



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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April 20, 2018

NEWS

Holy Spirit delivers happiness at LSS 49



THANK YOU LORD FOR A "HAPPY" LSS #49 WEEKEND

Over the weekend, BLD Newark once again held a spirit-filled Life in the Spirit Seminar, with 26 candidates receiving many gifts from the Holy Spirit in LSS #49. The Holy Spirit's presence was powerful and fully evident as there was a vibrant and enthusiastic mood among the LSS sharers, auxies, shepherds, and especially the candidates from ME49 and from St. Antoninus Parish in Newark. Many of them repeatedly expressed that they were so HAPPY to have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Many of them shared their experiences and all felt blessed and renewed.

The seminar was well attended and well organized. There was an abundance of love, and the hard work in the planning, preparation and execution of the event ensured the seminar's smooth flow. Thanks to everyone who devoted their time, talents and treasures to ensure this success: to the LSS 49 Team, the LSA, ME48, SPE19; to the auxies from the Singles, Solo Parents,

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COUNSELS

The Good Shepherd

THEME: Our faith is strengthened when we serve others in self-giving sacrifice.

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

ORDER: *Lay down your life for your sheep.* (cf Jn 10:11)

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says that He is the Good Shepherd that the prophets had promised to Israel, thus evoking the passages in Psalm 23 (*the Lord is my Shepherd*) and Ezekiel 34 (*I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down*). In the Good Shepherd Discourse from John 10, which is the Gospel reading for the fourth Sunday of Easter (unofficially called Good Shepherd Sunday), Jesus says that He is the Divine Shepherd Who walks ahead of the sheep, and the sheep follow Him because they recognize His voice. Unlike shepherds in Western cultures, the shepherds in the Near East do not drive their sheep. Because the sheep had already learned to respond to his voice signals, the shepherd walks ahead of his sheep instead; he leads them, and they follow him. The shepherd is trusted by his flock.

All Israel knew of and loved King David, who was a young shepherd when he slew Goliath in battle, and later ascended to the throne of the Kingdom of Israel. Jesus says He is the promised Shepherd King - the new David - and further revealed that He is the Shepherd Who lays down His life for His flock. In saying this, He expanded upon the Old Testament's characteristics of a shepherd (as in those of the shepherds in Ps 23 and Ez 34). Jesus is the Shepherd Lord Who would submit Himself to dying.

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Promise of the Week

"... we are God's children now; what we shall be... is... we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (1 Jn 3:2)

Holy Spirit delivers

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ME couples, Praise Ministry, and the Liturgical Ministry; to the LSS Shepherds, Msgr. Paul Schetelick, and to Fr. Robert Lamirez, Fr. Joe Saltarin and Deacon Serge, who all assisted our Spiritual Director during the weekend. BLD's gratitude is also extended to St. Antoninus' Amazing Grace Prayer Group, to Masagana for their very generous love offering, and to the Mark 10 Ministry for donating the huge back drop that graced the DMP auditorium's stage.

The LSS 49 class members are: Juan and Jackie Berrios, Pete and Chit Caparros, Edgar and Margaret Castro, Rene and Zeny del Rosario, Nong and Agnes Salazar, Ken Julien and Saneeta Somai, Oby Amaefuna, Sr. Susan Bagli, Charmaine Hill, Wendy Medina, Ojo Modupe, David Ouedraogo, Unity Omokha, Amanda Onwuka, Marjorie Ottey, Dianne Pascall, Raquel Perez Gonzales, Marva Snaggs, Dorothy Alburo and Jessica Festini.

A reunion will be held on Sunday, April 29. We invite all the LSS 49 Graduates and their Shepherds to attend the 11 am Mass at Divine Mercy Church, followed by lunch and the reunion, which is to be conducted in the school building's second floor Library, from 12 pm - 4 pm.

The LSS is not over! Let us continue to pray to the Lord our God to fill our hearts with His love and may the Holy Spirit dwell in our hearts always! LET US ALL BE HAPPY!

See pictures below for more LSS #49 "HAPPY" scenes...

During retreats like the LSS, people often prophesy and express the messages they get from our Triune God. Here is one He sent during a Lenten recollection last February:

A MESSAGE FROM JESUS

Time was when I'd joyfully shout,

"I love You Lord!"

...And I would feel very happy,
And that would really make my day!

Till something happened
That was even more wonderful,
And made me feel more awesome
Than how I felt
When I expressed that.

It happened when one day,
He made me aware
About how He really felt about me.

It happened when in my heart,
He answered...
Softly... clearly...

"TE AMO MAS."



The following is a reflection based on the Gospel reading for Friday, April 27, which includes:

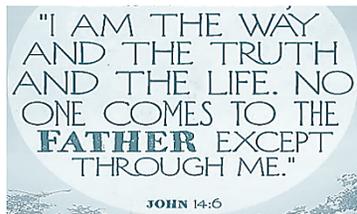
JOHN 14:6

Almost every work day, I have a very good friend at the office who emails me a daily devotional taken from the various podcasts he subscribes to on his computer. Since he is a Baptist, inevitably, more than a few of them deal with how we can only gain entrance into Heaven by His Grace. Several years ago, when I first got one of these, I was troubled by how “non-Catholic” this sounded; that is until I came across the section in the CCC that basically said the same.

Upon reflection, this made so much sense. No one, and certainly not me, can assume that St. Peter will just let me in. (Remember the old joke: What happens when you assume? You make an *a*** of *u* and *me*!) The way I now see it, HUMILITY is an essential ingredient to get to Heaven.

Still, those devotionals often go on to something that could be truly troublesome (at least for me), because they seem to mock good works, as in how they aggressively challenge folks who might think that the good they do would earn them a heavenly entrance. It’s troublesome because the emphasis on faith alone, coupled with the heavy-handed discounting of good works, seems to imply and emphasize an unalterable impotence of doing good. So, I wonder if there’d be some who won’t act, and instead just say, “Why bother?”

Once, at an LSS at BLD Allentown, I was staring at a Crucifix, and for some reason, I started thinking of the passage from John 14:6 –



Then it occurred to me that in that most important quote from Jesus Himself, He was saying to me that, yes, faith and believing in Him are vital. Then I started to ponder what He might have meant by “the way.” And soon, other words from Jesus provided the answers. He said that we must carry our own crosses... So, I thought... that must be “the way!”

Faith must not conclude with our just saying that “I believe.” It really must be about following Him, the Way, the Truth and the Life... all Three that Jesus said He is. St. Paul was right when he concluded that we are saved only by grace. But St. James was right too when he exhorts the faithful to demonstrate faith via works. We all believe that Jesus is the Truth and the Life; for us to show that we believe that He is also the Way, then there’s nothing passive about it... we must actively and purposefully follow His Way.

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

"I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own." (Jn 10:17-18).

Jesus, by dying on the cross, laid down His life for every human being. He sacrificed Himself, not only for the salvation of all mankind, but personally for each and every man and woman (CCC 606-623).

In the First Reading, St. Peter proclaimed before the Sanhedrin that the healing of the cripple was accomplished in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, Whom Israel crucified and God raised from the dead. St. Peter then asserted this, as was foretold about Jesus, that ***"He is 'the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.'"*** (Acts 4:11 / cf Ps 118:22) Peter then makes an even bolder assertion: ***"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) In laying down His life and taking it up again, Jesus made it possible for us to know God as He did - as sons and daughters of the Father Who loves us.

As we hear in the second reading, from 1 John, chapter 3, the Father calls us His children. The Epistle continues: ***"...what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."*** Here, St. John describes "salvation," as defined by Jesus. To be saved is to share in the very life of God. It is to participate in the divine nature, to share in Jesus’s Divine Sonship, to become a "child" and "heir" of God, and enjoy being with Him forever. It will be an eternal communion with God: ***"we shall see Him as he is."*** Gazing upon God, seeing Him face to face for all eternity is the beatific vision that awaits us in Heaven. Through Jesus’s sacrifice, all peoples were gathered up into His fold. He restored, to each one of us, the divine life which had been lost through Original Sin.

This sets an example for us to follow in our discipleship in BLD. Jesus taught us: ***"If any one wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*** (Lk 9:23) The path of salvation is the way of the cross, living a life of self-denial, even to the point of death. In our Community we continue to serve in loving obedience to the Lord’s command to love our neighbors as ourselves. Our theme for this week emphasizes this: **Our faith is strengthened when we serve others in self-giving sacrifice.**

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COUNSELS

(from page 3)

The shepherd pastures his sheep and gives them rest. He watches over them so they do not go astray lest they be killed by wild animals; he defends them from wild animals when under attack. He searches for the lost and binds their wounds and heals their sickness. This is the shepherding that our Lord Jesus showed us, and we can follow Him only if we accept Him as our Shepherd and we become His sheep. This relationship is much more personal; it is a friendship, and not the relationship of master and slave. The Good Shepherd, when seeing the wolf coming, does not flee, but is ready to risk His own life to defend His sheep. If He was not ready to do so, or if He did not love us so much, taking on the judgment due to us as sinners for the expiation of our sins, He would not be worthy of the name of Good Shepherd. He would be a hireling, but not a shepherd.

Through the Catholic Church, the Good Shepherd still speaks (cf Lk 10:16), and forgives sins (cf Jn 20:23), and makes His body and blood present, that all may know Him in the breaking of the bread (cf Lk 24:35). It is a mission that will continue until the entire world, all the lands, nations, and peoples, are one flock under the one Shepherd.

As followers of Christ we continue the Great Commission to make disciples through BLD. Through our evangelization seminars and retreats, we are able to share the Good News of our Divine Shepherd with others. Our formation teachings help us to be perfected in our faith, to be equipped with the Word of God for the works of ministry. Our pastoral programs accord the Good Shepherd's care to those young in the faith who are under our spiritual care. Our mission works enable us to minister to the lost, the least, and the sick and impoverished in God's flock. Through our management and stewardship duties we are able to assume the role of servant leaders to inspire in others the desire to follow the Divine Shepherd. Through all the prayers, daily meditations on the Liturgy of the Word, partaking of the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Sacraments, our eyes are opened to the Scriptures; our hearts too are opened to the total experience of the Triune God - the Father's Love, the Beloved Son's mercy and the compassion and power of the Holy Spirit. Only in following the Way will we be able to serve as Jesus did - in total self-giving sacrifice. Let us now, as a Community of faith, listen for His voice as He speaks to us in the Scriptures, and recommit ourselves to be even more faithful followers. →→

A pdf of this Covenant News and more information about BLD are available online at BLDNEWARK.com

LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Last Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,497	\$ 17,784
Love Offerings	\$ 580	\$ 10,751
Mission Collections	\$ 25	\$ 9,665

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com
Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LSS # 49 Reunion

Sunday, April 29, 2018

11 am Mass at DMP Church; followed by lunch and Reunion from 12-4 pm, DMP Library

Teaching Calendar

Teachings for Saturday, **May 12, 2018** - 1 to 6 pm:

- Apologetics 2 (LSS 1-46)
- Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit (LSS 1-48)
- Sienna Gifts Inventory (LSS 49)

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 50

Friday, May 18 – Sunday, May 20, 2018

Hotel Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ

Contact: MLA@BLDNewark.com

Singles Encounter #38

June 8 -10, 2018

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center
Garrison, NY 10524

Come all you who are thirsty...

Please contact: [Jutt Bustos](mailto:Jutt.Bustos@graymoor.org)
[Lita Alfaro](mailto:Lita.Alfaro@graymoor.org)

Solo Parents Encounter #20

"Jesus is calling..."

Please contact: [Caezar and Vicky Razalan](mailto:Caezar.Razalan@graymoor.org)

June 22-24, 2018

Days Hotel of East Brunswick
195 Route 18 S
East Brunswick, NJ 08816

DIVINE MERCY PARISH CALENDAR FOLLOW ME

Experience the joy of a renewed friendship with Christ

Eight Monday nights beginning on Monday, May 21, 7 pm

DMP Room 104 / Contacts: Ray/Suzie Atienza (908-463-0449)

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Apr 27	Mission
			May 4	Pastoral
			May 11	Evangelization
			May 18	Formation

→ And let us give thanks for the blessings and all the things He has done for us.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be an instrument to bring others to Jesus.
2. Witness to the Gospel by serving in your ministry without counting the cost.
3. Be willing to serve in the Community beyond your comfort zone.