin Edition

October 2, 2015

NEWS

The Shadow of Peter Fell on America Last Week

"In Pope Francis, the Bishop of Rome, Peter is still among us"

Rome, September 29, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Father Thomas Rosica

As a student, teacher and university lecturer in New Testament, I have always been moved by a story told in the Acts of the Apostles 5:15 where we read that the image of the shadow of Peter passing over the sick and disabled who had gathered in Solomon's portico of Jerusalem's Temple were healed. The passage speaks of the Spirit-filled apostles who were doing many signs and wonders among the people, in a section of the Temple in Jerusalem called Solomon's Portico. The leader in this exciting work was none other than Peter, once so afraid that he even denied knowing Christ. But now, people "carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, so that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them."

In reality, it was not Peter's shadow but God's power working through Peter. We also learn from that New Testament Acts story that religious authorities witnessing Jesus' power at work in Peter became jealous of that power and authority and viewed the Apostles as a continued threat and demanded respect for themselves. We know that the Apostles weren't demanding respect for themselves. Their goal was to bring respect and reverence to God. The Apostles had acquired the respect of the people, not because they demanded it, but because they deserved it.

An ancient Latin expression, first used by St. Ambrose in the fourth century, came to my mind over the last two weeks, as I had the privilege of commentating on Francis' historic papal visit to Cuba and the USA: *Ubi Petrus ibi ecclesia*, which translated means: Wherever Peter is, there is the Church. Peter was in Cuba and the United States over the past two weeks, and his gentle smile and obvious humanity and serenity ignited two nations that had previously been at enmity with one another. Peter (a.k.a. Francis) ignited a roaring blaze and filled the Cuban Church, the American Church and the universal Church with hope in the midst of cynicism, despair and many who would like to hasten death for a Church that is alive and young. ...*Continued on page 2*

COUNSELS

Bearing the Nature and Character of a Child

THEME: We bear the nature and character of a child when we are one of heart and forebear with one another.

READINGS : Gn 2:18-24 / Ps 128:1-2,3,4-5,6 /
Heb 2:9-11 / Mk 10:2-16

WORD: True disciples of Jesus bear the nature and character of a child.

REFLECTION:

Selflessness, mutual understanding, complete gift of self. These are qualities demanded of a good marriage; qualities that, founded on love, must be allowed to grow despite our human shortcomings. Marriage is not a competition between husband and wife, but a commitment requiring cooperation, collaboration, and caring presence. Built on love and demonstrated through words and deeds, marriage is a complementary relationship between a man and a woman, ordained by God to live life together in harmony - "*and the two shall be come one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh*" (Mk 10:8). This is the original plan of God which in our weakness, we frustrate when we turn marriage into a competition.

Jesus reiterates the sacredness and indissolubility of marriage, as He explains what is ideal. He sees marriage not only as a bond between man and woman, but also as a bond between the married couple and God. With God at the center, marriages should conform to His original intent of a lifelong commitment. We will never go wrong if we remain faithful to God's intention. Marriage and the family will always be relentlessly challenged by destructive forces that try to derail God's plan. *Continued on page 2*

Promise of the Week

"Blessed are all who fear the Lord, and who walk in his ways." (Ps 128:1)

NEWS *(continued from page 1)*

Only time, reflection, prayer and decisive action will reveal whether Francis' tour de force will bear fruit for Cuba, America and the world.

One thing is certain in my mind: the shadow of Peter fell on millions of people in Cuba and America in September 2015 and continues to fall on millions around the world to this day, especially upon those who are wounded and hurting from poverty, injustice, homelessness, hunger, religious persecution and the evil actions of sexual abuse of children. In Pope Francis, the Bishop of Rome, Peter is still among us.

Pope Francis' first trip to the United States had many people concerned about the impact this elderly, Argentine pontiff would have on a rather beleaguered church in a very divided land: divided by political, social and religious, tribal lines. Many asked if Francis would be able to "connect" with people given that he had never set foot on American soil. After all, Francis arrived in America at age 78 while John Paul was a mere 59 when he visited for the first time in 1979. Francis did more than connect. He bonded. He moved multitudes. He showed remarkable courage, wisdom and compassion, humanity and normalcy. He proved that he knew much more about us than we know about ourselves. He invited America once again to embrace a consistent ethic of life, from womb to tomb, and he asked us to rethink our stance on the death penalty and the silent death penalty of life imprisonment without any chance of rehabilitation or a new beginning.

Up until last week many people both within and outside the church in North America simply didn't know Jorge Mario Bergoglio, and some didn't want to know him. Some knew him through the distorted images of so called "magisterially faithful," traditional, blogs and websites that do nothing but selectively choose and distort his words without reading his texts in depth. Others had him all figured him out through the impoverished North American lenses of political categories which do nothing but pigeonhole people and silence them. They knew only half truths about a man wrongly labeled as a "leftist," "socialist," "revolutionary," "non-intellectual," "country pastor," etc. etc. etc.

Then the Pope came to America.

The visit included a royal White House welcome, a magnificent, historic address to a special session of the United States Congress, the opening address to the General Assembly of the United Nations and many more stops along the way. There was the profound, heart-wrenching visit to Ground Zero in New York City where the sound of the flowing cascades of water in the striking memorial to September 11 was only rivaled by rivers of tears flowing from the eyes of millions of people who watched that ceremony.

With the backdrop of Independence Hall, the Argentine Pope who knew first-hand about dirty wars, injustice and religious persecution reminded us of our own story of freedom and called us to work hard ... *Continued on page 3*

COUNSELS *(continued from page 1)*

Under the violence of attacks, the Christian family should always be mindful of the grace of the sacrament that binds them together. We are called to live in harmony, to be of one heart and to encourage one another. Despite our shortcomings and weaknesses, let us strive to maintain a good relationship through mutual respect, understanding, and faithfulness.

Children are always presented as examples of the "little ones". Why children? Because they are powerless and vulnerable, they are able to trust and depend totally on others for their well-being and guidance. Jesus sees children as having unique qualities that can teach deep lessons to the rest of us, especially in how we relate to those we dislike and would rather reject. Jesus shows children reverence. He lays hands on them and blesses them - "***Then He embraced them and blessed them laying His hands on them,***" (Mk 10:16). It is the childlike humility and obedience of these "little ones" that we are asked to emulate in our Theme for this week - "**We bear the nature and character of a child when we are one of heart and forbear with one another.**"

Prayer

Almighty God who ordained marriage to be a source of blessing, grant that with your fatherly love and care, our relationships may grow deeper, stronger, and more supportive of one another as time goes by. Fill our hearts with child-like love, trust and mutual respect, secure in your promise that life is a blessing, as we wait for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ, the King. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. How do we live our life in fidelity to one another and, more importantly, to God?
2. What do you think Jesus wants us to do for our loved ones?



for religious liberty in our own land and in every land. When he had the pilot fly low over the Statue of Liberty in New York's harbor, we can only imagine what was going through his mind. Emma Lazarus' words engraved at the foot of the statue: "Give me your tired your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free..." resounded in Francis' own plea to the American people and the American Church as he invited us to open again our hearts and homes to so many displaced persons wandering across the face of the earth.

There were parades, cheers, throngs of people, masses, prayers and praise rightly heaped upon women religious of the United States of America. The media did not miss the deep significance of the Holy Father's private, moving meeting with victims of sex abuse at St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia, a city and a Church that bear the scars of the abuse scandal and long for healing and reconciliation. Francis reminded us that love is always having to say we are deeply sorry for what happened. He let people know he listened and understood and he will continue to act so such a disaster would never repeat itself. Justice will be done.

The grandfatherly Pope delivered one of the best, unscripted teachings on marriage and family life before over a million people on Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia while millions more watched on television. His talk at the World Meeting of Families evoked deeply in my mind and heart the words of his saintly predecessor John Paul II: "The future of humanity passes through the family."

The New Testament's Acts of the Apostles tells us "that they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on any one of them." Francis reached out as a gentle, grandfatherly shepherd and blessed disabled, suffering, homeless, hungry and incarcerated people along the way while their loved ones, caregivers and guards wept nearby.

Pope Francis came to America – to Washington, New York and Philadelphia – last week to bring healing, hope and mercy. Only time, reflection and prayer will reveal if the healing of Americans and especially of U.S. Catholics begun last week, will bear fruit for the church in America.

One thing is certain: last week the shadow of Peter fell on millions of people in America and far beyond. And one more thing happened last week: Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the son of immigrants, came into his own. Though elected and installed as Pope nearly three years ago, his Papacy really began in the minds and hearts of North Americans last week when "Peter was among us." We have all been touched by his shadow. And many of us, including this writer and priest, have been healed.

He's Got The Whole World In His Hands

To paraphrase an ancient Christian proverb: "What we sing, we believe; what we believe, we sing." As children many of us sang (or taught our children to sing), "For the Bible tells me so." Another children's favorite's refrain goes, "He's got the whole world in His hands." When we sing lines such as those, we often think of the love of Christ: how He carefully watches over all things, especially, Christians.

But that innocent little line from that children's song can also teach us about the vision Daniel received from the Lord while Belshazzar ruled in Babylon. That's because "He's got the whole world in His hands," sounds like a summary of the brief portion in Daniel 7 where the LORD invites Daniel, even forces him, to look at a king, a king unlike any other.

Daniel saw kings and empires rising and falling. He even saw the rise and fall of the church's greatest enemy, the Antichrist, here described as a little horn coming out of the Roman Empire. Kings come and kings go. Then Daniel sees the LORD elect another king. He sees someone looking like "a son of man" come before the Ancient of Days "And He gave Him authority." The Father appoints and elects this "son of man" to be a king. A king over everything. A king forever.

If you listened to Daniel closely, the Ancient of Days elects this king. He gives Him all power, authority, and glory over all people. He declares His kingdom to be indestructible and everlasting.

As our faith fixes its eyes on Christ, we discover that God elected the right Man for the job. Unlike almost every other son of man in history, this Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, to give His life as the ransom for many. Having authority over His own life, He laid it down, only to take it up again. He condemned the enemies of the Church. He opened heaven for all believers. And therein is the supreme irony: the Ancient of Days appointed the Son of Man to be an eternal, everlasting king. And yet that King, Christ the King, makes Christians in His kingdom, His kings. He shares His power with us. Jesus testifies to this truth: His kingdom is our kingdom.

The kingdom comes as the Word creates and strengthens faith in our hearts. The kingdom comes within us as we are baptized into it, as we receive the seals of that kingdom in Christ's body and blood. And soon this kingdom will come in glory to replace this earthly kingdom. The Father gave His Son everything He needs to rule and reign in our hearts and lives. And that Son of Man uses His power wisely as He brings us into His kingdom. Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: He does have the whole world in His hands.

Amen.

FEAST OF THE ARCHANGELS

On September 29 we celebrate the feast day of God's most important messengers and guardians, the archangels. The feast of the three archangels venerates Archangel Michael, Archangel Gabriel, and Archangel Raphael.

The name of Archangel Michael means "who is like God" in Hebrew. He is often depicted as a strong warrior dressed in armor with a mighty sword and large, powerful wings. His name appears four times in the Bible, twice in the Book of Daniel, once in the Epistle of St. Jude, and once in the Book of Revelation. His most notable feat was when he led heaven's army of angels against Satan and his vindictive minions as mentioned in the Book of Revelations. St. Michael's will is immovable, steadfast, and utterly driven toward accomplishing goodness. St. Michael is the protector of souls, and so we invoke him to aid us in our battle against Satan; to save souls, especially at the hour of death; to be the champion of heaven and all of God's faithful followers; and to bring souls to judgment. St. Michael shows to us a model of unwavering dedication, focus, fearlessness, and trust in God's matchless goodness and power.

The name of Archangel Gabriel means "God is my strength". He is often depicted as a humble yet majestic man dressed in robes with a scepter topped with a lily and large, powerful wings. His name appears three times in the Bible as a messenger from God. He had been sent to Daniel to explain a vision concerning the Messiah and he appeared to Zechariah when he was offering incense in the Temple, to foretell the birth of his son, St. John the Baptist. His greatest act as God's messenger was the Annunciation, a pivotal moment in humankind's history: the Savior was, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to be conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The angel's greeting to our Lady, so full of meaning in its simplicity, *Hail Mary, full of grace*, has become the constant and familiar prayer to all of God's faithful followers. The Archangel who draws his strength from God said unto us the message of strength in which we draw our hope: God Incarnate was soon to give up His divinity for the love of man.

The Name of Archangel Raphael means "God has healed" in Hebrew. He is often depicted as a young man with large, powerful wings dressed in robes with a staff and gourd. He appears in the Book of Tobit as a regular man helping Tobiah, Son of Tobit, retrieve

money from the town of Media. During the journey, Tobiah is attacked by a fish in the Tigris River while he bathes. Raphael tells him to keep the fish's gall, heart, and liver because they can be used for medicine. In Media, Raphael urges Tobiah to marry a woman named Sarah who had lost seven husbands, each killed on his wedding night by a demon named Asmodeus. Tobiah marries Sarah and uses the fish's heart and liver to drive Asmodeus from the bridal chamber. Tobiah returns to Nineveh with his wife and his father's money, and cures his father of his blindness. Raphael reveals his true identity afterward to Tobit and Tobiah, and tells them to never be blind to their faith. We are to always exalt God's name and never be slack in praising Him.

Prayer to St. Gabriel

O Blessed Archangel Gabriel, we beseech thee, do thou intercede for us at the throne of divine Mercy in our present necessities, that as thou didst announce to Mary the mystery of the Incarnation, so through thy prayers and patronage in heaven we may obtain the benefits of the same, and sing the praise of God forever in the land of the living. Amen.

Prayer to St. Michael

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Divine Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who roam throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls.





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 40

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NEWS

59 lambs receive God's GRACE

"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" (Acts 2:3-4a)

Like the 44 Life-in-the-Spirit Seminars that came before it, BLD's LSS 45 proved to be a most grace-filled event. Fifty-nine candidates, their shepherds, and the LSS team surmounted the challenges of venue uncertainty, the rain and the cold; and in return, our Lord sent two priests to be the weekend's co-spiritual directors, as Father Paul Lehman and Msgr. Paul Schetelick took turns expounding the various topics of the seminar.

As the baptism in the Holy Spirit once again concluded in triumph, Grace was truly and abundantly present. Earlier in the day, Msgr Paul had explained what the letters in G.R.A.C.E. stand for: **Grace Revealed As Christ Empowers**.



God poured His mercy and love upon the lambs. Forgiveness was offered and accepted! Love was felt and shared! Healing was received and celebrated!



Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

THE PRIVILEGED POSSESSION OF WEALTH

THEME: We bear the nature and character of a child when we are detached from worldly possessions.

WORD: Wis 7:7-11/Ps 90:12-13,14-15,16-17
Heb 4:12-13/Mk 10:17-30

ORDER: "Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor...then come, follow me."(Mk 10:21b)

REFLECTION:

On this 28th Sunday in Ordinary time, the Gospel reading reminds us about the consequence of privileged possession of wealth. It is the focus of Jesus' message concerning the proper attitude for entrance into the kingdom of God and eternal life.

"Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mk 10:17b) This was the question asked by a rich young man, when he had no understanding of what the word "good" signified in Jesus' servanthood. Jesus answered him, *"Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone"* (Mk 10:18). Jesus refused to accept the term "good" for himself and directed it to God. He did not give an immediate answer to the question about inheriting eternal life; instead, He focused on the young man's use of the word "good." Jesus pointed the young man toward God, the source of all goodness which is the "one thing" at the center of all. "Jesus said to him, *"You are lacking in one thing"* (Mk 10:21a).

This young man was materially blessed, obedient to the commandments, and as per his claim, righteous.

...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"There is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age." (Mk 10:29-30a)

NO RE-ENTRY

“When an unclean spirit goes out of someone, it roams through arid regions searching for rest but, finding none, it says, ‘I shall return to my home from which I came.’ But upon returning, it finds it swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and brings back seven other spirits more wicked than itself who move in and dwell there, and the last condition of that person is worse than the first.” (Lk 11:24-26)

Yes, it may want to come back to re-occupy!

Let’s look at the example of the drug addict who went to rehab and now feels good: He goes to a party. After a drink, before he knows it, he is accepting an offer of drugs and tries it again. The wall crumbles! As we can see, he needs something which will keep him away from the party, the drink, the drug, the path to depression, and ultimately, death.

Brothers and sisters, when we have encountered forgiveness, when we are reconciled with God through our Divine Brother Jesus Christ who paid the price on the Cross for us, we cannot stay empty, “swept clean and put in order.” We have to fill ourselves with daily reading of His Word, the Scriptures, the Good News to grow in holiness and become like Christ.

He left us the Holy Spirit, the Helper, the Advocate to enlighten and guide us. He also left us the assistance of the sacraments. For example, the sacrament of Reconciliation is available when we stumble. The Eucharist nourishes our body and our soul. The more often we receive it, the more we are transformed into the image of Christ. When we have Jesus in us, we become like the strong man who is **“fully armed”** and **“guards his palace”** so that **“his possessions are safe”** (Lk 11:21).

We must understand that the individual is not an island. We need to be part of the Church: the community of the faithful where we encounter Christ in the service of others, in sharing, in giving of ourselves. We find the Lord in soup kitchens, food pantries, nursing homes, prisons, wherever there are those in need.

Christ will fill us and guarantee **no re-entry** of what is not of Him. He provided the environment, the Church, the assembly of the faithful for worship and fellowship and service. He leaves no emptiness, as in the case of the drug addict, but gives self-empowerment to enjoy a life of service, ensuring a rise to holiness, which opens, with the grace of God, the door to eternal life.

From a Member of the Youth Ministry:

THE HOLY ROSARY

... and Its “Fifteen Promises”

The Holy Rosary is a wonderful way of communicating with the Lord. It helps us pray to Mother Mary; and through it, we ask her to tell Jesus our prayers. She will always listen to our prayers for help, and she will pass them on to the Lord.



Mother Mary was the one that gave us the Rosary. There are many promises, benefits, and blessings that come with praying the Holy Rosary. Those that recite the Holy Rosary will receive powerful graces. There are also promised special

protection for reciting the Holy Rosary.

The Rosary is a powerful armor against hell. It destroys vice, decreases sin, and defeats heresies. It will cause virtue and good works to flourish as well as take souls away from earthly desires and lift them to the desire for eternal things. The soul that gives itself to the Lord by reciting the Rosary shall not perish. Those who recite the Rosary devoutly by applying themselves to the Sacred Mysteries will not be conquered by misfortune. They will not be chastised in His justice or perish by an unprovided death. If they are just, they shall remain in the grace of God, and become worthy of eternal life. If you have a true devotion to the Rosary, you shall not die without the Sacraments of the Church.

Those who are faithful to recite the Holy Rosary shall have the light of God and the plentitude of His graces during their life and at their death. At their moment of death they shall participate in the merits of the Saints in Paradise. The children faithful to the Holy Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in Heaven. Those that propagate the Holy Rosary shall be aided in their necessities. Those who recite the Holy Rosary are the Lord’s children and siblings of Jesus Christ.

“There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the Holy Rosary” (Sister Lucia dos Santos). Through the words of Sister Lucia and by the power of our Almighty God, let us pray the Holy Rosary with a renewed sense of understanding.

PRIORITIES

In Jonah Chapter 4, we find that the prophet Jonah is greatly displeased. Jonah preaches to the city of Nineveh that the city will be overthrown by God, unless the Ninevites do something to repent of their evil ways. Back then, Nineveh was considered to be an enemy of Israel. It's only natural for Jonah to want the city of Nineveh destroyed. He wants his enemies to live in despair, while he enjoys a better life. In the end however, God chooses for him to go down a different path. This displeases Jonah, and he cries out to God. He is angry because what was promised to him was not carried out. Jonah longs to see the city overthrown, but when God relents, Jonah is disheartened. He would rather die than to go on living. In this story, Jonah prioritizes his own personal desires over the plans of God.

Throughout our lives, we experience many trials, storms or obstacles. Sometimes, failures and burdens can affect us so much that we don't want to go on anymore. Many times, I find myself in circumstances of seeming failure, even when I do my best to live every day, as God would want me to. There was a time in my life where I worked very hard to achieve a leadership position. Like how Jonah worked so hard to preach to Nineveh to change their ways, I too worked hard to achieve this "momentous title." I lived every day giving 100%, doing my best to show my capabilities. I thought that through hard work, my efforts would pay off. I prayed to God constantly for Him to hear my pleas. Not too long after, I heard the tragic news. The position I worked so hard for, the title that I spent so much time attempting to receive, was not given to me. I became angry, angry to the point of where I too, like Jonah, thought it would be better to perish than to live. I felt the world around me crumbled, and everything that I hoped and dreamed for was taken away.

In the story, Jonah became very discontent with the way things had worked out. God gave him a plant to comfort him, but just as quickly, God retracted His gift. Jonah became so attached to this plant, this materialistic thing that he lost sight of what God really wanted him to do: put the needs of others and God before his. Jonah failed to trust in God's plan, and became angry because things didn't work out the way he wanted them to.

I find myself in similar situations time and time again. Many times, I fail to trust in God's plan. I put my needs and my wants before the needs of God and others. When the acclaimed position that I had tried so hard for didn't become a reality for me, I was heartbroken. Instead of trusting in God's plan, I became angry and disgruntled, especially at God.

It is never our place to question God's plan or authority over our lives. Over time, I learned that God does certain things to us for a reason. God made Jonah go through the feeling of pain, in order to teach him about humility and compassion. God allows us to go through trials so that we could learn something from the experience. God can only provide us with the tools we need to grow, and it's up to us to rise to the challenge, or fall short of our full potential.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

St. Paul, reminds us in Hebrews 4:13, "***No creature is concealed from him, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.***" God knows all our weaknesses and sins, yet His great love for us endures. "***Jesus, looking at him, loved him***" (Mk 10:21a).

This verse characterizes God's fathomless love. As we move into spiritual maturity, it is Jesus' gaze of love that enables us to abandon everything and unleashes love in us. This love cannot be earned with actions but is a sheer gift of the *good* God, who embodies the *one thing* that surpasses all else and can only be attained if one is willing to let go of everything.

In Mark 10:21b, Jesus orders the rich young man, "***Go, sell what you have, and give it to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.***" Jesus does not denounce wealth as evil. Rather, it is the *attachment* to wealth that is spiritually perilous. "***No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon***" (Mt 6:24). We are called to follow Jesus which requires that we detach ourselves from everything that could prevent us from serving Jesus and our neighbor. "***How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!***" (Mk 10:23b) Despite our constant exposure to the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ, especially in our community, to some degree, we still cling to our possessions and obsessions. This could mean money, career, talents, or social standing, anything that might deter us from making God our first priority.

"***Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven***" (Mt 18:3). Jesus wants us to possess the trust, obedience, sincerity, and faith of little children to their parents. To encounter God, we should have the heart of a child that is spontaneously open, simply dares to ask and believe, and wants to be loved.

Jesus heavily emphasizes absolute belief in Him and in the Gospel. It is the condition He sets for entering the kingdom of God and inheriting real riches in both this life and the life to come. He warns us against the spiritual complacency that can result from *material wealth*. Those of us whose earthly needs and desires are well satisfied all too easily can become self-reliant, self-indulgent, and arrogant, avoiding the complete surrender to God. The great temptation is to trust in one's status, wealth, and abilities as a substitute for trust in God alone.

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

Only by offering everything to Jesus, even one's earthly family, and participating in Christ's suffering ministry can one possess God's kingdom.

The first reading describes how young King Solomon prayed to God for wisdom. In the Old Covenant, which lacked the *example* of Jesus, there was no real sense for the true value of *poverty in the Spirit* and *renouncing everything*. However, because his request (wisdom) is the right one, God granted him countless riches (1 Kgs 3:13). And it was precisely this wealth that seduced Solomon into foolishness in his old age. As it says in the Responsorial Psalm, "*Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart...Let your work be seen by your servants and your glory by their children*" (from Ps 90:12,16). Only the *example of Jesus* can make it clear to men, that the God of all riches has no wealth, other than His love, a love that can even become *poor* for our sake.

DIRECTIONS:

- Give generously to the poor and to those in need.
- Share your God-given talents willingly without counting the cost.
- Reach out to others and be vigilant in the teaching of the Word of God.

NEWS

(from page 1)

What an AWESOME GOD we have! The added dimension of hearing from both Fr. Paul and the Monsignor truly empowered everyone there, especially these graduates of LSS 45:

ME: Richard & Rosalyn Argonza, Jean & Marie Bart, Greco & Jaymee Cabunag, Cristina Galarza-Canarte, Nestor & Rosalie Clarin, Rene & Ludy De Gracia, Antonio & Fe Escoto, Rossini Armin & Marilyn Frio, Paul & Pinky Martinez, Vincent & Paule McKenzie, York & Denise Miguel, Martin & Osato Ohiro, Reynaldo & Elma Pineda, Arnel & Maribel Torres, and Pros & Minda Villarica

SPE: Martin Barotilla, Jennifer Dimen, Mannie Espejon, Lourdes Felarca, Violeta Lee, Carmen Lopez, Eva Lorica, Ana Luna, Cecilia Monje, Evelyn Nuguid, Tony Ryan, Erika Scibetta, Angela Vales, Nice Fora Ybanez, and Ruthy Zabala

SE: Renato Andoy, Jaime Buhain, Angela Crisafulli, Abby Fabe, Glendyll Fabe, Michelle Felarca, Erika Flores, Jezreel Gaudiel, Alyna Pineda, and Stephany Urzua

St. Antoninus: Guy Serge Ballo, Annunciato David Steven Hines, Victor Lys-Herna, and Eileen Nze

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,517	\$108,351
Mission Collections	\$39	\$7,158

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Upcoming DLC
Meetings and
Pastoral Hour**

**Monday, November 23
7:30 pm**

Singles Encounter #35

November 6-8, 2015

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos - 908-208-2191

Lito/Elaine Fernando- 908-548-3640/ 908-294-1757

Marriage Encounter #46

November 13-15, 2015

Hotel Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ

Contact Persons:

Fil/Hum Flores (ME 45 Class Shepherds):

Fdf25@optonline.net / 201-841-5472 / 201-390-6013

Efren/Yollie Cruz (MLA Coordinators):

mla@bldnewark.com / 201-562-5071 / 201-988-7625



Disciples' Assembly

Saturday, 1- 5 pm

October 24, 2015

**LSS 45
Reunion**

Sunday, October 18th

2 pm – 6 pm

DMP Library, Rahway NJ

TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2015

Starts at 1 PM

**DMP First Floor School Classrooms
Rahway, New Jersey**

Sienna Gift Inventory - LSS 1-45

Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-43

Advanced Intercession - LSS 1-40

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Oct 16	Formation
			Oct 23	Management
			Oct 30	Mission
Nov 6	Pastoral			

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

COUNSELS

John 6 rocks at Crossings #16

On October 9 through October 11, twenty-two John 6 Crossings candidates spent the weekend becoming closer to God and learning more about their religion and what it means to be a child of God.

The candidates were awkward around each other at the beginning of the retreat, as expected, but throughout the weekend they warmed up to each other by forming groups with one another and playing games together, making skits and names for themselves, and by listening as others shared about their experiences, overcoming hard times through the power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They heard teachings on forgiveness and why no one should hide from God because He will always find you, look after you, protect and love you. The kids enjoyed singing and dancing to their theme song at mass and during the worships, interacting with their moderators, the people from the under study team along with those in Praise, all the while, growing closer to God and to each other through the power of the Holy Spirit.



A big thanks goes to the moderators and the under study team who made sure that everything ran smoothly; to all of the untiring auxies and those in Praise; and to everyone in the core group for cooking the delicious food that everyone ate over the weekend. A special thank you to JC15 for teaching the candidates the song and dance for their theme song, and doing a fantastic job as the sponsoring class for the candidates; and another big thanks especially to the parents for entrusting us with the safety and wellbeing of their children, the candidates and auxies of JC16.

HOPE AND SUFFERING

THEME: We bear the nature and character of a child when we serve with humility.

WORD: Is 53:10-11 / Ps 33:4-5,18-19,20,22 / Heb 4:14-16 / Mk 10:35-45

ORDER: *“Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all.”*

(Mk 10:43b-44)

REFLECTION:

The promise for this Sunday’s reading is taken from Ps 33:18 – *“The eye of the Lord is upon those who fear him, upon those who count on his mercy.”*

This verse provides us a beautiful image of our heavenly Father, Who gazes upon us with benevolence and mercy. The image of our God loving us unconditionally is like a beacon that draws us and guides us even as we stumble repeatedly in our journey. It provides us the grace to persevere as we resolve to do better, to put our hope in Him and to be fulfilled in Him.

St. Gregory in his sermon on God’s generosity said: God has given abundantly to all, the basic needs of life... His gifts are not deficient in any way, because He wanted to give equality of blessing to equality of worth, and to show the abundance of His generosity.

We are blessed that we stand together with an awareness of the source of our help, the one true God and King Who is worthy of all our trust. He generously provides for us in our lack, pouring graces from heaven to encourage us and equip us to lead, to learn and grow in Godly character.

...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“The eye of the Lord is upon those who fear him, upon those who count on his mercy.”(Ps 33:18)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Meet Terrence and Michael Parker



One day, at the Missionaries of Charity Soup Kitchen in Newark, I had the privilege of talking to two of the guests who were served a meal that day. I had sought to put a face and a name to what had always been my faceless, nameless notion of the poor and the hungry.

As I recall, no, there was nothing ground shaking in my encounter with these two men. I almost didn't really know what to ask them about for this write-up. But meeting and talking with them, however brief, did put a face where there once was none, and real names for two people who were previously, just someone.

Terrence is a regular at the soup kitchen. He likes it there so much that he even travels by bus from the other side of Newark to get there. No, he is not homeless – he lives in a building, somewhere. He had a wife and has a daughter, but they were no longer close. He said he was looking for a job, but that his main source of income was unemployment. He seemed street savvy – in the 5-10 minutes that I spoke to him, he had gone on the meal line 3 times, each time, putting the dwindling portions they were serving into a concealed plastic container – his food for the rest of the day. He did say that he had a commercial driver's license and that he might get a job the following Thursday. I pray God that He would will it to happen.

Michael Parker seemed like a favorite of the nuns. This was primarily because he helped out a lot as the meals were being served: he'd make sure that everyone was orderly, and he'd man the tray return station, scraping leftovers off of the plates that were then washed and made ready for their next use. Afterwards, he led the few guest/volunteers in the clean-up and scrub down of the entire dining area – tables, chairs and floor. He is there every day that the soup kitchen is open; Thursdays when it's closed, there was another facility close by that he'd go to for his main meal of the day. He said he was just half-homeless, but that there was a small house in the area that he would stay at with four other men. Sometimes, they'd cook dinner in its small kitchen. He said that he was Catholic, that he prayed every day, and attended the daily services at the Catholic church next door. He praises God every day.

Then, that was it. I couldn't really think of what else to ask them. But you know, now, even if just by a little bit, they were no longer faceless... no longer nameless. And yes, God loves them too. And they have friends too. That day, as two of Terrence's friends were about to leave, they said what your honest and concerned friends might say to you too: "(Terrence) you need to lose weight."

Is Faith Enough?

"For God is one and will justify the circumcised on the basis of faith and the uncircumcised through faith" (Rom 3:30)

Now let's take a moment to reflect on one of the more difficult and often misunderstood topics of St. Paul: justification by faith. Countless denominations and individual Christians, including Catholics, wrestle with this. The debatable question arises when James declares that faith without works is dead. This strikes what may seem as a discord, in complete opposition to St. Paul's statement that no man can attain salvation by works of the law but by justification through faith. The contention further amplified when Luther added the word "alone" to this faith (*sola fides*) which struck a deep schism in Christian history.



Let's have a look at what faith is. ***"Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen"*** (Heb 11:1). By faith "man freely commits his entire self to God" (*Dei Verbum*, n.5).

Faith is a theological virtue given to us by God as a gift. The door by which we access this gift is the sacrament of baptism. The Gospel calls us to first repent and then believe (faith) in the Gospel (Mk 1:15).

Faith is absolutely necessary for salvation; no one can merit this by way of works or deeds alone. It is the redemptive cross of Christ that made this a reality. However, it is unmistakably clear in scripture that God also commands us to do the works of love. The very action of this agape love is in the form of service. Our communion, inseparably, has two dimensions: the vertical, God and man, as well as the horizontal, man and community (*Sacramentum Caritas* 76). When one's faith becomes mature it leads to hope and blossoms in the works of charity (love). Charity is the very soul of faith; without it faith dies (St. Anthony of Padua). Without the sacrificial works of love, faith simply becomes muted and downright disastrous. ***"Only in faith working through love"*** (Gal 5:6) allows us to demonstrate our solidarity with God.

So we can be certain that faith alone does not suffice. ***"Even the demons believe that and tremble."*** (James 2:19) Prayer alone, while absolutely doing nothing is being complacent; it is the sin of omission. We become smaller in every way when we fail to care for the poor and the marginalized. Jesus said what we do to the least of our brethren we did it directly to Him. There can only be one natural response to sound faith - the works of love.

Love is the reason for creation, the reason for the cross, and the reason that should drive our daily actions.

JOYS IN THE KEY OF FAITH

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

Life can really go on
Regardless of whether or not
One has faith



Each day the sun
Will still rise and set
Every few seconds
We all will still need
To breathe in and breathe out

In our busy-ness
It seems tempting
To just forgo faith
But although it would seem
To free up time to get more done
What's lost are
The Joys in the Key of Faith

When you believe
Days just seem brighter
When you believe
Life might not be easier
But burdens become lighter

Life itself becomes richer
Because you'll find
Joys in the Key of Faith

When you truly believe
You find yourself appreciating
What you have
Instead of longing
For the fame and fortune
That others seem to possess

When you believe
You talk to God
When you believe
He talks right back
Then you'll hear and find Him
In everything around you

Loving friends and family
Helping strangers and those in need
Those too, will then bring
Even greater Joys in the Key of Faith

When you believe in Christ
That's actually, the best of all
For Jesus Himself
Will live inside of you
Placing a permanent smile
Where it's most needed
There, inside your heart

Believe in Him
The Ultimate Joy in the Key of Faith.

Among these gifts is Fear of the Lord. It is a sanctifying gift that enables us to be used for God's creative purpose. For believers, fear is a deep reverence and awe of the God of the Universe, the Creator, and Lord. This puts in us an abiding desire to obey Him, to submit to His discipline, and most of all to worship Him in awe.

St. Paul repeatedly speaks about hope and suffering. "*Affliction,*" he says, "*produces endurance, and endurance proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, that has been given to us*" (Romans 5:3-5).

As an analogy to the human body, suffering and hope is like the spinal cord and spinal column of the spirit. It is what keeps us upright, and forms the central structure of our humanity. As Jesus says, if we are to be His disciples, we are to take up our crosses and follow Him. To be a Christian, therefore, is to suffer. Christ knew that because of our sin, our lives will become very complicated. We will experience and undergo extreme suffering because of the evils man can perpetuate against each other. The stories reported in the news are becoming more and more evil, as we read about what is going on in society: the harvesting of human body parts from murdered infants, relentless persecution and senseless killings, 26 million records of individuals involved in extramarital affairs including well known Christians.

Only Christ can bring meaning to our sufferings when we embrace rather than flee from suffering. Only Christ can redeem us from all our iniquities.

Christ took on the mantle of suffering and calls us to do the same, to share in the work of our salvation and to bear with Him the suffering that brings salvation to others. We are "*heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him*" (Romans 8:17).

This is the reality of Christ's reign that His disciples did not grasp until after Jesus's resurrection. In the short time that they were with Him, Jesus was like a rising star. In less than 3 years, He was seemingly transformed from an unknown local carpenter to a highly popular preacher. He was performing amazing miracles and crowds were following him in great number. James and John sought to position themselves in the promised kingdom that He would establish.

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

It is also a reality that we very quickly fall into behavior when we seek places of honor, positions of authority and leadership. Just like James and John; it is a temptation that is difficult to resist. Every one of us, from the youngest to the oldest members of community seeks or desires recognition and appreciation at one time or another. Opportunities that should bring us to our knees in prayer or thanksgiving instead become sources of pride.

Lord God, you have given us the story of James and John to give us a realization of how different Your Kingdom is from our expectations. Give us the gift to suffer with grace and to always focus our hope on You.

“Our soul waits for the LORD, he is our help and shield. May your mercy, LORD, be upon us; as we put our hope in you.” (Ps 33:20,22)

DIRECTIONS:

- **Serve with humility; embrace suffering and rejoice in your affliction**

NEWS

(from page 1)

Congratulations to Mick Estiler and Jewel Lamp for being JC16's shepherds, to Mary Kate Morales and Sam Ilagan for being the co-shepherds, and to Cely Ocaya and Arnold Ocaya for being the adult class shepherds for this JC16. However, the biggest congratulations go to all the members of JC16:



Ryan Martinez, Reese Brillantes, Sophia Ilagan, Rica Lopez, Karylle Torres, Emma Wong, Brienna Malamug, April Ocaya, Addison Montemayor, Anastasia Farinas, Chad Cebedo, Geraldine Mendoza, Mary Teresa Argonza, Alyssa Delacruz, Camille Lorico, Gabriel DeLeon, Alexander DeSouza, Glenn Osemeha, Sebastien Pierre, Oyinkansola Akinwuntan, Daniella Avisado, Jade Kozimbo, and Felipe Pais.

Thank you for being amazing and wonderful candidates over the weekend. We hope everyone involved in the JC #16 crossing enjoyed it very much. To God be the Glory forever & ever!

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,063	\$110,414
Mission Collections	\$9	\$7,167

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Upcoming DLC
Meetings and
Pastoral Hour**

**Monday, November 23
7:30 pm**

Singles Encounter #35

November 6-8, 2015

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos - 908-208-2191

Lito/Elaine Fernando- 908-548-3640/ 908-294-1757

Marriage Encounter #46

November 13-15, 2015

Hotel Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ

Contact Persons:

Fil/Hum Flores (ME 45 Class Shepherds):

Fdf25@optonline.net / 201-841-5472 / 201-390-6013

Efren/Yollie Cruz (MLA Coordinators):

mla@bldnewark.com / 201-562-5071 / 201-988-7625



Disciples' Assembly

Saturday, 1- 5 pm

October 24, 2015

**LSS 45
Reunion**

Sunday, October 18th

2 pm – 6 pm

DMP Library, Rahway NJ

TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2015

Starts at 1 PM

DMP First Floor School Classrooms, Rahway, New Jersey

Sienna Gift Inventory - LSS 1-45

Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-43

Advanced Intercession - LSS 1-40

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2015

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

7:30AM – 5PM Divine Mercy Library LSS 1-43

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Oct 23	Management
		Oct 30	Mission
		Nov 6	Pastoral
		Nov 13	Evangelization



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 42

Bulletin Edition

October 23, 2015

NEWS

19 go on 'SOLO' trip with Jesus



The BLD Newark Solo Parents attended the 2nd Interdistrict Conference on Oct. 10, 2015 sponsored by BLD Washington. A total of 19 members signed up and made the trip to Silver Springs, Maryland. Our own DSL, Manny and Arlene Mangalanzo were also present to support us in this spirit filled workshop, as well as our brothers and sisters from BLD Rockland and BLD Camden, who graced us with their presence in this event too.

The conference included two talks given by the event's spiritual directors.

1. The first talk was about our relationship with God. Fr. Andy Gonzalo enlightened us with ways to develop our faith in our Lord. Then we were all divided into groups and shared our reflections with each other.
2. The second talk was about the mercy of God. Fr. Acquaye Emmanuel gave us his insights on doing the works of mercy, especially in our own families. A fitting topic since our beloved Pope Francis has declared an Extraordinary Jubilee with the mercy of God as its main theme. The Jubilee, also called a Holy Year, will open this year on Dec. 8 – the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception – and will close Nov. 20, 2016 with the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

SEEING THROUGH FAITH

THEME: We bear the nature and character of a child when we have the courage to witness to our faith.

WORD: Jer 31:7-9 ~ Ps 126:1-2,2-3,4-5,6
Heb 5:1-6 ~ Mk 10:46-52

ORDER: *“Take courage; get up, he is calling you.”*
(Mk 10:49)

REFLECTION:

From Chapter 3 142-156 of the CCC, we read that God created us in His image, for His purpose. He then gave us free will to respond to His invitation to conversion, and be in His company. God calls us to serve Him in spirit and in truth. Consequently we are bound to Him in conscience, but never coerced. The adequate response to this invitation is called “the obedience of faith.”

By faith, we completely submit our intellect and will to Him, to fully cooperate with His grace. In faith, we submit freely to the Word that we have heard, because its Truth is guaranteed by God, Who is Truth Himself. Through faith, which is our free assent to the whole Truth that our God has revealed, we are assured of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1).

And faith, though a human act, is a gift of supernatural value, infused by God in us. It is not something that we decided to have, or to practice, after suffering or being frustrated by our worldly idols. Before we can exercise this faith, we must have the grace of God to move and assist Him.

...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“With compassion I will guide them; I will lead them to streams of water, on a level road, without stumbling.” (Jer 31:9a)

Slaves of Righteousness

(Romans 6:12-18)

In these verses taken from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans [Christians in Rome], the Lord reveals that human beings by our nature are slaves. We are appalled by the idea of slavery in modern society. The great Civil War in the United States was fought with great loss of lives, to abolish the evil of slavery. St. Paul uses the term "slavery" because it was ever-present in Ancient Rome - in households, in the fields, mines, gladiator arenas, the army and navy, workshops, in construction and in many services within the city. Since Rome was a slave economy, slavery was an accepted reality. One out of every 3 people was a slave. Slavery or "dominium" was widely understood as the complete mastery of one individual over another. A slave has no will of his own but only that of his master's. It was in this context that St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome saying that every human being was under some dominant influence, living for sin or for God under grace.

"Do you not know that if you present yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Rom 6:16). Here the truth about ourselves as human beings is revealed, and that is, as human beings we cannot really escape being a slave or be under the "dominium" of someone else's will or power. But St. Paul also reveals that we have a choice of which master to be a slave to. We can choose to be a slave to sin which leads to death, or a slave of obedience which leads to righteousness (right doing and right standing with God).

The good news according to St. Paul is that we are free to choose because we have been freed from sin by our Lord Jesus Christ. Earlier in Romans, St. Paul taught us that the Gospel is ***"the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: for Jew first, and then Greek"*** (Rom 1:16). Because of His sacrifice on the cross, a new life of freedom was won for us by Jesus Christ. As believers we have obtained it through baptism, that is having "died with" Him and been "buried with" Him; so we have been "raised with" Him and now "live with" Him. (Rom 6:1-11). The Gospel is the "Good News" that all who believe in Jesus are already saved. ***"For sin is not to have any power over you, since you are not under the law but under grace"*** (Rom 6:14). The choice is clear - do not choose to be a slave of Satan. ***"Freed from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness"*** (Rom 6:18). We should choose to follow Jesus, and become His slave. ...Continued on page 3

Our Nation's Song – A GK Update

"Ako'y may kaibigan... at siya'y nahihirapan. Handa na ba kayong lahat, upang siya'y tulungan?"

(I have a friend... and he is suffering. Are you all ready now, to help him?) - from the song "Himig Natin" by the Juan dela Cruz Band



A sixty second video, posted on Youtube by Gawad Kalinga starts out with people from a Philippine village, dropping whatever they were doing, to help carry a mountainous pile of scrap wood and debris away from their barrio. They are doing this, "bayanihan" style, with everyone shouldering some of the heavy weight of the pile on their shoulders. In the background, the haunting tune, "Himig Natin", which, loosely translated means - "Our Nation's Song", accentuates what everyone is doing - they are helping out. Then, the camera zooms out to reveal what exactly they were carrying and what they were going to do with it: the mountainous pile was made up of the makeshift shanty houses that they used to live in and they were collectively, joyfully throwing it all off the side of a cliff.

BLD Newark's association with the Gawad Kalinga movement in the Philippines, which started over 10 years ago, continues to this day. And it has made a BIG difference. Recently, the Regional GK Coordinator, who oversees the Fr. Paul Lehman and UST Med Class 1976 GK villages, sent BLD Newark some updates on the tremendous positive impact that the support from over here has made possible, halfway around the world, over there. Among the many notable things were these highlights:

- * current funding for college tuition for nine deserving students
- * seven graduates now working in various fields – Information Technology, Account Management, Hotel / Restaurant Services, and Education
- * Scholarship of Hope (SOH) assistance to deserving elementary and high school children
- * progress in a livelihood project, with villagers making mats ("banig"), lampshades and bags from water lilies, which are an abundant local resource
- * 2015 completion of a roof re-painting project for all of the houses in the village
- * plans for the village now include construction of a covered multi-purpose court (with budget and funds already earmarked), to be used as a livelihood hall, and also as a venue for teachings, sports activities and Eucharistic celebrations

Understandably, the need for support likewise continues. Of immediate concern is that the funding ...Continued on page 3

“Present yourselves to God as raised from the dead to life and the parts of your bodies to God as weapons for righteousness” (Rom 6:13b). Choosing to be a slave of Jesus can only give us the profoundest dignity a human being can have, because Jesus does not call us slaves. **“I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father”**(Jn 15:15). Through the Holy Spirit, we have received a spirit of adoption and we became children of God, and heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom of God. (Rom 8:16-17)

A GK Update

(from page 2)



for the allowance given to the village’s elementary teacher (\$450 a year from a local bank) just recently ended. Additionally, many more children’s dreams of excelling in their education would be hampered without SOH assistance. The upkeep and improvement of the villages’ structures and facilities must be maintained. Livelihood assistance projects must continue to be spurred and innovated.

The refrain from that song probably best summarizes what we, as a Filipino Christian Global Community, must then have to do: **“Ang himig natin, ang inyong awitin; upang tayo’y mag-sama-sama, sa langit ng pag-asa”** – “Our nation’s song, we should be singing, for us all to be together, in heaven’s hope.”



Recently, a couple from Newark, in partnership with St. John the Baptist Church in Jersey City, sent close to a thousand pairs of Skechers clogs for all the children of GK villages in Nueva Ecija and also to villages in Metro Manila. Inset photo shows some of the grateful recipients.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

We must carry the Holy Spirit in our hearts to stay faithful to God. He will open the eyes of our minds, and make it easy for us to accept and believe the Truth. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6), and to attain fellowship with His Son. Therefore without faith, no one will ever attain justification, nor will anyone obtain eternal life, but those who endure to the end.

And we believe, not just because of our human understanding and intelligence, but because of the authority of God Himself, Who reveals to us, He Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Like Bartimaeus, in Sunday’s Gospel, our spiritual blindness, our spiritual cataracts, prevent us from seeing Jesus, in the fullness of His light and truth; prevent us from finding the way to His love. What is clear and bright appears dull and dark; what really is simple and manageable appears complex and unfeasible; and what is bearable and acceptable, appears intolerable and inadequate.

And what causes our blindness?

- our attachment to worldly things...1 John 5:19 reads, **“We know that we belong to God, and the whole world is under the power of the evil one.”**
- our attachment to our sins...1 John 3:8-9 tells us: **“Whoever sins belongs to the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning... No one who is begotten by God commits sin, because God’s seed remains in him; he cannot sin because he is begotten by God.”**
- our attachment to human intelligence and faculties...1 Cor 3:19a reads, **“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God.”**

Like Bartimaeus, who persisted in trying to get the attention of Jesus, when the crowd was trying to silence him, we must not let the trials and tribulation of this earthly life, keep us from seeking the LORD; we must not let the devil use these adversities to tempt us away from seeking the Kingdom of God.

Like Bartimaeus who, when Jesus called him, abandoned his place of work (as a side-street beggar), and threw away his cloak (his only shelter and protection against cold nights and sandstorms), we must cast aside all our doubts (that lead to spiritual blindness), and surrender our will to His.

Like Bartimaeus, who after being physically and spiritually healed, immediately followed Jesus, Who was on His way to Jerusalem, to His suffering and death, we must also do the same. In Mark 8:34, it says **“He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, ‘Whoever wishes to come** ...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” And in John 12:26 it reads, *“Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be.”*

Even some of the disciples of our LORD Jesus appear to have had some doubts or misunderstandings (which also leads to spiritual blindness). In Mark 10:35-45, he (Mark) clearly tells us that the disciples did not understand what the teaching and call of Jesus was all about. Mark implies that some of those who accompanied our LORD, were blind in spirit - they could not accept a Messiah who would suffer humiliation of His Passion and die a shameful death on the cross. In Luke 24:13-24, a couple of Jesus’ disciples were conversing about their hope in Jesus, being a mighty prophet in deed and word, being the much waited redeemer of Israel, but then sentenced to death, and crucified on the cross. They did not recognize Jesus when He joined them in their discussion. Then Jesus opened their eyes at the breaking of bread at the table.

But Bartimaeus, an “outsider”, understood that to follow Jesus was to follow Him on His way to suffering and death on the cross. In John 12: 24, we read, *“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.”*

Like Bartimaeus, we should understand that in the crucifixion, in dying on the Cross, Jesus brings forth fruit for everybody. He can only be the Messiah, if He falls and dies; and there is no other way. He is calling us to follow Him, *His* Way.

AND NOW THAT OUR SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS IS CURED, LET US GO AND FOLLOW HIM!! Have faith, take courage...He will console and guide us...He will lead us to brooks of water, on a level road....so none of us will stumble.

DIRECTIONS:

- Heed the call of Jesus and carry your cross.
- Persevere in faith, even in times of trial and persecution

NEWS

(from page 1)

We are thankful and grateful for the warm welcome, love and generosity of BLD Washington. Praise the Lord for this opportunity to know Him more and for keeping us close to His Sacred Heart throughout our trip!

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,453	\$113,867
Mission Collections	\$94	\$7,167

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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Meetings and
Pastoral Hour**

**Monday, November 23
7:30 pm**

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November 6-8, 2015

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center

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Marriage Encounter #46

November 13-15, 2015

Hotel Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ

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Efren/Yollie Cruz (MLA Coordinators):

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Disciples' Assembly

Saturday, 1- 5 pm

October 24, 2015

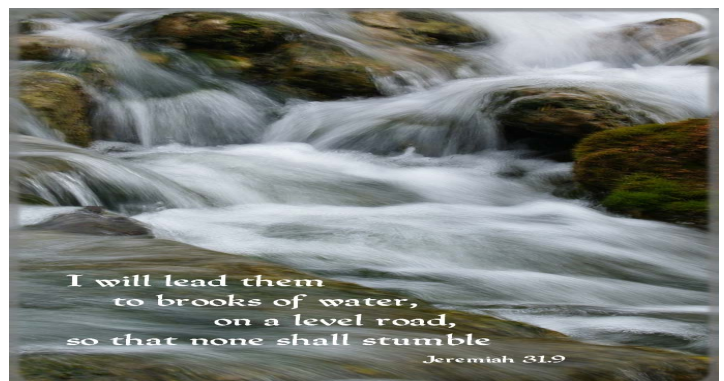
TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2015

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

7:30AM – 5PM Divine Mercy Library LSS 1-43

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Oct 30	Mission
			Nov 6	Pastoral
			Nov 13	Evangelization
Nov 20	Formation			



I will lead them
to brooks of water,
on a level road,
so that none shall stumble

Jeremiah 31:9



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 43

Bulletin Edition

October 30, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Many attend Disciples' Assembly



During Saturday, October 24, the community held its first Disciples' Assembly of 2015. A large number of disciples, representing every segment of the community, came out to learn more about, and to provide input on, some of BLD Newark's plans for the future. The meeting was coordinated by the members of the Steering Committee who represent the community's five apostolates. They are: Vino and Beth Guiang from Management, Efren and Yollie Cruz from Evangelization, Boyie and Stella Huelgas from Formation, Audie and Vulet Chong from Mission, and Portia de Jesus and Nick Feliciano from Pastoral.

After a spirited worship, led by the members of the Steering Committee and accompanied by the Praise Ministry, everyone turned their attention to the day's agenda. This began with a detailed financial report (which included the wonderfully successful Dinner Dance) and a discussion on efforts to reduce waste and to increase tithing. The community's Secretariat Ministry report outlined updates to the BLD Newark website and plans to implement use of Microsoft Office 365, which promises to streamline operations and communications within the community.

The Steering Committee's presentation covered a wide range of topics. It suggested areas where changes and new procedures are being considered. ...Continued on page 4

BLESSINGS ON THE MOUNT

THEME: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we live out the Beatitudes.

WORD: Rev 7:2-4,9-14 ~ Ps 24:1-2,3-4,5-6
1 Jn 3:1-3 ~ Mt 5:1-12

ORDER: *Give blessing and glory, honor and power to our God forever and ever.*

REFLECTION:

*R*evelation is a prophetic book dealing with the end times. It was written in symbolic language to show veiled defiance towards earthly rulers whose lust for power led to their demand for godlike glorification. The Roman emperors Nero and Domitian claimed divinity and if people did not give them the adulation they sought, they were martyred. The writer encourages us with the fact that we can overcome our enemies if we have our hearts set on Jesus. He reminds us that the fears of the present moment can be offset by the joy of everlasting life in His kingdom.

Christians have a prophetic mission to bring the Gospel to the world. Those who succeed in this mission are washed with the blood of the Lamb and sealed as His followers. Today, we celebrate the feast of All Saints. God wants us all to be saints. The sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross enables us to share God's holiness. As we respond to His grace, He transforms our lives. Jesus does not expect us to be holy on our own for He has given us the Holy Spirit as our help and advocate.

The reading from the first letter of St. John tells us of the Father's great love for us by adopting us as His sons and daughters through Jesus. As we wait to see our Father face to face, we are reminded to keep ourselves pure, as our Father is pure. ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven." (Mt 5:12)

Enduring in Hope

“For in hope we were saved. Now hope that sees for itself is not hope. For who hopes for what one sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.”

(Rom 8:24-25)

The Catholic Catechism teaches us that Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit.

In Hope, we do not have a long term plan or road map that we follow definitively, that show the steps, turns, and direction our future will take. Hope elevates us from a worldly understanding of our situation in life to a level that will enable us to grasp that there is more to this life than we know. Our perspective on life is so finite that we don't know how to look beyond the things we currently know, see, and expect. There is a whole different world out there, the world in the spiritual realm that is either beautiful without description or terrifying beyond imagination. God's kingdom is the eternal kingdom of splendor, glory and majesty. Then there is the darkness promised to those who have rejected God. The darkness which we can have victory over, through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

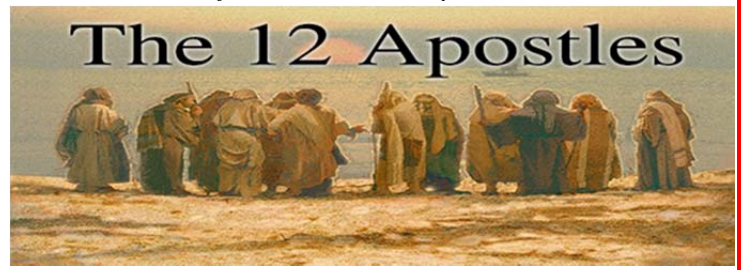
The Lord gives us His Word, His saints, His life as an example of how to live our lives, how to pursue behaviors that can free us from our attachments, passions, and weaknesses. Those are burdens we carry from which He can give us rest. Oftentimes, we are burdened with anger and pain due to offenses to our pride, beliefs and expectations; but these in reality are often a product of our own desires, wishes, and opinions. If we were to obey His teachings in our lives, then the issues that we struggle with would lose their hold over us; and we would be free to think and make more Christ-like decisions as guided by the Holy Spirit.

There will be many events in our lives, in our Christian walk, that will test our Hope. These are the moments we pray we be prepared to face, that we pray God's grace will see us through. The Lord permits devastating events to happen in the lives of Christians, and being a believer does not shield us from trials, but equips us to handle them. It is Hope that allows us to walk with endurance.

Unlike perseverance, endurance requires the bearing and conquering of pain in order to finish. God understands that we may be faced with almost unbearable pain, but He also reminds us that we are not in this journey alone. He exhorts us to bear our trials with joy in order that we may receive a full understanding of His wisdom in the trials that we face.

“Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope.” (Rom 5:3-4)

From a member of the Youth Ministry...

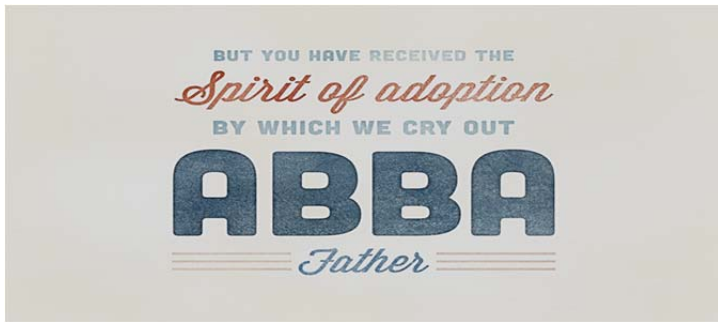


The number 12 is repeated throughout the Bible... 187 times to be exact. Twelve Bible names contain only two letters, Jesus was twelve when He was found in the temple, and Jesus had twelve Apostles. They were His disciples, called to serve His people, proclaim the Good News, perform miracles, and intercede for others. Most importantly, we can become inspired to do the same by reading their stories in the Bible.

Ever since the beginning, Jesus *“summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him. He appointed twelve [whom he also named apostles] that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach”* (Mk 3:13-14). The Apostles' mission, or ministry, is to continue what Jesus had done on earth. They knew that God called them to be “ministers of a new covenant,” “servants of God,” “ambassadors for Christ,” “servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (CCC 859). They must have been so overwhelmed at first! However, He didn't leave them alone. Jesus gave them the physical, mental, and spiritual power and His heavenly permission to continue His work. And because He granted to them His gifts, people who receive the Apostles will receive Jesus Who is in them.

I have always been particularly fond of Peter, one of the twelve Apostles, because I have always seen myself in him. He was an amazing disciple of Jesus – someone who confidently volunteered himself to do the works of Jesus and proclaim his love for Him. He was the rock that Jesus built His church upon. He was the first Apostle to identify Him as God. However, when the time came to defend Him, he acted like a completely different person. He denied knowing Jesus three times before His death, and faltered while walking on the water when Jesus told him to trust Him. I know that I can proudly proclaim my faith; but at other times, I am afraid to talk about my beliefs and morals.

The Apostles were human, too, and that's what makes them so easy to relate to. We can live out the life of Apostles by learning from their mistakes and also by evangelizing to others as they did. Remember, the mission did not end at the time that the Apostles left this earth. We Catholics are all called to make disciples in our own lives!



COUNSELS

(from page 1)

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus tells us how to live our lives in radical difference from what seemingly prevails in the world, through the Beatitudes. The word comes from the Greek, meaning blessings, and they are qualities found in a true disciple of Christ. The Beatitudes are addressed to each one of us who daily experience the different challenges and situations in life. They equip us in our journey towards holiness,

If someone came up to you and asked, "Who are you?" how would you answer? Literally, some people may say their name. But have you ever wondered who you really are?

By the virtue of our baptism we become heirs to the kingdom of God. He loves us so much and has given us free will, but because of man's sinfulness we often times choose to displease the Father. With His unconditional love, He sent His only begotten Son for our salvation, to follow the examples of Jesus Christ. As part of the body of Christ, every Christian should be proud to say, "I am a child of God!" We are sons and daughters of the One True God. Jesus, the Son of God, became human just like each one of us, sacrificed and died for our sins so that we may have everlasting life with 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!'"*** (Rom 8:15).



inspiring those of us who seek to be poor in spirit, meek, those who mourn, hunger and thirst for righteousness, those who are merciful and clean of heart, who are peacemakers and suffer persecutions for seeking holiness; these are the ones accepting the challenge to follow Jesus.

This sermon is revolutionary because it is the opposite of all our human inclinations. We think that the fortunate people are those who are wealthy and powerful, but Jesus exalts the poor, the gentle and those who are sad because of the sinful conditions in our world. We are afraid to be slandered and persecuted but Jesus says those who bear hardship because of Him will have a great reward in heaven. Our tendency is to get away with as much as the law would allow us to, like paying minimal taxes, or driving over the speed limit. Jesus says to go beyond minimal obedience to God's laws, but we tend to give someone what is his due and no more. We are not merely forbidden to harm or get even with our enemies, we are commanded to love and pray for them. Jesus calls his followers the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He tells us to be perfect as His Father is perfect.



God invites us to live in His presence for we are His children. We belong to Him! During those times when we struggle with the world of the flesh, let us remember His promise, ***"For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."*** (Rom 8:13) Through prayer, self-giving, and loving relationships, Our Father's love is unbounded.

Jesus is the very heart of the Father revealed. When we choose to accept God's invitation, we gain freedom. Our life's priority of seeking the kingdom of God puts everything in perspective. It doesn't replace our need for food, shelter, or clothing, but it takes away unnecessary worries over things we cannot control. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit Who empowers us to act as children of God, we are free from the bondage of sin. Therefore, we pray... Abba Father, help us to love with Your heart. Amen.

How can we find happiness in poverty, hunger, mourning and persecution? When we empty our hearts of earthly desires, we give room for God. We were created for God so our fulfillment and true happiness comes from Him alone. We nourish the hunger and thirst of our spirits in God's Word and the Eucharist. The grace they bring make us see the horror of a sinful and wasted life, and leads to joyful freedom from guilt.

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

The Beatitudes promise us salvation not in this world but in the next. Jesus promises that the joy of heaven will more than compensate for the troubles and hardships we suffer in this world. But when we follow the Lord's direction, we find peace and serenity in our lives here and now.

Because of Jesus' promises in the Beatitudes, we believe that sacrifice and suffering have redeeming values. Christian life is not easy, for following Christ requires self-denial and carrying our cross daily. The Beatitudes' promise of God's blessings alleviates our pains and sufferings, and sustains our cheerful hope in the midst of contradictions and opposition.

God our Father, Source of all holiness, the work of Your hands are shown in Your saints. The beauty of Your Truth is reflected in their faith. May we, who aspire to have joy in You on earth, also know their peace in Your kingdom, through Christ our Lord. Amen!

DIRECTIONS:

- Actively and joyfully participate in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
- Proclaim your faith through regular attendance in praise and worship.

 <p><i>This is my Body, This is my Blood...</i></p>	 <p>Friday Prayer Meetings 8:00 pm - St. Mary's Church 232 Central Ave Rahway, NJ 07065</p>
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NEWS

(from page 1)

Among these are forming a Safety and Security Committee to oversee a possible CCTV setup and to enhance fire department compliance, streamlining of the Emergence process, and establishing a more welcoming atmosphere for new members through the use of hosts and greeters at Friday Praise and Worship.

A lively question and answer period followed the presentations, reflecting the community's positive reaction to many of the committee's suggestions. The meeting's turnout and the engaging interaction were very encouraging; and next steps now include more frequent Disciples' Assemblies. The afternoon concluded with a prayer that God would make us, "ONE dedicated community that only seeks the path of excellence in its affairs and in its mission to bring Your people to Your never ending kingdom of love and joy."

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,530	\$117,397
Mission Collections	\$13	\$7,274

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Upcoming DLC
Meetings and
Pastoral Hour**

**Monday, November 23
7:30 pm**

Singles Encounter #35

November 6-8, 2015

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center

Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos - 908-208-2191

Lito/Elaine Fernando- 908-548-3640/ 908-294-1757

Marriage Encounter #46

November 13-15, 2015

Hotel Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ

Contact Persons:

Fil/Hum Flores (ME 45 Class Shepherds):

Fdf25@optonline.net / 201-841-5472 / 201-390-6013

Efren/Yollie Cruz (MLA Coordinators):

mla@bldnewark.com / 201-562-5071 / 201-988-7625

TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2015

**Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat
7:30AM - 5PM Divine Mercy Library LSS 1-43**

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Nov 6	Pastoral
		Nov 13	Evangelization
		Nov 20	Formation
		Nov 27	Management

In memory of our loved ones who have gone before us:

A New Journey

Not that a light has dimmed
For us still here on this Earth

But that our God has put up
Another star in His Heavens





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 44

Bulletin Edition

November 6, 2015

NEWS

Saints march in on BLD Worship



Last Friday, about two dozen members from BLD Newark's most adorable ministry marched down the center aisle of Divine Mercy's St. Mary's Church providing extra holy excitement to the conclusion of the evening's corporate worship services. In honor of the Catholic Church's saints, the children and adult core of the Mark 10 ministry dressed up as various angels and saints, bringing smiles to the faces of everyone there.

Each year, the Ministry holds this Parade of Saints and it is always truly special. The parade last Friday was a reminder that we are all called to strive to become future saints.

The children involved in this year's parade are:

ANGELS: Grace Agapito, Angela and Angelica Argonza and Stephanie Labang, Jessica Yanto ~ POPE ST. GREGORY: Anthony Dela Cruz ~ ST THERESA OF AVILA: Kayla Cebedo ~ ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE: Aaron Flores ~ MOTHER TERESA: Anne Argonza ~ JOAN OF ARC: Isabela Martinez ~ ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL: Matthew Alam ~ ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX: Gianna Austria ~ ST. JUDE THADDEUS: OJ Ohiro ~ ST. CATHERINE LABOURE: Aima Ohiro ~ ST BASIL THE GREAT: John Argonza ~ ST. PETER: Mico Castaneda ~ ST. PATRICK: Roman Manzo ~ ST. MARY MOTHER OF JESUS: Mary Argonza ~ BLESSED ALVARO DEL PORTILLO: Anton Abad ~ ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI: Tito Dhemie Alba (Ministry Coordinator) ~ FUTURE SAINTS: Ethan, Finley, and Devon Miguel (Mark 10 Children), with Purple Princess Tita Divine Alba (Ministry Coordinator)

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

For His Righteousness

THEME: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we offer God all that we are.

WORD: 1 Kgs 17:10-16 ~ Ps 146:7,8-9,9-10
Heb 9:24-28 ~ Mk 12:38-44

ORDER: "Listen to my voice!" (Jn 18:37)

REFLECTION:

The Church sets aside the month of November in memory of those officially recognized as saints, as well as all those whom He has called back to Himself. For our part, we find ourselves filled with memories of loved ones who have left us. We pray for them and perhaps even look to them for strength and direction in our own lives. We also call to mind, not only those who have gone before us, but all the people of God, including those still on this earthly journey like us, because we all belong to the family of God and are called by our Lord to be saints.

The Word for this month as discerned by the Executive Council of Servant Leaders is: **True disciples of Christ hunger and thirst for His righteousness.** Indeed, our souls' deepest hunger and thirst are only fully satisfied when we find nourishment and strength in God's Word...*"But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides"* (Mt 6:33). His righteousness is the complete and the sum of all good that leaves nothing further to be desired.

The theme for the first Sunday, the Solemnity of All Saints, is: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we live out the Beatitudes. ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The Lord keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed ...gives bread to the hungry." (Ps 146:6,7a)

THE GREATNESS AND GOODNESS OF GOD

“I will extol you my God and king; I will bless your name forever and ever. One generation praises your deeds to the next and proclaims your mighty works. They speak of the power of your awesome acts and recount your great deeds.” (Ps 145: 1,4,6)

When I was young, I remember well how religious and faithful our mother had been. Everything my siblings and I are today, and all the goodness that we have experienced, clearly signify how God has worked in us; just as we had witnessed His works in her. My mother’s commitment to her faith was never affected by her life’s struggles, by her failing health, nor by any road block that came her way. In her weakness, God was her strength, her salvation and the source of hope and light for us, her children. Her unwavering faith, made me see a woman with strong convictions; and her persistence always magnified her strength and helped her to overcome the limitations of her paralysis. Her faith became her stronghold, and her trust in God alone never failed. The way I see God in my life today is the same way our mother saw HIM in her life then.

I battled my own storms. I was still mourning the loss of my mother when the unexpected death of my husband and youngest daughter almost devastated me. I found myself begging God’s mercy and love for strength. Now, I thank God for the gift of life. I have found the strength to acclaim God’s name to speak of His glory to many who grieved along with us. Why is this possible when so many find it difficult to accept the truth of God’s love for us? Somehow, I felt His presence in our midst; and the Lord was using me to touch people’s lives, to learn of His greatness. Weakness can be witnessed through our own suffering, but it is in our state of weakness, that we can experience God, and truly live life to the fullest. The power we receive from God through our suffering, and our prayers become the shield that helps us find the light in our darkness.

I thank God for our mother who proved over and over again, the goodness of our Lord and His mighty deeds. I choose my path so as to follow what God wants me to do. I have survived and weathered my storms because of my faith and trust in Him. I sense how my children and family see God in me, just as how I saw God in my mother’s life. We become living witnesses to the next generation who will continue to spread the Good News that God is the Truth, the Light and the Way, and proclaim His glory forever.

St. Paul’s Pep Talk



“Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer” (Rom 12:11-12)

In this reading, Saint Paul delivers a message that is short and to the point. Instead of a reading with room left for interpretation. He gives us an honest “pep talk” which is meant to enthuse and encourage.

As a registered nurse, I often find that although every shift brings new challenges, there is a certain monotony that can leave one weary by the end of the work week. In my prayer life, it is just as easy to fall into a routine that can lead to stagnant communication with God. At work what usually helps is a pep talk from a coworker or even a pep talk from myself.

These pep talks contain positivity as opposed to negativity. In the Bible passage, Saint Paul tells us to “rejoice in hope” rather than grumble in despair. He says, “endure in affliction” instead of being intolerant of trials and tribulations. I find that positive feelings and passion go hand-in-hand. If I am praying on a gloomy day where I feel no energy, it takes a lot of effort to keep in constant communication with the Lord. In contrast, on sunny days, both literally and figuratively, I even feel compelled to write down some of the inspiring messages that God shares with me during my prayer and meditation. My prayers are more thought provoking and emotional on days when I am more positive.

Ultimately, Saint Paul teaches us that faith requires action. He teaches us that serving our Lord is not monotonous and repetitive, but is a constant renewal, requiring effort on our part. God has given us all specific gifts by His grace, so *“let us exercise them”* (Rom 12:6). Saint Paul says that if you are a teacher you should teach; if you are a minister then minister; and so on and so forth. What is faith without action? To believe is a verb; therefore I cannot be stagnant. I must “persevere in prayer” so I may serve our Lord the best I can with positivity and passion. The rest of my life, including my job, will reflect my prayer life in that way, and I pray that God will bless me and those who read this.

Amen!



Psalm 145
From One Generation
to the Next



Mercy

There is perhaps a word we should learn if we did not know it already, and that word is “eschatological”. It has to do with the final or end things of life, namely death, resurrection, heaven, hell or purgatory. The main contention with some of our Protestant brothers and sisters is purgatory. There is a position among some that our salvation is assured in this life, and death is the entrance into eternal happiness that is already ours here on earth. For them when we die we “go” to heaven or hell (death being the entrance into eternal damnation as well). In one sense there is an element of truth here.

When we are born again in Baptism and embark on the journey to eternity, there is theoretically no reason why we could not enter heaven immediately upon our death. There is nothing lacking on God’s part to bring us straight into heaven. There is a continuity between our life here and hereafter. But the reality behind this discussion is original sin. Is it not demanding too much of human nature to expect that even with the infinite merits of Jesus’ resurrection, we could just walk into eternity completely purified and ready to see the all holy God? This does not mean that everyone “goes” to purgatory. I do believe that many good people die and “go” immediately to heaven. But as Pope Benedict reminded us, if there were no purgatory we would have to invent it, precisely because of the defects of the human dimension. Purgatory is an act of mercy.

Our Holy Father, the Pope, is calling for a “Year of Mercy.” Every year, every day should be an opportunity for mercy, to be received and to be given. I recommend strongly St. Sister Faustina’s diary in which she relates the “mercy” conversations between her and Jesus. The mercy of Jesus is an antidote to the fears and anxieties we may have about leading the perfect life leading to eternal salvation. It is also a challenge to avoid cheap grace – the presumption that we automatically go to heaven because of God’s mercy, no matter what we do.

Living in God’s mercy means using the means His mercy provides for us to be perfect cooperators in yielding to the grace He provides. It is all His work. We are no more than recipients of mercy. He wants us all to go to heaven. Let His mercy carry you there!

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

The Beatitudes offer the blueprint for true happiness and inner joy. They are a reflection of the way Jesus lived His life on earth - poor in spirit, meek and humble of heart, a peacemaker, and one who was persecuted for the sake of justice. His life is a proclamation that God is the answer to humanity’s deepest longing. In the words of St. Teresa of Avila, "Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things pass - God never changes. Patience achieves all it strives for. Whoever has God lacks nothing - God alone suffices."

The second Sunday's theme is: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we offer God all that we are. The Gospel exhorts us not to yield to our self-centeredness, but instead seek the good of others through humble service and love. Jesus teaches us that real giving must come from the heart. A gift grudgingly given, or given simply as an outward gesture, has no value. But a gift given out of love, with a spirit of generosity and sacrifice, is invaluable. The service we render in God's vineyard may seem menial, and the love offering that we put in the collection basket may seem trivial; but no matter how insignificant, if we place these gifts at the Lord's disposal, God can do with them what is beyond our reckoning.

In the Gospel of the third Sunday, Jesus tells us to be watchful for the coming signs, so that we may not be caught unprepared when the Son of Man returns to judge us. These ‘signs’ should encourage all who trust God's word, to bear the fruits of His kingdom - the abundance of new life in the Holy Spirit and the joy of God's kingdom. Just as our Lord expected to find fruits from the fig tree, He expects us to bear and to share the fruits of the Spirit – **“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”** (Gal 5:22-23) - with those around us.



This is given emphasis in the theme of the third week: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we are vigilant in serving God.

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

The theme for the fourth Sunday, the Solemnity of Christ the King is: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we testify to the Truth. The Truth is Jesus is King and Ruler over all. He has all authority and power to reign over heaven and earth. He came to conquer every heart and soul and establish God's kingdom here on earth - *"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of food and drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit,"* (Rom 14:17). Our lives should be submitted to His Lordship as we seek to do only His will and to serve His Kingdom above all else today and for all eternity. Which kingdom will you serve today and for all eternity? The world, which is passing, or God's kingdom, which will endure for all time? If we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and King, we become citizens of this everlasting kingdom which is governed by God's righteousness, peace, and love. Is your life submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

Directions:

- Go and serve our less fortunate brothers and sisters by actively participating in mission work.
- Submit to God's will and offer Him a daily life of prayer.

NEWS

(from page 1)

Saints march in... (Continued)

The Adults in the Mark 10 Ministry core whose assistance in the parade is very much appreciated are: JJ Castaneda, Jonas & Emy Cebedo, Archie & Carol Dela Cruz, Maricar Estiler, Nelson & Rose Manzo, Anjou Martinez, Gerry & Ellen Mendoza and Arnold Yanto.

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,396	\$120,793
Mission Collections	\$39	\$7,313

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Upcoming DLC Meetings and Pastoral Hour

**Monday, November 23
7:30 pm**

Marriage Encounter #46

November 13-15, 2015

Hotel Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ

Contact Persons:

Fil/Hum Flores (ME 45 Class Shepherds):

Fdf25@optonline.net / 201-841-5472 / 201-390-6013

Efren/Yollie Cruz (MLA Coordinators):

mla@bldnewark.com / 201-562-5071 / 201-988-7625

TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2015

**Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat
7:30AM - 5PM Divine Mercy Library LSS 1-43**

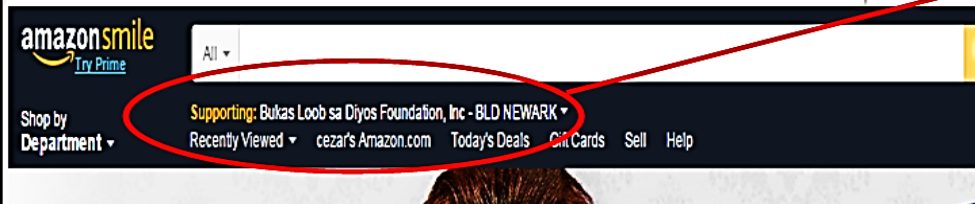
Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Nov 13	Evangelization
		Nov 20	Formation
		Nov 27	Management
		Dec 4	Mission

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

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Since it's almost that time of year, when we all search for gifts for our friends and loved ones, please consider helping BLD while you shop. If and when you shop at Amazon Smile, a small percentage (0.5%) of your purchase will be donated to BLD.

Note: Amazon Smile is affiliated with Amazon, but has its own separate website. You can, however, still use your regular Amazon account in Amazon Smile. Also, when in the Amazon Smile site, please make sure that the organization the donation will go to is BLD Newark - see what's circled in red in the extract of the site shown below:



If you see another organization's name, put your computer cursor on that name to bring up a pop-up box, where one of the options on the lower left side of the box is "Change your charity"

Click on that box to launch a window to make that change. Type in "Bukas" in the search box, and about 11 options will come up. Select the one for **BLD NEWARK**.

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 45

Bulletin Edition

November 13, 2015

NEWS

Archbishop Hebda visits BLD

+ other news from this past weekend

It was a very busy first full weekend in November for BLD Newark. There were at least five newsworthy events going on.

Friday night: Newark Coadjutor Archbishop Bernard Hebda served as the main celebrant at the BLD First Friday Mass.

In a well delivered homily, Archbishop Hebda shed interesting new light on “The Parable of the Dishonest Steward” – where the steward was reducing others’ debts, his Grace saw Christ eliminating all of ours. He also lauded BLD’s devotion to Jesus’ Sacred Heart via the Community’s monthly celebration of First Friday Mass, and its witnessing, that “we’ve encountered God,” as especially reflected in the active participation in BLD of the whole family, young and old alike. “The message is always young,” he declared, and, “it must always be proclaimed.”



Newark Coadjutor Archbishop Bernard Hebda (center), shown here at fellowship after last Friday's Mass. Also in the photo are concelebrant Fr. Paul Lehman, Deacon Rod Soriano who also assisted at the Eucharistic Celebration, and the Evangelization DCS Stewards, Manny and Judy San Luis.

The next day: 16 candidates responded to Christ’s invitation in the Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat.

“As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.” (Jn 13:34) Thanks to the collaboration of the Teaching, Intercessory, Praise, Service, Witness Development and Liturgical Ministries, and through the grace of God, with One Spirit spearheaded by Monsignor Paul Schetelick, 16 candidates experienced the transformation of “The Cup of Suffering” to “The Cup of Blessing”, and realized that in serving others with humility and in love, “no one is greater than the other.” ...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

The Essence of Our Hope

THEME: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we are vigilant in serving God.

WORD: Dn 12:1-3 ~ Ps 16:5,8,9-10,11
Heb 10:11-14,18 ~ Mk 13:24-32

ORDER: Learn a lesson... when you see these things happening, know that He is near.

REFLECTION:

The Gospel reading for the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time speaks of the Second Coming of Christ. Most often, we refer to it as the Last Judgment, or the end of the world, or “The Judgment Day”, when the Son of Man will return, not as a Savior but as a Judge of us all. It’s not a question of if, as His Second Coming is certain, but when, which we do not know. As stated in Mark 13:32: “*But of that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*” This is the basis for this week’s theme: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we are vigilant in serving God.

It directs our focus on God’s righteousness that will be revealed through His Justice in the second coming. Our honest souls can only desire to endure our present situation because of the certainty of the great reward, when Christ appears suddenly with His angels bringing the Kingdom of God, gathers the elect into the Kingdom, and dismisses the wicked into the outer darkness. And because we do not know the day or the hour, we must remain hopeful, vigilant, and persevere in our belief to the end. For how well we prepared ourselves at the time of death, that’s how we will be at the second coming. Then when our end or that of the world comes – whichever comes first – we will be ready to live forever in the beatific vision of seeing God face to face for all eternity. ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“You will show me the path to life,
abounding joy in your presence” (Ps 16:11)

THE LORD HEARS

King David's Psalm 34:18 echoes Isaiah's message when he addressed God's people in Jerusalem in chapter 30 verse 19: "...you shall no longer weep; **He will be most gracious to you when you cry out; as soon as he hears he will answer you.**"

How comforting it is to know that our Lord hears our cries and saves us from all our troubles; but is asking God's help the only requirement for our prayers to be heard and answered? Can we be assured that God will always open His ears and listen to our supplications? We can be sure He always listens and acts on our prayers if we love Him and if we trust in Him; more importantly, if we ask in harmony with His will (not demanding); if we ask with reverence, acknowledging His kingship; and, if we ask in the Name of Jesus.

Psalm 34:19, describes how our Lord is close to the brokenhearted and how He rescues those who are crushed in spirit. What is this verse telling us?

Being broken hearted and crushed in spirit are crucial elements of true repentance. Humble admission of our brokenness and our sinfulness gives delight to our loving and forgiving God. When we pray with a penitent heart and humbly ask His help during times of pain, grief and sorrow, He will deliver us from our problems. Our prayers become acceptable to Him, He hears our pleadings.

Years ago, the life of a person dearest to me was threatened by a health issue. My spouse was diagnosed with a brain tumor. The news had stricken our family with shock. Not knowing what the future was to hold for us, my spouse and I prayed our hardest, fully placing our faith and trust in God. We unconditionally surrendered to Him, prayed unceasingly and fervently expressed our love for Him. Brokenhearted and crushed in spirit, we pleaded and humbly asked for His healing mercy.

True to His promise, He heard our cries and healed my spouse. Indeed His mercies abound!

To God be the Glory!!!

Only One Returned



"And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. Jesus said in reply, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine?"
(Lk 17:15-17)

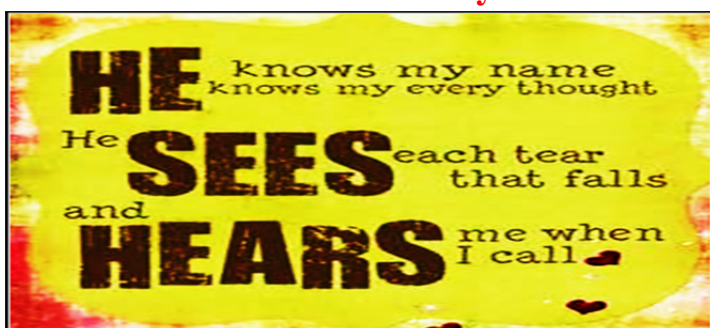
We too, have been healed and made whole by our God. We now freely enjoy the abundant life that He has graciously given us. Would we, like the nine lepers, rush off so quickly to glory in our blessings without stopping to thank Him? Jesus expects us to show gratitude. Jesus is clearly not happy at the ingratitude of the nine lepers who did not return.

Expressing appreciation and gratitude can be time-consuming. At times it requires going out of our way and delaying some of our urgent appointments. It is even harder to do when we are struggling with trials and difficulties, especially since we live in a culture that encourages us to act on the basis of how we feel.

Why is expressing thanks so important? God doesn't need our thanks, but thankfulness acknowledges our dependence upon Him. When we acknowledge what He has done for us, we are completing the cycle that God began when He promised to meet all of our needs. It is then in our best interest to be reminded that everything we have is a gift from Him. Without gratefulness, we become arrogant and self-centered; we begin to believe that we have achieved everything on our own; but with thankfulness in our hearts, we keep that right relationship to the Giver of all good gifts.

Giving thanks also reminds us of how much we already have. Human beings are prone to covetousness, and we tend to focus on what we do not have. By giving thanks continually, we are reminded of how much we do have. When we focus on blessings rather than wants, we are happier. When we start thanking God for the things we usually take for granted, our perspective changes. We realize that we cannot even exist without the merciful blessings of God. Most importantly, gratitude is a vital component in our salvation. Were all ten lepers healed? Yes they were all physically healed, but only the thankful leper saved his soul. As children of God, we must then be thankful in all circumstances especially for our blessings. We must be grateful enough to throw ourselves at Jesus' feet; but also, grateful enough to help others find their way home too - by asking Jesus' question as our own:

"Where are the other nine?"(Lk 17:17)



Discovering God in His Creations

"Foolish by nature were all who were in ignorance of God, and who from the good things seen did not succeed in knowing the one who is, and from studying the works did not discern the artisan... For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen." (Wis 13:1,5)

Chemistry, Physics, Geology, Biology, Astronomy, Anthropology, Anatomy, Oceanography. This sounds like a page out of a college catalogue. We have been studying science since we were very young, and throughout school, and into our workplaces and our homes, science has been a big part of our lives. We watch nature programs on TV and read books on the workings of the mind and the wonders of the universe. In all that exploration of the world around us, it is possible to miss one very important fact: that ***"from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author...is seen."*** We discover the Creator in His Creation.

The author of the Book of Wisdom calls those who fail to do this "foolish." Anyone who is called foolish in the Old Testament is not thought of as just unwise, but as stubborn, closed-minded, and lacking spiritual insight as well.

In our everyday lives, there are many amazing things happening all around us, wonders and moments of grace that we take for granted. Sadly, we often do not ***"discern the artisan."*** When we witness a beautiful sunrise or sunset with its magnificent colors bouncing off the clouds or the changing of the seasons, especially autumn with its array of glorious colors, why don't we burst into a chorus of "How Great Thou Art"? We see Nature in all its *awesome wonder* everywhere we look; so why is it that we get so full of our own thoughts, plans and worries that we fail to recognize the hand of God in all of this? It's just our own foolishness. What would be the remedy for our stubborn, closed-minded, unwise lack of spiritual insight? It is a process that begins with awareness, leads to acknowledgement and appreciation, and results in gratitude, followed by a heartfelt chorus of:



The Catechism tells us that, "methodical research in all branches of knowledge can never conflict with the faith, because the things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God" (CCC159). When we take time to look for Him, we discover the Creator in His Creation.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

There is a mystery to God's righteousness and judgment, and part of that mystery is that God permits evil to practice its tactics upon the good, otherwise, none of us could be called free. We know for a fact that forces of evil are increasing in the world, the state of the righteous grows harder, distress and natural signs follow. And while we experience its tactics which will surely lead to destruction, the reward is great for those who resist them. God calls each and every one of us to change directions and to become citizens of that world that is yet to come. What the Scriptures teach us is that God offers mercy to all who desire it and that the time of the ending is extended so that all might choose right, that all who desire it may be part of the new life that is promised to us.

As Christians we are called to look forward, although it's not a bad thing to look back, for we learn from things of the past, and we take our experiences and our wisdom with us. But our gaze cannot be back there all the time. We do not need to see our past flash before our eyes. Instead, we need to look to the future. And our future should be filled with hope, for despite everything, in the end, God wins.

What a wonderful thought – in the end, a life lived in praise of God, solely dedicated to loving Him, will restore you completely, for praise and adoration can open up the gates of heaven. The greatest drama of all time is the one that you are living out right now. Where will you end? It's your choice - whether for eternity in heaven gathered as His elect, or eternity in hell for everlasting horror and disgrace.

This is the essence of our hope. This is our faith. Knowing this can help us persevere through anything, even anything evil that may come our way; as in the responsorial Psalm, which says: ***"Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, my body too, abides in confidence; because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption."*** Because in the end, there will be joy and hope in Your presence, as in Your promise: ***"You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence."*** (Ps 16:11)

PRAYER:

Father God, You are my safe refuge. Help me remain dedicated and committed in serving You. Whom shall I fear, why should I worry? I will put my trust in Your goodness and rest in Your love. Your joy is my strength and Your peace is my shelter. I will cast away my cares and find my joy in Your presence. Amen.

Directions:

- Avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Reconcile with God and your fellow men.
- Live your life in righteousness and love.

NEWS

(from page 1)

The next day... continued

Congratulations to: Connie Burton, Maria Bolos, Patricia McKiernan, Ruth Ureta, Gigi Espejon, Debra Leung, Belinda Pacaira, Eliza Literato, Rosemarie Go, Jo-Ann Santiago, Rico Lopez, Bo Frio, Ali Mario Morales, Mari lou Morales, Nancy Lim-Sulit and Carl Sulit.

Also the next day: Project "I do" bore fruit once again!

We praise and thank the Lord for showering His Graces upon Cristina and Arturo, who last Saturday, were bonded together in the Sacrament of Marriage. The Angels and Saints were celebrating in Heaven!



They are from Divine Mercy Parish and they will be joining the BLD Newark ME this coming weekend.

Meanwhile, in Allentown, PA: BLD Newark supported another LSS, which was attended by 20 participants.

As the theme for this past Sunday exhorted, "We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we offer God all that we are," this Spirit of Love inspired us to offer ourselves as witnesses to how the Holy Spirit not only dwells in us, but also works through us for others, for them to feel the saving grace of God.

We thank and praise the Lord for blessing the LSS weekend with the services of Fr Joe Saltarin, Deacon Serge Bernachez, the sharers and all the auxies and intercessors whose selfless and untiring service and dedication brought about a fruitful harvest of new believers in His unending and unconditional love. Like the poor widow, they lovingly shared their God given talents for the conversion of others. For the twenty attendees, this is just the beginning of their spiritual journey.



As a community, we are committed to persevere in our efforts to provide for their spiritual nourishment to sustain them as they walk along the path of life. God is with us!

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$2,476	\$123,269
Mission Collections	\$132	\$7,445

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

TEACHINGS & MEETINGS

Saturday, Nov 21 (1pm): NCR / GIP – LSS 1-45
Understanding Corporate Worship / Healing and Deliverance – LSS 1-40

DLC Meeting & Pastoral Hour **Monday, November 23**
7:30 pm

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Nov 20	Evangelization
		Nov 27	Formation
		Dec 4	Management
		Dec 11	Mission

And in Garrison NY: Fifteen young adults graduated as members of Singles Encounter #35.

Last weekend November 6-8, fifteen young adults answered the Lord's call to a spiritual encounter, at the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison, NY. Each one of them was specially called by name and was brought together to form the new class of Singles Encounter #35. It was facilitated by Samantha Aglibut, Mikko Pepino, Diane Alburo and Ditto Fernando, with Fr. Paul Lehman as the Spiritual Director. SE#35 is blessed to have the guidance of their class shepherds, Tito Danny and Tita Cora Labung.

The Lord's hand was truly evident as the candidates found a renewed relationship with Him. The hard work of the SE34 sponsoring class, along with their class shepherds and auxies (some coming from BLD Washington DC), was truly a labor of love. Yes, the Lord's mighty power was felt throughout the weekend making SE#35 victorious.

The Singles Ministry welcomes its new members:



Judy Cellan, Michelle Felarca, Christian Flores, Danielle Flores, Darren Lopez, Connie Maningas, Christina Montepara, Larissa Palomares, Alyna Pineda, Alex Richard and Peter Sayson. The SE#35 class coordinators are: Mathias Ahmed, Jill Buhain, Matthew Cruz and Russell Dizon.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 46

Bulletin Edition

November 20, 2015

NEWS

BLD WELCOMES ME46

Marriage Encounter # 46 was held the weekend of November 13th -15th. The retreat was powerful, filled with spiritual promises and new beginnings. The joy and the realization that God had opened up the floodgates with the diverse cultures represented were overwhelming. The transformation of the sharers through spiritual impetus created epiphanies and renewed hopes with the encountered and amongst those present.

Continued on page 4



YOUTH WASHING OF THE FEET

“If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do” (Jn 13:14-15).

On November 14th 2015, the Youth Ministry was



blessed to have the opportunity to hold its second Washing of the Feet

Retreat. Thanks to the efforts of the Teaching Ministry, Witness-Development Program, and Singles Ministry’s Praise, Washing of the Feet was able to be fruitful. The first movement of the retreat was gaining a deeper understanding of The Agony in the Garden and then going over the Washing of the Feet. *Continued on page 4*

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS

CHRIST THE KING!

THEME: We hunger and thirst for His righteousness when we testify to the Truth

WORD: Dn 7:13-14 ~ Ps 93:1,1-2,5
Rev 1:5-8 ~ Jn 18:33B-37

ORDER: Testify to the Truth. Everyone who belongs to the Truth listens to My voice.

REFLECTION:



We celebrate the Feast of Jesus, King of the Universe or the Feast of Christ the King on the last Sunday of the liturgical year which is this coming Sunday. This feast was instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1925 in response to the growing secularism and nationalism in

Europe that gave birth to the fascism of Mussolini and Hitler's Nazis. This country and the world were then beginning to experience the great Depression. What a great time to be aware and to remember that our loving and merciful God, Jesus is the true King who would never forsake or abandon us!

Today more than ever, just like that time almost a hundred years ago, in the face of all the false values that surround us, we need Christ the King. We need Christ the King to help us face the radicalism, extremism and serious errors that are widely believed in certain parts of the world. Now more than ever, as professed disciples of the King, we must seize the opportunity to imitate our Lord and testify to the truth! Now is the chance to live out the gospel. Jesus said , *“For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.”* (Jn 18:37)

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“Behold, he is coming amid the cloud, and every eye will see him” (Rev 1:7)

ZACCHAEUS – SALVATION HAS COME

Reflection on Luke 19: 1-10



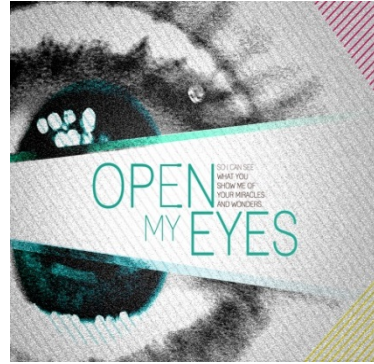
We learn a lot about Zacchaeus in the first four lines of Luke Chapter 19. He was short, a tax collector, rich, a sinner, a leader and resourceful. Jesus says to him **“today I must stay at your house”**. Why did Jesus single him out? We know that Jesus came to save the lost, and here we see Him reaching out to Zacchaeus; but this was not the only significance of the encounter. We see that Zacchaeus had a longing in his heart to see Jesus, so much so that he climbed a tree. Was it for personal gain, as we would expect from someone of Zacchaeus’ description? Maybe, but when Jesus called to him, he responded with great joy. He repented and made restitution. We can see his desire not to be separated from Jesus, the desire to welcome Him to his house. Are we like Zacchaeus then? Maybe.

Jesus comes to us first and calls us, but to be like Zacchaeus, we need to open our hearts to the call and accept the grace to repent and make restitution. Jesus’ presence filled Zacchaeus with grace and gave him the ability to truly repent. What do we say to Jesus when He tells us that He must stay at our house? Do we joyfully get rid of the impediments to welcoming God? Zacchaeus’ conversion was absolute. He gave away the thing that appeared to be dearest to him, his money, not only as restitution but also as a measure of charity or love. **“Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor.”** Of course, Zacchaeus had an advantage - Jesus was standing right beside him filling him with grace and love; but I don’t believe that we are at a disadvantage. If we truly open up our hearts to Him, we will find that Jesus is right beside us too, filling us with grace and strength. God always calls to us first, but we need to respond. We need to be willing to let go of the things that keep us separated from Him. More than just trust God, we need to love God.

Let us pray to God to open the eyes of our hearts so that we may see Jesus standing beside us, and receive the grace that He bestows, so that we, like Zacchaeus, may repent and discard the things that get in the way of a true and meaningful relationship with Jesus.

LET ME SEE

A Reflection on Luke 18: 35-43



This reading from Luke begins in a place with which many can identify, especially with Thanksgiving fast approaching and Christmas following not far behind. We are in a season of asking. For the week to go well, for safety, for health, for the family to be together, if only for a night; we ask these things of the Lord, faithful that everything happens according to His plan. So too was the blind man as he called for Jesus’ intervention in his life. Regardless of what others say, the blind man was firm in his belief that our God is one who listens to those who are humble enough to seek His aid. As Jesus said, **“Have, sight; your faith has saved you.”** (Lk 18:42)

However, we must watch for the times when we are the people in the crowd. These people rebuked the blind beggar, telling him to be silent. As easy as it is to outwardly say that we love and serve the Lord, it is even easier to judge another without seeing the faith in their actions. We can get so caught up in appearances, in what we deem to be correct. We must be watchful for moments when we judge someone for having a relationship with the Lord that we cannot understand. As every soul is individually crafted by the Lord, so too is the ministry that each person needs. Only when the crowd saw Jesus perform a miracle did **“all the people [give] praise to God.”** (Lk 18:43) There was no mention of worship before the crowd received concrete proof of His work in the world. However, the blind man was faithful, and the results became clear according to the Lord’s plan. As brothers and sisters in the Lord, we are being asked to support one another, especially the most marginalized of our communities.

Only when we have faith in the Lord, can we attain true sight. Only then can we allow God to work in our lives, so that we can work to help others. When we support others, we live as members of the Body of Christ, and we give praise to God as a complete family of faith.

THY WILL BE DONE

"Thy Holy will be done. Jesus, Jesus, come. Yes-yes. My Jesus Thy will be done-Jesus," These were the last words of Blessed Charles I, the last Emperor of Austria and king of Hungary, facing the end of his life with dignity. He was the first world leader to establish a Ministry of Social Welfare. Bearing the culture of Catholic Christianity, he advocated peace in the midst of WW I. "Now we must help each other get to heaven," Blessed Charles words on the eve of his marriage to Princess Zita in 1911.

Pope John Paul II declaring Charles Blessed in October 3, 2004, said: "The decisive task of Christians consists in seeking, recognizing and following God's Will in all things."

These are the spiritual foundational directions of the community's mission works, the focus we must set our minds to follow. Mission works must come from our hearts, filled with the Love of God and love of neighbors.

It is not about you or me, but about Jesus in us.



Recently, the BLD Assisted Parish Ministry, through Father Dennis, dedicated their spiritual energy to the parishioners of DMP, through sharings and teachings on family values, and issues regarding spiritual struggles, as well as medical health. The ministry shared that the family is a domestic Church, a "factory of hope" (Pope Francis), through the 7A's: Affirmation, Affection, Acceptance, Appreciation, Attention, Approval and Action; and discussed the need for medical well-being. These were all received with "mucho gusto", manifested through their questions, answers and happy faces.

Sometimes our spiritual cataracts blind us to the realization and understanding that our neighbors in need - the poor, the marginalized, the unemployed, and our mission of Evangelization are just around the corner. We must incorporate and inculcate in our community's moral and spiritual convictions the principles and demands of true mission works. It is neither about *feeling good* nor about being exclusive to our race. It is about *Agape Love*, the kind of love Jesus is giving to us which we must share with others.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

For the people of Jesus' time, it was absurd to recognize that God would send His chosen people someone like Jesus. In their minds, this Messiah-King would come in all splendor and glory, mighty and powerful, to redeem them from slavery and oppression that they, the Jewish people experienced from the political forces at work. They envisioned that their coming King would be served by the whole world when He establishes a kingdom where He would reign forever and ever. We see this in the first reading from the book of the prophet Daniel. "***I saw coming with the clouds of heaven, One like a son of man.... He received dominion, glory, and kingship... one that shall not be destroyed.***" (Dn 7: 13-14)

Jesus, however, states that His kingship is of a different order. His kingdom is not of this world. He is not the expected King with vast powers, crowned with gold, holding a scepter and robed in majesty. His Kingdom is one that looks for conversion, allegiance and faithfulness of the heart. Its authority is spiritual and exercised through love, service, humility, kindness and self-sacrifice, in obedience to the Father's will. His authority does not compete with earthly powers because His kingdom is of a different and higher order.

Jesus has come to reveal the Father and His plan of salvation, to bring us all who have gone astray back to Father. He is the absolute Truth: "***I am the way, the truth and the life.***" (Jn 14:6) Those open to the Truth hear the word of Jesus. "***Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.***" (Jn 18:37) They hear Him as they accept Him and submit to Him as their King and Master. And this is our invitation from Him: to find Him, to discover the real King, to live out the Reign of God - in our hearts. It may be easy for some of us to say Jesus is the King, the Lord of my heart; or perhaps many still struggle to recognize Jesus as our Lord and King. What does this mean to me? To us?

There is a statement that I heard before that asks: Tell me what you value and I will tell you what you worship. What do we value in our lives? Who sits in the throne of our hearts? Does Jesus occupy the place of honor in our hearts? Do we have other idols that come before Him?

Continued on page 4

DIRECTIONS

- Make disciples of others.
- Be witnesses for Christ.
- Be faithful to your prayers and reflection of the Word

BLD WELCOMES ME46

Led by ME45 and their Class Shepherds the community did not go unnoticed, with its unselfish response and unrelenting dedication. It touched the lambs tremendously. BLD created an opportunity of transparency to influence the next chapter of their lives as married couples and for their children as well. We all know that BLD is not a perfect community but it is a community that nurtures spiritually, physically and mentally.

With the spiritual guidance of Msgr. Schetelick the Marriage Encounter Retreat culminated with the desired spiritual success. The Harana brought everyone to their feet and was totally enjoyed by everyone especially the encountered lambs -- Tikoy & Minky Aguiluz, Melchor & Cheryl Amarrador, Arturo & Cristina Baez, Boyet & Gale Clarin, Yvon & Nickie Joseph, George & Margaret Roeck, Eddie & Giselle Roldan, Roger & Malou Regalado, Calin Razuri & Laura Tamayo, CQ & May Quiban, Milly Rivas and Simon Villacres.

Youth Washing Of The Feet

It was through Father Paul Lehman's talks and the testimonies given by Kyle Abinales, John Estrella, Olivia Felibrico, Coleen Atienza, Kipsy Quevada, Dana De Castro, Justin Lucero, and Jay Ymbong that the 36 candidates truly absorbed the 3 themes of the retreat: Obedience, Humility, and Service.

It was then time for the pinnacle of the retreat: washing each other's feet. In that moment, the room was filled with the Holy Spirit as youth members were brought to tears performing what would seem to be such a simple task. On bended knees we humbled ourselves and asked for forgiveness and expressed our love for one another. There is profound beauty in being able to wash each other's feet not only as an act of service, but because it was what Jesus did. It is what He wants us to do today.

Thy Will Be Done

(from page 3)

We are stewards of God's gifts, and our time, talents and treasures should also be geared and directed toward Catholic Social Justice, invoking the name of Jesus in our Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Let us focus and concentrate on the fruits of God's Peace, that they may be enjoyed by all. Above all, let our mortality be lived humbly with dignity, imitating the life of Jesus through this BLD community.

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$ 2,740	\$ 126,009
Mission Collections	\$ 173	\$ 7,618

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

DLC Meeting & Pastoral Hour

**Monday, November 23
7:30 pm**

	Date	Apostolate
	Nov 27	Management
	Dec 4	Mission
	Dec 11	Pastoral
	Dec 18	Evangelization

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

Or have we pushed Him out and filled His throne with our hidden negative judgments, grudges, pride and lust for recognition and power? Or have we driven the nails again into His hands by our hearts of stone and unforgiveness? Like the apostles, we can easily lose our way and give up, as His way is not just physical death, but a wholehearted dying to ourselves, to our humanity and everything we believe in, for our love of Him, Who selflessly gave His life for us, ***“who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, who has made us into a kingdom, priests for his God and Father...”*** (Rev 1:5,6) Let us gain strength and glorify the King by constantly drawing from that moment of grace when we first felt the hand of the love of God for us - that miracle of the moment when we knew, when we felt His loving presence in our lives; that time when He called us His beloved, perhaps during our encounters or LSS. And the only thing we could do then was to relish that love and try to give back to Him in return by serving Him. Our King asks us to never forget and to constantly relive that moment, to testify to the truth of His endless and unconditional love for us, venerating Him in our thoughts and actions, having a close personal relationship with Him as our Lord, Savior and Friend. He wants us to see Him among our broken brothers and sisters, serve them without measure, help one another to become the face of Jesus to those we meet, and make authentic disciples of each other and the vast multitude that Jesus is still waiting for us to meet. This is His kingship and we are commissioned to bring His Truth to others by our witnessing, by thinking, acting and living like Jesus. Only then will we see His Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. ***“To Him be glory and power, forever and ever. Amen.”*** (Rev 1:8)



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 47

Bulletin Edition

November 27, 2015

NEWS

Jesus' Kingship is freeing, not oppressive, says Pope

Rome, November 22, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Kathleen Naab

Jesus is not the king of another world but simply another kind of king, Pope Francis said today before praying the midday Angelus with those in St. Peter's Square.

On this feast of Christ the King, the last day of the liturgical year, the Pope considered the kingship of Jesus, drawing from the Gospel reading, which presents Jesus before Pilate.

"We have here a contraposition of two types of logic," the Pope said. "The worldly logic bases itself on ambition, competition, combat with the weapons of fear, of bribery, of the manipulation of consciences. On the other hand, the logic of the Gospel, that is, the logic of Jesus, is expressed in humility and gratitude. It is affirmed silently but effectively with the force of truth."

Jesus reveals himself as a king precisely on the cross, the Holy Father added.

"To speak of power and strength, for the Christian, means to make reference to the power of the cross, and the strength of Jesus' love: a love that remains firm and complete, even when faced with rejection, and which is shown as the fulfillment of a life poured out in the total surrender of itself for the benefit of humanity," he said.

This kingship was recognized by the "good thief," who despite having received a death sentence for "all of the brutalities that he had committed in his life" found in Jesus' behavior and meekness the great force of love.

"The majesty of Jesus doesn't oppress us, but rather frees us from our weaknesses and miseries, encouraging us to walk the path of the good, of reconciliation and of pardon. Let us look at the cross of Jesus, let us look at the good thief, and say together what the good thief said: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom," the Pontiff invited.

When we "feel that we are weak, that we are sinners, defeated," Francis encouraged, then we should ask Jesus to look at us, and "tell him: 'You are there. Don't forget me.'"

"To say 'Jesus has given his life for the world' is true," the Pope said. "But it is more beautiful to say, 'Jesus has given his life for me.'"

COUNSELS

The Lord Is Coming!

THEME: We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we remain vigilant as we await His coming.

WORD: Jer 33: 14-16 ~ Ps 25:4-5,8-9,10,14
1Thes 3:12-4:2 ~ Lk 21:25-28,34-36

ORDER: "Be vigilant at all times and pray!"
(Lk 21:36)

REFLECTION:

Advent is a season that is marked by a spiritual time of prayerful waiting, expectation, and preparation during the weeks before Christmas. In observance of the start of the Advent season, let us call to mind our spiritual preparation for the Lord's coming on Christmas Day, His present coming into our hearts, and His second coming. The Advent theme of spiritual preparation involves special prayers that are focused on longing, watching, and hoping for the Lord's coming. Advent assures us that Jesus must come into our lives. The promise has been made and as the word of God, it cannot be revoked.

As we begin to walk day by day during this Advent season, we ask God's help to open our minds and hearts to His Spirit. May our thoughts be focused on our Lord Jesus Christ. This season shows us how to wait, not with anxiety, but with hope and anticipation. And for the right reasons, we need to be assured that the wait is for the good of all. There are times though, when the struggles we face may become too difficult to overcome, and disappointments too frequent. When we try with our lives to preach the good news in a broken world, ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah." (Jer 33:13b)

THE WRITING ON THE WALL



Above All,
God



God took King Nebuchadnezzar who was filled with pride and self, and worked in his life. He brought Nebuchadnezzar to Himself, honored him and blessed the pagan king for his faith in Him. Belshazzar, the new king of Babylon, was a different story.

Belshazzar ignored God, His Word and His will, and he paid a terrible price. His story stands as a powerful warning to those who turn against God. His is the handwriting on the wall of those who refuse to honor God in spirit and in truth.

Daniel appeared to have lost his influence in Babylon because King Belshazzar did not seem to know about him; but when a man is faithful to the word of God and proclaims it without apology, sooner or later he will have an opportunity to speak, even to important men. God will bless him in the most appropriate time. He will reach down and take His faithful servants and put them in a place where they will have the occasion to speak for Him. When the words “Mene, Tekel, and Peres” appeared on a wall during one of the king’s banquets, Daniel was called to interpret their meaning.

Today, our Lord wants us to examine the handwriting on the wall of our community life. We claim that we are living in the Spirit, abiding by God's will, yet we find it difficult to accept the truth. Sometimes, when there are struggles in our community, we opt to distance ourselves from its historical foundations. However, a careful reading of history is enough to remind us of how our community came to be. There are questions being raised on sensitive community issues that relate to subsidiarity, discernment, transparency and empowerment, which are not new. We all know them yet we fail to fully address them.

As Daniel speaks, *"You, his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this."* (Dn 5:22)

What must we do?

We all need to examine our hearts and consider the handwriting on the wall, lest we lose out to disciple indifference, declining attendance, discouraging response to our evangelical charisms and diminishing financial support.

Lord, we thank you for caring more about who we can become rather than what we settle for. Keep showing us Your Light; guide us and give us the fortitude needed to address the problems facing our community so that we can become free and find in it, a land of true beauty. Let NOT the words inscribed on Belshazzar's wall be upon us... ***“MENE, TEKEL, and PERES.”*** (Dn 5:25)

Have mercy on us, Lord, and give us the grace to be humble and to abide by Your will and the TRUTH that will set us free.

We always hear about persecution! Men and women losing their lives! We can learn and take courage from examples in scripture of those who chose to put God above all, as in the time of the Hebrew exile. *“Eleazar, one of the foremost scribes, a man advanced in age and of noble appearance, was being forced to open his mouth to eat pork [by order of King Antiochus]. But preferring a glorious death to a life of defilement, he went forward of his own accord to the instrument of torture, spitting out the meat...He died, leaving...a model of nobility and an unforgettable example of virtue not only for the young but for the whole nation.”* (2 Mc 6:18-20,31)

In Daniel 1:1-6, 8-16, Daniel and his companions, young, handsome, and intelligent, were placed in the palace of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to be prepared for the king’s service. The king ordered that they partake of food and wine from the royal table. Daniel was resolved not to defile himself with the king’s food and wine. By God’s grace, he was able to convince the steward to test him and his companions by giving them vegetables to eat and water to drink. They were found to look healthier and better fed than any of the young men who ate from the royal table.

Why did Eleazar and Daniel believe that they would be defiled by eating the Gentiles’ food and wine? Those foods were unclean (Hos 9:3; Tb 1:12; Jdt 10:5; 12:1-2) because they might have been offered to idols and the meat may not have been drained of blood. God prohibited the consumption of blood because the life of the animal (literally, the soul of the animal) is contained in the blood. In Deuteronomy 12:23-24, God prohibited the ingesting of the blood of a slaughtered animal because ***“blood is life; you shall not eat that life with the flesh.”*** In Leviticus 17:11, God says ***“the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement on the altar for yourselves, because it is the blood as life that makes atonement.”*** This was a foreshadowing of what the precious Blood of Jesus was to do for us!

The Gentile kings were attempting to force Jews to eat forbidden food in contempt of their religion. Therefore, both Eleazar and Daniel, by refusing to do this, chose to put God above all.

The moral is that people of faith can resist temptation and conquer adversity. The secularism of our world today attempts to coerce our cooperation in practices that are in contempt of our religion, such as abortion and contraception, failing to appreciate the demands of our conscience and threatening our religious liberty. It is our turn to stand firm. God does not abandon those who trust in Him. Are we ready to put God first in our own lives, or are we still sitting on the fence? By His grace, let us all say,

“Above All, God!!!”

THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING



Oh it's so easy to forget
As I go about my busy days
Doing this, doing that, sunrise through sunset
Worrying 'bout the bills I have to pay

Do I take things for granted?
Did I get all that I wanted?

I just hope I remember
To say Thank You to the Father

Thank You for Your blessing
Thank You for I'm still breathing
Thank You for the thoughts I'm pondering
Thank You for the love we're sharing

Although I may face a struggle
Sometimes feel like gearing up for battle
If I think of what to me,
He has already given
The means to make things happen

Thank You for Your blessing
Thank You for I'm still breathing
Thank You for the thoughts I'm pondering
Thank You for the love we're sharing

As I search for happiness
I hope I realize, I've more not less
That there is joy in giving
Jesus I should be thanking

Thank You for Your blessing
Thank You for I'm still breathing
Thank You for the thoughts I'm pondering
Thank You for the love we're sharing
Thank You for giving meaning to everything
Thank You for the love we're sharing

The above is an original song, the result of a collaboration of lyrics and music written by two BLD members from the Praise and Word Ministries. We pray that gratitude be in all our hearts, not just during the holidays, but always.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

a part of us gets broken too. However, we are reminded to persevere in our faith, be prayerful and be watchful of the coming of the Son of Man, the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ.

We want to be renewed with our belief that Jesus came to save us from our sinfulness. We want to experience His coming to us now, in our everyday lives, to help us live our lives with meaning and purpose, all for His glory.

In this Sunday's first reading, we read the words of hope that Jeremiah offered his fellow Israelites when everything that they held dear seemed to be falling apart. The Israelites understood that God had made covenant promises to their ancestors, that He would protect them and secure their nation.

Jeremiah gives voice to God's own words of comfort and reassurance, that despite past and present threats, the future will bring "what is right and just" in the land. When that day comes, Judah and her capital city, Jerusalem will be safe. Jeremiah's prophecy about the fulfillment of God's promise, is a vision of the coming of the truly just King, Jesus Christ.

God also invites us to live with our forefathers' hopes. A new generation is about to begin. New life will be experienced within our very own selves. We are about to witness the wondrous manifestation of a Savior. He will save us through the baptism of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. We become heirs, in hope, of eternal life.

In the second reading, Paul likewise offers hope to the Thessalonians. Paul wants to "strengthen" their hearts. He encourages them to continue to grow in love for one another and for all.

Likewise, we are exhorted to keep our hearts blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God wants us to grow in holiness as we are reminded again and again of His coming, to be righteous in His eyes, observing all His commandments and orders. We need to be vigilant always and conduct ourselves so as to place God above all else.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus described the coming of the "**Son of Man... with power and great glory**" (Lk 21:27), for the redemption of those who persevere in their faith. This is written to give hope to those who are persecuted for the sake of the Gospel. Since no one knows exactly when the Son of Man will come, we should be ready always. Let us remain watchful and prayerful so that we may escape the tribulations of sinfulness, by remaining in the Lord's graces.

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

While we wait with faith, we are invited to manage our lives with sincere and every day holiness. Just like the early devoted disciples of Christ, we are to stand straight with raised heads, knowing that our redemption is at hand. As we continue to persevere in a spirit of meditation, our minds and hearts will remain calm in contemplation of His coming, realizing that He is just around the corner, waiting, and watching silently.

In order for us to appreciate the true meaning of Christ's coming at Bethlehem and His second coming, we need to spend time in prayer and reflection and to love others as Jesus loves us, especially the poor and the suffering. This is how Jesus taught His early disciples and we should likewise learn from this and live His teachings. May we recognize the Lord in the poor and the suffering not only in this time of the year but throughout our lives.

Prayer:

Father God, You teach the humble and lead them in Your steadfast love and faithfulness. Make my heart humble and obedient, hopeful and fearful, so that I may accept You in all Your appearances, especially in the way that You come to me this Advent. Lord, strengthen my heart making it blameless and holy before You and to wait upon You with courage and faith. O Lord Jesus, allow me to let You do what You want to do through me. Remind me to listen to Your still voice and spend quiet time with You. Amen

Directions:

Be vigilant at all times: go to confession, meditate on God's word, and spend time in prayer and reading spiritual books.

OTHER NEWS

After a slow start, the Medical Mission task force is gaining speed!



As of November 20, over \$100,000 worth of CMMB medicines were packed in balikbayan boxes. The next day, our collective vision became even clearer after we hauled away nearly 3,000 pairs of eyeglasses from the Lion's Eyeglass Recycling Center in West Trenton, NJ. Thus far, 18 boxes have been shipped to Tagbilaran, Bohol, the site of the 2016 Medical Mission, estimated to arrive in early February.

Tagbilaran was devastated a year ago by earthquakes and then by a typhoon which wreaked havoc upon an already →

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$3,470	\$129,479
Mission Collections	\$109	\$7,727

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Worship
- Friday, Dec 11

Family Worship
- Friday, Dec 18

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2016

Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines

Contact Persons: Ramon/Leonie Mariazeta

rmariazeta@msn.com / lmariazeta@msn.com

bldmcoord@outlook.com



Friday, January 22, 2016

Contact Persons: Ray Salmo - raycalmo@aol.com /
Cezar Calingo - cezar02459@yahoo.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015

Basic Bible Study - LSS 1-45

Encounter with Jesus: Luke/John - LSS 1-44

Marshaling	Date	Apostolate
	Dec 4	Mission
	Dec 11	Pastoral
	Dec 18	Evangelization
	Jan 8	Formation

→ constricted economy. The earthquake damaged century old churches dating back to the Spanish era.

Mission services will be offered free to all, with most of our patients expected to be the poor and the needy. On average, the BLD Medical Mission benefits more than five thousand patients every year. In the last mission, more than eight thousand patients were seen and received appropriate treatment.

In the next few weeks, the Mission team will tackle the nitty-gritty of the planning stage from accommodations and transportation, to communications and site layout. Thanks to all the volunteers, especially Cora Simsiman (venue sponsor) who has been on top of every issue that has emerged so far. We ask for your prayers - to assure the Lord's Victory and the success of the 2016 Medical Mission.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 48

Bulletin Edition

December 4, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

BLD Newark Welcomes new District and Community Instructors

The Executive Council of Servant Leaders (ECSL), in one heart and one mind, approved the accreditation of BLD Newark District and Community Instructors as recommended by the DCS and endorsed by the District Servant Leaders (DSL) of BLD Newark. The ECSL CIRCULAR NO. 11 - 2015-117A was posted on Nov 10, 2015.

The Formation Servant Leader has determined that the following District Instructors are qualified to teach the following Discipleship Formation tracks: LSS Orientation, NCR, GIP, BBS, and CMP-1 topics;

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Cinderella Alegria | 8. Mike Pepino |
| 2. Eric Cruz | 9. Emma Pepino |
| 3. Gale De Leon | 10. Jean Richards |
| 4. Libarid Maljian | 11. Marie Richards |
| 5. Earl Manguiat | 12. Alyssa Sta. Ana |
| 6. Flo Manguiat | 13. Mat Yap |
| 7. Wanda Ortiz | 14. Precy Yap |

The following have complied with the requirements and, therefore, have been approved for elevation as Community Instructor – BLD Newark:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Ed Unay | 3. Bing Ymbong |
| 2. Frank Mendonez | 4. Gene Ymbong |

Congratulations to all!

Prayer for Teachers

Almighty God, We come to you today and give thanks for all our teachers. Thank you for the way in which they give of themselves in the classroom, Serving and instructing the next generation of this land. We thank you for them all now.

In the wonderful name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Advent: A Season of Hope

THEME: We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we repent of our wrongdoings and ask for forgiveness.

WORD: Baruch 5:1-9 ~ Psalms 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11 ~ Luke 3:1-6

ORDER: “Be vigilant at all times and pray!”
(Luke 21:36)

REFLECTION:

The month of December encompasses the 4 weeks of the Advent Season, a time meant to be spent in reflection and preparation for Christmas, the birthday of Jesus. To help us in this, the ECSL has discerned the Word for the BLD Community: “**God gave us Jesus Christ to be our way to salvation, with the corresponding order: “Be vigilant at all times and pray.”**” (Lk 21:36).

Advent is a season for prayer and a time for reforming our hearts. It invites us to make ready for the coming of Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of God’s promised Redeemer, the Holy One who will restore our inheritance of Eternal Life. The Church sees this time of year as a new beginning, a time to reexamine what has been, and to look towards our renewed response in our faith journey as a redeemed people of God.

These are the discerned weekly themes to help us do our Advent reflection during the month of December:

Our theme for the First Sunday of Advent is: **We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we remain vigilant as we await His coming.** In this Gospel, Jesus reminds His disciples to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“Those who sow in tears will reap with cries of joy.”
(Psalm 126:5)

Words and Action

This Sunday's Gospel is straight-forward but can be confusing. It warns us that by just proclaiming that we are Christian, is not good enough. It warns us that calling out to the Lord alone is not good enough. We have to do more.

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21)

What does Matthew mean to say? Are we not saved already through the passion of Christ who died on the cross so that those who believe in Him will have everlasting life? (John 3:16). The key words here are “*not everyone*”, not “no one” and “*the will of my Father*.” In Matthew 7:22, Jesus rebuked those who called out, “***Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?***” Here, Jesus warns us about the false prophets who used the Lord's name for their own self-serving righteousness and not the will of the Father. We not only have to believe in Jesus and God the Father but also do the works of the Lord and to do them according to His will and for His sake.

What is the will of the Father? It is found throughout the Bible and the first step is to believe in Him.

“This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent.” (John 6:29)

Once we do that, we should then follow the teachings and works of the one God sent [Jesus] and do them for His sake and not for our own selfish pride.

Let us take it one step further. We have often heard the derisive term *Sunday Christian*. But is there any truth in it? Do we just go to church on Sundays and say we are Christians and followers of Christ, and yet do not adhere to the teachings of the Bible? Being Christians and followers of Christ means trying to do what Jesus did, that is, the will of the Father, no matter how difficult or inconvenient it may be. Jesus reached out to everyone. He does not discriminate against the rich or the poor, the healthy or the sick, the powerful or the lowly, the wise or the uneducated. He treats everyone the same. He loves everyone. He reaches out to everyone who needs it.

We can say we are doing the will of the Father by believing in Him, worshiping Him, and listening to His word when we go to church. However, we should do more by following Jesus' ***Continued on page 4***

The Call

“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19)

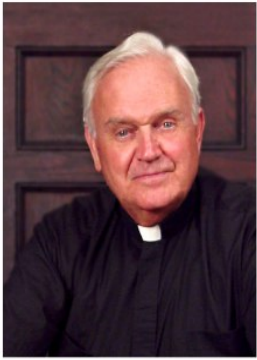
As Christians, some of us have our own doubts in our faith. Some of us are unsure if there really is a God. "Does He really listen to my prayers? Does He listen if I tell him about my problems?" As believers, why do we stay quiet if Jesus did all these sacrifices for us? Why don't we spread His words to others, just as He commanded His disciples and apostles? Why is it difficult for some of us to love one another as Jesus wanted us to do?

In Matthew 4:18-22, when Jesus was walking beside the sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers (Simon and Andrew) casting their nets into the lake since they were fishermen. Jesus told them to come and follow Him, in order to make them fishers of men. Simon and Andrew were full time fishermen, yet they didn't hesitate to pull their nets back into their boat and follow Jesus. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James and John. They were beside their boat with their father Zebedee preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father in order to follow Him. All four of these men were thirsty for Jesus' wisdom and teachings, for He is the true Messiah and Shepherd.

I was taught at an early age about Jesus and the Catholic ways - from attending a Catholic school from 1st grade to my 2nd year of high school. However, I knew that there was something missing. I was dry and thirsty for more of Jesus. Something was missing and lacking in my spiritual life. I really didn't become deeper in my faith until joining BLD in 2002. My wife and I are a product of Marriage Encounter, Life in the Spirit Seminar, and Family Encounter. We are also Family Encounter class shepherds. My family and I were also blessed to be family sharers for the FE. Our journey continued by our serving in the Mark 10 and John 6 ministries. Now, my wife and I are serving our Lord as one of the Youth Core. I really feel that the Lord is calling me to do more, not only for our BLD community, but in general.

I, too, will follow You Lord and become a fisher of men. I realized that the only way to become a fisher of men is to trust in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lord, I pray that You guide me to become deeper in my faith. Make me a more prayerful person. All I want is to follow You and spread Your words to everyone I meet. Mold me, Lord, to be the disciple that You want me to be. I ask all of these in Your mighty name, Amen.



Fr. Paul Speaks The Three Comings

If you remember last month's CN, we examined the heady subject of the "eschatological"-the final realities of heaven, hell and purgatory. The season of Advent initially continues the same theme. It is only later in the month that we begin to see references to Christmas, and the prophecies that foretold the "Advent" or coming of the Savior. The link between the two themes of course is the coming of Jesus in the simplicity of a baby, and His final majestic coming in the future with great majesty and awe. Both are connected as a past and a future.

But what about the now? He does come now in countless ways. We talk about eternal rest in heaven. Yet, God does not "rest". He is always active first as a Trinity of persons within His own mysterious being, and then outside of Himself in His concern for the creation that He has brought into being. When you feel guilty because your conscience bothers you for doing something wrong, that is God "bothering" you to avoid sin and follow the lead of the Spirit. When you are inspired to do a holy act or perform an act of kindness, that is, God encouraging you. In fact when you are "in the state of grace" God the Trinity actually dwells within you and shares with you His very being. This is a supernatural reality which only God can "do". Thus there is a present coming which depends on the past action of Jesus who redeems us by His death and resurrection. His birth at Christmas is the prelude to the great events of Easter. As we are redeemed and saved now, we are readying ourselves for the final future coming of our King at the "end of the world."

Thus there are three comings. The first coming was the humble Baby who comes into our frail humanity. This is the "Incarnation", God entering into human flesh. That alone could have easily redeemed us. But going to the cross was the goal of that infant Jesus. The last coming will be the big surprise. He will come in glory. No present words can describe that reality. The practically important coming is the "now". Do we connect in prayer and Eucharist with the living flesh of the now glorified Jesus? Our Advent prayer is not only a desire for the final coming of Jesus, but a cry and request for deeper intimacy now. We cry out "Maranatha, come, O Christ the Lord." Again a reminder to do your "*lectio divina*" every day. If Jesus comes and finds you praying, blest will you be for all eternity.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

"Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man." (Luke 21) As Christian disciples, we too are exhorted to be alert and always prepared by soaking ourselves in God's word. We need to pray unceasingly with an attitude of optimism and hope (Jeremiah 33), and with trust in the goodness and promises of the Lord (Psalm 25).

Our theme for the Second Sunday of Advent is: **We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we repent of our wrongdoings and ask for forgiveness.** Through prayer, let us ask the Lord to reveal to us, the many areas in our lives that may need to be renewed and transformed, as we sincerely seek forgiveness from Him, and from others whom we may have hurt, while releasing forgiveness ourselves to those who may have wronged us. This is what John the Baptist preached as he *"went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins..."* (Luke 3).

On the Third Sunday of Advent, our theme is: **We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we are filled with hope in Him and share our expectations with others.** Through our word sharing circles, let us convey God's message of hope and love, and actively offer help to our brothers and sisters who are lowly and burdened. In today's Gospel, John the Baptist exhorts us, *"Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise."* (Luke 3). Let us take this Advent season as an opportune time to actively participate in our mission outreaches that we may bring hope and joy to our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, let us put to mind our theme: **We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we accept and obey the will of God in our lives.** It may be hard to be reflective about doing God's will at this time of the year when our focus is more on partying and celebrating the holidays. Yet, we are asked to make this a time of renewal and rededication. Let us make this, then, our offering to the Lord - to really find time to reexamine our life and determine how we can do better as we await the Lord's coming.

On the Feast of the Holy Family, our theme is: **We believe Jesus Christ is** *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS (from page 3)

our way to salvation when we allow Him to be at the center of our family life and activities. Let us make Advent a time of adventure for the whole family, with Jesus Christ at the center. Let us challenge ourselves to spend time and energy stepping out of our normal activities and together as a family, do something more positive, more caring and more Christ-like during this time of preparation, such as visiting the sick and the aged, or pooling our resources to provide for our brothers and sisters in prison.

Finally, let Advent be a period of expectation, anticipation, preparation, longing and hope for all of us.

DIRECTION:

Bring others to Christ by the witness of your lives.

Words and Action (from page 2)

example and be more 'active' in our faith. James warns us, *"Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves"* (James 1:22)

The Gospel continues with the example of those who listen to Him and follow His teachings, who can withstand any storm because they are built on firm foundations. They are built on God's word, the will of the Father. Those who listen but don't follow His teachings will wither and fall because they do it for their own self-serving righteousness and pride. James says that faith without works is dead and reiterates what Matthew said. *"What good is it ... if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... For just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."* (James 2:14, 26)

If we have faith, we will do His work and be active in His church, and we can do them in so many ways. Just in our BLD community alone, there is so much that can be done. Every ministry has a function. Every member can contribute and help ... in encounters and retreats, medical mission, soup kitchen, nursing home, witnessing, administration, service, intercessory, praise, pastoral, teaching, and so much more. Sometimes these "works" can be challenging, demanding and stressful but Jesus did what He had to do to obey His Father's will and even paid for it with His life for us.

If you really have faith, you will do the will of the Father for His sake, even if it means spending our time, talents, and treasures. To conclude, James said,

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,006	132,485
Mission Collection	38	7,765

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Dec 11	Pastoral
			Dec 18	Evangelization
			Jan 8	Formation
			Jan 15	Management

Be a Living Word

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Worship
Friday, Dec 11

Family Worship
Friday, Dec 18

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2016

Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines

Contact Persons: Ramon/Leonie Mariazeta

rmariazeta@msn.com / lmariazeta@msn.com

bldmmcoord@outlook.com



Friday, January 22, 2016

Contact Persons: Ray Salmo - raycsalmo@aol.com /

Cezar Calingo - cezar02459@yahoo.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015

Basic Bible Study - LSS 1-45

"No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

"Indeed someone may say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Demonstrate your faith to me without works, and I will demonstrate my faith to you from my works." (James 2:18)



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 49

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December 11, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

At Grand Mosque in CAR, Pope Denounces Violence Perpetrated in Name of Religion or God

Speaking to Muslims, Says Muslims and Christians Are Brothers, Sisters; Acknowledges Recent Violence Not Grounded in Properly Religious Motives

Bangui, November 30, 2015 (ZENIT.org) Deborah Castellano Lubov

Pope Francis has said that Christians and Muslims together, must say no to hatred, to revenge and to violence, "particularly that violence which is perpetrated in the name of a religion or of God himself."

The Holy Father stressed this point this morning when speaking to Muslims in the Grand Mosque of Koudoukou in the Central African Republic's capital of Bangui, reminding those gathered that God is peace. Pope Francis made his first Apostolic Visit to Africa, visiting the capitals of Kenya, Uganda, and CAR, and is due to land in Rome this evening.

"Christians and Muslims are brothers and sisters," the Pope stressed, after noting it was a joy to be with the Muslim community. "We must therefore, consider ourselves and conduct ourselves as such."

Those who claim to believe in God must also be men and women of peace, he said, acknowledging, "We are well aware that the recent events and acts of violence which have shaken your country were not grounded in properly religious motives." He also recalled that Christians, Muslims and members of the traditional religions have lived together in peace for many years.

Given this, he continued, they ought to "remain united in working for an end to every act which, from whatever side, disfigures the Face of God and whose ultimate aim is to defend particular interests by any and all means, to the detriment of the common good."

In these dramatic times, the Pontiff lauded that Christian and Muslim leaders have sought to rise to the challenges by working together to play an important role in re-establishing harmony and fraternity among all.

The Pontiff also strongly urged those present to make their country 'a welcoming home' ... *Continued on page 4*

Advent of Hope and Joy

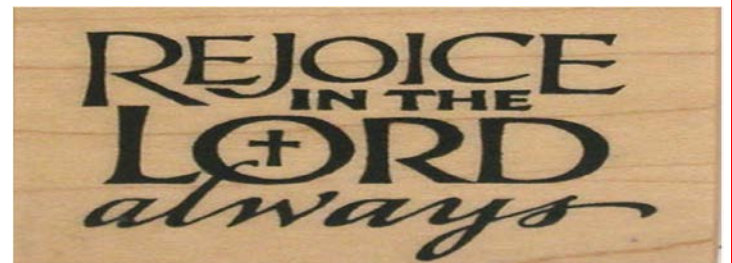
THEME: We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we are filled with hope in Him and bring our expectations to others.

WORD: Zep 3:14-18A ~ Is 12:2-3,4,5-6
Phil 4:4-7 ~ Lk 3:10-18

ORDER: *By prayer and petition, with thanksgiving make your requests known to God.*

REFLECTION:

*I*t's kind of strange that the Gospel this Sunday preaches repentance, thus creating a somber mood in us as if Holy Week is near, instead of the jubilant Christmas season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus the Messiah. Yet in the liturgical tradition of Roman Catholicism, this Advent Sunday is also known as "Gaudete Sunday", one of two Sundays (the other in Lent) when the seasonal purple vestments yield to the lighter color of dusty pink. "Gaudete" is taken from the Latin entrance antiphon "Gaudete in Domino Semper" which means:



(Phil 4:4) to herald the coming season of joyful celebration: Christmas!

While Gospel means "Good News", this Sunday's exhortations by John the Baptist do not sound easy to pass for "good news": if you have two coats, give one to him who has none... if you have food, you must share some... do not take more money ...*Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:7)

MY JOY!



In the Canticle of Mary, Mother Mary shows her joy and exultation when told by the angel Gabriel what God's plan was for her. *"And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord my spirit rejoices in God my savior."* (Lk 1:46-47). Mary was the chosen one; the first prophecy about her was in Genesis 3:15 *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; they will strike at your head, while you strike at their heel."* Here God says that He has a plan for mankind's salvation, that Mary's Child will crush Satan and man's salvation will be assured. This salvation is made possible because Mary, our hope, said "Yes."

Although not mentioned frequently, Mary was an important person in the life of Jesus. The infancy narratives of Luke and Matthew describe some of the hardships and difficulties she had to endure to become the mother of our Savior. Then, when Jesus was twelve and He was missing, it must have been with great anxiety that she and Joseph searched for their Son, looking for three days before they found Him - in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers discussing the Law. It was no coincidence too, that Mary had a pivotal role in Jesus's first miracle, at the wedding in Cana. Still, beyond all that, she was there at the foot of the cross after her Son had been beaten and killed for our sins.

Mary is faith. She rejoiced with praise when she realized that she was the chosen one, and she praised and trusted in God, obeying His will. She was there, obedient to God's will, as she witnessed His plan for our salvation to happen. The question I ask myself is "Can I do what Mary did?"

Our lives are full of trials and challenges, bringing many kinds of emotions in many different situations. The question we face when difficulties arise is, "Can we give glory to God and praise Him more and allow Him to take control? Will we hold on to our hope and stay courageous and faithful just like Mary did?"

I have had a blessed life so far, and largely due to the BLD community, I have a more intimate relationship with our Lord God Almighty. I see that clearly as I recall the toughest times of my life before BLD, before I had let God take control of my life. Now, through difficult times, I always pray to Mary for the courage to do what she did.

Now, I know I need to be always hopeful and to stay faithful. My strength and courage come from God; and this is my joy! I will cry and laugh, I will be happy and angry, and at times, I will still be frustrated. But I know now that I can call upon Him through prayers and praise, I can yield control and let His will be done. This is the joy that I have: I have God in me! Mother Mary, pray for me to stay as hopeful, courageous and faithful as you are. Amen.

WHOM TO BLAME?

A term that we always hear, especially in the corporate world is CYA, short for 'covering your ass'. Our emails are sent to so many recipients, when only 1, or at most 3, really have to take action. The others are included as FYI (for your information). Why is that? So that they can't say they were not informed or did not know about it. We notify everybody to 'protect ourselves' and thus, avoid blame. Sad, but true.

In family squabbles, often we say that it's the other family member's fault. They then would reply back that it's the other way around. Nobody takes responsibility for saying, "It was I." The fault is always somebody else's and never mine.

In the story of the forbidden fruit, the man blames the woman who in turn, blames the serpent. Adam did not admit to God that he was weak and succumbed to the temptation offered by Eve. Eve, for her part, also did not admit to God that her resolve to resist temptation was not strong enough when she was tempted. Isn't this scenario very true in what we have today? Our resolve to resist temptation is not strong. God wants us to lead a very simple life focused only on what He wants us to become, and yet materialism and commercialism consume us. Especially during this season, we rationalize our purchases by claiming that we need them. Do we consider what God might think about that?

Mt 7:3 says, *"Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye."* It is easier to look at somebody's eyes but not see our own; after all, we've been given eyes to see others, not a pair of eyes that are looking at ourselves. However, upon reflection, our attitude should first be that of facing a mirror to do just that - look at ourselves to examine what's wrong in the things we do.



Whenever a mistake happens, what we need to do is to make an examination of ourselves before we lay blame on others. We have to check what was wrong in what we did or what we may have missed. First take stock of the *I*, the *me* or the *mine*, leading on up to the *we*. Then in the end, if the conclusion is that it is really not our fault, be humble and do not gloat nor glory in the correctness of what we did. But, if it is our action that led to the downfall of the *we*, be truthful and admit the mistake and promise not to commit the same the next time.

Dearest Lord, whenever things happen that are not good or when mistakes occur, let me always keep focus on the *I*. Show me my misdeeds before I look at the mistakes of others. Let me learn from them and help me resolve never to commit the same again. I know that only in Your presence in my life will I be able to do so. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.

God Never Gives Up on Us...

We Give Up on God

Is.40:31 – ***“They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar on eagle’s wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.”***

As I leave her bedside tonight at the hospital I have a renewed sense of hope. Her husband suffered a major heart attack at 40 and left her after only 16 years of married life, 42 years ago. She raised 4 great children by herself and never lost faith. Her “kids” describe her as a strong and determined woman with much love. One of her sons, with me in the hospital room, asks her, ‘Mom, what will you say to Dad when you see him?’ His mom, Alice, answers: ‘I’m gonna kick him in his butt for leaving me so soon, then the two of us will be praying for our kids and grandkids every day of your lives.’ Alice died 6 hours later with a serenity that lit up her face.

“They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength...”

The Mass reading for this 2nd Wednesday of Advent is another reminder of the sustaining power of this liturgical season.....HOPE. Not just any kind of HOPE, but HOPE IN THE LORD. Alice knew she was dying and asked for a priest to come and pray with her, not out of a fear of an approaching death, but with a hope of an awaiting heaven. Her children shared with me how, before she got so sick, she loved beginning her day with an early morning walk to Church. In my private time with Alice she spoke of her meditative strolls to daily mass and how she occasionally would be stopped in her tracks by a flock of birds soaring overhead. ‘If God had not been the wind beneath my wings, now you know Fr. Paul I’m borrowing that from a song’, she laughs gently, ‘I would never have had the strength I needed to raise my children.’

The Book of Isaiah portrays the prophet, in the first 35 chapters, warning the people of Judah to depend on God alone in their battle with Assyria. Isaiah reminded the Hebrew people not to use human means to create divine outcomes. They failed to listen and their nation was destroyed, not by the enemy nation they feared, but by the partner nation they trusted...Babylon. After 70 years in exile, in Chapters 40-66, Isaiah speaks to the Jewish people in Babylon about God ending their exile and returning them to their homeland. But the “chosen people”, in verse 40:27, believed that God had thrown them aside and no longer cared for them because of their disobedience. But then Isaiah reminded them that God never gives up on us, we give up on God. God is always faithful. God cannot fail, ever, to be the wind beneath our wings.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

from people than you should... take no money from anyone by using your own strength... do not lie about anyone... be happy with the pay you get (Lk 3:11-14). Before this exhortation, John initially addressed the people who came to be baptized by him with the admonition: ***“Therefore every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”*** (Lk 3:9b)

The truth is, what counts as good news to one, could be bad news to another. And it all depends on the hearer’s disposition towards John’s preaching on repentance. For those who yield to God and to His commandments, and accept being dispossessed of material wealth, following what John admonished us to do to be saved may not be too much of a problem. But for those who are obsessed with material possessions, and have no love of neighbor, it would be very difficult. Therefore, the hearers and doers of the Word can look to what lies ahead, that is expectant hope and salvation. But for the hardened of heart, having to surrender his wealth so as to be saved is very bad news. In Mt 19:24 Jesus says: ***“It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”***

If we carefully analyze how John replied to the people’s question “what must we do to be saved?” we will realize that truly John is the precursor of Christ. He foreshadows what Jesus would emphasize in His teaching on love of God: that the true measure of how much we love God is the extent by which we love our neighbor. ***“If anyone says, ‘I love God’, but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen”*** (1 Jn. 4:20). True repentance requires conversion of the heart, a change in our way of life which includes sacramental healing, reconciliation and prayers. It is a commitment to share our time, talent and treasure with those in need especially toward the poor, the marginalized, the disadvantaged, the sick, and the unemployed. James 2:17 says: ***“Faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”***

The Good News that John the Baptist brings to us is that he has prepared the way for Jesus Who is our Salvation! No matter what trials befall us, we only have to open our hearts to Him and He will give us the peace that this world and earthly wealth can never give us! Jesus is our Hope, our Strength, our only True Wealth!

Personally, I am a living witness to this truth.

When my doctor said I had to go through dialysis, I felt miserable and depressed. I had understood the fact that it was necessary but I could not tolerate the inconvenience of sitting on a chair for four hours at a time. It seems like eternity at times, not to mention the cramps and the annoying trips to the bathroom.



...Continued on page 4

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

But with the support from my family, ME30 classmates, shepherds, friends, and the whole BLD community, I found that when I sought Jesus in prayer, things began to change. I began to accept the hardships of my treatment when I began to think of how Jesus suffered for our sins without any whimper of complaint. My mind started to open up and I realized that what was happening to me had a purpose -- Jesus' purpose to extend my life, to renew my life.

PRAYER:

Lord, I am deeply sorry for having doubted You, my Healer, my Savior. Forgive me for always complaining, for not being confident and unafraid, because You are always near me; that there is Hope in You in my healing which You enable through other people; for my lack of trust to offer my suffering to You. Forgive me Lord for failure to realize that it was Your grace to extend my life so I can appreciate my life more, my family and my neighbors, as well as the world around me. Thank You for Your saving power, and I give You all the Glory, for You Alone are the source of my joy, my strength and my hope! Amen.

Directions:

- Rejoice even in times of affliction
- Trust in Him and He will meet our needs
- Pray for the intentions of the community, Church and others.
- Actively participate in vigil room prayers.

NEWS

(from page 1)

for all its children, regardless of their ethnic origin, political affiliation or religious confession. If they do this, he explained, the Central African Republic, situated in the heart of Africa, will then prove a stimulus in this regard to the entire continent, as well as prove a positive influence helping to "extinguish the smoldering tensions which prevent Africans from benefiting from that development, which they deserve and to which they have a right."

The Holy Father also invited them to pray and work for reconciliation, fraternity and solidarity among all people, and concluded, praying that God bless and protect them.

God Never Gives Up...

(from page 3)

An eagle cannot soar in a place where no air currents exist, and you and I cannot soar above earthly tragedies unless we trust that the breath of God raises us up to where we belong. Isaiah is a prophet of HOPE. Advent is a season of HOPE. Jesus is our reason to HOPE. In order for an eagle to soar, it needs not only wind beneath its wings, but it must stop flapping its wings, it must surrender to that beguiling breeze that sustains it, just as in all the eagle's flights before.

We are no different than the eagle; we must launch ourselves daily into a hope-filled horizon and believe →→

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$ 2,407	\$ 134,892
Mission Collections	\$ 127	\$ 7,892
Christmas Envelopes	\$ 137	\$ 137

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Family Worship - Friday, Dec 18

Medical Mission

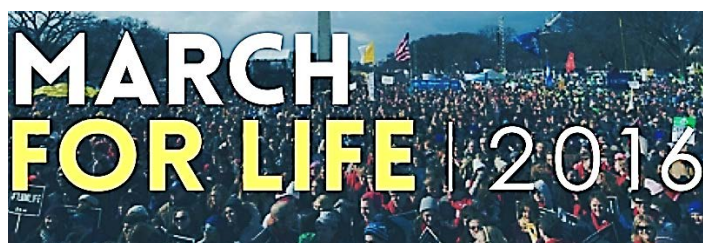
February 22-25, 2016

Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines

Contact Persons: Ramon/Leonie Mariazeta

rmariazeta@msn.com / lmariazeta@msn.com

bldmmcoord@outlook.com



Friday, January 22, 2016

Contact Persons: Ray Salmo – raycsalmo@aol.com /

Cezar Calingo – cezar02459@yahoo.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Teachings resume on **Friday, January 8** with:

a **CDFP Overview** (for ME 46; after Worship); and,

on **Saturday, January 16:**

Prayer Leadership, CMP II - Part 1 & Encounter with Jesus

Other Announcements:

Going shopping? Consider AMAZON SMILE

It is run by the same company as AMAZON, but with a non-profit twist: Amazon will donate a portion of your spending to charitable organizations. So, if you will be shopping online, this Christmas and in the new year, try it! ...And make your spending dollars truly go a long way!

Please designate: Bukas Loob sa Diyos Foundation, Inc - BLD NEWARK as the beneficiary for AMAZON SMILE's donations.

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Dec 18	Evangelization
		Jan 8	Formation
		Jan 15	Management
		Jan 22	Mission

→→→ that it is not our personal energy, but our surrender into the power of God's love that will make us soar and never grow weary. An eagle soaring is at complete rest letting the gracious gusts surrounding it guide it to its destination. HOPE IN THE LORD AND SOAR.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 21 Issue 50

Bulletin Edition

December 18, 2015

NEWS

COUNSELS

Archbishop Myers gives homily at the Mass of the Opening of the Holy Door

December 13, 2015 (source: RCAN.org)

Most of us can remember major events which occurred many years ago. It might be marriage, it might be ordination to the Priesthood, it might be attaining a special academic degree, it might be the birth of a child or it might be an event which occurred in our society or in the life of the Church. Those moments took place so long ago. Yet, it does not seem possible that so many years have passed.

Dramatic changes have occurred around us both in the world and the Church and also in our families. Probably in us, also, although we may not be as aware of that. (Other than growing older!) Fundamental things stay the same:

Jesus Christ – yesterday, today and forever

His Church – which is a continuing Sacrament of His mission and teachings

The importance of integrity, keeping one's word, keeping one's balance and values in a kaleidoscope of change. Change in our family which continues; solid and good relationships; and our friends. How lucky we are when these things can be the same. How richly blessed we are in our families, we are grateful for them, especially at times of celebration. We are grateful that our families can surmount differences and difficulties and not suffer dire consequences.

Even though some may remember differently, I do not recall that any of us knew where we would be in 2015. I surely did not. But so much good has happened. And we are grateful for the chance to serve and for the excitement.

Continued on page 2

Like Mary

THEME: We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we accept and obey the will of God in our lives.

READINGS: Mi 5:1-4A ~ Ps 80:2-3,15-16,18-19
Heb 10:5-10 ~ Lk 1:39-45

ORDER: Stand firm and shepherd His flock by the strength of the Lord.

REFLECTION:

There's but a week left before Christmas Day, and in the Gospel passage for this, the 4th Sunday of Advent, St. Luke presents us with two expectant mothers, filled with the excitement of their pregnancies. Only a few days had passed since the wonderful event of the Annunciation, and Mary, inspired by the Angel's advice of her older cousin's condition, had traveled in haste to Elizabeth's town. At Mary's greeting, Elizabeth felt the infant in her womb leap for joy. Her son, who was to grow up as John the Baptist and precursor of the Messiah, had heard Mary's voice and sensed the presence of Jesus, Who was to grow up as the Messiah, Who would suffer and die for the redemption of all mankind.

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Lk 1:45) This is God's discerned Promise to us this week, and the words were spoken by Elizabeth to her young cousin. What brought these to her lips? St. Luke describes Elizabeth as being filled with the Holy Spirit, filled with awe at the joyous welcome of the infant in her womb.

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Lk 1:45)



NEWS (continued from page 1)

John the Baptist, even before Christ, spoke simple, moral common sense.

Share if you have more than you need. Be honest and fair – do not take more than you are due. Do not bully people. Tell the truth. Do not live for money.

But he spoke the truth: “One is coming who is far greater than I.”

We can affirm these simple truths in our lives. We examine ourselves. We are never too sophisticated to learn these lessons once again.

Today, in union with the Church around the world, we have opened a Holy Door here at the Cathedral Basilica to begin celebration of the Holy Year of Mercy. A Year of Jubilee or Holy Year goes back to the time of the Old Testament in which the Law of Moses described a special year for the Jewish People. This special year required people to restore land to the original owners after approximately a 50 year period, forgiveness of debts, the liberation of slaves and the land being left fallow.

In the New Testament, Jesus presents Himself as the One who brings the old jubilee to completion because He has come to preach the year of the Lord’s favor (Isaiah 61:2). These particular actions were called for to strengthen faith and to encourage works of charity and fraternal communion within society. The first Christian Jubilee was proclaimed in 1300 AD by Pope Boniface VIII. It eventually became the custom to declare a Year of Jubilee every 25 years. But special years of Jubilee could be called more regularly. During a Jubilee Year it is particularly good to undertake a pilgrimage to those places designated by having a Holy Door. This Door is of great symbolic value, indicating our journey through life which leads to Christ Who pointed out that He is the Way, that He is the Door to the Father. It is He Who knocks at the doors of our hearts, our homes and our Churches. (These thoughts are dependent on the companion for the Year of Mercy printed by the Magnificat Organization.)

Christ stands knocking at the doors of our hearts. He calls tenderly to us and, as He did in that upper room where the Disciples gathered in fear, He calls out to us: **“Do not fear! It is I!”**

Another door which is important for us is the door to the Church. The Church door is a witness to us of important moments in our lives. We approach the Church at the time of Baptism, weddings, funerals, and other significant events.

Continued on page 3

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

She had supernaturally perceived the depth and significance of Mary’s Fiat, the momentous **“Yes”** to God’s call to a central role in His divine plan of Salvation.

“Blessed are you,” Elizabeth said. And Mary acknowledged this humbly, with no empty modesty, in her gracious and magnificent reply - her Canticle that we now know as the Magnificat. **“Behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.”** (Lk 1-48b).

I hear Mary’s response, in words or in song, and my own spirit rejoices within me. Mary said, **“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For He has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness; ...The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.”** (Lk 1:46-48a,49)

The call tonight from the Lord, to me and to you, to us all, as we sit in silent and wondrous reflection on the richness of Mary’s Visitation with Elizabeth, is embodied in our theme for tonight’s worship - that **we accept and obey the will of God in our lives.**

The discernment of God’s will in our lives and circumstances comes about in various ways - through prayer, in Scripture reflection, in deliberate search of the knowledge of God’s ways; through the habitual pursuit of sanctity, frequent reception of the Sacraments, consorting with the just and avoiding the wicked.

Even when we get to know what God’s will is with certainty, what may be more difficult is our acceptance and obedience. And yet, we are not to be fazed by such difficulty, for the road to glory is through the Cross, and **“no disciple is above his teacher, no slave above his master.”** (Mt 10:24)

It may be hard to be reflective about doing God’s will at this time of the year when our focus is more on partying and celebrating the holidays. Yet, we are asked to make this a time of renewal and rededication. Let us make this, then, our Christmas offering to the Lord - to really find time to re-examine our lives and determine how we can do better as we await the Lord’s coming.

Mary believed that what was spoken to her by the angel of the Lord would be fulfilled. If we but ask, we shall be given great faith. Let us ask our Holy Mother to pray for us, that the Lord’s will be fulfilled in our lives.

Directions:

- 1. Be obedient to the will of God.**
- 2. Abide by God’s call to shepherd His flock.**

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE:
- FROM FR. PAUL LEHMAN**

Dear Beloved brothers and sisters,

Allow me to express my sincere wishes for a holy and joy filled Christmas and New Year for all of you and your families. This liturgical season reflects the changes and movements of the seasons we see in nature. After the birth of Jesus the days gradually become longer. John the Baptist announced that He (Jesus) must increase; he (John the Baptist) must decrease. After the birth of John the Baptist (June 24th), the days become shorter.

Jesus the Son of God shines brightly in the midst of a dark world. As these days lengthen into longer Spring days, may the spiritual brightness of Jesus radiate more brightly in each one of you and each member of your families. I see the brightness of God's love shine so brightly in so many of you. May that Holy Presence grow and increase each day of the New Year.

- Father Paul

NEWS (continued from page 2)

The Church door is the door to salvation, the portal of the Kingdom of God. Again we note that Jesus, Himself, told us that He is the Door to the Kingdom of Heaven. We go to Christ and through Christ to reach our eternal home always acting in the love of the Father Who is always willing, through His Son, to forgive our sins and other failings.

Christ not only invites us to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but He also leaves the keys to His Apostles assuring them that "whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; whatever loosed on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." It is for us to enter through the door so that Christ may enrich our lives and change them in a loving way and by His grace.

As we continue our Advent journey and our journey through this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we await Jesus, we now look forward to celebrating His birth in a special way. As we welcome Him into our hearts, we know that at the end, we will encounter Him as the Lord and Judge of all.



**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE:
- FROM THE DISTRICT
SERVANT LEADERS**

"Let us be renewed by God's mercy, let us be loved by Jesus, let us enable the power of his love to transform our lives too; and let us become agents of this mercy, channels through which God can water the earth, protect all creation and make justice and peace flourish." (Pope Francis)

What a wonderful way to approach this season of Advent by being ushered into the yearlong **Jubilee of Mercy** as declared by our beloved Pope Francis. While we celebrate Christmas filled with hope, peace, love and joy at the coming of Jesus, our Messiah, the Emmanuel, let us not lose sight of the other greatest gift of Jesus to us, His mercy.

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." (Lk 6:36)

Christmas is a beautiful event to rediscover the joy and the fruitfulness of the mercy of God as we give love and consolation to our family, friends and neighbors, the poor, the lonely and the sick. Christmas is a season not only of gift-giving, but more importantly, of expectant faith, of joyful hope, and prayers, to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus, Who is the Word made flesh.

It is a perfect time to thank you for your faithfulness and commitment to serve our Lord through the BLD Community, where we are spiritually blessed, as we accept the challenge to follow Jesus in our journeys of faith with Him.

Finally, but nonetheless the greatest, we give praise and thanks to God Almighty for the ultimate expression of the Father's love for us, the gift of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. With His rebirth and presence in our lives, we are being healed, transformed, reconciled and made whole.

On behalf of the entire BLD community, we wish you and your families the message of Jesus this Christmas - His peace, His joy, His love and His mercy.

Wishing you all the special blessings of Christmas and a bright and peaceful New Year!

- MANNY & ARLENE MANGALONZO

Christmas Treasure
(a Haiku)

**Life is just too short
To forgo true treasure: Christ
- Life's Truest Treasure**



HOPE AND TELL

“Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” (Lk 7:20)

Although we start with good intentions, sometimes our faith falters. Apprehension about the troubles around us and doubt regarding God’s presence and ability to help, make us ambivalent and lose faith. This doesn’t necessarily mean we have failed.

I used to live a distinctive way of life until a terrible event turned my life upside down. So I began to doubt! Is there someone who cares out there? Is there a God? How can God allow such an abominable event to happen?

“But he should ask in faith, not doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed about by the wind.” (Jas 1:6)

Some people need to doubt before they believe. Doubt leads to questions. When doubt becomes stubborn and results in a prideful lifestyle, it harms faith. When in doubt, we should seek answers and pray for wisdom to deepen our faith.

A mind that waivers is not completely convinced that God’s way is best. It treats God’s Word like human advice, and it retains the option to disobey. It vacillates between obedience to God’s commands and subjective feelings about the world’s ideas. To *believe not doubt* means, not only believing in the existence of God, but also believing in His loving care. If our faith is new, weak, or struggling, we need to remember that we can trust God. God is always faithful.

God understands our human condition. He knows we are weak, but He is always full of mercy and compassion. He gives us answers that are simple to understand, clear, and definitive, as when we read in Scriptures about the mighty deeds, actions and powerful teachings of Jesus. From these we can see that He is the Messiah that was promised to us. Jesus Christ is our Savior; His example of obedience and trust in God is the Way that we need to follow on our life’s journey. He is the fulfillment of God’s promise to us.

By His presence, we are filled with wonder and tears of thanksgiving and joy as we experience an inexhaustible treasure that flows into us from God’s heart. It is at this intersection of laughter and joy that we find peace beyond all understanding. With hope, I can tell everyone the Good News that our Redeemer has been born on Christmas.

Happy Birthday Jesus!

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$ 3,072	\$ 137,964
Mission Collections	\$ 191	\$ 8,083
Christmas Envelopes	\$ 864	\$ 1,001

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Medical Mission

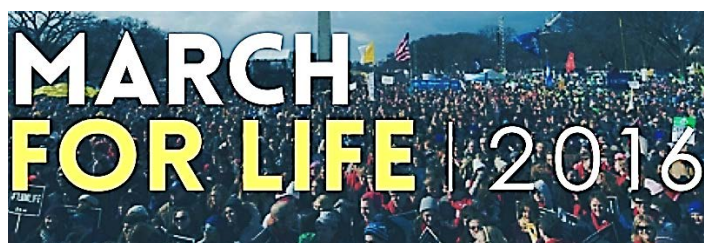
February 22-25, 2016

Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines

Contact Persons: Ramon/Leonie Mariazeta

rmariazeta@msn.com / lmariazeta@msn.com

bldmmcoord@outlook.com



Friday, January 22, 2016

Contact Persons: Ray Salmo – raycsalmo@aol.com /
Cezar Calingo – cezar02459@yahoo.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

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on **Saturday, January 16:**

Prayer Leadership, CMP II - Part 1 & Encounter with Jesus

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Please designate: **Bukas Loob sa Diyos Foundation, Inc - BLD NEWARK** as the beneficiary for AMAZON SMILE's donations.

Reminder:

**NO WORSHIP on Friday,
December 25 and January 1**

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Jan 8	Formation
		Jan 15	Management
		Jan 22	Mission
		Jan 29	Pastoral



NEWS

COUNSELS

Divine Mercy in Rahway opens its Holy Doors

As previously announced, Divine Mercy Parish in Rahway has been designated as one of the seven Pilgrimage Churches in the Archdiocese of Newark for this year's **Jubilee of Mercy**. Last Sunday, at the 11am Mass, the Holy Doors were blessed and opened by Fr. Dennis Kaelin (Pastor) and Fr. Robert Lamirez.



The Holy Doors welcome everyone who is asking for His Mercy and Healing. Note also that inside St. Mary's Church at Divine Mercy Parish, on the left side by the statue of Mother Mary, are relics of St. Faustina and St. Pope John Paul II. Please invite your family and friends to visit.

Let us all spread the message of His Unfathomable Mercy.

The other six Pilgrimage Churches in the Archdiocese of Newark during the Jubilee Year of Mercy are:

Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart
89 Ridge Street
Newark, NJ
973-484-4600

The Holy Door will be open Sunday - Friday 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., and Saturdays 4 - 7 p.m.

Continued on page 4

Focus

THEME: We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we allow Him to be at the center of our family life and activities.

READINGS : Sir 3:2-6 / 1 Sm 1:20-22,24-28
Ps 128:1-2,3,4-5 / Ps 84:2-3,5-6,9-10
Col 3:12-21 / 1 Jn 3:1-2,21-24
Lk 2:41-52

ORDER: Love one another just as He commanded us.

REFLECTION:

This Sunday is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and appropriately, the readings for the Mass present family-related themes. In 1 Samuel, Hannah dedicates her son, Samuel, to the Lord. In Sirach, the wisdom of honoring parents is highlighted with a promise that those who do so



“will have joy in their own children and when they pray they are heard.” (Sir 3:5) In Colossians, 3:18-21, St. Paul has instructions on our relationships within our families: *“Wives, be subordinate to your husbands, as is proper in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and avoid any bitterness toward them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged.”*

In the Gospel, St. Luke presents that one glimpse we have of Jesus growing up, which is the time when Jesus was “lost” for three days. *...Continued on page 2*

Promise of the Week

“What your hands provide you will enjoy; you will be blessed and prosper” (Ps 128:2)

Francis Also Reminds 'Salvation Is Free,' Warns Against Being Led to Believe Otherwise

Deborah Castellano Lubov | Dec 16 | ZENIT.org | General Audience | Vatican City

When we sin, but we recognize it and ask for forgiveness, Jesus celebrates. Pope Francis underscored this during his weekly General Audience this morning in St. Peter's Square, just one day before his 79th birthday.

Francis began his address recalling that the **Jubilee of Mercy** was inaugurated this past week by the opening of the Holy Door, and reminded those gathered that the Jubilee is not only in Rome, but in dioceses worldwide, "so it can become an experience shared by every person."



The Holy Father prayed that this ecclesial communion becomes more and more intense, so that the Church is the living sign of the love and mercy of the Father in the world. "But mercy and forgiveness should not remain beautiful words," Francis stressed, "but should be realized in everyday life. Loving and forgiving are visible and concrete signs that faith has transformed our hearts and allows us to express in ourselves the very life of God."

"To love and forgive as God loves and forgives," the Pontiff stressed, "is a program of life that cannot know interruptions or exceptions, but encourages us to go further and further without ceasing, with the certainty of being sustained by the paternal presence of God."

A Warning

The Pontiff warned against those who are 'clever' and say you have to pay for or 'buy' salvation. "Salvation one doesn't pay for. The salvation one doesn't buy. The door is Jesus and Jesus is free! He himself speaks of those that makes others enter in a way they shouldn't, and simply says they are thieves and bandits. Still, be careful: salvation is free. Crossing though the Holy Door is a sign of true conversion of our heart."

The Pope stressed that the door is always wide open to not exclude anyone, "not even this one or that one that bothers me."

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The parent in me can relate to the anxiety that Mary and Joseph felt as they searched Jerusalem for their Son. The same parent in me is a little troubled by the seeming nonchalance of Jesus's response when Mary asked Him, "*Son, why have you done this to us?*" It makes me wonder why St. Luke included this episode in his Gospel account. The answer, I think, lies in the rhetorical question Jesus Himself asked, "*Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?*" The Bible footnotes here tell us some, about the significance of this episode: "It presents Jesus in the role of the faithful Jewish boy, raised in the traditions of Israel, and fulfilling all that the law requires."

Beyond that though, I surmise that at twelve, Jesus must have been at the crossroads of transitioning from a boy to a man. In St. Luke's re-telling, this seems to have happened, within the abbreviated span of two sentences: (i) the Boy replying "*Why were you looking for me?*" and then (ii) the Man stating His commitment, "*that I must be in my Father's house.*" It is just like Jesus to have as His sole focus, God the Father and doing His will.

While we are, unfortunately, left to wonder what Jesus's childhood must have been like, my guess is that it was similar to other children's; maybe even similar to ours. However, at that moment, when He spoke that He must be in the Father's house, it seems that Jesus Himself took a dramatic turn. He matured and grew up.

We can think of this episode as being an important juncture: first He was a child just as we all have been children; and then afterwards, we don't even have to wonder about His years between twelve and thirty - St. Luke clearly indicates that He was obedient to His parents and pursued the things that would advance Him in wisdom and favor of His sole focus, the Father.

For us this too is the really important part. We too must grow up and advance, keeping our focus on the Father.

In these frantic days that lead up to the celebration of Christmas, it is much too easy to lose track of what's truly important. Maybe this is part of the reason why our Church fathers have placed this feast in the Sunday immediately following December 25, so that we can reflect on our relationships within the family and not lose the Christ in Christmas. With the holidays' emphasis on gifts, the elusive art of appreciating and being appreciated is a challenge that often distracts us. While it may seem that the holidays peak on Christmas day, wouldn't you agree

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The Canticle of Mary



The Canticle of Mary, also known as the Magnificat, is prayed daily in the Liturgy of the Hours at Vespers or Evening Prayer. It is a hymn of our Blessed Mother Mary, reflecting the exceptional richness of her interior world. The profound structure of her canticle of prayer is praise, thanksgiving and grateful joy. In St. Louis de Montfort's words, it is "the only prayer we have which was composed by our Lady, or rather, composed by Jesus in her, for it was He Who spoke through her lips." In a sense, not only is it a prayer suggested by the Holy Spirit; it is uttered by Jesus Himself from the mouth of His mother.

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God, my savior."

The Magnificat sprang forth from the heart of Mary while she carried the Savior in her womb, and, as St. Louis de Montfort suggests, it should resound in the hearts of the faithful when they receive Jesus Christ, the Lord, in Holy Communion

Having just attended a 3 day silent retreat, I realized that my soul had become drowsy with the anxieties of this world. My praise and thanksgiving had become just verbal, not arising from deep within my soul. "Yes," I say to our Lord in Holy Communion. "I thank you Lord, I praise you and I love you," yet it sadly seemed to lack fervor. When I decided to go back to the basics, I then realized the need to do something to enliven and enrich my prayer life.

So how can I be like Mary when I receive her Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord in Holy Communion? St. Louis de Montfort tells us to "perform all our actions with Mary, in Mary, through Mary and for Mary." So that is what I did - I recalled my heartfelt experiences in Fatima, when I asked Mother Mary to help me quiet down so I could go deep into my soul, and with her, said to our Lord, "let Your divine will be done in my life."

Now I ask Mary to pray with me, so that together with her, I can proclaim the greatness of the Lord. Now I ask for her intercession to her spouse, the Holy Spirit, to fan the flame of love in my heart, so that with →→

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that the heart of Christmas is not in the rush to it? For me, it starts in the quiet of the next few days after, when I begin again, to try to figure out what's truly important.

For believers, therein lies the True Gift – it has already been figured out for us. Jesus has shown us the Way. It is having God at the center of our lives and our families.



Lord, another year is about to close. Sometimes I think that all I am sure of is that I have advanced in age... But I know that that is not true. While far from being wise, I know that I have gained wisdom because of knowing You. We all have much to learn from You and St. Joseph and from Mary; much to learn from God the Father and Your Holy Spirit. And even much to learn from friends, and especially, members of our families. Grant that our focus too, be on the Father always, by placing You in the midst of what we do in our families and in our Community's activities, that we may today and someday be truly blessed with the fruits of Your salvation. Amen.

Directions:

- 1. Seek reconciliation and be united with one another.**
- 2. Pray for each other.**

→→→ Mary's spirit in me, I rejoice again in the Lord my Savior, for all the blessings I've received and for those yet to come, including any trials and challenges. Now, I ask Mary to go with me wherever I go and to help me take her Son to the world; with her intercession I echo the psalmist:

"Magnify the Lord with me" (Ps 34:4)

May the Lord be magnified in our lives as we welcome the Child Jesus this Christmas, in every Holy Communion, in every instance of our lives. Amen!

NEWS

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Other Pilgrimage Churches in the Newark Archdiocese, continued:

Our Lady of Mercy

2 Freemont Avenue, Park Ridge, NJ
201-391-5315

*The Holy Door will be open Daily from 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Confession will be available on Saturday 9 - 9:30 a.m., 1 - 1:30 p.m., Monday 7 - 7:30 p.m.*

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

127 Paterson Avenue, Wallington, NJ
973-778-7405

Saint Francis Xavier

243 Abington Avenue West, Newark, NJ
973-482-8410

The Holy Door will be open Saturdays and Sundays

Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus

131 East Edgar Road, Linden, NJ
908-862-1116

Our Lady of Mercy

40 Sullivan Drive, Jersey City, NJ
201-434-7500

The Holy Door will be open every Wednesday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Francis Also Reminds...

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Celebration in Heaven

An important sign of the Jubilee is Confession, Francis pointed out, noting, "God understands us even in our limitations and contradictions."

With God's love, the Pope explained, He tells us how when we confess, He comes even closer to us and encourages us to look ahead. "He says more: that when we confess our sins and ask for forgiveness, there is a celebration in Heaven. Jesus celebrates: this is His mercy: Let us not be discouraged. Go forward, go ahead with this!"

When we recognize and confess our sins, there is a celebration in Heaven!" Francis said.

The Pope lamented how often he has heard: 'Father, I cannot forgive,' and went on to question how we can ask God to forgive us, 'if we are not capable of forgiveness?' "Forgiving is a great thing. Of course, forgiving is not easy... But if we open ourselves to receive God's mercy for us, we too, become capable of forgiveness ... Therefore, courage!"

The Holy Father reminded those gathered that God "asks us, through genuine conversion, to open the doors of our hearts to a more sincere love of God and neighbor," and prayed that faithful receive the grace which can make us "ever more effective signs of His reconciling love at work in our world."

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe & Love Offering	\$ 3,010	\$ 140,974
Mission Collections	\$ 42	\$ 8,125
Christmas Envelopes	\$ 1,308	\$ 2,309

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Eucharistic Celebration - Friday, Jan 8, 2016 Celebrant will be Fr. Joe Valle

- recently ordained priest and former member of the BLD Youth Ministry (Crossings 1 / YE 10 / YLSS 11)

Medical Mission

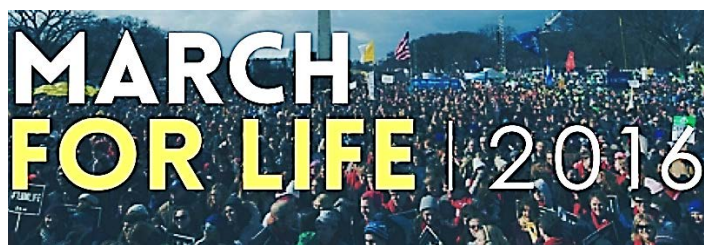
February 22-25, 2016

Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines

Contact Persons: Ramon/Leonie Mariazeta

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Friday, January 22, 2016

Contact Persons: Ray Salmo - raycsalmo@aol.com /
Cezar Calingo - cezar02459@yahoo.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Teachings resume on **Friday, January 8** with:
a **CDFP Overview** (for ME 46; after Worship); and,
on **Saturday, January 16**:

Prayer Leadership, CMP II - Part 1 & Encounter with Jesus

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Jan 8	Formation
		Jan 15	Management
		Jan 22	Mission
		Jan 29	Pastoral

Merry Christmas!!!
- from the BLD Newark Word Ministry

