



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

COUNSELS

At Santa Marta Pope urges 5 minutes of prayer for those in power

- 'It is a sin not to pray for rulers'

SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 / ANNE KURIAN / POPE'S MORNING HOMILY (source: zenith.org)

Take five minutes today to reflect on the duty to pray for rulers, requested Pope Francis during the morning Mass at Santa Marta Residence, on September 18, 2017. "It's a sin not to pray for rulers," he warned.

In his homily, reported on Vatican Radio in Italian, the Holy Father commented on the day's Readings, where Saint Paul recommends "supplications, prayers ... for kings and all who are in high positions" (1 Timothy 2:1-8) and where a Roman centurion implores Jesus to cure his slave (Luke 7:1-10).

This centurion, he noted, "felt the need to pray" because "he was aware that he was not the master of everything, that he was not the last resort." On the contrary, he who "does not pray, shuts himself in his self-reference or in that of his party, in this circle that one can't get out of; he is a man closed in on himself."

A ruler should have "this consciousness of subordination," he must remember "that there is another who has more power than him. Who has more power than a ruler? The people who gave him the power and God, from whom the power comes through the people. When a ruler has this consciousness of subordination, he prays."

The ruler's prayer, continued the Pope, "is the prayer for the common good of the people entrusted to him." To unbelievers, he recommended: "If you can't pray, consult ... your conscience ... wise men of your people ... but don't remain alone with the small group of your party." ...Continued on page 3

Responding to God's Grace

THEME: Our hearts are enlightened when we respond to God's grace with gratefulness.

WORD: Is 55:6-9 ~ Ps 145:2-3,8-9,17-18

Phil 1:20c-24,27a ~ Mt 20:1-16a

ORDER: "Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Phil 1:27a)

REFLECTION:

In the Gospel reading this coming Sunday, Jesus told His disciples a parable about a landowner who went out to hire laborers for his vineyard. The landowner hired workers in five groups, the first ones working the whole day, and the last group working only one hour. When it was time to get paid, all of them received the same pay regardless of how many hours they worked.

If you tell this story to your children or grandchildren who were born and grew up here in the US, they will surely say "that's not fair." And they have a point. Why will the pay for eight hours of work be the same as for one hour? And so the first group that worked the whole day grumbled. For those of us who are immigrants, who were born and grew up in the Philippines, we know that in our native language or dialect, the grumble is translated as "Nag-reklamo sila."

In our daily life, we don't realize it, but we do grumble a lot. When waiting for the bus to go to work we say, "this bus is late again!" When visiting our doctor, we comment, "this doctor is never on time."

...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth." (Ps 145:18)

CONSIDER YOUR WAYS

One of the shortest books in the whole Bible is the Book of Haggai (the shortest being, in the Old Testament, the Book of Obadiah; and in the New, the Second and Third Letters of John and the Letter of Jude). In its wisdom, the Church has included a passage from Haggai in its weekday Mass readings, probably because, even though it was written some 500 years before Christ (BC), its words are just as pertinent today.

“Reflect on your experience! You have sown much, but have brought in little; you have eaten, but have not been satisfied; You have drunk, but have not been intoxicated; you have clothed yourselves, but not been warmed; And the hired worker labors for a bag full of holes. Reflect on your experience!” (Hg 1:5b-6; this is from the reading for Thursday, September 28)

While the NABRE uses the phrase, “Reflect on your experience,” other Catholic-approved Bible translations say “Consider your ways.” The advice, though, is pretty much the same.

In this twenty-first century world that we live in, it is so easy to get caught up in the many things we can now do, that before we could not, maybe even just five to ten years ago. However, in most instances, we put excessive pressure on ourselves to fill in every waking moment. We are often so pre-occupied with doing things that sometimes, we forgo even sleep and rest in pursuit of what, in the end, are trivial matters.

So many of us are now addicted to technology, and while it’s true that there is much efficiency that has been gained by it, we often need to be reminded about the essential message of the words from Haggai.

While we are able to do many things, what are we really accomplishing? Are our efforts achieving meaningful results? Or do we wind up neglecting important aspects of life? Do we labor... only to wind up with ***“a bag full of holes”*** where we lose what’s truly precious?

I too am guilty of checking for messages on my i-phone just before going to bed at night and first thing in the morning...and then constantly during the day. But do I really have to? Sometimes, I am so connected to my cellphone, but disconnected to those immediately around me, including members of my own family. Even in the simplest of everyday activities, let us always be mindful of the prophet Haggai’s advice:

“CONSIDER YOUR WAYS!”

In the CCC it states that the Old Testament books “are divinely inspired and have permanent value.” It also states that “the Old Testament is unveiled in the New.” With this in mind, and because next week, all of the daily Mass first readings come from the Bible’s Old Testament (Ezra - 9/25-27, Haggai - 9/28, Daniel - 9/29 and Zechariah - 9/30) included in this CN is a report on the:



Reasons Why People Have Read the Old Testament

10. I saw the movie and I wanted to see if the book was better.
9. I wanted a new career and thought that the book of JOB had interview tips.
8. I heard that the Old Testament had sex and violence, so I wanted to see if that was true.
7. I wanted to learn how to build an ark.
6. I read it because it’s the Bible that Jesus read and studied.
5. I needed free advice, and so I sought God’s guidance in the books of Proverbs and Wisdom.
4. My BLD shepherd suggested that I read the Bible from “cover to cover.”
3. I was inspired to read it by a certain BLD teaching on “Jesus in the Old Testament.”
2. I was inspired by Fr. Paul Lehman’s teaching on Lectio Divina.

... and, the number one reason to read the Old Testament is because...

1. I love Jesus and I want to know Him more!

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

Even when the homily given by a priest is nice, some will still say, “it was a little too long.” Other grumblings might be, “you put too much water in this rice,” or “you forgot to bring out the garbage again!” There are numerous examples like these that are so common that we don’t even realize that we are complaining. At times, we justify our comments by saying, “I am just conveying a fact,” or “what I am saying is true anyway.” Perhaps, but in reality, we are also grumbling.

When the landowner hired the workers, he did not ask for the qualifications of the prospective workers. He did not ask what experience they had or lack of it, neither did he ask where they came from, or if they were Jewish or Gentile? No background check at all. Why like this? The Landowner (Who symbolized God) was giving each of them an opportunity to earn something to support themselves and their families. In reality He was giving each of them a gift.

God, Who created all of us, is responsible for all the blessings we enjoy. Life in this world was given to each of us as an undeserved free gift. We have different talents, features, abilities and even imperfections. We have different intellectual and spiritual gifts as well, varying from one person to another. Even identical twins have differences. However, all of us have one thing in common - that everything we own comes as a free gift from God Who did not have to create any of us in the first place. And just like the workers in the Gospel, note that they did not apply for the job, they were called.

Another aspect that we should take to heart from this parable is about the generosity of the landowner. Jesus is a generous giver, never outdone in generosity; He is a God of abundance. You may recall the multiplication of the bread and fish where there were twelve baskets leftover, and when He made His disciples catch so many fish that their boats almost sank. How about the wedding feast at Cana where He turned six jars of water, each holding 20-30 gallons, into the best wine? When Jesus Christ gives, He gives in abundance.

Jesus wants us to be most generous within our family, in our circle of friends and fellow disciples. He wants us to be generous with our time, talent and treasure. Beyond this, He also wants us to be generous with our praise, encouragements, patience and compassion. →→

Pope urges prayer...

(from page 1)

And the people must pray for all rulers without exception, stressed the Pontiff, preventing objections. “No, I didn’t vote for him . . . let him do what he wants.’ No, we can’t leave rulers alone; we must accompany them with prayer. Christians must pray for rulers. “But Father, how can one pray for one who’s done so many bad things?’ ‘He has even greater need. Pray, do penance for the ruler.’”

“I ask you for a favor,” concluded Pope Francis, “that each one of you take five minutes today, not more. If he is a ruler, let him ask himself: “Do I pray for the one who gave me the power through the intermediary of the people?’ . . . If one is not a ruler, ‘Do I pray . . . for all rulers?’ When you do your examination of conscience to go to Confession, if you find that you’ve not prayed for rulers, bring that to Confession, because it’s a sin not to pray for rulers.”

→ Generosity is especially beneficial to our spiritual growth because we learn to let go of our greed, to give up our stubbornness, and to renounce materialism. Luke 3:11 says ***“Whoever has two tunics should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise.”***

The Gospel reading talks about laborers being called. In the story, some grumbled, but by the day’s end, everyone actually benefitted from the generosity of the landowner.

The leaders of our Community, guided by the Holy Spirit and with their wisdom, discerned the theme to be that **our hearts are enlightened when we respond to God’s grace with gratefulness.** This is their message to us from the Gospel. So, when we are given tasks to do here in BLD, or in our everyday life, we should not grumble, but instead respond with gratefulness to the call from a generous God, to serve, and in turn, enlighten our hearts.

To the leaders of our community, Thank you.

“One person is lavish yet grows still richer; another is too sparing, yet is the poorer. Whoever confers benefits will be amply enriched, and whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.” (Prv 11:24-25).

DIRECTIONS:

1. In all things, give praise and thanksgiving to God.
2. Be grateful and joyful when you are called to serve.

There are just seven weeks left until this year's Raffle Fundraiser Drawing!

With just seven weeks to go before its drawing date, it's time for everyone to really make an effort to sell the tickets for this year's major fundraiser. **At just \$2 a ticket, your friends and family will have a chance to win the top prize of a trip to the Holy Land!**

Among the highlights of that trip are visits to:

1. Mount Beatitudes, where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount
2. Capernaum – the Synagogue of Jesus and the House of Peter
3. Cana – to renew marriage vows at the Church of the Wedding Feast
4. Nazareth – the Church of the Annunciation
5. Mt. Tabor – site of Jesus' Transfiguration
6. The Jordan River – where Jesus was baptized by St. John the Baptist
7. Jericho and the Dead Sea – including camel rides and the opportunity to float in the Dead Sea's ancient waters
8. Bethlehem – the Church of the Nativity
9. Jerusalem – the Mount of Olives, the Upper Room, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Wailing Wall, the Via Dolorosa, Golgotha and the Tomb of Jesus

The Raffle's other fabulous prizes are (2nd) an Apple MacBook Pro, (3rd) an Apple iPad Pro, (4th) five consolation gift cards of \$200 each.

Pictured below: BLD members and friends on Pilgrimage, with most of the group that was there earlier this week wearing BLD's 25th Anniversary - By His Grace t-shirts.



LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,535	\$ 50,609
Love Offerings	\$ 1,429	\$ 46,561
Mission Collections	\$ 116	\$ 4,368

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Life in the Spirit Seminar #48
 October 13-15, 2017
 Salubungan is on Sept. 1, 2017
 Contacts: Earl & Flo Mangulat

John 6 Crossing # 18
 October 6 - 8, 2017
 Fellowship Deaconry
 Basking Ridge, NJ
 Contacts: Tony & Marlene Brillantes

Marriage Encounter #49



November 17-19, 2017
 Hotel Executive Suites
 30 Minue St, Carteret, NJ

Please contact: **Efren & Yollie Cruz**

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 29	Pastoral
		Oct 6	Evangelization
		Oct 13	Formation
		Oct 20	Management