



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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Bulletin Edition

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Here's What You Said

We wish to thank everyone who had responded to the recent BLD Newark survey. We certainly appreciate your feedback, comments, and numerous suggestions. Your answers to the survey questionnaire are being tabulated and analyzed and a more complete report will be published and distributed to the membership as soon as it is available.

Meanwhile, the following are some preliminary but interesting statistics based on your responses to the survey:

- A total of 179 members took and completed the survey - 84 male and 95 female.
- 69.8 percent of the survey population answered "Yes" to the question: "Do you know the community's Vision and Mission?"
- 31.3 percent of respondents were currently serving under the Formation Apostolate. However, when the members were asked if they could choose, that number dropped to 20.1 percent, with the difference shifting to Evangelization (+0.9%), Mission (+8.2%), and Pastoral (+2.1%) apostolates.
- 96.1 percent of participants were "involved" in some way with the community's ministries and mission work.
- Only 4.5 percent of survey respondents said that they were "uninformed" about BLD Newark issues and matters. However, 33.5 percent said they were uninformed about matters pertaining to the global community.
- Although we learned to pray more as individuals and as a community, only 53 percent of total respondents devoted more than 30 minutes daily listening to the Lord through meditative/contemplative prayer.
- 77.7 percent of respondents knew their spiritual gifts and 98.5 percent of those who knew their gifts said they were willing to offer them in service when called upon.

Other major issues that also surfaced through participants' suggestions included: unity and outward focus, emergence process, transparency, discernment, and witnessing. Much more important than the findings are the related action items that we, as a community, may need to take. Let us support and pray for our servant-leaders as they

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COUNSELS

The Stranger in Our Midst

Word: Acts 2:14, 22-33; Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-11;
1 Pt 1:17-21; Lk 24:13-35

Theme: God's Word keeps our hearts burning.

Order: *"Conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pt 1:17-29)*


Reflection:

As we celebrate this Third Sunday of Easter, we continue to reflect upon the life, passion, death and resurrection of The Christ and to reflect upon our own journey in faith. St. Luke's Gospel on The Road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35) provides us with a framework for our personal reflection.

The journey of Jesus' two disciples from Jerusalem to Emmaus and their return back to Jerusalem provides us with the image of humanity experiencing the loss of paradise because of sin, walking to and reaching their earthly destination, encountering The Redeemer, finding their way back to the heavenly Jerusalem, and proclaiming *"The Lord has truly been raised!"* This is the journey of the lost soul yearning for the Divine Spirit. This is the journey of fallen creation returning to The Creator.

The two disciples felt disappointed and hopeless when they witnessed the crucifixion and death of Jesus. They could not understand the meaning of "Crucified Savior". They could not make sense of the empty tomb without seeing The Risen Body. Human wisdom cannot totally comprehend divine reality.

We, like the two disciples, holding on to our shared experiences, feeding on each other's words, often fail to recognize The Stranger in our midst. In community, we naturally form circles of friends within our assigned

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God's Promise for the Week

"You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever." (Ps 16:11)

Let The Children Come To Me

As written in Mark 10:14, Jesus said, *'Let the children come to me; do not prevent them for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these'*. The parents of the BLD Community followed what Jesus taught and let the children come.

YLSS-13 was held from Friday, March 28, 2008 thru Sunday, March 30, 2008. A total of 39 kids received the gifts of the Holy Spirit and were baptized and commissioned to be God's soldiers on earth to spread His word. These 39 kids who responded are:



Amanda Nicole Anderson, Frances Arcales, Jofec Baquilod, Molly Brillantes, James Calingo, Jamie Ciocon, Marella Cruz, Michelle Decepida, Joe De Guzman, Jordan Del Fierro, Ernest Sherwin Eusebio, Aubrey and Thom Gordola, Trixie Jose, Chris Laurelli, Michelle Lim, Neil and Nicole Lopez, Camille and Carlo Loreto, PJ Luardo, Charlie Masisado, Willy Montemayor, Xavier Pineda, Alexa and Andrew Reyes, Pat Salmo, Joseph Salonga, Matthew San Agustin, James Santiago, Vincent Troy Santos, Dee Solon, Kevin Taraya, Kody Tolentino, Mav Umahon, Valerie Vallarta and Marion Venadas. They will be shining examples of being childlike in the name of the Lord and bring glory to His name.

We let the children come to show to the world that being like them will bring about salvation to mankind.

Covenant News is also available on our website at www.bldnewark.com

Here's What You Said (from page 1)

discuss and further discern what the findings mean and develop whatever steps would be needed for the benefit of the community and its members.

May our Risen Lord always be glorified in all we think, say, and do as individuals and as a community!

Our Unity in Christ



While we desire to be close to one another, our minds may say that we want to hold one another at arm's length. We may have learned to be suspicious of other people's motives. We may have been burned in the past and so we fear being

burned again; thus we erect barriers that effectively insulate us from one another. We become an obstacle to true unity and communion within God's Church.

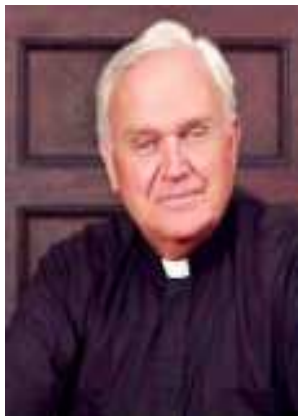
The challenges our community faces in its struggle toward unity may seem to be beyond any member's reach. For that to happen, many barriers have to fall. Lack of trust has to be replaced with openness and vulnerability; ambiguity with decisiveness; fear with love and respect. Most importantly we need the power of the Holy Spirit to move us and produce in us God's vision of His true plan for us as His ambassadors in bringing the Good News to the world! This oneness will be upon us only if we truly allow Christ to be our Lord, surrender our aspirations and plans to Him and allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit.

In *1 John 1:7* it says, *"If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another."* As we walk in the light of the truth of God's Word, we enjoy true fellowship with one another. Our faith in the Lord should bring us together so that our every desire is to follow Jesus, both in heart and mind. The desire to express God's love and to share that love with every man must be experiential so that what began in faith should make its way to our actions.

Experiencing both, the love of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, will give us a new vision, a new life filled with joy. We fall in love with Him and with every other believer. We are able to call one another brother and sister because we are one family. We express the love and care and concern for one another freely and openly. Thus, the barriers we have erected will come down freely when we are one — one in faith and one in heart.

"The community of believers was of one heart and mind" Acts 4:32, says it all. *Believers, heart and mind* when joined together can only result in the mystical unity of the body. All the "believers" were one. They were united in heart. They were also one in mind.

Today, let us merge our oneness in faith and heart with our minds and decide to express our unity in Christ.



Fr. Paul Speaks

The second Sunday of Easter (this year March 30th) has been officially designated as Divine Mercy Sunday. Even though that feast is behind us, the grace of divine mercy permeates the whole Easter season. Devotion to the divine mercy has become very popular,

because it emphasizes and reminds us of the most basic attribute of Jesus, manifested particularly by His Easter victory. Admittedly it can be misunderstood. It can be presented as one of the new liberalizing trends in the Church. It could be presented as an excuse to sin, or that things are just getting easier. Forgiveness then becomes almost automatic. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Devotion to the divine mercy is an antidote to the other extreme of the Christian life. God can be presented as a vengeful and wrathful God, waiting to get revenge for the offenses that we have perpetrated against His sovereign majesty. Mercy is not a middle ground between a merciful God and a wrathful God. Mercy is not permissiveness, but a challenge. God's mercy, like his love, can never be turned off, no matter how often we may abuse it. To understand divine mercy we have to ask for the grace of the Holy Spirit to really even begin to comprehend it. We so often apply to God our human modes of acting and reacting. If WE have been offended we tend to look for ways to get back. It takes a miracle to turn the other cheek as Jesus told us to do after we have been offended. We then instinctively think God deals with us in the same manner. Mercy, however, is the measuring rod that God uses to judge us, not the sins we commit or the good actions we perform.

Divine mercy is more closely connected with Easter, than with the sufferings of Jesus. I say this even though the novena to the divine mercy begins on Good Friday. In the 12th, chapter of St. John's gospel Jesus refers to being lifted up and drawing all men to Himself. That LIFTING UP refers not only to His bodily death, but also to His glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven. There, from His glorious place at the right hand of the Father, does He DRAW all of us to Himself.

In my experience of hearing confessions, many who have seriously sinned find it very difficult to believe that they have been really forgiven along with a psychological guilt that can almost freeze a person from moving on in their spiritual walk with the Lord. May we all open to His mercy and receive the challenge to greater holiness with all the weight of our sins behind us.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every **2nd Sat.** of the month, Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passiac, NJ - **Volunteers are needed.** Please contact Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340.

WORD

Share your walk, faith, transformation in the Lord with the community through an article (450 words max). Email to word@bldnewark.com.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Abraham & Sarah

May 03, 1pm @ Living Waters Theatre, Lancaster, PA

A Journey of Love Sight & Sound

Payments due on April 4.

Ticket + bus fare: Adults \$63.00 Teen (13-18) \$46.00
Child (3-12) \$42.00

For tickets only: Adults \$33.00 Teen (13-18) \$16.00
Child (3-12) \$12.00

Seating arrangements based on date payment is received.

For details, please call Frank or Malou Venadas - 973-562-0055 or send email to bobbitski@hotmail.com.

TEACHINGS

Apr 18 After Worship

Teaching	Youth, John 6, Mark 10
Encounter With Jesus	Singles
New Creation Realities	Solo Parents

Apr 19 St. Mary's 1-6 pm

Healing & Deliverance	LSS 27
Christian Maturity Program	LSS 29
Special Teaching by Epie Ocampo	Post Covenantal

Apr 25 After Worship

Teaching	Golden Years
Formation	Intercessory/ Service

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Week Ending Mar. 28, 2008

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for the Poor **\$4,343**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

ministries or with those that we share similar ideas or ideals, which feels very much like our security blanket. Those who find themselves outside these circles, naturally feel like uninvited guests. If we no longer see them, we simply rationalize that the community may not be for them. Are we able to invite them to “stay with us”? How far are we willing to reach out? Do we fear rejection from our invitations? Do we expect that someone else will be inviting them?


This week’s Order: *“Conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, with the precious blood of Christ.”* (1 Pt 1:17-29) reminds us to revere God, to respect each other’s dignity, to fulfill the new commandment: *“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* (Jn 13:34-35)

Jesus probes our hearts to reveal to our own selves our deepest feelings, our disbeliefs and exposes our foolish ways. Jesus the Incarnate Word opens the Scriptures to us, to interpret for us “the promise” and to reveal to us that “He is the fulfillment of the promise”. God’s Word kindles the flame in our hearts. In community, due to various demands on us in our different ministries, we like Martha, often neglect to spend time with the Lord, in our Living Word Group. We realize that we often “run out of steam”, feeling “burnt-out” because we just feed on each other’s words.

Our BLD Covenant Community is about relationships... our relationship with God and our relationship with one another. Each and every one of us is called to Holy Communion. In Holy Communion we become One Body in Christ... many parts, but One Body. The celebration of Holy Mass is the celebration of the Liturgy of The Word and the Liturgy of The Eucharist. The Word removes the veil from our eyes to reveal to us the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Encyclical Letter “Ecclesia de Eucharistia”, Pope John Paul II wrote: “The Eucharist creates communion and fosters communion. Saint Paul wrote to the faithful of Corinth explaining how their divisions, reflected in their Eucharistic gatherings, contradicted what they were celebrating, the Lord’s Supper. The Apostle then urged them to reflect on the true reality of the Eucharist in order to return to the spirit of fraternal communion (cf. 1 Cor 11:17-34).”

In this week’s promise: *“You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever.”* (Ps 16:11), our Lord provides us the roadmap and He reveals to us our destination. *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* (Jn 14:6)

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Apr 04-06** **Life in the Spirit Seminar #30** - St. Mary’s
- Apr 11-13** **Aspirants Retreat**
- Apr 12** **Disciples Assembly** - St. Mary’s **1-6pm**
Committed & Covenanted
- Apr 12** **Community Building** - St. Mary’s
Special teaching by Epie Ocampo
- Apr 12** **Holy Spirit Breakfast**
Our Lady of Liberia School Auditorium
5808 Kennedy Blvd., W. New York, NJ
Mass celebrated before breakfast
Contact: Angel/Aida Calilap (973)284-1853 or
Sal/Marie Russo (973) 338-1050
- Apr 15** **Fr. Fernando Suarez-Healing Mass 6:30pm**
St. Mary’s Church, Rahway
Please reserve seats thru your assigned Ministry/Class
- Apr 25-27** **ME #2** BLD Charlotte, NC
The Oratory, South Carolina.
Contact Henry & Aida Koryan (973) 709-1387
- May 30- Jun 1** **ME#31** - Mary Immaculate Center
300 Cherryville Road Northampton, PA 18067
Contact: Norie/Miriam Abes (973) 960-3711
and Gary/Mil Camacho MLA (732) 821-450.
Application forms available at
www.bldnewark.com.
- May 30- Jun 1** **SE #20** - Graymoor Spiritual Center
Garrison, NY, Contact: Glenn Canlas
invazian21@yahoo.com
- Jun 27-29** **SPE#10** - Xavier Center, 23 Covenant Road,
Covenant Station, NJ 07961- 0211
Contact Vic/Dee Lim (973) 865-4203 (c) or
(973) 226-2306 (h)

Counsels *(continued)*

Pope John Paul II wrote: *“Receiving the Eucharist means entering into a profound communion with Jesus. ‘Abide in me, and I in you’ (Jn 15:4). This relationship of profound and mutual abiding enables us to have a certain foretaste of heaven on earth. Is this not the greatest of human yearnings? Is this not what God had in mind when he brought about in history his plan of salvation?”*

Directions:

- Be believers and doers of the Word.
- Always be guided by the word of God to maintain the right focus in life.
- Reach out to those who have not been coming to the community and break bread with them.