



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 1

Bulletin Edition

January 2, 2009

NEWS

FIGHTING POVERTY TO BUILD PEACE MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD DAY OF PEACE (PART 2 of 2)

Poverty & Moral Implications

Poverty is often considered a consequence of demographic change. For this reason, there are international campaigns afoot to reduce birth-rates, sometimes using methods that respect neither the dignity of the woman, nor the right of parents to choose responsibly how many children to have; graver still, these methods often fail to respect even the right to life. The extermination of millions of unborn children, in the name of the fight against poverty, actually constitutes the destruction of the poorest of all human beings. And yet it remains the case that in 1981, around 40% of the world's population was below the threshold of absolute poverty, while today that percentage has been reduced by as much as a half, and whole peoples have escaped from poverty despite experiencing substantial demographic growth. This goes to show that resources to solve the problem of poverty do exist, even in the face of an increasing population. Nor must it be forgotten that, since the end of the Second World War, the world's population has grown by four billion, largely because of certain countries that have recently emerged on the international scene as new economic powers, and have experienced rapid development specifically because of the large number of their inhabitants. Moreover, among the most developed nations, those with higher birth-rates enjoy better opportunities for development. In other words, population is proving to be an asset, not a factor that contributes to poverty.

Another area of concern has to do with pandemic diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS. Insofar as they affect the wealth-producing sectors of the population, they are a significant factor in the overall deterioration of conditions in the country concerned. Efforts to rein in the consequences of these diseases on the population do not always achieve significant results. It also happens that countries afflicted by some of these pandemics find themselves held hostage, when they try to address them, by those who make economic aid this kind of treatment must be made available to poorer peoples as well. This presupposes a determined effort to promote medical research and innovative forms of treatment, as well as flexible application, when required, of the international rules protecting intellectual property, so as to guarantee necessary basic healthcare to all people.

A third area requiring attention in programmes for fighting poverty, which once again highlights its intrinsic moral dimension, is child poverty. When poverty strikes a family, the children prove to be the most vulnerable victims: almost half of those living in absolute poverty today are children. To take the side of children when considering poverty means giving priority

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COUNSELS

Epiphany of the Lord

WORD: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-13; Eph 3:2-3a,5-6; Mt 2:1-12

ORDER: Raise your eyes and look about; seek Jesus in your lives and come to do Him homage.

THEME: We are stewards of God's grace when we lead unbelievers to worship Jesus.

REFLECTION: [Evangelization]

This Sunday January 4, 2009 marks the Feast Day of the Epiphany of the Lord. The Epiphany takes its name from the Greek "epiphania," which denotes God's visit on earth. It is told in the gospel story, that "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." These "wise men" or "astrologers" came from the east and were said to be observing astral phenomenon. "Magi" came from the Latin form of the Greek word "magoi", referring to the ancient hereditary priestly caste among the Medes of Persia (Kurds in modern day Iran). Through early church traditions we know there were three of them, since they brought three specific gifts. Later they were viewed as kings and their names were Balthasar, Melchior, and Gaspar.

Why did the magi come from so far to go to Bethlehem? They were drawn by the rise of a star they saw in the east because they recognized in it, according to Pope Benedict XVI, the sign of the birth of the Messiah, the descendant of David, and the "King of the Jews". What was in their hearts that motivated them to search for this Messianic King? Pope Benedict XVI said "the magi set out because of a deep desire which prompted them to leave everything and begin a journey. It was as though they had always been

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Promise of the Week

"...upon you the Lord shines, and over you appears his glory." (Is 60:2b)

The Promise & The Fulfillment

We learned from our BLD Christian Discipleship Formation Program (CDFP) teachings that Jesus is hidden in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament, likewise that the Old Testament is the Promise and the New Testament is the Fulfillment of the Promise. Note that the words 'Promise' and 'Fulfillment' in the previous sentence both starts with capital letters, because Jesus is both the Promise and Fulfillment. The Promise and Fulfillment is not just an idea or concept, but in reality is a Person – Jesus.

In the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, *"God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after are likeness.'" (Gen 1:26)* Note in this scripture verse that the word 'us' refers to both God the Father and God the Son. Man is the crown and climax of God's creation and all of God's creations were entrusted to his dominion. In Genesis chapter 3 we read about the fall of man, caused by disobeying God's order not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and bad. God gave man free will to choose between good and evil. Man's sinful desire is to subjectively determine what is good and bad. Man has the ability to rationalize what is evil and convince others that it is not bad at all. We seek others that are sympathetic to our viewpoints and attitudes. The more we can convince others, the more we feel justified. As in the case of Adam and Eve, we lead each other into darkness.

In the first chapter of the Gospel according to John, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."* (Jn 1:1-2) These scripture verses reveal to us the preexistence of Jesus – the Incarnate Word. Objective moral values can only originate from God. Popular opinions and democratic process does not alter the Truth. *"Jesus said: 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" (Jn 14:6)*

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. (Jn 1:14) In spite of our desires to have our own way, oftentimes turning away from God, God chose to lead us back to Himself, to restore our relationship with Him through Jesus. The season of Advent reminds us of a new beginning offered to us – to continue our "merry" way or to choose to do God's will.

We pray that the New Year will bring to us deeper faith, renewed hope and the love that strengthens our covenant with our Lord and with one another, by the grace of the Father, by the teachings of Jesus – the Eternal Word and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My Commitment To The Lord

"Give to the Lord, you families of nations, give to the Lord glory and might; give to the Lord the glory due his name! Bring gifts and enter his courts; bow down to the Lord, splendid in holiness." (Ps 96:7-9a)

As my spirituality matures, the Lord, who is consistently by my side, opens my heart, my eyes and especially my conscience. He constantly reminds and helps me recognize my shortcomings, and I know there are many. When I became a covenanted disciple, I made a promise to the Lord to "commit myself to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. It means union in mind and heart and spirit with other Christians... in obedience to God the Father and at the direction of the Holy Spirit." (BLD Disciples Manual 3.4.3a)

On numerous occasions I have over-extended my commitments that caused me to neglect or bluntly ignore my promised obligations to my family, my ministry, my parish and BLD communities, and the LORD. I'm too quick to make an excuse saying "I am sorry I am currently busy at work." Then I get a nudge from above saying; "Busy. So is everyone else!" *"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one."* (Mt 5:37) I am reminded to serve with all my heart, unconditionally, expecting nothing in return and no recognition for the work that was done.

There were also occasions where I said "Why did you not ask, I would have helped?" I ponder on those words and realize that I should not be asked. As a disciple, I should be the one approaching others, asking and offering to help.

When I reflect back to determine when I am happiest, the answers that come to mind were those times that I was tired, exhausted and had 2-3 hours of sleep or none at all, like the times my children were born, preparing for a special family occasion, or volunteering to work in our Lord's vineyard. Next to family occasions, I can honestly say that it gives me great pleasure to work in our Lord's vineyard. I am able to discover gifts that the Lord has equipped me that I did not even know I had. The more I use these gifts the more they get refined and the more I discover more gifts. Our Lord truly works in mysterious ways.

I also realize the journey is not easy with all of my secular commitments. This is when I pray the hardest and constantly asking for the Lord to be at my side to help me discern the correct priorities and to ease the burdens. *"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."* Mt (11:29-30)

Visit our website at
www.bldnewark.com

Natural Family Planning

You have all heard of the “theology of the body”, a term phrased by our previous holy father, Pope John Paul II. It is coming more to the attention and consciousness (and hopefully the conscience) of our catholic people. I have found in my ministry that this “new” approach to sexuality and marriage seems to be more exciting both for the married and for singles looking some day to marriage. The value of this different approach is the removal from the consciousness of so many of us, that there is something not quite holy or spiritual enough about marriage and sexuality, since it was often presumed in the past that the celibate vocation was the superior vocation. Another factor is the way sex and marriage are handled by our society. For many, sex and marriage are for having fun.

The pope was able to transfer the abstract approach to marriage spirituality into the physical relationship of the sexual union itself. He linked sexuality to the marriage contract, and reminded us that sexual union between married couples was actually a renewal of marriage vows the couple made on their wedding day, thus an intrinsic part of the Sacrament. If a couple should engage in sexual intercourse before marriage, it is a lie, because there are no vows to renew. If a married couple committed adultery, they are also lying, in that the act does not say “I love you”, but rather: “You make ME feel good”. In both of these cases, pre-marital and adulterous intercourse, the object is to take, not to give (no matter what kind of love language is used). Contraceptive intercourse speaks the language of incomplete giving. They say to each other: “I give you my body, but not my fertility.” The complete gift is missing, and thus does not reflect the total gift of themselves made on their wedding day.

The holy father also brought up the question of family planning and children. This is where the “Natural family program” or NFP, comes in. Not every act of sexual intercourse is intended to result in pregnancy. If there is a serious reason, a couple can restrict their sexual activity to the infertile period, AS LONG AS the act is naturally completed, and symbolizes the total gift of the couple to each other.

May I invite you all to a short seminar on the theology of the body with special emphasis on NFP, on Saturday, January 17th from 1 to 5 pm in St. Mary’s gym. I am fortunate to have three couples from BLD who will share with us how NFP has deepened their love relationship, and how it has brought them closer to each other as well as to God himself.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD:

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).
Email to word@BLDNewark.com

MISSION:

Nursing home visit - Volunteers needed

Every 2nd Saturday of the month.
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ 07055
Please contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Medical Mission - Save the date!

February 9-12, 2009
Location: Barangay Guba & neighboring mountain barangays in Cebu City
Please contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

TEACHING MINISTRY

Jan 9 - Friday

CDFP Overview/Intro to the Word – LSS32

Jan 16 – Friday

Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit-Singles
Mark 10, John 6, Youth Teachings

Jan 17 – Saturday

Adv. Intercession/Spiritual Warfare – LSS28
Christian Maturity Program II – LSS29/30
Christian Parenting I – LSS31/32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1-6pm at St. Mary’s

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

SAVE THE DATE!

BEHOLD THE LAMB

(This season only)

**Sight & Sound – Millennium Theatre
Lancaster, PA**

March 21, 2009 (Sat) 1:00pm show

For details please contact Frank & Malou Venadas
(973)562-0055

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending December 26, 2008

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$ 3,520.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

PLEDGE OF LOVE

**Week Ending December 26, 2008
\$10,376 .00**

Counsels from page 1

waiting for that star.” They were strongly motivated by the prevailing Messianic prophecies that He shall be born in Bethlehem but it was the magi’s faith in God’s promise to send a Savior King that propelled them to make this long journey.

Their journey mirrors our search for the truth about life here on earth. Pope John Paul II in his encyclical “Fides et Ratio” confirms that “all human beings desire to know, and truth is the proper object of this desire. ““The truth comes initially to the human being as a question: Does life have a meaning? Where is it going?” “Scientists sought the logical explanation of a phenomenon. They sought to answer what Pope John Paul II considers as “the fundamental questions which pervade human life: Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?” It is through the help of the Holy Spirit, who moves hearts and opens minds that we are able to understand and believe the divine truth which God revealed to us. He gives us the spiritual gift of faith to enable us to understand and believe the Father’s abounding love for the human race and His Son’s sacrificial love for the Father, for our sake and our salvation.

For the magi, their search became complete as soon as the star that they saw rising and preceding them “came and stopped over the place where the child was.” Jesus said “*I am the Way and the Truth and the Life.*” (John 14:6). They found the truth because they found Christ. Like the magi, “men and women are on a journey of discovery, a search for the truth and for a person to whom they might entrust themselves.” The magi found both of these realities in the child of Bethlehem (Pope Benedict XVI).

In our own encounter with Jesus Christ we have come to see the light and are blessed to know God personally. How can we bring the light of Jesus Christ to those we meet in life? The BLD community is given stewardship of God’s grace to lead unbelievers to worship Jesus. The magi presented their gifts of gold frankincense and myrrh for the Lord. What gifts are we giving to Him this year? We need only raise our eyes, look about and seek Jesus daily in our lives that we may raise Him up as our King and do Him proper homage. The Word of God directs us to spend quiet time with the Lord and in this way fulfill our priestly function as prayer warriors and as agents of evangelization when we spread the shining light of the Word throughout the community. The Word daily exhorts us to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) and this is made possible by taking concrete steps in our mission work to help the plight of the poor and alleviate the roots of poverty in a sustainable way. May God bless us all and sustain us in the New Year!

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) Spend quiet time with the Lord.
- 2) Be the shining light for others in the community by being more concrete in your mission work that will help the poor in a sustainable way.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 17 – Theology of the Body-
Natural Family Program Seminar St. Mary’s Gym – 1-5pm
Auditorium (Fr. Lehman and
Assigned Couples).

Mar 7 & 8, 2009 – YLSS #14

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19

For more info send email to youthministry@bldnewark.com or call
Alan/Tess Cam (201)889-4238;(201)233-6991

Salubungan is scheduled on Jan 2

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to those objectives which concern them most directly, such as caring for mothers, commitment to education, access to vaccines, medical care and drinking water, safeguarding the environment, and above all, commitment to defence of the family and the stability of relations within it. When the family is weakened, it is inevitably children who suffer. If the dignity of women and mothers is not protected, it is the children who are affected most.

A fourth area needing particular attention from the moral standpoint is the relationship between disarmament and development. The current level of world military expenditure gives cause for concern. As I have pointed out before, it can happen that “immense military expenditure, involving material and human resources and arms, is in fact diverted from development projects for peoples, especially the poorest who are most in need of aid. This is contrary to what is stated in the Charter of the United Nations, which engages the international community and States in particular ‘to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources’ (art. 26)”.

This state of affairs does nothing to promote, and indeed seriously impedes, attainment of the ambitious development targets of the international community. What is more, an excessive increase in military expenditure risks accelerating the arms race, producing pockets of underdevelopment and desperation, so that it can paradoxically become a cause of instability, tension and conflict. As my venerable Predecessor Paul VI wisely observed, “the new name for peace is development”. States are therefore invited to reflect seriously on the underlying reasons for conflicts, often provoked by injustice, and to practise courageous self-criticism. If relations can be improved, it should be possible to reduce expenditure on arms. The resources saved could then be earmarked for development projects to assist the poorest and most needy individuals and peoples: efforts expended in this way would be efforts for peace within the human family.

A fifth area connected with the fight against material poverty concerns the current food crisis, which places in jeopardy the fulfilment of basic needs. This crisis is characterized not so much by a shortage of food, as by difficulty in gaining access to it and by different forms of speculation: in other words, by a structural lack of political and economic institutions capable of addressing needs and emergencies. Malnutrition can also cause grave mental and physical damage to the population, depriving many people of the energy necessary to escape from poverty unaided. This contributes to the widening gap of inequality, and can provoke violent reactions. All the indicators of relative poverty in recent years point to an increased disparity between rich and poor. No doubt the principal reasons for this are, on the one hand, advances in technology, which mainly benefit the more affluent, and on the other hand, changes in the prices of industrial products, which rise much faster than those of agricultural products and raw materials in the possession of poorer countries. In this way, the majority of the population in the poorest countries suffers a double marginalization, through the adverse effects of lower incomes and higher prices.



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Volume 15 Issue 2

Bulletin Edition

January 9, 2009

Global Solidarity and the Fight Against Poverty *Pope Benedict's Message* (Part 3)

One of the most important ways of building peace is through a form of globalization directed towards interests of the whole human family. In order to govern globalization, however, there need to be a strong sense of *global solidarity* between rich and poor countries, as well as within individual countries, including affluent ones. "Common code of ethics" is also needed, consisting of norms based not upon mere consensus, but rooted in natural law inscribed by the Creator on conscience of every human being (Rom 2:14-15). Does not every one of us sense deep within his or her conscience a call to make a personal contribution to the common good and peace in society? Globalization eliminates certain barriers, but is still able to build new ones; it brings people together, but spatial and temporal proximity does not itself create conditions for true communion and authentic peace. Effective means to redress marginalization of the world's poor through globalization, will only be found if people feel personally outraged by the injustices in the world and by concomitant violations of human rights. The Church, which is the "sign and instrument of communion with God and unity of the entire human race" will continue to offer contribution so that injustices and misunderstandings may be resolved, leading to a world of greater peace and solidarity.

In the field of *international commerce* and *finance*, there are processes at work today which permit a positive integration of economies, leading to an overall improvement in conditions, but there are also processes tending in opposite direction, dividing and marginalizing people, and creating dangerous situations that can erupt into wars and conflicts. Since the Second World War, international trade in goods and services has grown extraordinarily fast, with a momentum unprecedented in history. Much of this global trade has involved countries that were industrialized early, with the significant addition of many newly-emerging countries which have now entered onto the world stage. Yet there are other low-income countries which are still seriously marginalized in terms of trade. Their growth has been negatively influenced by rapid decline, seen in recent decades, in prices of commodities, which constitute practically the whole of their exports. In these countries, which are mostly in Africa, dependence on the exportation of commodities continues to constitute a potent risk factor. I should like to renew an appeal for all countries be given equal opportunities to world market, without exclusion or marginalization.

COUNSELS

Christ is the Model of Servanthood

WORD: Is 42:1-4, 6-7; Ps 29:1-4; 9-10;
Act 10:34-38; Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

THEME: We are stewards of God's grace when we lead our members to be faithful servants of Jesus.

ORDER: "*Fear him and act uprightly.*" (Acts 10:35)
"*Give to the Lord the glory due to His name, adore the Lord in holy attire.*" (PS 29:2)

REFLECTION: Our team is Servanthood. This is a very important topic in our community and it is part of our teachings, Christian Servanthood. It reinforces the concept of serving a Master, in the person of Jesus who taught us how to serve, by giving us good examples. Our theme is a reminder of what our duties as servants are.

Who are servants? Servants always seek and do the will of their master. They perform what the master asks them to do, anytime, all the time. Good servants must know many things about their master, including his visions, and his plans. And it is a pleasure for the servant to do his master's will.

The Bible has shown us different men and women as models of Servanthood, among them are:

- ◆ Mary as she expresses her heart in all humility when the angel announced that she was chosen - Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. (Luke 1:38),
- ◆ Paul after his conversion- as he humbly consider himself a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God (Ti 1:1)
- ◆ John the Baptist as he acknowledges Jesus as his Master - I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. Mk 1:8

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God Is Love

"Beloved, Let us love on another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God loved us, we also must love one another. No has has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us." (1John 4: 7-12)

This week, the daily Mass readings have focused on Love...Love that is spelled with a capital letter...God's kind of Love. The readings cover the 4th chapter of the First Letter of Saint John. They are full of simple truths, ones we have heard many times. In verse 6 we read, "We belong to God." Saint John tells us "God is love" in verse 8 and "we also must love one another" in verse 9. Verse 18 says, "perfect love drives out fear" and verse 19 reads, "We love because He first loved us." It is summed up by verse 16, "We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him."

All this leads up to Sunday's epistle which boldly declares, *"For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith."* (1 John 5:3-4)

Knowing God, keeping His commandments, and loving one another are inseparable. What better time to renew our commitment to love than at the start of a new year. And what better place to begin than in our own homes. A friend recently gave me a copy of The Love Dare book which was featured in the movie Fireproof. The book's authors, Stephen and Alex Kendrick, believe that strong marriages are not based on mutual attraction and shared feelings alone but require a firmer foundation; and they encourage couples to build their marriage on unconditional love. *"But you will struggle and fail to attain this kind of marriage unless you allow God to begin growing His love within you. Love that 'bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things'"* (1 Corinthians 13:7) *does not come from within. It can only come from God."*

Unconditional Love should be spelled with a capital letter... it is God's kind of Love.

Pledge of Love

Week Ending Jan. 2, 2009

\$10,726.00

Idolatry

"Children, be on your guard against idols." (1 John 5:21) is John's brief ending command, which has a deep concern for the centrality of Jesus Christ to every believer. It is an issue of valuing any thing or any person more than the One True God.

In Exodus 20: 3 & 5, it says, *"You shall not have other gods besides me.....For I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God."* God will not share His throne with another whether that idol be money, our spouse, our child, a humanitarian project, our ministry in BLD community or parish, our music, our hobby or recreation, our career, our house, our car, our addiction, our status, our self. If we allow these things or persons to take center stage in our lives or if we think we can't live without them, we disobey God's first commandment. These things (living or non-living) become an **idol** to us when we attach importance to them to the point of putting them on the throne of our lives before God.

Stubbornness and covetousness are also forms of idolatry. When we love to do our own will more than God's will, we fail to love God and obey His Word. When we glorify God's Name or claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit while we have secret motives or desires to have our names praised by men or be promoted unnecessarily, we fail to exalt God's Name ALONE. Our name and fame become an idol to us! When we are so hungry for recognition, power, position, money, or any material possessions, we occupy our hearts and minds and become enslaved - this is idolatry!

There is nothing wrong with worldly possessions as long as it doesn't compete, displace or replace God. At the same time, doing the best we can with the talents the Lord has given us at work, in church, or in the community is absolutely the right thing to do. However, we should always examine our motives or desires and reflect if we are using our talents to glorify God or to glorify ourselves?

Always keep in mind that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. Satan's mission is to make all of us an ineffective witness of God's love for humanity by having us set our eyes on temporal things instead of the eternal. However, we have great power to fight this evil one for in 1 John 4:4, it says, *"...for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."* Hence, we can fight the battle and overcome all competing gods in our lives and focus on the all-sufficiency of the One True God, who can meet our **EVERY** need daily.

Let us start the New Year with setting our priorities right by allowing God to be the driver of our lives instead of letting other 'gods' rule us.

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE

"BLD"

Chosen by God to be a Family of Light !

Have you ever thought why you have found a home in BLD? Why did it take you several invitations to finally attend an ME, SE, SPE, YE or LSS? Could it be that God handpicked each of us with our own brokenness to be a light to all? To prepare us with this calling, God gave us BLD to be our spiritual home. In BLD, God has mightily revealed Himself to us "internally" with our teachings and scripture studies. Most of all, He has humanly revealed Himself to us "externally" with our encounters where we realized and experienced that His love is greater and beyond our sinfulness. With our sharers' life struggles, because we saw ourselves in their stories, God used them to reveal His unconditional love, changing us to a different person, to one we could not imagine nor do alone. God has called us to be a light to all asking us to live a life different from the world. Having experienced the same unconditional love of God, we united and became a chosen family, "The BLD family"! In Colossians 3:12-14, "God reminds us as a chosen family, *"to be holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on "Love", that is, the bond of perfection."* As a chosen family, if we live by these words, not only do we distinguish ourselves different from the world but most of all, we become a light to all. As Jesus came to us in human form not deeming equality with God something we could not understand, so do we in our human brokenness be light to all something we could not fully understand – a mystery as Jesus selfless love is a mystery.

Being God's chosen family, we His children are entrusted to our DCS just as Jesus was entrusted to St. Joseph and Mama Mary growing and becoming strong, filled with wisdom and favor of God. As brothers and sisters, God expects us in Colossians 3:15-17 to *"let the peace of Christ control our hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."*

Being God's chosen family, the DCS chosen to be our parents, are expected by God in Colossians 3:18-21 to *"be subordinate to each other, as is proper in the Lord, loving each other avoiding any bitterness toward each other"*. We their children need to obey them in everything; for this is pleasing to the Lord. Parents (DCS) do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged but united as a family in the bond of love.

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Ministry Announcements

Word

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.)

Send to word@bldnewark.com

Mission

Nursing Home Visit - Hamilton Plaza
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday of the Month

Volunteers Needed

Nong & Tricia Bustos – 732-591-1340

nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

SAVE THE DATE!

Medical Mission

February 9-12, 2009

Location: Barangay Guba
and neighboring mountain
barangays in Cebu City

Nong & Tricia Bustos – (732) 591-1340

Teachings

Jan 9 - Friday

CDFP Overview/Intro to the Word – LSS32

Jan 16 – Friday

Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit-Singles

Mark 10, John 6, Youth Teachings

Jan 17 – Saturday

Adv. Intercession/Spiritual Warfare – LSS28

Christian Maturity Program II – LSS29/30

Christian Parenting I – LSS31/32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1-6pm at St. Mary's

Special Announcements

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com



Sight & Sound – Millennium Theatre, Lancaster, PA

March 21, 2009 (Sat) 1:00pm show

*Tickets & Bus: Adult \$85.00, Teen \$59.00, Child \$47.00

For Tickets only: Adult \$54, Teen \$28, Child \$16

Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055

Payment Deadline: Feb. 6, 2009

Trip includes stops at Tanger Outlet & Kitchen Kettle Village

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Report for the week ending

June 2, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor \$3,433.00

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Counsels from page 1

All of them showed what it meant to serve, without ever expecting to be repaid, and to lead others to Jesus, our Master, – *who being in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*, Ph 2:6-7. Another good example that Jesus left for us to remember was the washing of his disciples' feet. He gave us an ultimate example of what a Christian attitude should be – humbling oneself, disregarding status, and meeting the needs of others. When Jesus spent time with the unlovely, the undesirable, the sinners or the outcasts, we saw the ultimate examples of Christian Servanthood. These examples must have compelled St. Peter to remind all Christians, including all of us living in this present time, something that is contrary to what this world teaches... *In all humility, consider others better than you are.* 1Pt 2:3.

As a community, our readings encourage us to be stewards of God's grace as we lead our members to be faithful servants of Jesus (our theme). We must continue to learn more about our Master through our prayer life and our study of the Scripture. We must develop the discipline of seeking and obeying His will for us. We must always consider serving others without expecting any return, in all humility. We must take this opportunity to be active in our ministry works by emulating our Master's examples, by being good witnesses in leading others to Christ. We must consider the urgency of our Master's call, to do it now, not someday but today. Not someday when we are ready at our convenience but today when our Master is calling us to serve.

DIRECTIONS:

- Increase awareness of and involvement in Social Justice advocacies starting with Pro-Life (i.e. March for Life)



Promise of the Week

"...upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nation." (Is 42:2)

Community Calendar

January 10 – "Unless the Lord Builds this House Retreat"

(Day of Recollection for DCS/DLC & invitees),
St. Mary's auditorium, 8:00 am -5:00 pm

January 17 – Theology of the Body

Natural Family Program Seminar at St. Mary's from 1- 5pm
Auditorium (Fr. Lehman and Assigned Couples)

January 22 – March for Life, Washington, D.C.

(the 36th Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade)

Assembly: Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Nutley at 5:45 a.m. &
at St. Mary's, Rahway at 6:30 a.m.

For details contact: Rene/Sally Castaneda (732)822-8783
Frank/Malou Venadas (973)562-0055

March 7 & 8 – YLSS #14

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19
For more info send email to youthministry@bldnewark.com or
call Alan/Tess Cam (201)889-4238; (201)233-6991



Deacon's ... from page 3

As we enter the New Year, are we fully aware and do we truly believe we are God's chosen family in BLD? Can we make a heartfelt decision to be one as Jesus chose to be one with the Father until death for His love for us? As brothers and sisters, are we willing to die of our own self-centeredness ready and willing to accept each other in our differences? St. Joseph chose to be Jesus' father, giving Him his name, caring and providing for Him as a true father beyond blood relation. Mama Mary chose Jesus to grow physically within her, nursed, cared, taught Him and most especially shared with His mysterious suffering, death and resurrection all in obedience to the Father and love for us. Can we chose and consciously commit ourselves to making BLD a home for everyone especially those who are new in the family? Are we ready to grow out of our inherited brokenness sharing our experiences of God's boundless love to others being a light to all? Are we willing to be Jesus hands, feet, eyes, ears and heart for others as Jesus was for the Father out of love and obedience? Just like St. Joseph and Mama Mary, are we ready to choose Jesus. Are we willing to allow Him grow in us, and shared to others who do not know or recognize Him?



"Unless The Lord Builds This House" Retreat

Braving the inclement weather, over one hundred disciples, members of the community's leadership and other invited guests attended the first BLD community retreat for 2009 last Saturday, January 10. Under the spiritual guidance of Rev. Pete Literal, all attendees were called to prepare spiritually for the challenges of the new year, to seek guidance and enlightenment for our affairs as a community of believers with the goal of bringing the Good News to all! *"They entered into a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and soul."* (2 Chron 15:12)

The retreat focused on Jesus, our Lord, as the Model, Who taught and embodied leadership as service. His Mission was to be the Messiah, to be a true and humble Servant. His disposition is obedience to the Father. The retreat made them aware that just like Jesus, God calls all to authentic discipleship and leadership. Its foundation is in servant leadership that goes beyond the "head table" syndrome, where the calling is not upward but downward mobility, a return to the "towel and basin" mentality. It opened everyone's hearts that God's divine call is for all to give of self freely and go beyond one's comfort zone.

The retreat brought a sense of awareness among our leaders that *"Unless God Builds the House, then they will only be able to build a house with quite a number of surprises, where conflict, confusion and disagreement abound."*

The retreat became a springboard for reconciliation and healing. The Spirit made everyone acknowledge the presence of conflict, made everyone aware of their role in the conflict and most importantly, to be forgiving. Forgiveness is the heart of every caring community that embraces conflict for its benefit. As St Paul states in Romans 12, *"if possible live peaceably with everyone!"*

Today, we can only rejoice that reconciliation, forgiveness and healing are parts of our wider spiritual consciousness whose natural progression for us as a community is to be more inclined to fully embrace the Gospel message of healing.

Growth from seeking wholeness can enliven each follower of Christ to truly live a life as a reconciler, as one always ready to forgive. Reconciliation, as the restoration of relations with God in Christ, is the source of being at peace with oneself, with other people and with the whole of creation.

As a community, we are called to receive and celebrate

(☪ Page 4)

COUNSELS

Repentantly Dispossess and Follow Jesus

WORD: Jon 3:1-5, 10; Ps 25:4-9;
1Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20

THEME: We are stewards of God's grace when we repent and follow Jesus.

ORDER: 1. *"Repent and believe in the gospel."* (Mk.1:15)
2. *"Come after me and I will make you fishers of men."* (Mk. 1:17)

REFLECTION:

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops in a Pastoral Letter on Stewardship defined Stewardship as an expression of discipleship, with the power to change how we understand and live out our lives. Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be. They are deeply aware of the truth that *"The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it"* (Ps 24:1). They know themselves to be recipients and caretakers of God's many gifts. They are grateful for what they have received and eager to cultivate their gifts out of love for God and one another.

The Bishops also write that Jesus sometimes describes a disciple's life in terms of stewardship, not because being a steward is the whole of it but because this role sheds a certain light on it. A steward is one to whom the owner of a household turns over responsibility for caring for the property, managing affairs, making resources yield as much as possible, and sharing the resources with others. This week's theme reminds us that, "We are stewards of God's grace when we repent and follow Jesus." God receives and forgives every truly repentant man. However, there has been misunderstanding and confusion over the meaning of repent or *repentance*. Many think repent means

(☪ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week



*"...he shows sinners the way.
He guides the humble to justice."*
(Ps 25: 8b-9a)



In Prayer, the Lord Refreshes My Soul

“Jesus is always able to save those who approach God through him, since he lives forever to make intercession for them.” (Heb 7:25)

My bag was stolen at work a few weeks before Christmas. At first I felt violated and then betrayed. There was no one else in the office except my secretary and a patient and his family. It kept me wondering, how did it happen, why did it happen, what is the Lord trying to tell me through this unfortunate experience?

In poring over this week’s readings and reflecting upon them, I’ve somehow arrived at my own epiphany. The Lord allows unfortunate circumstances in our lives so we may turn to Him in prayer. In my case, I was moved to pray for the person who took my purse. It happened in the midst of Advent and Christmas season, so I prayed that the contents of my bag provide needed food and sustenance for this person, especially during the holidays. I prayed that he or she may open the Magnificat that was in my purse, and the prayers tucked within it, and by His grace be touched and transformed miraculously. I prayed that this person be changed through God’s almighty and marvelous power. And as I prayed, I felt God’s warmth surrounding me and an overwhelming sense of peace. His grace was filling in for whatever sense of loss I may have felt. Suddenly, I was no longer saddened by my material loss because it was replaced by something greater and more valuable: the knowledge that God was with me and in me at that very moment.

At our Sunday mass celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany, our new parish pastor spoke of the Feast of the Epiphany as one of the 3 most important holy days observed by the Early Church; Easter, and Christmas being the other two: Easter as we celebrate the Lord’s triumph over death and the mystery of His Salvation; Christmas as we celebrate His coming to save the world; and finally Epiphany as it is when three wise men, guided by the Holy Spirit, found Jesus, and consequently, went out to the world to declare His arrival. As an extension, we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany mindful of our own personal mission to go out and tell the world of His Good News. I pondered upon that and thought of how our community, as Christ’s church, truly embodies the Lord’s promise and gives flesh to His undying devotion and love.

It touches me when I see someone in community humbly receiving a late request to “cover” someone’s unfulfilled tasks. They not only obediently perform, but also respond with fullness of joy and humility. It humbles my heart when I read a deacon’s email asking for forgiveness for having gone over the prescribed article word limit, saying that he will strive to put “less of me and more of Him” in his future articles.

These are little blessings that I receive each time I pray and reflect upon His words. While I stay close to Him in prayer, he brings to me grace upon grace. Suddenly, His promise in Ezekiel 47:1-12 becomes clearer and my heart is filled with hope



St. Francis de Sales

Bishop of Geneva, Doctor of the Universal Church. born at Thorens, in the Duchy of Savoy, 21 August, 1567; died at Lyons, 28 December, 1622. His father, François de Sales de Boisy, and his mother, Françoise de Sionnaz, belonged to old Savoyard aristocratic families. The future saint was the eldest of six brothers. His father intended him for the magistracy and sent him at an early age to the colleges of La Roche and Annecy. In 1588 he studied law at Padua, where the Jesuit Father Possevin was his spiritual director.

Having been admitted as a lawyer before the senate of Chambéry, he was about to be appointed senator. His father had selected one of the noblest heiresses of Savoy to be the partner of his future life, but Francis declared his intention of embracing the ecclesiastical life.

On the death of Claude de Granier, Francis was consecrated Bishop of Geneva (1602). His first step was to institute catechetical instructions for the faithful, both young and old. He made prudent regulations for the guidance of his clergy. He carefully visited the parishes scattered through the rugged mountains of his diocese. He reformed the religious communities. His goodness, patience and mildness became proverbial. He had an intense love for the poor, especially those who were of respectable family. His food was plain, his dress and his household simple. He completely dispensed with superfluities and lived with the greatest economy, in order to be able to provide more abundantly for the wants of the needy. He heard confessions, gave advice, and preached incessantly. He wrote innumerable letters (mainly letters of direction)

“The writings of Francis de Sales, filled with celestial doctrine are a bright light in the Church, pointing out to souls an easy and safe way to arrive at the perfection of a Christian life.” (Breviarium Romanum, 29 January, lect. VI.)

There are two elements in the spiritual life: first, a struggle against our lower nature; secondly, union of our wills with God, in other words, penance and love. St. Francis de Sales looks chiefly to love. Not that he neglects penance, which is absolutely necessary, but he wishes it to be practiced from a motive of love. He requires mortification of the senses, but he relies first on mortification of the mind, the will, and the heart. This interior mortification he requires to be unceasing and always accompanied by love. The end to be realized is a life of loving, simple, generous, and constant fidelity to the will of God, which is nothing else than our present duty. The model proposed is Christ, whom we must ever keep before our eyes. “You will study His countenance, and perform your actions as He did” (Introd., 2nd part, ch. i). The practical means of arriving at this perfection are: remembrance of the presence of God, filial prayer, a right intention in all our actions, and frequent recourse to God by pious and confiding ejaculations and interior aspirations. (Source: Catholic Encyclopedia)

*“When you call me, when you go to pray to
I will listen to you.”*


(Jer 29:12)



Pope Benedict XVI Message: **FIGHTING POVERTY TO BUILD PEACE**

14. In the Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II warned of the need to “abandon a mentality in which the poor – as individuals and as peoples – are considered a burden, as irksome intruders trying to consume what others have produced.” The poor, he wrote, “ask for the right to share in enjoying material goods and to make good use of their capacity for work, thus creating a world that is more just and prosperous for all” [15]. In today’s globalized world, it is increasingly evident that peace can be built only if everyone is assured the possibility of reasonable growth: sooner or later, the distortions produced by unjust systems have to be paid for by everyone. It is utterly foolish to build a luxury home in the midst of desert or decay. Globalization on its own is incapable of building peace, and in many cases, it actually creates divisions and conflicts. If anything it points to a need: to be oriented towards a goal of profound solidarity that seeks the good of each and all. In this sense, globalization should be seen as a good opportunity to achieve something important in the fight against poverty, and to place at the disposal of justice and peace resources which were scarcely conceivable previously.

15. The Church’s social teaching has always been concerned with the poor. At the time of the Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum*, the poor were identified mainly as the workers in the new industrial society; in the social Magisterium of Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI and John Paul II, new forms of poverty were gradually explored, as the scope of the social question widened to reach global proportions [16]. This expansion of the social question to the worldwide scale has to be considered not just as a quantitative extension, but also as a qualitative growth in the understanding of man and the needs of the human family. For this reason, while attentively following the current phenomena of globalization and their impact on human poverty, the Church points out the new aspects of the social question, not only in their breadth but also in their depth, insofar as they concern man’s identity and his relationship with God. These principles of social teaching tend to clarify the links between poverty and globalization and they help to guide action towards the building of peace. Among these principles, it is timely to recall in particular the “preferential love for the poor” [17], in the light of the primacy of charity, which is attested throughout Christian tradition, beginning with that of the early Church (cf. *Acts* 4:32-36; *1 Cor* 16:1; *2 Cor* 8-9; *Gal* 2:10).

“Everyone should put his hand to the work which falls to his share, at once and immediately”, wrote Leo XIII in 1891, and he added: “In regard to the Church, her cooperation will never be wanting, be the time or the occasion what it may” [18]. It is in the same spirit that the Church to this day carries out her work for the poor, in whom she sees Christ [19], and she constantly hears echoing in her heart the command of the Prince of Peace to his Apostles: “*Vos date illis manducare* – Give them something to eat yourselves” (*Lk* 9:13). Faithful to this summons 

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Sat. of the month Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ

Volunteers needed

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340/
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Medical Mission

February 9-12, 2009

Barangay Guba & neighboring mountain barangays in Cebu City

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340/
nongb601@aol.com

HEALING SERVICES: Every Monday at 8 PM

Healing Prayer Service & Eucharistic Celebration

Every 1st Monday of the month at 8 PM

2000 Hail Marys Devotion & Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Saturday of the month except December. Prayer starts at 8:30 AM

Venue: Resurrection Parish – St Bridget Church, 372 Montgomery St, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Websites: bondoflove.org and 2000hailmarys.org

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article

(450 words max.).

Email to word@bldnewark.com

ISAIAH 58

SAGIP: Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a school child)
Collection of School Supplies/Coin for Change Campaign
Every Friday from January 23 to April 17, 2009

Contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante at rubenluz@aol.com

TEACHINGS

Venue: St. Mary's Classroom

January 30 (Friday after worship)

LSS Orientation - Four Basic Truths - LSS 32

MGT - LSS 29 & LSS 30

February 7 (Saturday: 1 pm - 6pm)

Christian Maturity II - LSS 29 & LSS 30

Christian Parenting - LSS 31 & LSS 32

from the Lord, the Christian community will never fail, then, to assure the entire human family of her support through gestures of creative solidarity, not only by “giving from one’s surplus”, but above all by “a change of life- styles, of models of production and consumption, and of the established structures of power which today govern societies” [20]. At the start of the New Year, then, I extend to every disciple of Christ and to every person of good will a warm invitation to expand their hearts to meet the needs of the poor and to take whatever practical steps are possible in order to help them. The truth of the axiom cannot be refuted: “to fight poverty is to build peace.”

From the Vatican, 8 December 2008

Counsels (from page 1)

“to get your act together” or to “get religion” or “fly straight”. Repentance requires taking in new point of view; looking at it God’s way. It is not only a heart broken for sin, but also from sin. We must forsake what we would have God forgive. It is not enough just to turn away from sin; one must turn to God for salvation.

“Repent” thus refers to a truly God-given, Spirit-led change of heart and mind toward God about sin: A revolution in dealing with our attitude and view towards sin and righteousness; an inward attitude of the soul.

In our first reading, we read of the instant conversion of the people of Nineveh and the mercy of God as result of the action of Jonah. The one who had been reluctant to answer God’s call and had in fact tried to hide had now repented and was dispossessed and was boldly proclaiming repentance. We read further that after hearing Jonah, the people acted and *“when God saw by their actions how they turned from their evil way, he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do to them.”* (Jon 3:10)

In our Gospel, we read that as Jesus was passing by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea and Jesus said to them, *“Come after me and I will make you fishers of men.”* (Mk 1:17) Without hesitation, they followed him. Similarly, James, the son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were also in their boat mending their nets, left their father without hesitation and followed Jesus.

Unlike Jonah, Simon, Andrew, James, and John responded instantly and willingly to leave all and follow Jesus. However, how many people are in their individual boats and will try to remain in their comfort zone and neglect their calling? How many today are weighed down by earthly desires and concerns and will not follow Jesus? Some have identified a culture in which destructive “isms” – materialism, relativism, hedonism, individualism, and consumerism – exercise seductive, powerful influences on today’s disciples. We are called to a renewal in Christ in Eph 4: 17 – 32 from a list of inimical behaviors. St. Paul stressed the urgency of our conversion in I Cor: 7: 29 & 31, *“I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running out.For the word in its present form is passing away.”*

Just as the people of Nineveh acted decisively and repented and their city was saved, Christians are called to a life of conversion. We are ordered to repent and believe in the gospel and follow Jesus and become fishers of men. Like the disciples, we too must respond with immediacy to God’s call and with complete faith be ready to leave our worldly attachments and comforts, and follow Jesus no matter how difficult dispossession may be.

As a Community, we should be like Jonah and obediently heed God’s call for us to proclaim the salvation He offers us, His people by availing of any opportunity to share our lives through our Community’s word sharing circles, encounter programs, and LSS; and serve in mission activities without reservations or hesitation.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Marian of the Immaculate Conception Eucharistic Celebration

February 6, 2009

St. Mary's Auditorium, at 7:30 pm

*Followed by a reflection/presentation of the Marian Fathers in the Philippines spreading the Divine Mercy message.

Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar (YLSS)

March 7 & 8, 2009

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19

For more information, send email to youthministry@bldnewark.com or call Alan/Tess Cam (201)889-4238/(201)233-6991

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

For information on St. Mary’s and St. Mark’s visit their newly designed website:

www.stmarystmarkparish.com

Bible Study @ St. Mary & St. Mark Parish

Starting February 13, 2009 at 7:30 pm

St. Mary's School in Rm 104

Everyone is welcome. Bring your family & friends

Save the date! BEHOLD THE LAMB

(This season only)

Sight & Sound - Millenium Theatre, Lancaster, PA

Saturday, March 21, 2009 1:00 pm show

Adult \$85, Teen \$59, Child \$47 (Trip includes stops at Tanger Outlet & Kitchen Kettle Village)

Tickets only: Adult \$54, Teen \$28, Child \$16

Contact Persons: Frank/Malou Venadas (973)562-0055

Payment deadline: February 6, 2009

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report
for the Week Ending January 16, 2009**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor**

\$3,308.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Unless the Lord.....(from page 1)

reconciliation as a gift that is empowered by the Spirit. Let us build God’s house by allowing His will to prevail in us and surrendering our lives to Him. Whether leader or follower in community, let us explore the message of reconciliation and healing as integral to the profession of our faith in Jesus.



**Lord, let your Light
meet the darkness of our lives!**

DIRECTION:

* Leave behind all baggage (spiritual and otherwise) in our work for the Lord.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS - NJ / NY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 5

Bulletin Edition

January 30, 2009

NEWS

MARCH FOR LIFE 2009 WASHINGTON DC

We would like to praise and thank our Lord, Jesus Christ for touching all our hearts in making this most inspiring and important pro-life event or if I may say a “crusade”, an eye opener and a heart moving experience for all of us. I was so shocked to learn the very gruesome atrocities that were being done to the unborn and unwanted children.

Sometimes when our Lord, Jesus Christ says “*Come, and you will see*” John 1:39, it may not be just an invitation limited to see His works and miracles, but it may be to reveal to our own eyes the works of the devil. It made me think, “WHY”? Why would anyone do this and how could the mothers, doctors and anyone who participate in condoning such an act, live with their conscience without guilt or remorse. Then I remembered what our parish priest said, “people have changed their moral values and they do not know anymore, what sin is ...”

Fifty three BLD Pro-lifers from adults, singles, and youth prayed the rosary, sung praises and marched the 3 mile long trek in Washington D.C. along Constitution Avenue leading to First Street where the march ended in front of the Supreme Court building. At the steps of the building, we heard testimonies of women who had their babies aborted and how it affected their lives. Hundreds of thousand of marchers mostly composed of young adults from various catholic schools all over the nation, priests, deacons, nuns, seminarians, rabbis and other religious groups from different parts of the world were there as well.

As we head back home, we prayed for all our blessings and most of all, the gift of life. A moment of reflection and personal sharing were heard about related experiences involving the importance of awareness, understanding and doing action to prevent and end abortion. Our march is not really over. This is just the beginning. Each day is a new day and the battle has just begun, as we live and pray each day for life. Join Us!

**MAKE COVENANT NEWS A
PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE**

COUNSELS

Have You Met Your Prophet?

WORD: Dt 18:15-20; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9; 1 Cor 7:32-35; Mk 1:21-28

ORDER: “*Come let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the Lord who has made us.*” (Ps 95:6)

THEME: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we recognize Him as the Holy One of God.

REFLECTION:

[FAITH]

The first reading is taken from the Book of Deuteronomy. It is Moses who is speaking. The question at issue here is the all-important one of the vital link between people and God. Moses is seen not only as the one who delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt, not only as the one who gave them God’s laws, but also as the first prophet and the model for all future prophets. (Prophets were the spokesmen of God and communicated God’s message to men. This divine message could refer to the past, present or future). The role of the prophet is to monitor the status of the people’s covenantal relationship with God. Prophets are like fingers, not like faces. We are not meant to look at them but to the reality to which they point. God chooses to speak to the Church through individuals. It has been the obedience of an individual to God’s Word that has left a lasting effect on the world

The ‘official prophets’ are those who speak with the authority of a legitimate church or religious body. We Catholics might surely list among them figures such as the late John Paul II and now Benedict XVI.

On the second reading here St. Paul explains why virginity is preferable to marriage. It has nothing to do with the rightness or wrongness of sex.. Rather it is a question of anxieties which prevent the mind from concentrating on the worship of God. Marriage involves spouses in many worldly cares that make it difficult for them to concentrate themselves perfectly and in

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

“I will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him.” (Dt 18:18b)

“Faith is the realization of what is hoped for & evidence of things not seen”

(Heb 11:1-2)

During these very difficult time of economic uncertainty where the faith of many among us are being tested like never before I am reminded of what my dad went through and how it thought his family a valuable lesson about Faith.

My dad was a top executive for one of the largest companies in the Philippines. At 38 he became the youngest executive to ever hold his position at his company. Along with his success came the usual perks, a huge house, fancy cars, the best schools for his seven kids, membership at a private golf & country club near our house, and annual vacations abroad with the whole family. By all accounts his life was pretty good.

But when it came to his Faith he barely met the minimum. Sunday mass was the extent of his spiritual life, & just to clarify, during most of the mass you will find him outside, most likely smoking a cigarette.

Then in 1995, at the age of 56 and at the peak of his career, he started to go blind. His diabetes coupled with the smoking, the food, the drinking, and the stress of his work finally caught up with him. Less than a year later he lost his sight completely & not even the best doctors that money can buy can help him.

His days were now spent sitting at home, alone, with only his thoughts and his wife to keep him company. As for his kids, who by this time have all been shipped off to the US, we can only imagine what could be going through his mind. Knowing how he was, we felt so sorry for him. Here was a guy who was so consumed with his professional success...and just like that, it was all gone.

But to everyone's astonishment, instead of becoming bitter and angry, he said that losing his sight was the best thing that ever happened to him. Going blind allowed him to rediscover his Faith. It freed him from worrying about the things of this world and focus instead on what's really important. Because he was blind, he no longer had to worry about how he looked, the clothes he wore, the car he drove, or even the house he lived in. None of those things mattered anymore.

The only thing that mattered to him now was his newfound friendship with Jesus and how he can see our Lord clearly through his “mind's eye”, as he calls it. We saw how he was filled with joy at now having all the time in the world to be alone in prayer (or as he liked to say, hangout with his “best friend”).

Ironically, he had to go blind in order to “see” Jesus. He died the following year at the young age of 58. At his deathbed he told his kids not to lose sight of what's truly important, that no matter what he achieved in his life, in the end he was left with just three things; his FAITH in God, his HOPE for an everlasting life, and the LOVE of his family and of course “closest friend”.

As for me I take comfort in the words of our Lord, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (Mk 5:34b)...take care Pops, I know you're in good hands...

Patiently Waiting on GOD

In the Gospel according to Mark, he mentions that Jesus began to teach them many things in parables and at the end with many such parables he spoke the word to them. Jesus' talk about the kingdom of God coming was not new but his vision of the kingdom was radically different from what it usually was. When Jesus begins the kingdom of God is like he assumes divine authority to explain what God's rule is.

The fact that although Jesus' ministry in Galilee doesn't look like the sort of kingdom of God movement people were expecting, it was in fact the seedtime for God's long promised and long awaited harvest. People wouldn't be able to see how God's appointed plant would grow from this seed but grow it would and harvest would come. The story in its context is a warning about looking down on the small beginnings of Jesus' Galilean ministry, as part of the great work that God was going to do. It can function as a warning too for us today against looking down on the small beginnings that often herald the start of some great new initiative that God has in mind.

The seed planted in the ground carries its own future in itself. Its growth to maturity and harvest, to become a large shrub is inevitable because of the nature of the seed not the ability of the farmer. In the context of the first parable of the chapter reasonable to assume the seed is the word of the good news of the kingdom, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The image portrayed is not of when the church gathers on Sunday mornings, but what the church does after through out the rest of the week. Sowing the seed of the gospel by what you say and do. Inevitably when it is sown, it will produce a harvest; maybe not immediately, maybe not every single seed but enough to ensure a great harvest. The seeds success fortunately does not depend on our efforts and we can not make the seed germinate and grow.

Sure we need to sow the seed in the first place, and the image is of the church scattered rather than gathered, but then how the seed grows is a mystery, it is the work of God. Having done our part, having sown the seed we need to have patient trust in God who we are assured will one day reap a harvest, will one day grow a whole tree from the smallest of seeds.

Lastly, we need to remember that the mission of the church is God's not ours as we are invited to participate in the mission of God, to join in what Jesus Christ had already begun and to keep HIS word in our hearts.

Visit our website at

www.bldnewark.com

FR. PAUL SPEAKS on Encyclicals

Following the global inter-district conference in the Philippines in February, 2008, we shared here in our own inter-district conference the challenge of the “social” encyclicals... The coverage of those encyclicals was very summary, and we certainly have not fully absorbed the social teachings of the Church. We encourage ourselves as a community to continue to study the social teachings of the Church especially as it relates to poverty.

It was suggested that in this CN column we focus on “Humanae Vitae” which encyclical, however, does have social implications. The encyclical was published by Pope Paul VI on July 25, 1968 as a follow up to theological investigations that followed the closing of the second Vatican council in 1965. It has been called a strong anti-artificial birth control statement, and that is one of its important aspects. This teaching is part of the exercise of magisterial authority, and we are not permitted, as faithful Catholics, to believe or live life at variance with this teaching. But there is much more. We could miss the social and prophetic implications of this encyclical.

One of the areas where the somber prophecy of Paul VI has come true is the growing practice of abortion. When artificial means to prevent conception fail, and pregnancy results, the temptation is to abort. Abortion then becomes a method of birth control. You are all familiar with abortion statistics. The Right to Life march in Washington reminds us every year of this scourge on our nation.

The central teaching in the encyclical is the intrinsic connection between the unitive and procreative aspect of the sexual act. This is where confusion results in the minds of some who claim the Church teaches that married couples should have as many children as possible. SUCH IS NOT THE CASE. We seek clarification in “The Theology of the Body,” a series of teachings and a follow-up to Humanae Vitae, given by our previous holy father, Pope John Paul II. He analyzes the “language” of the body especially, as it expresses itself in sexual activity. However, aware of it or not, we communicate all the time with our bodies even outside of marriage intimacy.

Since I am space limited, allow me to continue in the next CN news with answers to the following questions: Question 1- What does the body say when two singles engage in pre-marital sex? Question 2- What does the body say when a married couple practices artificial birth control? Question 3- What does the body say when two people of the same sex engage in sexual activity? Question 4- What is the difference between “natural family planning” and contraception, if the attitude of both is to regulate the size of their family?

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD:

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).
Email to word@BLDNewark.com

MISSION:

Nursing home visit - Volunteers needed

Every 2nd Saturday of the month.
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ 07055
Please contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Medical Mission - Save the date!

February 9-12, 2009
Location: Barangay Guba & neighboring mountain barangays in Cebu City
Please contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

TEACHING MINISTRY

Jan 30 - Friday

LSS Orientation - ME32
MGT - ME29 & ME30

Feb 7 – Saturday

CMP II - ME29 & ME39
Christian Parenting I – LSS31 & ME32

Feb 13 – Friday

LSS Orientation - ME32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1-6pm at St. Mary's

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

February 6 – Marians of the Immaculate Conception Eucharistic Celebration

St. Mary's auditorium/gym, 7:30 pm

*Followed by a reflection/presentation of the Marian Fathers in the Philippines spreading the Divine Mercy message

Mar 7 & 8, 2009 – YLSS #14

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19

For more info send email to

youthministry@bldnewark.com or call Alan/Tess Cam
(201)889-4238;(201)233-6991

Counsels from page 1

many relationships that subject them to this world and can easily impede their complete dedication to God. The husband must try to please the wife, and the wife the husband. Consequently, they are divided, impeded from devoting their attention solely to the Lord. The virgin, being freed from the cares and duties of family life, can devote herself with undivided attention and heart to the Lord. In counseling virginity, St. Paul does not intend to restrict the Christian's liberty to marriage, but only to point out what is advantageous for them and what enables them to devote themselves to the Lord without distraction. Marriage is a good thing too because through it the "means" of human continuity are found, as building a family is in its own way building up the people of God, provided the parents take seriously their responsibility to form their children in the teaching of the Church.

In the Gospel from St. Mark, Jesus has just started His public ministry. For the past two weeks we have heard of Him going out and recruiting disciples. Now He begins to teach. From the very first day of Christ's public ministry, His messianic power began to be manifested to those who saw and heard him. The Jews of Capernaum were "astonished" at his teaching and "amazed" at his power over the evil spirits. "What is this," they asked one another, "a new teaching and the unclean spirits obey him!" But they were still a long way from recognizing him for what he was, the Messiah and Son of God. The astounding mystery of the incarnation was way beyond human expectation and imagination. And it was our Lord's own plan to reveal this mystery, slowly and gradually, so that when the chain of evidence had been completed by his resurrection, his followers could look back and see each link in that chain. Then they would be ready to accept without hesitation the mystery of the incarnation and realize the infinite love and power of God that brought it about. We look back today through the eyes of the Evangelists, and, like them, know that Christ was God as well as man—two natures in one person. We should not therefore be "amazed" at the teaching of Jesus or at his power over the unclean spirits. What should amaze us really is the love that God showed mankind in becoming one of our race.

We are creatures with nothing of our own to boast of. We were created by God, and every talent or power we possess was given us by God. God's benevolence could have stopped there and we would have no right to complain. We can still find many facets in our daily Christian lives which can and should make us amazed at our lack of gratitude to God and to his incarnate Son. Leaving out serious sin which turns us away from God if not against him, how warm is our charity, our love of God and neighbor?

How much of our time do we give to the things of God and how much to the things of Caesar? How often does our daily struggle for earthly existence and the grumbles and grouches which it causes, blot out from our view the eternal purpose God had in giving us this earthly existence. We are no longer powerless in the face of sin. Jesus has given us victory over sin and the devil. We are no longer easy prey to temptation. Through the grace of God, we have victory in all our battles — if we really want it.

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) Soak yourself in prayers and daily reflections of the Word so you can speak with the authority of Jesus.
- 2) As a disciple of Christ, be more compassionate, loving and caring to lead others to the kingdom of God.
- 3) Seek the Lord's voice in emerging leaders.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**2000 Hail Marys Devotion and Eucharistic
Celebration for Medical Mission Group
Saturday, Jan. 31 starting at 8:30am
Resurrection Parish - St. Bridget's Church
372 Montgomery St. Jersey City, NJ 07302**

Catholic Men's Conference
Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Newark's
Men's Commission
Essex County Richard J. Codey Arena,
560 Northfield Avenue, West Orange, NJ
For more information:
www.rcan.org/menscommission

BIBLE STUDY **AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH**

***** Starting February 13 *****

Conducted by Fr. Dennis
Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm
St. Mary's School, Room 104
Everyone is welcome!

*Make it your New Year's resolution to know God
better through His Word.*

SAVE THE DATE!
BEHOLD THE LAMB
(This season only)

**Sight & Sound – Millennium Theatre
Lancaster, PA**

March 21, 2009 (Sat) 1:00pm show

Adult \$85.00, Teen \$59.00, Child \$47.00

Tickets only Adult \$54, Teen \$28, Child \$16

Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055

Payment Deadline: Feb. 6, 2009

**Trip includes stops at Tanger Outlet &
Kitchen Kettle Village**

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending
January 23, 2009
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$ 3,363.00
Thank you for your continued generosity.**



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NITARE

Volume 15 Issue 6

Bulletin Edition

February 6, 2009

An Open Letter on March for Life

Dear March for Life Organizer,

You said "Thank You" to us for joining the March for Life but "No", it is we who should Thank You!

I hate to admit that prior to Thursday, January 22, I had an abhorrent indifference to the issue of abortion. Yes, I thought it was wrong, but in reality I did not do anything to protest it. It was just something that affected someone else - an item in the news, occasionally.

But that Thursday, seeing other people indignant at our government, galvanized me and woke up untapped passions. There was a multitude of people everywhere, from all the streets of America! There were old and young of differing religions and race. Men, women, children, and families came. There were those who had had abortions, some of whom are now the loudest voices against it.

So touching were the pictures of fetuses that were not given the chance to live. Another touching experience was when a mother standing next to us, tried to explain to her young, what the rally was all about and what had happened to those babies.

How does one explain to a child that there are some babies who are not welcome in this world?



Even on just an intellectual and philosophical basis, how can man's creation, the Constitution, take the precedence over our Creator's wisdom? Ultimately, is not Life the forefront of all our being? Given the permanence of its alternative, should we not defend Life with all our might? So whatever future BLD efforts there may be to speak out against this violence, let us know. Meanwhile, there are a lot of pro-life avenues that we can actively be a part of.

(continued on page4)

COUNSELS

The Good News of Salvation

WORD: Jb 7:1-4,-7; Ps 147:1-6;

1Cor 9:16-19 22-23; Mk 1:29-39

THEME: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we receive Him and preach the Good News of Salvation.

ORDER: Go on to the nearby villages and preach there also (paraphrased Mk 1:38)

REFLECTION: From the Gospel we learned that Jesus gave importance and priority to prayer before ministry work. May it be proclaiming the Kingdom of God, performing miracles or healing the sick, Jesus offered everything to the Almighty God, His Father.

Followers of Christ, who are servants of the Good News, need to understand who they are serving. We are to serve with the kind of passion that would make us prisoners for the sake of the Gospel. We must understand that we do our work for the glory of God. We can serve in the most difficult times without discrimination with humility and love once we truthfully understand our purpose here on earth.

For someone to claim to be servant of the Good News, one needs to have the mind of Christ. This can happen if we put ourselves in total surrender to God to let His grace and power to work in our lives. A servant-hearted disciple has a heart filled with passion for the Good News of Salvation, thus attracting more people to become members of the Body of Christ. Servants of the Good News cannot be an observer but an active participant in spreading the Good News of Salvation.

(continued on page4)

Promise of the Week

"He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds." (Ps 137:3)

Love in His Discipline



"My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines; he scourges every son he acknowledges." (Hebrews 12:5-6). This

exhortation illustrates how the Lord is our Father, and we are truly His children. He disciplines us with love and for love because it is through this discipline that we are able to become a better person, the person He created us to be.

As children we have experienced getting in trouble with our parents when we disobeyed them. Similarly, I feel when I sin against God knowingly, I will be corrected by Him. I know I did something that was not pleasing in His eyes, and for that reason, He will discipline me with love to teach me to do better. *"For what 'son' is there whom his father does not discipline?"* (Hebrews 12:7)

The Lord does not want us to lose heart or scorn His discipline. It is for our benefit and blessing. *"Endure your trials as 'discipline'. At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it."* (Hebrews 12:7, 11). The Lord has His reasons for disciplining us the way He does. During the times of trials and discipline, it is difficult for us to be patient, understanding, and accepting of our situation. It is easier to feel sorry for ourselves and be discouraged.

When big trials come in my life, I quickly react with complaints, irrational thoughts, and negative feelings. It is when I begin praying about my circumstances that my eyes are opened to see a different perspective, a heavenly perspective. I am reminded that the Lord is with me, and He will see me through. I believe that everything happens for a reason, and there is something that I need to learn from each experience. For every hardship and struggle, there is a blessing. If we are able to persevere through the trials with Jesus, then we gain His peace, triumph, and righteousness.

When you feel the discipline of the Lord, embrace it and embrace Him. His discipline guides us to where we need to go and what we need to do in order to reach our goal – our Father in Heaven. *"So strengthen your drooping hands and your weak knees. Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be dislocated but healed."* (Hebrews 12:12-13). Let us not lose heart or be weary of God's discipline. Rather, let us pray that He continues to lead us and teach us to be His faithful and righteous children.

Who Touched Me?



Who touched me? This was the question asked by Jesus to His disciples and to the crowds pressing around Him while He was on His way to Jairus house. (Mk 5:27-34)

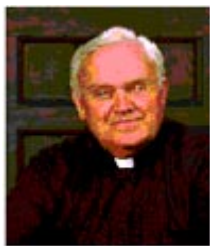
It was a woman in the crowd who was afflicted with hemorrhages for 12 years, who suddenly approached in fear and trembling, fell down before Jesus and told Him the whole truth. In all that crowd pressing around Jesus only this woman actually touched Him and she touched Him not only with her hand but also with the faith she bore in her heart that is why not only was she physically cured of her affliction she was also spiritually saved.

We all know and believe that Jesus' love for us is unconditional and every time we touched Him in faith, power comes out from Him. This is the power to cure, heal, and restore, to bring back life from death and most especially to save our soul.

The woman was blessed because she was able to physically see, touched, and be close to Jesus, we too can see, obtain physical contact, and be close to Jesus when we receive Him in the Holy Eucharist. The more we spend time with Jesus through prayers, scriptures, and availing of the Holy Eucharist, the more we can experience His powerful presence and saving power in our lives and the lives of others.

We have seen and believe what our Lord can do for us when we touched Him with our faith, but when God through the Holy Spirit touches us what will be our response and what kind of power can God expect to come out from us? Will it be his loving power being manifested through us or will it be our own selfish and self-righteous power? Will we be willing and able to open up our spirit, mind, heart, and soul to Him? Can we freely and honestly say to Him with humility, YES Lord, Thy will be done? Are we ready to forego all the material things we love and obey His command to pick up our cross and follow Him?

First we have to know that it is truly Jesus who is touching and directing us to His will, and then we have to cling to His promise, *"Do not be afraid, just have faith"* (Mk 5:36). We can say this only if we have begun to put off our old attitudes and mindsets and take on a new mind that is formed in his image. We need to come before God in humility today and ask Him to increase our faith. Let us renounce the attitudes of the world and beg the Holy Spirit to fill us with His truth instead.



On Encyclicals

Humanae Vitae (Part 2)

In my closing paragraph in last week's article on "Humanae Vitae" I proposed four questions that are contained in the encyclical and its follow up in Pope John Paul II's teaching on the "Theology of the body".

Question 1 - "What is the body saying when two singles engage in sexual activity?" We note the intrinsic connection between sexual intercourse and the Sacrament of marriage. The marriage is not only the public taking of vows, "I take you for my wife etc.", but also the private act of sexual union that FOLLOWS the public vows. The physical sexual consummation is an intrinsic part of the Sacrament, and thus a holy act. It physically seals the deep spiritual relationship proclaimed publicly when the couple exchanged marriage vows. To engage in sexual activity BEFORE the marriage vows is a lie. They got it backwards. There is nothing to seal. No matter how much love language is used the language of the body says: "I love me through you."

Question 2 - "What does the body say when a married couple engage in artificial birth control?" Each act of sexual intercourse should be a physical renewing of marriage vows with a new desire for the couple to completely surrender in love to one another. When the fertility of the husband is deliberately not received into the body of his wife or in some way made sterile, the language of the wife's body says: "I open myself and receive everything from you except your fertility." The language of the husband's body says: "I give everything to you except my fertility." Something is missing. The act is deficient. It lacks the completeness of total surrender. It is a lie. The possibly procreative and fruitful aspect of the act is made impossible.

Question 3 - "What about sexual activity between two people of the same sex?" Besides the obvious fact that the body parts don't fit, the procreative aspect of the sexual union, an intrinsic aspect of the sex act, is impossible.

Question 4 - What is the difference between a couple who practices NFP (Natural Family Planning) and a couple who are contracepting since both may have the same reasons for avoiding pregnancy?" Again the language of the body gives the same answer. The act is a renewal of marriage vows during any time of the cycle. Humanae Vitae does NOT teach that every act of intercourse must result in pregnancy. If that were the case then the couple would be restricted to sexual activity ONLY during the fertile period OR God would have insured that every act of intercourse would result in a new life. For a good reason, then, a couple can deliberately restrict their intimacies to the sterile periods determined by NFP.

Ministry Announcements

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.)

Send to word@bldnewark.com

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit - Hamilton Plaza
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday of the Month
Nong & Tricia Bustos – 732-591-1340

nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary Church, Rahway, New Jersey (Fellowship Area)

For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908) 810-1213

rubenluz@verizon.net

Cez/Pinky Calingo or Gene Ymbong

Teaching

Feb 7 - Saturday

Christian Maturity Program II – LSS29/30

Christian Parenting II - LSS31 & ME32

Feb 13 – Friday

LSS Orientation - Four Basic Truths - ME32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1-6pm at St. Mary's

Special Announcements

BIBLE STUDY AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH

***** Starting February 13 *****

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin

Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's School, Rm 104

Everyone is welcome!

Make it your New Year's resolution to know God better through His Word.

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

L I M I T E D



SEATS AVAILABLE

Sight & Sound – Millennium Theatre, Lancaster, PA

March 21, 2009 (Sat) 1:00pm show

* Tickets & Bus: Adult \$85.00, Teen \$59.00, Child \$47.00

* For Tickets only: Adult \$54, Teen \$28, Child \$16

Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055

Payment Deadline: **TODAY**

Trip includes stops at Tanger Outlet & Kitchen Kettle Village

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Report for the week ending

January 30, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor \$3,912.00

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Counsels from page 1

Servants of the Good News are humble, have a passion for evangelization, and focused on the Lord. They cannot be observers of faith, observers of worship nor observers of life. One must possess a servant heart, a faithful heart that leads to actions with proper direction. Faith is dead if our work is without direction. We should have the zeal of Jesus Christ in our ministry work and not allow complacency to dominate our community.

When Jesus spoke of being a servant to all, he was talking about a servant's heart that leads you to concrete action to serve other people. *"Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come."* (Mk 1:38) Jesus did not stay put in one area and had traveled thousands of miles with his disciples to preach the Good News of Salvation, no matter what circumstances awaited him in those strange places. Jesus' departure from the village did not in any manner depict that he did not care for those who were looking for him, rather He simply had a mission to fulfill- a direct instruction from Almighty Father.

We are called to serve God alone. No matter what position we hold, no matter what gifts we have, it is all about serving God by serving the Body of Christ, our community.

Let's step out of our comfort zone, leap out in faith, to serve and spread the healing love of Jesus to everyone and offer our sacrifices to God through our loving words and deeds. Let us share Jesus' love and accept everyone around us with no regard to what we may receive back from them. Let us all live our life to the fullest for God!



DIRECTIONS:

- *Become all things to all, to save at least some. All this for the sake of the Gospel.* (1Cor.9:22-23)



MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE

Community Calendar



February 6 – Eucharistic Celebration by the Marian Fathers of the Philippines

7:30 pm at St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway

Spreading the Message of the Divine Mercy
For more info visit www.marian.org/philippines

March 7 & 8 – YLSS #14

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19
For more info send email to youthministry@bldnewark.com or
call Alan/Tess Cam (201)889-4238; (201)233-6991

March for Life ... from page 1

Dear Lord, as we pursue our daily lives, may we always hold precious Your Gift of Life to everyone. All creation, all Life, from conception to natural death, worships You. We pray for the end of man's cruelty to his fellow man, both here in our land and in places near and far. We pray for the end of any and all abortion practices, of euthanasia - for ALL LIFE worships You. May Your Peace reign in our hearts, in the hearts and souls of this violence's victims, mothers, fathers, siblings, relatives, friends but most especially the unborn innocents - unable to smile nor cry, unable to see nor breathe, whose promise was never given a chance to be fulfilled. Please hold them in the palm of Your hand.

Dear innocent children, please forgive me for the past when I turned a deaf ear to your cries. No longer will your sacrifice be in vain. May "March for Life" be a January, February, March... April thru December – for life!





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 07

Bulletin Edition

Feb. 13, 2008

Philippines to Host 5th Asian Youth Day



Manila, Philippines, (Zenit.org). The capital of the Philippines will host the next world youth day in Asia, from Nov. 20-27.

The 5th Asian Youth Day, organized by the youth department of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), will focus on the Eucharist.

The FABC reported that the goal of the event is to "renew Asian youth's faith in and love for the Word of God and the Eucharist," and to help them integrate these realities into their lives.

The meeting, which aims to gather 2,000 young representatives from 22 countries, draws its theme from the synod of bishops on the Word of God last October in Rome.

The Asian Youth Days began in Thailand in 1999, and the most recent was held in Hong Kong in 2006.

Similar to World Youth Days, the Asian event will include the welcome of pilgrims by parishes and host families, plenary sessions on the Word and Eucharist, reflections and testimonies, workshops, times of prayer and liturgies.

The encounter's focus on the Eucharist will be in conjunction with the theme of the 9th plenary assembly of the FABC, to be held Aug. 10-16 in Manila. The session will center on the topic of "Living Eucharist in Asia."



Make the Covenant News a part of your covenant life.

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

COUNSELS Compassion

Word: Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Cor 10:31-11:1; Mk 1:40-45

Theme: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we reach out to and care for the poor and the marginalized.

Order: "Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31)

Reflection:

The theme for this week's worship is, "Jesus heals and renews our life when we reach out to and care for the poor and the marginalized." It sounds like this was taken from an advertisement of a telephone company, which says "reach out and touch someone." What is, however, alluded to in our theme is more than just to say "Hello" or "Hi". To reach out to and care for someone is to have compassion for that person. Compassion is much more than pity. It is an attitude of the heart to give someone serious attention; to look after someone; to give someone protection. It is possible to be a generous person and still lack compassion for others. Simply giving something away - whether it's your time or money, doesn't necessarily mean you have compassion. Never make the mistake of equating generosity with compassion. If anything, a generous spirit flows from compassion. True compassion means that you see other people the way God sees them. It means looking into the hearts of these people. These people maybe complete strangers, or may be people you've known for years. They all have one thing in common: they are loved equally by God, who made them in His image. "Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is

(continued on page 3)

God's Promise for the Week

"Blessed is he whose fault is taken away, whose sin is covered." (Ps 32:1)

Christian Life A Call to Holiness


God wants us to be imitators of Him. As such, there is a universal call for all to be holy. Holiness is a life consecrated to God, meaning we are in Him, with Him and for Him. This is manifested as a life that revolves around Jesus. It does not necessarily mean we have to live as saints but just be holy. This is tantamount to saying live by the Scripture through living in the Spirit.

To a multitude such a life style is beyond reach because we instinctively reason out our humanness. This is not completely true. Realistically, to live a life in holiness is within our grasp, within our reach. This way of living is not perfection for only God is perfect.

Some of us remember God only when we need him. Many of us reach out to God daily in our morning and evening prayers, on Sunday and other holy days of obligation and our Friday worship. This is a good Christian way of trying to be holy. But it takes more than that as the Bible is telling us how. God wants us to be with Him 24/7. We need to center God in our work, in our daily chores and in our daily relation with our family and others.

In our relation to God, we cannot live lives in the form of a rhomboid and putting him in the center simply because there will be times we are distant from Him. There should be perseverance and continuity in placing God in our midst. We should reach out and reconcile with one another, no matter who is at fault. We should lead as servants in community activities. These are forms of humility which in God's eyes is being holy as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

To be holy is achievable if we stop pretending to be holy and focus on Jesus. Living our lives revolving in a small circle with God in the center is a reachable way. In that way, all the time our lives will be equidistant with God's grace. Praying as often as we could, thanking God for the breathe of life we have, worshipping Him, thinking about Him and making God a priority minute to minute in our daily lives is not as hard as it seems. We must remember God not only in am and pm. We have to include noontime as we remember to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. Communing with Him 1-2 minutes every hour can become a force of habit. We can start now instead of being pessimistic and make it possible for nothing is impossible with God.

To be holy is not utopian. It is a reality that is achievable by constancy in prayers and by being reconciled with God daily through the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist instead of spending too much time watching TV and surfing the web. In that way, His faithfulness and perpetual presence in our lives will not only be embedded in our minds and ideas but in our human hearts. (continued on pg 4) 

How Great and Awesome is the Lord?

"When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars which you set in place... What is man that you should be mindful of him, or the son of man that you should care for him?" (Ps 8: 4-5)

God created the heavens with the moon and the stars so we can behold the beauty and its enormity that attest and support the conviction and faith of believers of how great and awesome is the Lord. He created the Earth and the rest of the solar system all synchronized and operational for a perfect existence and viability. He created water, devoid of taste, color and odor yet a universal solvent the ultimate catalyst with all its endless myriad uses, without which survival of God's creations is impossible. He created man and made him superior in all ways to any of His creation on earth and to any living creature as the animals, the birds and plants, all for man's disposal. God gave man his human form and likewise gave man his own volition. All these attest to the fact that there is an intelligent source, an intelligent mind, and intelligent design, from an intelligent Being; all knowing, omniscient God; great, most awesome and most wonderful God!

What about the greatest true story ever told? He created man to His likeness for the express purpose of continued relationship with man. God so loved the world that He sent His only Son. God came down from heaven and became man. Ultimately He suffered and gave us His life to extricate us from our original sin so we may avail of the promised glory and salvation; so finally and ultimately, we may enjoy eternal fellowship with our Maker.

From the time man is conceived he is beholden to God Almighty as Christians believed. What is it with God that gnaws, tugged and pursues us relentlessly till we surrender and succumbed to His power. To follow Him with arduous faith, devotion and works of mercy. Belief and faith in Him did not come from sheer manifestation of supernatural strength or through punishment or coercion. Belief and devotion to God came through persuasion; from various acts of blessings and from His enormous, greatest inherent, divine, everlasting love as Jesus loved His Father. Jesus constantly referred to God the Father not from a position of separation but of union with Him. *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me, then you will also know my Father"* Jn 14:6. Jesus taught us life, how to live it, how to love it...all for the glory and honor of the greatest God of all!

*Glory be to the Father and
to the Son and the Holy Spirit!*

Deacon's Corner Humility

Humility or humbleness is a quality of being courteously respectful of others. It is the opposite of aggressiveness, arrogance, boastfulness and vanity. Rather than, "Me first," humility allows us to say, "No you first my friend." Humility is the quality that lets us go more than halfway to meet the needs and demands of others.


Humility as a virtue is a major theme of both the Old and New Testaments. Why do qualities such as courtesy, patience and deference have such prominent place in the Bible? It is because a demeanor of humility is exactly what is needed to live in peace and harmony with all persons. Humility dissipates anger and heals old wounds. Humility allows us to see the dignity and worth of all God's people. Humility distinguishes the wise leader from the arrogant power-seeker.

Acting with humility does not in any way deny our own self worth. Rather, it affirms the inherent worth of all persons. Some would consider humility to be a malady that interferes with "success," or a weakness. However, success gained at the expense of others brings only anxiety, never peace and love. ***"It is better to be humble with the meek, than to share plunder with the proud."*** Prv 16:19

We should at all times maintain an attitude of deference toward both God and other persons. Wisdom cannot be found or practiced through arrogance or anger. As servants of God, we must respect all of God's creation, including our fellow human beings. Humility means putting God and other people ahead of our self interests. Humility comes with the knowledge that God's people transcend our own narrow interests. As with other aspects of wisdom, humility will gain us much more than we sacrifice. ***"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*** Mt 23:12

Humility does not come easy. You will never be humble if you think you are. You will never be humble because others say you are. I don't know what God will require of us as He forms this humility in us. But I think the process starts with Mk 8:34 ***"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."***

True humility comes when you're dead to self and alive to God. It manifests when your own self-interests are gone, and you are focused only on the purposes of God. By humility we acknowledge that God created us for His purposes and not for our self-glorification. By humility we acknowledge the dignity of all God's people.

A humble demeanor is not a denial of *(continued)* 

Counsels *(continued from page 1)*

nothing, he is deluding himself." (Gal 6:2-3)

In the Gospel, it is written: "Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand, touched the leper..." We know that leprosy is transmitted by physical contact. The lepers shall declare themselves unclean, they shall dwell apart, making their abode outside the camp. Here is an example of an act of compassion on the part of Jesus! Jesus treated the leper with respect as one of God's beloved. Jesus expressed Himself with kind words of encouragement. "I will do it. Be cured. Now, go off and present yourself to the priest and offer your cure what Moses prescribed."

The poor could be represented by someone lacking in material things; someone who is spiritually bankrupt; or someone who is in poor health. The marginalized are those who are vulnerable, the confused, disturbed, discouraged, those with low self-esteem, the depressed or the lost. We are called to reach out and show our love, caring and compassion to these people. We should likewise reach out to, and show our concern and care for the inactive members of our community.

In the 2nd reading Paul was dealing with the spiritual needs of the Corinthians. Paul exhorted both factions present, *"give no offense to Jew or Greek or to the Church of God, just as I try to please all in any way I can by seeking, not my own advantage, but that of the many, that they may be saved."* (1 Cor. 10:32-33) Paul's handling of this contentious issue of early Christians offers valuable lessons for our community. One's position must be judged on the basis of its impact on other Christians, and not merely on the basis of whether it is, in theory, correct. The overriding consideration must be to build up each other and community. We must not act, speak or communicate in a way that scandalizes young members even if we believe that our position is right. The prime consideration must be the impact of such conduct on others. Are we sensitive to reach out and care for the spiritual need of our young members? Do they see Jesus in us? Let us be all imitators of Christ. Let us not seek our own benefit but that of the many. Let us then, turn to the Lord in time of trouble.

Directions:

1. Be imitators of Christ
2. Turn to the Lord in time of trouble
3. Do not seek your own benefit but that of the many

our worth as individuals. Rather, it is the tool that allows us, insofar as possible, to be on good terms with of our brothers and sisters in community.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** Starting February 13 ***

Bible Study at St. Mary & St. Mark Parish

Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's, Rm. 104

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin

Everyone is welcome! Make it your New Year's resolution to know God better through His Word.

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

BEHOLD THE LAMB

The greatest words ever spoken... the greatest miracles ever done... and the greatest sacrifice ever given. Let the greatness and glory of the life of Jesus Christ fill you with His life changing love. *Behold the Lamb* is a powerful presentation of the timeless message of the Savior, that *"whoever believes in Him, shall not perish, but have eternal life!"* (This season only)

Sight & Sound – Millennium Theatre Lancaster, PA

Mar. 21, 2009 (Sat) 1pm **Payment Due: Feb. 6, 2009**

Tickets only Adult \$54, Teen \$28, Child \$16

With transportation Adult \$85, Teen \$59, Child \$47

Trip includes stops at Tanger Outlet & Kitchen Kettle Village

Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055

May the blessing and favor of the Lord
be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays
and wedding anniversaries this week.

Week Ending Feb. 6, 2009

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Tithes, Love Offering, \$3,143
Mission & Fast for the Poor

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Christian Life

We have to let the Holy Spirit that dwells in us, bestir and sanctify us to be holy by fully opening our hearts to His grace, love and mercy.

We cannot let our faith be taken for granted. In the midst of our daily experiences, we have to believe, seek, understand and live his truth. Let us not magnify our human failures but rather completely surrender our minds and souls to God so He can work wonders in our lives. By doing so, we start walking in the road to holiness.

Somebody once said: "let us stop speaking the language of the flesh and start speaking the language of the Holy Spirit." Let us begin a life in holiness and give God His glory.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary Church, Rahway, New Jersey (Fellowship Area)

For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1213

rubenluz@verizon.net Cez/Pinky Calingo or Gene Ymbong

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit – Hamilton Plaza

56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed

Nong & Tricia Bustos nongb601@aol.com 732-591-1340

WORD

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Mar 07-08 YLSS #14

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19

For info email: youthministry@bldnewark.com

or call Alan/Tess Cam 201-889-4238; 201-233-6991

Mar 28-29 Youth Encounter #1 for St. Mary's and St.

Mark's Retreat @ St. Mary's Auditorium

For further info contact: Ray and Susie Atienza -
YE Coordinator or Fr. Robert Lamirez

TEACHINGS

Feb 13 After Worship

LSS Orientation LSS 32

Feb 20 After Worship

Intro to Commitment Singles
Teaching Youth, John 6, Mark 10

Feb 21 St. Mary's 1-6 pm

Healing & Deliverance LSS 28
Praise & Worship/Prayer LSS 31
New Creation Realities Shepherds

Feb 27 After Worship

Intercessory Formation LSS 29
Christian Servanthood LSS 30
Road to Emmaus Solo Parents
Teaching Golden Years Ministry

Traveling Catholics

For nationwide listing of Catholic Churches and Mass times,
visit www.masstimes.org.



“LEPERS’ APOSTLE” TO BE DECLARED A SAINT

Father Damián Ministered in Hawaii

VATICAN CITY, FEB. 16, 2009 (Zenit.org).- The miraculous healing of a Hawaiian woman with cancer is leading to the canonization of a priest known for his ministry on the island with lepers relegated to a sequestered community. Belgian Father Damián de Veuster (1840-1889) is known as the apostle to the lepers, for his ministry on the island of Molokai.

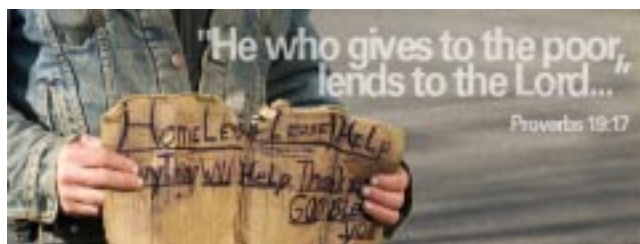
The Holy See reported today that on Saturday, there will be a consistory to decide the date for his canonization, and that of nine other blessed.

Pope John Paul II beatified Father Damián in 1995.

The priest requested to work with the lepers, providing them with religious and practical support since they were denied necessary medical treatment and provided only with food and basic supplies. Father Damián managed to establish for them a parish, schools and a society. He himself died of leprosy.

The miracle that paved the way for his canonization was the healing of Audrey Toguchi of Honolulu. Her cancer was considered incurable, but she spent nearly a year asking God to heal her through the intercession of Father Damián.

She said that during that period, her prayer was directed to God “exclusively through Blessed Damián. I am convinced that this miraculous disappearance of the cancer is due to the intercession of Blessed Damian.”



COUNSELS

Sin and Divine Forgiveness

WORD: Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25; Ps 41: 2-5, 13-14
2 Cor 1:18-22; Mk 2:1-12

THEME: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we lead others to repentance.

ORDER: Rise, pick up your mat and walk.

REFLECTION:

We notice in this Sunday’s Gospel that there is a great deal of movement.

When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a great crowd of people gathered around making it impossible for many to come near Jesus. Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat. They tried to take him into the house, however, because of the crowd, they could not find a way to do this, so they made an opening in the roof and lowered him down to where Jesus was. At this point, a spiritual movement occurred. Seeing their faith and how they do their utmost to move closer to Jesus, Jesus healed the paralytic right then and there. Mark portrays a kind of movement whereby a person tries to come closer to God, as well as opening his heart to God’s grace. When we open our hearts to Jesus, with a desire to come closer to him, we enable his grace to touch and to heal us. The power of sin weakens and we are enabled to experience his healing love.

“Which is easier to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or to say ‘Rise, pick up your mat and walk’? (Mk 2:9) Here is a solemn assurance that the Son of Man has the power to forgive sins on earth as proven by the healing of the sick man, first spiritual then physical healing. One of the most beautiful elements of Jesus’ ministry is that He combines the majesty of power with (☞ Page 4)



God's Promise for the Week

“Your sins I remember no more.”
(Is 43:25b)



Hold on to our Faith

“By faith, Noah warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household. Through this, he condemned the world and inherited the righteousness that comes through faith.” (Heb11:17)

Noah opened himself up to ridicule by building a huge boat in the middle of the dry season. Nonetheless, he followed the Lord's instructions down to the last detail.

I want to be like Noah, strong, wise, and full of faith. Unfortunately, I am weak and full of fear. But with just a glimmer of faith, I know that the Lord have the power to make me strong and give me courage to do His will. *“And Jesus said unto them, because of your little faith, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Mt 17:20)* A grain of mustard seed is so small, it is nearly invisible. How could anyone who loves the Lord not have at least that much faith? And yet, even His disciples failed from time to time because of their unbelief.

Some days, when I keep my eyes fixed on Jesus, my faith is so strong, I can almost see it. Although I am not quite up to moving mountains, I feel Jesus' power within me, and I dare to believe I am capable of doing anything. Other days, when I get sidetrack, my faith seems puny and weak. Indeed, faith thrives when we stay focused on God rather than ourselves.

The list of our worries shows how little we think of God and how big we think of ourselves. But as we face our worries, let us be reminded that God is powerful and almighty. Those who are grounded in faith, even during rough times, will always have Christ to lean on. Jesus Himself experienced having a troubled heart. He was rejected, denied, betrayed, tortured, and crucified. However, He was able to find peace and joy, trusting that He was doing the will of His Father. Like Him, we can also find peace and joy in the midst of our worries, fears and anxieties when we have faith in God and put our trust in Him.

Lord, give me that kind of strength, courage, and wisdom for the task ahead of me. Help me to grow in faith. Be with me on both my strong and weak days because no matter how I feel, I want to do your work.

Thank you Father for the faith of those in my family who went before me and who put my feet on the path to knowing you. Thank you for the blessings of faith in my life. Continue to strengthen my knowledge of You and help me pass on my faith to my children. Amen.



The Disabled Man

“Do you have eyes and not see and ears and not hear.” (Mk 8:18)

The Olympics has a version for the disabled called, Special Olympics. Why is this so? To even out the playing field. Logical right? A person with two (2) feet has an unfair advantage over one with only one in full use.

The teaching of the Lord though does not speak about missing parts. More so, He was speaking about misusing the parts that we have. Sad to say, sometimes, those with a whole set of body parts are the ones who do not know how to appreciate what they have and use them correctly. Those who do not have the complete parts are the ones who put a lot of importance on these missing parts.

What is the Lord asking us? That our whole being is given to spreading the Word of the Lord. Tough task, right? The Lord is not happy with not using them, however, if we can dedicate to using them in whichever way to evangelize and bring the lambs to His Kingdom, we have done our assigned task.

So what are His expectations? He is expecting us to: use our eyes to see the good in everyone regardless of how futile it seems to be; open our eyes to the ‘dregs’ of society and try to find something that we can do to alleviate their situation and allow them into being useful members of society; see the people who are in the direction away from the Lord and bring these lost souls back to Him; learn how to listen instead of just hearing; value the meaning of silence to truly understand what the Lord is telling us; learn how to use our mouth so we can declare the Word of the Lord and speak the words that will bring peace to somebody's heart; and learn how to keep our mouth shut to enable somebody else to speak.

There is a new Filipino soap opera entitled *“May Bukas Pa”* (There is Still Tomorrow). I like watching the show as it is so positive. The main character, Santino, believes in the power that Bro (Jesus) has. He follows the words that Jesus speaks to Him to the letter.

Lord, I pray that I can be like Santino - to be childlike in my relationships and just trust in You always. In Jesus' name, I ask. Amen.

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**May the blessings of the season
shine upon those who are
celebrating their birthdays and
wedding anniversaries this week!**

Traveling Catholics: For nationwide listing of Catholic Churches and Mass times, go to www.masstimes.org

APOLOGETICS




Purgatory not in Scripture

Some fundamentalists also charge, as though it actually proved something, *"The word purgatory is found nowhere in Scripture."* This is true, and yet, it does not disprove the existence of purgatory or the fact that belief in it has always been part of Church teaching. The words Trinity and Incarnation are not in Scripture either, yet, those doctrines are clearly taught in it. Likewise, Scripture teaches that purgatory exists, even if it does not use that word and even if 1 Peter 3:19 refers to a place other than purgatory.

Christ refers to the sinner who *"will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come"* (Mt 12:32), suggesting that one can be freed after death of the consequences of one's sins. Similarly, Paul tells us that, when we are judged, each man's work will be tried. And what happens if a righteous man's work fails the test? *"He will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."* (1 Cor 3:15) Now this loss, this penalty, cannot refer to consignment to hell, since no one is saved there; and heaven cannot be meant, since there is no suffering ("fire") there. The Catholic doctrine of purgatory alone explains this passage.

Then of course, there is the Bible's approval of prayers for the dead: *"In doing this he acted very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection. For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin."* (2 Mc 12:43-45) Prayers are not needed by those in heaven, and no one can help those in hell. That means some people must be in a third condition, at least temporarily. This verse so clearly illustrates that existence of purgatory that, at the time of the Reformation, Protestants had to cut the books of the Maccabees out of their Bibles in order to avoid accepting the doctrine.

Prayers for the dead and the consequent doctrine of purgatory have been part of the true religion since before the time of Christ. Not only can we show that it was practiced by the Jews of the time of the Maccabees, but it has been retained even by Orthodox Jews today, who recite a prayer, known as the Mourner's *Kaddish*, eleven months after the death of a loved one so that the loved one may be purified. It was not the Catholic Church that added the doctrine of purgatory. Rather, any change in the original teaching has taken place in the Protestant churches, which rejected a doctrine that had always been believed by Jews and Christians. 

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Sat. of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ
Volunteers needed

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340/
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article
(450 words max.).

Email to word@bldnewark.com

ISAIAH 58

SAGIP: Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)
Collection of School Supplies/Coin for Change Campaign
Bring your old or unused school supplies
Every Friday from January 23 to April 17, 2009
St. Mary Church, Rahway, NJ (Fellowship Area)
Contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908-810-1213/
rubenluz@verizon.net), Cez/Pinky Calingo or
Gene Ymbong

TEACHINGS

Venue: St. Mary's Classroom

February 21 (Saturday: 1 pm - 6pm)

Healing & Deliverance - LSS 28
Growth in Prayer: Praise & Worship/Prayer - LSS 31
New Creation Realities - LSS 31
Shepherds Refresher Course - Shepherds

Feb 27 (Friday after worship)

Intercessory Formation - LSS 29
Christian Servanthood - LSS 30
Road to Emmaus - Solo Parents
Teaching - Golden Years Ministry



Venue: St. Mary's Auditorium

February 28 (Saturday: 1 pm - 4 pm)

Cultivating a Culture of Life
For all members (ages 14 and up, if younger, accompanied by a parent)
Speaker: Allan Cruz

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending February 13, 2009


**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor** **\$3,385.00**
Thank you for your continued generosity.

Source: *The Essential Catholic Survival Guide - By the Staff of Catholic Answers (pp. 253-254)*

Counsels (from page 1)

the tenderness of a loving shepherd. He brings forth miracles, which lead to a conversion of heart and a committed life of discipleship. He begins by healing the disease that is by far the most serious one: man's spiritual paralysis. This is a disease, which a man brings upon himself by turning away from God and which he cannot heal by himself, not even by the many psychological methods men discover as a means to forget their guilt or absolve themselves. Only the very God who has been offended has the power and the grace to forgive the injury done to Him. And since He has sent His Son into the world to proclaim this forgiveness, this authority is ascribed to Jesus Himself. He has the power because of the ultimate price of this grace: the Cross and the acceptance of guilt by a guiltless One. The first reading proves how much work the sinner loads onto God, since the entirety of divine love is needed to lift the burden of sin from him. We do not bring about our own redemption but rather, it is dependent on the will of God as He unites Himself with those who realize and repent of their sinfulness and take hold of the grace He offers them. His Word in Ps 103:12-13 says, *"As far as the east is from the west, so far have our sins been removed from us, as a father has compassion on his children so the Lord has compassion on the faithful"*.

Like the paralytic, we need friends, brothers and sisters in community. We need a relationship in which we are able to encounter Jesus. And this is what all of us here tonight fit in, a fellowship, who in love and faith will carry one another, especially those who cannot carry themselves, to the One who can forgive and heal, to the One who speaks the truth, to the One who brings justice and restores that which has been lost: our relationship with God. Many of us, however, find it difficult to ask for help, to allow ourselves to let go, to stop fighting, to stop trying to run the world. We find it hard to really forgive from the heart even when we have expressed forgiveness a number of times. When we encounter offensive people in our daily living, giving a smile or greeting them "God bless you" is a better approach than giving in to our emotions. Self-control, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is most neglected especially in community. As renewed Christians, we should love and pray for our offenders, that they may be converted by Jesus' loving mercy. St Paul tells us in Romans 12:21, to conquer evil with good. And Gal 5:15 says, *"Rather than tearing and biting one another into pieces, take care! You will end up in mutual destruction."*

It is time for us to dismantle the walls of pride and self-assertion and open ourselves to God's grace. Let us not brood over our hurts but learn to extract from them whatever wisdom we can and then bury it. The enduring mercy of God should incite us to forgive sinners and show mercy to our offenders. We would then avail ourselves of the most powerful graces and blessings imaginable that flow from the loving heart of Jesus, who now 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar (YLSS)

March 7 & 8, 2009

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19
For more information, send email to
youthministry@bldnewark.com or call Alan/Tess Cam
(201)889-4238/(201)233-6991

.....
SAVE THE DATE!

Marriage Encounter # 33

May 29-31, 2009

Mary Immaculate Center
Northampton, PA
Application & Directions on bldnewark.com
.....

Family Encounter #16

July 17-19, 2009

Malvern, PA

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's
visit their newly designed website:
www.stmarystmarkparish.com
.....

BIBLE STUDY

AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH

***** Starting February 13 *****

Conducted by Fr. Dennis
Every Friday, 7:30 - 8:00 pm
St. Mary's School, Room 104
Everyone is welcome!

*Make it your New Year's resolution to know God better
through His Word.*
.....

Youth Encounter #1

for St. Mary's & St. Mark's Retreat

March 28 -29, 2009

St. Mary's Auditorium
For further info, contact: Ray/Susie Atienza
Fr. Robert Lamirez

sits at the right hand of God, waiting for us to open our hearts to His Saving Love and call upon His Loving Mercy.

DIRECTION:

* **Receive the healing of the Lord and give glory to God.
Do not get bogged down with the events of the past.
Perceive the new things the Lord is doing.**



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 10

Bulletin Edition

Mar. 06, 2009

Cultivating a Culture of Life

On Saturday, Feb. 28, 2009, Allan Cruz of BLD Toronto presented a workshop to the BLD community of Newark entitled Cultivating a Culture of Life. Being a graduate of the first SE in Toronto, married (2?) years ago, and a new father, he was able to relate to both singles and married folks alike. Over 30 participants, about a dozen of which are from the Singles ministry, offered this afternoon to broaden their understanding of the what the Catholic Church teaches about life issues.

"Here, then, I have today set before you life and prosperity, death and doom. If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I enjoin on you today, loving him, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and decrees, you will live and grow numerous, and the LORD, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to occupy." (Dt 30:15-16)

In this workshop, we discussed bioethical issues that are controversial in the liberal society we live in today. However, living in the ways of the Catholic Church, we are challenged to walk the road less traveled to live and multiply as Jesus originally intended. In addition to leading by example to cultivate this culture of life, we are also called to evangelize against abortion, contraception, and artificial insemination; while promoting natural family planning methods that bring life into this world without disregarding the quality of life. This workshop provided a growing knowledge of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church by explaining how these issues are supported by both the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. While this was Allan's first teaching on this topic, he is searching for more avenues to speak to people in both Canada and the US as he continues his mission to provide a better understanding of how the church supports life in its purest and simplest forms!

*Make the Covenant News
a part of your covenant life.*

Traveling Catholics

For nationwide listing of Catholic Churches and Mass times, visit www.masstimes.org.

COUNSELS HOLINESS

Word: Gn 22: 1-2, 9^a, 10-13, 15-18; Ps 116: 10, 15-19; Rm 8: 31b-34; Mk 9: 2-10


Theme: We are faithful to God's covenant when we listen to Jesus.

Order: *"This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."*
(Mk 9:7b)

Reflection:

Walking with the Lord as covenanted or committed disciples and experiencing His Presence in our beloved community is life-changing and transforming - an awakening and a rediscovery in faith. We became like His privileged disciples Peter, James and John whom the Lord led up the high mountain to be witnesses of His Glory. In the Miracle of Transfiguration, Jesus' clothes became dazzling white, "as bright as the sun". This majestic and mysterious countenance of the Lord reflects His character - unblemished, undefiled, pure, perfect and holy. In Christ Jesus, the Holiness of the Invisible God is revealed. We are all called to be witnesses of His Glory and to imitate His Holiness as faithful disciples. *"Be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, after the likeness of the Holy One who called you"* (1 Pt 1:15).

The mystery of Transfiguration fills us with awe for it transcends the essence of His Being, the Triune God, as revealed in the Father's voice saying, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him," our Lord Jesus, the Son of God who is transfigured, and the Spirit in the cloud expressing His Perfection, the excellence of His Divine Nature. The brief appearances of Moses and Elijah conversing with the Lord were misunderstood by the

(continued on page 3) 

God's Promise for the Week

*"I will bless you abundantly...and in your descendants
all nations of the earth shall find blessings - all this
because you obeyed my command." (Gen 22:17a-18)*

Fr. Paul Speaks

Humane Vitae III

Be Holy

“Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.” (Lv 19:2b)

This is my third article on Pope Paul VI’s encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, written in 1968 in which the Church’s unchanging teaching on contraception was reaffirmed. One of the supporters and framers of the encyclical was Carol Wotyla, the future John Paul II, who later published his own teachings on marriage and sexuality in his famous “Theology of the Body”. Part of the teaching was a prophecy that in hindsight we wished had never come true. In a recent article in *Homiletic and Pastoral review* it was pointed out that Paul VI pointed out dire consequences if contraception became widespread. “When Pope Paul VI issued his landmark encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, he warned that separating the procreative aspect of sexuality from the sexual union of the spouses would bring horrific consequences. He warned that acts of birth control- never allowed in Christendom before 1930- were always intrinsically immoral”

The pope reminded us that separating the procreative and the unitive aspect of the marriage union would drive a wedge between body and spirit. This would allow the individual to use his or her body as an instrument for sexual gratification. *Humane Vitae* has indeed proven to be a prophetic document. The seminal teachings of the encyclical were widely ignored, criticized or attacked often enough by dissenting theologians within the Church itself. The warnings of the pope have come true in the sexual degeneracy of a contraceptive culture that accepts everything from abortion to homosexuality. to the harvesting of stem cells from human embryos. As an aside let me mention a confusion about stem cell research. The Church is not opposed to stem cell research IF it does not involve human embryos, life already conceived in the womb. There are many other stem cells that can be harvested from the after birth placenta, and even from the fat around our waist.

The pope predicted terrible consequences that would flow from artificial birth control. Morality would decline, marital infidelity would increase, and women would become instruments of sexual gratification. Sexual morality of the young would be corrupted. Abortion would become a means of birth control if other methods of birth control should fail. Pornography, especially internet pornography, is rampant. Sex as recreation and entertainment is part and parcel of American life.

Is this all true? Would these evils have happened anyway even if contraception was not widespread? Perhaps just a little reflection can reveal the wisdom of the pope’s dire prophecy. A reading of John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body*, a very heavy undertaking can help. Begin with Christopher West’s “Theology of the Body for Beginners.” May we all witness by word and action to the magisterial truth, given to us by our Catholic Church!

In this Lenten season, we become aware more than ever, of our need for conversion and healing. As we focus in the weeks ahead on our own spiritual cleansing and renewal, we acknowledge our failures and transgressions. We pray that as a community we come to true repentance, and resolve to live in humility and obedience to our Lord’s divine will in our lives.

Each one of us has been brought into this community, to declare God’s victory in our lives. In our own ways we are all like the prodigal son broken and brought into humility by our own arrogance and self pride, given a second chance to renew our lives through our baptism in the Spirit. *“I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.” (Rom 12:1-2)* As part of our holy and living sacrifice in this season of renewal, we bring to mind what God has done for us, and ask ourselves what is it that we can do for others?

“Go and learn the meaning of the words, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’” (Mt 9:13)

Corporal Works of Mercy

- * Give drink to the thirsty
- * Clothe the naked
- * Shelter the homeless
- * Comfort the imprisoned
- * Visit the sick
- * Bury the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

- * Admonish sinners
- * Instruct the uninformed
- * Counsel the doubtful
- * Comfort the sorrowful
- * Be patient with those in error.
- * Forgive offenses.
- * Pray for the living and the dead.

Let us all rise up, carry our mats, and walk as one with Jesus our Lord and Savior! (Jn 5:8) Let us bring each other into the waters of life, emulating what Jesus has done for the crippled man at the pool in Bethesda. May we become beacons of hope for each other. May God’s love shine through all of us, that we may bring His healing and divine mercy to all. Let us be bold and firm in our knowledge that nothing can separate us from His eternal love. *“I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8:38-39)*

Counsels *(continued from page 1)*


disciples. They neither grasped the significance of the situation nor did they understand what rising from the dead meant. Our Lord Jesus fulfills “the law and the prophets” (Mt 5:17). He is greater than either Moses or Elijah who prefigured Him in the Old Testament times. The true messianic identity of Jesus as the “Son of God” is declared by the authority of God the Father Himself. His Passion, Death and Resurrection impart the dynamism of His generous love.

How can we heed the Father’s call to listen to His Son?

The Church encourages devotion towards the Eucharist and teaches that prayer before the Lord’s sacramental presence actually extends the union with Christ whom we have received in Holy Communion. *“Could you not stay awake with Me for an hour?”* (Mt 26:40). Spending a holy hour in the presence of the Holy Eucharist is time spent with Christ Himself, the One who alone is holy. It does not only mean physical or bodily presence but being present within our hearts, a loving awareness of who is present. “Be still and know that I am God.” (Ps 46) It is in this silence that the Lord speaks to us. *“Silence is so powerful a language that it reaches the throne of the living God. It is His language, though secret, yet living and powerful.”* (St. Faustina’s Diary, 888).

Prayer is the well-spring of our spiritual life, whether personal or shared in community praise or intercession. When we pray regularly, we become nourished and strengthened. Prayer in tongues (glossolalia) is a “prayer in the Spirit”. It is a fruit of complete surrender to Him and one way the Holy Spirit aids us in overcoming our limitations. Regular participation in the Sacraments especially the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, sacramentals, fasting and prayer of deliverance are other ways in which we can grow in faith and combat the works of the evil one and his dominions.

Persistent and devoted reading and reflection in God’s Holy Word satisfy the longings of the soul and enlighten our minds. As we search for holiness, we turn our eyes to Mary, the Mother of God who shines as the model of virtues. With her “Fiat” and obedience to God’s Word, the Holy Spirit overshadowed her and Christ came into her life. Similarly, we must be open to God’s message and responsive to His Will. The saints are our friends who draw us closer to Christ and help us to follow Him along the path of holiness. Their lives of great sacrifice and heroic virtues are worthy of emulation. St. Therese of Lisieux, the greatest saint of modern times, whose mission is “to make God loved” said, “What matters in life is not great deeds, but great love. I will let fall a shower of roses.” Indeed, everywhere around the world, her roses continue to fall.

Our true destiny is beyond the limits and horizons of this world. We are created for an eternal communion with Him and to share His Divine Life. As servants *(continued on pg 4)* 

Call For Repentance

“Man and beast shall be covered with sackcloth and call loudly to God; every man shall turn from his evil way and from the violence he has in hand.” (Jon 3:8)

When hearts become hardened, men will not only destroy others but themselves. This was the heart condition in Nineveh, the city God was calling Jonah to preach. God threatened to destroy the wicked city of Nineveh. Jonah was re-commissioned to go to Nineveh to proclaim God’s message and Nineveh received God’s message for what it was: “God’s Word”. The people believed God, they believed Jonah’s message without signs or miracles (in contrast to Sodom and Gomorrah). Nineveh only had the sign of Jonah. God’s message was evidence of hope. Jonah had been saved. He was a walking sign of hope and God’s mercy. Nineveh repented, they had faith and hope in God and they turned from their sin.

Nineveh, a proud and great city was transformed into a city of humiliation from the king down to the least citizen. The city God threatened to destroy had totally changed. The old Nineveh was gone. It became a city of humility, fasting, crying out to God and turning from wicked ways. Nineveh had become a ‘new creature’, with the old things passing away.

We see the sincerity of Nineveh’s repentance. It was a spiritual transformation evidenced by obedience to God. There was a complete change of heart, mind and attitude. It is the kind of repentance that is essential to having a new life in Christ. Not merely outward appearance but total change of heart. If there is outward expression without genuine change of heart, it is nothing but hypocrisy. There is true repentance when there is change of heart that results in changed life. If we expect to see God’s work in our life there must be true repentance.

Jonah 4:2 says God is slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness. We see God’s love in action when He spared Jonah and we see God’s love when He spared Nineveh. We see God’s love clearest of all on the cross. There is no greater proof of God’s love than His sending His only begotten son to die on the cross. Christ’s love meant giving His own life to save us. His command is for us to love God, with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, and to love our enemies.

Like the city of Nineveh, we need to turn to God. Give our life to Christ and experience His love and mercy.

Proposed Readings for the Year of St. Paul July 2008-July 2009

Mar 02-07 Ephesians 1-2 Mar 23-28 Philippians 1-2
Mar 09-14 Ephesians 3-4 Mar 30-Apr 4 Philippians 3-4
Mar 16-21 Ephesians 5-6

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** Starting February 13 ***

Bible Study at St. Mary & St. Mark Parish

Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's, Rm. 104

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin

Everyone is welcome! Make it your New Year's resolution to know God better through His Word.

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

*** March 14, 2009 (Saturday) ***

Protecting God's Children - Deacon Serge 10am-1pm

This teaching is required for all those who are serving in the Mark 10, John 6 & Youth Ministries especially those in the immersion program and Singles who shepherd youth members. This is in compliance with the Diocesan Requirement. Certificate of Attendance will be issued by Deacon Serge at the completion of the course.

*** March 28, 2009 (Saturday) ***

CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE

Fueled by Faith, United in Christ Our Hope 8am-4pm
Essex County, Richard J Codey Arena, W. Orange, NJ
Contact: N. Laxina 973-661-9268 B. Huelgas 732-303-9356

*** April 8, 2009 (Holy Wednesday) ***

TENEBRAE - 8pm St. Mary's Church

Come and join us for a night of reflection of our Lord Jesus Christ's Passion and Death inspired with Fr. Dennis' Reflection, Scriptural Reading, Prayers and Song. Sponsored by BLD Newark together with the Oratory Group of St. Mary's & St. Mark

Counsels

of the Lord in this community, filled with the consuming fire of the Holy Spirit, we must answer His call to conform our hearts, minds and will according to His goodness, mercy and love.

Directions:

1. Spend time before the Blessed Sacrament.
2. Hold zealously to the 3rd and 4th pledges of our covenant with the Lord:
 - Nourish spiritual life by opening to God through individual, conjugal and family daily prayers; and upbuild the Community through intercessory prayer. Faithfully pray and worship in unity and fellowship as one Community at least once a week.
 - Regularly receive the Sacraments of the Faith, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and bear witness to the power of God's grace in our lives

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary Church, Rahway, New Jersey (Fellowship Area)

For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1213

rubenluz@verizon.net Cez/Pinky Calingo or Gene Ymbong

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit – Hamilton Plaza

56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed

Nong & Tricia Bustos nongb601@aol.com 732-591-1340

WORD

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Mar 07-08 YLSS #14

Accepting applications for youth ages 15 to 19

For info email: youthministry@bldnewark.com

or call Alan/Tess Cam 201-889-4238; 201-233-6991

Mar 28-29 Youth Encounter #1 for St. Mary's and St.

Mark's Retreat @ St. Mary's Auditorium

For further info contact: Ray and Susie Atienza - YE Coordinator or Fr. Robert Lamirez

TEACHINGS

Mar 06 **Salubungan** LSS 32

Mar 07 **St. Mary's 1-6 pm**

Prayer Leadership and LSS 29 & 30

Understanding Corporate

Worship

Basic Bible Seminar LSS 31

Mar 20 **After Worship**

Teaching Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Christian Maturity Program Singles

Week Ending Feb. 20, 2009

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 11

Bulletin Edition

March 13, 2009

COMMUNITY NEWS

YLSS # 14 - A Spirit Filled Weekend

"Come now, let us set things right, says the LORD: Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow; Though they be crimson red, they may become white as wool. If you are willing, and obey, you shall eat the good things of the land." (Is 1:18-19)

Praise the Lord! 49 teenagers were baptized by the Holy Spirit during the Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #14. YLSS #14 was held at St. Mary's during the weekend of March 6-8. The 49 lambs were commissioned by God to spread his love on earth. These lambs were: Ariana Abad, Krisstoffor Abarabar, Samantha Aglibut, Coleen Atienza, Patricia Badiola, Spencer Bautista, Alexandria Bolinas, John Cam, Gene Celestino, Gene & Fritzie Dacula, Remus DeJesus, Theresa Dueno, Rommel Espina, Ysabella Esteban, Kevin Estor, Glendyll Fabe, Danya Isabel Facura, Joseph Fallurin, Olivia Felibrico, Benjamin Florentino, Erika Flores, Allen Garcia, Michelle Guzman, Nicole Halasan, Jorrel Ignacio, Katrina Jaudian, James Jauregui, Ana Javier, Ding Jose, Gian Jose, Angela Larobis, Mae Lim, Lauren Lopina, Marko Luardo, Francis Muyalde, Alinoel Navia, Justin Ortuoste, Mikko Jan Pepino, Jessica Rementilla, Justin Reyes, Kobi Rigor, Ronald Salamat, Kathrina Salonga, Will Santillian, Christian Tarectecan, Andrew Trinidad, Abigail Viernes, Kristine Villanueva. Not only did they feel the fire of the Holy Spirit burning in their hearts, but they enjoyed praising God through prayer and songs as well. What a blessed weekend! Special thanks to our Spiritual Director, Father Paul Lehman; our sharers: Kody Tolentino, Cathy Duma, Stephanie Ikalina, the Raagas family, and JV Reyes; all shepherds from Singles and Youth; and Tito Alan and Tita Tess Cam for many years of loving service in the Youth Ministry!

COUNSELS

Who Do You Think You Are?

Word: Ex 20:1-17; Ps 19:8-11; 1 Cor 1:22-25; Jn 2:13-25

Theme: We are faithful to God's covenant when we zealously obey His commandments.

Order: *"I am the Lord your God. You shall not have other gods besides me."* (Ex 20:2a, 3)

Reflection:

"What sign can you show us for doing this?" (Jn 2:18). This is a classic reaction from an individual who questions authority. If we were present during that time when Jesus angrily demanded to stop making His Father's house a marketplace, and did not know who Jesus was, we may have probably asked condescendingly, "Who do you think you are?"

We raise this challenging question many times in our lives. Like the Jews, we look for proof of authority to obey an order. This proof is usually a policy, statute, rule or law. There are different factors that motivate us to obey rules. We obey the laws of the land for fear of incarceration. In the military, soldiers follow the rules of engagement for self-preservation. At work, we follow Firm policies for job promotion or fear of job loss. In organizations, we put our conditional obedience in our personal relationship, economic stature, political maneuvering or intellectual impression of leaders. In most of these instances, our obedience is measured by the limits of the specifics of the written rule. When we disagree with these regulations we try to dispute them with our own interpretation of the law, and at times resort to consulting a lawyer or people who share our opinions to justify our refusal of a mandate.

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength" (1 Cor 1:25). Man creates laws, yet these laws change through the passage of time due to influence, belief, and interpretation. But *"God's Laws and Commandments are perfect"* (Ps 19:7-9). Yet from the time of Adam and Eve man foolishly tried to find loopholes in them to rationalize his guilt before God.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true, all of them just." (Ps 19:9)

The Road to Guba - A Paradigm of Life

The road to Barangay Guba (the medical mission venue) is a long and winding road that is full of sharp turns, bumps, and steep ravines. There is no public transportation. People either walk to their destination or ride on motorcycles (with no side car) as tricycles could not make it through.

On the way to the venue, volunteers riding on a bus had to pick up women and children who are walking a great distance in order avail themselves of the free medical care that we offer. Others who are from the farthest mountain Barangays were transported by pick up trucks with nothing to hold on to, except each other when their truck traverses a sharp turn. Yet it is their persistence or perhaps their desperation that provides them with the drive and perseverance to get to the mission venue.

Guba serves as the capital of the mountain Barangays, with a church, a school, a rural health center, a few “sari-sari” stores, a district hospital (or an old building), and a covered gym where we conducted our medical consultations. There is no pharmacy, neither is there a drug store.

Since we were catering to the residents of Barangays and not towns or cities, there were concerns that we would not have enough patients to care for. But the Lord blessed this mission with many volunteers because He knew from the very start that we would care for more than what we have anticipated. This is the first time that we ran out of patient registration forms (we pre-printed 6,000) and we re-ordered medicines more than before.

The volunteers worked tirelessly, each one offering his/her God given talents or skills to care for and make a difference in the lives of so many (over 6,200). Truly, our Lord has blessed and guided this mission as volunteers worked together as one body in Christ.

As in our Lord’s message in the parable of the good Samaritan, our loving and caring community with the help of non-BLD volunteers did not turn its back on the sick and the marginalized.

Like the road to Guba, life is full of trials and challenges. The same is true when we answer His call to serve in His mission of love and compassion. But as we persevere and fully trust the Lord, He will be there to get us through.

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose hope is the LORD. He is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream: It fears not the heat when it comes, its leaves stay green; In the year of drought it shows no distress, but still bears fruit.” (Jer 17:7-8)

Judgment Toward Others

In the BLD community, I am at times confronted by situations that I’ve seen or heard which made me wonder. Is this the right thing to do? Is this Christ-like? Are we authentic witnesses to God’s word? In some instances my response would be silence. Silence is golden where I would think that saying nothing is preferable to speaking. Silence is golden when I am restrained and careful in my speech so as not to utter judgment toward my brethren. There are times when I feel that I can say more by being silent. Certainly, “silence is golden,” but is it always so?

It is the obligation of every Christian to spread God’s word, reprove rebuke and exhort those who need teaching and correction. We must teach people the truth and condemn sin and error wherever it may be found. Sometimes this is not pleasant or easy task. Religious martyrs certainly did not believe that “silence is golden” when the truth needed to be proclaimed in bold language. They boldly condemned all error wherever and whenever they found it. We must do the same to defend the truth and reflect on the following questions:

Are you concerned for the spiritual well-being of your brothers and sisters in Christ? Do we really care about others to correct, encourage and sustain them in times of trouble and discouragement? Where do you stand? Are you hiding behind the cloak of silence, with the idea that “silence is golden?” There were times when I am guilty of saying too much and an inner voice comes “*Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven*” (Lk 6:37).

In this case, where do you draw the line between maintaining silence and breaking the silence without being judgmental? The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) teaches that to avoid rash judgment, everyone should be careful to interpret insofar as possible someone’s thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way. Every good Christian must be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another’s statement than to condemn it. But if he cannot do so, let him ask how the other understands it. If the latter understands it badly, let the former correct him with love.

Omnipotent Father, grant that my love for my brethren may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that I may be able to *discern* what is best and be pure and blameless until the day of Christ. Loving Father, bestow upon your servant, a *discerning* heart to distinguish between right and wrong; that I do not cast judgments but in spirit of truth correct my brethren lovingly. Amen.

DEACON'S CORNER

Do You Still Not Understand?

A couple of missionaries with their aborigine guides run out of food while on their way to another village. They were worried because they were still a few days away from their destination. The aborigines reassured them that they will find food after the next hill. True enough, there were plenty of guava trees with ripe fruits. After having their fill, the guides gave each one a fruit for the road. The missionaries suggested that they get as much fruit as they can carry so they will not run out of food for the rest of the journey. The aborigines said not to worry. There will be more fruit trees along the way. Besides, if they picked all the fruits, nothing will be left for others traveling the same route. This idea coming from an aborigine, not yet a Christian, more so not yet a Catholic!

Trust according to Webster is the assured reliance or confidence on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone or something. The aborigines sure had it.

The apostles were worried because they had forgotten to bring bread. And this was after Jesus broke five loaves for five thousand with twelve wicker baskets full of fragments leftover and seven loaves for four thousand with seven baskets full of fragments leftover. He said to them, "Do you still not understand?" (Mk 8: 14- 21)

This Gospel message is very appropriate for all of us at this time of economic upheaval. Most of us are worried like the disciples about not having enough to eat which symbolically represents our feeling of insecurity regarding our job, homes, 401K's, etc. What does Jesus want us to understand? He wants us to trust in his promises. While we don't know what tomorrow will bring, that the details of our lives are yet to be revealed yet we know and must believe according to our faith that the Lord is present in every circumstance of our lives. The Scripture is replete with examples of his love, mercy and providence such as "*He split the rock in the desert to provide water for the Israelites*" (Nm 21: 11; Ps 78: 15) and "*he sent them abundance of food* (Ex 18: 13-15, Ps 78: 24). "*Cast your cares upon Him for He careth for you*" (1 Pet 5:7). And... "do not worry about your life. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you besides.*" (Mt 6:25-34)

How much trust do we have in Jesus?

Help us, Lord, to understand your love for us and to trust in you. Amen.

Counsels (from page 1)

Jesus simplified the Ten Commandments and reduced them to two encompassing Commandments of Love: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these." (Mk 12:30). He made Himself the ultimate example of total obedience to these laws by declaring at the beginning of His passion in Gethsemane, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Lk 22:42). And finally in Calvary, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk 23:34).

Thomas à Kempis states in his book "Imitation of Christ," "Many live in obedience more from necessity than from love." Christ's obedience clearly stems from His great love for us and for His heavenly Father. It was not only the desecration of the physical temple but people's attitude towards God that made him very angry. He knew that the brick and mortar that made up the temple would not last. He knew that a greater temple will be built in us, where His Holy Spirit will reside through His death and resurrection. It is this Temple of Salvation that mattered most to Him.

Thomas à Kempis further wrote on obedience, "The man who is at perfect ease is never suspicious, but the disturbed and discontented spirit is upset by many a suspicion. He neither rests himself nor permits others to do so. He often says what ought not to be said and leaves undone what ought to be done. He is concerned with the duties of others but neglects his own." Therefore, we must get rid of all the worldly clutter that permeates our being so Jesus can live in us. He gave us this community to help us identify those unwanted baggage so that we may be free to focus on Jesus' saving presence, thus allowing Him to finish the work He has begun in us. Most of us acknowledge that obedience to our Covenant is at the very root of the continued anointing that we receive from God. Our leadership's wisdom may be limited, but their humble obedience allows the blessings of the Lord to pour down upon our community.

Let us continue to entrust our leaders into the guiding hands of God. Let us not worry or be anxious. This house continues to provide the love to all who come, for it is obedient to the Lord. Obedience out of love and not out of necessity is the proof of our true faith in the saving grace of Jesus' presence in our community, fully trusting in God that where our leaders err, He will rectify.

Directions:

- Hold zealously to the 1st and 2nd pledges of our covenant with the Lord:
- Surrender self totally to God the Father, to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and to the Holy Spirit of God; and believe that God is the Source of all authority. Humbly offer self in submission and servanthood to God's authority as represented by the Catholic Church in the persons of the Holy Father and the Bishops of the Church. Submit to the ecclesial authority of the Bishops of the diocese and the district Spiritual Director to whom the diocesan Bishop has delegated authority.
- Read, study and live the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures and in other spiritual readings, and regularly share knowledge and experience of the Word with other members of the Community at least once a week in designated Word Sharing Circle.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mission

Nursing Home Visit

Every 2nd Saturday of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Ave, Passaic, NJ 07055
Nong/Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Mission

Healing Prayer Services

Every Monday at 8:00pm

Healing Prayer Service and Eucharistic Celebration

Every 1st Monday of the month at 8:00pm

2000 Hail Marys Devotion with Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Saturday of the month starts at 8:30am
Resurrection Parish - St. Bridget Church
372 Montgomery St, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Isaiah 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused school supplies
St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)
Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1231 rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo (308)230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong (308)406-6955

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 28-29, 2009

Youth Encounter #1 for St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish
Contact: Ray/Susie Atienza or Fr. Robert Lamirez

Bible Study

Conducted by Fr. Dennis at St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish
Every Friday 7:30pm-8:00pm at St. Mary's School, Room 104
Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His word.

March 28, 2009 (Saturday)

Catholic Men's Conference

Fueled by Faith, United in Christ Our Hope

8:00am-4:00pm
Essex County Richard J Codey Arena, West Orange, NJ
Nestor Laxina (973)661-9268
Boyie Huelgas (732)303-9356

April 8, 2009 (Holy Wednesday)

TENEBRAE

8:00pm at St. Mary's Church
Come and join us for a night of reflection of our Lord Jesus Christ's Passion & Death inspired with Fr. Dennis' Reflection, Scriptural Reading, Prayers and Songs. Sponsored by BLD Newark together with the Oratory Group of St. Mary's/St. Mark.

The Lord's Provisions

Week Ending: March 6, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission &

Fast for the Poor: \$ 2,888.00

Thank you for your continued generosity

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 14, 2009 (Saturday)

Protecting God's Children – Deacon Serge

10:00am-1:00pm at St. Mary's Rahway
This teaching is required for all those who are serving in Mark 10, John 6 & Youth Ministries, especially those in the immersion program and Singles who shepherd youth members. This is in compliance with Diocesan Requirement. Deacon Serge will issue certificate of Attendance at completion of the course.

May 29-31, 2009

Marriage Encounter #33

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA
Gary/Mil Camacho (732)821-4507
Dens/Mina Mantes (973)887-5904

May 29-31, 2009

Singles Encounter #22

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Manny/Arlene Mangalanzo (908)256-2622 arlenemanny@gmail.com
Boy/Des Parker (201)823-2230 boydesparker@optonline.net
Lita Alfaro (201)214-8229 litaalfaro@aol.com
Glenn Canlas (201)888-6700 invazian21@yahoo.com

July 17-19, 2009

Family Encounter #36

Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA
Manny/Nette Manguiat (201)355-0439

Note

*Application forms for all encounters
are available at bldnewark.com*

TEACHING MINISTRY

Date/Class

Day/Teaching

March 20, 2009

Friday

Mark10	Teachings
John6	Teachings
Youth	Teachings
Singles	Christian Maturity Program

March 21-22, 2009

Saturday & Sunday

By Invitation Only	Teachers in Process Program
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March 27, 2009

Friday

GYM	Teachings
LSS29	Intercessory Formation Teaching
LSS30	Service Formation Teaching
Solo Parents	Encounter with Jesus

Note

*Friday teachings – after worship
Saturday teachings 1:00pm-6:00pm at St. Mary's*

Proposed Readings for the Year of St. Paul

July 2008 – July 2008

March 9 - 14	Ephesians 3-4
March 16 - 21	Ephesians 5-6
March 23 - 28	Philippians 1-2
March 30 - April 4	Philippians 3-4



*A letter of Encouragement from a
former BLD Youth:*

SEMINARIAN - HOME OF THE MOTHER, SPAIN

Hey guys,

I am not so sure that you remember me. It's Joe Valle. I wanted to drop an email to say hello. This is not a virus. I just felt curious on how everyone is doing back home.

Right now, I'm hanging out in Spain as a novice for the Home of the Mother. Gregg & Kristian Espejon are with me in the same community.

The second reason I wrote is to encourage you guys on living a solid Christian life. I know how hard it is and confusing it can be but stick to it. Live the simple life, the bare essentials and life becomes easier. "Pray, pray, pray", our Mother Mary said in Fatima. Therefore, pray. Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find. If it is truly for you, God will grant it.

You are guys, and I know you are fighters. Keep going at it. Go to mass daily, pray the rosary, pray before the Blessed Sacrament, have times of silence during the day. Like what Saint Teresa of Avila said, "Perfection is not in consolations but in the increase of love."

If you truly love someone, the emotions don't matter. LOVE for God means love of life. True life is to live abundantly according to the desires of God, not one's own desires because normally when we put our own wants in God's way, we mess things up; we end up more lost than we were before.

I encourage you to live a Christian life and you will discover true happiness.

*God bless,
Joseph Valle*

Mark 10, John 6, Youth Ministry

COUNSELS

Faithfulness Through Good Works

WORD: 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23; Ps 137: 1-6;
Eph 2:4-10; Jn 3: 14-21

THEME: We are faithful to God's covenant
when we do good works in His name.

ORDER: Live the truth, so that His works may
be clearly seen as done in God.

REFLECTION:

Last week, on the 3rd Sunday of Lent, we considered the Paschal mystery in terms of Jesus' body being destroyed and raised up in three days. This Sunday, the 4th week of Lent, we see that same mystery, now demanding a choice from us: darkness or light, unbelief or belief, condemnation or salvation.

The center of the work the Father sent Jesus to do on earth is referred to as the Paschal Mystery. The word "paschal" comes from a Hebrew word meaning "the passing over." The Paschal Mystery is Jesus' passing over from life on earth through His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension to a new and glorified life with the Father. This is talking about the truth about passing from the slavery of sin to the freedom in the love of God. Through the Paschal Mystery all things have been justified and made right in Christ with God. Jesus came to fulfill and perfect the covenant of God, and to assure all that God's love is eternal and constant. In the Gospel, John 3:16 states: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish, but might have eternal life." To us, who are disciples of Christ, during our observance of Lent, it makes clear to us that our

(Page 4)



God's Promise for the Week

*"For by grace you have been saved
through faith." (Eph 2: 8)*



Building a Family of Faith

I have been in the community now for over 8 years. I feel blessed to belong to a community that provides an opportunity for me to grow in my faith through the teachings. This community has drawn me to love and value God's word, allows me to participate in Corporate worship, has given me the opportunity to serve others, and has given me friends who journey with me in the quest to know, love and serve the Lord. I value and love my faith more than ever.

We are called to be faithful to our covenant and to share and teach what we know about our faith to the next generation. *"However, take care and be earnestly on your guard not to forget the things which your own eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your memory as long as you live, but teach them to your children and to your children and to your children's children."* Deuteronomy 4:9

The greatest challenge for me is in being a good witness of God's love to my family. It is easier to teach Catechism to children who are not my own. The best way to teach my children about my faith, God's love and service to Him is by my own good example. I can draw my children closer to the Lord when they see God's love in me through my day to day interaction with them. My busyness in community work is of no value if my home is filled with tension, discord and conflict. I must take guard to ensure that my home is filled with God's love, peace and joy everyday.

I can be a better witness to my children, by being disciplined in my actions and in my words. My children watch and observe what I do. They are keen to how I react and respond to situations and conflict. I realize that there is less chaos in the home when there is order. As a mother, I set the tone in the home. When I start my day with prayer and allow the Holy Spirit to guide my decisions, our home is calm. I must exemplify the value of sacrifice, prayer and forgiveness. I must teach my children to honor the sacrament of marriage, by being faithful to my husband, putting my husband first after God and respecting him as the head of our household. I want to instill in my children the value of praying the rosary daily as I believe this has shielded me from worldly temptations and oppressions. I tell my children, that in order to have less troubles and pains in life, we must honor God's commandments. I pray that my children and their children grow to be faithful to God.

Traveling Catholics: For nationwide listing of Catholic Churches and Mass times, go to www.masstimes.org



St. Joseph

As a catholic, we all know Saint Joseph as the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus. He was a carpenter and a working man. He wasn't rich for when he took Jesus to the temple to be circumcised and Mary to be purified, he offered the sacrifice of two turtle doves or pigeons, a practice allowed only for those who could not afford a lamb. (Luke 2:24)

Joseph came from a royal lineage. A descendant of David the great king of Israel. In fact the angel who first told Joseph about Jesus greeted him as "son of David", a royal title used also for Jesus.

Joseph was a compassionate and caring man. He was a man of faith, obedient to whatever God asked of him without knowing the outcome. When the angel revealed to him in a dream and told him the truth about the child Mary was carrying, Joseph immediately and without a question or concern for gossip, took Mary as his wife. Again when the angel came to tell him that his family was in danger, he immediately left everything he owned and fled to a strange country together with Mary and Jesus. In Egypt he waited until the time the angel revealed to him that it was safe to return.

Joseph loved Jesus. He was very much concerned for the safety of this child entrusted to him. When Jesus stayed in the temple, Joseph and Mary search with great anxiety for three days. (Luke 2:48) He treated Jesus as his very own son. Every year, Joseph took his family to Jerusalem for Passover.

Since Joseph does not appear in Jesus' public life, at his death and resurrection, many historians believed that Joseph probably died before Jesus entered public ministry. Having died in the "arms of Jesus and Mary" catholic traditions considered him the model of a pious believer who receives grace at the moment of death. He is considered the Patron of the universal church, fathers, carpenters and social justice.

We celebrate two feast days for Saint Joseph: March 19 for Joseph, the Husband of Mary and May 1 for Joseph, the Worker. This reflects Saint Joseph's status as what many Catholics and Christians consider the "patron of workers" and "model of workers". Catholics and other Christians' teachings and stories about or relating to Joseph and the Holy Family frequently stress his patience, persistence, and hard work as admirable qualities which believers should emulate.

There is much we wish we could know about this saint. Instead, Scripture has left us with the most important knowledge: who he was, "a righteous man". (Matthew 1:18)

APOLOGETICS



Question:

Why Don't Roman Catholics Sing the Alleluia During Lent?

Throughout the liturgical year, the Catholic Church makes certain changes to the Mass to reflect the liturgical season. Next to the change in the color of the priest's vestments, the absence of the Alleluia during Lent is probably the most obvious.

The Meaning of the Alleluia

The Alleluia comes to us from Hebrew, and it means "praise Yahweh." Traditionally, it has been seen as the chief term of praise of the choirs of angels, as they worship around the throne of God in Heaven. It is, therefore, a term of great joy, and our use of the Alleluia during Mass is a way of participating in the angels' worship. It is also a reminder that the Kingdom of Heaven is already established on earth, in the form of the Church, and that our participation in Mass is a participation in Heaven.

Our Lenten Exile

During [Lent](#), however, our focus is on the Kingdom coming, not on the Kingdom having come. The readings in the Masses for Lent and in the Liturgy of the Hours focus heavily on the spiritual journey of Old Testament Israel toward the coming of Christ, and the salvation of mankind in His death and resurrection.

We, too, are on a spiritual journey, toward the Second Coming and our future life in Heaven. In order to emphasize that journey, the Church, during Lent, removes the Alleluia from the Mass. We no longer sing with the choirs of angels; instead, we acknowledge our sins and practice repentance so that one day we may again have the privilege of worshipping God as the angels do.

The Return of the Alleluia at Easter

That day come triumphally on [Easter Sunday](#)—or, rather, at the Easter Vigil, on Holy Saturday night, when the priest chants a triple Alleluia before he reads the Gospel, and everyone present responds with a triple Alleluia. The Lord is risen; the Kingdom has come; our joy is complete; and, in concert with the angels and saints, we greet the risen Lord with shouts of "Alleluia!"

Proposed Readings for the Year of St. Paul

March 16 - 21	Ephesians 5 - 6
March 23 - 28	Philippians 1 - 2
March 30 - April 4	Philippians 3 - 4

BIBLE STUDY

AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH

*** Starting February 13 ***

Conducted by Fr. Dennis
Every Friday, 7:30 - 8:00 pm
St. Mary's School, Room 104

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Sat. of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ
Volunteers needed

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340/
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article
(450 words max.).

Email to word@bldnewark.com

ISAIAH 58

SAGIP: Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)
Bring your old or unused school supplies
St. Mary Church, Rahway, NJ (Fellowship Area)
Contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908-810-1231/
rubenluz@verizon.net), Cez/Pinky Calingo (308-230-3660
or Gene Ymbong (308-406-6955)

TEACHINGS

Venue: St. Mary's Classroom

March 20 (Friday after worship)

Mark 10 Teaching

John 6 Teaching

Youth Teaching

Christian Maturity Program - Singles

March 21 & 22 (Saturday & Sunday)

Teachers in Process Program

March 27 (Friday after worship)

Intercessory Formation - LSS 29

Service Formation - LSS 30

Encounter with Jesus - Solo Parents

Teaching - Golden Years Ministry



LSA # 32 SCHEDULE

DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY
3/21 - 3/27	Any Day	3rd Shepherding
3/28 - 4/2	Any Day	4th Shepherding
4/4 - 4/5	Sat & Sun	LSS Proper

Marriage Encounter # 3 BLD Charlotte

May 9 - 10, 2009

Blowing Rock, North California

Contact: Henry/Aida Koryan: 973-709-1387 (Home)
973-629-6059 (Cell)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report
for the Week Ending March 13, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission

& Fast for Poor

\$3,970.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Counsels (from page 1)

salvation is accomplished for us by the goodness of an all loving God, whose movement toward the world, through the Son, is entirely motivated **by Love, not condemnation**. The only duty we have is to believe in such overwhelming love; then, penance and good works will arise spontaneously from our grateful hearts.

In this reading, verse 16 is bordered by two rich images. First, the image of the crucified Christ (lifted up). Jesus is seen as pre-figured in the bronze serpent that Moses "lifted up" in the desert and upon which Israel gazed and found healing. Second, light is one of John's most pervasive symbols of Jesus Christ, penetrating the dark world with illuminating truth. The two images are complementary. They both involve seeing and being drawn to what we see.

The Light (Christ) enables us to see, but we can only come up to The Light and believe if we "live the truth" which is expressed in good works. Evil works lead to death; good works lead us to light. Light and faith are gifts. We demonstrate that we accept these gifts when we do good works. God demonstrates great love for us by sending His Son to be lifted up on the cross and then raising Him to eternal life. We demonstrate our great love for God when we do good works.

The 1st reading complements the Gospel text in which we hear Jesus explain to Nicodemus that condemnation comes only to those who do not see the light, those who do not believe in Him. According to Chronicles, condemnation came to God's people, because they kept refusing to believe in the messengers sent to them that seventy years of enforced exile must be endured. John says the same thing in the Gospel. Jesus was the last in a long line of God's messengers, and He, too, was rejected by the blindness of the blind - those who would not see. *"And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil."* (John 3:19)

The second reading reminds us, once again, of God's richness in mercy, of God's great love for us. Even though we were dead in our transgressions, He brought us to life with Christ. The whole point of Jesus' life, death and resurrection is heard in these words: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God."* (Eph.2:8).

In gratitude for God's unconditional love, we, as members of the community must be faithful to our covenant to do good works in His Name, to be as charitable as He was with us. In return, we must generously support our Church and community, which God gave us, with regular tithes and love offerings to propagate the faith. We must serve God with peace and joy in our hearts without expecting any reward. As we follow Him, we must learn to deny ourselves and pick up our crosses. May we be a shining ✍

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Singles Encounter #22

May 29-31, 2009

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact: Manny/Arlene Mangalanzo (908-256-2622/
arlenemanny@gmail.com; Boy/Des Parker (201-823-
2230/boydesparker@optonline.net

Marriage Encounter # 33

May 29-31, 2009

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA
Contact: Gary/Mil Camacho (732-821-4507)/Dens/Mina
Mantes (973-887-5904)

For application & directions, go to bldnewark.com

Family Encounter #16

July 17-19, 2009

Malvern, PA

Contact: Many/Nette Manguiat (201-355-0439)

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

TENEBRAE

April 8, 2008 (Holy Wednesday)

Come and join us for a night of reflection of our
Lord Jesus Christ's Passion & Death inspired
with Fr. Dennis' Reflection, Scriptural Reading,
Prayers and Songs

Sponsored by BLD Newark together with
the Oratory Group of St. Mary's & St. Mark

CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE

Saturday, March 28, 2008, 8:00 - 4:00 pm

Essex County Richard J Codey Arena

West Orange, NJ

Contact: Nestor Laxina 973-661-9268

Boyie Huelgas 732-303-9356

Youth Encounter #1

for St. Mary's & St. Mark's Retreat

March 28 -29, 2009

St. Mary's Auditorium

For further info, contact: Ray/Susie Atienza

Fr. Robert Lamirez

light to the nations as we generously extend God's love to others, as we follow His most holy will.

DIRECTION:

* **Hold zealously to the 7th and 8th pledges of our covenant with the Lord:**

- * Actively assist in ministering to the spiritual, personal and material needs of other members of the Community and of the Body of Christ in a spirit of self-giving love.
- * Support the Community's Apostolates and Ministries with regular tithes and love offerings, given according to our true means and out of the fullness of our heart.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 14

Bulletin Edition

April 3, 2009

YE #1

St. Mark's and St. Mary's Parishes

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have; God is pleased by sacrifices of that kind." (Heb. 13:16)

The first Youth Encounter of St. Mary's and St. Mark's Parish was held on March 28-29, at the auditorium with 18 candidates, coming from the 8TH grade CCD class of St. Mary's, the Spanish and the Filipino community of the parish ranging from 13-17 years of age.

With only 7 weeks of preparation for its first BLD sponsored Parish Youth Encounter, 3 facilitators from the Singles ministry, with the help of the Youth DYC & Tricord, we were able to plan well, including the creation of a program fit to meet the needs of the Parish. This would not have been possible without the collaboration of Fr. Dennis Kaelin, Spiritual Director for the weekend, BLD Youth, Evangelization & Mission Ministries.

Obedience, Prayer & Trust in the Lord were the key to a victorious weekend. Thank you Lord for the victory, for only by Your Grace and Mercy that were able to accomplish this task.



First Annual Catholic Men's Conference

"As iron sharpens iron, so man sharpens his fellow man." (Prv. 27:17)

It was a gloomy Saturday, no sun in the sky and temperature is about 40 degrees. But the weather was not an obstacle for the 2,700 attendees, including 30 of our BLD brothers and 7 of our BLD sisters, to attend the First Annual Catholic Men's Conference organized by the Archdiocese of Newark held at Richard J. Codey Arena. This is the first conference I attended that no one dozed off as we were provided with great speakers.

Deacon Ralph Poyo, our first dynamic speaker talked about "The Genuine Pursuit of Men's Sexual Purity", his transformation from being addicted to pornographic materials to a man of the Word of God. Our second speaker, Dr. Phil Mango, a psychiatrist with a great sense of humor talked about "The Real Deal about Men" and "The Woman We Love." He told us that we should always say **I LOVE YOU** to our spouses, which was not really difficult to say. *(continued on page4)*

COUNSELS

Could You Not Keep Watch For One Hour?

WORD: Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9,17-20,23-24;
Phi 2:6-11; Mk 14:1-15:47

THEME: God exalts us when we patiently bear our cross daily.

ORDER: *"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* (Phil 2:10-11)

REFLECTION: (Forbearance/Endurance)

We could not help it but succumb to the daily grind of the day in the city. As soon as we wake up, our body seems to be a running machine. We look at the clock, rush for a quick shower, quickly dress up, no time for breakfast, and off we go to catch the train. Hopefully, there is still time to pass by the vendor at the corner for a bagel and a cup of coffee, run to the office and barely make it on time. The day is just beginning. The after office time is just as hectic. We rush to catch the earliest train, hopefully be home by 7 or 8 pm. Have a quick dinner from left over the day before, do some house work and off to watch the late 11:00 o'clock news. Such is a typical day of a city worker. What is dreadful is the realization that we have to do it all over again tomorrow.

It would seem that we have no more time other than to accomplish our daily routine. We live a fast pace life full of anxiety and stress. We have time or try to find time for matters of this world. We have time or try to find time to earn money if not more money. Money which we think could lead us to fame, luxurious living, and a happy life. In the end, we find that nothing satisfies our desire for more worldly things. It is a reality that busyness robs us of the richness of life. When the pace of life gets hectic, let God's promises offer us peace. *(continued on page4)*

Promise of the Week

*"The Lord God is my help, therefore
I am not disgraced."* (Is 50:7)

The Truth Will Set Us Free

Jesus then said to those Jews who believed in him, *"If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* (John 8: 31-32)

At the Eucharist we pray "Lord by Your cross and resurrection, You have set us free". Jesus is "Truth" himself. He is the truth who sets us free. Jesus came to set the captives free to bring out prisoners from confinement and from the dungeon and those who live in darkness (Isaiah 42:7). Jesus is the redeemer the one who paid the price to ransom us from slavery.

Abiding in God's word free us to love. Because God is love and love must be freely given. God made us free by sending His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ Himself abide by His Love to the Father who is our God.

Freedom is a result or an outcome to love. When the human race sinned, it severely cut back its freedom and therefore it's capacity to love. When Jesus redeemed us, our freedom was restored. We now have the freedom to give our lives to the Lord and to love Him with all of our hearts.

We have been called to live in freedom but not a freedom that gives free rein to the flesh. Out of love, we place ourselves at one another's service. So we stand firm and not to take on ourselves the yoke of slavery from sin a second time.

In Jesus, we will speak and live the truth no matter if we have to die for the truth. Our love for Jesus will make us true. We are free in the spirit to worship God with freedom despite what others think. We are free to proclaim the truth, for Jesus has set us free. We are free from the slavery of trying to please others. Jesus means "You will be free" when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior on His term. I rejoice for Jesus is my way, my truth and my life. Amen.



The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Report for the week ending March 27, 2009
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor \$3,719.00
Weekly Disbursement \$6,649.16
Thank you for your continued generosity!

The Rock Of My Salvation

"I love you, LORD, my strength, LORD, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my God, my rock of refuge, my shield, my saving horn, my stronghold!" (Ps. 18:2-3)

One of the greatest trials I faced was my quest for a church annulment. I was married in 1972, separated in 1974, applied twice for church annulment and finally received approval in 2005. Without Him walking side by side with me, this would not have been possible. He is my Deliverer, my Rock, the One I cling to always and forever.

My marriage was purely involuntary on my part. I was young and naïve. Didn't know any better and was full of idealism. But 30 years of being under the shadow of darkness is enough for one to ponder, think, and to come to the light. Because He is the Light.

Dear Lord, I know that I have broken your laws and that separated me from you. I am imperfect and I am truly sorry! I believe that Jesus Christ gave His life for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer.

The first attempt of annulment was denied due to technicalities. As I was moving out of the country (in 1983) I did not appeal. More than 10 years later, being renewed in the Spirit, I had another go. I had to put my life in order. *"...Put your house in order, for you are about to die; you shall not recover."* (Is. 38:1)

And so I tried but was momentarily thwarted. After waiting for 2 years, I was directed to apply in Manila. No reason was provided but I obeyed. *"Let every person be subordinate to the higher authorities...and those that exist have been established by God."*(Romans 13:1) I went to Manila. Two trips, the first to officially apply and the second for the hearing. The "travel" was not easy. There were stumbling blocks along the way, bumps and potholes on the road and there wasn't any time to rest. The road was constantly uphill.

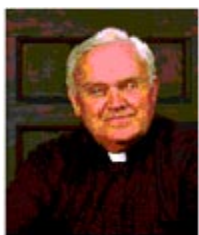
The whole process took 6 years. After the decision was finally granted, there was a slight snag that was easily resolved by my pastor as he interceded here in the local diocese (NJ). And so finally, I remarried **with** the blessing of the Catholic Church in 2006.

"Give thanks to the LORD, who is good, whose love endures forever." (Ps.118:1) There is nothing that can stand against You, and there is nothing that will bear deeper abiding fruit than living in Your will. You are beyond reproach and at the very heart of Your nature beats the heart of a glorious God whose beauty is unsurpassed. You are the Rock of my salvation.

Proposed Readings for the Year of St. Paul July 2008-July 2009

Mar 30-Apr 4

Philippians 3-4



Predator or Protector?

(Theology of the Body Continued)

I have been encouraged to continue my articles on the "Theology of the Body". I admit that even this important subject can be overdone, and eventually cause people to feel that everything has been said. Even if this is not true I will conclude these articles with this article and the following one with comments on a new publication, entitled "Theology of his/her Body". It is written by Jason Evert, a very popular speaker to youth throughout the country. There is also a new publication entitled, "Theology of the Body for Teens". I am giving a few of these copies to some of the youth to get their response to this new approach to sexuality. I hope to be able to report on this in next month's copy of CN.

The new approach by Jason Evert is that the front of the book is directed to boys (men). The second part of the book is written for girls (women). In Jason's comments to men he writes what I think is a very powerful statement: "If a man does not possess interior strength, he is a walking contradiction of what it means to be a man." In connection with this, you may be aware that in recent years some "liturgists" have sought to introduce "gender-inclusive" language, excluding any reference to masculinity in worship, even so far as to eliminate a reference to God as Father. Could this be a sad desire to eliminate distinctions between men and women? Men who "use" women for their own sexual satisfaction have become predators and not protectors, and have failed as men. The problem especially for young people as they mature is the confusion between "sexual" and "sinful." God made us sexual creatures, but original sin has wounded us, and our sexuality has to be "redeemed". Even if God has to part of this transformation, erotic and sexual desire in itself is not sinful. This can often be confusing experience for many good young people who may be at a loss as to how to deal with sexual temptation.

All men are called to fatherhood in some way, physical fathers in one way, priests in another way. There is problem of fatherlessness in our society today. I quote: "Some men fear the responsibilities of being a dad, so they sterilize their acts of intercourse. Still others consider their children to be an unwanted financial drain, so they urge their girlfriends to have abortions. They enjoy the act of creating life, but don't care to love the life they create."

Much more can be said. May I encourage you all to read either Jason Evert's book or Christopher West's "Theology of the Body for Beginners." Next month: "Theology of HER Body."



Ministry Announcements



MISSION

Nursing Home Visit - Hamilton Plaza
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055
Every 2nd Saturday of the Month
Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

Soup Kitchen - Missionaries of Charity
60 Jay Street, Newark NJ
Every 4th Saturday of the Month
April 25 - ME#30
Louie & Choly Relucio (201)483-8715

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)
Bring your old or unused School Supplies
St. Mary Church, Rahway, New Jersey (Fellowship Area)
For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1213
rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo(308)230-3660 or
Gene/Bing Ymbong(308)406-6955

Teaching

April 17 - Friday

Mark 10 Teaching
John 6 Teaching
Youth Teaching

April 18 - Saturday

Shepherds Training - LSS28
Encounter with Jesus - LSS31

April 24 - Friday

Golden Years Teaching
Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS29
Service Formation Teaching - LSS30

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship
Saturday Teachings – 1pm to 6pm at St. Mary's

Special Announcements

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com
BIBLE STUDY AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH
Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's School, Rm 104

April 8, 2009 (Holy Wednesday)

TENEBRAE

8:00pm St. Mary's Church
Come and join us for a night of reflection of our Lord Jesus Christ's Passion & Death inspired with Fr. Dennis' Reflection, Scriptural Reading, Prayers and Songs
Sponsored by BLD Newark together with the Oratory Group of St. Mary's & St. Mark

Counsels from page 1

In search for something significant or for someone who will lead us to eternal happiness, by sheer of luck or as we know it now, by design, we were introduced to Jesus. Over time of exposure to his presence, we found him to be the one who answers our quest for eternal satisfaction. We were taught that His words declare that He is the one who became obedient to His almighty Father, even to the point of death on the cross. That God the Father loves us so much that he sent His only begotten son not to condemn us but so we may live because of his great love for us.

But we are weak, sinful and worldly. The lies of the evil one overpower our fleeting moments of spirituality. In our earthly quest for achievement, we believe that we can accomplish things of our own making. Our justification is after all whatever we have, we work for it and we deserve to be happy too.

Realize that God created us for so much more than this earthly life can offer. Psalm 16:11, says *"You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever"*. It is unfortunate that despite our renewed relationship with our Lord we still find justifications for our earthy behavior. We search for fame instead of servanthood and the desire to be popular instead of aiming for humble existence. Ironically, though we acknowledge that he is God, we still insist that we are only human. *"That our spirit is willing but the flesh is weak"*. That we have time for everything, sadly even for sinning. How about spending time with Jesus? Can we not spare one hour with Him?

Rather than fall into these pitfalls of community life, we should strive to boast only those of the Lord. Always make God our priority in life. Ask God for Wisdom and pray more and he will direct you (Prov.2:8). Do not let money control you (Luke 16:13). Always give to Him and to others (1 Cor. 16:2). Trust God that in every situation it is always an opportunity to draw closer to Him. Search for His true discernment. Make your daily life as an offering, as a prayer.

Lord, I humbly ask for your mercy. You came, Lord Jesus to give a full and meaningful life. Forgive me for the times I succumbed to the busyness of my daily schedule and forget that you my Lord is all that matters. Whatever I have done for you or for anybody is too insignificant to what you have done for me. You have endured so much suffering and even died on the cross to redeem me of my sinfulness. It is only by your grace that I can be saved. Help me make my daily existence as offering of my love for you. You O' Lord will always and forever be my Lord and Savior. IN JESUS NAME, AMEN

DIRECTIONS:

- Pray unceasingly, in every opportunity, to be ready to bear the sacrifices as we obey God's will in our lives with all humility.
- Continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Community Calendar

May 9 to 10 - Marriage Encounter #3

BLD Charlotte

Blowing Rock, NC

Contact: Henry/Aida Koryan

H973-709-1387; C973-629-6059

May 29 to 31 - Marriage Encounter #33

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA

Contact: Gary/Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

Dens/Mina Mantes 973-887-5904

For application & directions go to bldnewark.com

May 29 to 31 - Singles Encounter #22

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY

Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo 908-256-2622

arlenemanny@gmail.com

Boy/Des Parker 201-823-2230

boydesparker@optonline.net

Lita Alfaro 201-214-8229; litaalfaro@aol.com

Glenn Canlas 201-888-6700; invazian21@yahoo.com

June 26 to 28 - Youth Encounter #16

St. Francis Retreat Center, PA

Contact: Mario/Cecil Salonga 516-561-6854

Sundee/Neneng Ikalina 201-384-8710

Stevie Olaso 973-975-8338; email: sjv.olaso@gmail.com

June 26 to 28 - Solo Parents Encounter #11

Archdiocesan Retreat Center

499 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, NJ 07032

July 17 to 19 - Family Encounter #36

Malvern, PA

Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439

Men's conference ... from page 1

The conference was designed to help us deepen our faith and relationship with Jesus Christ; and to shape our roles in families, in the Church, and in society as men of God and men for others.

In the afternoon, the keynote speaker was Mr. Danny Abramowicz who hosts the EWTN program "Crossing the Goal". Mr. Abramowicz focused on spiritual growth. Confessions were held throughout most of the day with our very own Fr. Dave Sison as one of the confessors.

Inspiring music was provided by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal who call themselves the "Catholic Underground".

The conference ended with a Eucharistic Celebration led by Archbishop John J. Myers from the Archdiocese of Newark, with 25 priests and 10 deacons as co-celebrants. It was a very solemn mass with readings said in English and Spanish.

During this conference, I felt and saw the devotion of our brothers and sisters to our Lord, Jesus Christ. No matter what color or race you belong to, this conference brought everyone together, united as one.



MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE



THE LORD REIGNS!

The Lord God Almighty has manifested His Mighty Power once again during the 'Life in the Seminar #32', which was held last April 3-5, 2009. Among those who received His peace, love and joy are the 46 candidates, who participated in the BLD's unique process of shepherding. The shepherding sessions gave all assigned shepherds an opportunity to share with their lambs their own experience of God's transforming power and love; explain to their lambs how to live a life in the Holy Spirit; and help their lambs prepare spiritually so they will have a meaningful encounter with Jesus during the weekend.

The Pastoral team was led by Fr. Pete Literal. He was enjoined by BLD sharers, who proclaimed their blessings through witnessing and their willingness to serve God in His vineyard. The team includes: Mhylanie Guinto for **God's Love**, Tita Valonzo for **New Life**, Richard/Lee de la Fuente for **Reconciliation and Healing**, Nestor/Becbec Laxina for **Exhortation**, Ollie/Annie Felibrico for **Growth**, and Mon/Bingle Chan for **Transformation**. Moreover, this collaborative effort was supported by the willing and able LSS #31 sponsoring classes from the ME, SE and SPE and auxies led by the LSS #32 Seminar Coordinators, Fil and Hum Flores. Their obedience to the call was truly a blessing to all those who were present during the weekend.

We rejoice for the victory our Lord Jesus has revealed in us. By the power of the Cross, He saved us from the bondage of sin, and through the Holy Spirit, His Truth is ingrained in our hearts and minds. Knowing, loving, and serving Him with all our best inspire us to work for His perfection. Truly, our journey to His kingdom is what we desire to live by.

The Lord reigns forever and ever!

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SAVE THE DATE!
Family Encounter #16
July 17-19, 2009
Malvern, PA

COUNSELS

REPENTANCE & FORGIVENESS

WORD: Act 3:13-15,17-19; Ps 4:2,4,7-9;
1Jn 2:1-5; Lk 24:35-48

THEME: God exalts us when we preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

ORDER: *"Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away."*
(Acts 3:19)

REFLECTION:

Today's reading offers us a continuation of the Lenten message: forgiveness of sin, the necessity of repentance, conversion and avoidance of sin. It implies that this season is not the time to relax the work begun in Lent, but to intensify it even as we celebrate Jesus' rising from the dead.

"Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away." Acts 3:19

What is repentance? Repentance is the acknowledgment of our failure to follow God's commandment. It is sorrow for having offended the Lord, our God, and for having broken our relationship with Him. But what, exactly, do we repent of? Sin! To repent of sin, simply means to "change direction." We turn from the way of self-indulgence and "getting" to the way of "giving." We stop serving the desires of our own flesh and begin to serve others. We turn from selfishness to selflessness.

There are no shortcuts to eternal life - without the cross, there can be no crown. As Christians, we must always remember that in order to share in the life of the Risen Christ, we have to share the life of the crucified Christ. Death and resurrection must take place in each of our lives.

(Page 4)



God's Promise for the Week

***"Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, is expiation
for our sins and for the whole world"***
(1Jn 2:1b-2)



“Whoever believes in the Son has Eternal Life”

John 3:36

Jesus Christ is the mystical key that unlocks the door to eternal life, promised through baptism with water and spirit. Eternal life is an inheritance for those who believe in the Son; a grace from God. With the knowledge of God’s love, the salvation of the risen Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, I am compelled with enormous love, confidence and conviction to boldly express in public that every breath I take; in joy, sorrow, success, failures and challenges in my life, is an everlasting celebration of my utmost joyful thanksgiving. By God’s grace, there were only occasional moments that I questioned His will, though oftentimes, I seek Him in prayer to discern and gain perspective of His plans in my life.

One day in August 2005, the news of my mother’s diagnosis of papillary carcinoma of the thyroid pierced my heart like a knife. With bended knees and broken spirit, I fervently sought God for guidance. By the aid of the Holy Spirit, I obtained God’s comforting words of wisdom and His abiding love surrounding me. Night and day, I prayed to God for strength in assisting my mother, courage to lift her spirits up, and understanding to enable me to accept the reality of her illness. My life then revolved intensely on my mother’s physical, mental and spiritual care. As I witnessed my mother’s body wasting away and her voice lost as a result of thyroid surgery, I find hope in Christ’s saving sacrifice and healing grace. His passion and death became the source of our strength. My mother acknowledged and testified that the magnitude of her sickness in no degree, measures to the sufferings that Jesus Christ experienced on his way to the Calvary. With heart rejoicing, she regarded her sickness as a gift from God, claiming that her illness intensified her union with Christ. Her great faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and humble obedience to the Father’s divine will made her a true disciple. Thus, she sincerely believed that eternal life is guaranteed.

The life my mother led is a testimony of Christ’s love, mercy and compassion. Her death testified that God is trustworthy. At last, our beloved mother is eternally safe home - resting in God’s peace. May 12, 2009 marks her one year death anniversary. She peacefully died from respiratory sepsis caused by advanced thyroid cancer. I admire her strength, humility and faithfulness to have embraced such illness as a treasure to be cherished and shared with her beloved family; and to all who bore witness to the fullness of her life on earth.

As faith-filled children of the Divine Father, let us hold on to His promise in the gospel of John that states, *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life.”*

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SAVETHE DATE!

**Solo Parents Encounter #11 - June 26-28, 2009
(Archdiocese Retreat Center, Kearny, NJ)**

ACHIEVING PURITY OF HEARTS

During the early years of the founding of the Franciscan community, there was a dialogue between its founder, St. Francis of Assisi, and an early recruit, Brother Leo. Their conversation went like this: (From Passing from Self to God - A Cistercian Retreat – By Robert Thomas, OCSO).

“Do you know, brother, what purity of heart is?”

“It is not having any fault with which to reproach oneself” responded Leo.

“Then I understand your sadness,” said Francis, “because one always has something about which to reproach himself.”

“Yes”, said Leo, “and it is precisely that which makes me despair of arriving one day at purity of heart.”

“Brother Leo, believe me,” responded Francis, “don’t worry so much about the purity of your soul. Turn your gaze toward God. Admire Him. Rejoice in what He is. Thank Him because of himself. Having a pure heart is exactly that, little brother. And when you are thus turned toward God, above all do not turn back to yourself at all. Don’t ask where you stand with God. The sadness of not being perfect and finding yourself a sinner is still a human sentiment. You must lift your gaze higher. There is God, the immensity of God and His unalterable splendor. The pure heart is the one which does not cease adoring the living and true Lord. It takes a profound interest in the very life of God. Such a heart is overflowing and stripped. It is enough for it that God should be God. In that alone it finds all its peace. And God Himself is therefore all its holiness.”

“God nevertheless demands our effort and our fidelity,” observed Leo.

“Yes”, responded Francis. “But holiness is not an accomplishment of the self, nor a fullness which one gives oneself. It is first of all an emptiness which one discovers and accepts, and which God comes to fill in the measure that the person opens himself to His fullness. Our nothingness, if accepted, becomes the free space where God is able to create. He is the Lord, the Unique, the only Holy. But He takes the poor person by the hand, He pulls him out of his mud, and makes him sit with the princes of his people, so that he may see His glory. God then becomes the jewel of his soul. To contemplate the glory of God, Brother Leo, to discover that God is God, eternally God, beyond what we are or can be, to rejoice fully in what He is, to be in ecstasy before His eternal youth and to thank Him for Himself, for His unfailing mercy, that is the most profound demand of that love, which the Spirit of the Lord does not cease to pour into our hearts. That’s what it is to be a pure heart.

“How do you do it?” demanded Leo. “It is necessary simply to keep nothing of yourself. Sweep out everything, even that sharp (☞ Page 3)

REFLECTION OF A LAMB

I came home exhausted from the Life in the Spirit Seminar that took place all weekend. The eleven hour sleep was definitely not enough to rejuvenate myself from the physically and emotionally exhausting seminar.

The one month preparation for the seminar included shepherding sessions with emphasis on reflection on daily readings, and practicing what I learned from the Word of God. In effect, I was happy to resolve two major issues with my past relationships. I came to realize that my problem of failed relationships was caused by my bitterness. Also, this bitterness had a negative effect on my view of myself.

However, with prayer and through the power of God's Word, I was eventually able to forgive those who had offended me and myself. I learned to love myself and be grateful for all the blessings God has given me. Honestly, letting go of the resentment freed me from so much emotional suffering. I am currently happy that my issues on this aspect of my life have finally come to a resolution. I am not perfect and relationships are never going to be perfect. I pray to God to grant me the grace to be patient and understanding so I will be able to make my future relationship work.

When the LSS weekend came, I was excited and nervous at the same time. Since I recently just solved some problems, I was happy and content; however, during the talks and sharing, the Lord revealed to me other problems or issues in my life. During the weekend, I've come to appreciate my family and friends even more.

Even though I had attended worships, had done all the prep work for LSS, and had gone to LSS, I honestly say that I am still a little doubtful of God and His powers. During the Baptism, I did not completely believe in the spiritual gifts and the spiritual experiences a lot of the people in the seminar talked about. I honestly felt confused and disappointed in myself. I was probably just one of the few people in the whole group that didn't fall or get "slain". I kept praying but I was so distracted. I don't know if my prayers were really heartfelt. I was trembling. My eyes were twitching. I thought to myself "I am so tense right now and that's probably why I'm feeling these". My shepherd prompted me to let go but when she saw me getting tired, she sat me down.

As I meditated, I thought of my family and friends and just thanked God for them. When I think about my life, I can definitely say everything that happened is part of God's plan for me. Though I am quite a "doubting Thomas", I know that I have to live my life for the Lord. As the saying goes, "Living in God's way is a continuous process". This is only the beginning of my spiritual journey to God's kingdom.

BIBLE STUDY

Every Friday from 7:30-8:00pm
St. Mary's School, Room 104

Everyone is welcome! Know God better through His word.



MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Sat. of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ

Volunteers needed!

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340/
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).

Email to word@bldnewark.com

ISAIAH 58

SAGIP: Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused school supplies

St. Mary Church, Rahway, NJ (Fellowship Area)

Contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1231/

rubenluz@verizon.net, Cez/Pinky Calingo (308)230-3660
or Gene/Bing Ymbong (308)406-6955

SOUP KITCHEN

Missionaries of Sisters of Charity

60 Jay Street, Newark, NJ

Every 4th Saturday of the Month

April 25 - ME 30

Contact Persons: Louie & Choly Relucio (201)483-8715

TEACHINGS

Venue: St. Mary's Classroom

May 1 -3 (Friday to Sunday)

Aspirant's Retreat - LSS 26, 27, 28, & 29

May 15 (Friday after worship)

Mark 10 Teaching

John 6 Teaching

Youth Teaching

Intro to Intercession - Singles

May 16 (Saturday: 1 pm- 6pm)

Shepherds Training II - LSS 28

Encounter with Jesus - LSS 31

Growth in Prayer - LSS 32

New Creation Realities - LSS 32



THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending April 17, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission

& Fast for Poor \$4,242.00

Other Collection \$1,518.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Disbursement Report from April 11-17, 2009 \$1,236.00

Achieving..... (from page 2)

perception of our distress. Make a clean place. Accept being poor. Renounce everything that is heavy, even the weight of our faults. Have nothing more than the glory of God, become irradiated by it. God is, that is enough. The heart then becomes light. It no longer feels itself. It has abandoned every care, every iniquity. Its desire for perfection is changed into a simple and pure desire for God."

Counsels (from page 1)

We have to die to self in order to live for God. Sin continues to roam around and must be avoided at all cost, because sin alone, can separate us from the love of God and the glory He has won on our behalf. *Those who say, "I know him," but do not keep his commandments are liars, and the truth is not in them. But whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him.* 1Jn 2: 4-5

Through repentance by the grace of God, we are restored, healed, and given the life of God. Grace is the supernatural gift of life, shared in the presence of God. Grace gives us the power to resist evil, to move from death to life, and to do the good works that Jesus promised we would do. It offers the final gift of resurrected bodies and eternal life in heaven. The Resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the proof that all He said was true: repentance, forgiveness, and transformation are all possible right now through the grace of God.

In the gospel, Christ opens the minds of the disciples who are to be His witnesses. The first disciples, in turn, could not keep the good news to themselves, but hurried to share their great joy with anyone who had ears to listen, preaching penance for the remission of sins to all nations. *"Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations."* Luke 24: 46-48

Our salvation has already been won by Jesus. We now have an intercessor before God that if we fall again, Jesus will lift us up with pardon, help us repent, and facilitate our transformation into His image through a personal relationship in prayer and through the Word, Sacraments, and Communion in the Church. Likewise, relationship with Jesus requires us to become witnesses of His Word by our attitudes, values and lifestyle. If we are to be witnesses to Christ's Word, we must stop living in a half-hearted manner and demonstrate the power of Christ's resurrection in our lives. Drawing close to Jesus implies a truly Christian behavior, and being of one mind and heart with Him. The risen Lord's impact can only be demonstrated when our words and actions combine to reveal His power.

St. Peter, in the Acts of the Apostles, makes it clear that a crucial role of an apostle, and indeed any Christian, is to bear witness to the Christ's resurrection. *"The author of life you put to death, but God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses."* As Christians, we have a mission: to bear witness to the Risen Lord. One of the most powerful ways that we bear witness to Christ is when His peace reigns in our hearts. The world is starving for peace, on every level. If we know Christ's peace, if it reigns in our lives in spite of life's countless trials, then people will seek the source of our peace and they will be led to Christ. ☞

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Marriage Encounter # 3 BLD Charlotte

May 9-10, 2009

Blowing Rock, NC

Contact: Henry/Aida Koryan (973)709-1387 or (973)629-6059

Youth Rally

May 23, 2009: 8:00am - 6:00 pm

St. Mary's Auditorium

"A Fun Day to Forge the Bond
Between Youth and Parents"

Contact Youth Ministry for particulars

Singles Encounter #22

May 29-31, 2009

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY

Contact: Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo (908)256-2622/
arlenemanny@gmail.com; Boy/Des Parker (201)823-2230/
boydesparker@optonline.net

Marriage Encounter # 33

May 29-31, 2009

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA

Contact: Gary/Mil Camacho (732)821-4507

Dens/Mina Mantes (973)887-5904

For application & directions, go to bldnewark.com

Youth Encounter #16

June 26-28, 2009

St. Francis Retreat House, PA

Contact: Mario/Cecil Salonga (516)561-6854, Sundee/Neneng
Ikalina (201)384-8710, Stevie Olaso (973)975-8338

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Spirit Breakfast

April 25, 2009 - 8:00 am - 12:00 noon

Archdiocese of Newark

Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Our Lady of Liberia Church

5808 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, NJ

Tickets: Adults \$9 Children \$6

Payment deadline: April 24, 2009

Contact: Angel/Aida Calilap (973)284-1853

Sal/Marie Russo (973)338-1050

Encounter season is quickly fast approaching. Our next Marriage Encounter is already next month. Now is our opportunity to witness Christ peace in our lives among our friends, families and co-parishioners. Let us all be an instrument of spreading reconciliation and peace around us.

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Keep His Word so the love of God is perfected in you.**
2. **Trust in Jesus.**
3. **Be at peace with one another.**



Covenant NEWS

BUKAS-LOOB SA DIYOS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 17

Bulletin Edition

May 1, 2009

Holy Spirit Breakfast

Saturday, April 25th, was a perfect day with an early taste of summer weather to invigorate the spirits from the winter sleep. Once again, some BLD members and several other charismatic prayer groups from the Archdiocese of Newark had come together to partake in the "Holy Spirit Breakfast" at Our Lady of Libera Church, West New York, New Jersey.

The beautiful event started with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was celebrated by Father Phil Rotuno, Spiritual Director, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Archdiocese of Newark. Father Phil delivered an inspiring homily on the empowerment and indispensable coming of the Holy Spirit. He exhorted everyone to manifest the power of the Holy Spirit in words & in deeds. *"I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want"* (Galatians 5:16-17).

After the Holy Mass, breakfast was served to hundreds of participants while the "Ocean of Mercy" choir with Steve Kuban, a gifted worship leader filled the air with their enthusiastic and anointed music. The song entitled, "The Lord is my Tower" brought a lot of excitement, feeling the strength of God's presence in the place.

The highlight of the day came with a testimony from 47-year old Scott Benedon, born and raised in a Jewish family who converted to Catholicism at age 33. He recounted that his conversion was a challenging and difficult process but extremely rewarding. In Galatians 2:19-20 it says, *"For through the law I died to the law, that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me."* Scott testified that after his baptism in the Holy Spirit, his hunger to serve and know the Lord grew stronger than ever. He firmly accepted the truth that Jesus is the Lord and Savior, the Jewish Messiah!

The Charismatic prayer groups felt fired-up in the Holy Spirit. There was a release of power of the Spirit felt through praising and worshipping. The "Holy Spirit Breakfast" event bears witness, makes present and spreads the mystery. All of us who received one and the same Holy Spirit are united with one another and with God.

COUNSELS

The Good Shepherd

WORD: Acts 4:8-12; Ps 118:1,8-9, 21-23,26,28,29; 1Jn 3:1-2; John 10:11-18

THEME: We have God's own heart when, as His under-shepherds, we lay down our lives for own lambs.

ORDER: I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. (Jn 10:16)

REFLECTION: Our **Word direction** for the week, *"As BLD disciples, let us commit to and live our CHARISM... to be the Lord's under-shepherds, to witness to the Word, to bring healing and wholeness to others, to be co-defender in Christ to those who suffer injustice and oppression"* raises this unavoidable question: how can we when we are so broken?

Peter was probably responding to a similar question from Jewish leaders and elders when he said, *"If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved..."* (Acts 4:9) Although Peter and John were the instruments used for the crippled beggar's healing (Acts 3:1-10), he knew they cannot withstand examination of their lives. True, they were amazingly blessed to be disciples of Jesus. But it was also true that they were nonetheless still sinful men.

Note that Peter and John refused to take credit for their good deed. There is no room in them for pride and self-acclaim. To them, their life and work was no longer about self, but about Jesus. It is to Christ that Peter ascribed the power to heal: "all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead;

(continued on page4)

Promise of the Week

"We do know when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1 Jn 3:2b)

“Regain Your Sight And Be Filled The Holy Spirit”



It was through our Marriage Encounter weekend that we have been reunited with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Almost four years ago, we left our old selves behind and became a New Creation as children of God through our LSS. We desire to seek the will of the Father in our lives. But our walk with the Lord becomes difficult when we face challenges and choose between right and wrong, good or bad, pleasing or unpleasing. We are blinded by the things of the world and make us lose focus in the most important things in our lives. But our Lord allows us to respond to His call through other people as he did with Saul. In Acts 9:17, it says *“So Ananias went and entered the house; laying his hands on him, he said, ‘Saul, my brother, the Lord has sent me, Jesus who appeared to you on the way by which you came, that you may regain your sight and be filled with the holy Spirit.’”*

Our awesome and all knowing God chooses us in His perfect time and qualifies us to do His works. *“It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you”*. (John 15:16) Like Saul, the Lord chose him as an instrument in proclaiming His Name to the ends of the earth. Saul had to suffer in His name to be able to bear fruit.

The BLD formation program helps us learn our Lord's ways, accepting challenges so our Lord can purify and refine us. We see Jesus amidst our sufferings. We regain our sight when we see the things in our lives that need to be changed. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, all these are possible when we allow Jesus to take over our lives and be totally dependent on Him. *“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.”* (John 12:24)

Lord Jesus, we thank you for the gift Your Son Jesus Christ and Your Holy Spirit, who dwells in us everyday. As we continue our walk with You, help us to be good servants of Your vineyard. Use us mightily to proclaim Your Name to the ends of the earth. Forgive us for the many times we complain about our trials in the community, give us the gift of wisdom to see You amidst these trials, that we may see You in others. Help us daily to die to ourselves, so that we may be able to bear fruit according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thank you Jesus, for choosing me as your servant.



YES, LORD!

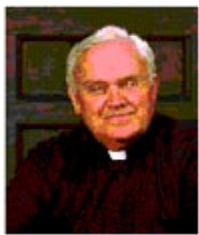
Let your ‘Yes’ mean ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ mean ‘No.’ Anything more is from the evil one. You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other one to him as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles.” Matthew 5: 37-41

St. Stephen, the first martyr for Christ, was an extraordinary example of a man's surrender to God. When chosen to serve the growing community of Jesus' followers, Stephen wholeheartedly gave his **“yes”** to devote himself to our Lord, and was unwavering in keeping his word. The Holy Spirit worked powerfully through Stephen with miracles and wonders, thus bringing a great number of believers to the truth in Jesus Christ.

Stephen was confronted about his teachings, and was accused by the Jewish leaders of speaking against God and the prophets. With the wisdom and authority of the Holy Spirit, Stephen responded, not to defend his own name, but to defend the Lord our God. The members of the crowd closed their hearts to the Spirit's voice, but rather opened their hearts to anger. Stephen looked up towards the heavens, and Jesus revealed Himself in Glory to Stephen. As the mob drove him out, and proceeded to stone Stephen, he remained focused completely on the Jesus. With his full attention on the Lord, Stephen's last breath carried not the words of his salvation, but prayers to forgive those who rejected him.

Just as Stephen did, we CAN hold to our “yes” to the Lord! The same power and wisdom working in Stephen is the same Holy Spirit which lives in us today! The Holy Spirit has not changed from then when He worked wonders through Stephen. What Jesus commands, the Holy Spirit empowers and convicts us to do. The first step is saying, “Yes, Lord.”

“Yes, Lord”



The Mystery of Women (Theology of the Body Continued)

We finally come to the last sharing on the theology of the body. I certainly hope we have not overdone it. I again encourage you all to invest in Christopher West's book, "Theology of the Body for Beginners." As I mentioned last month, a very popular speaker with young people, Jason Evert, has also published a split level book: "Theology of his/her Body." Today we summarize the section on HER body.

Jason Evert's approach and emphasis reflect John Paul II's use of the very poetic Scripture, "The Song of Songs." We may be surprised to read such things in the Bible as the following: *"Behold you are beautiful, my love. You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride, with a glance of your eyes. How sweet is your love! How much better is your love than wine!"* It sounds like a love sick young man exaggerating his love for his girl friend. Yet the application is God's love for us, his people. God is the Lover. We are the beloved. Notice the lover refers to his beloved as sister before he refers to her as bride. Reminding us that even though men and women are different they share a common humanity. The beauty of the woman is her inner beauty, much more than the false beauty that our society tries to impose upon our women. Beautiful women such as Clare of Assisi, Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, not to mention Mary, the mother of Jesus, and even modern women like Dorothy Day, have revolutionized Church history.

In virtue of being a woman every female is called to become both bride and mother, even if not all women are called to the Sacrament of marriage. Consecrated religious sisters become the brides of Christ, and spiritual mothers for many souls. There is a great deal of emphasis on the mystery of women. Husbands are the first to admit that they have never quite figured out their wives. She is again as the Song of Songs sings, an enclosed garden. To be truly a woman she must never give the keys to this garden except to the man she has consecrated herself to in the sacrament of marriage. Only then in the pure embrace of sacramental love will the husband begin to penetrate the mystery of women.

Only by opening up to God's love can we, both men and women begin to understand the mystery of marriage. As St. Paul reminds us, we are all called to submit to the love of Jesus. We all are called to be "under the mission" of the Lord, and that mission is to allow the Lord to love us and bring us some day into his eternal marriage banquet.



Ministry Announcements

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit - Volunteers Needed
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055
Every 2nd Saturday of the Month
Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

SOUP KITCHEN

Missionary of Sisters of Charity
60 Jay Street, Newark NJ
Every 4th Saturday of the Month
MAY 23 - ME#29

Nick and Lita Centeno (973)857-9315

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord
with the community thru an article
Send to word@bldnewark.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)
Bring your old or unused School Supplies
St. Mary Church, Rahway, New Jersey (Fellowship Area)
For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1213
rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo(308)230-3660 or
Gene/Bing Ymbong(308)406-6955

Teaching

April 24 – Friday

Golden Years Teaching
Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS29
Service Formation Teaching - LSS30

May 15 – Friday

Mark 10/John 6/Youth Teachings
Intro to Intercession – Singles

May 16 – Saturday

Shepherds Training II – LSS 28
Encounter with Jesus – LSS 31
Growth in Prayer – LSS 32
New Creation Realities – LSS 32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship
Saturday Teachings – 1pm to 6pm at St. Mary's

Special Announcements

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

BIBLE STUDY AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's School, Rm 104
Everyone is welcome
Know God better through His word.

Counsels from page 1

in His name this man stands before you healed" (Acts 4:10). And it is to Christ alone that he ascribed the power to save: *"There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved"* (Acts 4:12).

We too have been similarly blessed to be the Lord's disciples. Like Peter and John, an honest self-examination will lead us to recognition of our brokenness and unworthiness—even as the Lord uses us as instruments of His grace. It is to Christ that we must direct ourselves and others. When we do, then our life and work will be about Jesus and our relationship with Him. He proclaimed, *"I am the good shepherd"* (Jn 10:11a); Jesus is the shepherd, we are the under-shepherds; Jesus is the Word, we are His voices; Jesus is the Healer, we are the laying hands of faith; Jesus is the Defender of the weak, we are His prayer warriors; Jesus is the King, we are His servants.

Our relationship with Jesus grows in intimacy and unity as we persevere to follow His footsteps, to have His own heart, to think with His mind and to act in His Spirit. All of which is possible by grace alone. That grace comes to us through the cross. *"A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep"* (Jn 10:11b). We can be good under-shepherds if we lay down our life for the sheep. This means to love as Jesus loved: selflessly, totally, sacrificially - for the glory of God the Father. Goodness comes with love, and love comes from Jesus Christ.

"See what love the Father has bestowed on us, that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are." (1 Jn 3:1). Our present and future identity is to be children of God. But while *"we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed."* (1 Jn 3:2a) Our adoption into God's family leads to our ultimate reality - "what we shall be". This will come at the time of revelation, when *"we shall see Him as He is, and in accord with God's grace, 'we shall be like Him'"* (1 Jn 3:3).

Back to the question, how can we when we are so broken? We can in spite of our brokenness, if we persevere in Christ. We can, when we listen to the Lord's voice and allow Him to lead us in our journey to the Father. We can, when we love and care for the flock with the love and strength of the Good Shepherd. We can, when our witness to Jesus is in the power of His Spirit- giving thanks, praise and worship to Him who entrusts, enables and equips us to do His work, and who gives us victory over sin, suffering and death.

DIRECTIONS:

- As BLD disciples, let us commit to and live our CHARISM... to be the Lord's under-shepherds, to witness to the Word, to bring healing and wholeness to others, to be co-defender in Christ to those who suffer injustice and oppression.

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE

Community Calendar

May 1 to 3 - Aspirant's Retreat

LSS 26/27/28/29

May 9 to 10 - Marriage Encounter #3

BLD Charlotte - Blowing Rock, NC

Contact: Henry/Aida Koryan

H973-709-1387; C973-629-6059

May 23 - Youth Rally 2009

St. Mary's Auditorium, 8:00 am—6:00 pm

"A Fun Day to Forge the Bond Between Youth and Parents"

Contact Youth Ministry for particulars

May 29 to 31 - Marriage Encounter #33

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA

Contact: Gary/Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

Dens/Mina Mantes 973-887-5904

For application & directions go to bldnewark.com

May 29 to 31 - Singles Encounter #22

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY

Manny/Arlene Mangalanzo 908-256-2622

arlenemanny@gmail.com

Boy/Des Parker 201-823-2230

boydesparker@optonline.net

Lita Alfaro 201-214-8229; litaalfaro@aol.com

Glenn Canlas 201-888-6700; invazian21@yahoo.com

June 26 to 28 - Youth Encounter #16

St. Francis Retreat Center, PA

Contact: Mario/Cecil Salonga 516-561-6854

Sundee/Neneng Ikalina 201-384-8710

Stevie Olaso 973-975-8338; email: sjv.olaso@gmail.com

June 26 to 28 - Solo Parents Encounter #11

Archdiocesan Retreat Center

499 Belgrove Drive, Keamy, NJ 07032

Contact: Lea Samson 609-371-0685

Ben/Letty Chua 732-662-3540

July 17 to 19 - Family Encounter #16

Malvern, PA

Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439



One family. Sharing Jesus' love and life together

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Report for the week ending April 25, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor \$4,030.00

Weekly Disbursement \$1,124.00

Thank you for your continued generosity!



RELIGION MUST NOT BE SOURCE OF DIVISION, SAYS POPE

JERUSALEM, MAY 11, 2009 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI affirmed that religious differences should not be a cause of division, but rather an opportunity for encouraging others to follow God's ways.

The Pope said this today in a meeting with representatives of organizations for interreligious dialogue in the Holy Land, the last public act of his first day in Israel.

The Pontiff affirmed that it is necessary to respect religious differences and to promote all that unites us.

The meeting with Christians, Jews, Muslims, Druze and Samaritans took place in the auditorium of the Pontifical Institute Notre Dame of Jerusalem Center, created by Pope John Paul II for religious, cultural, charitable and educational programs.

In his speech, delivered in English, the Holy Father noted that "some would have us believe that our differences are necessarily a cause of division and thus at most to be tolerated."

He continued: "A few even maintain that our voices should simply be silenced. But we know that our differences need never be misrepresented as an inevitable source of friction or tension either between ourselves or in society at large."

Rather, Benedict XVI said, "they provide a wonderful opportunity for people of different religions to live together in profound respect, esteem and appreciation, encouraging one another in the ways of God."

The Pope encouraged the meeting participants to "step forward with courage, respecting all that differentiates us and promoting all that unites us as creatures blessed with the desire to bring hope to our communities and world."

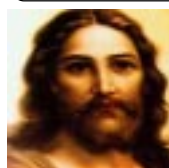


BIBLE STUDY

Every Friday from 7:30-8:00pm
St. Mary's School, Room 104

Everyone is welcome! Know God better through His word.

COUNSELS



TO LOVE AS CHRIST LOVES

WORD: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; Ps 98:1-4;
1 Jn 4:7-10; Jn 15:9-17

THEME: We have God's own heart when we love one another with the love of Jesus.

ORDER: "Love one another as I love you."
(Jn 15:12)

REFLECTION:

Our Servant Leaders remind us through our global worship theme for this month, "Be shepherds after God's own heart."

Now, the thought of having God's own heart sounds impossible and terrifying. But we are given concrete guidelines on how to try and accomplish this: to bring healing by the exercise of our spiritual gifts, to defend the marginalized, to sow understanding of the Word by the example of our lives, and to lay down our lives for our lambs. Our community, ever faithful in its pastoral and formation concern for its members, continues to address our growth in each of these areas.

This week, we visualize God's own heart as we think of the Heart of Jesus – sacred, compassionate and merciful, throbbing and pulsating with love for all mankind. And from the Lord's own mouth comes our Order for this week: *Love one another as I love you.*

We have undoubtedly read or heard these words before. Think of Jesus saying directly to you, *Love as I love...* His is a radical and revolutionary call to an all-consuming kind of love. Have we meditated on these words, and contemplated the Love that is held up before us to follow? Now and then, maybe. Do we have the conviction to put our faith into action, in loving and caring for our

(Page 4)



God's Promise for the Week

If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love...I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete." (Jn 15:10a, 11)



KEEP READING

I think Word Sharing Circles are a great idea. They have added a new dimension to the way I read Scripture. When I hear the Sunday Mass readings, I usually detect a theme, a single thread that ties them all together even though they were written centuries apart. Perhaps they all mention a symbol like water or wind, or tell stories of sacrifice or obedience or forgiveness. Whatever the topic, they usually paint a picture of mankind's relationship to God. What happens in our Word Sharing Circles is quite different. We are discovering our own personal relationship to God. Instead of looking at the "big picture," we seek the single verse, the short phrase, or even the one word that speaks volumes to our own heart.

Whether we are looking at the "big picture" or trying to find our "struck," we can't help but be amazed at the wealth of knowledge and wisdom we find in the Holy Scriptures. We often think of the first apostles as a rag-tag little group, not clever, not educated, not wealthy. Jesus had given them a big job to do, to write and to preach the Good News of the Kingdom to all the world. But he never expected them to do it on their own. He promised in John 14:18, *"I will not leave you orphans." The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you.*" (John 14:26)

When we open the Scriptures at Mass, at worship, or in our WSC, we read the words the Apostles wrote; but it's the Holy Spirit who is our teacher. He is the one who draws us in, opens our eyes, enlightens our minds, and touches our hearts. It is as if He whispers, **"there is more, keep reading."** That's what happened the day I started writing this reflection. I had plenty of time on my hands as I had just returned from a visit to my cardiologist with orders to stay home and take it easy. I was scheduled for a CT scan the next morning. Conscious of the tightness in my chest and feeling uneasy about what the test might show, I opened to the assigned passage: John 14:21-26. Jesus had just told His disciples that He would soon have to leave them, but He comforted them and told them about the Holy Spirit. I thought it might help if I looked at the big picture, so I opened my Bible to read the surrounding verses. I began with John 14:27: *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid."* Just what I needed to hear! Thank you, Holy Spirit.

There is more, so much more. Keep reading.



COMMUNITY FAITHFULNESS

A tree continues to bear fruit based on the nourishment it receives from the soil and sun. It is considered a good tree if it has luscious leaves and if it is fruit-bearing, has a lot of fruits to be shared by everybody. Similar to a community, each branch signifies a ministry. Each Ministry has branches to it and each branch will have leaves coming out from it. The most precious of the tree's riches are its fruits, which are used to feed others.

What does a community provide? Constant nourishment to the soul. Nourishment comes in the form of worship or prayer, retreats where everyone is given an opportunity to reflect on God's word and His role in our lives, teachings, and good works towards attaining the mission and vision of each ministry toward fulfilling the goals of the whole community.

Similarly, the community will flourish based on the faithfulness of the workers to do its mission by tithing, faithful attendance not just for worship but in its activities as well, openly offering their time, talent and treasure for each and every endeavor it pursues, contributing ideas to achieve the objective.

Truly the Lord said, *"I am the vine and you are the branches. Remain in me as I remain in you."* We the branches should cleave to the community of believers to ensure that we 'remain in Him'. In Jesus name, we pray, Amen.

TEACHINGS

Venue: St. Mary's Classroom

May 15 (Friday after worship)

Mark 10 Teaching
John 6 Teaching
Youth Teaching
Intro to Intercession - Singles

May 16 (Saturday: 1 pm- 6pm)

Shepherds Training II - LSS 28
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 31
Growth in Prayer - LSS 32
New Creation Realities - LSS 32



THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending May 8, 2009

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor **\$8,992**
Thank you for your continued generosity.

Disbursement Report from May 2-8, 2009 \$4,005



MESSAGE OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

On 13 May 1917, the three children of Fatima: Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta took their flocks out to pasture on the small area, known as the Cova da Iria. Our Blessed Mother appeared to them and told them not to be afraid, "I come from heaven." Lucia then asked her what she wanted: "I have come to ask you to come here for six months on the 13th day of the month, at this same hour. I shall be here yet a seventh time." The children were asked: "Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the conversion of sinners?"

Our Blessed Mother's message then and now to us, her children is: "Say the Rosary every day, to bring peace to the world and the end of the war."

The Rosary of the Virgin Mary, which gradually took form in the second millennium under the guidance of the Spirit of God, is a prayer loved by countless Saints and encouraged by the Magisterium. Simple yet profound, it still remains, at the dawn of this third millennium, a prayer of great significance, destined to bring forth a harvest of holiness. It blends easily into the spiritual journey of the Christian life, which, after two thousand years, has lost none of the freshness of its beginnings and feels drawn by the Spirit of God to "set out into the deep" (*duc in altum!*) in order once more to proclaim, and even cry out, before the world that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour, "the way, and the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6), "the goal of human history and the point on which the desires of history and civilization turn".

The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the *depth of the Gospel message in its entirety*, of which it can be said to be a compendium.² It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial *Magnificat* for the work of the redemptive Incarnation which began in her virginal womb. With the Rosary, the Christian people *sit at the school of Mary* and are led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer. The Rosary, says the Roman Breviary, "is a certain form of prayer wherein we say fifteen decades or tens of Hail Marys with an Our Father between each ten, while at each of these fifteen decades we recall successively in pious meditation one of the mysteries of our Redemption." ✍

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Saturday of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Volunteers needed!

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340/
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).

Email to word@bldnewark.com

ISAIAH 58

SAGIP: Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused school supplies
St. Mary Church, Rahway, NJ (Fellowship Area)

Contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1231/
rubenluz@verizon.net, Cez/Pinky Calingo (308)230-3660
or Gene/Bing Ymbong (308)406-6955

SOUP KITCHEN

Missionaries of Sisters of Charity

60 Jay Street, Newark, NJ

Every 4th Saturday of the Month

May 23 - ME 29

Contact Persons: Nick & Lita Centeno (973)857-9315

EVANGELIZATION & MISSION

Pentecost Sunday Celebration

May 31, 2009

St. Peter Church

155 William Street, Belleville, NJ 07109

6:30 PM - Praise and Worship Music

7:00 PM - Mass with Bishop Da Cunha

Wear something red or your BLD "RED SHIRT"

Contact persons: Angel & Aida Calilap

HEALING PRAYER SERVICE AND EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

Every first Monday of the month at 8:00 pm

Resurrection Parish - St. Bridget Church

372 Montgomery St., Jersey City, NJ 07302

.....

The same lesson for the Feast of the Holy Rosary informs us that when the Albigenian heresy was devastating the country of Toulouse, St. Dominic earnestly besought the help of Our Lady and was instructed by her, so tradition asserts, to preach the Rosary among the people as an antidote to heresy and sin. From that time forward, this manner of prayer was "most wonderfully published abroad and developed [*promulgari augerique coepit*] by St. Dominic whom different Supreme Pontiffs have in various past ages of their apostolic letters declared to be the institutor and author of the same devotion."

(Source: New advent .org)

Counsels (from page 1)

neighbor? Shall we be measured and found wanting: who will gainsay the truth that very few can attain, to the end of our days, to the perfection of this love?

Are we even capable of such love? Listen to what else Jesus says: *"As the Father loves me, so I also love you."* The Father loves the Son, who reveals the joy, such complete joy in this. Why does Jesus share such intimacy with us? He wants to give us this knowledge, so that this joy may be in us! *"Remain in my love,"* He says, *"that my joy may be in you, and your joy might be complete."* And the Lord then teaches us the way to remain in His love. *"If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love."* He follows with words that cannot be simpler nor be more explicit: *"This is my commandment, love one another as I love you."* (Jn 15 vv 9-12)

Ask yourself, "Who do I love enough, that I'm willing to lay down my life for?" My spouse? My parent or child or sibling? Any friend or co-worker? Take a look within our community. Who do I love enough to sacrifice my own life for – my shepherd or lamb? A steward, my ministry head or member? Someone who has shown me kindness or prayed for me? How about a difficult person, who obstinately remains aloof, or hostile and unforgiving?

Listen again to Jesus speaking to His disciples (that's us!). *No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.* Jesus calls us, no longer slaves, but His friends! I am His, and He is my Friend, for Whom I am willing and ready to die.

"The Lord has made His salvation known." (Ps 98:2) Just like the Lord rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, our love in imitation of Christ will not end in final death. *"The love of God was revealed in this way: God sent His only Son into the world so that we might have life through him."* (1 John 4:9) For Jesus, my Friend, my Redeemer, I am ready to die to my old self – to leave behind the dead person of pride, anger, gossip, selfishness, greed, ambition. By the power of Jesus, for Him and through Him, I can look with genuine love at a most difficult family member, co-worker, brethren in community, for I can find Christ in each one of them.

"In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that that He loved us and sent His Son as expiation for our sins." (1 Jn 4:10)

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you." (Jn 15:16)

Everything flows from the divine action, and from the grace that enables us to love like Jesus loves. For God is love. And love is of God.



DIRECTIONS:

- Show no partiality.
- Consider others as called and gifted by the Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Youth Facilitators' Training

May 16-17, 2009

St. Mary's Auditorium

Youth Rally

May 23, 2009: 8:00am - 6:00 pm

St. Mary's Auditorium

"A Fun Day to Forge the Bond

Between Youth and Parents"

Contact Youth Ministry for particulars

Singles Encounter #22

May 29-31, 2009

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY

Contact: Manny/Arlene Mangalanzo (908)256-2622/
arlenemanny@gmail.com; Boy/Des Parker (201)823-2230/
boydesparker@optonline.net; Lita Alfaro (201)214-8229/
litaalfaro@aol.com; Glenn Canlas (201)888-6700/
invazian21@yahoo.com

Marriage Encounter # 33

May 29-31, 2009

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA

Contact: Gary/Mil Camacho (732)821-4507

Dens/Mina Mantes (973)887-5904

For application & directions, go to bldnewark.com

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

June 6, 2009

LSS 29 & LSS 30

St. Mary's Connell Hall (basement under the gym)
and classrooms

Mark 10 Crowning/Flowers for Mama Mary

May 29, 2009

St. Mary's Rahway Church

Youth Encounter #16

June 26-28, 2009

St. Francis Retreat House, PA

Contact: Mario/Cecil Salonga (516)561-6854, Sundee/Neneng
Ikalina (201)384-8710, Stevie Olaso (973)975-8338

Solo Parents Encounter #11

June 26-28, 2009

Archdiocese Retreat Center

499 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, NJ

Contact: Lea Samson (609)371-0685

Ben/Letty Chua (732)662-3540/(732)766-0427

Family Encounter #16

July 17-19, 2009

Malvern, PA

Contact: Manny/Nette Manguiat (201)355-0439



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 21

Bulletin Edition

May 29, 2009

COMMUNITY NEWS

It Takes a Community to Raise a Child

Saturday, 23 May 2009 was a red-letter day for the Youth Ministry. After 5 years, the BLD-Newark Youth Ministry revived the Youth Rally. Defining as YOUTH made up of YOU ♦ The Lord ♦ Family, the ministry was following the order of Jesus: *"Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these"* (Mk 10:14).

The objective of the one-day rally is to bring together the parents and the Youth, to enable us to address issues related to both. Separate teachings for parents and the Youth members. Attending to the issues of the youth were Fr. Dave Sison, the day's spiritual director together with youth teachers who discussed topics about Christian courtship and dating and Christian spirituality in college. The adults in the group were given an overview of what the Youth Ministry is all about, addressing the generation gap and teen depression and suicidal tendencies. The afternoon was dedicated to a family sharing, a skit prepared by the youth leadership and a workshop that enabled parents and youth exchange ideas and addresses issues between them. The spiritual director Fr. Dave, culminating the day's activities, celebrated the mass. About 47 youth members and their parents participated with gusto to the day's activities. Richard and Lee Dela Fuente together with Dr. Rory Tiu and the Ministry's TriCord facilitated the parent's group. Alissa Abad, Joe De Guzman, Faith Ikalina and Fr. Dave together with the Ministry's District Youth Council were tasked to attend to the youth group.

It was indeed a successful rally that parents and youth alike were one in agreement to make this rally a regular Youth Ministry activity.

Promise of the Week

"When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth." (Ps 104: 30)

COUNSELS

Stewardship of Our Gifts

Word: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34; 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13; Jn 20:19-23

Theme: We have God's own heart when we exercise our spiritual gifts for the healing and wholeness of others.

Order: Receive the Holy Spirit

Reflection:

Today, we celebrate Pentecost Sunday - birthday of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, comprising all men of all ages who are redeemed by His Passion and Death.

On the day of Pentecost, Christ sent the Holy Spirit in the form of roaring wind and tongues of fire, upon the apostles and disciples who assembled in fear in the upper room. It was a spectacular event with an inexplicable effect on the disciples... ***"All were filled with the Holy Spirit."*** (Acts 2:4). The Spirit of God filled the disciples with new hope and courage; they received the power and strength to set off to the world and enthusiastically continue the work, which Christ had begun. With the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they boldly set forth to begin the mission of preaching the Good News and proclaiming their faith in the crucified Christ to all nations, to the end of the world.

Since that day, the Holy Spirit unceasingly dwells in the Church and in every Christian who is in the state of grace. He bestows His gifts, ordinary and extraordinary, for the building up and perfecting the Body of Christ, which is the Church. The extraordinary gifts were necessary to strengthen the faith of the disciples in the first days before the Church itself became a living miracle and testimony to its divine origin and mission. The ordinary gifts which we receive in Baptism and which are perfected in the sacrament of Confirmation make us correspond readily to the prompting and inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the depths of our own souls. The Holy Spirit is always present in us, not only in the great events in the life of the Church, but as part of our life.

Continued on page 3

Pentecost Sunday

Pentecost Sunday is one of the most ancient feasts of the Church, celebrated early enough to be mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (20:16) and St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (16:8). It is the 50th day after Easter (if we count both Easter and Pentecost), and it supplants the Jewish feast of Pentecost, which took place 50 days after the Passover and which celebrated the sealing of the Old Covenant on Mount Sinai.

The Acts of the Apostles recounts the story of the original Pentecost as well (Acts 2). Jews from all over were gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish feast. On that Sunday, ten days after our Lord's Ascension, the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary were gathered in the Upper Room, where they had seen Christ after His Resurrection:

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them: And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak. (Acts 2:2-4)

Christ had promised His Apostles that He would send His Holy Spirit, and, on Pentecost, they were granted the gifts of the Spirit. The Apostles began to preach the Gospel in all of the languages that the Jews who were gathered there spoke, and about 3,000 people were converted and baptized that day.

That is why Pentecost is often called "the birthday of the Church." On this day, with the descent of the Holy Spirit, Christ's mission is completed, and the New Covenant is inaugurated. It's interesting to note that St. Peter, the first pope, was already the leader and spokesman for the Apostles on Pentecost Sunday (see Acts 2:14ff).

In years past, Pentecost was celebrated with greater solemnity than it is today. In fact, the entire period between Easter and Pentecost Sunday was known as Pentecost (and it still is called Pentecost in the Eastern churches, both Catholic and Orthodox). During those 50 days, both fasting and kneeling were strictly forbidden, because this period was supposed to give us a foretaste of the life of Heaven. In more recent times, parishes celebrated the approach of Pentecost with the public recitation of the Novena to the Holy Ghost.



Do You Believe?

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son." The best way to understand what we mean by our profession of faith in the Holy Spirit is to compare it with our faith in the Son of God. In God there is intellect and will, corresponding to thinking and loving in human beings. Scripture identifies the mind of God with the Word of God, as St. John tells us: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"* (Jn 1:1). "So, just as the Word of God is the Son of God, so the Love of God is the Holy Spirit" (St. Thomas Aquinas Exposition of the Apostles' Creed, Article 8).

Who exactly is the Holy Spirit? We must say He is one in substance with the Father and the Son. He therefore proceeds from both and is perfectly equal with the Father and the Son. That is why the Nicene Creed adds the statement about the Holy Spirit, *"With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified."*

St. Paul tells us: *"The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us"* (Rom 5:5). Our faith in the Holy Spirit is our belief that God, who is Love, can share with us something of His own divine love. That is why when the Holy Spirit is given to us, we are able to love God so freely as to sacrifice voluntarily the selfish love of the world.

"When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19:6) This verse from the book of Acts tells of the first time that the presence of the Holy Spirit fell upon those believers and the gifts they received. Because of these gifts the Holy Spirit becomes our counselor, our guide and our comforter. As believers, we know that the Holy Spirit dwells within us. Why then do we sing songs that ask Him to come? Holy Spirit come... fall down on us... etc. The reason we ask is because of our brokenness. Each time we sin we push away the Holy Spirit so we ask the Holy Spirit to come back to us and give us the grace of God to help us reject temptation.

Receiving the Holy Spirit enlivens us and transforms us, lifting us to new heights where we could not be on our own - our souls and our bodies are transformed. As beautiful as it is, we have to realize that we receive the Holy Spirit only by faith in Him so let's make it happen and believe!



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

Perhaps by the time all of you read this, the slate of new stewards will have been made public. We look forward to welcoming them to what sometimes is a very daunting responsibility. We plan to have a recollection day on June 6th for the incoming and outgoing stewards. The new can learn from the experiences and mistakes of the past. I would like to share my own thought on stewardship, not only for the new five couples, but also for all of us who are now reading this column. We are all called to be stewards. We all have a responsibility not only for our immediate families, but also for the wider family of the Church, and our local "Ecclesiola", our BLD community. I have noticed that recourse to the whole DCS is in my opinion, often overused. I believe in many instances and according to the principles of subsidiarity, the ministry heads in consultation can settle many of the issues with their membership, or by bringing the matter to the individual steward who has competence in that particular area. The five stewards are not a grievance committee, nor should they be expected to make decisions in every detail. May I encourage all of us not overload the new stewards.

I plan to share with the new stewards three aspect of stewardship. These three aspects can define for all of us, the challenges of the Christian life. These include the spirituality, the service, and the servanthood of the Christian steward. All of us by our Baptism are called to be stewards. For us, especially during this Pentecost season, we should be reminded of the need for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in order to grow in the holiness that identifies a steward.

The service of the steward has to be a ministry, freely given out of love, not for money or power. The steward is a trustee who in the very words of Jesus will be called to give an account of stewardship that has been given to him or her. Jesus gave us a model of service when he washed the feet of his apostles.

The steward finally participates in the authority of Jesus, the supreme shepherd who came to server, not to be served. As servant, the steward will remember that the Holy Spirit will teach them. Decision-making comes from prayer, and listening to promptings of the Holy Spirit, not from legalism.

Finally we must all remember to pray for all of our leaders, the new DCS, bishops, priests, and especially our holy father, the pope. May the Lord give our new DCS all those qualities that will insure a community, which also looks upon itself as stewards of God's manifold gifts.

Counsels (from page 1)

From age to age, the Holy Spirit helps the Pope, Vicar of Christ and the hierarchy in the Church. Thus is fulfilled Christ's promise that the Holy Spirit will govern, console, teach and sanctify the Church. Even the Church practical decisions were made under the influence of the Spirit that the apostle would write: "*It is the decision of the Holy Spirit, and ours too, not to lay on you any burden beyond what is necessary.*" (Acts 15:28). In our BLD Covenant Community, it is the same Spirit whom we seek in the emergence of our leaders, with the gift of discernment through our Community Spiritual Director and Council of Servant Leaders. The Holy Spirit is authoritatively discerned and the proper use of His gifts is judged by "those who preside over the Church whose office is not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good" (LG 12).

Until today the Holy Spirit continues to exercise His functions: to give life, to unify and to move the whole body (cf LG 7). Let us allow the Holy Spirit to disturb our Community, to lead us to bring love, peace and joy. As individuals, we have to be a part in the Stewardship of God-given gifts, in the grace of restoring unity among people and unifying our talents in the Christian direction. In the grace of mission, the Gospel prefaces the bestowal of the Holy Spirit with this word of mission: "*As the Father has sent me, so I send you.*" May we be instruments in the grace of healing, to cleanse and set free from difficult memories, brokenness and burdening past and to bring wholeness to others.

Increasing our prayer life is a gateway to the Holy Spirit, who helps us into a loving relationship with God. We must have an attitude of prayerfulness and discover our spiritual gifts, so that we may be able to respond to our obligation to use them in up building the Body of Christ. Pentecost invites us to reflect upon our openness and our response to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our own lives. The Holy Spirit remains with us as our connection to Christ and His Church. He is as close to us as the beating of our hearts. Thus, brothers and sisters, go forth!

Directions:

- Share the gifts that you receive
- Proclaim the mighty deeds of God in your life
- Peace be with you



MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mission

Nursing Home Visit

Every 2nd Saturday of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Ave, Passaic, NJ 07055
Nong/Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Mission

Healing Prayer Services

Every Monday at 8:00pm

Healing Prayer Service and Eucharistic Celebration

Every 1st Monday of the month at 8:00pm

2000 Hail Marys Devotion

with Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Saturday of the month starts at 8:30am

Resurrection Parish - St. Bridget Church
372 Montgomery St, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Mission

Soup Kitchen

Every 4th Saturday of the month
Missionary of Sisters of Charity
60 Jay St., Newark, NJ

Isaiah 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused school supplies
St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)
Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1231
rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo (308)230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong (308)406-6955

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Study

Conducted by Fr. Dennis at St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish
Every Friday 7:30pm-8:00pm at St. Mary's School, Room 104
Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His word.

Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic

Prayer Communities

15th National Conference June 26-28, 2009
Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD
Frank/Malou Venadas (973)562-0055
Registration – Adults (26 and up): \$40.00
Youth (26 – 25 years of age): \$20.00

The Lord's Provisions

Week Ending: **May 22, 2009**

Regular Collections: **\$4,118**

Other Collections: **\$1,500**

Expenses: **\$2,906**

Thank you for your continued generosity

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 29, 2009 (Friday)

Mark 10 Crowning/Flowers for Mama Mary
St. Mary's Rahway Church

May 29-31, 2009

Marriage Encounter #33

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA
Gary/Mil Camacho (732)821-4507
Dens/Mina Mantes (973)887-5904

May 29-31, 2009

Singles Encounter #22

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo (908)256-2622
arlenemanny@gmail.com
Boy/Des Parker (201)823-2230
boydesparker@optonline.net
Lita Alfaro (201)214-8229 litaalfaro@aol.com
Glenn Canlas (201)888-6700 invazian21@yahoo.com

June 6, 2009

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat
LSS29 & LSS30

St. Mary's Connell Hall (under the gym)

June 26-28, 2009

Youth Encounter #16

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Mario/Cecil Salonga (516)561-6854
Sundee/Neneng Ikalina (201)384-8710
Steve Olaso (973)975-8338 sjv.olaso@gmail.com

June 26-28, 2009

Solo Parents Encounter #11

Archdiocese Retreat Center
499 Belgrove Dr. Kearny, NJ
Lea Samson (609)371-0685
Ben/Letty Chua H:(732)662-3540 C:(732)766-0427

July 17-19, 2009

Family Encounter #16

Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA
Manny/Nette Manguiat (201)355-0439

Note

*Application forms for all encounters
are available at bldnewark.com*





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 22

Bulletin Edition

June 05, 2009

Appointment of the DCS – BLD Newark

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We praise and thank the Lord for guiding the discernment of the ECSL and the community in the selection of the District Stewards for BLD Newark. We also thank the DCEO and CCEO for their work in the general emergence just held.

With one heart and one mind, the Executive Council of Servant Leaders announces the appointment of the following members of the District Council of Stewards (DCS) with their respective Apostolates, effective July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2012 for a term of 3 years (Res No. 09-0526-056A):

District Council of Stewards – BLD Newark

San Luis, Manny & Judy	- Evangelization
Felibrico, Ollie & Annie	- Formation
Trillana, Noel & Letty	- Management
Chan, Mon & Bingle	- Mission
Santiago, Roger & Irma	- Pastoral

We are confident that having been called by the Lord and empowered with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to serve as leaders in their District, the incoming DCS will meet the tasks and challenges ahead for the service to BLD, all for the glory of God.

We leave them this verse from 1 Peter 5:2-4: *“Tend the flock of God in your midst, (overseeing) not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”*

May we request that the commissioning of the new DCS be scheduled as soon as possible. As we extend our gratitude to the outgoing members of the DCS, we request that a smooth and complete turnover of responsibilities, including pending matters and concerns, be conducted. They shall also provide an orientation of functions to the incoming DCS to ensure their readiness to take over their new tasks.

In the service of Christ and for the greater glory of God,
Jun & Baby Delarmente - Presiding Servant Leard

Marriage Encounter #33


Mary Immaculate Center in Northampton, PA was the location of our newly graduated members of ME#33 that took place during this past weekend of May 29 to May 31st 2009. The power of His love was truly evident in transforming the hearts of these couples and opening their hearts to His Holy Spirit. The weekend was a victory in the Lord and was only possible by the graces of His power. Praise God and Alleluia!

We welcome the class of ME #33 to the community led by their class Shepherds, Gerry/Gigi Cabunag:

(continued on page 3) 

Singles Encounter #22

The Singles Ministry held their semi-annual Singles Encounter last weekend (May 29-31) at Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison, NY. Let us come together in welcoming and congratulating the 41 graduates of Singles Encounter #22:

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COUNSELS

Sharing Life & Love in the Blessed Trinity

Word: Dt 4:32-34, 39-40; Ps 33:4-6, 9, 18-20, 22; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 28:16-20

Theme: Blessed are we when we observe and teach God's statutes and commandments

Order: *“Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you”* Mt 25:20

Reflection:


The Blessed Trinity

In the Gospel, Jesus commands His disciples, *“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ...”* (Mt 28:19). This verse is the only passage in the Bible in which the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity are named so close to one another and in a sacramental context. In fact, this “baptismal formula” continues to be used since the first century.

In his account of Jesus' own baptism, St. Mark speaks of the existence of the Blessed Trinity, *“And when Jesus came out of the water, he saw the heavens split open and the Holy Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven saying, ‘You are my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with you.’”* (Mk 1: 10-11)

And in his final greeting to the church in Corinth, St Paul also refers to the Blessed Trinity, *“May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”* (2 Cor 13:13)

Although these Bible passages talk of the Blessed Trinity, we cannot fully comprehend the mystery of the Blessed Trinity in this life. Therefore, rather than asking this question for which we have no answer, let us ask ourselves: “What have the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – done for us?” It is when we ask ourselves this question that the Blessed Trinity becomes a reality – a reality that all of us have encountered.

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God's Promise for the Week

“You must keep his statutes and commandments that I enjoin you today, that you may have long life on the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you forever.” Dt 4:40

Fr. Paul - Exhortation May 29, '09

Our community has been entrusted by the Lord with a stewardship. This stewardship is given not only to our leaders, but to each and every one of us in community. Our stewardship is focused on our Community Covenant, which in turn is directed to our Mission which God gave us. In the past 17 years, our community has exercised faithful stewardship of our Mission, and God has blessed our work with fruitfulness.

Let us recount what the Lord has accomplished through us in each of our 6 mission areas:

1. **FAMILY: *Liberate the family from the forces that work against life, love and unity.***

- Through our Encounters, LSS, YLSS, Youth Rally, Singles' Date with Jesus, and other programs aimed at renewing the family in Christ.

2. **NEEDY: *Minister to the temporal, emotional & spiritual needs of the elderly, the infirm, the immigrants & the unemployed***

- our monthly Nursing Home visitations, soup kitchens, Medical Missions – which in the last three years served 17,000 poor people, Christmas gift-giving for orphans and seniors, books and school supplies for indigent children, etc.
- Isaiah 58 Program, which provides aid to members who are in need in the following areas: emergency financial assistance, job placements, immigration advice, and periodic health checks.
- Pastoral Ministry's Jeremiah prayer teams, which prays over the sick among our members and their families, and Bereavement Program, which along with Isaiah 58 and the Praise Ministry, offer support and consolation to members who have experienced death in the family.

3. **DISCIPLESHIP: *Raise an army of disciplined prayer warriors through worship, instruction and pastoral care***

- Our discipleship formation and pastoral care programs. Members grow in discipleship through classroom teaching, one-on-one discipling, ministry service, Word proclamation, weekly worship and Word sharing circles.
- The Lord has called us to pro-Life, pro-Family advocacy. We've begun participating in the annual March for Life in Washington DC in February, and have been supporting letter writing campaigns to federal and state officials.

4. **COMMUNITIES OF FAITH: *Form and equip small communities of faith that will proclaim the kingdom of God in their respective areas***

- The Lord accomplishes this through our outreach programs to form new BLD districts and to assist parish-based prayer groups.
- In the past 15 years, the Lord used BLD Newark to start and develop new communities in Reno, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Washington DC, Charlotte, Long Island, Albany, Rockland, Trenton, Allentown. This includes prayer groups like Amazing Grace Prayer Group at the Blessed Sacrament Church in Newark and the Holy Family Prayer Group – which has chosen to become BLD Camden. Now some of our outreaches which have become full-fledged or full-term districts have started their own outreaches, for example BLD Long Island in Orlando, BLD Seattle in Tri-Cities in Washington state, BLD Reno in Sacramento, BLD Los Angeles in San Bernardino.

5. **CHURCH: *Serve the needs of the Roman Catholic dioceses and parishes through our community programs***

- through our service to the Archdiocese of Newark's evangelization efforts: Festival of Faith, Young Adults and Singles Ministry, Men's Conference, CCR, NJCC, Evangelization Commission, RCAN Evangelization Office website, Pentecost Mass, etc.

- We have also begun to serve our community's spiritual home, St. Mary's & St. Mark's, in ways that Fr. Dennis can best speak about. Some examples: service in the Parish Council's parish life and temporalities teams, YE 1 with 18 youth graduates, website design and administration, etc.

6. **POVERTY: *Support the community's breaking the yoke of poverty programs***

- The Lord accomplishes this through BLD-GK, which has a holistic program aimed at truly liberating the poor in the following areas: shelter, livelihood, child & youth development, health & environment, community empowerment, and of course, spiritual transformation
- In the past 5 years, BLD-GK has built 12 villages benefiting about 400 poorest of the poor families in the Philippines. One of those villages is the Fr. Paul Lehman Village. Along with the UST Medical Class of 1976 Village, which was started by some of members, the two Cabiao villages jointly have about 95 homes, a wig-making livelihood program, a library, a school with 27 students, a spiritual transformation program. Two years ago, two villages' young children received their first communion from Fr. Paul Lehman.

- Beloved, why did we enumerate all these? I have three reasons:

1. **To give thanksgiving to the Lord.** BLD Newark will be 17 years old this coming August. Over these past years, the Lord blessed our BLD Newark community with great fruitfulness. We can look at our fruit and say, how blessed we are. But these are just signs of an even more precious gift from God – this community – meaning YOU – and your communion as a community of persons and families. And you've received the greatest gift of all – the Holy Spirit, who dwells in you, who animates your love, from which comes the self-giving which the Lord builds upon to do His work. Beginning with this Eucharistic celebration, therefore, we offer the Lord our praise and thanksgiving for all His blessings on our community of faith.

2. **To remind ourselves that our work has just began.** Much more has to be done, given the mission field and the challenges of the times. We are called to more fully participate in the life and mission of the Church. Let us revive our zeal, renewing our commitment, revitalizing and growing our efforts to bring Christ to as many people as we meet.

3. **To ask the Lord to renew, to invigorate, to bring to fullness the spirit of Stewardship in each and every one of us.** that the Lord may pour out on all of us the anointing to do His work going with greater dedication, more-complete self-giving and abounding fruitfulness.

How are we doing with our financial stewardship?

* 2008 Financial highlights (round numbers)


Total Income:	\$213,000
Tithes, love offerings:	\$168,000
Income through fund-raising:	\$32,000
Other income (Fr. Suarez, investment)	\$13,000
Total Expenses:	\$221,000
Net income:	(\$8,000)

* 2009 Budget highlights

Projected Income from tithes/love offerings:	\$170,000
Budget submitted by ministries/apostolates (3 rd reduction):	\$235,000
Target budget:	\$200,000

In 2009, the current DCS has decided to meet the community's needs with tithes and love offerings. This means that we will avoid fund-raising. What is the implication of this decision? It is that we will rely in faith on the Lord to provide us an increase in tithes and love offerings

For the reasons cited above, we are launching a Stewardship 2009 campaign, which begins with

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Tobit 12:1-5, 15-20

Sometimes, it is difficult to comprehend why it is necessary for people to give tips to service providers for jobs performed. A waiter or waitress, for instance, who toil their labor for hours on end depends on tips from customers to bring home a decent wage; a baggage handler at the airport does a service to make things easier for travelers and looks to be rewarded for good service; or a barber or beautician for helping a person feel good about themselves for a nice hairstyle. Yet, many other occupations do not require such a reward. A surgeon, an engineer, or an accountant are just a few of such professions. The profound difference between the latter and former group of course is their salary. But why, people still wonder, is tipping a practice that must be supported?

Tipping, can be defined, as one's measure of appreciation to someone who offered a service of value to another that can only be rewarded according to the means the receiver of value can give. This is, however, a very realistic and practical view of the economic exchange in the way trade is performed in contemporary times. Not so in Tobit's time approximately 2,500 years ago.

Have you ever done service to another without asking for a reward in return? Would you ever think of working for someone without asking for wages in return? Maybe not. But still many other exceptional people perform service to the poor as volunteers and never expect anything in return. And many more give gifts to charity and remain anonymous.

Raphael's example in this story is mystifying since he was rewarded for the good deed he has done but took Tobit and his son Tobias aside to exalt in them, instead, the virtue of giving thanks and praise to God for all the good he has done to both. What would you have done?

We could do the same by giving thanks and praise to God for all the good He has done for us. While we are alive we should proclaim the wonders and awe God has been to us. And while we may not always get everything we pray for we should, nevertheless, remember that God is with us in good times as well as in bad. In the end He hears us all the time.

Marriage Encounter #33

Ed and Armi Bayudan, Martin and Abigail Castaneda*, Virgilio and Raquel Casuple, Herman & Cristina Catalan*, Ricky & Edna Day, John Entrada & Marie Genevieve Javellana, Romerico & Meryl Foz*, Nicholas & Ijeoma Nwaigwe, Jose & Vivian Santos, Herminio & Susan Tabion, John & Mardi Ramos, Vedasto & Jocelyn Valencia*, and Michael & May Walker.

The spirit filled weekend was facilitated by the Pastoral Team of Fr. Pete Literal, Casey/Malyn Tanseco and Lito/Gigi Vibar. Their testimony of God's unfailing love was evidence of God's love that is ever-present and exists in everyone's lives. It truly enlightened the class and brought deeper meaning to John 15:12-13, *"This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends."* The couples embraced God's message of love and that through any circumstance, He will save you from your struggles and difficulties no matter how big or small they may be.

The weekend was sponsored by the Holy-Spirit filled strength of the four couples representing ME #32, Jude/Maricel de los Reyes, Vicente/Elizabeth Magsino, Efrain/Wanda Ortiz and George/Sarita Rodriguez, led by their class shepherds Dens/Mina Mantes, and with the help of BLD-Allentown auxies.

Let Your light shine upon these graduates and their new journey within their faith. Congratulations, class of ME #33!

Coordinators*

Fr. Paul - Exhortation May 29, '09

this exhortation and will be followed up in subsequent Fridays with sharing and teaching on Stewardship.

We are making a leap of faith in subsidizing ME & FE, because we trust in God, who we know will provide for our needs, and because of the good and generous hearts of our members, who we know will heed the Lord's call to a renewed spirit of stewardship.

Counsels (from page 1)

The love and compassion, the blessings and the saving deeds of the Holy Trinity are not things of the past that we just read in the Bible but are present-day occurrences we feel and experience.

The Love of the Blessed Trinity

We all remember our LSS baptism, when we went in front of the Father and asked for His mercy and forgiveness, when we acknowledged Jesus Christ, His Son, as our Savior and Redeemer, and when we received the Holy Spirit and experienced the fruit of the Spirit.

Indeed, we nurture a life-giving relationship with each of the Three Divine Persons, when we received and continue to receive God's love. And we receive this love not because of our own merit, but solely because of the Father's love. *"See how very much our heavenly Father loves us, for he allows us to be called his children, and we really are."* (1 Jn 3:1) And as the Holy Spirit dwells in us, we dare call God "Abba, Father", the same intimate way Jesus Himself addresses His Father.

St. Paul in his letter to the Christians of Rome explicitly confirms our being "children of God". He writes, *"Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ... you received a Spirit of adoption, through whom you cry, 'Abba, Father!' The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ ..."* (Rom 8:14-16)

The Demands of Being Children of God

Through baptism we became children of the eternal Father, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ and sacred abodes of the Holy Spirit. But what do all these mean?

This means that our daily life has to be in keeping with our being "children of God". Everything in us – our thought and attitudes, our words and actions – should be living testimonies to the reality of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in our life. The readings for the four Sundays of June show us what are demanded of us as "children of God".

In the first reading, Moses exhorts the Israelites who fled from Egypt, as well as sojourners like us, *"You must keep his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you today ..."* (Dt 4:40a) In the Gospel, Jesus commands His eleven disciples, as well as His present-day disciples like us, *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you ..."* (Mt 28:19-20) As children of God we are to love God above all and to love our neighbors. We are to witness with our words and deeds how to love God and our neighbors. Truly, we are blessed as children of God *when we observe and teach God's statutes and commandments.*

St. John's exhortation to all early Christians, refers to the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, *"We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us. Those who obey God's commandments live in fellowship with him and he in them. And we know he lives in us because the Holy Spirit lives in us."* (1 Jn 3:23-24) Indeed, our relationship with the Blessed Trinity should result in a permanent transformation of our very being. The Blessed Trinity is our means to the heavenly Kingdom where we belong as children of God. Amen.

Directions:

1. Be a living witness in words and action not only in the Community, but more so in your own family, in your neighborhood and in your work place.
2. Live transformed lives and be worthy to be called children and heirs of God.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jun 06 Agony in the Garden / Washing of the Feet Retreat** LSS29 & LSS30
St. Mary's Connell Hall (under the gym)
- Jun 26-28 Youth Encounter #16**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Mario/Cecil Salonga (516)561-6854
Sundee/Neneng Ikalina (201)384-8710
Steve Olaso (973) 975-8338
sjv.olaso@gmail.com
- Jun 26-28 Solo Parents Encounter #11**
Archdiocese Retreat Center
499 Belgrove Dr. Kearny, NJ
Lea Samson (609)371-0685
Ben/Letty Chua H: (732) 662-3540
C:(732)766-0427
Family Encounter #16
Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA
Manny/Nette Manguiat (201)355-0439

TEACHINGS

- June 05 **After Worship**
Commitment LSS 31
- June 12 **After Worship**
Intro to Intercession Solo Parents
- June 19 **After Worship**
Teachings Mark 10, John 6, Youth
Christian Maturity Program I Singles
CDFP Overview ME 33
- June 20 **St. Mary's 1-6 pm**
Apologetics LSS 28
Encounter with Jesus LSS 31
Basic Bible Seminar LSS 32
- June 26 **After Worship**
Teaching Golden Years
Intercessory Formation LSS29
Service Formation LSS30

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities
Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD
15th National Conference June 26-28, 2009
Frank/Malou Venadas (973)562-0055
Registration – Adults (26 and up): \$40.00
Youth (26 – 25 years of age): \$20.00

Week Ending May 29, 2009

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Tithes, Love Offering, \$3,318
Mission & Fast for the Poor
Total Disbursement \$3,659
Thank you for your continued generosity

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.
www.masstimes.org

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)
Bring your old or unused school supplies to St. Mary Church (Fellowship area).
Contacts: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1213
rubenluz@verizon.net,
Cez/Pinky Calingo 308-230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong 308-406-6955

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055
Every 2nd Sat. of the month. Volunteers are needed.
Nong & Tricia Bustos 732-591-1340
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com.
Soup Kitchen - Missionary of Sisters of Charity
60 Jay Street, Newark NJ
Every 4th Saturday of the month. **June 27 - ME 24**
Contact: Frank & Malou Venadas 973-562-0055
Resurrection Parish – St. Bridget Church
372 Montgomery St Jersey City, NJ 07302
Healing Prayer Service every Monday at 8:00pm
Healing Prayer Service / Eucharistic Celebration
Every first Monday of the month at 8:00 pm
2000 Hail Marys Devotion / Eucharistic Celebration
Every last Sat. of the month starts at 8:30am except Dec.

Singles Encounter #22

EJ Aguas*, Dawn Muriel Aliparo, Amanda Anderson, Aelen Arbiol, Steven Banom*, RJ Barrera, Brenda Calinawan, Angelo Canlas, Jennifer Castillo, Jean Castillo, Michael Castro, Fritzie Dacula, Roman Damaso, Larissa Da Rocha*, Genevieve DeGuzman, Melody DelaCruz, Lia DelaCruz, Roberto B. Felix, JB Flores, Anne Francisco, Cherrie Francisco, Raffy Gutierrez*, Ian Laxina, Marie Louise Lazaro, Brice Magpayo*, Maricris Mangasi, Jason Mendiola*, Judith Mendoza, Charisse Ompod, Jonathan Panlilio*, John Pena, Derek Pineda, Stephanie Rigor, Krystal Roz*, Will Slota, Adam Smith, Margaret Tolentino, Marie Roxanne Torres, Millette Torrijos, Trisha Wenur, and Joy Yuzon.

Through God's amazing grace, the weekend, which was facilitated by Jeremy Alarva, Drew Ignacio, Margaret Aliparo, Jennifer Mendiola, and Pauline Montemayor, served as the battleground to what would later be claimed as yet another victory. Under the spiritual direction of Msgr. Paul Schetelick, the graduates were able to break down barriers within themselves and share with each other their life experiences, building a strong bond together with Jesus as the foundation.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for touching the hearts of the graduates of SE #22. Continue to shower them with your most Precious Blood so they may spread the word of God's love and unending mercy to those who still seek You. Lay your Guiding Hands upon their class shepherds, Carlos and Fe Masisado, so they may be able to lead Your new flock towards a path filled with righteousness as they begin their spiritual walk with You. *"Come, my love, let us go out into the fields and spend the night among the wildflowers."* ~ Song of Solomon 7:11
Coordinators*

Proposed Readings for the Year of St. Paul
July 2008-July 2009

June 01-06 : 2 Tim 1-3 June 15-20 : Titus 1-2 June 29 : Philemon
June 08-13 : 2 Tim 3-4 June 22-27 : Titus 3



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOOB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NITARE

Volume 15 Issue 25

Bulletin Edition

June 26, 2009

Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community Global Districts

MESSAGE

BLD is now in its 24th year of foundation, which makes us look forward to its silver anniversary.

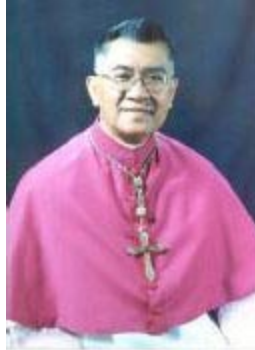
I would like to link this occasion of preparation and forthcoming celebration of the BLD Silver Anniversary with the CBCP announcement of the Year of the Two Hearts of Jesus and Mary for lay participation in social transformation as well as with Pope Benedict XVI's announcement of the Year of the Priests. Both will last from June 19, 2009 to June 2010.

For the many problems and crises that our country is encountering, we cannot just simply rely on political, social, economic and professional solutions – no matter how much these are needed.


The many ordinary Catholics can help address these problems and crises by applying the spirituality of the Year of the Two Hearts for social transformation. It consists in the *renewal-reform* of our minds and hearts, of our deeds and lives, towards *oblation-offering* through *conversion-consecration* to the Heart of Jesus together with the Heart of Mary, for the growth of the *Kingdom* of God in our midst; **ROCK** for short. These are what are being asked of every priest and every layperson during this Year of the Two Hearts and Year of the Priests.

I recommend and suggest a Holy Hour either on First Friday or First Saturday or on both for the above intentions. It can be done individually or in community or the family.

May this *Year of the Two Hearts of Jesus and Mary* and the *Year of our Priests* be lived faithfully, profoundly and intensely, by all of us for the renewal of our country.



Archdiocese of Jaro


+ ANGEL N. LAGDAMEO
Archbishop of Jaro &
BLD Spiritual Director
June 11, 2009

COUNSELS

I Say To You, Arise!

WORD: Wis.1:13-15, 8-11; Ps.107:23-26, 28-31; 2 Cor. 5:14-17; Mark 4:35-41

THEME: Blessed are we, when like Jesus, we abound in works of charity.

ORDER: “*Excel in this gracious act, which is love.*” (2 Cor. 8:7)

REFLECTION: In this Sunday's Gospel, St. Mark records an action-packed episode in our Lord's life. Surrounded by a crowd, Jesus performs two miracles—both unique demonstrations of his love and divine power, and both containing important lessons for us.

As the passage opens, he is approached by one of the synagogue officials by the name of Jairus. Jairus begs the Lord to come and heal his daughter who is at the point of death. Instead of reacting negatively from being called away from his ministry of preaching, Jesus responded with compassion to the man's plea. While on the way to Jairus' house, something extraordinary happens.

A hemorrhaging woman, who had lost all hope in the medical experts of the day, catches sight of the Lord and, despite great difficulty, pushes her way through the crowd toward him. In the midst of her pain and suffering, a spark of faith has been ignited in her heart and she is convinced that she can snatch a blessing from the Lord simply by touching the hem of his garment. The woman's secret act of faith yields miraculous results. As Jesus pauses to recognize this sneak thief of grace, he treats the woman with great tenderness and love, calming her fears. *(continued on page4)*

Promise of the Week

“...your abundance at the present time should supply the needs, so that their abundance may also supply your needs, that there may be equality.” (2Cor 8:14)

“John the Baptist”



Can you imagine if at this time and age angels could just appear to send us a message from God? Do we ever wonder how we will respond to them? Do we say yes without questioning? Or do we say no for so many other reasons? Does it make life's decisions so much easier to undertake? Like in the case of coming up with names for our children, I sometimes think do we discern on it first then decide?

Or do we jump right into a name that fancies our taste?

“No; he shall be called John.” (Luke 1:60) These are the words of Elizabeth who came forward when people were deciding on what to name her newly born son. Her neighbors were surprised about this since no one in Elizabeth's family was named as such. Then they turned to Zechariah, Elizabeth's husband, who at that time was mute. Zechariah started writing on the tablet, *“John is his name.”* (Luke 1:63). Then a miracle happened to Zechariah! *“Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God.”* (Luke 1:64) What made this couple name their son John?

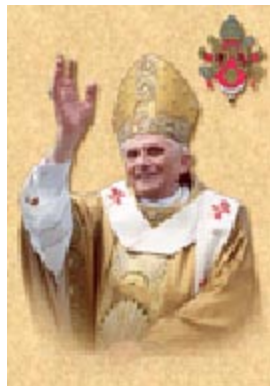
While serving as a priest in the division of Abijah, Zechariah had an encounter with Angel Gabriel who brought the good news that his wife Elizabeth will bear him a son. Being told so, Zechariah doubted it because he and his wife were barren and both were very old. Because Zechariah did not believe it, he became mute. He was gripped with fear. But God kept His promise that Zechariah will be able to speak again when the time appointed for the birth of his son takes place. Even their neighbors feared upon hearing this that they asked, *“What, then, will this child be?”* (Luke 1:66)

This child is St. John the Baptist. *“The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the desert until the day of his manifestation to Israel.”* (Luke 1:80)

Heavenly Father, create in us an obedient and brave heart like Elizabeth's. To God and her husband, she remained loyal in fulfilling how their child was to be named. May we be also reminded of Zechariah's vigilance in carrying forth the Lord's great plan: the birth of St. John the Baptist. He may have been fearful in the beginning but remained steadfast in his faith. As soon as he was able to, Zechariah spoke of nothing else but blessings to the Lord. May we be like him for every answered prayer we get from the Lord. All praises and glory for Him!

Where our biggest fear is lays our greatest potential. Not because we are powerful beings but because there is a power higher than ourselves. He is the Lord our God who promises to stay with us at all costs. *“... I am with you always, until the end of ages.”* (Matthew 28:20)

Pope Affirms God's Power To Remove Suffering



SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO, Italy, JUNE 21, 2009 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI is affirming that suffering cannot be understood on a human level, but requires faith in God, who alone has the power to remove it.

Following the example of Jesus, he stated, “the Church, from its very beginnings, moved by the Holy Spirit, has considered it her duty and privilege to stand beside those who suffer, cultivating a preferential attention for the sick.” The Pope noted: “Sickness, which manifests itself in many forms and strikes in different ways, raises disturbing questions: Why do we suffer?”

“Can the experience of pain be considered positive? Who can liberate us from suffering and death?” These questions, he said, cannot be answered on a human level, “since suffering is an unfathomable mystery for our reason.” He added, “Suffering is part of the very mystery of the human person.”

“Only God can remove the power of evil” that is the source of suffering, the Pontiff asserted. He explained that “faith helps us to penetrate the meaning of all things human and therefore also of suffering.”

The Holy Father affirmed, “There is, therefore, an intimate relationship between the Cross of Jesus — the supreme symbol of the pain and the price of our freedom — and our pain, which is transformed and transcended when it is lived in the awareness of the closeness and solidarity of God.”



ECSLs' Message



"We are to be faithful to the Lord, and only to the Lord because we are His servants."

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are now celebrating our 24th year of existence as a covenanted catholic charismatic Community. In the words of Fr. Pascual Adorable, S.J., one of our founders and our first BLD Spiritual Director, *"Bukas Loob sa Diyos is the response to God calling us to three things, namely: Holiness, Righteousness in His sight and Fullness of Love. Not as individuals separated and disunited but held together by the bond of love and peace centered on Christ. That, it is also a response to the triple call of Jesus addressed to Peter, 'Feed my lambs... Tend my sheep...Feed my sheep.'"*

As we prepare to celebrate BLD's Silver Jubilee in 2010, our beloved Community Spiritual Director, Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo asks our Global Districts two things, in the midst of these trying times:

- To continue with more vigor our participation and support to our BLD-GK program, in providing not only houses but homes to the poorest of the poor of our country, and;
- To provide educational "Scholarship of Hope" even for one child in each family (BLD-GK villages or in any of your adopted Community) from elementary to high school, and for at least a two-year vocational skills training, if not a full College degree, not necessarily only to the 'intelligent' child.

He also exhorts us to help address the many problems and crisis our country is encountering by applying the spirituality of the Year of the Two Hearts for our social transformation. (His message of June 11, 2009)

May our Poverty Alleviation Programs continue to be acceptable to Christ, as a fragrant offering to Him.

For the Executive Council of Servant Leaders,


Jun & Baby Delarmente
Presiding Servant Leader
June 18, 2008

BUKÁS LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY
The Executive Council of Servant Leaders

Ministry Announcements

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord
With the community thru an article (450 words maximum)

Send to word@bldnewark.com

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit - Volunteers Needed
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home

56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday of the Month

Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Healing Prayer Service & Eucharistic Celebration

Every first Monday of the month at 8:00 pm

Resurrection Parish-St. Bridget Church

372 Montgomery St Jersey City, NJ 07302

2000 Hail Marys Devotion & Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Saturday of the month,

starts at 8:30am except December

Resurrection Parish-St. Bridget Church

372 Montgomery St Jersey City, NJ 07302

SOUP KITCHEN

Missionary of Sisters of Charity

60 Jay Street, Newark NJ

Every 4th Saturday of the Month

JUNE 27 - Volunteers

Ray and Tess Salmo (732)387-8525

Teaching

June 26 – Friday

Golden Years Teaching

Service Formation Teaching - LSS30

July 17 – Friday

Mark 10/John 6/Youth Teachings

Singles – Christian Maturity Program I

July 18 – Saturday

Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit - LSS31

Encounter with Jesus – LSS 32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1pm to 6pm at St. Mary's

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

The Lord's Provisions

Weekly Collection Report For the Week Ending June 19, 2009

Regular Collections **\$3,971.00**

Other Collections **\$851.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Weekly Disbursement Report from June 15 to 19, 2009

\$3,633.12

Counsels from page 1

He gives her the opportunity to acknowledge the gift she has received, and then he tells her, *"Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."* (Mark 5:34). And so, in addition to her physical cure, Jesus gives this woman the gift of peace - a spiritual blessing - and assures her that, because of her faith, she can now enjoy complete physical and spiritual salvation.

Often this is true in our own lives. We seek the Lord asking for a little, and he gives us a lot - if only we would recognize the magnitude of his gifts.

Now Jesus continues on his way to Jairus' house. But the teacher has come too late, it would seem, and the little girl has died. Was this all part of Jesus' plan? Raising a sick girl to health is one thing, raising a dead girl to life is quite another! In all probability, the Lord intended this tragedy to enter this home precisely so that he could demonstrate the fullness of his divine power. With a word of love, *"Talitha kum"*, which means *"Little girl, I say to you, arise!"* (Mark 5:41), he takes the little girl by her hand and raises her from her deathbed healthy, happy and full of life.

Such is the power of prayer. In each case, a request is made of the Lord - one silent and one spoken. In each case there is a mustard seed of faith. In each case, the Lord's power, mercy, and love far exceed our expectations.

Indeed, in both instances, we see Jesus' personal concern for the needs of others and his readiness to come to their aid. In Jesus we see the infinite love of God extending to each and every individual as he gives freely and wholly of himself to others. Although he did not heal all of the sick in Palestine, nor did he raise all of the dead, he always gives to all of the faithful all that they need to live for him and to attain eternal salvation. Our part is to receive his gifts with faith and to put them into practice in our lives.

Two Sundays ago, we celebrated the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Although he has ascended into heaven with his human and divine natures intact, Jesus continues to remain with us in a real, physical, and even edible way, as he gives himself to us in Holy Communion. He also remains with us in our brothers and sisters, which form his mystical Body on earth. As we interact with one another, and our lives touch one another, we have the opportunity of communicating the divine power of God by allowing Christ's love to flow through us as we treat one another with kindness, gentleness, forbearance, and charity.

Conversely, we can show ourselves to be cancerous growths in the Body of Christ through bitterness, rivalries, jealousy, and petty hatred.

Should we let Jesus continue to touch us through his Word, through the Sacrament of his most holy Body and Blood, and through our brothers and sisters or should we be the cancerous growths that destroy life?

I say, let us arise and allow his loving touch to transform our lives, and then bring his love to those whose lives we touch.

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE

Community Calendar

June 26 to 28 - Youth Encounter #16

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contact: Mario/Cecil Salonga 516-561-6854
Sundee/Neneng Ikalina 201-384-8710
Stevie Olaso 973-975-8338; email: sjv.olaso@gmail.com

June 26 to 28 - Solo Parents Encounter #11

Archdiocesan Retreat Center
499 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, NJ 07032
Contact: Lea Samson 609-371-0685
Ben/Letty Chua 732-662-3540 or 732-766-0427

July 17 to 19 - Family Encounter #16

Malvern, PA
Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439

Special Announcements



Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities

15th National Conference June 26 - 28, 2009
Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, Maryland
Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas 973-562-0055
For info visit: www.afccpc15nc.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies
St. Mary Church (Fellowship Area)
For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908) 810-1231
rubenluz@verizon.net

Cez/Pinky Calingo (308) 230-3660 or
Gene/Bing Ymbong (308) 406-6955

BIBLE STUDY AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's School, Rm 104
Everyone is welcome
Know God better through His word.

For Mass Schedule within the U.S.A.

for Traveling Catholics visit:
www.masstimes.org
or call (410) 676-6000



DIRECTIONS:

- Tithe faithfully
- Give willingly and cheerfully of your time, talent and treasure



Covenant NEWS

BUKAS-LOOB SA DIYOS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 26

Bulletin Edition

July 3, 2009

29 Graduates of SPE# 11

"Hear, O LORD, have mercy on me; LORD, be my helper. You changed my mourning into dancing; you took off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness. With my whole being I sing endless praise to you. O LORD, my God, forever will I give you thanks." (Ps. 30: 11-13)

CYO Archdiocesan Youth Center in Kearny, NJ was the Venue for a spirit-filled Solo Parent Encounter #11 held on June 26-June 28, 2009. Msgr. Paul Schetelick was the spiritual director. Ed and Nanie de los Reyes are class shepherds of SPE#11 graduates as follows: Olga Abroguena, Bryan Atienza*, Susan Banzuela, Ram Bautista, Malou Blankas, Norma Calara, Eugene Casas, Rosine Davies, Mariella De Borja, Imogene D'Souza, Maris Fandino*, Nick Feliciano, Jr.*, Elaine Francisco*, Hermogenes Jugueta, Rem Leano, Vic Limbo, Estel Maido, Claire Mariano, Rose McHugh, Eneida Montanez, Myrna Montanez, Emy Moya, Cora Silverio, Lydia Smalley, Fe Subida, Gladys Vicari*, Maria Yangas, Mar Zafra*, and a priest Fr. Robert Lamirez in attendance. (*Coordinators)

The weekend ended with the Eucharistic celebration.



Youth Encounter# 16

The weekend of June 26-28 was unforgettable for 40 teenagers who compose the class of BLD Newark's Youth Encounter #16. This year's YE, held at the St. Francis Retreat House in Easton, PA, was truly filled with the Lord's graces, as all who participated fully contributed their time and talents to making the weekend a success for God's glory. The members of YE16 are: Ryan Abarabar, Kyle Abinales, Kurt Batocabe, Josef Catalan*, Marianne Claricia, Jethro Cruz, Marc Densing, Elise Espinosa, Wilfred Estiller, John Estrella*, Olivia Felibrico*, Jesraye Flores, AJ Flores, Precy Gotico, Darren Guiang, Aaron Guiang, Irbeth Hate*, James Jauregui, Nico Jose, Gian Jose*,

(continued on page3)

COUNSELS

Proclaim The Kingdom Of The Father

WORD: Ez.2:2-5; Ps.123:1-2.2,
3-4; 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Mark 6:1-6

THEME: We partake in Christ's prophetic mission when we endure hardships, persecutions and constraints.

ORDER: "Son of man, I am sending you to...rebels who have rebelled against me..." (Ez 2:3)

REFLECTION: The month of July covers the 14th to the 17th Sundays in Ordinary Time. On the 14th and 15th Sundays, the first readings recount the call to Ezekiel and Amos, respectively, as prophets of God. A prophet is one who speaks in the name of God; God's spokesman. Ezekiel was sent to his compatriots, a people, "hard of face and obstinate of heart," during the Babylonian exile. He was told to preach the message to them whether they "heed or resist." He reproached the Israelites for their sins, past and present, which eventually led to the destruction of Jerusalem. In contrast, Amos was a shepherd who denounced Israel for injustice and idolatry.

The Gospel readings on the other hand narrate the rejection of Jesus while preaching in his own hometown, and his sending out the twelve disciples with instructions not to take along any provisions for the journey. The following 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Jesus invites the twelve to take a rest. On the 17th Sunday, the people acclaim Jesus as the prophet who is to come after the miraculous multiplication of bread and fish.

(continued on page4)

Promise of the Week

"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." (2Cor .12:9)

“Fisher Of Men”



I believe that St. Peter proves to be a very good model to show how God expects us, his people, to continue the teachings and examples of his own Son, Jesus. St. Peter, originally named Simon, at first was an ordinary human being just like us; an honest man doing an honest man's work as a “fisherman.” Until one day, Jesus called him to witness greater things in his lifetime. He called Peter to come follow Him. Answering Jesus's call, Peter dropped everything. The Lord promised that from then on he will be a “fisher of men” and thus he became one of the twelve apostles that followed Jesus throughout His public ministry. Peter recognized Jesus as the true “Son of God” and “the Messiah, our Savior.”

Peter came to be known as Jesus's primary disciple. He was in attendance in the majority of the recorded works of Jesus. As one of His most trusted apostles, Peter was given the title of “Peter the Rock” and was told, *“And so I say to you, you are Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 16:18-19). Peter was told he was going to be the Church's first spiritual leader who was to build a strong foundation for the Church according to the Lord's spiritual “blueprint” when He established the Catholic Church. Peter continued Jesus's shepherding of His flock after the Messiah's Ascension and went on to become the Catholic Church's First Pope. He was to be a great solid foundation for the Church that stands tall to this very day.

In a sense, we too are part of this very strong foundation of the Catholic Church. It is through our active participation and commitment to our Lord that allows this foundation to exist. Without our membership in the Catholic Community we may not know what would become of the Church and all of its functions. Now the real question is: Can we continue building up this strong foundation for the many future generations to come? We only turn to St. Peter who although an ordinary human like all of us accomplished extraordinary things by the help of the Holy Spirit. He had his faults and sins, as clearly seen when he impulsively denied our Lord three times. But by God's grace, his great faith and commitment to the Gospel overcame these weaknesses. He duly repented and was forgiven by our Lord. Let us follow his example in our lives. Let us continue building up the foundation of the Church. Let us spread the Good News the Gospel and draw others into our community so we can all help in the continuation of the Catholic Church.

St. Paul, The Apostle



St. Paul is one of the most remarkable apostles that Jesus ever saved. Before encountering Jesus, “Saul” was born in a Jewish family as a Pharisee and was to keep strict observance towards the laws of God. He believed that all the laws of God are for all Jews to obey and respect. Upon hearing word about early Christian churches, Saul was deeply distraught about how Christians displayed apostasy,

meaning that they have abandoned their Jewish faith. As a result, Saul began to persecute the churches in Jerusalem. He said that if he found any men or women who went their way, he will bring them back to Jerusalem in chains. Traveling on a road to Damascus, Saul was enveloped in a bright flash of light. Suddenly, he heard a mysterious voice calling to him, saying, *“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”* Later, Saul realized that the one who was speaking to him was the risen Jesus. The Lord has chosen Saul as his instrument to carry His name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites. Saul was then baptized and converted to Christianity, thus becoming St. Paul.

Reflection: St. Paul really gave me an idea on how a person's life can dramatically change when he or she is introduced to Jesus. St. Paul, before meeting Jesus, was a Jewish persecutor. Later, he became a Christian preacher. I was amazed how Jesus chose a man to become one of his apostles, even though he was attacking His faith rather than praising it. When I applied this teaching to my life, I learned a strong fact that will forever remain true: Jesus will love you no matter how much you have sinned. I thought about how many times St. Paul was against his fellow brothers and sisters, and I thought about how many times I was against Jesus. When I pray every night, I ask for Jesus to pardon my sins and find favor in me, but whenever I recall my transgressions, I felt like Jesus was disregarding me for not learning from my mistakes. This lie kept clouding my head whenever I stumbled upon my own two feet. When the Word Ministry gave me this reflection assignment, I had a feeling this was nothing but work. However, when I learned about the story of St. Paul, that cloud of lie has condensed itself into water vapors of truth! If Jesus can forgive St. Paul for harassing His children, Jesus can forgive me and you!



BLD-Gawad Kalinga U.S. Coordinators

Archbishop Lagdameo, in his April 30, 2009 pastoral letter and the ECSL, in their June 18, 2009 message for BLD's 24th Foundation Anniversary, exhorted the global community to give great importance to the work of BLD-Gawad Kalinga. Following is a quote from the ECSL's message:

- *To continue with more vigor our participation and support to our BLD-GK program, in providing not only houses but homes to the poorest of the poor of our country, and;*
- *To provide educational "Scholarship of Hope" even for one child in each family (BLD-GK villages or in any of your adopted Community) from elementary to high school, and for at least a two-year vocational skills training, if not a full College degree, not necessarily only to the 'intelligent' child.*

We are pleased to announce the ECSL's appointment of Bong & Merle Encarnacion as BLD-GK Coordinators for the US. They have been actively engaged and leading the work of BLD-GK since the inception of the Fr. Paul Lehman GK Village almost five years ago. Please contact them for assistance regarding our shared BLD-GK poverty alleviation ministry

We pray that you will respond to our shepherds' exhortation in whatever manner the Lord allows you.



Youth Encounter# 16 *from page 1*

Christina Kopka, Andrew Kopka, Michael Kopka, Kirstein Labaso, Tina Larobis, Justin Lucero, Liberty Mayo, David McSpedon, Jamie Pagdonsolan*, Kay Panaguiton, Alex Paredes, Johnson Pham*, Christian Punla, April Ramirez, Adrianna Reyes, Jasmin Rodriguez, Marvee Sanagustin, Will Santillian*, Nathaniel Tomkowski, and Meldrick Umahon*.

Ray and Susie Atienza were given the task of shepherding the youth, while Marc Brillantes and Faith Ikalina are their youth counterparts. Father Paul Lehman was the weekend's spiritual director.

The most important lesson that the YE16 class took with them was that as a community, they could grow together and find love in one another with God as the center of their lives. Their rallying cry for the weekend is a testament to their dedication to one another: Does someone need love and affirmation? "YE16 – TO THE RESCUE!"

Ministry Announcements

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord
With the community thru an article (450 words maximum)

Send to word@bldnewark.com

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit - Volunteers Needed
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home

56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday of the Month

Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Healing Prayer Service & Eucharistic Celebration

Every first Monday of the month at 8:00 pm

Resurrection Parish-St. Bridget Church

372 Montgomery St. Jersey City, NJ 07302

2000 Hail Marys Devotion & Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Saturday of the month,

starts at 8:30am except December

Resurrection Parish-St. Bridget Church

372 Montgomery St. Jersey City, NJ 07302

SOUP KITCHEN

Missionary of Sisters of Charity

60 Jay Street, Newark NJ

Every 4th Saturday of the Month

JULY 25 - Volunteers Needed

Frank and Malou Venadas (973)560-0055

Teaching

July 17 – Friday

Mark 10/John 6/Youth Teachings

Singles – Christian Maturity Program I

July 18 – Saturday

Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit - LSS31

Encounter with Jesus – LSS 32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1pm to 6pm at St. Mary's

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's, visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com



The Lord's Provisions

Weekly Collection Report For the Week Ending June 26, 2009

Collections **\$3,524.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Weekly Disbursement Report from June 22 to 26, 2009

\$4,714.00



Speaking on vocation and the mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the world, the late Pope John Paul II exhorts the lay faithful to share in the prophetic mission of Christ. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* he says, *"Through the participation in the prophetic mission of Christ, who proclaimed the Kingdom of His Father by the testimony of His life and by the Power of His Word, the lay faithful are given the ability and responsibility to accept the Gospel in faith and to proclaim it in word and deed, without hesitating to courageously identify and denounce evil."* United in Christ, the 'great prophet' (Lk 7:16), and in the Spirit made "witnesses" of the Risen Christ, the lay faithful are made sharers in the appreciation of the Church's supernatural faith, that *"cannot err in matters of belief"* and sharers as well in the grace of the Word." (Acts 2:17-18; Rev 19:10) They are also called to allow the newness and the power of the gospel to shine forth everyday in their family and social life, as well as to express patiently and courageously, in the contradiction of the present age, their future glory even" through the framework of their secular life." (P 31-32)

St. Paul encounters the same problems as Ezekiel, and like Ezekiel, suffers for Christ. Jesus was rejected by his own people in His own hometown. As we share in the prophetic mission of Christ, we should persevere in witnessing to the Word of God in word and in deed, whether convenient or not. We have the promise of the week to rely on: *"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."* (2 Cor 12:9)

DIRECTIONS:

- Develop and intensify a deeper relationship with God through regular confession, daily Communion, regular visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and daily reflection on His word.
- Continue our work of evangelization in bringing awareness of God's faithfulness to His people, especially the poor.
- Reinvigorate pastoral care program.

Community Calendar



July 17 to 19 – Family Encounter #16

Malvern, PA

Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439

August 15 - Community Day

BLD Newark 17th Year

Annversary Celebration

Johnson Park, Piscataway NJ

Contact: Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439

Special Announcements

ISAIAH 58

Sagip ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary Church (Fellowship Area)

For more info contact: Ruben/Luz Amarante (908) 810-1231

rubenluz@verizon.net

Cez/Pinky Calingo (308) 230-3660 or

Gene/Bing Ymbong (308) 406-6955

BIBLE STUDY AT ST. MARY & ST. MARK PARISH



Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin

Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm at St. Mary's

School, Rm 104

For Mass and Adoration Schedule within the U.S.A.

visit: www.masstimes.org

or call (410) 676-6000



MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE



NEWS

COMMUNITY NEWS

We praise and thank the Lord for the following servants who were anointed on July 3, 2009:

ME30 - Agapito, Elmer; Agapito, Weng, Duma, Bing; Loreto, Mavil; Mercado, Frank; Mercado, Tess; Munsod, Del; Munsod, Rey; Pangilinan, Divina; Pangilinan, Ronald; Sta. Ana, Danny; Sta. Ana, Mary Anne

SPE8 - Dumlao, Fedelita

SPE9 - Ferando, Tomasa; Furman, Tess; Loreto, Cy; Gamolo, Aida; Manahan, Renee

SPE10 - Carpio, Elizabeth; Cocjin, Melita; Dacula, Nena; De Jesus, Portia; Florentino, Cecilia; Ocasio, Margarita; Samson, Lea; Ventura-Perez, Carmelita

On July 10, 2009, there will be Anointing of the following Community Servants: Audie & Vulet Chong as coordinators of the Institutional Mission Ministry-whose functions as defined per section 9 of the latest policies from ECSL are as follows: "to develop strategies for mission activities in offices, schools, and institutions, including seminaries, convents, prisons, correctional institutions, hospitals, soup kitchens and nursing home visitations, and various welfare agencies.

Singles Ministry Core:

Eric Cruz, Carol Manguiat, & Pauline Montemayor

Management Stewards:

Noel and Letty Trillana

**MAKE COVENANT NEWS A
PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE**

COUNSELS

WE ARE CALLED

WORD: Amos 7:12-15 Ps 85:9-14 Eph 1:3-14 Mk 6: 7-13

ORDER: *Take nothing for the journey but the Holy Spirit (Mk 6:8)*

THEME: "We partake in Christ's prophetic mission when we forgo our personal comfort for the sake of the Gospel."

REFLECTION:

This Sunday's Gospel from Mark, Chapter 6, talks about practical guidelines given by Jesus on how His chosen apostles should carry out His mission. The apostles had heard His preaching and had seen the miracles He performed. Their future work would be to bring His teachings and the story of Christ's life and miracles to all men. They had not yet seen everything, nor were they fully aware, as yet, of who Christ really was, but they did know that He was laying the foundation of the Kingdom of God among men. He sent them out on a temporary mission: two by two, they were to go to the neighboring villages and towns, preaching repentance, casting out demons and healing the sick. He would provide them with the necessities of life. They were to take neither food supplies nor money, only the clothes on their backs and a walking stick... thus making them entirely reliant on God's divine providence. This is also echoed in the First Reading from the Book of Amos. Amos was sent on a mission to prophesy in another land. Amos obeyed,

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

*"The Lord Himself will give His benefits; our land shall yield its increase. Justice shall walk before Him, and salvation, along the way of His steps."
(Ps 85:13-14)*

Inner Peace

What must we do to have Inner Peace? We must see the Son of God. How can we find Inner Peace? Hear the call and accept the gift of discipleship. In MT 10: 7-15, Jesus commissioned his disciples to act with His authority to extend His mission in preaching the coming of God's kingdom. Discipleship has been offered to them as a gift, so they are to offer it to others as a gift. In their journey they were instructed to receive nothing, but rather to depend on the charity given. Their lack of concern for anything allows them to carry out the mission in a simple way. It also bears witness to their trusting acceptance of God's plan and care for them and to their conviction that what has been freely received should be freely given. When task is rejected, they remain faithful and trust to receive God's rewards of inner peace.

Like the disciples, we are called to teach, spread the Good News but doing this role might not be without difficulty, as we lead our lives and focus our vision into God's plan.

Like the disciples we will face rejection by our own relatives and friends as well as by the strangers we will encounter both Christians and non Christians. Occasionally, welcome will not always be given but the call of discipleship and the demand of God lead us into becoming His "new creation" to become apostolic missionaries.

Like the disciples, accepting and doing missionary work means dying to self. It is not easy as it normally hampers the essence of freedom and the ability to do what one desires. Yet we have to keep going, for it is God who calls and invites us to this life- that has purpose, meaning and good.

Like the disciples, to keep going is to give up something that is of value to oneself for the benefit of another. Whatever it is we give in terms of money, time talent and support to the church, community or any charity, we do so not because we expect recognition nor reward but because we know that all of these gifts are from God, due to God alone and we have to give it freely. Hence we are called to do simple things, to touch all lives and hearts. Like the disciples we are challenged to remain steadfast in our commitment to be obedient in service, faithful representative of His love by following His examples. By elevating ourselves spiritually the Kingdom of God will come alive in us and we will receive His gift of "Inner Peace" which is our ultimate pleasure in life.

Speak in God's Light

"What I say to you in darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops."
Mt 10:27

In keeping with the divine destiny of the Gospel, we are exhorted to speak forth to all with boldness and fearless utterance the words of God. Like the apostles, who were taught privately by our Lord, God speaks to us in the privacy of our hearts and minds. Jesus speaks out of His very heart into the hearts of His true disciples through the Divine Spirit.

I often ask, how do we know what is spoken into our hearts is the truth and not a creation of our own thoughts? "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.." Jn 16:13. God uses the Holy Spirit to teach us the truth and give us courage to proclaim without fear the good news of Christ's death, resurrection and victory over sin and death.

St. Francis of Assisi said and I quote, "Preach the Gospel at all times and if necessary use words". Here, St. Francis is encouraging us not only to preach the gospel using the truth we learned from the Scriptures, the teachings and traditions of the church, but the truth revealed to us in our hearts through our own life experiences. When Jesus Christ touches our lives, He becomes real to us. When we encounter triumph over our hardships and challenges, the Holy Spirit is working in us. When this happens, we feel the Holy Spirit's power that urges us to speak to the world about God's love, mercy, and compassion. We relate what grace has done for us and testify what we have seen.

"Therefore do not be afraid of them. Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will be known." Mt 10:26 We should cease from our fear of men and boldly proclaim the truth that God is continuously revealing to us.

Sometime in the middle of June, I was approached to write an article for the covenant news. Not knowing what the verse focus was, I listened to the little voice in my heart and said a big 'yes!' When I got home after the Friday worship, I wondered what I got myself into. I felt inadequate. But, lo and behold, I am now writing the last paragraph of my article. "...for He shall not speak of on His own; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me, because He will take from what is mine and declare it to you..." John 16:13, 14

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DEACON'S CORNER

Predestination

There are people who read today's 2nd reading from the Letter to the Ephesians and see nothing but predestination. Of course, the passage talks about God who "chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world," and who "destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:4-5). But we must read this not in isolation but in harmony with other biblical teachings regarding human freedom and responsibility for our eternal lot. The problem is not whether the Bible talks about predestination or not but how we understand this teaching.

In the history of Christian thinking, the teachings on predestination can be classified under two broad types. The first type holds that God creates two types of people, those He has predestined to be saved (the elect) and those whom He has predestined to be damned (the reprobate). According to this understanding, those who are destined to be saved will be saved, and those who are destined to be damned will be damned, no matter what they do or do not do. This version of predestination is known as deterministic predestination.

The problem with deterministic predestination is that it portrays God as arbitrary in the dispensation of saving grace. It contradicts what we read in Acts 10:34-35, "God has no favorites, anybody of any nationality who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him." Moreover, it denies the validity of human effort. If God has already decided our eternal lot and there is nothing we can do about it, why then should we strive to do God's will? Why then would Paul tell us to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling?" (Philippians 2:12).

Fortunately, there is a second way of understanding predestination which makes room for human freedom and effort. In this version, predestination simply means that God has created everyone who comes into this world for a purpose. God does not bring us into the world and leave it up to us to determine our purpose. We are brought into the world for a purpose and given the gifts of body and mind necessary for achieving that purpose. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5). In this understanding, God creates everybody for a good purpose. God created and destined everybody for salvation. God creates only those He has chosen. God did not create anyone for damnation.

God, however, will not force His blessings on us. He loves us too much to do that to us. So God gave us all the power to say yes or no to Him. This is the mystery of human freedom. We can walk in the path God has destined for us. In His will is our peace. But we can also walk away from God and suffer the consequences of loss of God in our lives. And so we make effort to get back on God's track for us if we have gone astray, or to continue on the track if we are on it. All our effort is nothing but cooperating with God's grace freely given.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit – Volunteers Needed, Every 2nd Saturday of the Month, Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055, Nong & Tricia Bustos
(732) 591-1340, nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com

Intercessors needed for the Archdiocese of Newark's Deanery 16
LSS on May 9-10, Sacred Heart Church
Bloomfield NJ, May 9 (Fri) 6:30-9:30pm, May 10 (Sat) 7:30am – 4:30pm, Please contact Angel/Aida Calilap, Sal/Marie Russo, Mon/Bingle Chan

2000 Hail Marys Devotion & Eucharistic Celebration
Every last Saturday of the month, starts at 8:30am except
December, Resurrection Parish-St. Bridget Church, 372
Montgomery St Jersey City, NJ 07302

Pentecost Vigil (BLD-sponsored activity of the CCR) worship
and Eucharistic celebration, Sacred Heart Church, Bloomfield NJ,
May 10 (Sat) 6:30pm – 10pm
Everyone is invited to participate, Please contact Angel/Aida
Calilap, Sal/Marie Russo, Mon/Bingle Chan

ISAIAH 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)
Bring your old or unused School Supplies
St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)
Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1231
Rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo – 308-230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong – 308-406-6955

BIBLE STUDY

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish
Every Friday from 7:30-8:00pm
St. Mary's School, Room 104
Everyone is welcome
Know God better through His word.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

July 17-19, 2009

Family Encounter # 16

**Malvern, PA Contact: Manny/Nette Manguiat
201-355-0439**

August 15, 2009

**BLD Newark 17th Year Anniversary
Celebration - Community Day
Johnson Park Piscataway NJ**

8:30 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Contact: Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439

Counsels from page 1

notwithstanding his fear of inadequacy. I am no prophet. I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, he says. Yet, he accepted God's calling, trusting that God will supply Him with all his needs. Our second reading from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians affirms this in the opening verse of Ephesians 1: 3: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens."*

We too have been called, not because of who we are, what we are or what we can bring to community, BUT simply because God has chosen each one of us, and He knows each one of us by name. In Him, we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to the intention of His will, so that we might exist for the praise of His glory, we who first hoped in Christ.. Eph 1:11-12. By virtue of our baptism, as believers of Christ, we have the responsibility to share the message of hope, the Good news of God's love with others. We have been called, like Amos, and the early disciples to go forth and make disciples of all people trusting God that He will accompany us in this missionary journey. God is our strength. His grace is sufficient.

The scripture readings this Sunday, in a meaningful way, tells us how Jesus had prepared the disciples, letting them go and allowing them to take over the reins. He was able to allow the students to become the teacher. In our own ministry, we must also learn to do the same. We need to equip people and then enable them by exiting. John the Baptist knew when it was time to step aside after preparing the way for Jesus. He must increase, I must decrease. Jn 3:30. As members of BLD, we are not called to be the 'Jack of all trades'. Although some of us can, and do wear many hats, our job is not to do all the work, but to enable others to do so. We must invite others, guide and mentor them and the Lord will equip them. Then, we must exit or step aside, allowing them to carry the word of God to others. This requires great trust. However, if the Lord could entrust His message to us, should we not all do the same by trusting others? And where does that exit lead? It leads back to where we first encountered God and the cycle begins all over again.

DIRECTION:

1. Trust & depend on God alone.
2. Leave emotional, physical, spiritual baggage behind: be poor in spirit.

Traveling Catholics
For nationwide listing of Catholic
Churches & Mass times, go to
www.masstimes.org

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Lord's Provision	
Weekly Budget	6,121
Collections	2,976
Expenses	8,594
Surplus/(Deficit)	(5,618)

Mid-Year YTD* Financial	
* As of 06/30/09 (Un-audited)	
Collections	93,575
Expenses	102,378
Surplus/(Deficit)	(8,803)

Weekly Average (25 weeks)	
Collections	3,685
Expenses	4,095

TEACHING MINISTRY

July 17, 2009 (Friday after worship)

Mark 10 Teaching

John 6 Teaching

Youth Teaching

Singles –Christian Maturity Program I

July 18, 2009 (Saturday – St. Mary's)

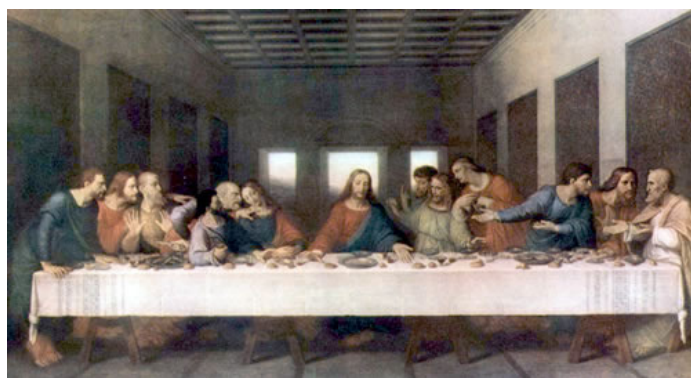
Gifts & Fruits of the Holy Spirit – LSS31

Encounter with Jesus – LSS32

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1-6pm at St. Mary's





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 28

Bulletin Edition

July 17, 2009

RECOLLECTION

"Growing in the Community of the True Vine and the Vine-grower"

How we can grow as branches of the The True Vine (who is Jesus) the Vine-grower (God the Father) as the Vine-grower, based on Jn 15:1-2: *"I am the True Vine and my Father is the Vine-dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, He (the Father takes away; and every branch that bears fruit he prunes it so that it may bear more fruit."* Another foundation verse related is 1 Cor 3: 4-7 "(For when) one says, *'I am of Paul'*, and another, *'I am of Apollos'*, are you not mere men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth."

When: July 18, 2009, Saturday, 1PM - 5PM

Where: St. Mary's Library, 2nd Floor

For Whom: Open to all BLD Members and their Families

Retreat Master: Fr. Larry Tan, SDB

Who is Fr. Larry - Fr. Larry Tan, a Salesian priest, has served BLD globally in its many encounters over the years. He was the priest called by God to gather and organize the 3 couples (Andy and Belle Escano of BLD Hong Kong & Toronto; Jay and Salou Sobrepena of BLD Manila and Roger and Irma Santiago of BLD Hong Kong) to sponsor the first ME in NJ. All of us three became friends of Fr. Larry after he conducted our own respective ME's). In June of 1992 Fr. Larry Tan came to NJ and he met with the Sobrepenas. He mentioned that Andy and Belle were moving to NY for work and the Santiagos would be returning to NJ from a 3 year job stint in Hong Kong) and that BLD usually needed 3 couples/disciples to form a community. So in August 1992, we pooled our time, talents and meager financial resources and simply depending on the provision of God, we sponsored the first ME in Newark, NJ with 19 1/2 graduates. It was the beginning of what is now BLD Newark, which, after 17 years, now has districts or district in process in more than 15 dioceses in many US states. Fr. Larry also used to be a Principal of th Don Bosco School in Makati. A bible scholar, he runs retreats for priests in Manila. He is currently visiting his family in NJ after having conducted a ME for BLD Vancouver in Edmonton, Canada).

Promise of the Week

"I will appoint shepherds for them who will shepherd them so that they need no longer fear and tremble; and none shall be missing." (Jer 23:4)

COUNSELS

Compassion

Word: Jer 23:1-6; Ps 23:1-6; Eph 2:13-18; Mt 6:30-34

Theme: We partake in Christ's prophetic mission when we seek and gather the lost.

Order: Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while (Mk 6:31). Gather remnant of my flock...and bring them back to their meadow (Jer 23:3)

Reflection:

God the Father, who loved us so much, sent His only son Jesus who ultimately suffered and died on the cross to save us. He spent his whole lifetime in healing the sick, teaching, comforting the afflicted, and performing miracles. Yes, he did care for us!

Like the Good Shepherd, Jesus commissioned ordinary people to continue His work. People followed them everywhere because they wanted to hear what Jesus and His disciples had to say. People hungered for instruction-good people who are searching for directions. They may be parents who are sick with grief over the future of a troubled child; the unemployed; a woman facing a pregnancy alone; elderly people in debilitating conditions; people who are angry and confused because they believe that the church is no longer dependable. They are people looking for answers and purpose and meaning of their lives. They long for the love and security a Good Shepherd brings.

To whom do we go for guidance? There are so many voices that claim to have the answer; how do we know which one to follow? A good Shepherd put the needs of others before his own. Reliable Shepherds walk with us in the dark valleys. They are willing to share the dangers through which we pass even at the risk of their own safety. They do not pit one segment of the community against another, scattering the sheep and driving them away. Instead, they work to dismantle the walls that divide us. They speak the Word that gathers us together. They reconcile us with God and with each other. They may not give us easy answers, but their primary concern is to lead us to Jesus, the one who is our peace and our salvation.

Continued on page 3

Love God Above All

Over and over again, Jesus teaches us that God has to be the principal object of our love. In Mt 10:37-38, Jesus tells us in words that leave no room for doubt: “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.”

This shocking claim is not meant to encourage hatred of one’s family. It is meant to force us into a clear prioritization of values: God must be first, without condition or compromise.

God alone is to be loved fully and absolutely. We all know how a Pharisee came to Jesus and tested him by asking the question: Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest? Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with your entire mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment.” (Mt 22:37-38). God is not asking a bit of room in our heart, in our soul or in our mind, for just a share in our love: He wants it all – not just a little love, some part of our life, but all we have got. Love of God means that we worship Him only, not our families, jobs, or possessions. It is nourished in prayer, in the reception of the sacraments, in the unceasing effort to maintain a living presence of God throughout our working day, in our relations with others, in our times of rest. The Eucharist above all must be the spring at which our love of God is perpetually refreshed and strengthened.

However, love for God is not love for Him at all unless it expresses itself in our love for others. Thus, the Lord adds, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22:39). By linking these two commandments together as one and inseparable, it is clear that one cannot love God without loving one’s brothers and sisters at the same time. Love of God and love of neighbor are tightly intertwined. One is expected to go much further by serving those who are in need: the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the naked, those in prison, the social outcasts, the unemployed, the handicapped, the lonely...as often you did it to the least of my brothers, you did it to me (Mt 25:40).

Ultimately, love of God, the source of all being and life comes first.

With all our heart, all our soul, and our entire mind, let’s love God above all other loves.

Turn To The Lord All You Need And You Will Live

Since the creation of the world, God said “ Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with it seed in it.”(Genesis 1:11) Even before God created us He was already preparing the things that we need and when God created us, He created us with so much love and affection. “God created man in His image: in the divine image he created Him.”(Genesis 1:27.)

God is our Father, our Creator, and our Divine Provider who knows all our needs and provides for all our needs. Who can we turn to except Him, our Ultimate Hope? In Him alone will we live.

If at anytime we are so overwhelmed with death, with our afflictions, as to be unable to discern the slightest hope of life, let us learn to meditate on His truth, that even in the most profound depths of adversity faith will hold us up and, what is more, may elevate us closer to God; as Paul testifies (Romans 8:38-39): “ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Whatever deep waters of affliction or temptation we sink into, whatever floods of trouble or ungodly men seem ready to overwhelm us, let us persevere in prayer to our Lord to save us. The tokens of God's favor to us are enough to keep our spirits from sinking in the deepest outward troubles. If we think well of God, and continue to do so under the greatest hardships, we need not fear but trust that He will do well for us. As it is written in Ps 69: 33-34:” "See, you lowly ones, and be glad; you, who seek God, take heart! For the LORD hears the poor, does not spurn those in bondage.” And if at any time we are called on to suffer reproach and shame for Christ sake, our comfort is in the knowledge that He hears our cries.

God is magnified by our praises, not because any addition can be made to His dignity and glory, which are infinite, but because by our praises His name is exalted among men. The humble shall look to Him and be glad; those that seek Him through Christ shall live and be comforted. God will do great things for us. Let all who hopes in Him rejoice. Those that love His name shall dwell before Him forever. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also freely give us all things that we may live?

Gay Marriage

Do Catholics oppose same-sex marriage because they think sex is dirty? Do they not want others to have fun?

The Catholic Church takes a very high view of marriage and human sexuality. As the account of Genesis shows, marriage and sexuality were created by God and given to mankind as gifts for our benefit. Scripture records God's statement that "it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Gen. 2:18). As a result, "a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). Some may forego the good of marriage to serve a higher calling (cf. Matt. 19:10-12), but it is a good nevertheless.

Marriage is a conduit through which God's grace flows to the couple and their children.¹ The Catholic Church understands marriage between a baptized man and woman to be a sacrament, a visible sign of the grace that God gives them to help them live their lives here and now so as to be able to join him in eternity.² For Catholics, marriage is social as well as religious, but its religious aspects are very important. The Bible repeatedly compares the relationship between man and wife to that between God and Israel (cf. Hos. 9:1) or between Christ and his Church (cf. Eph. 5:21-32). For Catholics, marriage is a holy vocation.

How do you answer the charge that the Catholic Church or opposition to same-sex marriage is "homophobic"?

The term *homophobic* refers to fear of homosexuality. This term often is used by homosexual activists to end rational discussion of the issue by accusing their opponents of having an irrational fear. This is unjust. One can disagree with and be critical of a behavior without having a fear of it. When the charge of "homophobia" is made, it signifies that those making the accusation do not have reasoned responses to their critics, so they switch to portraying their critics as irrational rather than responding to their arguments.

While the Church does recognize homosexuality as disordered, this does not mean that the Church is uncompassionate to those who suffer from the disorder. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "Men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies . . . must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided."³

So we deplore acts of discrimination or unkindness against homosexual persons, but we insist on speaking the truth about the nature of homosexual acts. This is not a phobia. It is compassion together with frank recognition of the nature of a disordered condition.

Footnotes:

1. Catechism of the Catholic Church 1613, 1653.
2. Ibid. 1617.
3. Ibid. 2358.

Counsels (from page 1)

There are times in our life when the challenges and responsibilities of leadership frightened us. There are times in our life when we feel we can no longer carry the burden that has been entrusted upon us. What should we do when times of crisis like this come?

We should turn to God in prayer and be fed and nurtured by receiving Jesus in the Holy Eucharist not only on Sundays but as frequently as possible and actively participating in the different ministries of the Church and in our community. If we do, God will strengthen us; just as He strengthens his shepherds.

While we know that we are the sheep under Our Lord's flock, it is often hard to find peace in the pasture or our community here in BLD. We get caught up in the struggles of our daily life, the hardships of health issues, sickness, the rigors of work, the complexities of relationships, unemployment, and financial insecurities. All these issues can be summed up in one word: STRESS. There come days when a single word distresses us that everything in it seems to weary us and ends up with anxiety and fear. Because of too many activities in the community that we cannot refuse but follow including our own personal matters, all these can easily "burn" us out. Let us listen to what the Master says: "Come away--- and rest awhile." (MK 6:31)

When Jesus and the apostles sailed off to a deserted place for some peace and quiet; we have to understand, it is not vacation. The "desert" here becomes a symbol for learning on how to be fed by God through his Word and Reflections. The overall picture shows us how to receive divine energy and nourishment that drives the mission. Relaxation is an occasion to seek Christ. Rest is needed to gain strength, to think clearly, and to be renewed. Hopefully all these things will make our life and the people around us content and happy. Simple, quiet time most especially in contemplative prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament is all that is needed to allow the love of God fill and radiate from us because Jesus is our ultimate "Stress Reliever" who offers us consolation, hope and peace. He is the Good Shepherd who can ...and will ... guide and protect us when we place our trust in Him.

Lord God look with compassion upon Your people as we hunger and thirst for true life. Bring peace to our soul. Guide us in Your ways and bring us safely into your flock. Grant us goodness and mercy in our life that we may be able to follow as You lead us. AMEN.

Directions:

- Bring the community to a retreat to be strengthened further by the Word
- Devote time to daily personal, conjugal and family prayer
- Spend time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mission

Nursing Home Visit

Every 2nd Saturday of the month
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Ave, Passaic, NJ 07055
Audie/Vulet Chong (732)356-9056

Mission

Healing Prayer Services

Every Monday at 8:00pm

Healing Prayer Service and Eucharistic Celebration

Every 1st Monday of the month at 8:00pm

2000 Hail Marys Devotion with Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Saturday of the month starts at 8:30am
Resurrection Parish - St. Bridget Church
372 Montgomery St, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Mission

Soup Kitchen

Every 4th Saturday of the month
Missionary of Sisters of Charity
60 Jay St., Newark, NJ
Volunteers needed

Frank/Malou Venadas (973)562-0055

Isaiah 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused school supplies
St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)
Ruben/Luz Amarante (908)810-1231
rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo (308)230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong (308)406-6955

Medical Mission

Save the Date

Feb. 22-25, 2010

Venue Selection in Process

Mosty/Ling Garcia

(908)659-8940 or (732)547-1917

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Study

Conducted by Fr. Dennis at St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish
Every Friday 7:30pm-8:00pm at St. Mary's School, Room 104
Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His word.

LORD'S PROVISION

Weekly Budget	6,121.00
Collections	3,508.00
Other Collections	10,509.34
Expenses	11,841.96
Surplus/(Deficit)	2,175.38

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

July 17-19, 2009

Family Encounter #16

Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA
Manny/Nette Manguiat (201)355-0439

August 15, 2009

BLD-Newark 17th Year Anniversary Celebration- Community Day

Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ 8:30AM – 6:00PM
Manny/Nette Manguiat (201)355-0439

Note

*Application forms for all encounters
are available at bldnewark.com*

TEACHING MINISTRY

Date/Class

Day/Teaching

July 17, 2009

Friday

Mark10

Teachings

John6

Teachings

Youth

Teachings

Singles

Christian Maturity Program I

July 18, 2009

Saturday

LSS31

Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit

LSS32

Encounter with Jesus

Note

*Friday teachings – after worship
Saturday teachings 1:00pm-6:00pm at St. Mary's*



RECOLLECTION

July 18, 2008 Saturday 1:00pm-5:00pm

St. Marys' Library

Day of Recollection Retreat

*"Growing In Community With The True Vine
and The Vine Grower"*

ERRATA

In last week's Community News article the anointing of servants referred to were Committed Disciples. Bing Duma was included in the ME 30 list; he is from ME10. Also the anointing of the new coordinators for Institutional Mission Ministry, Singles Ministry Core and Management Stewards were held on July 3, not July 10 Our apologies.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 35

Bulletin Edition

September 4, 2009

NEWS

The Body Talks by Allan Cruz

On Saturday, Aug. 29, 2009, Allan Cruz of BLD Toronto under the auspices of Fr. Paul Lehman and the Formation Apostolate, presented a series of talks called The Body Talks. It summarized some key points of Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body. The program was attended by Youth, Singles, Solo Parents and adult married couples. The talks divided into four sessions — B.O.D.Y. (Beautiful, Original Opportunity, Destiny and Yearning) were punctuated by timely teachings from Fr. Lehman.

Allan discussed how we all started life bearing original sin. We were naturally ashamed of this state, but purely by His GRACE we were able to overcome the shame and live in His love. Allan with comely wife, Nicole recalled their aspirations for the religious vocations with their early studies to become a priest and a nun. God's true calling for them was for a married life. They affirmed human sexuality between husband and wife loving each other in marriage and the proper way to have children personified by their 13 month old bundle of joy – Joshua. They encouraged the members to follow God's calling, and though it will be difficult at times when the devil tempts us with sinful desires or yearnings through the media's distorted view of sexuality, through prayers, we can overcome these yearnings and continue to live according to His will.

Overall with the dialogues with their peers the members had a hands-on and intuitive learning opportunity to know more about Pope John Paul II's teaching and their understanding of the meaning of life was greatly enriched.

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.

www.masstimes.org

COUNSELS

Sincerity

WORD: Is 35:4-7a; Ps 146:7-10; Jas 2:1-5; Mk 7:31-37

THEME: We are open to the Father's will when we minister with no partiality in doing His work.

ORDER:

- *"Show no partiality."* (Jas 2:1)
- *"Say to those whose hearts are frightened: be strong, fear not! Here is your God."* (Is 35:4)

REFLECTION:

The Theme for the week is: "We are open to the Father's will when we minister with no partiality in doing His work." St. James admonishes us not to give preferential treatment to the affluent while looking at the poor with a condescending attitude. In the Gospel, Jesus showed no partiality. With compassion, He ministered and healed a deaf man who had a speech impediment. If we want to follow the Will of the Father, we should minister sincerely and with no bias to any one that God brings to us regardless of his stature or position in life.

We have to do the work of Jesus by up building one another, our community, and the Greater Church. In 1991, the Second Plenary Council of the Phils. (PCP II) was held. One of the Decrees the Council made, was the call for all of us to be the Church of the Poor, a term used by the late Pope John II. In the light of the readings and of the call of our Lord Jesus Christ to be on mission, we need to review the decree. PCP II says that the term "Church of the Poor" does not mean that the Church includes only the

Continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"God chooses those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him." (Jas 2:5)

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE.

Fallen Asleep

“Therefore let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober.” (1 Thes 5:6)

Do you have a last Will & Testament? What are you bequeathing to your children?

My mother passed away after two years of battling colon cancer. My father gave seven of us her few pieces of jewelry by lottery. No favoritism or jealousy. For me, her faith and devotion to God is my treasure and I am passing it on.

My parents always emphasized that materialism or attachment to worldly things detaches us from God's kingdom. When we are too sentimental we become 'imprisoned' to the thought, person or thing, thus we cannot move on or see God's purpose in our lives.

We were taught always to be honest and charitable without counting the cost. My mother's favorite line: "Seek first the kingdom of God" is engraved in my heart because she lived it. Her life was rich in virtues of faith, hope and love, and charity. Everyone who knew her said 'she was ready to meet the Lord' when she passed away.

You and I know of people in or outside BLD whose lives became models to reflect on when stricken with illness or tragedy and yet lived full of love of God and service for others. They ***"know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night. When People are saying 'peace and security', then sudden disaster comes upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape."*** (1 Thes 5: 2-3)

Do we have to wait for an illness or sudden death of a loved one to be closer to God, be prayerful and forgiving? Life is short. "It is in our lives and not our words that our religion must be read." (Thomas Jefferson)

Being in community made me realize that every person I meet should be able to experience the 'joy' of encountering Jesus in me. Do not hold grudges, judgments or unforgiveness. Pray for others and lead them to God so that they too will know that ***"we are not of the night or darkness."*** ***Therefore let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober."*** (1 Thes 5:5-6) Be a living example to your family and others, and show them the way to salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Obey God's commandments and receive the sacraments.

Let us encourage one another, building each other up, affirming one another, loving, bearing each other's burden in pain or sorrow, forgiving and asking to be forgiven. ***"So that whether we are awake or asleep we may live together with Him."*** (1 Thes 5:10)

Joy In His Presence

"Shout joyfully to the Lord, all you lands; worship the LORD with cries of gladness; come before him with joyful song." (Ps 100:1-2)

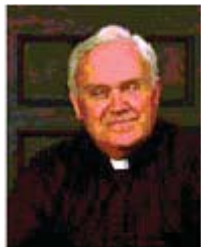
Scripture tells us repeatedly that we are resurrection people. Because of what the Lord has done for us, we, His disciples, should be so full of joy that it is not only noticeable but contagious.

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit which gives us a feeling of great rejoicing because we have faith in God and His promises. Joy or happiness could also be elusive. Every man's daily activity is focused on attaining some kind of joy, but most of us look for it in the wrong places. The world tells us we have a lot of needs. The more we give in to these worldly needs the more problems we have. Attachment is a worldly need. It is an inordinate clinging to people or things that make us vulnerable to turmoil and destroys our peace. Attachments give us temporary pleasure but our souls crave for everlasting joy. As St. Augustine's most quoted lines say, *"Our hearts are ever restless O Lord until they rest in Thee."* This yearning has been ingrained in our hearts that our total joy happens only when one's wills are fully surrendered to His. We, who constantly seek our peace and comfort, should know that suffering, when endured without complaint or blame, can result in much joy. When we die to ourselves and our selfishness, we live for the source of our joy. In the patient endurance of our pain, God cleanses and purifies us for Himself. This joy in our suffering is like the paradox of the cross- it is in dying that we live. The logic of the cross is: if we put our needs and desires second place only to what God wants of us, our needs and desires are fulfilled a hundred-fold.

Let us resolve now, daily, that we will accept everything that He wills for us. Let us give our ALL to Christ. If we embrace every situation with Him, good or bad, we will lose interest in ourselves and our problems and be focused on Him, who is our ***true and eternal joy.***



Fr. Paul Speaks On Caritas in Veritate



Allow me to comment on the pope's new encyclical, "Caritas in Veritate", and of course to encourage you all to read the document. It will probably take its place as one of the major social encyclicals, closely following the mind set of Pope Paul VI who wrote "Populorum Progressio" in 1967, shortly after the close of the second Vatican council.

In the introduction we have an explicit revelation of the keen mind of Pope Benedict. Even the title reveals his very practical teaching that one cannot separate love from truth. I believe it is here that he points out the great modern heresy, relativism. He has commented on this defect over and over again. It was the thrust of his observations during his recent visit to the United States. I quote from the encyclical: "Without truth love degenerates into sentimentality.. Love becomes an empty shell, to be filled in an arbitrary way, it falls prey to contingent subjective emotions and opinions. The word, love, is abused and distorted, to the point where it comes to mean the opposite... Truth, by enabling men and women to let go of their subjective opinions and impressions, allows them to move beyond cultural and historical limitations and to come together in the assessment of the value and substance of things."

How often is it heard that it does not matter what you believe. It's the doing that matters. Or it does not matter what religion you belong to as long as you love. But since love cannot exist apart from truth, moral living does matter as does the particular religion you "belong" to. Christianity without truth, even with a pool of good sentiments, would be of little relevance. How can one relate to another if the terms of the relationship, even in a marital relationship, are not defined? Love without truth is one of the major reasons why many marriages fail. Love does not solve serious relational issues.

Following up on the teaching of Paul VI in Populorum Progressio he emphasizes the importance of the Gospel for building a human society according to freedom and justice, with emphasis on the unification of humanity and the Christian ideal of a single family of people in solidarity and fraternity. He also warns again of the danger of entrusting the entire process of human development to technology alone. He also refers to "Humanae Vitae", even as it addresses the unitive and procreative elements of sexuality, as well as "Evangelii Nuntiandi", as developing the fully human meaning of development that the Church proposes.

There are many elements in this encyclical that deserve serious attention. It could be called the "Rerum Novarum" of our day. He concludes; "A humanism which excludes God is an inhuman humanism."

Ministry Announcements

Word:

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.)

Email to rguiiao@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

Mission:

Nursing Home Visit - every 2nd Saturday of the month.

56 Hamilton Plaza, Passaic, NJ 07055

September 12 - Solo Parents

Soup Kitchen:

Missionary of Sisters of Charity

60 Jay Street, Newark NJ

Every 4th Saturday of the Month

Sept 26 - ME 25

Jerry/DimplesCANLAS

Ramie/EmmieESPINA 732-817-1050

Teachings

Sept 5 (Sat.)

Encounter with Jesus - LSS 32

Healing and Deliverance – LSS 29 & 30

Shepherds Refresher Course –

All LSS 33 shepherds

Sept. 18 (Fri.)

CMP 1 – Singles

Mark 10 Teaching

John 6 Teaching

Youth Teaching

Sept 19 (Sat.)

CMP 1 – LSS31

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1 pm-6pm at St. Mary's

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Week Ending - Aug.28, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	3,718	130,537
Expenses	11,918	146,378
Surplus/(Deficit)	(8,200)	(15,841)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Counsels from page 1

materially poor and there is no place in the Church for those who are not. For the Church must, like her Savior, embrace everyone of every economic class. It means a Church that embraces and practices the evangelical spirit of poverty, which combines detachment from possessions with profound trust in the Lord as the sole source of salvation. While the Lord does not want anyone to be materially poor, He wants His followers to be "poor in spirit." The "Church of the Poor" is one whose members and leaders have a special love for the poor. This special love is a love of preference for the poor. It is not an exclusive or excluding love in such a way that there is no room in a Christian's heart for those who are not poor. For always, the Christian's heart must love all persons whether just or unjust and must have room in the heart even for an enemy. Christ was able to love well-to-do people like Zaccheus and the family of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. It is one where, the very least of the poor are not discriminated against because of their poverty, and they will not be deprived of their "right to receive in abundance the help of the spiritual goods of the Church, especially that of the Word of God and the sacraments from the pastors. It means that the pastors and other Church leaders will give preferential attention and time to those who are poor, and will generously share their own resources in order to alleviate their poverty and make them recognize the love of the Lord for them despite their poverty. It is one that will be in solidarity with the poor. It will collaborate with the poor themselves and with others to lift up the poor from their poverty. It will also mean that the Church will not only evangelize the poor, but that the poor in the Church will themselves become evangelizers. Pastors and leaders will learn to be with, work with, and learn from the poor. They will not cherish in their hearts ambition for titles and honors but the words of Jesus in their hearts, "*The greatest among you will be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; whoever humbles himself will be exalted*". (Mt 23:11-12) Rather, they will live simply in order to share what they have with the needy. They will follow the example of Christ, and thus set an example for others. (PCP II 122-136) For the Promise of the Week says: "*God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him.*" (Jas 2:5)

DIRECTIONS:

- Be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit for guidance in ministering to others.
- Be open to criticism, correction, or affirmation.
- Minister to the needs of others by listening.

Community Calendar

WHAT: BASIC PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR

WHEN: September 12, 7:30 AM - 7:00 PM
September 13, 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM

WHERE: RAMADA LIMITED

2989 Hamilton Blvd

South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Tel. # 908 753 8900

Registration fee is \$40.00 to cover food, snacks and booklet handouts.

Please contact: Pastoral@BLDnewark.com

Oct 2-4 – LSS#33

St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway

Oct 24-25 – John 6 Crossing #10

St. Mary's Church, Rahway

**Contacts: Boyet/Zita Cruz, Gene/Ruby Ymbong,
Ernest/Nellie Sun**

Special Announcements

Reasons to Believe

Dr. Scott Hahn Conference

September 12

Kellenbergh H.S. Auditorium

Admission - \$15.00 advance

\$20 at the door

Contact: Toti Conforti (516) 385-8963

toticon@aol.com

Life Issues Seminar 2009

October 3, 2009, Saturday

Queen of Peace Church,

North Arlington, NJ

For general admission - \$10.00

Students - \$5.00

Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055

Sagip Ka Eskuela program

(Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)

Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1231

Rubenluz@verizon.net

Cez/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-3660

Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

**May the blessing and favor of the Lord
be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays
and wedding anniversaries this week.**



NEWS

Prayer Counseling Seminar

"How can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove that splinter from your eye,' while the wooden beam is in your eye?" (Mt 7:4)

Are you looking to hone your shepherding skills? Attend the next Basic Prayer Counseling seminar!

On September 13-14, 2009 forty-seven hopeful participants attended the Prayer Counseling I seminar at Ramada Hotel in South Plainfield, NJ. They were mostly from the Newark district, with one attendee from Charlotte and two members from Trenton. The group was made up of a mixture of MEs, SEs, and SPEs. The seminar was taught by certified Prayer Counselors of BLD- Newark: Lee dela Fuente, Noel & Letty Trillana, Aimee Pena, and Lith Golanco, who is formerly of BLD-Newark and Trenton, and now serving in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The two-day seminar was based on the pioneering work of John and Paula Sandford, founders of Elijah House. Primarily pastoral in nature, it focuses on transforming lives through prayer. A key principle of the techniques used is the probing into the "bitter roots", the root causes that feed into broken relationships, habitual sins, and many other "bad fruits."

A follow-up seminar, Prayer Counseling II is planned for February 2010. If you need more information on upcoming Prayer Counseling seminars, please contact our Pastoral Ministry coordinators, Sam and Rory Olaso.

Praise be to God for He is good all the time!

Lord's Provision Week Ending Sep. 11, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	4,849	138,766
Expenses	7,485	156,307
Surplus/(Deficit)	(2,636)	(17,541)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COUNSELS

The Servant of All

WORD: Wis 2:12,17-20; Ps 54:3-6,8; Jas 3:16-4:3; Mk 9:30-37

ORDER: *"Anyone who wishes to be first shall be the last of all and servant of all." (Mk 9:35)*

THEME: We are open to the Father's will when we defer to one another in humble service

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday's gospel, Jesus turns the social ranking system upside down when He says: *"Anyone who wishes to be first shall be the last of all and servant of all."* (Mk 9:35). He told this to His disciples after He knew that the disciples were discussing who was the greatest among them. To Jesus, those who hold the highest positions must be willing to take the lowest place. And to further demonstrate what He meant, Jesus took a child, placed it in the midst of them, put his arms around it and said to them: *"Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the one who sent me."* (Mk 9:37)

In Jesus' time, a child, like servants, was a non-person, someone the world overlooked or ignored. Children neither had legal rights nor social status. Children were symbols for anyone of lowly status that was helplessly in need. They represented the weakest and most vulnerable. Why did Jesus use the example of a child as a model for his disciples to follow? Because a child is direct and sincere; a child rushes in where angels fear to tread; a child is unembarrassed asking and answering any kind of question; a child will remain loyal and honest. The child in us must live for us to be a disciple of Jesus.

The second reading from the letter of James describes at length the childlike qualities that are expected of Jesus' disciples. St. James

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

*"God is my helper; the Lord sustains my life."
(Ps 54:6)*

Proof of God's Love

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Our calling has three distinct stages, which we can see in the lives of many called before us, to become mature fishers of men who greatly impact God's Kingdom. First, there is the gestation period. This is the development stage of our lives. It may involve years of normal work experiences. You may be a Christian during this time, or you may be following after worldly success as a non-Christian. Paul spent years in religious and political training, persecuting believers most of his early life. Moses spent years in the court of Pharaoh and 40 years tending flocks in the desert. Jesus spent 33 years living at home and working in His father's carpentry business. However, all these years were part of their preparation.

Next is the crisis stage. Sooner or later, God calls you into relationship with Him. For many, like Paul, it comes through dramatic encounters like being knocked off a horse, blinded and spoken to personally by God. Some people are more difficult than others to reach and so require this level of crisis. This is a time when major changes are required by God so that you follow Him fully. It can be a time in which God harnesses years of experience for a new life purpose. Paul's earthly experiences would be used in his calling to the religious and political leaders of his day. For Moses, the burning bush experience would begin his journey in which he would discover his ultimate calling after years of preparation. For Peter, it was his denial of Jesus three times that allowed him to face his shallow commitment to Christ. For Jesus, it was the cross. These were the benchmark turning points for men who made an impact on their world.

Last is the fruit-bearing stage. In it, God's power is manifested in your life like never before. God takes all your experiences and uses them to build His Kingdom in and through your life. Your obedience to this final call results in fruitfulness you could never imagine without the long preparation process. For Abraham, it resulted in becoming the father of many nations. For Paul, it resulted in bringing the gospel to the Gentiles. And for Peter, it meant becoming the rock the Church was built on. For Jesus, it was salvation for the entire world.

What does God want to achieve through your life? God has a plan that is so incredible you cannot comprehend it. It requires only that you love Him and follow Him. Then you will become fishers of men like the world has never known.

Selfless Service=Love in Action

The core of our service to God and others is love. Without true love, nothing really matters. The Son of Man (Bar enosh in Aramaic) and a suffering servant gave us numerous examples and parables to teach us real selfless service or love in action. He healed the sick, drove away demons, fed thousands of people, forgave the sinners and ultimately died for us. His disciples also followed Jesus in giving service, like the converted women, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susana, who provided for them (Jesus and the twelve apostles) out of their resources, when Jesus and His apostles went from town to town to preach the good news of the kingdom of God. (Luke 8:3)

How do we imitate Jesus in our BLD ministry? Sometimes we are guilty of the so-called "lip service." How easy it is to say "Yes, I will do it" or "Yes I will attend" but at times we fail to live up to our promises. Are we "doers of the Word" (Psalm 15:1a) We can also learn from the other creatures of God: A story was told that a forest ranger in Yosemite, California found a burned dead bird during a forest fire. He pushed the charred bird and found two live chicks under her dead body. By instinct, the parent bird refused to fly away from the fire, instead protected the offsprings with her body. Such an example of selfless love!

Are we willing to die to ourselves in the service of God and His creations? Do we do it by instinct or by training or by example or by the grace of God? We all need the Grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to enable us to love and serve without reservations.

How hard is this challenge? Do we have to do extraordinary things or just do ordinary things extraordinarily well with love? "I do not busy myself with great matters, with things too sublime for me." (Psalm 131:1) As we continue to do our respective ministries, doing ordinary tasks like cleaning after worship, cooking for the Soup Kitchen, singing in Praise, giving a warm handshake or a welcome to our visitors, we pray with a stalwart trust in God's mercy to give us generosity of hearts. In the spirit of servanthood and humility, we hope to commit ourselves in selfless service to God and the community, giving our 4 Ts: time, talent, treasure and true love in action.

**MAKE COVENANT NEWS
A PART OF YOUR
COVENANT LIFE.**

APOLOGETICS

Defend your faith

“Always be prepared to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope that is in you, but do it with gentleness and reverence.” (1 Pet 3:15-16)

Apologetics is a branch of theology that explains and defends our faith. Of equal preponderance, we are exhorted to do it in a loving and gentle manner. It is vital in today's culture to first know our faith, teach it to our children, and defend with reverence as commanded in scripture. Younger generations today are readily influenced by the relentless corruptive propaganda portrayed by the secular environment and media. According to Peter Kreeft, students are unable to obtain reasons to defend their faith primarily because they are not getting the faith to begin with. What is remarkable is that more than ¾ of the well-educated Catholic students “don't know how to get to heaven.” Often they would cite to “be nice, don't hurt people” but rarely mentions Jesus as The Way. Our faith has become relative to the norms of what is falsely perceived as acceptable at work and in one's social network. A digression from such would make one unpopular and may be ostracized from the group. In other words, our faith is contained in a locked box. Jesus only becomes relevant & important when He fits in our lifestyle of convenience.

With the advent of war, economic crisis, and the constant threat in national security, one could easily contest the fact that if God is so good, why is the world so bad? The problem of evil is one vital objection to God's existence. Apologists highlight the fact that “evil is not a thing, an entity, or being, nor did it originate from God.” Everything God created “is good” (Gen). Evil is not a thing, rather a wrong choice. It did not come from The Creator but the creature freely choosing deviant sinful behavior. Remove sin and selfishness and you have heaven on earth (Kreeft). Furthermore, the cause of physical evil is spiritual evil- suffering due to sin. God's solution to sin is His only Son, Jesus, on the cross, to put our “upside-down” world “right side up.”

Thomas Aquinas could only find two objections to belief in God. One we mentioned as the problem of evil, the second is the miraculous-the supernatural. Here science exhausts itself in attempt to explain all things empirically, otherwise it just doesn't exist. A good example of such is that science would refute our belief of a virgin birth. Christianity, of all other religions, is the only one that absolutely demands belief in miracles- otherwise you are simply not a Christian. Our faith is in The Good News of Incarnation, Resurrection and Ascension. These are not fictitious beautiful anecdotes; they are eternal Truths. Without The Resurrection, our faith is of naught.

So, do not be afraid to defend your faith or to be unpopular, even against the intelligent and well-educated. Beyond any finite human reasoning is the transcendent Truth, and beyond all Truth there is God.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD:

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to word@BLDNewark.com

MISSION:

Nursing Home Visit – Volunteers Needed, Every 2nd Saturday of the Month, Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055
Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340;
nongb601@aol.com; teres202@aol.com
Soup Kitchen - Missionary of Sisters of Charity
60 Jay Street, Newark NJ, Every 4th Saturday of the Month, Sept 26 - ME 25
Jerry/Dimples CANLAS; Ramie/Emmie ESPINA 732-817-1050
Medical - Feb. 22-25, 2010, Mauban, Quezon
Contact: Mosty/Ling Garcia, 908-659-8940 or 732-547-1917

ISIAH 58:

Sagip Ka Eskuela program (Save a School Child)
Bring your old or unused School Supplies
St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)
Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1231
Rubenluz@verizon.net
Cez/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Oct 2-4 – LSS#33

St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway

Please pray for the Lambs, Shepherds and LSS servants.

Aspirants Retreat

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ
Contacts: Jovy/
Emily Lucero 732-207-9422 jovluc@aol.com, Ed/Eydie Unay 973-222-1342 esunayvmd4@cs.com

Oct 23-25 – John 6 Crossing #10

St. Mary's Connell Hall, Rahway

Applications available - www.bldnewark.com

Contacts: Boyet/Zita Cruz, Gene/Ruby Ymbong, Ernest/Nellie Sun

Nov 13-15 – ME#34

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ
Contact – Nong & Tricia Bustos 732-591-1340

Gary & Mil Camacho – 732-821-4507

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Counsels *from page 1*

calls these characteristics the good fruit of divine wisdom: pure, peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. While these are the qualities of a child, St. James and the Book of Wisdom in the first reading are in agreement that they are possessed by the adult. Without the good fruit of divine wisdom, the adult will turn into a monster guilty of conflicts, disputes, wars, murder, envy, quarreling, and fights. Without the fruit of righteousness, the adult will resort to "all kinds of vile behavior" that are hideous consequences of jealousy and strife, of covetousness and self ambition.

The message of this Sunday readings is so powerful because it is real. And it is not hard for any of us to put ourselves in this scenerio. Who amongst us does not wrestle with ego and become competitive even among friends, even with siblings, or our co-workers in the Community that we serve? If the disciples of Jesus during His time on earth thought about greatness, or who was the most important among them, how can we be different?

For example, it is not hard for any community member to think that being a DSL or a member of the DCS or Tri-cord or Core Group or Ministry Coordinator could be a position of honor and power? And as such it could blind any one assuming that position to lord it over others who are in a lesser or no position. It is a very possible occurrence because of the likelihood that what triggered the disciples of Jesus to think of who was the greatest among them was their proximity to Jesus - the Teacher, the Master, the Messiah, the Son of God – thus making them arrogant and power-hungry. Instead of using responsibility, influence and power to relieve suffering and inspire greatness in others, they fell into the trap of using them to elevate themselves. It is also not impossible for any of us to feel envious or jealous of others who are "in position of honor" so that if mixed with selfish ambition, as St. James wrote, that it could result to "disorder and every foul practice" in a community. The most stubborn obstacle to Christian living is the ego.

It is for this reason that Jesus taught us how to be truly great: to be the last of all and the servant of all. Also by identifying Himself with a child, Jesus sows what He Himself is, without pretense: The Lord and Master certainly, but as one who serves. Following Him means we need to be humble, obedient and teachable, as He was. As His present-day disciples through the BLD Community, we must conduct ourselves in the same manner and rejoice at being welcomed as lowly person, not seeking to cut an impressive figure or to assert ourselves. To follow Jesus is to bend down to our brethren, to be ready to die to ourselves a thousand pieces, to be everything to every one in the hope of saving some, to undervalue nothing that pertains to Christ.

As the servants of all are entrusted with a function we must consider ourselves and be considered by others "servants of Christ", stewards of the mysteries of God," of whom it is required that we be found trustworthy. (1 Cor. 4:1-2). This responsibility entails duties, but does not give any right to material advantages or honors. (1 Tim. 3:1)

DIRECTION:

- 1. Free yourself from jealousy and self-ambition as you serve the Lord.**
- 2. Let the fruit of the Holy Spirit be made manifest in your works.**

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

DSL-DCS-DLC Recollection

by Fr. Paul Lehman

Sep. 19, 2009, Saturday 9-5pm

St. Mark's Church, Rahway, NJ

For: DSL, DCS, all DLC

DLC Meeting is scheduled shortly after the recollection.

A Date with Jesus Retreat (Singles)

Sep. 26, 2009, Saturday 8:30-5:30pm

St. Mary's Connell Hall, Rahway N.J.

Retreat Master: Fr. P. Lehman/ Deacon B. David

Contacts: Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo arlenemanny@gmail.com,

Pauline Montemayor prmontemayor@gmail.com, Carol Manguiat

cmanguiat@gmail.com, Eric Cruz jcrucer@gmail.com

BLD's Annual Dinner Dance

Oct. 17, 2009, 6:30-11:30pm

Veterans Memorial Hall, 600 Washington Ave., Manville NJ

Contacts: Dondon/Hermie Tenchavez, 732-822-6340; Joe/

Trudy Aboyme 908-252-0904; Aboymejoe@yahoo.com;

gaboyne@somerset-healthcare.com

Proceeds to benefit all BLD Mission works

Life Issues Seminar 2009

A Call to Action: Overcoming the Culture of Death

Oct. 3, 2009, Saturday 11am-5pm

Queen of Peace Church,

North Arlington, NJ

Speakers: Damon Owens & Robert George

General Admission - \$10.00, Students - \$5.00

Deadline for registration – Sept. 25

Contact: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055

TEACHING MINISTRY

Sept. 18 (Fri.)

Christian Maturity Program 1 – Singles

Mark 10 Teaching

John 6 Teaching

Youth Teaching

Sept 19 (Sat.)

Christian Maturity Program 1 – LSS31

Sept 25 (Fri)

Encounter with Jesus – SPM

Golden Years Teaching

Intercessory Formation Teaching

Service Formation Teaching

NOTE:

Friday Teachings – after worship

Saturday Teachings – 1-6pm at St. Mary's



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 39

Bulletin Edition

Oct. 2, 2009

Date With Jesus

The best date I've ever had as of yet happened this past Saturday, 9/26, in the basement of St. Mary's in Rahway, NJ. It was A Date with Jesus that started at 9 am and ended around 5:30 pm. Other singles were there as well including some from Trenton but He truly knows how to make me feel special that it felt like it was just me and Him.

This year's theme was the 10 Commandments. The day started with breakfast and then powerful morning worship with the Blessed Sacrament exposed. The worship was led by the DWJ's coordinators Paul Lazaro, Louie Lomuntad, Melissa Martinez and Pauline Montemayor. Deacon Bong and Fr. Paul gave informative talks about the commandments, splitting the first 3 in the morning and the remaining 7 in the afternoon with lunch in between. We were divided into groups after the talks where we shared about our reflections. Later, Glenn Canlas gave a heart-felt sharing on how he came to appreciate God's commandments with the experiences he went through in his life. It ended with the Lord's amazing grace and forgiveness through the dissolving of the sins/burdens and confession.

The day was definitely affirming, much-needed and so awesome. Having been to other retreats before, it was nice not to know what to expect. He is full of surprises after all! Thank You for the renewed peace, love and joy you stirred within my heart this past weekend, thank You Jesus for a wonderful date.

"Day of Recollection" with Fr. Trevor

Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we are dead in the water. More emphasis on that simple fact could not have been made any stronger than it was over this past weekend with the visit of Fr. Trevor Nathasingh from Trinidad/Tobago. Fr. Trevor, who is a convert from a Muslim Hindu background, re-evangelized us cradle Catholics & re-stirred the flames of Holy Spirit's fire in us charismatics who had the privilege of being present at St. Antoninus this past Saturday. "Spectacular", was how one of the grateful attendees described it. The day just flowed starting with the Patriotic Rosary, proceeding to anointed

Continued on page 4

BLD's Annual Dinner Dance

Oct. 17, 2009 6:30-11:30 pm

Veterans Memorial Hall, 600 Washington Ave., Manville NJ

Contacts: Dondon/Hermie Tenchavez 732-321-7627

Joe/Trudy Aboyme 908-252-0904 gaboyme@somerset-healthcare.com

Proceeds will benefit BLD Mission activities.

To advertise on the souvenir journal, please email

fundraising@bldnewark.com or visit www.bldnewark.com

COUNSELS

Fidelity

WORD: Gn 2:18-24; Ps 128:1-6; Heb 2:9-11; Mk 10:2-16

ORDER: "Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate." (Mk 10:9)

THEME: We are faithful to Christ when we defend the sacredness of our vocation.

REFLECTION:

It was a beautiful sight to watch seven siblings marching in chronological order according to age with their respective families in tow. At the end of the march, there were 42 family members, including spouses and 26 grandchildren, gathered around the altar to celebrate the sanctity of a marriage that has lasted fifty years. The San Agustin church was full of family and friends, bearing witness to the couple's faithfulness to Christ.

A golden wedding anniversary is always a touching occasion because it is a testimony of the inviolability of marriage in a society that has allowed separation and divorce to flourish. The gospel of Mark declares, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate." (Mk 10: 8-9)

The pressures of modern living have placed great strain on the institution of marriage and many people no longer consider it a lifetime commitment. From the beginning of creation, however, the Lord's order was clear. The 1st reading brings us back to God's intention of creating man and woman, and His original vision for the human race, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him... That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one flesh." (Gen 2:8, 24)

As disciples of Christ, divorce is not an option for us, since it deviates from the very purpose for which God created the human person. The break-up of a marriage does not reflect the will of the Creator and becomes an act of disobedience to God's commandment. To follow Jesus, we need to love the other, even if the other does not seem to deserve that love and whether or not the relationship has turned bitter.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Blessed are you who fear the Lord who walk in his ways!
For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork, blessed shall you be, and favored." (Ps 128: 1-2)

Please remember to wear your IDs at all times.

Fr. Dennis, On BLD

I once crossed the path of BLD years ago. At that time, I was impressed. The impression never left me.

A year ago in July, I arrived in Rahway, I heard BLD was here. That was a consolation to me. I had the opportunity to attend a Friday night worship. That experience was beautiful. That night, I thanked God that BLD was established here. My appreciation and admiration for BLD has only grown since then.

Joy and love for Christ and His Church is strong and powerful among the members of the community and it is contagious. The warm open embrace everyone is given at any BLD gathering is an incarnation of the observation Christ desired for His people. "See how they love one another."

The community finds joy in the person of Jesus and the life He invites us to enjoy. The difference Jesus makes when we share our lives with Him reflects the fruits of the Holy Spirit. I have often encouraged people to use the Fruits of the Holy Spirit as the basis for an Examination of Conscience. It helps us to discern the authentic movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives and activities.

The primacy of Jesus creates a spirit of detachment that characterizes BLD. This has to be one of the reasons why I have noticed that morale is always high and enthusiasm is strong. This detachment eliminates things that hinder our efforts to live the life that does bring joy. Anything not of Jesus just is not worth getting a second thought, material things, attachments, feelings and emotions are included here.

I think this is important. We live in a country where Mother Teresa once observed that we were poor people. We were people who showed that we were lonely.

This can only be true because we are attached to things that are not satisfying us. Christians must be capable of detachment. It is the only way we can observe the great commandment of loving God the way He deserves to be loved and loving each other the way God wants us to love each other.

Any association with BLD will soon show a person that if anything in life or ministry presents a "closed door" look for another door to be open or another indication that God might want us to be moving in a different direction. I have never heard or seen the slightest clinging onto anything that might have been expected or predetermined.

A missionary priest finished a sabbatical year in the U.S. The night before he was to return to his assignment, I asked what his impression of the Church here was. He told me he was surprised to experience that many of us came across as angry people.

It seems that many of us come across as angry because of a problem we have with the Church not being willing to do things "my way". We are attached to ourselves, our own opinions and expectations. Many are resentful at the need to follow the Pope and the bishops. We come across as though they should obey us. In other words, we have a problem with detachment.

I think that among the many gifts that God has cultivated in BLD, joy and detachment are two that go hand in hand and might be a needed witness for the members of the Church here in the U.S.

On many occasions, I have acknowledged the debt that is owed to BLD. While I speak only about my own experience here in Rahway, I hope that others will see the application to the Church universally. BLD has made wonderful contributions to the structure of St. Mary's and St. Mark's parish communities. We are strengthened in our ability to preach the Gospel and live the witness Jesus commands because of what is shared with →

Listen with your Heart

"I urge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose." 1 Cor 1:10

St. Paul's message in Corinth seems simple enough. Yet as unique individuals fashioned in God's image and likeness, it is also one of the hardest teachings that we, as Catholics, find hard to practice. Beneath the layers of traditions and customs lie our own weakness for intolerance and self-righteousness. Sometimes, even with the best of intentions, we find ourselves in disaccord with our family, co-workers and even in our own community.

But the Lord understands our failings and did not leave us unequipped. He gave us the gift of prayer. Prayer brings us closer to our God. It is grace which enables us to establish a personal dialogue with our Lord. In prayer, we are able to express our gratitude, frustrations and petitions. On the other hand, we should likewise be able to listen. It is a true blessing to be able to listen and understand what our Lord wants to tell us. ***"A clean heart create for me, God; renew in me a steadfast spirit."*** (Ps51:12) Listening not only entails hearing the weekly homily on Sunday mornings. We must empty ourselves of matters that distances God from our hearts. An insatiable hunger for God's word is a grace that we should all pray for. It is by immersing ourselves in His Word and using it as a framework for our lives that we are able to shape our everyday decisions to be in accordance with our Lord Jesus Christ's teachings. We then see all persons and circumstances in a different light. It is by doing this that we can see a glimpse of how Jesus sees all of us, as His beloved whom He died for to save from sin.

If we listen with our hearts and speak with gentleness, it would not be difficult to develop a community of mutual respect, compassion and humility. We may all have different experiences and come from different backgrounds but we should not be divided in the mission that God has called us to. ***"Jesus said to him, 'Do not prevent him, for whoever is not against you is for you.'"*** (Lk 9:50) This way, we can move as one body, one church, serving all in God's vineyard.

us by BLD.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit given to BLD really are given to be used by the entire Church. The genuine living out of these gifts by BLD is what God deserves from the community. The sharing of these gifts is why God has spread the community far and wide. Brothers and sisters are able to look and see the wonderful things God has done for His people in BLD and know it is an experience awaiting anyone who really lives what Jesus has revealed.

You Will See Greater Things Than This

“Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree?” (Jn 1:50a)

Reflecting on this question from our Lord Jesus to Nathanael, it made me wonder whether Jesus was chiding Nathanael for being gullible. Just before this exchange, Jesus tells us that Nathanael has “no duplicity in him”; and yet when Nathanael exclaims that Jesus is “the Son of God”, Jesus appears to question this response.

The Lord was not questioning Nathanael’s sincerity but making a promise to him that through his faith he will witness greater miracles. God promises each of us that we will see greater things. ***“You will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”*** (Jn 1:51).

God asks us to trust Him when He calls upon us to do something; trust that He has a greater plan for us than what we can see. For me there are times when I had relied more on my own self in determining what the right thing to do was. Then God in His goodness showed me what could have been if only I trusted in Him and obeyed His voice. It is one of the evils of the modern world that we were taught to rely on our selves, forgetting that while we do have the free will to choose our direction, it is by accepting the will of God and letting Him work in our lives that His wonderful plan comes to be.

I know that for me it is because I am sometimes afraid of what God’s plan for me is, and sometimes it is because I do not understand what God’s plan is. God had once asked me to share my bagel with a homeless person. But I thought I knew better and tried to bargain with God. Of course, I did not hear a reply, but soon after I realized that the reason He had asked that I give away the bagel was because there was a feast waiting for me. How I would have enjoyed that if only I had followed God’s will!

Do I really need to understand what His plan is? I don’t really need to; I may not be capable of understanding, I only need to trust. ***“For His ways are above our ways, His thoughts above our thoughts.”*** (Is 55:9) God asks us to trust Him because His plan for us is good. He tells us not to be afraid and also to love Him ***“with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength”*** (Mk 12:30). As His plan for us unfolds, we begin to understand how wonderful it truly is. Through our faith and trust we see God’s great works in our lives.

Counsel (continued from page 1)

This command is not easy to follow and many might well question it.

In his address to the Roman Rota on January 30, 2003, Pope John Paul II discussed the crisis of marriage in society today. The Pope stated, “Influenced as it is by models of life that are too often presented by the mass-media, today’s mentality asks, ‘Why must one spouse always be faithful to the other? Why it is always necessary to love the spouse even when so many apparently justifying reasons would lead one to leave?’”

To this question, His Holiness provides an answer, “Many replies can be given; among them the very powerful ones are the good of the children and the good of the entire society, but the most fundamental reply comes through the recognition of the objectivity of being spouses, seen as a reciprocal gift, made possible and guaranteed by God himself. The ultimate reason, therefore, for the duty of faithful love is none other than what is the basis of the divine covenant with the human person: God is faithful. To make possible the fidelity of heart to one’s spouse, even in the hardest cases, one must have recourse to God in the certainty of receiving assistance.”

In the spirit of faith, we are reminded to keep our marriage together regardless of the difficulty it may entail. It’s our way of participating in the suffering of Christ, trusting in His righteousness. Our spouse is a gift of God, for whom the other must sacrifice herself/himself. Just as Christ gave himself for all, each person must give himself or herself totally to the other, bearing with one another. We’re compelled to resist the temptation of getting rid of the burden of the other person by putting an end to the marriage. St. Paul admonishes the Galatians, ***“Bear the burden of one another’s failings; then you will be fulfilling the law of Christ.”*** (Gal. 6:2)

Each of us has a special calling, be it to marriage, a holy life as a single person, a solo parent, or a religious servant of the Lord. Each path brings with it, many obstacles, imperfections, trials and disappointments along the way. It begs the question, how do we make it to fifty years of marriage? ***“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”*** (Rev 2:10)

Lord, You have called us to various vocations in life according to Your divine plan. In these modern times, we are besieged with circumstances that run contrary to Your teachings. Please grant us the favor of remaining faithful and committed to our calling. We pray most especially for the institution of marriage, that amidst the unrelenting attacks from those who would undermine it, we remain vigilant in proclaiming its sanctity, inviolability, and permanence. We claim victory in the name of Jesus Christ Your Son, Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

- ❖ Affirm and strengthen our covenantal pledges through participation in word sharing circles, disciples’ assembly and attendance in community teachings and retreats.
- ❖ Align and conform ourselves with the Church teachings and advocacy on family, pro-life, and other social issues

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVANGELIZATION SERVICES

BIBLE STUDY

Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin

St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish

St. Mary's School, Room 104, Every Friday from 7:30-8pm

Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His Word.

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)

Contacts: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1231

Rubenluz@verizon.net, Cezar/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-3660

Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

MARK 10

For the safety of our children, **all parents** of Mark 10 children are requested to **sign in and sign out** for their children. Please note: **drop off must be no earlier than 8 p.m. and pick-up must be no later than 10:45 p.m.** After 10:45 p.m., parents will be responsible for their children's safety.

We thank you in advance for your full cooperation in this very important matter.

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit

56 Hamilton Plaza, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Sat. of the month. Volunteers are needed.

Oct. 10 - Mission Ministry

Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**

Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

PRaise

To view Arch. Lagdameo's Eucharistic Celebration video, please visit: www.youtube.com/BLDPraise or www.youtube.com/ArchbishopLagdameo

SECRETARIAT

For replacement IDs and database updates, monthly picture-taking and updates will take place **every 4th Friday** at the auditorium

WORD

Share your walk, faith, transformation in the Lord with the Community through an article (450 words)

Email to wordeditors@bldnewark.com

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING SEPT. 25, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	4,358	146,737
Expenses	95	152,820
Surplus/(Deficit)	4,263	(6,083)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Aspirants Retreat - Oct. 09-11

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ

Contacts: Jovy/Emily Lucero 732-207-9422 jovluc@aol.com,

Ed/Eydie Unay 973-222-1342 esunayvmd4@cs.com

John 6 Crossing Retreat - Oct. 23-24

St. Mary's Connell Hall

Contacts: Boyet/Zita Cruz, Gene/Ruby Ymbong, Ernest/Nellie

Sun. Applications available @ www.bldnewark.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Oct 16 Christian Maturity Program I - **Singles**
Teaching - **Mark 10, John 6, Youth**

Oct 17 Christian Maturity Program - **LSS 31**
Encounter with Jesus - **LSS 32**
Growth in Prayer & New Creation Realities - **LSS 33**

Oct 23 Encounter with Jesus - **Solo Parents**
Teaching - **Intercessory & Service, Golden Years**

Oct 30 Intro to Intercession - **LSS 33**
MGT • Charismata - **LSS 31**

Note: Teachings on Fri: after worship, Sat: 1-6pm at St. Mary's

Day of Recollection ... (continued from page 1)

talks & analysis of what is going on around us in this intensely heightened spiritual battle we are now in. There was a video presentations on the identity & prophetic locutions of Ned Dougherty (who just "happened to show up for a visit to Fr. Paul on the preceding Thursday); a powerful short video on young people in CA using the gift of healing with spectacular results (Why not in NJ?) followed by a practicum on healing, an excellent presentation on the importance of small cell groups in a society where churches & the freedom to worship openly may not be so tolerated, & culminating in the powerful Eucharistic celebration. This day was powerful but it didn't end there. Fr. Trevor gave a rousing sermon the next day encouraging us to continue worshipping in the way we do at St. Antoninus, that every Sunday Mass should be like the one we enjoy there. He spoke of the critical need for the Holy Spirit to grace all the "ologies" seminarians are required to acquire. We need to pursue the Holy Spirit even more radically & urgently than we pursue "advanced degrees". We are talking about eternal realities here that no number of MAs, PhDs, etc. will give us access to. And that was the theme of the day, "Set Your Hearts on Heavenly Realities. . . NOW!" Prayer & fasting needs to be the order of the day, we need to be in serious & constant intercession, for the clergy & the hierarchy who are under intense attack. The Church to wake up & speak out on serious issues before they are railroaded into law. We are at war, but He is with us as is evidenced by the plethora of activity in the spiritual realm in terms of so many apparitions, locutions & miracles of healing & conversion that we heard about & witnessed. Truly this was a "spectacular", day. Critical for what we are living through now & what we need to be doing as Catholics to cooperate with God's plan at this time. USE the charismatic gifts He has given us as Fr. Trevor exhorted the Singles on Friday night. USE the gift of tongues in praise & worship. It opens the doorway to the rest of the gifts. Arm yourselves with the power of God & stand firm. There are CD's available but they in no way compare with being there.

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS - NJ / NY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 41

Bulletin Edition

October 16, 2009

NEWS

BLD Response to “Ondoy” Calamity

Typhoon “Ondoy” struck the capital region of the Philippines on the last weekend of September. Within hours, we received series of updates of the aftermath. An article by Tony Meloto in the Philippine Star, “The Best Filipinos in the worst of times” highlighted countless heroes during the onslaught of the typhoon. Despite the sadness and desperation that surrounded us, I see hope upon reading this article.

And how did our BLD community respond? During the Eucharistic celebration on Oct. 2, the DCS made an urgent appeal to the community for our fellow Filipinos whose lives suffered the wrath of “Ondoy” and the response was so heart-warming. While recession still lingers and several of our brothers and sisters in the community directly affected by our own economic turmoil here, shared much of what they have to give to our suffering brethren back home. That night, the community was able to gather \$6,193. Our District Leader together with our Council of Stewards without hesitation sent an initial donation of \$10,000 to BLD Manila.

You can still feel the compassion and the outpouring of love exhibited by members of this community towards our countrymen affected by this calamity. Last Friday Oct. 9, \$937 was collected. Our community will continue to collect and accept donations because we all know that the process of rebuilding takes a while. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, a man asked Jesus “Who is my neighbor?” When faith calls this community to act, it would never turn its back to neighbors near or far. For we are one body in our Lord Jesus Christ!

ASPIRANTS RETREAT- October 9-11, 2009

The aspirant’s Retreat is the culmination of the Christian Development Formation program in BLD; a prerequisite leading to full covenanting discipleship, which marks another milestone and represents a confirmatory step towards deeper commitment in the Aspirants’ discipleship with Jesus. Sponsored by the Teaching Ministry, with the zealous help of the sharers with their inspiring and fitting accounts; respective Class Shepherds, and auxies and above all God’s help and the Holy Spirit’s prodding, the retreat was held on October 9-11, 2009.

The road to covenanting involves a desire to follow, to have friendship with Jesus; friendship that demands the Aspirants adapt the scale values of Jesus, as the retreat’s, Spiritual Director, Fr. Lehman, explained. It demands total surrender of mind and heart and commitment to Him by nourishing and nurturing their spiritual lives through prayers and sacraments. The Lord invites the aspirants to come and see. To keep up and run the race with Him. To experience Him as the Lord and Savior, and see what may await the following Aspirants: Romy & Lyn Castillo - ME 25; Will & Melinda Reyes - ME 27; Aileen & Ferdie Umahon - ME 28; Cookie Montemayor - Singles & ME 30; Cris Escobinas - ME 2; Sonny & Nini Ungco, Emil & Thelma De Guzman, Victoria Catral, and David Malantic from Rockland Outreach.

COUNSELS

SERVANTHOOD

WORD: Is 53:10-11; Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22; Heb 4:14-16; Mk 10:35-45

ORDERS: “Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be the slave of all.” (Mk 10:44)
“Drink the cup that I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized.” (Mk 10:38)

THEME: We are faithful to Christ when we render unselfish service to community.

REFLECTION:

Imagine living in a kingdom, just like in the medieval times where the people pledged their loyalty to their king. One can imagine the luxurious life the King lived, being catered to and having people kneel whenever he entered a room. The trumpets would sound and all would stop what they were doing and pay reverence. Back then; all subjects serve their king, even unto death. The king has all the power, and he owns everything.

This Sunday’s Gospel presents to us a completely different king. In the Gospel, we have our King Jesus, the Son of Man, our Prince of Peace, and the King of all Kings, who tells His disciples - “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mk 10:45) Can you imagine Jesus, the one true King who came down from Heaven, serving us, His people? He was a humble King who, before His passion, death, and resurrection, served with great love, compassion and humility. Just as He taught His disciples, He teaches us and shows us what the meaning of true servanthood is.

Do we ever think about what we receive when we reach out to help others? Yes, there is that warm, fuzzy feeling. We feel good about ourselves. There is nothing wrong with that, but there is a lot more that we receive. We receive God’s Grace. We are given a dose of humility. We experience how our works, in the name of Jesus, are

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

“If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the Lord shall be accomplished through him.” (Is 53:10)

IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT OF THE WORLD

We all know that great joy can be found in simple things. Each season of the year brings its own distinct pleasures. I really love autumn weather... sleeping with the window open, waking up in time to see the first rays of light tinting the morning sky, grabbing a jacket on the way out the door and kicking up some leaves on the way to the car. It makes my spirit soar. Even God likes it. *"God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good."* (Gen 1:31) And on a glorious October morning, I feel that way, too. I look at everything He made and know it is good.

Sadly, day-to-day living in the 21st century is not always so wonderful. We often hear harsh words directed at others or at ourselves from people full of criticism, judgment, and abuse. We witness acts of hostility and arrogance, selfishness and greed. We are bombarded by images of war, immorality and materialism. It can be very discouraging. God is good and mankind is made in His image. So why is the world such a mess? St. Paul saw the same fault in the world he knew in the first century.

"Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made. As a result, they have no excuse; for although they knew God they did not accord him glory as God or give him thanks. Instead, they became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless minds were darkened." (Rom 1:20-21)

Often people have failed to recognize the glory of God in the world He created and failed to acknowledge the gift He gave us in Jesus, His Son. *"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."* (Jn 1:10)

On the eve of His death, with the Cross looming before Him, Jesus prayed in the hearing of His apostles the prayer recorded in John 17 in which He begged the Father to guard them and future generations of believers. *"I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word."* (Jn 17:14-15, 20)

Like Jesus, we do not belong to the world. We belong to God. *"In him we live and move and have our being"* (Acts 17:28). We are IN the world but not OF the world. To God be the Glory!

SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG

It has been said that biblical faith is a singing faith. Indeed the Holy Scripture is replete with verses on music and song. In Ephesians 5:19 we are to *'speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs'*. Distinctions between these 3 classes of songs have been made by bible scholars. A psalm is generally simpler, shorter, more testimonial and less theological than a hymn. A hymn would usually carry a greater sense of history; a psalm, or chorus, would be more personal. The spiritual song consists of spontaneous melodies and words, inspired by the Holy Spirit and sung around a chord or slowly moving chord progression. The genius of these three song forms is that each is uniquely appropriate to express a dimension of God's nature, and each will speak for a different kind of personality, as well as to the different facets of the individual.

The Book of Psalms, otherwise called *Psalter*, is a collection of 150 psalms, 73 of which were composed by King David. Psalm 98:1 urges us to *sing to the Lord a new song*. This psalm was written by David in celebration of his success in bringing the Ark of the Covenant to his throne in Jerusalem. This event was of utmost significance to David because the ark, which contained the tablets of the 10 commandments, was initially abandoned, when his attendant who was bringing it to Jerusalem, got killed along the way. It was only after David sought the help of God that he succeeded in bringing the ark to Jerusalem.

Just like David, we constantly seek the help of our Lord whenever we are faced with challenges. It is only fitting that we sing new songs of praise to our God whenever we receive His blessings. Every blessing needs to be celebrated and every celebration needs a new song for our Lord. After all, we are all His creatures and everything we have comes from the abundance of His heart. Songs for our Lord may not necessarily be joyous and triumphant. We may also sing songs which plead for His mercy and grace; or songs that praise and glorify Him.

A new song may come in the form of a fresh composition or an old hymn given a fresh musical dimension. New music gives us new vehicles of communication with God, and new ways to give God glory. New songs help us see different aspects of God and broaden our perspective of what it means to belong to the global body of Christ.

In BLD, we always aspire for excellence in worship every time we gather in church to worship our Lord. In pursuit of this goal, we sing new songs not only to further enhance our worship but also to express in new ways our great love for our good God whose mercies are new every morning.

Visit our website at
www.bldnewark.com

Born in God's Image and Likeness – we are Divine Image – Part II

I closed the first part of “Born in God's Image and Likeness with an invitation to reflect on the question, “To what degree have we lived and reflected God's divine image in us?” When we start trying to understand who we are “God's divine image” we come to know and meet our authentic self. This happens because we are searching and validating that we are God's divine image. We come to experience and know who really God is. God will start pointing to us our qualities that are different from His own divine image and likeness. God will help us see and realize our past experiences that made us different from Him. God will allow us know the people in our life that have caused our sufferings and pains that made us build walls to cover His image and likeness.

As we realize and meet these people in our life, through God's grace, we come to understand our true self. Finding our true self happens when we are able to totally surrender our whole being to God believing we are His image and likeness. It is when we totally surrender our self to God and come in terms with everyone who has hurt, brought us pains and sufferings that forced us build the walls that covered our real divine being. Coming in terms with everyone who took away our innocence means accepting the ungodly things they have done to us.

It is accepting that we can't totally blame them for what they did because they did not know better – they gave us what they think is best. This can happen when we try to see what they did in their own eyes. What kind of care giver did they have? Did their parents, uncles, aunts and even grandparents' do the same they did to us because like our own they did not know better? As we totally surrender our whole being to God and all these understanding, realization and coming to terms with our past happens, we experience God's love and peace. Our walls that covered our authentic being start to fall leading us to becoming as what God has created to be - His divine image and divine likeness.

This breaking down of walls is a life time experience. Slowly our thoughts, words and actions are seen by others as graces. Slowly we reflect God in our life. Slowly we truly become God's image and likeness. Slowly we are being prepared to be perfect in the eyes of God. All these is because we have allowed our selves to have an intimate personal relationship with God – as a best friend, a brother, a sister, a mother, a father or our God. This intimate personal relationship with God is the key to our spiritual growth to fullness of life – God's divine image and divine likeness.

**For Mass & Adoration schedule
within the U.S.A.**

www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Life In The Spirit Seminar Fall 2009

Dynamic - Life Changing Experience!

St. Antoninus Parish – Oct 21 to Nov 25 (Wed.) 8-10pm

337 So. Orange Ave., Newark, NJ 07103

**Baptism In The Holy Spirit On Christ The King
Sunday Nov. 22 – 10am Mass, Fr. Bill Halbing, Celebrant**

For pre-registration or more info contact George & MaryAnn McGehrin - 201-933-5983 or georgemaryann@hotmail.com

Franciscan Friars of the Renewal

Oct. 24, 2009 9:00am–5:00pm

Men's Retreat Day - The Courage of Pope John Paul II
A Challenge to Men to Live a Courageous Gospel Life
Most Blessed Sacrament Friary 375 13th Ave, Newark, NJ
Registration 8:00am, **Main Speaker–George Weigel**
Space is limited – To pre-register please call 973-622-6622

For More Information: www.franciscanfriars.com

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVANGELIZATION SERVICES

BIBLE STUDY - Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin

St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish

St. Mary's School, Room 104, Every Friday from 7:30-8pm

Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His Word.
For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's visit their
newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)

Contacts: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1213

Rubenluz@verizon.net, Cezar/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-
3660 Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

MARK 10

For the safety of our children, **all parents** of Mark 10
children are requested to **sign in and sign out** for their
children. Please note: **drop off must be no earlier than
8 p.m. and pick-up must be no later than 10:45 p.m.**

After 10:45 p.m., parents will be responsible for their
children's safety.. We thank you in advance for your full
cooperation in this very important matter.

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit

56 Hamilton Plaza, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Sat. of the month. Volunteers are needed.

Audie/Vule Chong 732-356-9056

Soup Kitchen

Missionary of Sisters of Charity, 60 Jay Street, Newark NJ

Every 4th Sat. of the month

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**

Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

PRaise

To view Arch. Lagdameo's Eucharistic Celebration
video, please visit: www.youtube.com/BLDPraise or
www.youtube.com/ArchbishopLagdameo

Counsels *from page 1*

transformed into servanthood. We want to do it again and again because we are experiencing God. At the end of our Mass, the priest tells us to go forth to love and serve the Lord. As the congregation replies, "thanks be to God," this does not mark the end, but rather a commencement. When we leave the church, we have Jesus physically living inside us, and we are to go forth and serve others. Servanthood is not something we only do on Friday worships, LSS weekends, or Sundays at mass. It is a way of life that we must live just as Jesus did.

Our community encourages us to be good stewards. Stewardship means the best use of our talents, time, and treasures. When Jesus, who is our King, commands us to serve in Matthew 28:19 when He tells us to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." The King is asking us to do the best we can, to use all the gifts we received, and to develop those gifts in service to His kingdom. What can I do best? What can you do best? When we give our best, serving one another, it pleases our King and He calls us "faithful servants". This affirms our theme for this Sunday's readings, which states that we are faithful to Christ when we render unselfish service to the community.

As we continue to devote our time and service to the Lord through the community, we must also endure sufferings. Budgeting our time with work, family, and community life can be a challenging task. Serving our fellow brothers and sisters can be difficult as well, where sometimes we may not agree on everything and judgments are cast. These are simply the bearings of serving in an imperfect community. The Lord encourages us in Isaiah in regards to the suffering servant – "...through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear." We must therefore remember our common goal in serving, to please the King. We must emulate His unique ways of serving – with love and humility.

In the Lord's promise, we are comforted to know the fruits of our service to the Lord. As we give our lives to Him as an offering for sin, we shall see our descendants in a long life and the Lord's will, shall be accomplished through us. We are the Lord's hands, His instruments, and His handiwork – used to do His will in the lives of others.

Heavenly Father, I ask You to set me free from fear and pride that I may be a worthy servant with love and compassion for others. May the fire of Your love inflame my heart that I may give generously and serve joyfully for Your sake. Through my service, may I place myself at the disposal of others by putting their interests first and by taking on their cares and concerns as if they were my own. Make me a servant O Lord, humble and meek. Make me a servant.

DIRECTIONS:

- **As you lead, do not lord it over the flock the Lord has entrusted to you.**
- **Serve as Jesus served**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

John 6 Crossing Retreat - Oct. 23-24

St. Mary's Connell Hall

Contacts: Boyet/Zita Cruz, Gene/Ruby Ymbong, Ernest/Nellie Sun. Applications available @

www.bldnewark.com

ME 34 - Nov 13-15

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ

Contacts: Nong/Tricia Bustos 732-591-1340
Gary & Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

SE 23 - Nov 20-22

Graymoor Retreat Center, Garrison, NY

Contacts: Carlos/Fe Masisado masisadoc@yahoo.com,
Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo arlenemanny@gmail.com

TEACHING SCHEDULE

- Oct 16 Christian Maturity Program I - Singles Teaching** - Mark 10, John 6, Youth
- Oct 17 Christian Maturity Program - LSS 31 Encounter with Jesus - LSS 32 Growth in Prayer & New Creation Realities - LSS 33**
- Oct 23 Encounter with Jesus - Solo Parents Teaching** - Intercessory & Service, Golden Years
- Oct 30 Intro to Intercession - LSS 33 MGT — Charismata - LSS 31**
- Nov 7 Advanced Intercession & Intro to Spiritual Warfare LSS 29 & 30 Christian Maturity Program II - LSS 31 Encounter with Jesus - LSS 32**
- Nov 20 Teaching** - Mark 10, John 6, Youth

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

	Actual	YTD
Collections	7,257	156,655
Expenses	(867)	159,203
Surplus/(Deficit)	8,124	2,549

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

ONDOY DISASTER RELIEF FUND
\$7,130



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 42

Bulletin Edition

October 23, 2009

NEWS

BLD Newark Dinner Dance Fundraiser

The Lord truly does not disappoint! On October 17, 2009, over three hundred BLD members, their family and friends, united together to joyously celebrate in BLD Newark's Thanksgiving event, the Annual Dinner-Dance at the VFW Hall in Manville, NJ. This event also serves as the one and only fundraiser for our community this year.

It was indeed heartwarming to see members of all ages, ranging from the children of John 6, Youth, Singles, and adults from Solo Parents and various ME classes represented on the dance floor. There was non-stop dancing for most of the night, from 7:00 to 11:30 p.m. Non- BLD members were given a glimpse of all the good works of BLD through a brief video presentation. The evening culminated with the announcement of the 50/50 Raffle winners, drawn by a special guest, Ms. Marianne de la Riva. In the true spirit of Stewardship, the winners of the raffle turned around and donated all their winnings back to the community!

Lord, You are the giver of all gifts, and once again You have shown this community that You will never forsake us. With grateful hearts we declare: *To God be the all the glory!*

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me in this, says the LORD of hosts: Shall I not open for you the floodgates of heaven, to pour down blessing upon you without measure?" (Mal 3:10)

COUNSELS

What do you want me to do for you?

WORD: Jer 31:7-9; Ps 126:1-6; Heb 5:1-6; Mk 10:46-52

ORDER: Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you.

THEME: We are faithful to Christ when we are persistent in our faith. (Perseverance)

REFLECTION:

The gospel story spoke about the blind man from Jericho named Bartimaeus. He was a beggar waiting at the roadside. During those times, the Jews believed that people with handicaps, especially the blind, lepers or other illnesses have been cursed by the Lord so they were treated with disdain. Even being poor was a sign that you had found disfavor with God, while the healthy and the rich were the recipients of God's blessings. So this blind man was left with no other means of support except to beg for alms from the passersby. When he heard the commotion from the crowd and learned that Jesus of Nazareth was in the area, he started to cry out saying "Jesus, son of David have mercy on me". But the people rebuked him and told him to be silent as if to tell him that he was not worthy to call on the Name of Jesus. But he cried out all the more "Son of David have mercy on me", something inside him was pushing him to persevere, inspiring him to ignore the advise of the crowd with hopes that Jesus would hear him. His perseverance paid off as Jesus stopped and called him.

These scripture passages may just pass our hearing because we can not fully appreciate how difficult it is not to be able to see. But as we have learned and experienced, the words in Scripture are inspired by God and are often directed to each of us. Let us consider for a moment, how many of us feel like this blind beggar - waiting for
Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Go your way; your faith has saved you."
(Mk 10:52)

Growing Rich in the Sight of God

“Then he told them a parable, there was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, ‘What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest? And he said, ‘This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods.’” (Luke 12:16-18)

When you hear the word **rich**, we assume money, treasure and worldly possessions. Jesus never condoned poverty and a subsistent lifestyle. In fact, God has gifted each of us specific talent(s), left them for us to cultivate and utilize. But why did God give different gifts to us?

Jesus wants all of us to grow rich but not in a worldly way and invites us to make ourselves rich spiritually in the sight of God by making use of our gifts. And the parable gives us some basic understanding in the true sense.

In retrospect, think about all the energy you spend in achieving riches and worldly possession. Think about how work consumes you or how the desire to succeed materially distracts you from Jesus. If you are going to grow rich in the sight of God, you must re-direct your energy towards the development of your spiritual life, not what takes you away from doing what is truly important. You must re-evaluate the time and the energy you are giving to God, to prayer and to your faith.

Luke 12:15 says, *“Take care to guard against all kinds of greed, for though one may be rich one’s life does not consist of possessions”*. **Greed** is the greatest motivator of dishonesty. The parable teaches how people consumed with material gain can lose their way and begin to behave greedily. You must recognize that God is the source of our blessings. Also, think about the many gifts you so often take for granted – life, family, friends, etc. Be mindful not of what is lacking, but rather of the abundant blessings God has bestowed upon you.

Return God’s blessings by **SHARING** kindly. In reality, your blessings are from God and are only lent to you. Thus, the obvious subsequent step is to share these blessings with others. True wealth lies in the giving away of your abundances especially to those in most need. Accumulating and keeping them for your own selfish reason makes you poor in the sight of God. Hence, take a moment and ask yourself: What are the treasures in my life? Do I recognize those treasures and give them ample time and enough energy they deserve? Do I give precedence to those treasures in my life?

Loyalty to Christ

In Luke 12:49-53 we glance into the distressed soul of Jesus journeying toward the cross “to set the earth on fire” through a painful “baptism” immersed in suffering, death, and a growing anguish until it is accomplished. He asks, “Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth?” No, I tell you but rather division.” Jesus’ message is a source of conflict and dissension and meets with acceptance or rejection even in today’s families. Is this the same compassionate Jesus who healed the blind, the deaf, the crippled, and the lepers? Is this the same loving, forgiving Savior who welcomed back this long lost prodigal daughter?

Oh Yes! It is the same Jesus, one who passionately longs for the time to come when He will baptize His followers with the ‘Holy Spirit’ and with “fire” destroying evil, purifying goodness, and strengthening weakness. It is the same Jesus who longs for that “fire to be enkindled,” for that “Holy Blaze” to spread throughout the world, for “God’s love” to be poured out into all hearts.” It is the same Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, who willingly sheds His blood unto death on the cross for the salvation of all mankind. “Opened hearts receive “the fire of His Spirit” and closed hearts “the fire of His justice”.

What about me? Who or what have I chosen to be first in my heart? Is it the Lord, my family, my job? God is a jealous God who wants us to love Him above all else remaining loyal to Him and His truth. Family ties are the strongest of bonds, but our loyalty to Christ must supersede them.

To follow Christ involves taking a stand and living out our faith even when it may cause division in the family. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life! A pregnant teenage daughter wants to have an abortion. A son old enough to vote decides on a political candidate with a 100% pro-abortion record. These issues need to be addressed no matter how difficult. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, but true peace is not the absence of conflict. Christ takes precedence over all our other relationships. Loyalty to Christ is loyalty to “truth” which is much more important than loyalty to “family unity”. We must make a choice to follow the Lord, to speak God’s word, to teach values consistent with God’s reign even when such actions may result in a division among family members who may not want to make the same choices to follow Christ. “Prince of Peace” may Your truth always reign in our hearts and set us free!

About Halloween

The Celts, 2,000 years ago lived in what is now Ireland. New year celebrated on November 1 marked the end of summer and harvest and the beginning of the long, dark winter, often associated with human death. The Celts, on the night of October 31, celebrated Samhain (pronounced sow-in), it was believed that the spirits of the dead returned to earth and that otherworldly spirits' presence facilitated Celtic priests' predictions about the future. These prophecies were an important source of comfort and direction during winter. During the celebration, they wore costumes, consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes.

By the 800s, Christianity influence spread into Celtic lands and parts of Europe, instead of trying to abolish these pagan customs, people tried to introduce ideas which reflected a more Christian world-view. Pope Boniface IV designated November 1 All Saints' Day, to honor saints and martyrs. It is believed today, as an attempt to replace the Celtic's festival of the dead with a church-sanctioned holiday. The celebration was called All-hallowmas (from Middle English Alholowmesse meaning All Saints' Day) and the night before it, Samhain, began to be called All-hallows Eve, eventually, Halloween.

In 1000 A.D., the church declared November 2 All Souls' Day, to honor the dead, celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels, and devils. Together, the three celebrations, the eve of All Saints', All Saints', and All Souls', were called Hallowmas. Halloween has since become a confusing mixture of traditions and practices from pagan cultures and Christian tradition.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Irish immigrants fleeing Ireland's 1846 potato famine came to America and helped popularize Halloween nationally. Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat". Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by early twentieth century because newspapers and community leaders encourage parents to eliminate anything "frightening" or "grotesque".

Halloween became a secular, but community-centered holiday, by the 1920s and 1930s. By the 1950s, Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young, due to the fifties' baby boom. A new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6.9 billion annually, the country's second largest commercial holiday.

Can pagan customs and superstitions of ancient peoples be "Christianized"? As believers, we are called to ***"Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil."*** (1 Thesalonians 5:21-22) Witches, monsters, ogres, vampires, ghosts, ghouls, goblins, devils and demons all portray evil. Christians are to ***"... Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness, rather expose them."*** (Ephesians 5:11) We are supposed to shine the light of Jesus Christ every day!

Counsel (from page 1)

relief in this highway of life. How often do we feel neglected, unappreciated, taken for granted or ignored by the people around us, even the ones closest to us, our spouses, children or family, and even by our community. We may even feel envious of those who have a lot of possessions and better positions. Most of us wait for the day when the Lord will hear our prayer, the day of our deliverance from the pains, worries and fears, when we can find comfort, peace, and security – the easy life. But often, doubt comes to us, leading us to ask: "are we worthy"? Will God listen to sinners like us? Many will stop praying, just remain quiet and hope for the best. We allow the crowd of doubts and lack of confidence to discourage us – unlike Bartimaeus who ignored their rebuke and persevered in calling on the Lord.

Perhaps we could relate to the crowd who rebuked the beggar. We are not like this blind man, we are not handicapped in any way. We have been blessed in many ways. We are doing well in our work, we are well provided for and we are well-respected and appreciated by our friends and co-workers. We are on some kind of easy street, knowing that our abilities and resources will be enough to see us through, no matter what comes up. Of course, we still rely on the Lord, and we tithe, we serve and do what we can to help others as long as these do not interfere with our defined comfort zones. And what are our comfort zones? These are the areas we hold sacred and non-negotiable not even for the Lord. Referring back to the gospel when Jesus called Bartimaeus, he threw away his most precious possession, the mantle that gave him comfort from the wind and the cold. He sprung up from his position and came to Jesus. Let us ask ourselves, what have we given up? Have we surrendered our comfort zones or attachments in order to follow the Lord more closely? Let us not forget that we cannot be with Jesus without sacrifice, we have to get rid of everything that gets in the way.

Jesus asked Bartimaeus, "what do you want me to do for you?" He answered "Master let me receive my sight" and Jesus said to him "Go on your way your faith has made you well". Immediately he received his sight and followed Him on the way. God has raised the bar for us, who are his followers. Acknowledging the blessings he has given to all of us by allowing us to know Him, we should be the one asking Him – "Lord what is it you want me to do for you?" And whatever you ask of me – give me the grace to accomplish your will.

- Directions:**
- a. Deal patiently with the ignorant and erring**
 - b. Bear with one another.**
 - c. See Christ in each other.**
 - d. Persevere in prayer.**

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stewardship Day

“The Stewardship Journey” - **Oct. 24, 2009 8am-12pm**
 Seton Hall University - Jubilee Hall Building
 400 South Orange Ave. South Orange NJ
 FREE registration & includes continental breakfast 8-8:45am
 Register on-line at www.rcan.org/stewardship or
 call Lynn Gully at (973) 497-4589

Life In The Spirit Seminar Fall 2009

Dynamic - Life Changing Experience!

St. Antoninus Parish – Oct 21 to Nov 25 (Wed.) 8-10pm
 337 So. Orange Ave., Newark, NJ 07103
 Baptism In The Holy Spirit On Christ The King
Sunday Nov. 22 – 10am Mass, Fr. Bill Halbing, Celebrant
 For pre-registration or more info contact George & Mary Ann
 McGehrin - 201-933-5983 or georgemaryann@hotmail.com

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVANGELIZATION SERVICES

BIBLE STUDY - Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
 St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish

St. Mary's School, Room 104, Every Friday from 7:30-8pm
 Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His Word.
 For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's visit their newly
 designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies - St. Mary's Church
 Contacts: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1213
Rubenluz@verizon.net, Cezar/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-3660
 Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

MARK 10

For the safety of our children, **all parents** of Mark 10 children
 are requested to **sign in and sign out** for their children. Please
 note: **drop off must be no earlier than 8 p.m. and pick-up**
must be no later than 10:45 p.m. After 10:45 p.m., parents
 will be responsible for their children's safety.

*We thank you in advance for your full
 cooperation in this very important matter.*

MISSION

Soup Kitchen

Missionary of Sisters of Charity, 60 Jay Street, Newark NJ
 Every 4th Sat. of the month – **Oct. 24 Singles Ministry**
 Contacts: Cris/Ampy Escobinas

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**
 Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

PRAISE

To view Arch. Lagdameo's Eucharistic Celebration video,
 please visit: www.youtube.com/BLDPraise or
www.youtube.com/ArchbishopLagdameo

SECRETARIAT

Replacement IDs, database updates and monthly picture-
 taking will take place **every 4th Friday** at the Auditorium

WORD

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

John 6 Crossing Retreat - Oct. 23-24

St. Mary's Connell Hall

Contacts: Boyet/Zita Cruz, Gene/Ruby Ymbong, Ernest/Nellie
 Sun. Applications available @ www.bldnewark.com

ME 34 - Nov 13-15

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ

Contacts: Nong/Tricia Bustos 732-591-1340

Gary & Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

SE 23 - Nov 20-22

Graymoor Retreat Center, Garrison, NY

Contacts: Carlos/Fe Masisado masisadoc@yahoo.com,

Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo arlenemanny@gmail.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Oct 23 Encounter with Jesus - **Solo Parents**
 Teaching - **Intercessory & Service, Golden Years**

Oct 30 Intro to Intercession - **LSS 33**
 MGT • Charismata - **LSS 31**

Nov 7 Advanced Intercession & Intro to Spiritual Warfare
LSS 29 & 30
 Christian Maturity Program II - **LSS 31**
 Encounter with Jesus - **LSS 32**

Nov 20 Teaching - **Mark 10, John 6, Youth**

Nov 21 Washing of the Feet & Agony in the Garden Retreat –
LSS 31 & 32

Dec 04 CDFP Overview / Intro to the Word – **ME 34**

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING OCT. 16, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	1,244	157,898
Expenses	1,856	161,461
Surplus/(Deficit)	(613)	(3,562)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Ondoy Disaster Relief Fund 7,901

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 43

Bulletin Edition

Oct. 30, 2009

NEWS

John 6 Crossing

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Lk 18:16)

This year's John 6 Crossing posed new hurdles and challenges! Instead of having it at the Ramada Inn, we held it at St. Mark's and St. Mary's. Accommodations, logistics, and the flooding from the thunderstorm were some of the issues we faced. But through it all "God will make a way ... God will never abandon."

We thank God for all those who offered their help and services especially Fr. Dave and Fr. Robert, St. Mark's and St. Mary's parishes, the Youth members, Washington DC John 6 coordinators, the John 6 core, the many BLD volunteers, and especially the host families for the candidates, John 6 auxies, and YC Moderators. The retreat was spirit filled and we pray that the children have opened their hearts to the Lord.

On behalf of the John 6 Ministry, we would like to congratulate the Crossing #10 graduates and to warmly invite them to attend the John 6 Friday worship at St. Mary's at 8:30 pm. Thank you & God Bless.

Dustin Alba, Andre Andrada*, Tiffany Anyanwu, Eric Bautista, Angelica Cruz, Kyle Flores, Angel Jomud*, Biboy Jomud*, Paolo Jose, Kim Labaso, Zac Larobis, Marris Linsao, Anthony Lucero, Dulce Morillo, Chantal Muyalde, Samantha Muyalde, Andrew Olazo, Calvin Ombrete, Victoria Orosa, Efe Osemeha, Alyssa Pascoguin, Buddy Pejo*, Jen Reyes, Chijioke Umezinwa, Peter Wong. *Washington DC

More Praise For Crossing 10

John 6 Crossing # 10 is history and yet it will stay forever in our memories as another spirit-filled weekend. It's not fair to compare different crossings since *Continued on page 4*

I Believe There is More Tour

Nov. 14, 2009 • 7 pm – Newark Symphony Hall
A benefit concert for the Philippine Typhoon Victims
featuring Don Moen with special guest Mandisa
1030 Broad St., Newark, NJ ♦ Tickets: \$27 • \$47 • \$57
For more info: www.WorshipInJersey.com

COUNSELS

Prescription for True Happiness

WORD: Rv. 7:2-4, 9-14; Ps 24:1-6; 1 Jn 3:1-3; Mt 5:1-12

ORDER: *"See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God." (1 Jn 3:1)*

THEME: We have the righteousness of Christ when we endure persecution for His sake.

REFLECTION:

In Greek, "blessed" means "extremely fortunate, well off, and truly happy" because one is favored by God. Jesus, our LORD, invites us to live in a true inward peace that leads to a desire to be outward peacemakers, to bring reconciliation, to seek out opportunities for mercy and compassion, to pursue justice and righteousness as our hunger and thirst, and to persevere and endure, in spite of all fear, sorrow, helplessness, and persecution. And He will bring us to a peace which sorrow, loss, pain, and grief are powerless to touch, a happiness that shines through our tears, and a joy that nothing in life or death can take away (Jn 16:22).

In St. Matthew's Gospel reading this Sunday, the first three Beatitudes teach us that the true and lasting happiness we seek and long for can only be found in fleeing from evil and being delivered from sin, in poverty accepted for the love of God, in meekness and humility, and in tears of contrition. In contrast, the values of the world declare that we can achieve happiness by acquiring an abundance of things, of riches, and of honors.

The next two Beatitudes are our way of a Christian active life and are directed towards our neighbor. The Holy Spirit gave us the gift of fortitude for us to be courageous in seeking justice. The gift of counsel from the same Spirit inspires us to find the true remedy, prayer, and words that console and uplift. Mercy is the presence of Jesus in a wounded and fractured world. It is love in the face of sin and/or injury. Our God has been merciful to us, and we are to pass this gift on to *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God his savior." (Ps 24:5)

God's Gifts and Call are Irrevocable

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, That there may be food in my house, and try me in this, says the LORD of hosts: Shall I not open for you the floodgates of heaven, to pour down blessing upon you without measure?" (Mal 3:10)

We, as Christ's disciples, believe that we have come upon this community of the faithful not by chance but by God's design. It is in our faithfulness that we are made cognizant that we are not fully in control of our lives; God is. It is only in fully surrendering to the powers and promptings of the Holy Spirit that we act according to His Word, and we become realizations of God's divine plan.

In Romans 11:29 St. Paul confidently assures us that ***"God's gifts and call are irrevocable."*** These come to me as words of comfort for, as a disciple of Christ, I have been made aware of the spiritual gifts that have been given to me; and I am to use them to bring glory and honor to the Lord.

Life in community is rife with ups and downs, doubts, and seemingly insurmountable challenges. There are many times when the tasks given to us seem beyond our human abilities, and we become uncertain if we are sufficiently equipped to deliver the goods.

When my husband & I were asked to head the Fundraising Committee, we said "yes" out of love for a brother who was asking to be relieved of the responsibility as he prepared to immerse himself in his diaconate studies. Never did we realize that this committee would turn into the "Stewardship Committee," which was an uncharted territory for us. We hardly even knew what *stewardship* really meant! The Lord sustained us by speaking to us through His apostle Paul, ***"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness. I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me...for when I am weak, then I am strong."*** (2 Cor 12:9-10)

In faith we steadfastly committed ourselves to the work at hand. We prayed hard as we tried to balance the demands of our jobs and our community responsibilities. At the end of the second quarter, it became apparent that a fundraiser was needed to augment our community's financial resources. A dinner dance was approved by DCS as the singular fundraiser. There was not going to be anything else, and we would continue to rely solely on our tithing.

In our human weakness, we asked fervently for the Lord's divine assistance. In a time of economic crisis, how will one fundraiser provide enough money to sustain our community's good works? But God is truly faithful. He put together a committee of selfless and tireless servants who gave freely of their time, talent, and treasure. The dinner dance on Oct. 17, 2009 was truly evidence that our merciful and loving Lord will not abandon us! Not only did the community rally to join together in a joyful celebration of thanksgiving, but they also worked eagerly to solicit for the souvenir journal. Even in the eleventh hour we ➤

Hope and Wait with Endurance

"But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for endurance." (Rom 8:25)

We live in a fallen world. Only in heaven is everything done perfectly, the way God intends. That is why we are told to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We know that our hope in difficult times is not based on positive thinking, wishful thinking or natural optimism. It is certainly based on the truth that God is in complete control of our universe and that He loves us.

I know, Lord, that if we endure we will earn the crown of Your unending glory. Some are willing to suffer only what they choose to endure. Others can be patient with certain persons, but not with everyone. A truly patient man, however, makes no exceptions and sets no conditions as to when or with whom he will be patient. When we are faced with trials in our lives, we hope in God because we place our trust in Him. He will never forsake us or abandon us. We have to endure for His mercy and compassion.

Jesus could have saved us without inconvenience for Himself. He endured much more for us than He needed to. That was His way of showing His love for us. If I fix my eyes on Him, I shall never again say that I can take anything except this or that. I shall be willing to suffer anything for Jesus. I shall lose sight of the people involved and see only Jesus.

In a world where I learned to rely only on what can be perceived with our five senses, sometimes I can't help but be filled with doubts. After all, I can't see God's face or hear His voice or touch His hands. And meanwhile the world bombards us with messages that contradict our belief in God and His kingdom. Despite all of this, I have strength and hope in God. Where there is hope, there's patience and endurance.

Lord, when all around me appears dark, remind me the bridge of hope will carry me over the present troubles into the future. This You have promised. The future is full of doubts, but fuller still of hope. Being patient is not easy. I have an agenda for when things should happen and I am frustrated and resentful when they do not happen. Patience will come to me though, when I am truly surrendered to You. So here I am, Lord. Do what You want in my life, in Your time and in Your way. Thank You for this hope and endurance, for allowing me to lean on You in good times and in bad times. I am placing my trust in You to handle everything that comes my way. Amen.

continued to receive requests for journal ads. We were overwhelmed. We reached the maximum allowed for the printer's binding so that we had to negotiate for special binding to contain all the pages!

The Lord has once again filled our spiritual and physical needs to overflowing as He always does. Thank You, Lord, for Your abounding kindness and generosity! With grateful hearts, we sing: I love You, Lord!

Glory Revealed in Suffering

“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us.” (Rom 8:18)

It was the year that I thought my life was in order. I had my wonderful family, held a stable job, served our parish in Staten Island and our beloved BLD community. It was the year when we were blessed, able to join the Medical Mission in the Philippines where my wife and I were able to appreciate the things that we have. We saw our brothers and sisters in Christ in our native land and witnessed their physical poverty yet saw the happiness in their hearts. It was such an extreme combination, difficult to comprehend; so I ask myself, “How? What do they have that I do not?”

Upon returning to our community, we were hailed as heroes, however unable to share what was learned from the heart. With our busy schedule we went back into our own busy life style, not knowing that “The Great Author of Life” had plans for me and my family.

That same year, my wife felt a lump on my back that appeared to be growing faster than a usual fat deposit. I then went to have an imaging done where an aggressive type of cancer was suspected. Devastated by the news, stricken by disbelief, clouded by confusion, “Where do we go from here?” My life and my dreams seemed to start to fade as the doctor explained to us the possibilities and probabilities. We then turned to God for we believe that He is the Great Healer.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened...for my yolk is easy, and my burden light.” (Mt 11:28 & 30b)

I was prayed over by our Servant Leaders, ME Classmates and friends. My name was on the local and global community prayer lists and even our local parish had been interceding for us. In spite of this, none of the word CANCER was erased.

“My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.” (Mt 26:39b)

Surgical procedures and medical treatments began; the pains that I (we) bore reminded us of the passion of Christ. They punched a hole in my hips (with a large bore needle under local anesthesia to obtain cancer tissue sample) and cut my chest and placed a catheter through leaving the tip near my heart, reminding me of the wounds of Christ.

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46b)

We then started chemotherapy. I felt all the expected side effects of the given drug, thinking that I would eventually get used to them since I knew what to expect. The more chemo agents went into my body, the weaker I got. I lost all my hair; my physical appearance changed. At that point it seemed that it would be much easier to give up than to continue. However, as I looked at my family, I felt the spirit of self-pity so I prayed “Lord let Your will be done. Please give me strength to carry on.”

(To be continued next issue)

Counsel *(continued from page 1)*

others as when we pray the Lord's Prayer: *“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us”*.

Also when Peter asked our LORD Jesus ***“LORD, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him?”*** Jesus answered, ***“I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.”*** (Mt 18:21-22)

To be pure of heart means to be free of all selfish intentions and self-seeking desires. Those who are pure in heart will see God, because they are a spiritual mirror that reflects the very image of God. Purity of heart leads to contemplation. And the gift of understanding from the Holy Spirit will give our soul true sight – a sight that sees God in our neighbor, even in those that seem to be opposed to Him. We are able to see God in the Holy Scriptures and the practical applications of the Gospel. The apostles, after being flogged, left the Sanhedrin ***“rejoicing that they had been found worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name.”*** (Acts 5:41) Contemplation of God leads to fruitfulness. By emulating God's love for man, we peacemakers become children of Him. The gift of wisdom from the Holy Spirit gives us a taste of the mysteries of salvation by making us able to see, speak, and experience all things in God.

What a great blessing it is if we, disciples of Christ Jesus, are persecuted for righteousness and if we suffer rejection because of good deeds to our brothers and sisters and insults, contempt, and criticism for the sake of our faith and our love for the One who died for us. Why? Because then we become an image of our Master crucified. ***“Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.”*** (Mt 5:11-12)

But for us Christians the cross is not a sign of defeat. It is the ultimate sign of victory, of life with our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ. To be willing to stand with Him guarantees that He will never abandon us. His rather radical message is very clear: that persecution and happiness go together. As true Christians, we long to share fully in the life of Jesus: His life, suffering, death, and resurrection. This is the gateway into the Kingdom of God. True happiness is to be with God! And ***“everyone who has this hope based on God makes himself pure, as He is pure.”*** (1 Jn 3:3)

DIRECTIONS:

1. *“Be of clean heart and desire not what is vain.”* (Ps. 24:4)
2. Live out the Beatitudes.

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

For U.S.A Mass & Adoration schedule
www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVANGELIZATION SERVICES

BIBLE STUDY - Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish

St. Mary's School, Room 104, Every Friday from 7:30-8pm
Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His Word.

For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's visit their newly designed website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies

St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)

Contacts: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1231

Rubenluz@verizon.net, Cezar/Pinky Calingo - 908-230-3660

Gene/Bing Ymbong - 908-406-6955

MARK 10

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We thank you in advance for your full cooperation in this very important matter.

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit

56 Hamilton Plaza, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Sat. of the month. Volunteers are needed.

Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

Soup Kitchen

Missionary of Sisters of Charity, 60 Jay Street, Newark NJ

Every 4th Sat. of the month

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**

Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

PRaise

To view Arch. Lagdameo's Eucharistic Celebration video, please visit: www.youtube.com/BLDPraise or www.youtube.com/ArchbishopLagdameo

SECRETARIAT

For replacement IDs and database updates, will take place **every 4th Friday** at the Auditorium

WORD

Share your walk, faith, transformation in the Lord with the Community through an article (450 words)

Email to wordeditors@bldnewark.com

Stewardship – A Way Of Life!

Save the Date

Disciples Assembly - January 9, 2010

Please reserve Jan. 9, 2010 for our next Disciples Assembly. All committed and covenanted disciples are highly encouraged to attend. There will be no teachings, or any reunions/parties to conflict with this date RSVP to secretariat for valid excuses.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ME 34 - Nov 13-15

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ

Contacts: Gerry/Gigi Cabunag gcabunag@optonline.net

Gary & Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

SE 23 - Nov 20-22

Graymoor Retreat Center, Garrison, NY

Contacts: Carlos/Fe Masisado masisadoc@yahoo.com,

Manny/Arlene Mangalanzo arlenemanny@gmail.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Oct 30 Intro to Intercession - **LSS 33**

MGT • Charismata - **LSS 31**

Nov 7 Advanced Intercession & Intro to Spiritual Warfare
LSS 29 & 30

Christian Maturity Program II - **LSS 31**

Encounter with Jesus - **LSS 32**

Nov 20 Teaching - **Mark 10, John 6, Youth**

Note: Teachings on Fri: after worship, Sat: 1-6pm at St. Mary's

More Praise For Crossing 10 (continued from page 1)

each one of them is unique. But last weekend was a challenging one as we were going into uncharted territory. As mentioned in the closing talk last Sunday, "This is the first crossing held at St. Mary's and St. Mark's Churches. But the Lord is always with us."

We could see at the cleansing last Friday that everybody was tired and yet, faces beaming with joy still abounded. We are all imperfect and we may never be one; but from our perspective, that crossing weekend was almost as perfect as it could get. Each group from Liturgy/Vigil, Food, Facilities, Secretariat, and our own John 6 and Youth auxies gave everything they could give. Do we have shortcomings? Yes, but what we lacked, God provided; and the result was a fun-filled spirited crossing weekend. The weekend shows that the crossing is not just a John 6 event anymore but a community event. This was evident as other members of the community, regardless of their ministry, offered and selflessly gave their time and resources in order for these young children to be closer to God. We are honored and blessed to be a part of the crossing and the John 6 Ministry.

To God Be The Glory!

LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING OCT. 23, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	3,942	161,840
Expenses	2,739	164,200
Surplus/(Deficit)	1,203	(2,359)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Ondoy Disaster Relief Fund

8,564

Make the Covenant News a part of your covenant life.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 44

Bulletin Edition

November 6, 2009

St. Mary's & St. Mark Express Their Great Appreciation!

St. Francis De Sales taught "THE MEASURE OF LOVE, IS TO LOVE WITHOUT MEASURE." This past weekend BLD witnessed to the truth and beauty of this teaching. Thank you.

Doing what God asks is often difficult or demanding. Because of this, we can often find human excuses to do other things.

The Life in the Spirit Seminar given at St. Mary's in Rahway this past weekend fortunately didn't fall prey to human reasoning. Several "legitimate" reasons could easily have warranted canceling the seminar.

The spirit of BLD nourished the desire to be servants of the Lord. That spirit prevailed. A wonderful experience was shared and beautiful seeds were planted that already have shown fruits.

Thank you for your commitment to love God and His holy will without using a measuring stick or counting returns. BLD acknowledges God truly is Lord of the harvest."

Glory Revealed in Suffering

(Continued from Last Week)

I remember someone telling me to receive the Holy Eucharist daily, and we did as a family. A day after my Chemo, while I was in church, during the quiet time after receiving the Eucharist, I felt the effects of the Chemo to the max. My bones were melting, my muscles were shivering, my mouth was dry and painful, and my stomach was turning inside out. I felt like a man dying and rotting from inside out. I asked the Great Healer if tomorrow I may be excused for I am tired and weak.

"The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

(Mk 14:38b)

As I looked up towards His Cross, I saw a woman in her 90's with her walker receiving the Holy Eucharist, instead of having a Eucharistic Minister come to her. My tears rolled down and realized how little faith I have, He gave me such a little cross to bear and here I am complaining, while that woman carries her cross with ease and showed honor, glory and her love to the Giver of the cross.

Now, as my family and I look back, we have learned that in every trial and suffering, in the midst of confusion, He

(continue on next page)

COUNSELS

DISPOSSESSION: FULLY TRUSTING IN GOD'S PROVISION

WORD: 1 Kings 17:10-16; Psalm 146:7-10;

Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44

ORDER: "Do not be afraid, be like the widow who gave from her poverty." (1 Kgs 17:13) (paraphrase)

THEME: We have the righteousness of Christ when we give unselfishly, trusting in God's provision.

REFLECTION:

The Gospel reading for this 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time presents a comparison between false religiosity and genuine devotion to God. The situation of two widows in the gospel and the first reading are similar. Both are hard-working women. Both are poor. Both put their trust in God and both are rewarded for their faith.

The Gospel provides us with a picture of what true religion and devotion to God is. While observing people putting money into the Temple Treasury, Jesus takes the opportunity to warn His disciples against the wrong kind of religion, naming three wrong motivations in his denunciation of the religious experts of his time: the desire for prominence rather than selfless service; the desire for recognition and esteem, rather than seeking to promote the good of others through humble service and love; and thirdly, the attempt to use one's position (even a religious position) for self-gain and self-advancement.

True religion, according to Jesus, is relating rightly to God and to one's neighbor with love, honor, and respect. The Lord puts His Holy Spirit within us that we may be filled with the joy of his presence, the joy of true worship, and the joy of selfless giving and love for others. True reverence for God frees the heart to give liberally, both to God and to neighbor.

Jesus taught His disciples a dramatic lesson in giving with love. Love doesn't calculate; it spends lavishly! Jesus drove this point home to His disciples while sitting at the temple, observing people offering their tithes. He praised a poor widow

(continue on page 3, col 2)

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

"For the Lord says, 'The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry'..."

(1 Kgs 17:13b)

SAY YES!

“The servant went and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house in a rage commanded his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame.’” (Luke 14:21)

To better understand this verse is to read the whole chapter of Luke 14. This chapter talks about The Parable of the Great Feast where a man throws a banquet and invites all of His closest friends. In those days, it is customary that the invitation would go out and would be accepted or rejected. When the arrangements are made, the host would send out a messenger to retrieve the guests. The parable explains that all of the invited guests decided other things were more important than attendance at the banquet. As such the host invites complete strangers who gladly accept his invitation.

What does this mean to us Christians? The kingdom of heaven is like a Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-10). Everyone is invited. But, just like the invited guests from the parable, we find ourselves making excuses from our fellowship with God. We go about our own business; we have our own schedules and affairs to attend to. We’d rather be somewhere else instead of spending our time with the Master, the Lord, through fellowship, worship, teachings, or community activities.

When was the last time we gave up chatting or emailing time so we could spend quiet time with the Lord? When was the last time we turned-off our cell phones, or shut down our computers and took a deep breath and prayed? When was the last time we declined our friends’ invitation on a Friday night and attend the BLD worship? It is easy to get distracted and swayed. Sometimes we commit ourselves to ministry work only if it is convenient and praiseworthy, or when the setting is right, or when our buddies are around. We are busy with the world – we stack up with the temporary rather than the everlasting reward of heaven – *“Blessed is the one who will dine in the kingdom of God.”* Luke 14:15

The invitation to share in the kingdom was first offered to the Israelites – God’s chosen people. The rejection by Israel led to the extension of this invitation to all of mankind. Are we ready to say ‘Yes’ to this invitation?

This parable teaches that no one may enter the kingdom of God without an invitation from God - an invitation by grace. It also is a warning to heed the invitation because the invitation does not last forever.

Let us reevaluate our priorities and ask ourselves – Are we like those who refused the invitation of Christ? The feast is prepared, the table is set daily through the Holy Eucharist – will you take sometime to engage in the banquet of God?

Glory Revealed . . . (cont. from page 1)

will always be there. He prepared me from the beginning by showing me the sufferings and the joy of the people who have nothing while we were in the Medical Mission. Then, He showed me how pain and suffering can bind families and friends together especially in prayers and during His Passion and Resurrection; He has given us the reason to persevere

A PROMISE OF EVERLASTING LIFE

As BLD members we’ve been taught that Jesus Christ is the only way to have eternal life. We even hear this in our own word sharing circles that Jesus is the ONLY way to heaven. John 6:40 says, *“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”* This is a very direct message from St. John that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life. As simple as the verse is, do we really know how to look to the Son and believe in him?

Our faith is the measure of how well we really believe in Him. For our faith to be strong we have to have a solid and factual foundation. First is to believe that God has actually sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins and that Jesus Christ has done His work on earth and left. No one can believe in Christ without first believing about Christ and what He did. Second is to learn and then accept what our great Lord promises. A promise that any one who comes to the Son receives the benefits of His sacrifice - benefits of a new life energized by the Holy Spirit, a heritage as children of God that we can never lose and eternal reward later. All these can be acquired for free, by simply believing and receiving Jesus Christ in our lives.

But how do we receive Jesus Christ in our lives? We have to make Jesus the object of our faith. We have to believe all He is as written in the scripture. We have to acknowledge and receive the gifts He brings and depend on Him to do what He promised. We make Him our food, our sustenance and support of our life. So the way to receive Christ is to listen to God. The way to do that is to soak ourselves with His Word and pay attention to all He says in His Word. That Word is the Bible. The Bible will show us our sins and will give us a standard of righteousness that only He can meet. And it will also show Christ who came to redeem sinners and save us. That is why it is in reflecting on the Word during our Word Sharing Circles where we witness from our brothers and sisters the Word to come alive as if Jesus is talking to us on a personal level. We have to remember that to receive Jesus Christ is to be received by the Father. Equally, we should be forewarned that to reject Jesus Christ whom the Father loves so much would mean we would suffer under His wrath forever in hell. Because of our free will, if we chose not to hear, He might just let us go our own way and we will have no one to blame but ourselves. And so with this, it is very evident that there’s no other option but to look to the Son and believe in Him.

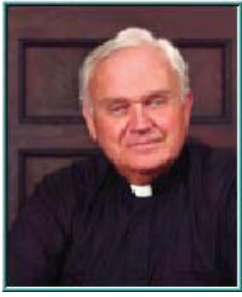
through the pains and trials in life. All these as we submit our selves to His Divine plan.

“Father, into Your hands I commend my Spirit.”

(Lk 23:46)

The Son of God hanging on the cross exemplified complete surrender, submissiveness to the Father, for His

(continued on page 3)



Fr. Paul Speaks

LOOKING FOR OTHERS

The recent devastation in the Philippines has triggered a very generous response from our predominantly Filipino members. It is a given fact that the economy of the Philippines depends for its survival on the generosity of Filipinos

living in other parts of the world. And when a terrible tragedy, like a typhoon, occurs, the dependency becomes more acute. May I continue to exhort you to a continued generosity especially for a country in which poverty predominates. When we reflect on the reality of poverty, the poor who have no resources to fall back on, will suffer more radically during these tragic moments. I encourage you all to invite your friends to generously continue contributions now and for the foreseeable future until some kind of "normalcy" takes place. You may be aware of the Don Men concert fund raiser scheduled for Nov. 14, 2009 and this is one way of showing your support.

May I also bring to your attention again the importance of looking outside the community for ministry. Giving money to worthy causes is admirable and one of the corporal works of mercy. However, we should be reminded again of the challenge of looking beyond community life and our own ministries in satisfying a great need by using our encounters and seminars for the benefit of the wider church of the Archdiocese of Newark. I spent some time on this point during our recent DCS/DLC meeting. We have started by offering to the parish of St. Mary's who hosts us on Friday evenings, an LSS for parish leaders on the last weekend of this month. Wouldn't be great if every parish in the Diocese had their leadership baptized in the Spirit! May I encourage the formation of a larger evangelization team or committee to look beyond our own needs, and give a new focus to the wider church. In that we could share some of our weekend blessings with others who are not members of our community! Since we have been designated as an association of the faithful by Archbishop Myers, may I encourage a new look at the diocesan church and a broader use of the ministries already in place here in BLD.

On a completely different note, may I use this opportunity to remind us of liturgical and spiritual norms regarding silence. It is particularly true that when we celebrate Mass in the hall or gym, we tend to forget that the hall has now become a church. It is so easy to think that these places are for socializing rather than worship. I also have been encouraging the praise ministry to remember the importance of brief silence after the Scripture readings as well as a pause in the beginning of Mass before the recitation of the penitential rite. Good liturgy will lead to good ministry!

Glory Revealed . . . (cont. from page 2)

Honor and Glory. Thank you Lord for letting me be part of Your passion, and most of all for letting me see and feel Your presence during the times of trials. Never let me go, my Savior, my Healer and my King, I love You Lord. Here I am Lord, I come to do Your will. Amem.

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

who gave the smallest of coins, in contrast to the rich who gave greater sums. How can someone so impoverished give more than those with ample means? Jesus' answer is very simple: love is more precious than gold! Jesus taught that real giving must come from the heart.

A gift that is given grudgingly, or for display, loses most of its value. But a gift given out of love, in a spirit of generosity and sacrifice, is invaluable. The amount or size of the gift is not as important as the cost to the giver. The poor widow could have kept one of her coins, but instead she recklessly gave away all she had! Jesus praised someone who gave barely a penny – an insignificant sum – because it was everything she had, her whole living.

What we have to offer may seem insignificant, but if we put all we have at the Lord's disposal, no matter how little it may seem, God can make it abound for us and for His purposes. Do you know the joy and freedom of giving liberally to God and to neighbor with gratitude and love?

The same scenario is seen in the first reading in which a widow gives what literally was to have been hers and her son's last meal. This widow is from Zarephath, a coastal city on the Mediterranean, northwest of the Kingdom of Israel. Elijah traveled through this land during a famine. As usual during such times, the rich complain and the poor starve. The woman was poor. When Elijah met her, she was putting last scraps of food together before preparing to die with her son. Picture her as one of the starving women in Somalia or Rwanda, and or even among those who lost everything to Ondoy and Pepeng. Imagine what faith it would take to give this last morsel of food to a stranger who asks for it in the name of the Lord. By putting her trust in God, the widow Zarephath received enough to tide her over the length of the famine.

The second widow placed two small coins into the Temple treasury. In fact, what she put is called a *lepton*, literally meaning a thin one, or the smallest coin at the time and worth 1/40th of one pence. But seeing this, Jesus told His disciples that her donation, while seeming insignificant, is the greater one, because she gave from her need, while the others gave from their plenty. By Jesus' standard, her donation is an act of complete faith and trust in God.

What these two widows did is extremely difficult for most of us to understand, especially for those who do not tithe. Many of our members may have far greater faith than some have, but we must also admit that no matter how great our faith is, it is profoundly difficult to put our total trust in God. Perhaps we think that we can solve our own problems, conquer all obstacles ourselves. Certainly, we are all tempted to believe that the proper amount of cash applied at the right time, in the right places can heal a multitude of ills.

Most will agree that the great fallacy of our age is that money can solve our problems, but the fact is that among those who have been blessed with material success, the happiest are those who have no qualms about sharing their wealth. The radical message of today's readings is that we must place our confidence in God rather than in our material possessions. This demands humility, a virtue known to the humble person who recognizes his/ her profound need for God and where he / she stands before Him. Only the humble person is certain that the presence of God in his/ her life is fundamental to happiness.

The two widows gave from their substance. They put their trust in God shouting with their actions that His presence in their lives is infinitely more important to them than anything and everything they owned. They give us fine examples of the ideal Christians, humbly trusting in God to care for them.

Perhaps, some day, you and I will have that same profound faith and trust in God. But, then again, is not that one of the reasons we go to Church? We worship God to pray for faith. Let us now pray this simple prayer of giving to the Lord what He has allowed us to possess: "Lord Jesus, all that I have is yours. Take my life, my possessions, my time and all that I have and use them as you desire for your glory."

Directions:

1. Be generous in giving out your time, talent and treasure.
2. Give food to the hungry; sustain the fatherless, orphans and the widows.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVANGELIZATION SERVICES

Bible Study - Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin
St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish
St. Mary's School, Room 104, Every Friday from 7:30-8pm
Everyone is welcome. Know God better through His Word.
For information on St. Mary's and St. Mark's visit their newly designed
website: www.stmarystmarkparish.com

ISAIAH 58

Sagip Ka Eskuela Program (Save a School Child)

Bring your old or unused School Supplies
St. Mary's Church (Fellowship Area)
Contacts: Ruben/Luz Amarante 908-810-1231
Rubenluz@verizon.net, Cezar/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

MARK 10

For the safety of our children, **all parents** of Mark 10 children are
requested to **sign in and sign out** for their children.
Please note: **drop off must be no earlier than 8 p.m. and pick-up
must be no later than 10:45 p.m.** After 10:45 p.m., parents will be
responsible for their children's safety.
*We thank you in advance for your full cooperation
in this very important matter.*

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit

56 Hamilton Plaza, Passaic, NJ 07055
Every 2nd Sat. of the month. Volunteers are needed.
Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

Soup Kitchen

Missionary of Sisters of Charity, 60 Jay Street, Newark NJ
Every 4th Sat. of the month - **ME 24** (Nov 28)
Tony/Linda Avisado, Benru/Elsa Etcubanas 908-687-1945

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**
Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

PRAISE

To view Arch. Lagdameo's Eucharistic Celebration video, please
visit: www.youtube.com/BLDPraise or
www.youtube.com/ArchbishopLagdameo

SECRETARIAT

For replacement IDs and database updates, will take place **every 4th
Friday** at the Auditorium

WORD

Share your walk, faith, transformation in the Lord with the Community
through an article (450 words). Email wordeditors@bldnewark.com

Stewardship – A Way Of Life!

Save the Date

Disciples Assembly - January 9, 2010

Please reserve Jan. 9, 2010 for our next Disciples
Assembly. All committed and covenanted disciples are
highly encouraged to attend. There will be no teachings,
or any reunions/parties to conflict with this date RSVP to
secretariat for valid excuses.

Make the Covenant News a part of your covenant life.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ME 34 - Nov 13-15

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ
Contacts: Gerry/Gigi Cabunag gcabunag@optonline.net
Gary & Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

SE 23 - Nov 20-22

Graymoor Retreat Center, Garrison, NY
Contacts: Carlos/Fe Masisado masisadoc@yahoo.com,
Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo arlenemanny@gmail.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Nov 7 Advanced Intercession & Intro to Spiritual Warfare - **LSS 29
& 30**

Christian Maturity Program II - **LSS 31**
Encounter with Jesus - **LSS 32**

Nov 20 Teaching - **Mark 10, John 6, Youth**

Nov 21 Washing of the Feet & Agony in the Garden - **LSS 31 & 32**

Dec 04 CDFP Overview / Intro to the Word – **ME 34**

Note: Teachings on Fri: after worship, Sat: 1-6pm at St. Mary's

LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING OCT. 30, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	3,350	165,190
Expenses	9,065	173,265
Surplus/(Deficit)	(5,715)	(8,075)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Ondoy Disaster Relief Fund **10,924**

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

I Believe There is More Tour

Nov. 14, 2009 • 7 pm – Newark Symphony Hall
A benefit concert for the Philippine Typhoon Victims
featuring **Don Moen** with special guest **Mandisa**
1030 Broad St., Newark, NJ ♦ Tickets: \$27 • \$47 • \$57
For more info: www.WorshipInJersey.com

A Day Of Reflection for Married Couples
Holy Family Church • Nov. 21 • 9-4:30pm
Rev. John F. Gordon – Retreat Director
Fee: 95/couple (in advance)—lunch included
Pre-registration required – space is limited
Further info contact: 973-497-4323

Erratum

1. Nestor (Nes) Tambor should have not been included in the Faithful Departed list.
2. Luigi Santiago's name was misspelled.

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.
www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon
those who are celebrating their birthdays and
wedding anniversaries this week!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 45

Bulletin Edition

November 13, 2009

NEWS

Benedict XVI: When Suffering, Trust God

(Zenit.org) - Although many doubt God's presence in their lives when facing suffering, it's actually the best time to entrust oneself even more to him, says Benedict XVI. The Pope said this today upon meeting with sick people at the Cardinal Paul-Émile Léger Centre. He assured those present, "You are not alone in your pain, for Christ himself is close to all who suffer".

"Faced with suffering, sickness and death, it is tempting to cry out in pain, as Job did, whose name means 'suffering,'" the Pontiff reflected. "As our condition deteriorates, our anguish increases; some are tempted to doubt whether God is present in their lives. "Job, however, was conscious of God's presence; his was not a cry of rebellion, but, from the depths of his sorrow, he allowed his trust to grow.

"His friends, like each of us when faced with the suffering of a loved one, tried to console him, but they used hollow and empty words". "In the presence of such torment," the Holy Father continued, "we feel powerless and we cannot find the right words. Before a brother or sister plunged into the mystery of the cross, a respectful and compassionate silence, a prayerful presence, a gesture of tenderness and comfort, a kind look, a smile, often achieve more than many words."

COUNSELS

WORD: Dn 12:1-3; Ps 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11;
Heb 10:11-14, 18; Mk 13:24-32
ORDER: *"Set the Lord before me"* (Ps. 16:8)
THEME: We have the righteousness of Christ
when we are ready for His coming.

REFLECTION:

A week before the great feast of Christ the King, which marks the end of the liturgical calendar, the first reading and the gospel story speak about the end times. St. Michael will herald the time of the Lord as the prophet Daniel mentions when "the wise shall shine brightly and those who lead the many to justice shall be like stars". In the gospel story, our Lord Jesus undoubtedly speaks about His second coming. Here, Jesus introduces these events or signs leading to His second coming:

1. The day of the Lord will be preceded by wars.
2. The day of the Lord will also be preceded by the darkening of the sun and moon
3. The Lord will gather His people from the four corners of the earth.

The most significant and most important event in our lives would be our departure from this earthly life as we enter into the next. Yet, we all tend to ignore or deny the truth about our ultimate destination. The readings for this Sunday invite us to reflect on the end of our short earthly journey. We should always be ready for the day when the Lord Jesus comes to lead us to the eternal life that He has promised us. We all need to pause from our busy lives to consider the short and limited number of our days here on earth. *"Seventy is the sum of our years, or eighty, if we are strong; Most of them are sorrow and toil; they pass quickly, we are all gone"* (Ps 90:10). **Continued on page 3**

Promise of the Week

"Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, my body, too, abides in confidence, because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful to undergo corruption." (Ps.16:9-10)

The Word of God: Replenishment of the Spirit

In the reading from Ezekiel 47:1-9.12, a beautiful stream of water is flowing from the temple. Water represents the beginning and continuity of life. As we were conceived in our mother's womb, we are floating and protected by water. Our body is nourished by water to survive. We have all seen pictures of emaciated children in drought stricken countries. Without water, there is no food and no life. The stream of water is The Word of God. When it is a part of our daily life, the water that is constantly flowing sets our roots, nourishes our spirit and makes us grow in faith. As we know, stagnant water does not encourage growth or good health. *"The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life"* (John 6:63).

I remember growing up in the city and on weekends going to our country home where my parents have a few acres of coconut plantation and other fruit bearing trees. I would often hear them talk and asked when the rain would come so we can get a good plentiful harvest. And when there was an abundance of rain, all the field workers would rejoice because that means they will be bringing basketful of fruits and vegetables to sell at the market. At harvest time, I will be awakened by the sound of people early at the break of dawn, beaming with excitement, loading their goods to sell. By midday, they will be coming back with baskets of fresh fish, meat, and rice to feed their families and nourish their bodies with good food to eat.

Hosea 6:3 says, *"The Lord will come to us like the rain, like spring rains that water the earth."* Just like the rainfall that enriched the orchard, the Word of God is the water that will nurture our soul, quench our thirst for a meaningful life and finally replenish our spirit. And from there, we will share the harvest of a wonderful spiritual life with our family, friends, neighbors and our community. Ezekiel 34:26 tells us, *"I will place them about my hill, sending rain in due season; rains that shall be a blessing to them."* Without the renewing and refreshing rain of God's divine instructions, the soul of God's people will shrivel and die. A life that is deeply entrenched with God, His Words and Teachings, will give us the strength to ride life's ups and down, the wisdom to make the right choices, the humility to forgive, the compassion, empathy, kindness, understanding and generosity to help others. A spiritual life involves the invisible dimension of a person's soul. It gives us the depth of character and ultimately the timeless quality to live a true Christian life.

Abide in God's Truth

"Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect." (Wisdom 3:9)

From time to time, as the problems and worries overpower us, we all find life difficult and discouraging. As the signs of stress and tension become visible on our faces, we sit up and listen to those reassuring and comforting words of Jesus. *"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."* (Mt 11:28) Jesus presents himself as the friend and consoler of the weary and oppressed. In trying situations he seems to invite us to come to him with our worries saying all will be well. This giving of our hearts to Jesus implies complete trust and childlike dependence, qualities we are missing in our adult world. When we were young we spent our childhood days in a simple carefree setting, relying completely on the love of those who cared for us. Growing up meant casting aside the childlike trust and exchanging it for reliance on material possessions. We have lost our paradise of childhood innocence and as a result find it difficult to cast our cares upon the Lord with the confidence that he will sustain us.

Christ leaves us in no doubt that humility is vital to our search for God. It is not a prized quality in our society where success is measured on arrogance, ambition and ruthlessness and, where the house we live in, the car we drive and the company we keep are indicators of our esteem. The humble person does not have to complicate matters by projecting such a false self-image or deceiving himself with the trappings of grandeur. He realizes that without God he is nothing. Because we are lacking in humility, we are robbed of that inner peace which comes from putting our hand in the hand of God. Humility enables us to let go of self and make space for God in whom we find our strength. When we come to Mass on Sunday laden down with the problems and troubles of the past week, Jesus Christ meets us at our own level. As we unload our difficulties and sufferings before him, he makes them into an acceptable offering to his heavenly Father.

St. Alphonsus Liguori said that our whole perfection consists in loving our most amiable God, and all the perfection of the love of God consists in uniting our will with His most Holy will. The greatest glory we can give to God is to fulfill His blessed Will in all things.

God is full of mercy and compassion and a great comfort in times of sorrow and distress. There is a great capacity of goodness in each one of us, provided we accept the invitation to build up our lives with Christ as our model.

Lord, Give Me the Simple Life

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” (Mk 13:31)

In this Sunday’s Gospel, Jesus is telling us to put our trust in His words of eternal life to bring us home to the Father.

The problem for many of us is that we’ve taken on so much excess baggage in our life’s journey. *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroys, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.”* (Mt.6:19-21) We can fill our lives to overflowing with the things of this world, but if we place our trust in earthly treasures to fulfill our life, we will one day discover that we cannot come home to God under their heavy burden. What compounds the problem is that when the things we have don’t bring us happiness, instead of picking up the clue that we’re going about in the wrong way, we go after more things. And the burden gets heavier, the frustration gets deeper and the journey back home to God gets rougher and longer each day.

Complicating the simple is a way of life for many of us. “Do not be anxious about your life,” Jesus tells us, and we literally invent things to worry about. He says, “Do not be anxious about what we are to eat or drink,” and we transform something as grocery shopping into a complicated, tense decision making process. He says, “Do not be anxious about what you shall put on,” and we exhaust ourselves trying to deal with questions of style, designer labels and whether our selections match. The list goes on and on, obviously, as will our frustrations as long as we insist on trusting our earthly treasures to satisfy our deep longing for peace of soul.

There are times when the truth hurts. Facing up to the reality that our frantic efforts to store more and more possessions into our lives, will not bring us the peace of soul we need and want is a hurtful and frustrating experience. It is not easy for us to accept that our lives may have been moving in the wrong direction. But have no fear and believe that even from the lonely depths of total frustration, our plea, “Is anybody there?” will not go unanswered. Ask, not doubting but in faith, and you will hear Jesus answer: “I am with you. I am listening. I care”.

Let our prayer be, “Lord, bring me back to a simpler life.”

Counsel (from page 1)

We should examine our own lives and our relationship with God, allowing His word to come alive in our hearts. **We should ask ourselves: “Are we really living God-centered, righteous lives?”** We should perform a daily self-introspection on how we have been doing, how we have lived the life of Jesus Christ, by following His Word and how we are to stand before God. We will ultimately be responsible and held accountable by our Lord for all that we did in this life. If we have committed mortal sin, we must avail of the sacrament of Reconciliation; if we have wronged anyone, we must seek pardon. We should be aware that the Lord Jesus will judge us by every word we have uttered (Mt 12:37) and by every deed we have done. Have we fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty, welcomed the stranger, clothed the naked, cared for the sick, and visited the prisoners? (Mt 25: 35-36). We are all reminded that we belong to our creator: *“Brothers and sisters: None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.”* (Rom 14:7-11)

As we take the time to examine ourselves, repent and perhaps, change our sinful past and enter into a new life in Jesus Christ; as we renounce our prejudices and develop greater understanding, forgiveness, and love for others, especially for our enemies; as we let go of our own agenda or vested interests and shun the attractions of the world; as we purify our passions with prayer; as we savor the Words of eternal life in our hearts, we also celebrate the presence of God in our lives.

When we seek the Lord in the silence of our hearts, He becomes our allotted portion and our cup. With Him at our right, we will never be shaken. He will show us the path to life, abounding joy in His presence, the delights at His right hand forever. (Ps 16:5, 8, 11)

We ought to heed what St. Paul says: *“My prayer is that your love may more and more abound, both in understanding and wealth of experience, so that with a clear conscience and blameless conduct you may learn to value the things that really matter, up to the very day of Christ.”* (Phil 1: 9-10)

We should not fear the coming of our Lord, Jesus for He is our light and our salvation. Instead, we should continue to persevere in following His commandments, we should believe that we shall enjoy the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. (Ps. 27:13). We can then claim the Promise of the Week: *“Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices, my body, too, abides in confidence, because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your faithful to undergo corruption.”* (Ps.16:9-10). Let us remember the Lord's order for the week: *“Set the Lord before me”* (Ps. 16:8). As we heed and follow the Lord's voice, let us also yield to His directions for ourselves: *Be prepared and be watchful for no one knows when the Lord is coming.*

DIRECTION:

Be prepared and be watchful for no one knows when the Lord is coming.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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St. Mary's/St. Mark's Parish

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Rubenluz@verizon.net, Cezar/Pinky Calingo – 908-230-
3660 Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

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*We thank you in advance for your full
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audie_chong@hotmail.com

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Missionary of Sisters of Charity, 60 Jay St., Newark NJ
Every 4th Sat. of the month - **ME 24** (Nov 28)
Tony/Linda Avisado, Benru/Elsa Etcubanas 908-687-1945

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**
Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg7lra@aol.com

PRAISE

To view Arch. Lagdameo's Eucharistic Celebration
video, please visit: www.youtube.com/BLDPraise or
www.youtube.com/ArchbishopLagdameo

SECRETARIAT

Replacement IDs and database updates, will take place
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WORD

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Community through an article. Email word@bldnewark.com

Stewardship – A Way Of Life!

Save the Date

Disciples Assembly - January 9, 2010

Please reserve Jan. 9, 2010 for our next Disciples
Assembly. All committed and covenanted disciples are
highly encouraged to attend. There will be no teachings,
or any reunions/parties to conflict with this date RSVP to
secretariat for valid excuses.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ME 34 - Nov 13-15

Radisson Carteret, 30 Minue St., Carteret, NJ
Contacts: Gerry/Gigi Cabunag gcabunag@optonline.net
Gary & Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

SE 23 - Nov 20-22

Graymoor Retreat Center, Garrison, NY
Contacts: Carlos/Fe Masisado masisadoc@yahoo.com,
Manny/Arlene Mangalonzo arlenemanny@gmail.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Nov 20 Teaching - **Mark 10, John 6, Youth**

Nov 21 Washing of the Feet & Agony in the Garden -
LSS 31 & 32

Dec 04 CDFP Overview / Intro to the Word – **ME 34**

Note: Teachings on Fri: after worship, Sat: 1-6pm at St. Mary's

LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING Nov. 6, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	3,432	178,698
Expenses	9,517	182,782
Surplus/(Deficit)	(6,085)	(4,084)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Ondoy Disaster Relief Fund	10,947
Dinner Dance Net Income (To date)	10,903.93

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

I Believe There is More Tour

Nov. 14, 2009 • 7 pm – Newark Symphony Hall
A benefit concert for the Philippine Typhoon Victims
featuring **Don Moen** with special guest **Mandisa**
1030 Broad St., Newark, NJ ♦ Tickets: \$27 • \$47 • \$57
For more info: www.WorshipInJersey.com

A Day Of Reflection for Married Couples Holy Family Church • Nov. 21 – 9-4:30pm

Rev. John F. Gordon – Retreat Director
Fee: 95/couple (in advance)–lunch included
Pre-registration required – space is limited
Further info contact: 973-497-4323

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.
www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon
those who are celebrating their birthdays and
wedding anniversaries this week.

**Make the Covenant News a part of
your covenant life.**



NEWS

IN HUMBLE SERVICE AND INTERCESSION

Humility, service and prayer were the topics of the recently concluded Washing of the Feet and Agony in the Garden Retreat held at St. Mary's Church's O'Connell Hall this past Saturday, November 21, 2009. Fifty six members from two BLD communities attended the retreat. Twenty-three attendees came from of ME 30/31/32 and seventeen from SPE 9/10 of BLD Newark. Sixteen members traveled all the way from BLD Charlotte, North Carolina to attend this retreat. It was a spirit-filled day led by Msgr. Paul Shetelick in collaboration with the Service, Intercessory, Praise, Teaching, and the Witness and Coach Development Ministries of BLD Newark. Eight powerful sharers from the community opened their hearts and humbly shared portions of their life stories on how they heard the Lord's call in their lives, learned to serve Him by serving His people and experienced the power of prayer.

The participants learned by example the virtue of humility that our Lord Jesus Christ showed by washing the feet of his first disciples. They also washed each other's feet as a sign of their willingness to serve one another in humility. During the Agony in the Garden portion of the retreat, the participants realized the importance of prayer in times of anguish and affliction. They learned to intercede for their own and other's intentions with heartfelt prayer and devotion, at the same time imploring that their cup of suffering pass not as they will but according to God's will in full acceptance and surrender to God's will for them.

Msgr. Paul reminded those who were present that the Washing of the Feet and Agony in the Garden happened during the last 24 hours of Jesus Christ's life. After Jesus washed the Apostles' feet on Holy Thursday, He instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Msgr. Paul informed those present that when they receive the Eucharist, not only do they receive the Body and Blood of Christ, but they become the Body of the Christ and temples of His Holy Spirit.

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" (1 Cor 6:19)

COUNSELS

By Your Perseverance You Will Secure Your Lives

WORD: Jer 33:14-16; Ps 25:4-5, 8-10, 14; 1
Thes 3:12, 4:2; Lk: 21:25-28, 34-36

ORDER: *"Strengthen your hearts to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His holy ones" (1 Thes 3:13)*

THEME: We are vigilant for the coming of Jesus when we abound in love for one another.

REFLECTION: [Love]

When we are depressed with life's tribulations, we are tempted to lose patience. We tend to forget and become complacent. Even when it is God who promised and again declare that He will fulfill that promise, that He will make a virtuous Branch grow from the stump of David (Jer 33:14-16), the people are tempted to lose patience when time dragged on. This was true during the time of Jeremiah in the first reading, the time of Paul in the second reading, and in the Gospel of Luke. In every generation, we seem to forget and take God's promise less seriously. We need this season of Advent to be prepared and vigilant, just as the Psalmist is reminding us - *"Your ways O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths, guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and for you I wait all day."* Ps 25:4-5.

Just like the Christians of Thessalonica, who were waiting for Christ's return during their lifetime, many of us need to be reminded not to lose patience and to continue living a blameless life, as we wait for the Second coming. We can easily feel overwhelmed by the struggle to meet trials and tribulations and other worldly cares. When this happens, it is easy to miss out of the central meaning of Advent: that fallen, finite human beings can be lifted up to the throne of

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"All the paths of the Lord are kindness and constancy toward those who keep his covenant and his decrees." (Ps 25:10)

***"But she from her poverty,
Offered her whole life" (Lk 21:4b)***

In 1 Peter 4:10 it says, "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."

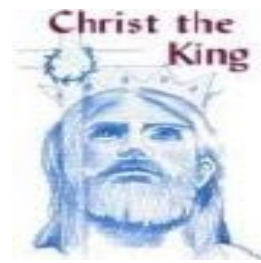
Stewardship to me means that all that we have now and in the future comes from the Lord. It means that I should always be cognizant of where, how, and what things do I spend my time, treasure, and talents on. Many years ago, at a Time Management seminar I attended, we were asked, "What matters most to you?" I wrote on my notepad: GOD, Family, and Work, in that order. Since then I've always tried to keep this in mind. If I say I love the Lord, I should be expending my energies, my time, and my resources on things that bring glory and honor to the Triune God.

Whenever I am able to exhaust myself for the Lord, whether in writing, selling raffle tickets, washing pots and pans after service, anything... I am happiest. It gives me such an inner peace and joy that is so indescribable. Moreover, I crave for this joy and peace. This is what perpetuates the cycle for me. I love the Lord, He loves me back, I am overfilled with His blessings, and I need to give it away so that I may experience more of His love.

Our most profound experience as husband and wife was serving in the Medical Mission. It was there that our eyes were opened to how good this community is, and how generous it is to those in need. We were overwhelmed with joy to be able to give back to our country, and in a very personal way, share our time, talent, and treasure with the poorest of the poor. It solidified for us that we will do anything and everything we can, so that this kind of work can continue.

My husband & I also took a long, hard look at our tithing. It was the one area that we may not have been so "bukas-loob" in/ so "open" in giving. Someone from the Stewardship committee brought in a copy one day of a "Proportional Giving Chart" which he received from his parish. My husband & I looked at the numbers, and found out that we have not yet met the 10% of our gross which, as you recall from our teachings, is what we are taught to "tithe" or give back to the Church. This is comprised of 1/3 for our parish, 1/3 for our family, and 1/3 for BLD. We are not quite where we would like to be yet, but my husband & I, are making a very conscious effort to increase our tithing and cut down on our frivolous expenses. To us, it is another step in our spiritual growth. I discovered that I could never outdo the Lord. No matter how much I endeavor to give Him, He always gives me more!

"For everything is from you, and we only give you what we have received from you." (1 Chronicles 29:14b)



As Roman Catholics, we celebrate annually the Solemnity of Feast of Christ the King during the last Sunday of Ordinary Time (34th Sunday). This celebration is so fitting because we observe Christ's kingship right before we liturgically wait for the promised Messiah (King). This is such a perfect entrance into the penitential season of Advent. This year it falls on November 22, 2009.

It started in 1925, when secularism was on the rise. Many Christians, even Catholics, and Church's doubted Christ's authority and even His existence. Pope Pius XI instituted this feast in his encyclical Quas Primas in response to the diminishing faith and belief in Christ and Church. This response is similar to the institution of Feast of Corpus Christi when the devotion to the Eucharist was at the low point.

Aside from Secularism, the Individualistic system has also gained popularity. People embrace the thought that authority comes from individual self. This stems from the peoples' distrust to the governing bodies which includes Kings and Queens. They reject the use of "Lord" and "King" because these words conjure thoughts of tyrants, cruelty and corruption. Although they have legitimate reason for this belief, they totally missed that Christ's kingship is one of service and humility. In Mark 10:42-45, Jesus radically redefined the nature of kingship when he said, *"Rather, whoever wishes to become great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

When we celebrate this feast we are reminded that Christ must reign in our hearts and minds and we recognize the supremacy of Christ in every aspect of our lives and be able to live it accordingly.

As we reflect on the Kingship of Christ, we are therefore reminded that our brief life here on earth is not just a waiting area for us to sit and stay out of trouble until we are called. But it is a time and an active work place for us to show compassion, mercy and exercise active service to our neighbors as Christ taught us.

As we approach the end of one liturgical year, we look forward to the beginning of another. But we also look forward to a time when there will be no more endings or beginnings because Christ the King will have brought everything to a final, unending present.

Visit our website at
www.bldnewark.com

MAKE COVENANT NEWS
A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE.

THANKSGIVING PRAYERS

MARK 10

Jesus, this Thanksgiving Day and everyday of my life, I want to say "Thank You" for loving me and for making me feel special even though I did not do anything great. Thank You so much for my BLD community for helping me know You personally. Now I know what Thanksgiving Day is all about. It is not only the delicious food on the table and the warm feeling of having everyone I love around. It is all about that time when You breathed life in me and the seed of gratitude was planted in my heart. Everyday my heart wants to express this gratitude toward You. I also say thank you to my mom and dad for taking good care of me and for all their sacrifices that I may have a comfortable life. I say thank you most of all to You, my Lord Jesus for suffering and dying on the cross so that I may have the only true life with You in heaven.

JOHN 6

Father God, on this Thanksgiving Day I remember all of the blessings You have bestowed upon me and my family. Thank You Lord for my house, which protects me from the cold. Thank You Lord for putting the turkey and other delicious foods on our table as I pray for the less fortunate people around the world. Thank You Lord for my family and friends who give me company and support day after day. I am also grateful Lord for every morning and evening you give me. For the warmth of the sun, for the light from the stars and for the rainbow after the rain, I thank You. Let me celebrate this Thanksgiving by lifting up Your name in praise through songs and prayers. And as Thanksgiving Day draws to an end, help me Lord to maintain a thankful heart everyday.

YOUTH

"Whatever you do in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:17)

Lord, we thank You in all we do from the littlest things in life to the most important things. We thank You for the air we breathe, the water we drink, and this Earth we live on. We thank You for all that we have in our lives today, the clothes on our backs, the roof above our heads, and the technology we use in our everyday lives. We thank You for the friends and family with whom we spend this Thanksgiving season and the BLD community with whom we worship Your Holy Name. Lord, we thank You for loving us unconditionally no matter what faults or failures we have. We thank You for the hardest struggles in life that we go through to show us our true strength. We thank You for the most important gift of all that You have blessed us with, our lives. Amen.



(Answers to quiz: 1c, 2b, 3a, 4b, 5b, 6d, 7c, 8c, 9a, 10d)

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. MARY'S ROOF REPAIRS

Help St. Mary's and St. Mark's with its roof repairs by going through the parish website when you do your Christmas shopping and other purchases at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Visit www.stmarystmarkparish.com & go to gift shop page

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Counsels from page 1

grace. Because Jesus came among us and freed us from sin, everything we do- even the most mundane task- can be lifted up to the infinite realm. St. Paul prays that God may strengthen their hearts, so that they may be holy at the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Advent is a time of repentance, a change of attitude, if necessary. We wait for Christ renewed coming at Advent and in one perspective his final coming, which will be final for you and me at the moment that God calls.

What should be our attitude while waiting? Brothers and sisters you know "how you should conduct yourself to please God," to be found "blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His holy ones." You have been guided in His truth and instructed by the one who "teaches the humble His way." "The friendship of the Lord is with those who fear Him and His covenant for their instructions." And you fear Him, so receive His instructions. Continue to do so. Continue to "increase and abound in love for one another." Let not the sums of your good works diminish in the least, but "strengthen your hearts," and what you are doing for Him, "do even more." Until the Day He comes, your justice must increase.

All is passing away and shall soon be on more. The nations will look, but they will not see the things they trusted so vainly. Only "the Son of Man coming in the cloud with power and great glory" will be known; He will be all that is seen. And will you recognize Him? And will He recognize you?

Brothers and Sisters, with the Lord's own words; "Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man." Wait expectantly with patient endurance for the Lord's second coming.

Direction: Prepare your hearts for the coming of the Lord by living in life of prayer and by sharing your blessings with others.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Save the Date

Disciples Assembly - January 9, 2010

Please reserve Jan. 9, 2010 for our next Disciples Assembly. All committed and covenanted disciples are highly encouraged to attend. There will be no teachings, or any reunions/parties to conflict with this date RSVP to secretariat for valid excuses.

TEACHING SCHEDULE

Dec 04 CDFP Overview / Intro to the Word – ME 34

ONDOY DISASTER RELIEF FUND

\$11,789

DINNER DANCE NET INCOME

\$12,844

Are you smarter than a Catholic 8th grader

Q1 - The truths, beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith are known as: a) Teachings b) Catechism c) Tradition d) Doctrine

Q2 - Which of the following is NOT a cardinal virtue?

a) Prudence b) Charity c) Fortitude d) Justice

Q3 - Rosaries, relics, medals, crucifixes, scapulars are all examples of sacramentals. a) True b) False

Q4 - The sacrament of anointing of the sick can be celebrated by:

a) Only the Bishop b) A Bishop or Priest c) A Bishop, Priest or Deacon d) A Layman in case of an emergency.

Q5 - The following sacraments can only be received once:

a) Baptism, Confirmation & Marriage b) Baptism, Confirmation & Holy Orders c) Baptism, Holy Orders & Anointing of the sick d) Confirmation, Marriage & Holy Orders

Q6 - Which sacrament(s) uses the Sacred Chrism oil?

a) Only Baptism & Confirmation b) Only Baptism c) Only Confirmation d) Baptism, Confirmation & Holy Orders e) None of the above

Q7 - What are the 4 marks of the Church?

a) Prayer, Love, Works & Alms giving b) Faith, Hope, Love & Charity c) One, Holy, Catholic & Apostolic d) Temperance, Justice, Prudence & Fortitude e) Peace, Love, Charity & Faith

Q8 - The sacrament of confession:

a) Must include a confession of all sins committed to be valid b) Must be received by all adult Catholics at least once a year c) Must be received before receiving Communion by anyone guilty of a mortal sin since his/her last confession. d) All of the above

Q9 - The consecration of the Eucharist:

a) Can be performed by a Catholic priest/bishop or by a priest/bishop of an Eastern Orthodox church b) Can be performed by a Catholic priest/bishop only if he celebrates Mass with at least two witnesses c) Can be performed by Catholic priests/bishops and Anglican priests/bishops so long as they have the proper intention and pronounce the correct words of consecration d) Can be performed by a Catholic priest/bishop but in emergency situations can be performed by a deacon

Q10 - In the Mass

a) Jesus is symbolized by the bread and wine from the moment of consecration onward b) Jesus is spiritually present along with the bread and wine once the consecration has occurred c) Jesus is spiritually present when the community gathers in prayer under the leadership of the priest and ceases to be spiritually present when the priest leaves the sanctuary d) Jesus is really and truly present, and the bread and wine are not present, after the consecration e) None of the above (See p.3 for correct answers)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

	Actual	YTD
Collections	4,225	176,427
Expenses	518	190,706
Surplus/(Deficit)	3,737	(14,279)

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

ERRATUM

Nov. 13, 2009, Lord's Provision YTD figures were reported incorrectly. They should be:

	YTD
Collections	172,172
Expenses	190,338
Surplus/(Deficit)	(18,166)



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 49

Bulletin Edition

Dec. 11, 2009

US Bishops Back Measure to Bar Tax-Funded Abortion

WASHINGTON, D.C., DEC. 7, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)):- The U.S. bishops are backing an amendment to keep abortion out of health care reform and are asking voters to urge their Senators to support the measure.

The bishops wrote Congress today in support of an amendment proposed by Senators Ben Nelson, Orrin Hatch and Robert Casey, which would prevent the health reform bill from using federal funds to pay for health plans that include elective abortions. They sent along two fact sheets explaining how the current bill supports abortion and how the amendment would stop that. A similar measure was passed in the House of Representatives, paving the way for the passage there of the "Affordable Health Care for America Act."

The bishops are urging voters to contact their Senators and express support for the amendment, and in fact, the bishops' [Web site](#) offers a user-friendly e-mail system to put constituents in touch with their Senators.

"This amendment will have the same effect as the Stupak-Smith-Ellsworth-Kaptur-Dahlkemper-Pitts Amendment already accepted in the House by an overwhelming bipartisan majority," the bishops' letter said. "Like that amendment, it does not change the current situation in our country: Abortion is legal and available, but no federal dollars can be used to pay for elective abortions or plans that include elective abortions. This amendment does not restrict abortion, or prevent people from buying insurance covering abortion with their own funds. It simply ensures that where federal funds are involved, people are not required to pay for other people's abortions."

The bishops note that without the amendment, the Senate bill fails to keep tax dollars from funding abortions. "Sadly, the current Senate bill fails to keep in place the longstanding federal policy against the use of federal funds for elective abortions or health plans that include elective abortions."

One of the sponsors of the bill, Senator Nelson of Nebraska, noted that the amendment is a reflection of Americans' desires to restrict abortion.

"Most Nebraskans, and Americans, do not favor using public funds to cover abortion," he said in a statement on his Web page, "and as a result this bill shouldn't open the door to do so."

COUNSELS

Teacher, What Should We Do?

WORD: Zep 3:14-18; Is 12:2-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18

THEME: We are vigilant for the coming of Jesus when we joyfully show kindness to all.

ORDER: "...**Rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all...**" (Phil 4: 4-5)

REFLECTION:

People who speak with conviction most often attract attention. John's powerful moral voice drew crowds to the banks of the Jordan. His fiery sermons spoke to something very real in their lives. He moved them to a desire to change. "What should we do" asked the crowds. John challenged them to acts of charity and social concern. They should show kindness, clothe the poor and feed the hungry.

Tax collectors asked him for instruction and guidance. They knew that people hated them for collaborating with the Roman government. They also exploited their own people, increasing their take by adding hidden costs for their services as tax agents. John did not tell them to give up their jobs, but he commanded them to stop cheating people. They should not use their authority to take more money than was allowed by law. Soldiers asked him for moral instruction. Roman soldiers found numerous ways to intimidate and bleed the local people. John confronted them with their well known crimes of violently robbing villagers and of using false witnesses to extort money. He admonished them to stop their greed with his words: "Be satisfied with your wages".

John touched a great many of his listeners. He converted their hearts and watched with joy as they waded into the Jordan for his baptism. Songs of praise arose from Jordan's banks as the stream of penitents let the waters wash them with a ritual cleansing, giving them a new sense of repentance and renewal. **Continued on page 2**

Promise of the Week

"...The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:7)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARK 10

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We thank you in advance for your full cooperation in this very important matter.

MISSION

Medical Mission

February 22-25, 2010 - **Mauban, Quezon**
Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-222-0550 mtg71ra@aol.com

Stewardship - A Way Of Life!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. MARY'S ROOF REPAIRS

Help St. Mary's and St. Mark's with its roof repairs by going through the parish website when you do your Christmas shopping and other purchases at amazon.com. Visit www.stmarystmarkparish.com & go to gift shop page.

ST. MARY'S BLOOD DRIVE

Dec. 13th, 9:15-3:15pm @ St. Mary's 1st floor Classroom
Our community of New Jersey is in dire need of **O Negative and B Negative** blood.

All blood types & ethnicities are encouraged to donate to help make certain that our region is prepared for predictable blood needs & any unexpected contingencies over the holiday season.

Contacts: Fr. Robert Lamirez • 732-709-6274
Efren & Yollie Cruz • 201-562-5071 • 201-988-7625

DISCIPLES ASSEMBLY

Please reserve Jan. 9, 2010 for our next Disciples Assembly. All committed and covenanted disciples are highly encouraged to attend. There will be no teachings, or any reunions/parties to conflict with this date RSVP to secretariat for valid excuses.

March For Life Rally

January 22, 2010, Washington D.C.
Contact: Frank & Malou Venadas 973-562-0055

WITNESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Jan. 23, 2010, St. Mary's @ 1pm By invitation only

*Make the Covenant News
a part of your covenant life!*

LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING DEC. 4, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	3,633	183,219
Expenses	7,402	207,560
Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,769)	(24,341)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Ondoy Disaster Relief Fund 17,999

Dinner Dance Net Income 12,844

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.

www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

"Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!"

COUNSELS (from page 1)

So exciting was John that many people wondered if he were the expected messiah. John quickly corrected this misconception. He denied that he was the messiah and told them that one "mightier than I" was coming. Cupping the river water in his hands, he told them he only baptized with water. The messiah would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.

The Gospel reflects the crucial role of John the Baptist in preparing the way for the coming of Christ; and likewise shows us, in this present day, that repentance and renewal are key in preparing our hearts for Christ's coming during this Advent season. These actions reveal our acceptance of God's encompassing presence in our lives and the operative relationship between ourselves and God.

The *real self* discovers far greater power in loving communion with the standards of God. When the person advances in loving union with God, enduring peace and joy flood the heart; kindness and harmony with others becomes possible; anxiety diminishes and a sense of power develops. This is the power of love not of force. It is the power of freedom not of addiction or compulsion.

A person in love with God has no need to push others around, hurt them, cheat, humiliate, take revenge against them. Love of God **"provides the peace of God that surpasses all understanding that guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"** (Phil 4:7 paraphrased). It makes the self strong and adequate for the challenges of life.

At the core of the teachings of John the Baptist is conversion from the bondage of ego. John asks us to detach ourselves from our ego and its sins of selfishness, unkindness, cheating and all other forms of cruelly controlling others. Detachment from our ego reveals our true self. This is possible if we attach ourselves to Christ. The more I attach myself to Christ, the more I become a "for others" person in Christ, the more will my *real self*, the person God wants me to be, flourish and become powerful. This is what St. Paul meant when he said in Phil. 4:13, **"I have the strength for everything through Him who empowers me."** The Gospel speaks only of the empowerment of love that comes only from attachment to Christ.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.
2. Share what you have with those who have none.
3. Show your kindness in words and deeds.

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 15 Issue 50

Bulletin Edition

Dec. 18, 2009

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

From Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo

Let the Spirit of Christmas that caused the Word of God to become flesh-and-blood dwelling among us bring forgiveness to whatever was sinful or wrong in our life, bring perfection to whatever is yet imperfect, bring fulfillment to whatever we have been dreaming and envisioning as individuals, families and communities of Bukas Loob sa Diyos.

We have to keep on remembering and celebrating Christmas with a view of realizing and experiencing what Jesus Christ, Son of God, is challenging us to do: "Follow me." In this light we understand what Mary, his mother and our mother, has instructed us to do. "Do whatever he tells you." And he says "Follow me."

It is no longer simply watching the Christmas Crib - which by the way has become rare. But the spirit of Christmas must now find its way and expression in our lives. Jesus, who was born of Mary two thousand years ago, must become flesh-and-blood in us. There would not have been a first Christmas, if there had not been Mary and foster-father Joseph to accept God's will with all its challenges.

Christmas is now in you. Christmas is you . . . and you . . . and you . . . and you. Jesus Christ has now to become flesh-and-blood in you and me. It is a process, longer and more difficult than what happened in the sacred womb of Mary. The process takes a lifetime of "incarnation." And so there was Christmas in 2000 and long before that, and Christmas this year 2009 and many more years after this year. It is an invitation to proclaim, different in spirit and intensity each time: "Jesus Christ yesterday, today and forever." You and I have a role in the presence of Jesus Christ in each moment of history.

Wherever you go with Jesus in you, your presence brings Christmas.

From the ECSL

During this Christmas season, we are all invited to reflect in a deeper way on the Love of God who sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins. Jesus was born in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn; whose first visitors were the shepherds. In His humble birth, may we not be completely absorbed with the temporal concerns of this world but be focused more and more on the perspective of eternity and our salvation and those of others.

May we celebrate the feast of the **Continued on page 2**

COUNSELS

I Come To Do God's Will

WORD: Mic 5:1-4; Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45

THEME: We are vigilant for the coming of Jesus when, like Mary, we do the will of the Father.

ORDER: Do the will of God. (paraphrased)

REFLECTION:

The Gospel in the 4th Sunday of Advent narrates how Mary bearing her child within her, through the miracle of God, traveled to her cousin Elizabeth. At that time, Mary's pregnancy was not known to anyone even to her betrothed husband, Joseph and Elizabeth, her relative. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, the child in Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy. This confirmed that what was spoken to Mary by the Lord, which she believed, has been fulfilled. Having accepted this exalted vocation, she became the ideal model of Christian faith and discipleship. The work and grace of God in Mary's life transformed her entire being into the embodiment of faithfulness, love and obedience.

As Christians, this advent revelation prompts us to ponder on our love and obedience to our God and reflect on the readiness of our hearts for the coming of Jesus. Deuteronomy 29:28 states: ***"Both what is still hidden and what has already been revealed concerns us and our descendants forever, that we may carry out all the words of His law."*** Through the revealed will of God, the bible, we know God's plan, purposes and the moral will. The most important purpose of God's revealed will in the scripture is to lead us to salvation in Christ. In 2 Timothy 3:15, Paul told Timothy, ***"and that from infancy you have known the sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus"***.

As disciples of Christ we have the responsibility to search the scriptures and know God's Word as fully as we are capable of learning. Only through knowledge of the Word can we develop or increase faith, hope, charity, love, and other virtues. We have to attend seminars and teachings that will deepen our knowledge of Christ. We can only prove to be His disciples if we bear fruit by actualizing what God commands us to do. If we obey His commandments, **Continued on page 2**

Promise of the Week

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Luke 1:45)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

then we love our neighbor and we abide in God. Romans 1:17 reveals: ***"For in it is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith; as it is written, the one who is righteous by faith will live"***.

Faith is a gift of God, a theological virtue infused by Him, by which we believe in Him and believe all that He has said and revealed to us, because He is Truth itself. By faith we freely commit our entire self to God and for this reason we seek to know God and do His will. Obedience is faith in action to the will of the Father. Jesus himself did this when He said, ***"I come to do your will."*** (Hebrews 10:9) And it is ***"by this 'will' that we have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*** (Hebrews 10:10). By obeying the will of the Father, whom He loves, Jesus saves us.

Similarly, Mary's obedience to the will of the Father was drawn by her love and deep-rooted faith in God. She believed that what was spoken to her by the Lord through Angel Gabriel would be fulfilled. She committed herself by responding, ***"May it be done to me according to your word."*** (Luke 1:38) If we have Christ in us we must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it, confessing Christ before men and follow Him along the way of the cross.

Jesus wants us not only to participate in good works but also believe in Him to be able to come up higher and be like Him. When we are being obedient to God, we are just doing that: Knowing Him, loving Him and having a personal intimate relationship with Him. To accomplish this we must be attentive to God's laws. Obedience to God is living God's Word because we want to, and enjoy being filled with the love of Jesus. For a Christian, obedience is a very important factor for growth. However, to always obey the law is almost next to impossible. But we can honor and maintain obedience to God by pondering or meditating on the words of Jesus. This means focusing one's thoughts on the scripture in order to understand it deeply.

To love God is to keep His commandments. In 1 John 14:15, Jesus says: ***"If you love me, you will obey what I command."*** Let us be reminded that advent is not only for waiting but also preparing for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we prepare for the coming of our Lord through His mercy and forgiveness may we increase and abound in love for one another and for all, so as to strengthen our hearts to be blameless before our God. Like Mary, our blessedness is in believing in God and doing His will.

DIRECTION: Shepherd the flock by the strength of the Lord.

Christmas Messages (from page 1)

birth of Jesus with Love – for our family, for our neighbor, for brothers and sisters in community, for our poor brethren, for those whom we have a misunderstanding, for those who have caused us pain; with Thanksgiving – for the blessings we have received this year, for the miracles we have witnessed in our family and in this community, and for the grace that allowed us to grow spiritually in spite of the trials, sufferings, and calamities in our lives.

May we all pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide each and every one to live ***Continued on the next column***

in, with, and for Christ in the coming year; to continue to be a blessing for our family and for our community; to be empowered to continue to do the Will of the Father and the Mission given to BLD.

We thank you for all your help in forging unity in BLD and helping in our common mission to bring Jesus to others. Our prayers for you and for your family, A blessed Christmas to all!

From the DCS and DSL • Rejoice!

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near." (Philippians 4:4-5)

On behalf of the DSL and DCS, we greet you with the love of Christ. May the true spirit of Christmas – the spirit of love, the spirit of joy and the spirit of peace, flow from our hearts and spread to all people we meet, to our families, to our neighbors and to our brothers and sisters in the community.

We thank God, foremost, for the blessings of 2009 and then, for all of you who have unselfishly dedicated yourselves to be co-disciples of Christ. We share the joy of serving an awesome God. May God continue to prosper the works of our hands.

A joyful Christmas and a blessed New Year to all!

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MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY

Dec. 27 - Christmas Party • Jan. 03 - Children's Party

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LORD'S PROVISION

WEEK ENDING DEC. 11, 2009

	Actual	YTD
Collections	4,311	187,530
Expenses	722	208,282
Surplus/(Deficit)	3,589	(20,752)

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

Thank you for your continued support!

Ondoy Disaster Relief Fund	18,054
Dinner Dance Net Income	12,944

Merry Christmas & a Blessed New Year

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