



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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October 14, 2016

NEWS

COUNSELS

BLD holds two retreats

Forty-Seven lift up their hands at LSS

Come Holy Spirit, come! Fill the hearts of Your faithful and kindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the Earth.

Forty-seven souls lifted their hands in jubilation as they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the Life in the Spirit Seminar on Oct 7-8 at the Divine Mercy Parish. The testimonies from the graduates of this LSS conveyed their gratitude for God's saving mercy and for the gifts of the Holy Spirit they have each received. The Seminar Director, Father Paul Lehman, said to the Lambs, that the light they were holding was a sign of their faith. He told them to be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and to always be aware of His presence. As a "new creation" with a "new life" each of the 47 individuals expressed their personal mission, and resolved to let go off the past and not let it encumber the future.

Our BLD Newark and Allentown Communities with one heart, commit ourselves to continue being the beacons for our newly baptized members. By loving each other, we exalt the Lord and bear the mark of a true servant of Christ as we recognize and express gratitude for His mercy!

John 6 kids sing "Endless Praise"

The John 6 Crossings is an annual Pre-Youth Encounter Retreat conducted by the BLD Community's John 6 Ministry in cooperation with the Youth Ministry. This retreat also serves as a formal entry for those children graduating from the Mark 10 Ministry into John 6.

This year, because of John 6 Crossings 17, our ministry is proud to announce that, 18 children now continue to remain faithful in attending our weekly Friday worships. There their personal relationships with God will grow each week. ...Continued on page 4

Pray Unceasingly

THEME: We bear the mark of a true servant of Christ when we ask for His grace to persevere in prayer.

WORD : Ex 17:8-13 ~ Ps 121:1-2,3-4,5-6,7-8
2 Tm 3:14-4:2 ~ Lk 18:1-8

ORDER: *"Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed"* (2 Tm 3:14)

REFLECTION:

Prayer is the only way we communicate with the Lord. Most of our prayers are done to get the Lord's attention to listen to our petitions and our needs. Thus, many Christians pray only when their lives are besieged with problems. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Paul commands us to *"pray without ceasing."* Similarly, we read in the beginning of this Sunday's Gospel of Luke 18:1, that Jesus told His disciples a parable about the need for them to pray always without becoming weary. This is the parable of a widow who unceasingly bothered a hard-hearted judge to render a just decision in her favor. He eventually relented to her wish because of her perseverance.

Jesus' reminder for us to pray always is not about those times when we are faced with problems as the widow was having. More importantly, it is for us to know His sacred will, to guide us at all times, so we can avoid sin and find salvation through His divine intervention. "Reverent" is the key adjective in the definition of prayer. Filled with a deep respect for the Divine Power, we therefore, pray with great humility. It is through reverence that we attain holiness and become closer to God, and know His will for us. Our Catholic faith has taught us various beautiful prayers that help us express our love for God ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

*"The Lord will guard you from all evil;
he will guard your soul." Ps 121:7*

PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL

Instead of taking sides in a family inheritance dispute between two brothers, Jesus warned against greed and took the opportunity to tell this parable. ***“Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions.”*** (Lk 12:15).

Greediness is the insatiable desire to acquire more. Greed and the pursuit of more wealth constitute one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual growth. They lead to false security and eventually to spiritual laziness. It is our greed that is sinful and it leads us to temptations causing discontent and ungratefulness. It makes us rely solely upon ourselves and riches instead of God. Greed makes the heart of men grow to love material things, making them forget that God is the source of every good thing; we store up treasures for ourselves alone and are not rich in what matters to God.

The wealthy man was materially blessed. His land produced plenty that he had to build bigger barns to accommodate his harvests. Once he stored everything, he carefully planned his retirement to live with ease. He felt secure with his possessions. He believed that he was self-sufficient and could take care of himself, and did not need God. He was so consumed with wealth and thought that he would live forever. His self-centeredness made him lose regard for the Lord’s abundant provisions, that he forgot to share his overflowing resources with others. His pride and greed blinded him from acknowledging that everything depends on what God wills. Little did he know that all his efforts to secure his wealth were all for nothing, for God had plans for him. And, the one big thing he couldn’t secure for himself was what mattered most, which signaled the end of his life and his relationship with the Lord.

Our lives are not to be about gathering wealth. Possessions are not to be stored selfishly but should be used for others. Life is not about material and earthly things but of what’s spiritual and eternal. We are called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Therefore, we cannot let our hearts love material and earthly things. ***“No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”*** (Mt 6:24) We must render to Jesus a love focused on Him for He is our Creator and Provider. He is our Lord God Almighty, so let us offer to Him our utmost gratitude and thanks. Living a Godly life and placing Christ first above all else should be our main priority. Let us treasure our relationship with Him and continue to seek His heavenly kingdom.

Lord, we ask You to free us from our worldly attachments and help us grow in spiritual wealth. We thank You for calling us into this Community where we can avail ourselves of many opportunities to build the kind of wealth that matters to You. May we find the courage, passion and desire to work in Your vineyard. Help us spring our faith into action in our community and parish ministries, religious activities and mission works. Amen.

ENTRUSTED WITH MUCH

“Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.” (Lk 12:48)

What comes to mind about this verse from the parable of the vigilant and faithful servants is the Community stewardship prayer that we recite every Friday. In it, we pray for strength and the graces needed to remain faithful in practicing the stewardship way of life. It is how the Lord expects us to live, and an essential part of our calling to discipleship. But do we have a clear understanding of what it means to be a Christian steward?

The first step to stewardship begins with having the right perspective. It is very challenging when we are immersed in a secular culture that threatens to eliminate God from the picture. Pope Benedict XVI once said, “Without God, we forget that all is gift and we begin to think ourselves as owners, instead of stewards, masters of the universe instead of servants of the one Lord Who has called us to nurture and develop his gifts wisely and well for the good of all.” It’s important to remember that our lives aren’t our own, but given to us for His purpose. In the USCCB’s “Pastoral Letter on Stewardship: A Disciples Response,” each of us is called to participate in this mission to be “collaborators and cooperators” with God “in continuing the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.”

With this awesome gift of life comes great responsibility. Our God created the earth and everything in it, entrusting it to our care. It is often said that, “Life is God’s gift to man. What we do with it is our gift to God.” Sadly, this trust is often misused and abused. Our society is heavily influenced by individualism, materialism, and consumerism, driving many to seek wealth, pleasure, status, and comfort above all things. Such worldly pursuits promote self-centeredness and obsession with money in our bank accounts. On the other hand, difficult circumstances can also lead to self-preservation and excessive worry over finances. Poverty as a mindset might also limit generosity, on the premise that we don’t have enough or have nothing worth giving away. With hardened hearts comes the risk of becoming indifferent to the pain and suffering that plagues humanity, especially the poor, persecuted and the most vulnerable.

We cannot ignore the needs of our brothers and sisters. The Lord holds us accountable for what we do with our time, talent, treasure, and resources. To prevent our hearts from becoming crippled, we must cultivate gratitude. A heart of thanksgiving opens our eyes to recognize the blessings we have and the abundance that God gives. When we model ourselves after Jesus and learn to depend on God, we recognize that He equips us with everything we need. When we allow ourselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit to make selfless choices, it changes us. It expands our capacity to love and share freely, with joy as we serve others. So let us examine ourselves and ask, are we prepared to accept and respond generously to this call? Let’s start today.

On Fire!



COUNSELS

(from page 1)

I have this impression of Jesus as Prince of Peace and since we are in the midst of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, I always pictured him as the Good Samaritan, Who heals and restores us back from our wounds and our pains. Most of the accounts from the Gospel by Luke, also known as the Gospel of Mercy (due to narratives like Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan and the story of Zacchaeus), seem to contradict Luke 12:49-53. It is not the merciful or peaceful Savior I was accustomed to but quite the opposite.

I seem to have this notion of peace as the absence of conflict, but slowly as I have walked deeper into my discipleship, I have realized that true peace within is about reconciliation with God. Note, it was at Pentecost that the Holy Spirit was revealed to us and transformed us into the body of Christ; it was also the birth of the Catholic Church. The BLD Community continues to commemorate this event twice a year through the LSS.

My wife and I were called upon to be under shepherds several times, and recently as LSS sharers. But no matter how we serve, the blessing that comes is just indescribable. The LSS is an event that truly sets the community on fire. While every LSS could have different candidates, sponsoring classes, intercessors, sharers and even spiritual directors, the fruits remain constant - the awakening of the gifts that were bestowed upon us during our rebirth at Baptism.

While everyone feels high with indescribable joy after LSS, there is a hard reality as we go back to our homes and work places - our surroundings remain the same, and yet something has changed within us. It is you who went through transformation even though the world is still what it was. And there arises the conflict and division that Jesus spoke about in Luke 12:49-53. We are in the world and yet we should not belong to the ways of this world. How we wish we could continue LSS and be sheltered, but we have to go out and set the world ablaze though our witnessing. We have become Christ's ambassadors and yet it is not that easy, as we are prone to be absorbed back into the ways of the world. In spite of all this, let us continue to grow in the ways of Christ through a life of prayer and living the Gospel. Let the fire that was ignited, burn and push us to be good disciples of Christ.



and lift up to Him our needs and petitions. We offer these daily, such as through the Holy Rosary. This is only a part of praying unceasingly. God isn't expecting us to spend every moment of our lives in churches, our homes, or even in our thoughts, reciting these prayers non-stop. The call for unceasing prayer is about being constantly aware of His presence in our lives. With this consciousness, we surrender to Him our total being, believing, and putting our absolute trust in His hands. Our lives are constantly buffeted by all types of storms - financial, relational, health, or natural calamities. God does not want us to come to Him only when the storms have escalated to category 4 or 5, nor should we despair or lose hope and just hunker down. We should be talking and listening to Him with every breath we take.

God talks to us constantly, telling us what to do with our lives, long before a storm comes, so we are able to avoid it. The Judge in the Gospel relented because the widow was bothering him so much. She had become very annoying. On the other hand, God never gets tired of our prayers. God is always waiting for us to come to Him for every need we have, big or small. He is at the door of our hearts and minds, knocking, so we might open doors to let Him in so He can talk to us and guide us, as we traverse the short journey of our temporal lives, and thereby attain eternal life.

Our community and its members constantly storm the heavens with all our petitions for every need imaginable. We are all witnesses to how God answers our every intercession for others and for ourselves. One prayer that we must do unceasingly, together as a community, is to ask the Lord to guide us and help us evangelize and bring candidates to our Encounters and LSS. In the second reading, Paul tells us, in 2 Timothy 4:2 "**...proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient.**" We have heeded this command and have tried reaching out to all our friends, acquaintances and relatives.

Perhaps, we should try to understand God's will in the first reading from Exodus 18:8-13. In it we are shown how the Israelites defeated the Amalekites. Moses sent out the young Joshua to wage the battle to defend them, while he stood on a hill with the staff of God in his hand to guide Joshua. Moses himself had grown old and weary. In fact, he needed two people, Hur and Aaron, to support his hands so that his arms remained steady and raised, for as long as Moses kept his hands raised up, Israel had the better of the fight. Could this also be a call for us to start finding ways to bring in, through the ME Weekend, the younger generation of this community, in particular, our children who are now married, for them to lead the good fight of Faith? Meanwhile we, the older generation must guide them through ...*Continued on page 4*

BLD holds two retreats

(from page 1)

Forty-seven lift up their hands at LSS:



John 6 kids sing..

(continued from page 1)

The community was blessed with 21 candidates: John Argonza, Patrick Regis, Rafael Urmasa, Chidumeje Madubuko, Samuel Milevoix, Cherdan Petit, Christian Rivera, Antonio Idioma, Roman Manzo, Daniel Parale, Michael Castaneda, Antonio Escobinas, Branden Montemayor, Matthew Salazar, Temilola Akinwutan, Ellie Orozco, Claudine Lorico, Fiona Dela Paz, Gianna Austria, Chikamso Aniebue, and Ace Anunobi, all of whom experienced a Catholic retreat for the very first time. And to guide them through their journey with God, the ministry has discerned Chad Cebedo and Mary Kate Morales as their Class Shepherds, while Denny and Baby Dizon will serve as their Adult Shepherds.

The Ministry had such an amazing experience last weekend, held at the Fellowship Deaconry in Basking Ridge, NJ. The enthusiasm delivered by the Sponsoring Class JC#16, the understudies, and the moderators was just awesome. Equally so, was the way Fr. Dave Sison connected with the children with his humor and wisdom.

Quite fitting was the theme song of JC17 entitled "Endless Praise," which was what the Samaritan leper did in the Sunday Gospel story from Luke – "And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God." (Lk 17:15) The children, the candidates, sponsoring class and auxies gave their all to glorify God in their own special way of servanthood, loud enough for God to hear.



Please note that a pdf of this Covenant News is also available online at BLDNEWARK.com

COUNSELS

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our prayers, teachings and support (including, perhaps, by taking care of grandchildren). They have the energy of youth. They have the bigger ocean to fish, having acquired the culture and character to communicate more effectively with their generation.

In this particular need and Mission of our Community to evangelize, we should reverently pray unceasingly as one voice. Our prayers for evangelization should not be done only a couple of months before the Encounter Weekends. Together as a community we should constantly and unceasingly pray particularly during our Friday Worships throughout the year. This is our theme:

We bear the mark of a true servant of Christ when we ask for His grace to persevere in prayer.

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings	\$ 2,900	\$ 108,388
Mission Collections	\$ 235	\$ 5,980
Fundraising Raffle	\$ 13,134	\$ 31,234

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Teaching Calendar

Teachings for Saturday, October 15 - 1 to 6 pm:

- Encounter with Jesus (LSS 1-46)
- Christian Maturity Program II, Part I (LSS 1-45)
- Sienna Gift Inventory (LSS 1-47)

SATURDAY, NOV 5, 2016 - WASHING OF THE FEET / AGONY
IN THE GARDEN RETREAT



Disciples' Assembly

Saturday, 1- 5 pm

October 29, 2016

Marriage Encounter # 47

November 18-20, 2016

Hotel Executive Suites

30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ

Contact email: MLA@bldnewark.com

Medical Mission

February 13-16, 2017 Maasin, Leyte, Philippines

Contact Persons: Ramon/Leonie Mariazeta

rmariazeta@msn.com / lmariazeta@msn.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Oct 21	Formation
		Oct 28	Management
		Nov 4	Mission
		Nov 11	Pastoral