



# COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 25 Issue 17

Bulletin Edition

May 3, 2019

## NEWS

### ***At the LSS#51 reunion, graduates testify and the Holy Spirit pours out His gifts once again***

This past Saturday, the graduates of LSS #51, their shepherds, auxies and LSS team members, led by the LSA's Earl and Flo Manguiat, were reunited in an afternoon of fellowship, a brief and powerful worship, and teachings on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Almost three weeks have passed, and the works of the Holy Spirit are still clearly evident upon the graduates. It was an enthusiastic afternoon that became a bit emotional when the sharings began. Most of them testified about the struggles, challenges and temptations that they've faced as they've tried to live this new life in the Spirit, and shared how they've overcome the struggles through prayers.

One of the LSS 51 graduates testified about experiencing the power of the Prayer to Take Authority to drive evil away; another graduate dreamed about Mother Mary, while yet another told everyone at the reunion about acquiring the gift of tongues, not during the LSS, but a few days later. Gratitude was also expressed by everyone, and as cited in one of the testimonies, because of how the LSS made her more conscious, aware and equipped to face life's challenges and fight any oppression. She was also thankful for BLD, a community of likeminded believers who support and pray for each other.

Above all, it is evident from their testimonials that the graduates have discovered a deeper and more personal relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior. Truly, the power of the Holy Spirit has made such a vital and tangible change in their lives.

LSS#51 surely had another fruitful harvest for the Community!

**TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

## COUNSELS

### **What It Takes to Be a Disciple**

**THEME:** We are faithful to Christ's word when we seek His will and follow His command.

**WORD :** Acts 5:27-32,40b-41 ~ Ps 30:2,4,5-6,11-12,13  
Rev 5:11-14 ~ Jn 21:1-19

**ORDER:** *"Feed my lambs... Tend my sheep... Feed my sheep..."* (Jn 21:15,16,17)

**REFLECTION:**

**W**hy is it so difficult to be a disciple of Jesus? This Sunday's readings shed light on what it takes to be His follower. In the First Reading, the drastic change in Peter's attitude toward the Sanhedrin becomes evident. Not too long before that, he had denied knowing Jesus three times for fear of being arrested like his Master. This time around, we see a totally different Peter, who fearlessly proclaimed the divinity of Christ before the same men who were responsible for condemning and crucifying Jesus like a common criminal.

We are not unlike Peter, who believed that Jesus is God and that our life here on earth is just a passage on the journey towards our final destination, heaven. In order to attain eternal life, we obey the Lord's command to bring the Good News and proclaim the Kingdom of God to those who are in darkness. But what might set Peter apart from us is his great courage in defending his faith in Christ, regardless of the imminent risk and danger.

As followers of Jesus, we need to look into our hearts and see if we truly seek to possess the same tenacity and obstinacy as Peter did. *...Continued on page 3*

### ***Promise of the Week***

***"...Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something."*** – Jn 21:6

## Two Movie Reviews of...



*This first review is from a member of the Singles Ministry:*

### **“It reignites the fire...”**

In the wake of the recent passage in some states of radical abortion laws, the powerful movie “Unplanned” is making waves across America. It is awakening consciences and opening the eyes of many to the truth about the attack on life in the womb, and it is piercing hearts by unmasking the horror and the ugliness of abortion. Based on the same-titled memoir by former Planned Parenthood Employee-of-the-Year, Abby Johnson, it reveals the emotional pain and physical trauma that women endure as a result of the deception by the billion-dollar, profit-driven, abortion industry. Abby had climbed the ranks to become a clinic director for Planned Parenthood, but after finally seeing a sonogram of a fetus being aborted, she had a dramatic, Saul-to-Paul-like conversion to become one of the leading and most outspoken activists for the pro-life movement.

At first, the details of her checkered past may be unsettling. Folks may find themselves unsympathetic, and some might question how someone could be so blind and ignorant for so long. However, this movie reminds us that there are so many women, who have walked in Abby’s shoes and are in great denial of their experience. It is so tempting to just villainize those who identify themselves as pro-abortion, those who have had abortions, or those who support or work for organizations like Planned Parenthood. They have probably bought into the lie that “safe and legal” abortion is a woman’s “reproductive right,” and are convinced that they are helping women. But as the movie successfully points out, those with opposing viewpoints are not our enemies; rather, they are still our brothers and sisters who need to be steered away from the culture of death.

“Unplanned” depicts both sides of the issue, showing that even the pro-life movement is not without fault. It touches on some of the extreme actions by anti-abortionists, including the murder of a prominent doctor, as well as some of the aggressive and misguided approaches that shame and harass vulnerable women in crisis.



→ Rather than pass judgment and condemnation, and impose guilt like a Pharisee, Jesus calls us to be merciful. Jesus calls us to deepen our compassion and sensitivity to one another’s pain, and to love them in their brokenness. This life-giving approach is demonstrated beautifully by Abby’s parents, her husband, and the couple from the 40 Days for Life campaign that were also depicted in the movie. They did not condone her actions, but continued to communicate the truth with love. Even though they disagreed with Abby’s stance and were opposed to her career choice, they remained by her side and prayed for her change of heart until her miraculous breakthrough. By their example, we too are challenged to find better ways of relating to others. Through mutual respect, understanding, and patience, we can bridge the divide.

This movie can be an effective and suitable teaching tool to engage in healthy dialogue, so parents should not be discouraged by the “R” rating for “Unplanned.” Because of the need to educate the younger generations about this important issue, they should accompany and see it with their teen-aged children. It is well-produced and acted, moving, informative, and thought-provoking. It provides a window into what actually goes on inside the Planned Parenthood clinics and the very real struggles that patients undergo.

No one is beyond God’s grace and mercy. Through Abby’s story, “Unplanned” points to hope and speaks volumes to the saying that every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future. It testifies to God’s power to bring light and goodness out of darkness and evil. It encourages post-abortive women to seek healing and forgiveness. It drives us to support and serve both mother and child, especially pregnant women and mothers in crisis. It promotes the message that pro-life is indeed pro-woman and feminist. It reignites the fire in those who identify as pro-life to be bold and continue to fight for the rights of the unborn.

-----

*The second review is from a father of two daughters:*

### **“I was crying...”**

The film, “Unplanned,” tells the true story of Abby Johnson, who was a director of a Planned Parenthood facility in Texas. The opening scene from the movie was that of a medical doctor brusquely ordering Abby to assist him as he performed an abortion. Despite her having worked there for years, she had never actually witnessed the procedure before; and as she watched the fetus on the ultrasound, what she saw was the baby in the womb fighting a probe and suction tube. The doctor then turned on the machine, and after she saw the struggle and the resulting empty womb, ...Continued on page 3

## Unplanned...

(from page 2)

Abby fled in tears as she realized what had just happened.

I was crying as I saw the unborn baby, that at first was bouncing with life, and then, was fighting to avoid his unnatural demise. I was deeply saddened because I knew what was going to happen - the baby was going to lose the battle, be sucked out of the womb and dumped into a bucket. I could vividly picture how this would be repeated over and over again for others. I was already horrified, but this was just the beginning of the movie.

Later, there would be more scenes that would make me cry, but I don't want to give it all away since the movie is really worth seeing. I should add that I am a man, a husband and a father of two daughters, and so, I could see the faces of my girls in those young women who were portrayed in the movie. And I pray that my children would never find themselves in similar situations. Most women don't know the truth of how abortion will forever affect them.

This movie has an "R" rating - children under 17 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian - but a child under 17 can get birth control, and in some states, an abortion without a parent's consent, and nothing needs to be said to the father.

In the "pro-choice" narrative, I don't really hear anything about men having a say in what women do with their bodies. It is complicated how we got to this place, but in short, men need to take more responsibility in their relationships with women. I think men should also see this movie, because we can't just look at this as only a woman's issue. Men are also affected by abortion because they have also lost a child. In many cases, those who have lost babies, both mothers and fathers, know, and later on can even tell you, how old their babies would be if they had lived.

Planned Parenthood is portrayed badly, whereas the pro-life groups are portrayed as saintly folks, peacefully lined up outside the clinic praying, simply there to "talk" the young girls and women out of going inside. The critics of this movie are disturbed by the extreme depictions of the opposing groups. However, regardless of what side of this very controversial topic you stand on, the movie tells the truth about the process of abortion. The gore that is portrayed in the movie is a real part of what happens.

An unplanned pregnancy is often viewed as a problem, an inconvenience, and sometimes as just a nuisance to be disposed of. When a woman doesn't want to be a parent, an unplanned pregnancy actually leaves her with a life-changing choice to make. →→

## COUNSELS

(from page 1)

As we face contemporary moral issues such as birth control, same sex marriage, divorce and the like, do we have the courage to stand up for our faith and defend it? There are countless martyrs who gave up their lives in defense of their faith and they too were ordinary men and women, no different from us. We are not being asked to die like the martyrs. What we are asked to do is to preach Jesus Christ's message by being living witnesses of His love and grace, and by telling others of the blessings from Him that we ourselves have already received and experienced.

Easter is a good time to renew our lives, re-establish our purpose on earth and re-affirm our reason for answering the call to evangelization. We are reminded to do also what Peter was asked by the Lord, "**Feed my lambs... Tend my sheep... Feed my sheep.**" (Jn 21:15c,16c,17c)



...Continued on page 4

\*\*\*\*\*

→ The title of the movie is deliberate. It shows some of those situations, but it also makes the point that a pregnancy involves another life, a product of God's creation, and that abortion leads to the early end of life.

After she realized the gravity of what she had once advocated for, in the scene where Abby spoke to her husband about it, I could sense the shame and betrayal that she felt because of her life and her actions and decisions. She feared that God could not forgive her, for her sin was too great. Her husband disagreed and said that as she prayed to God asking for His forgiveness, "simply mean it" and He would grant it.

I believe in the power of God's mercy, which I also felt during this past Lent – especially in the times that I spent reflecting on Jesus Christ, His life and His passion, death, and resurrection. He did this all for us, and so, I believe that He is there when we repent. I pray that those affected by abortion know that God will forgive and is waiting with open arms, for God's grace is more powerful than our sins. In Psalm 103, Scripture tells us about this and the beauty of God's love and forgiveness:

***"Merciful and gracious is the LORD, slow to anger, abounding in mercy. He will not always accuse, and nurses no lasting anger; He has not dealt with us as our sins merit, nor requited us as our wrongs deserve. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins from us."*** (Ps 103:8-10,12)

# COUNSELS

(from page 3)

This is our theme for the week: We are faithful to Christ's word when we seek His will and follow His command. Like Peter, we are challenged by the Lord that if we truly love Him, we must care for His people. We should concretize our care for others by sincerely addressing their needs and concerns, whether their needs be material, emotional or spiritual. We must remember to share our time, talent and treasure with others and with our Church and community, so that by sharing and true caring, our love for the Lord becomes genuinely manifested. Now is a good time to probe our hearts and assess how well we have obeyed the Lord's command to care for His people.

Through Peter, Jesus taught His followers what it takes to catch people. It is not enough to just profess love for Him, Who is all-powerful, all-merciful, all-good and all-loving. Loving Jesus means loving the people He cared and died for, no matter what trials and obstacles come our way. Though this journey of discipleship may become arduous, whenever we get discouraged, the Lord promises, ***"Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something,"*** (Jn 21:6)



**Prayer:**

*Lord, we confess that it is not easy to be Your disciple. There are times when we get discouraged as we go about fulfilling our mission of proclaiming Your kingdom. But Your resurrection has given us hope and we know that as You commanded us to care for Your people, You are always with us. Give us the grace to fearlessly defend our faith and serve You by faithfully relying on Your Word of Truth. Grant us fervor and fortitude to show love and compassion to Your people in the last, the least and the lost. In Your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.*

**Directions:**

When receiving the Holy Eucharist be reminded to share your blessings with the poor.

Please note that a pdf of this Covenant News is also available online at [BLDNEWARK.com](http://BLDNEWARK.com)

## LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Last Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,849	\$ 25,052
Love Offerings	\$ 697	\$ 12,514
E-Giving	\$ 841	\$ 2,576
Mission	\$ 61	\$ 10,078

Financial details are available to all members through [treasury@bldnewark.com](mailto:treasury@bldnewark.com)

Thank you for your continued support!

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Marriage Encounter**  
**Weekend 52**  
18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2019,  
Sacred Heart Center, Newton, New Jersey

*I hold you in my heart, for we have shared together God's blessing.*  
Philippians 1:7

Please contact [mla@bldnewark.com](mailto:mla@bldnewark.com)

**Singles Encounter**  
**39**

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**June 7-9, 2019**  
Deadline to register is JUNE 6

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL: \$160  
\*MUST BE PAID BY MAY 31  
REGULAR PRICE: \$175

REGISTER NOW!  
<https://tinyurl.com/se39candidate>

PREVIOUS LOCATIONS:  
SACRED HEART RETREAT CENTER  
20 OLD SWARTZWOOD ROAD  
NEWTON, NJ 07860

**Solo Parents Encounter**  
**Weekend #21**

**June 29-30, 2019**  
Days Hotel of East Brunswick  
195 NJ 18 East Brunswick, NJ 08816

Please contact: Matt and Precy Yap

**YOUTH ENCOUNTER**  
**#26**

July 12 - 14, 2019  
Fellowship Deaconry Ministries  
3575 Valley Rd., Basking Ridge, NJ 07920  
Contact: [dyc@bldnewark.com](mailto:dyc@bldnewark.com)

**FAMILY ENCOUNTER 26**  
As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord: Joshua 24:15

July 26 - 28, 2019  
Malvern Retreat House  
Malvern PA

Contacts:  
Mike and Emma Pepino, Ed and Susan Pabe

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		May 10	Formation
		May 17	Management
		May 24	Mission
		May 31	Pastoral