



COUNSELS

Self-Giving

WORD: 1 Kings 19: 4-8, Psalm 34: 2-9, Ephesians 4: 30, 5: 2, John 6: 41-51

ORDER: *Jesus, the Living Bread, leads us to eternal life*

THEME: "Jesus leads us to eternal life when we live in love-kind to one another, compassionate, and forgiving [Self-giving]."

REFLECTION:

The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring, "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly His body that He was offering under the species of bread, this has always been the conviction of the Church, The holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine, a change occurs in the whole substance of the bread, which becomes the body of Christ our Lord, while the substance of the wine transforms into His blood. This change, the holy Catholic Church fittingly and properly calls 'transubstantiation'" (CCC 1376).

Indeed, it is this belief that distinguishes our Catholic faith from all the other Christian faiths. In this, we are assured of Jesus' real presence in what others might view as mere remembrance, or symbolic reenactment of an act that happened more than 2000 years ago. We Catholics rally around Jesus's radical proclamation, "I myself am the living bread come down from heaven...the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world" (John 6:51). Jesus's first intention in instituting the Eucharist is to give Him as food. Indeed it is often said that we are what we eat, and when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we can boldly claim with St. Paul that "*It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me*" (Galatians 2:20). Communion, that is to accept Jesus as food and believe that through His presence in us we are transformed to become truly the sons and daughters of God, is the ultimate act of faith.

In the first reading Elijah the prophet, was fleeing from Jezabel and was on his way to Horeb. During that long

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and difficult journey, he got so tired he wanted to die. "*Enough, O Lord! Take my life*". Lying down there he fell asleep..." (1 Kings 19:4). An angel of the Lord woke him up and offered him bread, asking him to eat for he still has a long journey ahead. Elijah ate and was sufficiently strengthened to continue his journey to Horeb, the mountain of God. What he could not do on his own strength, he could do with the meal that the Lord gave him when he was at the point of despair.

Here Elijah, called by the Lord to the faith, stands for us. In biblical language, mountains are almost always places of transformation. Each of us has a personal Mt. Horeb to climb. Mt. Horeb also represents the holy mountain of God – heaven - from where God our Father, calls us to our final destination. The length of the journey, forty days, represents our own long arduous journey on earth - saddled with much opposition, hardship, temptations and difficult moments. How many times did we see Elijah weakening, becoming so exhausted, he just wanted to give up? But just like Elijah, we too are awakened from our stupor by an angel of our Mother Church sent by God in His infinite wisdom - the BLD Community. Here, we meet Jesus in our many encounter and formation programs, at the core of which is our Eucharistic Celebrations in which we gather around God's table to receive nourishment and strength for our daily spiritual journey. This is enshrined in our fourth pledge to the Lord when we become Covenanted Disciples of the community: "We shall regularly receive the Sacraments of our Faith, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and bear witness to the power of God's grace in our lives."

In the sixth chapter of John, we see Jesus gradually building up to open before us an excellent perspective on reality – God's perspective. First, by multiplying loaves and fishes He miraculously satisfies his listeners' physical hunger (John 6 1-14). Next, He challenges them to seek the food

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Promise of the Week

"“Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me.” (John 6: 45b)

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that lasts to eternal life, not that which perishes (John 6:27). Finally, He tells them that He Himself is the new manna from heaven and that those who eat this bread will live forever (John 6:51).

In the Eucharist we receive Jesus, the bread of life. Unlike the bread brought by the angel to Elijah, who sustained him only for a time, the bread offered by Jesus gives eternal life. This “eternal life” does not only refer to a happy existence after death. But because the bread ‘transubstantiates’ – not just symbolically - into the actual body of Jesus, every time we receive it we are actually being filled with His divine life. Through Jesus, the believer participates in the life of God. If we stop to reflect upon it, this is an overwhelming, awesome reality. It means life without beginning or end, a life of love and happy self-giving, a joy that overcomes every sorrow.

As Jesus has given Himself to us as food and sustenance for the journey, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, inspiring us and transforming our lives as He guides and enables us to follow the path to the mountain of God. St. Paul speaks about surrendering to the life of the Spirit by getting rid of all that is not of God in our lives – bitterness, passion and anger, harsh words, slander, and malice of every kind (Ephesians 4:31). For Jesus to lead us to eternal life, we are to follow the way of love. The theme for the week tells us: Jesus leads us to eternal life when we live in love – kind to one another, compassionate, and forgiving. It is by being kind, compassionate and forgiving that we can fulfill our community value of self-giving, a virtue that promotes unity with others.

Jesus wants to reorient our lives toward Him, to make Him our first priority. With His life in us, we are given the power to put off sin (Ephesians 4:22) and to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1). When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion we receive Him who healed the centurion’s servant, who forgave the woman caught in adultery, and who rose victorious from the grave. We receive Him who longs to transform us from glory to glory (2Corinthians 3:18). Jesus wants to share this life with us. Let us receive Him always with reverence, bringing to Him our hunger for forgiveness, healing and strength. It is then that we can move forward to do His will to comfort the sorrowful, free the oppressed, encouraged the weary. And as He lives in us, His promise in John 6:45b: “*Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from Him comes to me,*” finds fulfillment.

DIRECTION:

1. Stop murmuring – practice Christian speech.
2. All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting and reviling must be removed from you along with all malice.
3. Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ

Lord’s Provision Week Ending - July 31, 2009

Weekly Budget	6,121
Expenses	1,998
Friday Collections	*3,537
Surplus/(Deficit)	1,539
Other Collections (Registration Fees)	7,109

- *Weekly collections remain lower than the projected weekly budget and continue to be a **major concern**.*
- *Thank you for your continued support & generosity*

Community Calendar

Aug 15 – Community Day, BLD Newark 17th Year Anniversary Celebration, Johnson Park, Piscataway NJ, 8:30am– 6:00pm, Contact: Manny/Nette Manguiat 201-355-0439

Aug 21 – 17th Year Anniversary Eucharistic Celebration St. Mary’s, Auditorium/Gym, Rahway, NJ, 8:00 P.M

Aug 29 – Allan Cruz’ Body Talk Retreat
1:00-5:00 pm, for audiences 13 years and up, singles & adults

Oct 17 - BLD-Newark Annual Dinner-Dance
VFW- Manville Hall, 600 Washington Ave., Manville, NJ 08835

Ministry Announcement

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 – 908-230-3660
Gene/Bing Ymbong – 908-406-6955

MISSION - Soup Kitchen, Missionary of Sisters of Charity, 60 Jay Street, Every 4th Saturday of the Month

Aug 22 - ME 20, Roger/Pina Coquia 908-222-0550, Mosty/Ling Garcia 908-659-8940 or 732-547-1917

Sep 26 - ME 25, Gerry/Dimples Canlas, Ramie/Emmie Espina 732-817-105

MISSION - Medical Mission, Feb 22-25, 2010 (Venue-TBD)
Contact: Mosty/Ling Garcia, 908-659-8940 or 732-547-1917

MISSION - Nursing Home Visit–Volunteers Needed, Every 2nd Saturday of the Month, Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, 56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055, Aug 8-YE 16, Audie & Vulet Chong (732) 356-905

Visit our website at

www.bldnewark.com