



# COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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## NEWS

### BLD Newark & Allentown rejoice together at LSS

The Promise for the week of September 11, 2016 was: *“There will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”* (Lk 15:10)

From the testimonials of the attendees at the BLD Allentown LSS this past weekend, we believe there is rejoicing in Heaven as in the promise for the past week.

We thank and praise the Lord for blessing the LSS weekend with the services of Deacon Serge Bernatchez as our LSS facilitator, the sharers and all the auxies and intercessors whose selfless and untiring service have brought about a fruitful harvest of new believers in His unending and unconditional love.

The weekend was also blessed with the presence and support of Fr. Tom Ganley of St. Peter & St James Parish in Phillipsburg, NJ and Fr. Cliff Bishop, Pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Bethlehem, PA.

Through the inspiration of the Spirit of Love, our brethren from BLD Newark and BLD Allentown worked together in harmony as they offered themselves as witnesses of the saving grace of God.

For the twenty eight attendees, our community is committed to persevere in helping them as they continue to walk along the path of life.

God is with us!



## COUNSELS

### Prudent Discipleship

THEME: We bear the character of Jesus when we are trustworthy stewards of the gifts and talents He has given us.

WORD: Am 8:4-7 ~ Ps 113:1-2,4-6,7-8  
1 Tm 2:1-8 ~ Lk 16:1-13

ORDER: *“Prepare a full account of your stewardship”* Lk 16:2b

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday’s First Reading, the prophet Amos offers a stinging indictment of those who create hardships for the poor. Many wealthy landowners would take over small amounts of land that the poor held, leaving them deprived of almost all they owned. The greedy merchants were waiting impatiently for the end of the Holy Days and Sabbath, so that they could proceed with their dishonest practices.

Amos chastises their greed, warning that the Lord will never forget their acts of injustice. The actions of the greedy, dishonest oppressors epitomize the sin of disconnection, whereby faith is consigned to the observance of Holy Occasions, but cut-off from concrete and just relationships with God and neighbors.

The connection of the Responsorial Psalm to the First Reading is very evident. In the First Reading, God promises never to forget an injustice done to the poor. In the Psalm, God redresses such wrongs and raises the poor from dust to nobility. This is expressed in the promise for this week, which states that *“He raises the needy from the dust... Seats them with princes...”* (Ps 113:7,8)

The Second Reading, from 1 Timothy 2:1-8, reminds us of our... *...Continued on page 3*

### Promise of the Week

*“He raises the needy from the dust... Seats them with princes...”* (Ps 113:7,8)

## ACT NOW!

Charity is one of the theological virtues, as taught by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbors as ourselves. By loving God and our neighbors, we should be willing to do what is right and good for them.

I have been blessed with many talents and gifts from God and for that I am grateful. I am able to use these gifts particularly in my own ministry. The demands of ministry work have required me to serve many times in new and unfamiliar situations. But with full trust in the Holy Spirit, I take them as good challenges and opportunities to learn. Trainings and seminars have also given me the knowledge and confidence to fulfill the work. There are times when the tasks that have to be done are things that no one is willing to do. However, with lots of prayers, reading of His Word, and listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, I find myself able to fulfill my obligations as a follower of Jesus. These are opportunities wherein I know that the Lord is teaching me to develop new gifts to be prepared to accomplish even more.

***"Do not withhold any goods from the owner, when it is in your power to act."*** (Prv 3:27)

Everything we have comes from the Lord, and all these we should offer back in return, as thanksgiving to God. Many times as humans, we usually judge right away just based on what our eyes see, especially during difficult times. We give numerous reasons to justify things when we want to deny or do not want to accept a ministry task. But ultimately, there are actually more reasons to do it, starting with our obligation to God and our neighbors.

Step back and take the time to pray and you will see the Hands of God in these situations. God sees the desires of our hearts and He equips us when we are called to serve. ***"Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."*** (Mt 5:16)

In every circumstance, I remind myself with these words, "What would Jesus do?" If we are given the chance to show our love and service to God, would we wait for someone else to do it? Or do we seize the opportunity to serve God through our neighbors? Can we be like St. Mother Teresa, who served when no one was looking or asking her to? She offered her whole life and served the poor with great love, out of love for God.

Jesus said ***"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."*** (Mt 25:40) ... Would you make Jesus wait?

## What is Vanity?

This week, in the First Reading of Thursday (Sept. 22, 2016), we encounter Ecclesiastes 1:2-11. The author of the Book of Ecclesiastes is said to be Qoheleth, a son of King David and a King in Jerusalem. Because he is introduced as "David's son" in the beginning of the chapter, it was commonly believed that it was King Solomon who wrote this book. However, some scholars refute this because the language used in the book indicates that it was written years after Solomon's death. Nonetheless, just as Solomon's wisdom was evident in the story about the two mothers who both laid claim to one baby (1 Kings 3:16-28), the same wisdom of a discerning heart is seen in this book's treatise on life's purpose.

Ecclesiastes opens with a catchy statement:



***"... All things are vanity!"***

It asserts that all things under the sun, all that man works hard for, amount to nothing but just vanity (Eccl 1:2b-3). Based on human intellect and observation, it paints a pessimistic perspective of life. This reading reminds us of the impermanence of our human existence and the insignificance of our human pursuits, in comparison to the absolute reality and glory of God our Creator.

Pondering upon this scriptural reading, using our human knowledge and perception, it is a difficult teaching to accept. At first blush, it speaks of the utter hopelessness and despair of humanity because of the seemingly ***"bad business God has given to human beings to be busied with."*** (Eccl 1:13b) Yet, upon prayerful reflection and thought, we begin to see the wisdom of the message. Indeed our existence can seem meaningless, unless the point of our existence ceases to be focused on our self-interests and becomes focused on God and following His commandments. Through our eyes of faith, we are able to recognize that our worldly existence is but a temporary phase, in our path towards the true Life that the Lord has given us through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

...Continued on page 3

## COUNSELS

from page 1

spiritual obligations, in accordance with the universal salvation that our Heavenly Father planned for mankind. When St. Paul wrote, ***“I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving be offered for everyone....”*** (1 Tim 2:1), his emphasis was on the Christian’s obligation to pray for all men without exception.

The Gospel of Luke draws our attention to the parable of the dishonest steward. This is one of the most difficult parables of the Bible. It appears, as if Jesus is suggesting that He approves of those, who gain dishonest wealth. On the contrary, Jesus asks us to be prudent about how we navigate our way, to focus on the very important, lasting, holy road to salvation, a road that is paved with acts of love. The Gospel further adds that this is in view of eternal life. This does not mean that we should spend our whole lives making “deposits” on our eternal life, so that we can “cash in” at death. This is being selfish and exactly the opposite of how we are to live. The prudent discipleship that this Gospel recommends means, first of all, that we take our identity as disciples of Christ so seriously that it defines how we live and act. Secondly, we acknowledge that nothing of this world is more valuable than eternal life in God’s Kingdom.

Thirdly, prudent discipleship means that we recognize that all our choices in our daily lives are really choices for eternal life, and so, there is an urgency in the choices that we make. We cannot afford to wait till the end to start thinking about it.

We, as members of the BLD Community, are encouraged to focus on the eternal reward as we handle things of this world. Our daily actions and choices must show that we are serving God, not Mammon. One good example is a choice between attending Friday worship and attending to things of this world. Being a Christian and a follower of Christ is better-expressed as a way of life than as practices to be fulfilled. The thrust of this Gospel is that we act prudently in this life in order to be welcomed into eternal dwellings. Prudence demands that we not squander opportunities to be charitable and just toward others, to be trustworthy in our assigned ministries, and to use the gifts given to us, as we follow the road to discipleship, having in mind the vision and mission of the BLD Community. Prudent discipleship means that our commitment to our covenant is an expression of our relationship to our Heavenly Father that is shown in the simple →→

## What is Vanity?...

from page 2

This scripture forces us to examine our own existence and the motives behind our human pursuits. Look closely into our hearts, we find that even our noblest goals: feeding the hungry ... sheltering the homeless ... bringing medical care to the sick ... interceding for others ... helping build a Covenant Community, can be tainted by our sins of pride and desire for recognition, if the motive behind these good deeds hinge on achieving something for ourselves.

***“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 6:24-25)

It is in the light of our own insignificance that Jesus’ self-giving sacrifice is more magnanimous. We realize His gift of love is even greater than we could imagine! It is in the radiance of Christ that we, who are doomed to darkness, are able to see the hope of our future (Jer 29:11; Rev 21:4). It is in the vastness and depth of His mercy that we are able to find courage to persevere and run the race (2 Tim 4:7). We put our full trust in Christ and abandon ourselves to His great promise of life eternal (1 Jn 2:25).

Life amounts to nothing if we exhaust ourselves on worldly things, but life amounts to EVERYTHING if we invest ourselves in the pursuit of life in Christ. It is in Christ that we find our true meaning.

*“Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.”*

- St. Augustine

## COUNSELS

(continued)

→ choices in our daily living. To put it simply, prudent discipleship means that God is always at the center of our lives.



Directions:

1. Use our resources wisely and prudently.
2. Share our resources with those who are in need.

# CATHOLIC... GO!

This was in the news last month. It was caught on camera, and shown on TV, that many people stampeded when a rare **pokemon** was said to be briefly available at a particular location in one of the big cities in Taiwan. I found myself wondering, 'Why would a horde of people rush towards something that wasn't even real?' ...I can only surmise that it's because of the human desire that wants to have something rare that only a few others possess. And so, even from just a virtual cartoon character, there is seemingly, great value to be derived.

In the Gospels, Jesus likened the Kingdom of God to a pearl and a treasure, so valuable, that one would sell everything he/she owned, in order to possess it. But no one seems to want to rush to Churches, let alone, stampede to Houses of Worship. How can **pokemon** – that are just figments of someone's imagination – be more wanted than **God Who is real?**

Is God just too commonplace? Do we take for granted, His presence everywhere? Do we simply presume that His boundless love and mercy will be readily available anyway, whenever our need for forgiveness surfaces? That He will always just be there?

The reality is that we cannot and must not assume it (if you don't know yet what happens when you assume, just google it).

The reality is that He is the Treasure that must be sought and searched for, more than anything.

The world will entice us to replace faith with things that money and prestige can buy. But if it's to God that we rush to... then both in this world and the next, He is really the only One our hearts need to capture, and our hearts won't need to catch anything else at all!

It behooves us, not just to play, but everywhere... to live out... **CATHOLIC GO!**

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**Morning of Mercy Mini Pilgrimage**  
 Saturday, September 24  
 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Divine Mercy Parish  
 232 Central Ave.  
 Rahway, NJ

Guest Speaker:  
 Msgr. Joseph Reilly  
 Missionary of Mercy

Please note that a pdf of this covenant News is also available online at [BLDNEWARK.com](http://BLDNEWARK.com)

## LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings	\$ 2,904	\$ 96,771
Mission Collections	\$ 78	\$ 5,478
Fundraising Raffle	\$ 1,320	\$ 6,280

Financial details are available to all members through [treasury@bldnewark.com](mailto:treasury@bldnewark.com)

Thank you for your continued support!

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Teaching Calendar

Teachings for Saturday, September 17 - 1 to 6 pm:

- Basic Bible Seminar (LSS 1-46)
- Christian Maturity Program 1, Part II (LSS 1-45)
- Advanced Intercession (LSS 1-43)

### Mercy Merci Raffle Fundraiser



Support BLD! Please ask families and friends to help us out... **Tickets are just \$2 each!**

**Drawing Date: Friday, October 14, 2016**

**LSS 46-B – October 7-9, 2016**

Contacts: Lito.Vibar@bldnewark.com,  
 Earl.Manguiat@bldnewark.com, Flo.Manguiat@bldnewark.com

### John 6 Crossings # 17

Retreat for children, ages 11-14.

**October 7-9, 2016**

Fellowship Deaconry, 3575 Valley Road,  
 Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contacts: Marlene.Brillantes@bldnewark.com  
 Tony.Brillantes@bldnewark.com

### Marriage Encounter # 47

**November 18-20, 2016**

Hotel Executive Suites  
 30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ

Contact email: [MLA@bldnewark.com](mailto:MLA@bldnewark.com)

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 23	Management
		Sep 30	Mission
		Oct 7	Pastoral
		Oct 14	Evangelization