



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS



Archbishop of Newark

Joseph W. Cardinal Tobin,
C.Ss.R., D.D.

Cardinal Tobin: Communicating Hope and Trust in Our Time

*(Cardinal Tobin's speech from
the 51st annual World
Communications Day in
Brooklyn on May 17.)*

Source: RCAN.org

There is a well-worn motivational fable that's been retold in various forums involving a man walking a stretch of beach who encounters a child throwing stranded starfish back into the surf. When the man questions what difference this action could possibly make, the child lobs another starfish into the water, noting, "It sure made a difference to that one."

On March 10th of this year, I found myself accompanying Mr. Catalino Guerrero to his deportation hearing. I did not expect to have anyone compare me to a child or Mr. Guerrero to a form of aquatic life. I simply walked beside a 59-year-old grandfather, a man who has lived in this country for over twenty-five years without ever being accused of a crime – not even a traffic ticket. Catalino, who suffers from diabetes and a heart condition, is anything but a "bad hombre". He has now been granted a one-year stay and some have noted that this act of accompaniment was similar to the work of the child with the starfish, that of making a singular difference in the face of vast hopelessness.

In his message for the 51st World Communications Day, Pope Francis observed that life is not simply a bare succession of events, but a history, a story waiting to be told through the choice of an interpretative lens that can select and gather the most relevant data.

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COUNSELS

Reflection for June 2017

THEME: We are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we forgive others unconditionally.

WORD: Acts 8:5-8,14-17 ~ Ps 66:1-3,4-5,6-7,16,20
1 Pt 3:15-18 ~ Jn 14:15-21

ORDER: **"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."**
(Jn 20:21b)

REFLECTION:

Our community word for June is – **The gifts of the Holy Spirit strengthen our commitment to serve God.** This month, we are exhorted to reflect on our relationship with God, particularly on our commitment to serve Him in building His Kingdom on earth. As we live a fruitful prayer life, He equips us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we need in accomplishing the task of building up the body of Christ. Meditating on the word of God enables us to make wisdom-filled decisions that allow the Spirit to develop godliness in us, deepening our commitment to serve our omnipotent God.

The 1st Sunday of the month commemorates the Solemnity of Pentecost. And for this week, the discerned theme is: **We are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we forgive others unconditionally.** Pentecost is the Church's celebration of receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit breathes peace and Jesus Himself is Peace as He says to us – **"Peace be with you."** (Jn 20:19b) True Peace means to be reconciled with God; and to be reconciled with God is to be reconciled with one another. We become grateful to God for redeeming and saving us through His great mercy... *...Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them." (Jn 20:23a)

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

*This He has said is the greatest
Command, not just a request
Love God with all your strength
Love God at any length*

In the Gospel for the daily Mass on Tuesday, June 8 (Mk 12:29), Jesus uses the Shema Prayer to answer a scribe's question about the first of all the commandments: **"Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone!"** He follows that with the commandment to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

It would have been easier if He just gave us clear rules to follow, because rules allow for measurable compliance. One either does things or does not; and the instances can be counted. But loving God does not really involve a quota to be met.

Jesus' left His command to love God open-ended in terms of what we actually need to do, but He was qualitatively very clear. He then took things to another level by saying that we must love our neighbors as ourselves. At this, the scribe correctly said that loving God and neighbor **"is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."** (Mk 12:33)

Too often, we equate love of God with formal practices and rules. While it certainly is appropriate to comply, compliance must lead to the greater goal of expressing love for Him by seeking to constantly find out what He wants us to do when faced with the many choices that life presents to us. In all situations, the essential question actually is, which choice puts God first?

By instructing us to love our neighbors as ourselves, Jesus is showing us how to choose God first and foremost. In moments when we have to decide, rather than asking "What's in it for me?" we should be asking "What's in it for God?"; and then we should seek the answer to that.

This way would lead to prioritizing the benefit to others as we do our own interests first, just as He would want us to. Oddly enough, in reality, that's where the truest and longer lasting sense of fulfillment resides. It is not in how comfortable we make our lives, but it is in how much we matter to God and others because of our love for Him and them.



When I was a child, I wasn't fond of the name that my father had given me. I was born on the last day of July (don't ask me what year), so "Julio" made sense. To complete it though, he made my first name "Cezar" – an obvious reference to the Roman who died on the Ides of March (because of that, March 15 has more than just a Shakespearean significance for me).

The episode where Christ says, **"Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God"** (from the Gospel Reading for Tuesday, June 6; Mk 12:17), had added to my qualms about the name I was given when I was born. Whenever that Gospel was read, I felt an unwanted spotlight over my head shining an accusing light on me. However since joining BLD and reflecting on God's Word in our Word Sharing Circles, it's the wisdom of this quote from Jesus that has astounded me.

First, St. Mark sets the stage: some Pharisees and Herodians intended to ensnare Jesus in a trap that was meant to question the validity of His teachings. They started with some flattery, then quickly sprang this question on Him: **"Is it lawful to pay the census tax?"** With a flair for the dramatic, Jesus then asked for a denarius and gave His now famous response.

Then **"they were utterly amazed at him."** (Mk 12:17)

I wonder if their amazement was because Jesus skillfully avoided the trap they had connived to set upon Him, or if it was for something even bigger than that. I actually think that it's both, and therein is the practical lesson for all of us, even to this day.

Beyond avoiding devious scheming though, in His response, He allowed for the need for the temporal order that good government makes possible, and even necessary. So good government that does the most good to the most number of people really should receive our financial and political support. We must give to Caesar what enables his government to do that.

In the same breath, He points out what is truly most important, *God*. This is ultimately the more important thing that we must do - give to God, especially as embodied by the commandment to "give our" love to Him with all our heart, mind and soul. It is our love of God that should dictate the rest of what we do in life.

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Cardinal Tobin...

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I would like to reflect with you this morning on the experience of communicating hope. This was not the reason that prompted me to walk with Mr. Guerrero on that snowy Friday morning. Rather, standing beside him, praying with him and his family, walking with leaders of Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities in northern New Jersey, speaking with the media covering the event – these actions taken together provided a lens through which others might “read” the event. And the “reading” led people to hope.

As Pope Francis points out in his Message for the 2017 World Day of Communication, for us Christians, that lens can only be good news, beginning with the Good News par excellence: “the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God” (Mk 1, 1). What is more, this good news – Jesus himself – is not good because it has nothing to do with suffering, but rather because suffering itself becomes part of a bigger picture. It is seen as an integral part of Jesus’ love for the Father and for all humankind. In Christ, God has shown his solidarity with every human situation. He has told us repeatedly, but never better than in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, that we are not alone, for we have a Father who is constantly mindful of his children.

It brings to light something Christians believe about grace, the power of God active in the world. Grace is not an abstraction; it is not a theory. It is particular. It stirs individual hearts, transforms particular situations, and changes the world in a gritty, yet transcendent way.

The appreciation for grace is one of the more significant pieces of pastoral wisdom Pope Francis offers for our deep reflection in his exhortation on the family, *Amoris Laetitia*/The Joy of Love. We never know how God’s grace will break through, to everyone’s surprise, but we have to be open to it. We have to believe in it.

Click this [LINK](#) for the rest of Cardinal Tobin’s moving speech on Communicating Hope.



COUNSELS

(from page 1)

and forgiveness. And as Jesus sends us to spread peace, He also gives the authority to extend forgiveness, accompanied with this promise in John 20:23a – **“Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them.”**

The theme for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity is: **We are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we firmly believe in the saving power of God.** Though the Holy Trinity is a profound mystery, it is a powerful Truth that all Christian believers must not doubt! If we deny that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct, we deny God His inherent personal and relational characteristics. We must constantly pray to our Triune God that by His grace we may have full knowledge of His mighty power that saved us, and exalt Christ over all so that we will properly represent Him on earth (Phil 3:10,12). Jesus’ promise this week assures us: **“Everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.”** (Jn 3:16b)

The theme for the 3rd Sunday - Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*) is: **We are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we are nourished daily by the word of God.** In the celebration of *Corpus Christi*, we profess our faith in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. As believers of Christ, the “spiritual food” through the partaking in the mystery of Holy Communion nourishes our piety and transforms us so that *we become What we consume* and we no longer live for ourselves, but that Christ may live in us. Receiving Holy Communion as often as we can allows us to participate in the ongoing redemptive mission of Christ, as He promised us this week: **“The one who feeds on me will have life.”** (Jn 6:57b)

On the 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, our theme is: **We are strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we testify to others what Jesus has done in our life.** As renewed Christians, we are invited by the Lord not to be afraid to be His witnesses to the transforming grace in our lives. We testify by words, actions and lifestyles, as we openly acknowledge our personal experiences in following Jesus. If our life is a testimony to what Jesus has done, then it should be the reflection of Jesus as we follow His ways. Jesus assures us in His promise that: **“Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father.”** (Mt 10:32)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we must not be afraid to defend our faith ...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

but be uncompromising to the Truth that He has taught and revealed to us in His words and through the teachings of the Church.

Directions:

Use your God-given gifts to serve His people and contribute to the works of His Kingdom.

Give to God

(from page 2)

As for that name that my father gave me when I was born, what an advantage that has now turned out to be. While it's a rather common name in the Philippines, it is still quite unique in this country. In places, such as at work, since I'm the only one with it, it has made me more memorable and recognizable. This has made my name into the blessing it was meant to be.

Truly, there is so much to be thankful for and each day we must give to God what should be His – our love. All the time and always, Alleluia!



BLD Newark
1992-2017

Save the Date

This year marks BLD-Newark's 25th anniversary. You are part of the beautiful tapestry the Lord has woven into this community's history, and we invite you to join us as we celebrate this important milestone.

Please save the following dates:

- August 19, 2017 - Community Celebration
Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway
- August 20, 2017 - 25th Anniversary Dinner Dance

We look forward to reminiscing our yesterday, celebrating our today, and envisioning our future with you.

By His grace,
The 25th Anniversary Committee

"May the LORD bless you and keep you! May the LORD let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you. May the LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace!"
(Numbers 6:24-26)

LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,528	\$ 28,654
Love Offerings	\$ 2,127	\$ 27,580
Mission Collections	\$ 41	\$ 2,852

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Teaching Calendar


- Teachings for Saturday, **June 17, 2017** - 1 to 6 pm:
- Healing and Deliverance (LSS 1-45)
 - Encounter with Jesus: Luke / John (LSS 1-46B)
 - New Creation Realities / Growth in Prayer (LSS 47)



SINGLES ENCOUNTER #37
June 16-18, 2017

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center
Garrison, NY 10524

Contacts:
Jutt Bustos – jutt.bustos@bldnewark.com
Lita Alfaro – lita.alfaro@bldnewark.com



Solo Parents Encounter Weekend #19
June 23-25, 2017

DAYS Hotel Conference Center East Brunswick
195 Route 18 South, East Brunswick, NJ

Contacts: **Cherry & Rueben Vibar**
(SPE18 CS)



YOUTH ENCOUNTER #24
"Come and Follow Me..."
July 7-9, 2017
Fellowship Deaconry
3575 Valley Road
Basking Ridge
Contact: dyc@bldnewark.com



FAMILY ENCOUNTER 24
July 14 - 16, 2017
Malvern Retreat House
Malvern PA

Submit Completed Applications for:
* Willy & Amor Ferrer
* Noel & Gale Deleon

As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord: Joshua 24:15

Marshaling	Date	Apostolate
	Jun 9	Mission
	Jun 16	Pastoral
	Jun 23	Evangelization
	Jun 30	Formation