



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

Vatican at UN: Faithful's commitment to 2030 Agenda is fundamental

- Intervention of the Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the UN Headquarters in New York

JULY 21, 2017 ~ ZENIT STAFF ~ VATICAN DICASTERIES/DIPLOMACY

On July 17, 2017, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations, Monsignor Bernardito Auza intervened, at the institution's headquarters in New York, on the theme: "Mobilize Religious Communities: Act with Solidarity and Shared Responsibility to Put an End to Poverty and to Promote Peace."

The Vatican official pointed out that the greatest contribution that the faithful can make to implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development — whose objective is the reduction of poverty —, is to continue in their commitment to this objective, with the protection of the environment and the building of peace.

This should be done, in the meantime, without the fundamental human coordinates, because otherwise the serious risk is run of having the objectives of sustainable development considered only in a partial way. In particular, there would be the risk of favoring economic and sociological aspects and not their ethical and anthropological context, explained the nuncio.

Therefore, he said it is essential that religious leaders, communities and the faithful contribute to nourish courageously and perseveringly "the soul" and "conscience" in favor of a genuinely sustainable development. In a period such as the present, marked by relativism, it is also urgent to help people develop the true meaning of goodness and beauty.

In addition, the Filipino archbishop said that those actions must be corrected geared to prevent instrumentalizing religion ...Continued on page 2

COUNSELS

True Treasure

THEME: We bear much fruit when we desire the kingdom of Heaven as our treasured possession.

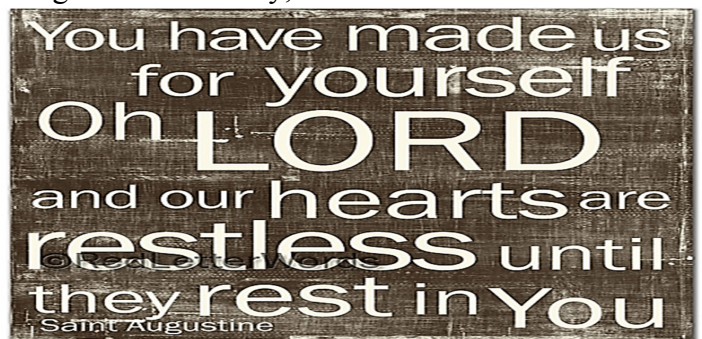
WORD: 1 Kgs 3:5,7-12 ~ Ps 119:57,72,76-77,127-128, 129-130 ~ Rom 8:28-30 ~ Mt 13:44-52

ORDER: "Whatever you ask I shall give you."
(1 Kgs 3:5)

REFLECTION:

We are always fascinated with treasures, whether as a child looking for buried treasure or as an adult searching for the lottery's jackpot prize. We tend to equate possession of these earthly treasures with happiness.

In every person is a desire for happiness. God created in our hearts a yearning for completeness but He alone can satisfy that deep hunger. As St. Augustine would say,



In other words, hearts are never satisfied until they find the Lord. Our will is wired for Him, but if we attach the deepest longings of our hearts to things that can never satisfy us, we will end up injuring ourselves. Wealth will never satisfy, power will never satisfy, ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"All things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." (Rom 8:28)

First Slave

“Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

In the quote above, from Matthew 20:28 Jesus shares another example of His everlasting love and wisdom. However, the episode that prompted Him to say this also showed how the disciples had not yet fully grasped many of the things He had said to them. After the mother of Zebedee’s sons came and asked Jesus to let her sons sit at His right and left, the other ten became indignant with them for having asked this of the Lord. After seeing this, Jesus explained to them that ***“whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave”*** (Mt 20:26-27). He then followed this up by saying something that connects it all together: that He did not come to be served but to serve.

At first, I couldn’t understand what this passage was trying to say and wondered if Jesus meant that we should not be ambitious nor strive to be the best that we can be. This concerned me because this type of striving is exactly what I think I must do, in order to prevail in this world. Why would He fill us with gifts and talents then tell us not to use them to maximize their potential? However, I found that the last line holds the key: Jesus, more than anything, wants us to use our gifts and talents to serve others, and, at most, even to die for others. In a sense, Jesus gives the example of Himself, the greatest Servant of all.

Oftentimes, we can look at this reading, see how indifferent the disciples were, and wonder why they couldn’t understand what Jesus was trying to say. However, the real question is this: do *we* really understand? Sure, we can comprehend the deeper meanings of what Jesus says, but do we really follow the calling to serve others like we are supposed to? That is Jesus’ call for us: we need to use our talents and gifts to serve others, learn to put their interests above our own, and be willing to do something for someone else without expecting any reward or gain.

Serving others usually requires no special talent or ability; it takes a servant attitude to want to, and an observant eye to see what needs to be done. This observant eye can be developed if one has that attitude, but most of us do not see the opportunities to serve, since we often continually just think about ourselves instead of others. Jesus wants us to always remember to serve others no matter what we do.

In this reading, Jesus is not prohibiting us from achieving success and accomplishing our goals, →→

Vatican at UN

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for ends that are incompatible with its true essence, such as incitement to violence, which can lead to committing crimes and atrocities.

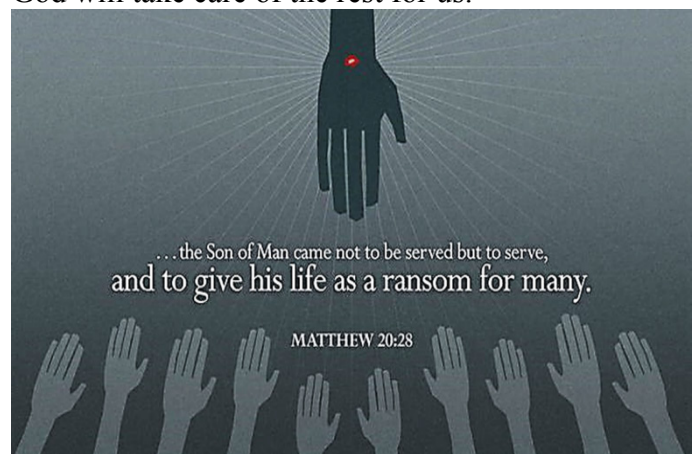
Religious leaders are not political leaders or experts. They are not called to measure objectives and scientific indicators, but to give their reasons for hope and to foster dialogue. Because, the real priority is to promote an integral human development of the whole person, he stressed.

Archbishop Auza also pointed out that religious leaders and the faithful must be committed to the protection of life in order to defend the weakest and the oppressed. In addition, they must help peoples develop their natural resources in a responsible way, to protect them from economic exploitations and political interests.

The Vatican’s Observer at the UN also quoted Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si’*. “The directives for the solution call for an integral focus to combat poverty, to restore the dignity of the excluded and, at the same time, to take care of nature.” And he reiterated that the most important indicators of sustainable development are not quantitative but qualitative and they refer to ethical values, to values that are opposed to the disposable culture.

→ but He wants us to remember that we are here on earth to serve others – not just to acquire wealth and power. Worldly ambition inclines us to exalt ourselves and exercise authority over others; on the other hand, Christian ambition seeks to exalt God and humbly serve.

The more we gain in life, the less we should work just for ourselves. We have to turn our focus toward the needs of others. When we receive good things, we should use them to serve the needy... and then, God will take care of the rest for us.



The Wheat in Me

The Gospel reading for Tuesday, August 1, was also the reading for a recent Sunday Mass. It's the one where Jesus explains to His disciples the



In His response to the disciples' request for an explanation, He describes the good seed as the children of the kingdom, and the weeds as those of the evil one; and that at harvest, the weeds will be collected, separated, and then burned up.

The lesson is clear for me: I want to be a good seed, and at His harvest, I want to be among the wheat. Something else struck me though, on that Friday night at Worship when this passage was discussed during Word Sharing Circles. It occurred to me that in each one of us, there are actually aspects of ourselves that are wheat-like, and there are other traits and habits that belong with the weeds. Then, just as in a garden, despite the best efforts to remove any and all weeds, they still seem to sprout, and do so, even in places where there is almost no soil. This, I thought, shed additional light on the parable, and provided a new dimension to it, stemming from the imagery of stubborn weeds.

I had to get rid of the weeds in me so that His good seed could grow into wheat and become the life-giving bread He calls me to be.

As everyone in BLD will attest, we are all sinners, prone to commit the same sins many times over. And they really are very stubborn, just like the weeds that persist in growing in yards and gardens, despite the efforts one might take to eradicate them. While it's true that our lives have forever been changed for the good because of our encounter with Christ, the challenge to rid ourselves of weeds does not go away. We, however, do not have to face them alone.

Christ set the example for us, and it is to Him that we should cling to – always, His mission was to obey the Father's will, showing us that that is the way to true happiness. It is not easy to surrender self-interest; maybe if it were, everyone would do it. But conquering the difficulties adds to the immense benefit that awaits the disciples who persevere. When we strive to remove every weed, God can harvest the wheat that He planted in us so that we may become like bread that is shared with others.

COUNSELS

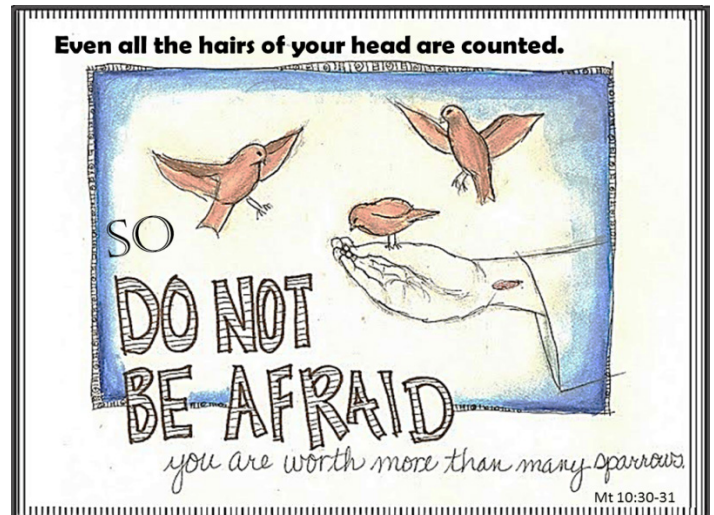
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pleasure will never satisfy. Longings for these will only deepen our wounds. There is no contentment in our souls until we find the key to our happiness.

As we continue to search, for what sometimes seems to be an elusive treasure, we may fall into despair. We must not get weary, for Jesus will not stay hidden. While we desperately seek after Him, He is even more passionately seeking after us. Eventually He will find us, for we are His precious jewels, and He values us so much that He is willing to leave the other ninety-nine in search of the one that is lost. There is so much rejoicing in Heaven because in BLD, Christ has found, not just one, but so many treasures. For the past 25 years, Christ has gathered His treasures in this Community. But we are unlike earthly treasures that are just mere decorations. We are fully alive because of our baptism which has made us living stones, meant to grow and bear fruit.

In the first reading, when the Lord appeared to Solomon, He granted Solomon's request for wisdom and an understanding heart. In our own personal encounters with Christ, we have also received His precious gifts. He has granted us the wisdom to clearly see He Who sought and found us; Jesus Who is really the True Treasure in our lives.

Since we acknowledged Christ as our True Treasure, we have to strive to know Him more deeply for He knows us profoundly and intimately. He loves each one of us as if there were only one of us.



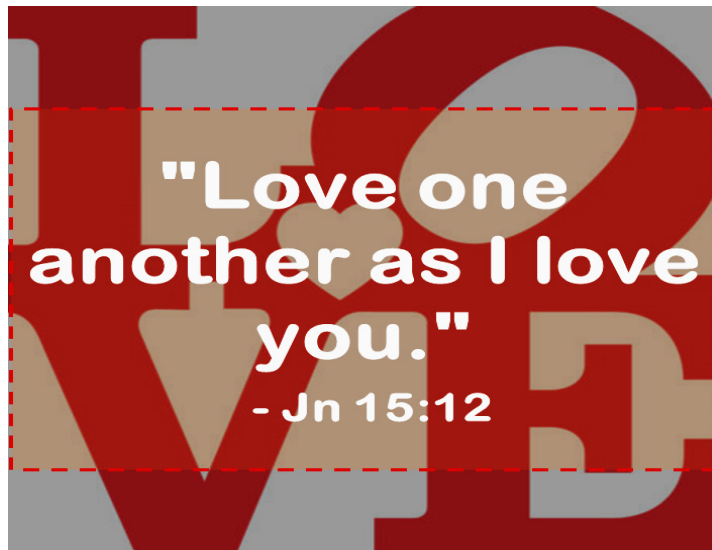
He knows our fears. He is aware of any physical illness that we may have. He understands the pains we are experiencing in our hearts. He knows our worries for our families and our financial burdens. He is offering His friendship to us. We must surrender and open ourselves to Him. Once our friendship with Christ has been bonded, ... *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

we cannot remain as bland participants and continue to live as we did before our encounter with Him. Take the time through your own prayer life to know Him more deeply. Jesus is a unique Treasure that cannot be admired from the outside or from a distance, for we must desire to be grafted to Him, like branches entwined to the Vine.

As we cling to Christ, we will be overwhelmed by His transformative power, and slowly our attitude, our orientation and our way of seeing will change. As we continue to be nourished by the Vine, we will become like the Vine. *"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete."* (Jn 15:11) We won't be able to contain this overwhelming joy, so we need to share it. Fruitfulness begins when we act on the love of Christ. And so we go to Friday worships and Eucharistic Celebrations to participate in the offering of praise and thanksgiving to Him. We share our earthly treasures by giving love offerings and tithes. We go to Saturday teachings to know more about His ways. We serve in the Community's sponsored encounters, intercede for someone we don't even know and pastor each other in many ways. Through these things, we participate in the fellowship of His Body and we follow His command.



It may not be easy, for Christ did not promise to take away our crosses. But we choose to remain with Him for we believe in the promise: *"All things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."* (Rom 8:28)

DIRECTION:

1. Seek and know Christ, the One True Treasure, through daily Scripture readings and prayers.
2. Regularly share your earthly treasures with the Church and community.

A pdf of this Covenant News and more information about BLD are available online at BLDNEWARK.com

LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,463	\$ 39,788
Love Offerings	\$ 898	\$ 36,874
Mission Collections	\$ 160	\$ 3,657

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

"We Walk Hand-in-Hand"
Disciples' Assembly
CANCELED
Saturday, July 29, 2017, 1-5 pm
Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

- (1) If you haven't done so yet, but are planning to attend, please send in your RSVP for the Community Celebration on Aug 19.
- (2) Regarding the 25th Anniversary Dinner Dance on Aug 20, please turn in ticket remittances to the members of the sponsoring class, ME 40, as soon as possible. They will have a table set up for this at fellowship.

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Aug 4	Formation
		Aug 11	Management
		Aug 18	Mission
		Aug 25	Pastoral