



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

Pope's 4 Verbs on Migration: Welcome, Protect, Promote, Integrate

Speaking to International Forum on Migration and Peace, Francis Appeals: 'For those who flee conflicts and terrible persecutions, often trapped within the grip of criminal organizations who have no scruples, we need to open accessible and secure humanitarian channels'

FEBRUARY 21, 2017 DEBORAH CASTELLANO LUBOVPOPE AND HOLY SEE L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

“Before this complex panorama, I feel the need to express particular concern for the forced nature of many contemporary migratory movements, which increases the challenges presented to the political community, to civil society and to the Church, and which amplifies the urgency for a coordinated and effective response to these challenges.”

Pope Francis stressed this in his address to participants of an International Forum on Migration and Peace taking place in Rome, whom he received in the Vatican this morning, noting his conviction that their shared response may be articulated by four verbs: “welcome, protect, promote and integrate.”

Organized by the new Vatican Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development in collaboration with the Scalabrini International Migration Network, the two-day international forum aims to stimulate dialogue on the root causes of migration and to elaborate and propose the best solutions for an ethical approach on the international management of migration, as well as the integration of migrants in hosting communities, and to concretely influence migration policies and practices.

Discussing welcome, Francis said: “Rejection is an attitude we all share; it makes us see our neighbour not as a brother or sister to be accepted,

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COUNSELS

Man's Inadequacy, God's Sufficiency

THEME: We affirm God's power and Spirit when we surrender all our worries to Him.

WORD: Is 49:14-15 / Ps 62:2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9
1 Cor 4:1-5 / Mt 6:24-34

ORDER: **“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.” (Mt 6:33a)**

REFLECTION:

Our Sunday Readings talk about abandoning ourselves to God's Providence. Who can help but be moved by His words, spoken through the prophet Isaiah, revealing His love and faithfulness with as tender a passage in the Bible as we can find: *Even should a mother forget the infant in her womb... I will never forget you, I shall not forsake you.* (cf Is 49:15)

Psalms 62 helps us praise God in so many ways. *He only is my Rock and my Salvation*, that we are led to call out, *Rest in God alone, my soul. Trust in Him at all times. I shall not be disturbed at all.* These words inspire such soothing imagery of a trusting soul, at rest, not disturbed by any tempest and all the trials of life.

Our Council of Servant Leaders in their prayerful discernment once again calls us to unity, with our global worship Theme for this month: *Our proclamation of the Gospel is an affirmation of God's power and Spirit.* And one way we can fulfill this affirmation is to *surrender all our worries to Him*, which is our Theme for this week.

God's love for us is evident in His lavish abundance in providing for our needs.

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Promise of the Week

“Do not worry... tomorrow will take care of itself.”

(Mt 6:34a)

SPECIAL RELIC

As Catholics, we honor the saints in heaven. Part of our rituals to honor them includes veneration of the things they used while they were still alive, such as rosaries, gloves and clothing. There are also relics venerated by the faithful that are believed to be associated with Christ Himself. For instance, St. Helena is credited with bringing back the “True Cross” from Palestine.



Among the more famous relics is the Shroud of Turin, believed to be the cloth that covered Jesus Christ while He was in the tomb after the crucifixion. While impossible to authenticate, 21st century science also has not yet determined how the shroud might have been man-made. Most interestingly, it took modern photographic technology, applied on the centuries old Shroud, to clearly reveal the negative image of a man's body that was imprinted on the cloth. To this day, it is still a holy enigma. But if one were to believe that it was indeed Christ's burial Shroud, then it must bear the image of our Savior Himself – His body as well as His face.

Now, unbeknown to most US Catholics, there is a third class relic associated with the Shroud of Turin right here in New Jersey, at the Dominican Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary in Summit. It's a four-hundred year old copy that was laid on top of the original Shroud back in the 1600's that then sustained a blood stain in the same area where the image had a pierced wound in the man's ribcage area. The Shroud of Turin Research Project (STURP), the international team of modern day scientists has confirmed that it was human blood, of the same type as that which is on the original. Being a hand-made copy of the original, this too then, might also have the image of our Savior Himself.

Since Lent begins this coming Wednesday, March 1, a visit to see this Shroud copy might be an interesting addition to our Lenten practices. The Monastery is located on the corner of Springfield and Morris Avenues in Summit, NJ (543 Springfield Ave), and is open to the public from 6 AM to 7 PM, with Blessed Sacrament perpetual adoration by the cloistered nuns, also open to the public (but during the same day time hours only). As Jesus told His first disciples: **“Come, and you will see”** (Jn1:39).

GOODNESS BEGETS GOODNESS

“...and your Father who sees in secret will repay you” (Mt 6:4b)

How God works in mysterious ways! He forgives our sins and rewards us for good deeds done. He makes everything perfect for He is perfect.

Matthew Chapter 6, from which this bible verse is taken, also known as the famous Sermon on the Mount, prepares us for the coming of Holy Week. There are a lot of teachings such as almsgiving, fasting, recompense, and even how to pray to our God the Father. Three verses in this chapter talk about reward from the Father (verses 4, 6 and 18).

Allow me to relate what happened to me.

On my way to Manila via Hong Kong, our flight was diverted to Taiwan due to the weather conditions in Hong Kong. There was a typhoon creating havoc in Hong Kong which made landing very dangerous. On the flight were two elderly couples, a Filipino and a Burmese seated next to me. As we talked, I found out that the Filipino couple belonged to Couples for Christ, and the Burmese couple was also going to Manila to visit their son. And when we landed in Taiwan I noticed the Burmese woman carrying the couple's bag. I was a bit peeved because the husband was just sitting there doing nothing. So while walking down the tube from the airplane, I grabbed the bag of the Burmese wife and told her that I was going to carry it for her. Later on I noticed the husband limping and walking with a cane. This changed my first impression. Anyway, my good deed was done for the day and the Filipino couple complimented me for my action.



While in Manila, my family asked me to bring them to Duty Free Philippines to buy some stuff, like chocolates and other pasalubongs. I decided to buy some for myself to give to them. There happened to be an ongoing raffle in the store at that time, so I went back to the 2nd floor to participate. To make a long story short, I won the grand prize in the raffle! It was the latest i-Phone! The first thing that came to my mind was to thank the Lord. And it came to me how He rewarded me for the good thing I had done for that Burmese couple.

How great indeed is the Lord! I was not expecting anything in return but simply was a witness and applied what we are taught in BLD. I admit that it also felt good doing good. Just being nice to people lifts one's spirits. Sometimes, you even get rewarded!

RETURN TO HIM!

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

The song from HOSEA echoes the longing of our Lord for the faithful to return to Him... *"Come back to me with all your heart....Don't let fear keep us apart. Long have I waited for your coming home to me and living deeply a new life."*... How have I responded to this call? Have I ever stopped and listened, pondered or given a thought about the Lord's call for a deeper relationship with Him? It is never too late to aspire to a spiritual change in our lives so long as we are open to learn and are willing to live out the teachings we receive and learn from the Word of God. A teachable heart is always searching and thirsting for more.

When I was invited to attend a Life in the Spirit Seminar sponsored by BLD-Newark, I was reluctant at first because I was already actively involved in a Catholic Charismatic prayer group in the community where I lived. But eventually, I said yes to attending. I was baptized in the Spirit and went to some Christian development programs, retreats and conferences. I had also served in several Life in the Spirit seminars, marriage and solo parents encounter weekends. I thought I had already learned enough to keep me on the right path. Little did I know that for me to live a deeply new life my conversion needed to be ongoing, that I needed to be a forever learner, and that I always need to allow the Holy Spirit's transforming fire and love to keep burning in my heart.



Now, I am blest to be in a community of brothers and sisters who also strive to grow deeper in love with the Lord. Attending the BLD community's Friday Praise and Worship keeps me going, and I feel re-energized by the songs and reflections on the living and abiding Word of God.

Scripture says in Sirach 17:24: ***"How great the mercy of the Lord, His forgiveness of those who return to Him."*** Our God is a great and faithful God, merciful and forgiving. He exhorts us not to be afraid to call on Him every moment of our lives, especially when we fall. He promises to provide a way back to Him when we return to Him with a contrite and humble heart. He loves us and delights in us even in our sinfulness. He patiently waits for us to respond to His invitation to come to rest in His ever-welcoming embrace. St. Augustine says: *"You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You."* Like the Hound of Heaven, our God pursues us and relentlessly seeks our return to Him. Mary, our Mother, help us to do what Jesus tells us to do. Amen.

The Lord points out in our Gospel passage, how God feeds the birds of the air who neither toil for today's food nor hoard for tomorrow. He clothes the fields of the wild flowers with such beauty that they surpass the glory of King Solomon. Man, being more important than the birds of the air and the flowers in the field, will be much more provided for. Therefore, Jesus says, *Do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear?'*

The Lord does not deny these basic and other human needs, but forbids our obsessing over them, making us their slave. Our heavenly Father knows them, and the challenge to us is not to dwell on what worries us but to rely on God's love, goodness and sufficiency. This kind of trust allows us to be more generous in turn. We will be able to fight off any selfish obsession to store up or hoard for future needs, and be inclined instead to share with those who lack what God has given us in abundance.

Believing in this teaching of the Lord is not easy, even as He admonishes His disciples about being of *little faith*. St. Matthew recalls a few other times when Jesus had done so. He challenged Peter when Peter sank after walking on the water, his obedient faith overtaken by fear (Mt 14:31). Jesus rebuked the disciples for being terrified amid a squall, instead of being reassured by His presence (Mt 8:26).

Do we see ourselves in any of these? Do we fail to recognize and remember the great deeds wrought by the Lord, especially in our community, as His early followers did in Mt 16:8? Is the faith of Christ's disciples in BLD as deep as it should be? How big should our faith be to be enough? How about, the size of a mustard seed? (Mt 17:20)

The Lord says, *Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.* (Mt 6:33) Our moral conduct is to be in conformity with God's will, submitting to His plan for our salvation. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.* (Mt 5:6)

"Where man is inadequate, God always suffices." May this maxim from St. Teresa of Avila ever inspire us. "Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things are passing away, but God never changes. Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone suffices."

Directions: *Trust in Him at all times. Pour out your hearts before Him. (Psalm 62:9)*

NEWS

(from page 1)

but as unworthy of our attention, a rival, or someone to be bent to our will”

Faced with this kind of rejection, rooted ultimately in self-centredness and amplified by populist rhetoric, he added, “what is needed is a change of attitude, to overcome indifference and to counter fears with a generous approach of welcoming those who knock at our doors.

“For those who flee conflicts and terrible persecutions, often trapped within the grip of criminal organisations who have no scruples, we need to open accessible and secure humanitarian channels.”

Turning to protecting, Francis stressed that defending their inalienable rights, ensuring their fundamental freedoms and respecting their dignity are duties from which no one can be exempted.

“Protecting these brothers and sisters is a moral imperative which translates into adopting juridical instruments, both international and national, that must be clear and relevant; implementing just and far reaching political choices; prioritizing constructive processes, which perhaps are slower, over immediate results of consensus; implementing timely and humane programs in the fight against ‘the trafficking of human flesh’; which profits off others’ misfortune; coordinating the efforts of all actors, among which, you may be assured will always be the Church.”

Turning to promoting, Francis stated that protecting is not enough, and said that “what is required” is the promotion of an integral human development of migrants, exiles and refugees.

And for integration, he clarified this refers neither assimilation nor incorporation, “a two-way process, rooted essentially in the joint recognition of the other’s cultural richness: it is not the superimposing of one culture over another, nor mutual isolation, with the insidious and dangerous risk of creating ghettos.”

“I believe that conjugating these four verbs, in the first person singular and in the first person plural,” Francis stated, “is today a responsibility, a duty we have towards our brothers and sisters who, for various reasons, have been forced to leave their homeland,” a duty namely of three types, he explained, of justice, civility and solidarity.

Pope Francis concluded, stating his hope that these two days will bear abundant fruit, assuring them of his prayers, and reminding them to pray for him.

A pdf of this Covenant News is also available online at BLDNEWARK.com

LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings	\$ 1,770	\$ 17,496
Mission Collections	\$ -	\$ 1,497

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Teaching Calendar

Teachings for Saturday, **March 11, 2017** - 1 to 6 pm:

- Apologetics (LSS 1-43)
- Prayer Leadership (LSS 1-45)
- Encounter with Jesus (LSS 1-46B)



YOUTH
Life in the Spirit Seminar
#22

March 4 & 5, 2017
Invocation Mass - March 3, 8:30 pm
Divine Mercy Parish

LSS # 47

March 31 – April 2, 2017
Now Open for Registration

Salubungan / Acquaintance – Friday, Mar 3

Contacts: Manny & Nette Manguiat – elxman@hotmail.com
Earl & Flo Manguiat - bldnewarklsa@gmail.com

Marriage Encounter # 48

May 19-21, 2017


Hotel Executive Suites
30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ
Contact email: MLA@bldnewark.com



SAVE THE DATE

Week-end of
Saturday, August 19, 2017
Details to follow

BLD Newark 25 Years
- By His Grace

	Date	Apostolate
	Mar 3	Evangelization
	Mar 10	Formation
	Mar 17	Management
	Mar 4	Mission