



COVENANT NEWS



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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January 4, 2019

NEWS

Pope's New Year's Advice: Entangled in Life's Knots, Lift Your Eyes to Mary

Reminds When Mary Gazes on Us, She Sees Not
Sinners, But Children

• January 01, 2019 10:45 • Deborah Castellano Lubov • Francis
Source: Zenit.org

Entangled in life's knots? Lift your eyes up to Mary. Pope Francis gave this New Year's advice in his homily in St. Peter's Basilica the morning of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, on New Year's Day, which also marked the World Day of Peace.

Recalling in Luke's Gospel that: "All who heard were amazed at what the shepherds told them," the Pope stressed that at the conclusion of the Octave of Christmas, as we continue to contemplate the Child born for us, "lacking everything yet abounding in love," what is asked of us today is to be amazed.

"Amazement is what we should feel at the beginning of each year, for life is a gift that constantly gives us a chance to make a new start."

Today, the Pope underscored, is also a day to be amazed by the Mother of God. Reflecting on the Good News of this New Year, Francis said:

"God is no distant lord, dwelling in splendid isolation above the heavens, but love incarnate, born like us of a mother, in order to become a brother to each of us."

"He rests on the lap of his mother, who is also our mother, and from there he pours out upon humanity a new tenderness," he said. "Thus we come to understand more fully God's love, which is both paternal and maternal, like that of a mother who never stops believing in her children and never abandons them. God-with-us, Emmanuel, loves us despite our mistakes, our sins, and the way we treat our world."

God believes in mankind, the Holy Father said, "because its first and preeminent member is his own Mother."

...Continued on page 2

COUNSELS

The Epiphany – A Beautiful Message of Hope

THEME: God's glory is revealed when we offer to Jesus our time, talent and treasure.

WORD: Is 60:1-6 ~ Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-11,12-13
Eph 3:2-3a,5-6 ~ Mt 2:1-12

ORDER: ...pay him homage... (cf Ps 72:11)

REFLECTION:

This New Year begins with a beautiful message of hope in the person of Jesus Himself, God's revelation to man. Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, was manifested to the world through the searching eyes and the determination of the wise men, who left the comforts of their homes to look for higher wisdom in the King of Israel. Their search was difficult. There were obstacles along the way. They were almost misled by King Herod whose only desire was to remain the only king.

Like the magi, we are also finding our way towards the Truth, the Light of God. God gave us Jesus so that we might journey towards holiness and joy. Our Community Word for January tells us – Christ is the revelation of God's glory to the world, and therefore, we must "*give to the Lord the glory due his name.*" (Ps 29:2a)

As the story of the Epiphany of our Lord unfolds in the Gospel for the 1st Sunday of the month, we can relate to the journey of the magi, who, despite finding just a poor child in a lowly manger, paid Jesus homage with humility and gave Him gifts.

...Continued on page 3



Promise of the Week

...He shall rescue the poor when he cries out, and
the afflicted when he has no one to help him.

- cf Ps 72:12

NEWS

(from page 1)

“At the beginning of the year, let us implore from Mary the grace to be amazed at the God of surprises. Let us renew the amazement we felt when faith was first born in us,” he said, reminding the Mother of God helps us.

“She, the Theotókos, who gave birth to the Lord, now presents us, reborn, to the Lord,” the Pope stressed, reminding: “She is a mother who generates in her children the amazement of faith. Without amazement, life becomes dull and routine, and so it is with faith.”

Entangled in Life's Knots, Lift Our Eyes to Our Lady

“Let us allow ourselves to be gazed upon. Especially in times of need, when we are entangled in life's knots, we rightly lift our eyes to Our Lady. Yet first, we should let ourselves be gazed upon by Our Lady. When she gazes upon us, she does not see sinners but children.”

The Holy Father recalled that many say the eyes are the mirror of the soul, and hence, the eyes of Mary, full of grace, reflect the beauty of God, and show us a reflection of heaven.

“The eyes of Our Lady are able to bring light to every dark corner; everywhere they rekindle hope. As she gazes upon us, she says: “Take heart, dear children; here I am, your Mother!”

This maternal gaze, which instills confidence and trust, he said, helps us to grow in faith. “Faith is a bond with God that engages the whole person; to be preserved, it needs the Mother of God.”

“A world that looks to the future without a mother's gaze is shortsighted,” the Pope underscored, reminding: “The human family is built upon mothers. A world in which maternal tenderness is dismissed as mere sentiment may be rich materially, but poor where the future is concerned.”

The Holy Father prayed: “Mother of God, teach us to see life as you do. Turn your gaze upon us, upon our misery, our poverty. Turn to us thine eyes of mercy. Let us allow ourselves to be embraced.”

Mary's Secret

Our Lady, Francis explained, took everything to heart. “She embraced everything, events both good and bad. And she pondered all these things; she brought them before God. This was her secret. In the same way, she now takes to heart the life of each of us: she wants to embrace our every situation and to present it to God.”

In today's fragmented world, *...Continued on page 4*



Jan - Mar March for Life

Med Mission: Tarlac City, Tarlac

GK Milestone: Inauguration & Blessing of Multi-Purpose Gym,
- Fr. Paul Lehman-UST Med'76 GK Village, Cabiao, Nueva Ecija

YLSS 23

Disciples' Assembly

BLD Youth supported one-day YLSS

- @ the Parish of Our Lady of the Mount in Warren, NJ

Teachings / Reunions / Parties / Outings / Fridays

Apr - Jun SE 38 LSS 49

ME 50 SPE 20

2018 Emergence

Retreat: "Keep Our Hearts Burning... the Mass, a New Fire Pit"

May Crowning of Mother Mary

BLD Newark Spiritual Program for the Unborn

Teachings / Reunions / Parties / Outings / Fridays

Jul - Sep Fr. Paul Lehman's 90th Birthday!

YE25 FE 25

BLD Newark, Divine Mercy Parish and
the Newark Archdiocese sign 10-year lease

Teachers' Forum

YIDC 2018 - "Redeemed"

Community Day 2018 GRACE-LAND Dinner Dance

Teachings / Reunions / Parties / Outings / Fridays

Oct - Dec John 6 Crossings 19

Mark 10 Parade of Saints LSS 50

ME 51 Community Event: 2000 Hail Marys

Aspirants' Retreat AIG/WOF Retreat

Singles Ministry: BLD Worship / Advent Adoration

Community Worship Family Worship

Christmas Presentations / Christmas Journal

Teachings / Reunions / Christmas Parties / Outings / Fridays

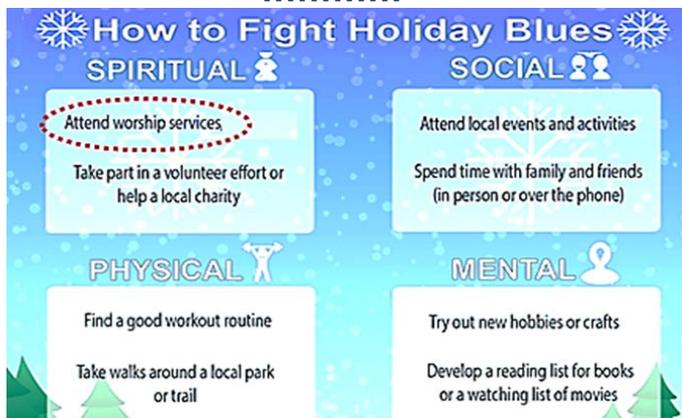


On the drive to work last week, I was hit with some post-Christmas blues. After gearing up for the holiday for almost a month, it seemed that suddenly, it had just quickly come by and was gone. And although there was still New Year's to look forward to, the start of 2019 just didn't measure up to how happy (and admittedly, stressed and pre-occupied) I felt during the days leading up to December 25. One would think that after several decades worth of holiday seasons under my belt, I should have already learned how to deal with "going back to reality." Suddenly, this thought buoyed my spirits; I made the analogy that I could actually view the BLD Fridays throughout the year as mini-Christmases!

Before Christmas, I spent an inordinate amount of time buying gifts for my friends and loved ones. It would have been easy if I didn't have to be constrained by my meager financial resources. Still, as the big day dawned, once again, I realized that it wasn't the material gifts that were important. What was most important was my faith that our Savior was indeed born, followed by the immeasurable gift that is the love of family and friends (and it didn't even matter if they were close by or far away, as in another state or even on the other side of the world!).

So now, on any given week in 2019, I actually have BLD Friday to look forward to, where I can experience love and true fellowship and friendships; and, although not as sumptuous, there'd be food there too!

If you are currently reading this article, you probably know what I mean. Each BLD Friday is really like a mini-Christmas, to be spent with people who have now grown to be so dear and precious. And just as the coming of Jesus is what's celebrated on Christmas day, it is His presence among us that brings us true joy each Friday, with BLD in Rahway.



COUNSELS

(from page 1)

After a long arduous search, what the magi saw filled their hearts with delight. They presented Jesus with gold – acknowledging Him as King; frankincense – acknowledging His divinity; and myrrh – a prophecy of His passion and death as our Savior. We too will experience joy when we adore and offer ourselves in service to the Lord through what we do for our brothers and sisters, which relates to our theme for the 1st week – God's glory is revealed when we offer Jesus our time, talent and treasure. For this, we give hope to others, as expressed in one of this Sunday's Psalms: "...*He shall rescue the poor when he cries out, and the afflicted when he has no one to help him.*" (cf Ps 72:12)

For the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, our theme for the 2nd week is – God's glory is revealed when we allow the Holy Spirit to renew our lives. Jesus' baptism was in fulfillment of the will of God, because at His baptism, the heavens were opened and the waters were sanctified by the descent of the Holy Spirit, Who empowered Christ as He began His earthly ministry. This is the same for us because by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in our lives, our hearts are renewed and we are prepared once again to continue our mission of bringing Christ to those who need Him - the lost, the last and the least of our brethren. In this way, we have God's promise: "...*upon him I have put my spirit, he shall bring forth justice to the nations.*" (Is 42:1b)

On the Feast of the Sto. Niño and the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, our theme is - God's glory is revealed when we are obedient to pastoral authority. Jesus started His ministry in the spirit of obedience. Even as a little child, He was obedient, both to His heavenly Father, and to His earthly parents. Especially for us who serve our community, the attitude of obedience opens our hearts to love, and therefore, gives us the opportunity to serve others with sincerity, commitment and dedication, without any cost at all. Obedience to God leads us to the following promises: "...*the God of our Lord Jesus Christ...may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him*" (Eph 1:17) and "*You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord*" (Is 62:3). Truly, obedience is the result of humility and loving God with all our hearts.

Our theme for the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time is – God's glory is revealed when we live our faith as one body of Christ. As one community of believers, we have received the love of God in our hearts

...Continued on page 4

NEWS

(from page 2)

where we risk losing our bearings, a Mother's embrace is essential. How much dispersion and solitude there is all around us! The world is completely connected, yet seems increasingly disjointed. We need to entrust ourselves to our Mother. "Our Lady embraces any number of concrete situations; she is present wherever she is needed."

The Pope encouraged us to allow ourselves to be taken by the hand: "Mothers take their children by the hand and lovingly introduce them to life," he said, lamenting: "But how many children today wander off on their own and lose their way." We need to learn from mothers, he said, that heroism is shown in self-giving, strength in compassion, wisdom in meekness.

God Himself Needed a Mother

"God himself needed a Mother: how much more so do we! Jesus himself gave her to us, from the cross: "Behold your mother!" (Jn 19:27). He said this to the beloved disciple and to every disciple.

"Our Lady is not an optional accessory: she has to be welcomed into our life," he said, praying: "Mary, take us by the hand. Clinging to you, we will pass safely through the straits of history."

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

and our delight in the Lord should be experienced by others. Faith is extended to all people because it is God's plan to offer His Kingdom to all. Just as Jesus received the Spirit and was empowered to "**bring glad tidings to the poor,**" we too should share the love of God by translating the Gospel of Christ into action through our evangelization and mission works - attending to the needs of the poor among us, promoting a spirit of peace, reconciliation and unity, opening the doors of mercy and compassion, and helping the younger generations in sustaining their faith. We need to show our concern for others because we all belong to the One Body of Christ. Thus, it is His assurance that "**...the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple.**" (Ps 19:8b)

May our faith journey in 2019 continue with direction and focus. May the Light of God dispel the darkness of sin and death and lead us to the splendor of grace and a godly life. Amen.

Directions:

1. Spend time in prayer and Word reflection, and worship regularly.
2. Share your spiritual gifts with others.
3. Be generous in your tithes and love offering.

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

LORD'S PROVISION 2018, THROUGH DECEMBER 28

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,624	\$ 72,143
Love Offerings	\$ 608	\$ 49,155
Mission	\$ 163	\$ 14,418

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



UNIQUE FROM DAY ONE

MARCH FOR LIFE Friday, January 18, 2019 • Washington, DC

To save a seat on the BLD Newark bus that will go to the **March for Life** on January 18, please contact Ray Salmo at (732)766-1785 / rayesalmo@gmail.com

BLD NEWARK MEDICAL MISSION

JOSE PANGANIBAN, CAMARINES NORTE
FEBRUARY 11 - 14, 2019

YLSS #24
Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar
March 1-3, 2019
Divine Mercy Auditorium

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Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Jan 11	Evangelization
		Jan 18	Formation
		Jan 25	Management
		Feb 1	Mission

2019
HAPPY NEW YEAR!