



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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The Archdiocese of Newark Women's Commission

“Mary & the Holy Spirit”

On Saturday, April 4, about 800 women heeded the call to converge at the Holy Family Parish in Nutley to hear Johnnette Benkovic, founder and president of Living His Life Abundantly, she is also the executive producer of The Abundant Life (seen internationally on EWTN). Her outreaches are not limited to television and radio but also in print and internet communications.

The day started with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with Most Rev. John J Myers, as celebrant.

In Ephesians 1:3-4 it says, “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before Him.*” We were conceived in the womb of a woman just like Jesus Christ. God holds nothing back from us; that is, the secret of spiritual life. If God withholds from us any blessing, He would cease being God. Love is an act of total donation. God cannot will evil because it is contrary to LOVE. Evil happens because of us, our twisted way of looking at ourselves and our relationship. Faith is not about feelings. Faith resides in our intellect. We need to always think of our faith through our free will. We must always rely on our faith and trust in God by surrendering our trials and tribulations of our lives to God; we leave ourselves open to receive all the blessings He has in store for us.

God called us because he wants to entrust us to the Immaculate Heart of our Blessed Mother. Sometimes tragedies are the greatest blessing of all, because it binds us closer to God and we tend to seek the intercession of Mary on our behalf. Mary is our contact point. She is our means to go back to God. We labored to give our children LIFE. We should also labor for their SPIRITUAL life. We unite our pain with the passion of our Lord. If we want more of God, we should get more of Mary. If we want more of the Holy Spirit, we should get more of Mary.

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

Apr. 13-18 *Colossians 3-4*

Apr. 20-25 *1 Thessalonians 1-2*

COUNSELS

Faith in Community

Word: Acts 4:32-35; Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24;
1 Jn 5:1-6; Jn 20:19-31


Theme: God exalts us when we believe and accept the Risen Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Order: *Do not be unbelieving but believe.*

Reflection:

The readings for the 2nd Sunday of Easter provide us with two contrasting pictures of a community of faith. The First Reading from Acts speaks of the first Christian community. The disciples were of one heart and soul; not one of them claimed anything as his own, but all things were common property to them. The scripture continues to tell us that the apostles took charge of the distribution of properties at first. Later we read how they selected a group of men so the apostles could give their time to prayer and the Word. In both cases, we learn that the proceeds and gifts were placed in the hands of their spiritual leaders, people who understand their responsibility before God and used the proceeds on the basis of the Lord's leading. This community of disciples existed in perfect harmony and sets an example of how faith communities should be.

John's Gospel, gives us a picture of the other face of community. A week after the death and crucifixion of Jesus, The disciples gathered in fear in the upper room which they considered their place away from the world. They waited there and they prayed not as individuals, but as a community of believers, followers of Christ. Together they worshipped, but they doubted. In contrast with the first community, this community was beset

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God's Promise for the Week

“... believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that through this belief you may have life in His Name.” Jn 20:31

Apologetics

What is the Easter Duty or Easter Obligation?

CCC 2042

The first precept (“You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor”) requires the faithful to sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord as well as the principal liturgical feasts honoring the Mysteries of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints; in the first place, by participating in the Eucharistic celebration, in which the Christian community is gathered, and by resting from those works and activities which could impede such a sanctification of these days.

The second precept (“You shall confess your sins at least once a year”) ensures preparation for the Eucharist by the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation, which continues Baptism’s work of conversion and forgiveness.

The third precept (“You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season”) guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord’s Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and center of the Christian liturgy.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2042 - Can. 920

1. After being initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, each of the faithful is obliged to receive holy communion at least once a year.
2. This precept must be fulfilled during the Easter season unless it is fulfilled for a just cause at another time during the year.


Code of Canon Law 920

What Easter Duty is *NOT*

So, first off we must understand that “Easter Duty” is NOT merely the requirement to go to Mass once a year at Eastertide. This is a misnomer held by many a Catholic who doesn’t really know their faith. Many “Catholics” show up for Mass once per year on Easter Sunday (some go twice per year with Easter and Christmas), Easter Duty does not imply that Catholics are only required to attend Mass once per year! Those who think this way are ignoring the First Precept, wherein faithful Catholics are required to participate in Mass on ALL SUNDAYS and Holy Days of Obligation. To only go to Mass once per year grossly ignores the First Precept.

What Easter Duty *IS*

Easter Duty refers to the Third Precept, mentioned above. It is the requirement to receive the Eucharist at least once during the Easter Season. In years past reception of the Eucharist was not an every Sunday affair and especially not daily reception - as many modern Catholics are accustomed to. Reception of Eucharist could be once per quarter, once per 6 months or even once per year. The Church decreed that faithful Catholics must receive Eucharist at least once during the season of Easter, or Eastertide.

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Called to Become Bread: Blest & Broken for Others

If Jesus appeared to you today, would you recognize Him? Would you recognize Him in the face of a stranger, or in a disgruntled coworker, or in the best and worst of times? A dear friend of mine once shared with me her experience of seeing the face of Jesus in a homeless person. Desolate and not knowing what to do, she sought solace in an almost empty church. As she was praying and crying her heart out, a stranger approached her and started talking and reassuring her that “everything will be alright...” Consumed with her own grief, she did not pay attention to the homeless person only to realize years later that the memory of that day would always *warm her heart* because she believes that it was Jesus, in the person of a stranger, who comforted her that day.

The Road to Emmaus is the road we walk each day, an experience all of us share. We have hopes of how life should be and we go into situations and stages of life with great expectations and, more often than not, face disillusionment. The two disciples walking toward Emmaus, who really thought all was lost, were true examples of disillusionment. How many times have we walked in their shoes? Then Jesus comes to us, and most of the time, in an unlikely place, event, or person. We often forget that God is always present and quietly walking with us, making His presence subtly known through the simple acts of service, kindness, or by simply being there for the other.

Each one of us is called to *become bread, blest and broken* for one another in the everyday actions of our lives. Every time I watch the *Washing of the Feet* on Holy Thursdays, I always wonder if I had taken advantage of all the opportunities I had the past year to wash the feet of those in need. I wonder where I had missed an opportunity to serve, whose pain have I ignored, whose life was diminished because of my blindness and lack of understanding. Was I willing to reach out to a “stranger” in need, just like the homeless man did to my friend?

Mother Theresa, who knew so well how to become Christ for another, said, “*The “least of my brethren” are the hungry and the lonely, not only for food, but for the Word of God; the thirsty and the ignorant not only for water, but also for knowledge, peace, truth, justice and love; the naked and the unloved, not only for clothes but also for human dignity; the unwanted; the unborn child; the racially discriminated against; the homeless and abandoned, not for a shelter made of bricks, but for a heart that understands, that covers, that loves... all those who have lost all hopes and faith in life; and all those who have lost God and who have lost all hope in the power of the Spirit.* (Mother Theresa, “The Simple Path”)

Do we recognize the “least of our brethren” among us?

Counsels

(from page 1)


with fears; they were confused and did not know what to do after witnessing the death of Jesus. It was only after Jesus showed Himself to them that they regained their belief and trust in Him.

This Sunday's readings confront the fundamental ingredient of all religion, faith. The Apostle Thomas is presented as a human with doubts, very much like you and me. It is not that he didn't trust the Lord. He didn't trust the other disciples. Thomas could not believe Peter, James, John and the others' stories that Jesus had risen from the tomb. He doubted that Jesus would use them to convey his truth. The words that Jesus addressed to Thomas were meant for all of us. *"Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."* Thomas answered him, *"My Lord and my God!"* Jesus said to him, *"Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."* (Jn 20:27-29)

But we are mere human beings. We search for miracles, for proofs or signs from God to believe. We are prone to question and doubt deep theological matters, like the dogmatic teaching on the Virgin Birth and sometimes even the mercy of God. For how can the human mind comprehend the extent of God's love in the midst of sufferings, sickness and death. We can never fully understand but we can believe through the grace of faith.

While the First Reading shows us an ideal community, the Second Reading from *1 John 5* reveals the reality of life just as we experience it today. Doubts, fears and conflict are facts of life in our community. They can destroy us *or* we can do what the early church did. We can strive for unity – working together in harmony despite all worldly differences that may exist between us, sharing community resources with other ministries, serving others, respecting and nurturing the gift of others, forgiving and reconciling with others and loving one another. Love for others is what will convince the world of the genuineness of our faith

Faith gives us the strength to overcome an overly possessive spirit characterized by doubt, fear and mistrust. Faith creates a real desire to share and in developing a sense of responsibility for one another. We can be the idyllic community described in Acts Chapter 4 and in *1 John 5*, a community of believers who are selfless and totally concerned for each other. One mind in faith, one heart in love.- characteristics of a true community that will reveal how fully blessed we are, and how our faith in Jesus Christ has allowed us to be responsive to the living presence and power of God in our lives.

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The Divine Mercy

"Who will paint you as beautiful as you are?" Saint Faustina asked the Lord. *"Not in the beauty of the color, nor of the brush lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace,"* the Lord replied. (Diary, 313).

This was the conversation that transpired between Jesus and Saint. Faustina back in 1931.

Who is Saint Faustina? Helen Kowalska, better known in the Catholic Church as Saint Faustina, is a young polish nun who entered the religious life with the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland in 1925. She was born to a poor family yet rich in her love for God and respect for other people.

On Feb. 22 of the same year, dressed in a white garment with one hand raised and the other at His breast, Jesus appeared to Saint Faustina and said, *"Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You! I desire that this image be venerated ... in your chapel, and ... throughout the world"* (Diary, 47). The image of Jesus showed rays flowing from His chest, one in red and the others in light shades. The red shades represent His Blood when His heart was pierced on the cross and the light shades symbolize water that cleanses and purifies the soul. *"These rays will shield the soul before the justice of My Father"*.

On Apr. 19, 1935, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon Jesus once again spoke to Saint Faustina when the latter entered the chapel, *"I desire that the image be publicly honored."* With the help of Father Sopocko, Saint Faustina's confessor, who gave a sermon about the great mercy of the Lord, the image came alive. The rays came shining and piercing through the hearts of all those gathered during the sermon.

It was a series of revelations of the Lord to Saint Faustina instructing her how He desires to reach more people through His Mercy. However, on Mar. 6, 1959, the Holy See, acting on information inaccurately reported to him, prohibited the writings and spreading of the image. There followed almost 20 years of complete silence.

On Apr. 15, 1978, after a careful evaluation and thorough examination of the original documents pertaining to the Divine Mercy, the Holy See completely reversed its decision and allowed the devotion to take its place.

Saint Faustina died on Oct. 5, 1938. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II in Rome on Divine Mercy Sunday, Apr. 30, 2000 as the very first saint of the 3rd millennium.

Directions:

1. As a community of believers, be of one heart and one mind in bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
2. Be of one heart and one mind in loving one another just as we love God and obey His commandments.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 01-03 Aspirant's Retreat

LSS 26, 27, 28 and 29

May 09-08 ME #3 BLD Charlotte

Blowing Rock, NC

Contact: Henry/Aida Koryan

973-709-1387 (H) 973-629-6059 (C)

May 29-31 ME #33

Mary Immaculate Center, Northampton, PA

Contact: Gary/Mil Camacho 732-821-4507

Dens/Mina Mantes 973-887-5904

Application & directions go to bldnewark.com

May 29-31 SE #22

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY

Contacts: Manny/Arlene Mangalanzo

arlenemanny@gmail.com 908-256-2622;

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

Glenn Canlas invazian21@yahoo.com 201-

888-6700; Boy/Des Parker 201-823-2230

boydesparker@optonline.net

TEACHINGS

Apr 17 After Worship

Teaching

Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Christian Maturity Program Singles

Apr 18 St. Mary's 1-6 pm

Shepherds Training

LSS 28

Encounter with Jesus

LSS 31

Apr 24 After Worship

Teaching

Golden Years

Intercessory Formation

LSS 29

Service Formation

LSS 30

Apologetics

What is Eastertide?

The season of Easter, or Eastertide, begins on Easter Sunday and lasts through Pentecost Sunday. There's no rush to get ones Easter Duty done on Easter Sunday. You have from the First Mass of Easter, during the Easter Vigil, through the last Mass of Pentecost Sunday.

To summarize - faithful Catholics are required to attend and participate in Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation (the First Precept). At least once per year, during Eastertide, faithful Catholics are to receive the Eucharist (the Third Precept). In order to licitly receive the Eucharist, faithful Catholics must be spiritually prepared, that is, they cannot have mortal sin on their soul (to not fulfill the First Precept not attending Mass every Sunday is a mortal sin), thus the necessity to go to Confession prior to Eucharist arises, and we are required to confess our sins at least once per year too (the Second Precept). So the "Easter Duty" or "Easter Obligation" is to receive Eucharist at least once between the First Mass of Easter (during Easter Vigil) and the final Mass on Pentecost Sunday.

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). 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

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit – Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home

56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055

Every 2nd Saturday 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. *April 25 - ME 30*

Contact: Louie & Choly Relucio - 201-483-8715

Resurrection Parish – St. Bridget Church

372 Montgomery St Jersey City, NJ 07302

Healing Prayer Service every Monday at 8:00pm

Healing Prayer Service with Eucharistic Celebration

Every first Monday of the month at 8:00 pm

2000 Hail Marys Devotion w/ Eucharistic Celebration

Every last Sat. of the month starts at 8:30am except Dec.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

2009 Emergence Mass

St. Mary's Church Apr. 18, '09 - Sat. @ 10:00 am

Followed by the Blessed Sacrament Exposition

Everyone is asked to proceed to the auditorium.

Bible Study

St. Mary & St. Mark Parish

Every Friday, 7:30-8:00 pm @ St. Mary's, Rm. 104
Conducted by Fr. Dennis Kaelin. Everyone is welcome 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

Holy Spirit Breakfast

Our Lady of Liberia Church

5808 Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City, NJ

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

Archdiocese of Newark Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Tkts: Adults \$9 Children \$6 Payments by: Apr. 24, '09

Contacts: Angel/Aida Calilap 973-284-1853

Sal/Marie Russo 973-338-1050

Week Ending Apr. 03, 2009

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Tithes, Love Offering, \$5,922

Mission & Fast for the Poor

Total Disbursement \$9,595