



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

Msgr. Paul expresses his gratitude

BLD Newark's beloved Spiritual Director celebrates another milestone... 70 years!

*The following is from his email to the Community, which he sent out, the very next day after last Saturday's big celebration. His family and friends and many BLD members came from all over to grace the special occasion. (His actual birthday is July 10; **Msgr. Paul, Happy Birthday!**)*

In my preaching at the Mass yesterday I spoke about the importance of the number 70 and 7 in the Bible. This morning I received a text from a Cursillo member who attended and said that if I added up 43 years of priesthood and 70 years of life I will get 113....the Spirit told her to look at Psalm 113....

Psalm 113

The LORD Exalts the Humble.

- 1 PRAISE THE LORD! (Hallelujah!)
Praise, O servants of the LORD,
Praise the name of the LORD.
- 2 Blessed be the name of the LORD
From this time forth and forever.
- 3 From the rising of the sun to its setting
The name of the LORD is to be praised
[with awe-inspired reverence].
- 4 The LORD is high above all nations,
And His glory above the heavens.
- 5 Who is like the LORD our God,
Who is enthroned on high.

In gratitude and praise to our Lord and Savior, and in heartfelt appreciation for all who made my celebration a gift: the SPE dancers, the Praise Ministry, the venue set up and take down teams, the DCS and video creators... and all who helped in any way... I lift God's name on high... Let us as a Community heed today's Gospel and prepare a way for the Lord... in a blessing prayer for all... and a Christlike love - *Monse*

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COUNSELS

"Who is My Neighbor?"

THEME: Disciples of Christ are empowered when they show mercy and compassion.

WORD: Dt 30:10-14 ~ Ps 69:14,17,30-31,33-34,36,37
Col 1:15-20 ~ Lk 10:25-37

ORDER: **"You shall love the Lord, your God... and your neighbor as yourself."** (Lk 10:27)

REFLECTION:

In Jesus' time, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a major thoroughfare for trade and pilgrims. It was long and winding and it stretched for about 18 miles, with large portions of it through areas of desert. It was notorious for danger and difficulty, and travelers on it were easy targets for bandits. It was called the "Way of Blood" because of the bloodshed that was frequently caused by robbers. Jesus used this setting to respond to the question posed by a scholar of the law: **"Who is my neighbor?"** (Lk 10:29) We now refer to His teaching as the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Jesus related this vivid imagery, of a man who was victimized by robbers, and who was in dire condition, stripped of everything he had, beaten and helpless. Then He described three travelers on that road who each came upon the man. When they saw him, the first two, a priest, and then a Levite, passed by on the other side. Why did they not stop to help?



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Promise of the Week

"The Lord hears the poor, and does not spurn those in bondage." – Ps 69:34

The following is from a letter, addressed to Fr. Paul Lehman (for whom a Memorial Mass was celebrated at BLD's First Friday Eucharistic Celebration last week). This letter was written by ME 1's Tito Richard and Tita Lee de la Fuente, soon after Fr. Paul's passing last month. This week's CN features part one, and in it, they highlight some of Fr. Paul's instrumental contributions and sacrifices for the BLD Community.

DEAR FR. PAUL,

I hesitated writing this letter, knowing how uncomfortable you are with accolades and attention. I understand why; because you had always pointed us to Jesus, wanting us to keep our eyes on Him, to commune with Him, to make our lives about Him, so that we may truly become His disciples. You were pretty good at stopping me on my tracks whenever you detected a hint of praise for you coming from me. Simply calling me "Smoothie" did it, for it drove home the message that I should work on overcoming the character flaws that keep me apart from the Truth. It is now also clear to me that you were teaching us to seek the only approval that mattered, the approval of the One to Whom we must render an account to.

With the life you lived, I believe that He gave you His judgment and overwhelming approval: "Well done, good and faithful servant...Enter into the joy of your Lord." So that would make you one of His saints...

And since stories of saints are told to inspire faith among believers, please allow me then, to share with our beloved community, just a tiny bit more about you. Through this sharing, I pray that we will continue to learn from your example as God's good and faithful servant.

A Priest Who Loves

It was in late 1994 that ME 3's Baby Arambulo talked us into attending the Sunday Eucharist at St. Antoninus' Church in order to meet **"an American priest who loves Filipinos."** That was you! Years later, you laughed when we recounted this to you. Well, that day was the beginning of BLD Newark's relationship with you, one that would last about 25 years, and eventually involve the Global BLD Community. Throughout our long history together, you lived up to that characterization of you, as a priest who loves, not only Filipinos, but every one of God's children to whom you had been sent.

A Gift to BLD in North America

Your ministry in BLD is a gift from the Lord and a visible sign of His love for us. You were sent to us when we were mere toddlers, who needed →→

→ continuous spiritual nourishment and guidance. You nurtured, pastored and directed us through our formation, growth and maturation as a missionary BLD district. You brought BLD Newark into more active participation in the life and work of the Archdiocese, which resulted in our designation as a private association of the faithful. You generously shared yourself with other BLD communities in the US and Canada, and in the process, showed everyone the importance of cultivating closer relationships with their local dioceses.

Positive Impact to Global BLD

In at least three ways, your leadership had a huge and positive impact on the Global BLD Community.

First, during BLD's darkest hours, when conflict within BLD Manila threatened to engulf all of BLD, you stood for truthful communication, dialogue, forgiveness and reconciliation. You traveled to Manila on a mission of reconciliation, met with the principal players, listened, prayed and dialogued with them; you forgave and asked for forgiveness. You resolutely stayed above the fray, shunning any negative talk. What no one else knew was that you also undertook the trip at great personal sacrifice because of the intense back pain that prevented you from sleeping on the plane (with relief only coming from laying down on the plane's floor whenever it was possible). When the division in Manila ended in a split, you encouraged conflicted North American districts to pray and to remain one with BLD, which they did.

Second, through the Archdiocese of Newark's canonical evaluation of the BLD Covenant of Communion, you helped initiate and apply the Global Community's statutes, which were then brought into alignment with canon law and the ecclesiastical principles of subsidiarity and authority of the local bishop.

Third, you ignited a zeal for social justice in BLD when you advocated and facilitated the formation of a joint ministry between BLD and Gawad Kalinga, to build homes for the poor in the Philippines. The BLD-GK program started in Newark, beginning with the Fr. Paul J. Lehman Village in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. This work eventually spread out and involved many other districts in the US, Canada and the Philippines, ultimately benefiting several thousand people with homes, communities, livelihood skills, opportunities for economic advancement, and most importantly, **hope!**

(Next week, the CN will have the letter's concluding half, which includes some of the many personal ways that Fr. Paul helped countless individual members of BLD.)

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

What were they doing or thinking? Some commentaries have offered the explanation that they, as religious, were forbidden by Jewish law to come close to the dead, for doing so would make them unclean. Others have countered that the man was not dead; and so, it may have been that the priest and the Levite were just afraid, and concerned only about their own safety.

Meanwhile, the third traveler was moved with compassion at the sight of the helpless man. Luke's account of Jesus' story gives a clear picture of the Samaritan helper; and from what he did for the man, much more can be deduced. He was ready and willing to get involved. He had skills and resources, and knew how to use them. He was strong, generous, and trustworthy. His whole being was empowered as he showed mercy and compassion.

"Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" (Lk 10:36) The scholar showed that he clearly understood the meaning of Jesus' parable when he answered, **"The one who treated him with mercy."** (Lk 10:37) Compassion leads to mercy, and in this case, the Jewish victim was delivered from the judgment of a Samaritan, someone who could have just ignored him or even treated him like an enemy.

→→

→ Is the Good Samaritan a personification of Jesus? What is He teaching, not only the scholar in this Gospel episode, but indeed, all of us as Christians to be like?

In this parable Jesus illustrates the superiority of love over legalism and the laws made by man. He exhorts us to pursue universal love and mercy. Among the lessons that He teaches is that compassion does not discriminate; it does not impose class, religious, or territorial distinctions; it does not know prejudice, and is void of judgment. This teaching from Jesus should serve as a great catalyst to move us to act!

The parable also made me wonder about why people still took the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, when it was known to be filled with dangers and difficulties. Maybe, it was necessary; perhaps it was the only road they could take. So, I am reminded of a similar road that is filled with challenges and hurdles, as well as great expectations; but one that also has light and easy moments, where opportunities come along the way. There is happiness, and at times sadness; success as well as failure. And yet, truly, it is also the only road that we can journey on.

We may not find ourselves in the same exact situation that the Good Samaritan was in, but on this road called LIFE,

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NEWS: MSGR. PAUL...

(from page 1)



**Thank you to all who came and graced this memorable event with their presence.
But most of all... Thank You to our God Almighty!!!**

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

we will meet many fellow travelers who need our help. And there are so many ways for us to also show mercy and compassion for our neighbors! BLD, our parish communities and many charitable organizations provide plenty of opportunities for us to do this.

Jesus whispers, "Go and take the road out of Jerusalem; bring a message of hope and brotherly love for the poor, deprived, and oppressed; proclaim the Good News." As followers of Christ, we are Jesus' hands and feet ushering in the promise of His Gospel: **"For the Lord hears the poor, and does not spurn those in bondage."** (Ps 69:34)

Mother Teresa said that prayer cleanses our hearts, and helps us to love one another as brothers and sisters. Despite our religious, cultural, racial, and ethnic differences, people should remember that we were all created by God Himself. "If we love each other in this way, being merciful to each other comes more naturally." (7 Insights from Mother Teresa on Being Merciful by Christine Galeone; beliefnet.com)

We may not always know how to respond to different situations, but we must trust that God will give us the grace to do His will and to act. The prophet Moses assured us that God's command is not mysterious and remote; it is near to us, **"something very near... in your mouth and in your heart"** (Dt 30:14). And the Lord empowers us when we show mercy and compassion, as we follow His command:



As children of God we are called to serve one another, to be witnesses to the full meaning of universal love. We await the great day when all will be one, when God will reign and we will walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love.

Directions:

1. Help and assist one another unconditionally.
2. Be of God's handiwork and actively do the full meaning of universal love.

Please note that a pdf of this Covenant News is also available online at BLDNEWARK.com

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Last Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,101	\$ 38,039
Love Offerings	\$ 760	\$ 20,169
E-Giving	\$ 474	\$ 5,200
Mission	\$ 103	\$ 11,381

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

BLD COMMUNITY DAY PICNIC

Saturday, August 17, 2019

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			July 19	Formation
			July 26	Management
			Aug 2	Mission
Aug 9	Pastoral			