



New Year's Greetings and Plans

From the Teaching Ministry...

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Cor 9:15)

We are transformed by gratitude as we recognized that God's greatest gift is the Child in Bethlehem being reborn in our hearts. We give thanks to the God Almighty for the blessing of community, where we see God at work through us. Through His grace, we are a changed people. We can see each other as God sees us, we can listen and understand; we can see and perceive.

Pope Benedict XVI says, "through Christ, we discover the Truth that sets us free and the Love that transforms our lives." We have been enriched by God's love. Rich in love, rich in help, rich in mission, rich in gifts, rich in the knowledge of God.

Our community's faithfulness to the Scripture and Liturgy and our Formation Program have become a golden string that passes through us and holds us together. Indeed, the Word is living and effective, the Word that created the universe.

The Teaching Ministry joins all ministries in the Body of Christ as we welcome 2006 with gratitude and thanksgiving.

We take this opportunity to congratulate several covenanted members who have been newly commissioned as Catechists under the Catechetical Office of the Archdiocese of Newark last November 24, 2005. This opens the gate to proclaim Christ message beyond the boundaries of our BLD community, to lead all people to worship and prayer and to motivate them to serve others. We give honor to God for the following brethren: Gerry/Gigi Cabunag, Aileen Ciocon, Ben Chua, Ding/Emma Deborja, Nanie De los Reyes, Rizaldy/Bing Espinosa, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ray Ermita, Lith Golanco, Boyie Huelgas, Sundee/Neneng Ikalina, Pauline Ibarolla, Rigor King, Larobis, Jovy/Emily Lucero, Art Monta, Mita Miranda, Agnes Monta, Pen Perez, Caesar Rasalan, Tony Rosal, Lito Vibar, Linda Viola, Lilibet Zandueta.

We feel blessed and privileged to be able to serve you in our own little ways all in the name of our personal Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the King. *(Continued on page 2)*

COUNSELS

Blessings of Prosperity

WORD: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12 (Solemnity of the Epiphany)

ORDER: *"Rise up in splendor! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you."* (Is 60:1)

REFLECTION: In today's reading, God has called us out of darkness, into His light of Truth. *"Rise up in splendor! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you."* (Is 60:1)

In our community, we are people from different parts of the Philippines and beyond who are gathered together to be Christ's ambassadors. We must therefore stand firm and be radiant in His light to bring the Good News to as many people as we can. It is God's will that all people be saved. We are called to be the light of the world wherever we go. We are within His perfect guidance when we trust and obey Him as we pay homage to His sovereignty. Weak as we are, when we hold on to God's strong hand, we can walk victoriously. All our insufficiency and earthly ineptitude will be covered by the sufficiency of His grace.

We receive the blessings of prosperity when we surrender to His Kingship, when we let His will be our will, His way be our way. Our life will blossom and be fruitful when we acknowledge Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We pay homage to our Master by recognizing His presence everywhere, in all people and conditions that we meet. We must always remember that in all our works and endeavors, in every achievement, with every ministry success- the glory goes only to God, our King. Then 'blessings of prosperity will be upon us when we pay homage to Jesus' which is the theme of this week.

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God's Promise for the Week

"Then you shall be radiant at what you see, your hearts shall throb and overflow, for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you, the wealth of nations shall be brought to you." (Is 60:5)

New Year's Greetings and Plans *(Continued from page 1)*

From the Praise Ministry...

We face the New Year with excitement and joyful anticipation for we know that the Lord blesses this community with His presence, with an abundance of talents and resources. The success of SPMT was proof that we can do things that are beyond our capacity by completely relying on the Lord. "Praise" saw this firsthand as it spearheaded this project.

This ministry will be facing bigger challenges as the community expands its works in the mission field. We greet this New Year with such eagerness to face these challenges, subservient to the community's direction, as we cast our nets into the deeper part of the ocean where the catch will be more plentiful.

Together with this community, we welcome the New Year with a resounding "Digo Si Señor!"

May our New Year be filled with greater joy and inspiration to continue to serve Him, and may He bless us with prosperity, peace and goodwill to all!

From the John 6 Ministry...

2005 is coming to an end quickly, and 2006 is just beginning. In the New Year I know that the John 6 ministry will grow and become better than it already is. My hope for the New Year is that all of us kids that make up this wonderful ministry will grow closer and become more involved in the community. I hope that we will all come to know our Lord together not only through prayer and worship, but through other fun activities as well. I expect that John 6 will go stronger and become a place where we, kids, will look forward to going every week to praise and worship our wonderful Lord. I am so thankful that He has blessed us with another year, and I can't wait to see what else He has planned for us. So from everyone in the John 6 ministry, we would like to wish you all a happy and blessed new year!

From the LSA Ministry...

Twice a year it is done, and we, in the LSA Ministry awaits this biennial happening in our community with great anticipation, with joy that once again the ministry is used as a vessel to bring encountered members of our community and non-encountered friends and families to experience the grace and blessings of God during the Baptism Of The Holy Spirit.

The assignment of undershepherds to the lambs is unique to BLD. We hear from the lambs how much they have in common with their shepherds and how much their shepherds help them prepare for the "big event". We only have to listen to their testimonies during their sharings. They go home after the seminar, a new person.

With the coming of the New Year, the LSA Ministry's wish is for more covenanted disciples of the community to give themselves to shepherding the lambs in the coming LSS. Let us serve God by serving others.

"Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord."
(Rm 12:11)

From the Secretariat Ministry...

Our message is just a very basic greeting to everyone: A HAPPY AND BLESSED NEW YEAR!

Hopefully our community will be prosperous not only in harvesting workers in our vineyard but also promoting good will and servanthood to the needy especially the poor and the sick...

Thanks and God Bless!

From the Intercessory Ministry...

The Ministry plans to enhance activities that will promote larger participation of community members through ministry collaborations, in addition to its current activities, in the following areas:

1. Friday Worship- collaborates with all the ministries in corporate worship, to assign respective members to act as Prayer Warriors on a regular basis.
2. Meditative Rosary- collaborates with Golden Years Ministry (GYM) in leading the rosary at least once a month.
3. Community Retreats- collaborates with Pastoral Ministry as co-sponsor.
4. Healing/Prayer Counseling Sessions- to actively participate with the Pastoral Ministry.
5. Easier access to Prayer requests submission- will request Secretariat to provide section in the BLD website for prayer request submission. This will allow members to submit prayer requests/petitions anytime.
6. Creation of Prayer/Intercessory Books/Articles for Sale Drive -which will provide the community with necessary reading and prayer materials.
7. Develop additional teaching modules through the Teaching Ministry to further enhance Intercessory formation.

From the Service Ministry...

"So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold new things have come." (2 Cor 5:17)

To everyone, our hearts are one with you in welcoming 2006. This is the time to renew our commitment to the Spirit, to share the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to everybody, in one mind, one heart, and one spirit as a community set apart to do God's work.

Ministry members always have that joy in their hearts doing their best to serve the Lord. Looking forward we would want to have that joy in serving remain in our hearts and at the same time encourage other members of the ministry to come and share that joy in serving. We plan to go beyond by:

- Calling members, who have been out two times in a row, extend any assistance we can;
- Visit members who have been out more than two times;
- Have monthly meetings to assess the status of the ministry;
- Need to communicate with BLD Administration our needs as

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New Year's Greetings and Plans

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well as their expectations and current situations of the ministry.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind everybody to observe cleanliness by using trash bins available and observe punctuality getting in and out to give clean-up time for the ministry.

May this New Year bring the kind of service to the families to which we belong which produces not only maturity but also the gift of peace, love and harmony among all our brothers and sisters in the community.

Have a happy and blessed New Year!

From ME 25: A change for the better...

In a few days we will mark the 1/2 year anniversary of our ME weekend. Seems like more than 6 months since we all met for the first time...so much have happened since that time.

Six months ago we took a hard look at ourselves, our spouses, our marriages and our relationship to God and changes began to take place that we never envisioned would happen at the retreat house starting that Friday night till Sunday. Wonderful changes...lots of growth...lots of bonding...lots of laughter...lots of prayer...lots of food!

Towards the end of last Friday's worship, we sang a song, which spoke of the peace we experience within the embrace of Christ. I got so choked up, I couldn't sing because within this wonderful group of people known as class of ME 25, my husband and I have felt the embrace of Christ. We are grateful to Him and to each of you for the joy that has filled us during these last 6 months.

Peace to all of you and a Happy New Year!

From LSS 18: "Security under God's Protection"

"...God's Faithfulness is a protecting Shield." (Ps 91:4)

Please allow me to share about my humble self. I was given life by our Lord, through my parents on July 27, 1924. I got married and have 4 children.

My husband was called back by our loving Lord on November 21, 1976, leaving me behind with our three sons and one daughter. I am a widow for twenty-nine years now.

At my golden age of 81 years I experienced a 'turning point' of my life. On July 5, 2005, I was admitted to a hospital and had a major operation, a triple coronary bypass. I knew that God sent His angels to guard and watch me in all ways. With their hands they supported me. Who are these angels? Oh, my attending doctors, nurses, medical technicians, the medical team and the dietitians. With my length of stay at the hospital, I was satisfied with how they took good care of me. They all showed me their 'saving power', which I know God provided them so they could bring me back to good health.

And so now, I "praise the Lord, our God, the Source of all security." My heart has been renewed. I thank God for my surgeon, Dr. Tyrone Krause who performed the successful operation.

Praise the Lord...and to the BLD community: thank you for all the prayers and care that gave me comfort and assurance.

Ministry Announcements

DLC Special Meeting

Saturday, Jan 7, 2006 at 7 pm, St. Mary's Rahway

FE 12 Reunion # 3

Sunday, Jan 15, 2006 from 1-6pm, St. Mary's Rahway

Youth Ministry

February 17-19, 2006 - Newark, NJ
Interdistrict Conference of youth from North America
(Seattle, Bay Area, Phoenix, Reno, Detroit, DC, Albany,
Long Island, Toronto and Trenton)

For details, please contact Dave de la Fuente
(david_reuben@hotmail.com)

YLSS#11

March 18-19, 2006

at Consolata Mission Center in Somerset, NJ

"Salubungan" on February 3, 2006

at St. Mary's Church after the Healing Mass.

Accepting youths of ages 15-20

Applications available at Secretariat
or online at BLDNewark.com

Deadline for submission: January 27th

Contact persons: Marvin Venadas (Tel#973-562-0055)
or Larry/Lennie DeGuzman (Tel#973-772-3752)

Medical Mission

January 23 to 26, 2006

For details, please see Nong & Tricia Bustos
or Willy & Myrna de Luna

Teachings

Jan 7: Shepherds Training Part 2 – **LSS 20 Newark**

New Creation Realities, GIP-Prayer, GIP-Praise &
Worship – **LSS 25 Newark**

Encounter with Jesus Part II (Mark, Matthew), Intro
to Commitment – **LSS 24 Newark**

Jan 20: Renewing The Mind - **Singles Newark,**
John6, Mark10

Jan 21 Understanding Corporate Worship– **LSS 21 &**
22 Newark

Prayer Leadership – **LSS 20 Newark**

Jan 27 Service, Intercession

Jan 28 Christian Parenting – **LSS 5-6 Washington**

MGT, CMP 1- Body & Blood, Community – **LSS 4**
Washington

Apologetics, Prayer, Trinity, Salvation – **LSS 1-2**

Washington

Christian Parenting – **ME 2 Rockland**

Encounter with Jesus, Luke, John, Intro to
Commitment – **LSS 1 Rockland**

Counsels

Continued from page 1

What a joy and security to know that God is blessing our community with His love and wisdom. Our heavenly Father who gives such great blessing will hold back nothing that is good for our community for as long as we unceasingly magnify Him in all our works, giving praise and honor that belong to Him alone in all our activities. God will shower us with abundance of joy, peace and love and our community life will prosper and thrive.

Thankfulness to God should be a part of our daily life. Our thankfulness for God's blessings means that we are called upon to even deeper resolution that all these gifts be used in His plan for the salvation of the whole mankind. We all have unique talents that we should use for God's purpose, to restore all things in Christ. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide us and enable us to be good stewards of our time, talents and treasures.

Just like the Magi, we seek the Lord, the Prince of Peace, our Eternal Light, the Source of all knowledge and wisdom and offer to Him our life. We pay Him homage by turning away from sin, repenting our past offenses and asking His forgiveness in the sacrament of Reconciliation. We seek Him in the Holy Eucharist and glorify Him as our Redeemer, the only One who grants true life.

This New Year brings so much joyful anticipation to our community. We can feel God's blessings of prosperity coming upon our BLD Newark community as she willingly serves as the administering district of BLD Los Angeles, in addition to BLD Phoenix. We, in the community, are co-workers with God who fulfills His prophecies. We are the new Jerusalem—we are part of that light that will shine in all the nations. We must open our hearts to all people, not only to Filipinos, and share with them God's saving grace through new mission programs and the evangelization assignments from the Archdiocese of Newark. The financial aspect must not deter us from doing these works for we trust in God's promise in Isaiah 60:5.

As we embark on another year, we see changes coming up, new roads to travel, new missions to undertake, more responsibilities to assume but together, working as one for the Lord, all these will bring blessings of prosperity to our community.

From the rising of the sun to its sunset, your Name is worthy of praise, O Lord!

Directions:

- ◆ Prostrate yourself and give Jesus homage; empty yourself of all pride and acknowledge Jesus as your King.
- ◆ Mention His name every moment of your life in love, praise and thanksgiving.
- ◆ As stewards of God's grace, open your treasures and offer them for the benefit of all His people.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 6-8 SE #1, Trenton
January 14 Youth Seminar, Newark
January 27-29 YLSS #1, Washington

Birthdays



6-Jan
Mel Hernandez, ME 20
Isa Hammond, SPE 3

7-Jan
Romy Chan, LSS 16
Fr. Cyril Nwankwo, LSS 16
Nonong Punzalan, LSS 10
Marie Somera, LSS 6
Paco Almazan, John 6

8-Jan
Marion Venadas, John 6
Melody De La Cruz, YE 8
May Tolentino, YE 8

9-Jan
Beth Alonzo, LSS 19

10-Jan
Hilda Briones, LSS 8
Luz Talag, LSS 8
Bernard Soluta, John 6

11-Jan
Janice Hernandez, John 6
Josie Punla, LSS 24
Demetria Cardines, SPE 2
Linda Jane De La Cruz, SPE 6

12-Jan
Trif Col, LSS 9
Knolma Thomas, LSS 23
Nicholas Salmo, Mk 10
Glendyll Fabe, John 6



Anniversaries

6-Jan Eddie & Nene Gutierrez, LSS 19
Tita Valonzo, SPE 4
Tony & Letty Luna, LSS 9
Atong & Ningning Reyes, ME 23

7-Jan Nestor & Letty De Guzman, FE 2
Jess & Mita Olaso, LSS 11
Andy & Luz Mendoza, ME 26

8-Jan Teddy & Larissa Avisado, ME 26

9-Jan Gene & Alice Bautista, LSS 23
Kelly & Tessie Concepcion, LSS 13
Medy & Mila Yabut, ME 26

10-Jan Jojo & Chi-Chi Velasco, LSS 23

11-Jan Oliver & Flory Santos, LSS 17

The Lord's Provisions

COLLECTIONS

12/16 \$ 2,686
12/23 \$ 3,267
12/30 \$ 3,151

COLLECTIONS

51-wk avg \$ 3,472
EXPENSES
51-wk avg \$ 3,782



Excerpts From CCEO Circular On General Emergence

The BLD CCEO issued a circular last January 9, 2006 providing guidelines for the General Emergence of Servant Leaders and Stewards, which is to be scheduled between February 26-March 12, 2006.. Following are excerpts from the circular:

Nominators' list and Nominees Lists for Servant Leaders and DCS should be submitted to the CCEO by January 2-14, 2006. The existing policy for any emerged covenant member (Tri-cord/DCS or CSL) who has rendered six continuous years of active service, whether in the Tri-cord, DCS or CSL, shall be on a sabbatical leave for one year.

Nominators List:

- Consists of names of all active Covenanted Disciples as of October 31, 2005;
- Criteria for qualification to active status shall be noted on every page;
- The list has undergone the process of evaluating complaints relative to inclusions and omissions through prior publication within the District.

Nominees List- DCS:

- Minimum Qualifications to be a nominee for DCS:
 - Couples who are both active covenant Disciple who has served the Community for the past three (3) years as of October 31, 2005 including approved absence of leave not exceeding six months;
 - Holding two of the three offices/ministries/apostolate: (i) Sharer, (ii) Worship Leader, and (iii) Teacher;
 - served as a member or former member of the District Leaders Conference ("DLC")

Nominees List- ECSL/DSL:

- Minimum Qualifications to be a nominee for ECSL and DSL:
 - Male active covenant Disciple who has served the Community for the past five (5) years as of October 31, 2005 including approved absence of leave not exceeding six months, and whose spouse is also an active covenant Disciple; *p3* ➡

Counsels

Recognizing God's Call

WORD: 1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19; Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-10; 1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20; John 1:35-42

ORDER: "Glorify God in your body." (1 Cor 6:20)

REFLECTION: Everyone is called by God to be something, to do something for others with their life and with their unique gifts.

The First Reading is about a young man who did not recognize God's call at first. Twice, God called Samuel, but twice he thought it was Eli. Twice Eli told him to go back to sleep. The third time God called, Eli realized what was happening and told Samuel, "*The next time you hear the call, say, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening'.*" When the Lord called the fourth time, Samuel was ready, ready to listen to God." And so, "*Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him, not permitting any word of his to be without effect.*" Samuel continued to listen carefully to what God was saying and in turn, passed on what he had heard to others. God's Word is never to be kept just for ourselves. That would be like the man who wrapped up the talent he was given in a cloth and buried it in the ground.

The LORD calls each of us all the time, but we often do not heed His call. By grace, we encountered Him and our lives changed. Like Samuel, we are growing in the knowledge of the Lord. We still have a lot to learn. We are blessed to receive faith formation teachings each month in our community. "*We are not yet where we have to be, but we are no longer where we used to be.*" As we grow in the Spirit, we will be sanctified in Christ.

The Gospel is about the calling of two men who were already disciples of John the Baptist.

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God's Promise For The Week

"God raised the Lord and will also raise us by His power." (1 Cor 6:14)

Sts. Fabian and Sebastian

St. Fabian was Pope from 236 to 250 A.D. His election was extraordinary: during the conclave a dove (the sign of the Holy Spirit) perched on his head. Regardless of the fact that he was a layman and not a bishop, the electors took this as a clear sign from heaven and immediately made him Pope. His deeds are recorded in the *Liber Pontificalis* (Book of the Popes). He began major reorganization of the Church of Rome, by establishing seven ecclesiastical districts, and appointing seven deacons (servants) to head the clergy of each area. He renovated the catacombs, or underground burial chambers. The early Church enjoyed a period of camaraderie with the Roman emperor Philip, whom Fabian had converted. However, when the emperor died, his successor Decius, forced all Christians to renounce their faith and worship his pagan gods in 250 A.D. Decius persecuted those who refused his order. While many Christians succumbed to the emperor's will, Fabian stood firm and defended his faith. For this insolence, Decius had Fabian scourged and decapitated. He is buried in La Crypta dei Papi (Crypt of the Popes), in the Catacombs of Calixtus in Rome. His epitaph reads, *FABIANO, EPI, MR*, Greek for "Fabian, Bishop and Martyr."

St. Sebastian was born a Christian and became a Roman captain, known for being an honorable and valiant man. When the Roman emperor Diocletian persecuted the Christians, Sebastian used his position of authority to help them to escape persecution. When the emperor discovered that he had been secretly helping the Christians, he summoned the captain and ordered him to give up his faith. Sebastian refused, and Diocletian ordered his soldiers to shoot him down. After many arrows had pierced his body, they left him for dead. A Christian widow named Irene took him in and tended to his wounds. Recovering fully, Sebastian bravely returned to Diocletian in 288 A.D., who was astonished that he was still alive. Sebastian rebuked the emperor's merciless acts of persecution. Diocletian then had him clubbed to death and threw his remains into the sewer. According to legend, his spirit appeared to a woman named Lucina, ordering her to take his body and bury it in the catacomb. Three centuries later, during an outbreak of the plague, the people carried the relics of Sebastian in a solemn procession. Miraculously, the epidemic ended, and Sebastian became known as the patron saint of plague victims.

Both saints paid the price with their lives, which they considered worthless compared to the faith they defended. While their call was to martyrdom of life, others are called to martyrdom of love, which is equally valuable and sacrificial.

Fear Not

What do we do when everything seems to fall apart? Trials, difficulties, suffering happen in most people's lives. We all experience a time when we feel helpless, when nothing at all makes sense: the loss of relationships which we value greatly, the destruction of things we have worked hard to obtain, accomplish or protect, painful illness or death.

The LORD said ***fear not***, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Malachi 3:3 says: "*He will sit refining and purifying (silver).*"

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at the next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities. The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot.

Then she thought again about the verse that says: "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver is being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment. She asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy – when I see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, ***fear not***, remember that God has His eye on you and will keep watching you until He sees His image in you.

Right now, this very moment, there may be people who need to know that God is watching over them. And, whatever they are going through, tell them to ***fear not***, because they'll be better persons in the end.

To be optimistic in spirit of everything, trust in God should be the pivot of our thoughts and actions. - **Pope John Paul I** (1912-1978)

Through The Eyes of God

"Not as man sees does God see, because he sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." (1 Sm 16:7)

How many times have we distanced ourselves from people who look dirty and who smell offensive? Our first reaction is not compassion but repulsion. We do not want to be near this kind of people at all, never mind entertaining them. But what would Jesus do in this case? God sees the heart of a person, his pain, his loneliness, his fears, his yearnings, his disappointments and He never judges by looks or stature in life. He would love these people the same way he loves you and me. He would offer them His comforting friendship.

It is easy to choose friends based on their financial means or status in society. It is human nature to want to be identified with people of influence, power and riches. But the Lord is reminding us that we must love the poor, too, as much as we love those around us who are materially beneficial to us and pleasing to be with.

In our community, we encounter some members that we would rather stay away from because he or she is not our type. With God, every person counts and each one is special to Him. To become true disciples of Christ, we must embrace all of God's people, most especially the unlovable and treat them with dignity and care. How much better we can be when we are being what God created us to be— to give love and be of service to the least of our brothers and sisters.

At the heart of who we are as a community is Christ's call to love one another. Whatever diminishes love diminishes the community. A measure of our sincere devotion to God and our genuine care for each other is how well we deal with frustration and disappointment. Both are a normal part of life but they need not lead to anger, rash judgment or quarrels, but rather to tolerance, patience and trust after the example of our Lord Jesus. We must again remind ourselves to see these circumstances through the eyes of God. God is eternal, perfect and infinite. We are temporal, flawed and finite, yet in God's boundless compassion, He gave us the Holy Spirit to help us have divine eyes so we can mirror His unconditional love to others.

We are all God's children and in faith we are to take care of each other, lift up the downtrodden, build up relationships and aim for a solid community united strongly in love and humility. These can only be realized when we finally see through the eyes of God!

I don't look at the results of our work. They don't belong to us. If they exist, they belong to God....
- **Blessed Marcelina Darowska** (1827-1911)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Medical Mission January 23 to 26, 2006

Volunteers are welcome, both in the medical and non-medical fields.

For details, please see Nong & Tricia Bustos or Willy & Myrna de Leon.

YLSS # 11 March 18-19, 2006

Consolata Mission Center in Somerset, NJ
Salubungan on Feb. 3, 2006 at St. Mary's Church after the Healing Mass

Accepting youths of ages 15-20

Applications available at Secretariat or online at BLDNewark.com

Deadline for submission: January 27th

Contact persons: Marvin Venadas

(Tel. # 973-562-0055) or Larry/Lennie DeGuzman(Tel. # 973-772-3752)

TEACHINGS – CDFP 2006 SCHEDULE

Jan 20 **Renewing The Mind** –

Singles Newark, John 6, Mark10,

Jan 21 **Understanding Corporate Worship** –

LSS 21& 22 Newark

Prayer Leadership – LSS 20 Newark

Jan 27 **Service, Intercession**

Feb 04 **Basic Bible Seminar**

(Books of Books, Approaches, Word of God, Response) - LSS 25 Newark

Apologetics, Trinity, Mary and Church –

LSS 19-20 Newark

Feb 17 **Walking in the Spirit** –

Singles, Newark, John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

CCEO Circular (from page 1)

- Holding two of the three offices/ministries/apostolate: (i) Sharer, (ii) Worship Leader, and (iii) Teacher;
- Coming from the Districts in the Ecclesiastical Province of Manila for the Executive Council
- Coming from a Full-term District (for the DSL) as member of the Council of Servant Leaders
- Those included in the list automatically qualify as nominees for DCS

Note: At last Saturday's special DLC meeting, the district's leaders discussed queries and suggestions to be submitted to the CCEO concerning the guidelines to the 2006 Emergence. Extra time will be requested to give the community the opportunity to review the lists.

(See insert for full text of CCEO Circular)

Counsels (from page 1)

When John saw Jesus, he proclaimed, "Behold! The Lamb of God!" The proclamation caused his two disciples to follow Jesus. By pointing to Jesus, John knew that his leadership was temporary and subordinate to the leadership of Jesus, whose coming he was tasked to prepare. He knew he must decrease for Him to increase.

As the two disciples followed Jesus, Jesus turned around and asked them: "*What are you looking for?*" They answered "*Where are you staying?*" Jesus replied "*Come and see.*" The Gospel of John is usually symbolic of something deeper. In this, Jesus invites them to the inner truth and life that is in Him and comes through Him. The disciples visited Jesus physically, but they experienced Him interiorly. When we discover something very important and valuable, it's just natural to want to share it with those closest to us, isn't it? So, Andrew immediately went to his brother Simon and told him the good news of his discovery of Jesus. And it didn't take much to get Simon to "come and see" who this Jesus was. Jesus reached out to Simon in the same way he did to Andrew earlier. In fact, Jesus gave him a new name which signified the call God had for him. Simon became Peter, which literally means "rock", a follower, an apostle and the leader of the new community.

"*Come and see*" is God's invitation to us for fellowship and communion with Himself. It is God who initiates and who draws us to Himself. Without His grace, mercy, and help we cannot find Him. And Jesus invites each of us to "come and see" for ourselves that His Word is true and everlasting.

His invitation is life-changing. Come and see . . . that invitation can come in different ways- through conversations to an act of unselfish love. Come and see . . . when we invite others, we ask them to encounter the One after whom we pattern our lives. Come and see . . . the Lord. He will show us the loving way to live and He will give us a new identity as His new creation. He will show us the way to the Father.

In conclusion, let's ask ourselves: What is God calling us to do, to be? How have we influenced others to follow Christ? Have we extended to others acts of love? When we invite others to join BLD, will they find Jesus here?

Directions:

- Avoid immorality, as your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Wait, listen and respond to the Will of the Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jan. 27-29** YLSS #1, Washington DC
- Feb. 3-5** YLSS # 4, Trenton
ME # 13, Seattle
- Feb. 10-12** Aspirants' Retreat,
Washington DC
- Feb. 12** Agony/Washing of
the Feet, Trenton



birthdays

- Jan. 13** Nonoy Catelo, LSS 17
Auring Macalino, LSS 9
- Jan. 14** Rose De Castro, LSS 6
Gen Mangasi, LSS 19
- Jan. 15** Ricky Santos, LSS 21
Manny Ausan, YE 10
- Jan. 16** Baby Arambulo, LSS 3
Mark Ong, LSS 22
- Jan. 17** Robert Tiukinhoy, LSS 23
Chay Pangilinan, YE 4
Ray Chan, YE 9
- Jan. 18** Susan Borja, LSS 12
Ryan Manguiat, YE 4
- Jan. 19** Remy Policarpio, LSS 14

anniversaries

- Jan. 14** Sundee and Neneng Ikalina, LSS 12
- Jan. 15** Flory and Gen Mangasi, LSS 19
- Jan. 16** Sonny and Bren Solema, LSS 20

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**BLD YEAR TO DATE CASH FLOW
AS OF JAN. 6, 2006
Week 1**

Date	Weekly Receipts	Year to Date Receipts
1/6/06	\$2,948.00	\$2,948.00
	Weekly Disbursement	Year to Date Disbursement
1/6/06	\$12,913.00	\$12,913.00
Total	\$9,965.00*	\$9,965.00*

* Means cash deficit

May the God of love and peace set your hearts at rest and speed you on your journey; may he meanwhile shelter you from disturbance by others in the hidden recesses of his love, until he brings you at last into that place of complete plenitude where you will repose forever in the vision of peace, in the security of trust, and in the restful enjoyment of his riches. - **St. Raymond of Peñafort** (1175-1575)



2006 Medical Mission

This year's medical mission will be in the town of Abucay, in the province of Bataan. It will be a four-day mission, from January 23-26, 2006.

This mission will provide free medical, surgical, and dental services to the poorest of the poor in a province that became famous during the Second World War, as the last place of resistance against an invading army.

There is also a planned stop over at the GK village (Fr. Paul Lehman's village) in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija on January 27, where a mini medical mission may be performed for the residents of the village.

As in most places in the country, we expect to see rampant malnutrition in this year's venue, which in effect causes some of the more common diseases. Farming and fishing are the two main sources of income, which can be best described as seasonal, unstable and insufficient to meet the basic needs, particularly food and medicine.

On January 26th, the last day of the mission, there is a scheduled trip to a remote barrio that is populated by indigenous Aetas, whose means of livelihood is planting crops and harvesting or cutting bamboo, sold at very minimal amount.

There are over 120 volunteers who are serving in the mission that include doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, and non-medical personnel who will provide logistical support. The volunteers pay for their own expenses. Medicines are provided to patients for free.

The medical mission provides not only physical, but also spiritual healing. There would be an evangelization team as well as a vigil. We are called to this mission to be witnesses of God's love to others, as we are guided by His word in Matthew 25:40: "... Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." *(continued on page 4)*

COUNSELS

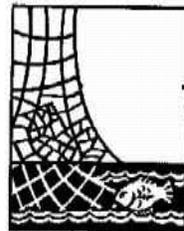
Our Calling

WORD: Jon 3:1-5;10; Ps 25:4-9; 1Cor 7:29-31; Mk 1:14-20

THEME: Blessings of fulfillment will be upon us, when we repent, believe and proclaim the Gospel.

ORDER: "The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mk 1:15)

REFLECTION:



This Sunday's Gospel from Mark relates that Jesus started his public ministry by picking two sets of brothers: Peter and Andrew, James and John. Jesus simply called them to follow Him and they did. The gospel does not portray Jesus as using persuasion to convince them. Nor does the text comment on their possible resistance, either due to the impracticality of leaving their family business or some inner doubts about the credibility of Jesus. Far from being a process of anguished decision making, it was a quick and clean encounter. Jesus calls. They responded.

When Jesus called the first disciples, little was said about mission strategies or how to achieve such a mammoth task. The disciples responded with trusting obedience, faith and love. In following Jesus, they offered evidence of sincerity. They showed the kind of response

(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." (Mk 1:17)

Sin Against The Holy Spirit

The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Matthew 12:22-32, Mark 3:22-30 and Luke 12:10 (cf. 11:14-23). In all these Scripture verses, Christ declared that this sin will not be forgiven. If we examine all the passages alluded to, we can determine the nature of this unpardonable sin.

Let us take for instance, the account given in the gospel of Mark, chapter 3, verses 22-30. The Pharisees, yielding to their wonted jealousy, and shutting their eyes to the light of evidence, said, "...*He is possessed by Beelzebul,*" and "*By the prince of demons he drives out demons.*" (Mk 3:22) Jesus then proved to them this utter absurdity and expressed to them the malice behind their blasphemy.

"... *How can Satan?*" (Mk 3:23) Then Jesus concluded, *you, all sins and that people forgiven them.*



blasphemes against the holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin. For they had said, He has an unclean spirit." (Mk 3:28-30)

Therefore, to sin against the Holy Spirit is to deny with pure malice, the Divine character of works manifestly Divine. This blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is contrasted by Jesus with the sin "against the Son of Man", which is a sin committed against Himself as man and the wrong done to His humanity. "*And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven...*" (Mat 12:22)

St. Augustine frequently explained blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, to be a final impenitence and perseverance until death in mortal sin. This impenitence against the Holy Spirit, frustrates and absolutely opposes the remission of sins, and this remission is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, the mutual love of the Father and the Son.

The sins against the Holy Spirit are said to be unpardonable. He who, from pure and deliberate malice, refuses to recognize the manifest work of God, or rejects the necessary means of salvation, acts exactly like a sick man, who not only refuses all medicine and all food, but who does all in his power to increase his illness, and whose malady becomes incurable, due to his own action. It is clear that this irremissible sin against the Holy Spirit is exclusively on the part of the sinner, on account of the sinner's act.

Feast Day : January 24

St. Francis De Sales (1567 – 1622)



Born in a French castle to a well-placed family, the parents of St. Francis de Sales intended that he become a lawyer, enter politics and carry on the family line and power. He knew for thirteen years that he had a vocation to be a priest but said nothing to his parents' wishes. Then he received a message telling him, "*Leave all and follow Me.*" He took this as a call to the priesthood, a move his family fiercely opposed. However, he pursued a devoted prayer life and his gentle ways won over the family. He was also known as the "Gentle Christ of Geneva", and the "Gentleman Saint". He was a friend of St. Vincent de Paul and he also helped found the *Order of the Visitation* with Saint Jeanne de Chantal.

It was St. Francis de Sales who said, "*An action of small value performed with much love of God is far more excellent than one of a higher virtue, done with less love of God.*"

When my wife and I were asked by our family physician to join the BLD Marriage Encounter two years ago, without hesitation we said yes. Unfortunately, my wife was in the Philippines at the day of the ME weekend, so I assured our doctor that we will take the next one. It was after the encounter that I realized that these words of St. Francis de Sales would be so meaningful for us and our family. Within the one and half year with the BLD community, we had attended the Life in the Spirit Seminar and the Family Encounter. We have sponsored candidates on another ME. We never missed the tasks assigned to our class such as joining with other ministries on a Christmas visitation at a nursing home, serving at a soup kitchen, assisting as auxiliaries on LSS seminars including the first Nigerian LSS and giving donations to the homeless and poor children of Newark. We will also be joining the medical mission this month, at Abucay, Bataan. These are just some actions of small value but performed with much love of God.

"*When we are at a loss what to do, when human help fails us in our dilemmas, then God inspires us. If only we are humbly obedient, He will not let us go astray.*" Like St. Francis de Sales, let us open our hearts to God's inspiration without any reservation and exception, and we will never lack what we need to live good, holy lives. Let us all follow and do God's will, by following the life of His only begotten son, Jesus Christ.

Emergence: Discernment, not Election

The emergence process begins in all BLD districts throughout the world in February and March. Held triennially, the BLD emergence is a process of discernment which starts with nominations and culminates in the selection of the new Executive Council of Servant Leaders (ECSL), District Servant Leaders (DSL) and District Council of Stewards (DCS).

The discernment process has two parts. The first is the nominations phase conducted in each district. The second is the final discernment phase conducted by the Community Spiritual Director- Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo- for the ECSL and DSL, and by the current ECSL for the DCS.

In the nominations phase, covenant disciples in active status as of October 1, 2005 will prayerfully choose from separate lists of eligible nominees for the ECSL, DSL and DCS. ECSL nominees will consist of eligible covenant disciples from the ecclesiastical province of Manila. DSL nominees will come from eligible covenant disciples from the cluster's full-term district, e.g BLD Newark. DCS nominees will come from eligible covenant disciples of the respective district.

All districts will participate in the ECSL nominations. Eligible nominators from districts within a cluster can nominate for the DSL. If their district is full-fledged, they will nominate for their DCS. However, they can not nominate for the administering district's DCS.

The second phase starts when the DCEO sends the top 10 nominees for ECSL and the top 3 nominees for DSL to the Community Spiritual Director for final discernment. The top 10 nominees for the DCS will be sent to the ECSL for final discernment. Those emerged will be announced sometime during the second quarter of the year. Their three-year tenure begins on July 1.

The emergence guidelines have been determined and communicated by the Community Committee of Emergence Overseers (CCEO) in Manila. The CCEO will also handle questions and issues regarding emergence guidelines. In the districts, the emergence process will be overseen by the District Committee of Emergence Overseers (DCEO).

The common process of emergence is one of the 16 terms of BLD communion. This means that the emergence process is the same in all BLD districts. In the past, some misunderstood the emergence process as an election. Consequently, the view was that those who received the highest number of nominations represented the people's will. Many emergence-related conflicts and divisions in

(continued on next column)

Ministry Announcements

YLSS # 11

March 18-19, 2006

- St. Mary's Church Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
- Salubungan on Feb. 3, 2006 at St. Mary's Church after the Healing Mass
- Accepting youths of ages 15-20
- Applications available at Secretariat or online at BLDNewark.com
- Deadline for submission: January 27th
- Contact persons : Marvin Venadas (Tel. #973-562-0055) or Larry/Lennie DeGuzman (Tel. #973-772-3752)

LSS # 26

April 7-9, 2006

- St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ



TEACHINGS

CDFP 2006 SCHEDULE

- Jan. 20 **Singles** - Renewing The Mind
John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching
- Jan. 21 **LSS 21 & 22** - Understanding Corporate Worship
LSS 20 - Prayer Leadership
LSS 24 - Encounter with Jesus, Part II, Mark, Matthew, Intro to Commitment
- Jan. 27 **Service Ministry** teaching
Intercessory Ministry teaching
- Feb. 4 **LSS 25** - Basic Bible Seminar (Books of Books, Approaches, Word of God, Response
LSS 19-20 - Apologetics, Trinity, Mary and Church
- Feb. 17 **Singles** - Walking in the Spirit
John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching



Emergence: Discernment, not Election

the past can be traced to this misunderstanding.

The emergence process is about seeking the Lord's will, about whom He wants to lead the community in the next three years. Participation in the collective discernment of His will for our community is a grace. Let us use this grace to bring unity in His body and glory to His name.

Counsels from page 1

that we too, as disciples should have. The willingness to follow Him wherever He leads us, the determination to accept changes in lifestyles, take risks, die to self, serve others and proclaim God's Word to everyone, are the cost of discipleship. We must be willing to give up something in order to be heralds of the Good News.

The year 2006 poses new challenges to our community, as a Private Lay Association of the Faithful and in tending to the needs of BLD Newark's growing outreaches. But our faith in God's guiding hands will see us through any difficulty. God puts honor to those who are diligent and humble. Jesus promised and said, "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." (Mk 1:17) It is He that qualifies us for this work, calls us to it and commissions us to fish for souls.

Our call to be disciples and our life as disciples is perhaps best described as a choice. It is a choice between living like everybody else, or living in the way Christ showed us: living in the way of the cross, knowing that all these will lead us to union with Christ. Like Peter and Andrew, James and John, all of Christ's followers are continuously reminded that the choice is clearly theirs: to live a worldly life or to "leave their nets", abandoning the attachment to the ways of the world and to follow Jesus.

Our membership in BLD calls us to follow Jesus through a ministry of service and reconciliation - to be Christ's ambassadors, to feed Christ's flock and to fish for men. By His power, we are equipped and empowered to discharge our ministry work. Discipleship has its rewards. When we follow Jesus, we are made to be, as St. Paul puts it, "the righteousness of God". We are made new in Him and the blessings of fulfillment will be upon us.

DIRECTION: Abandon your attachment to the ways of the world and follow Jesus.



2006 Medical Mission from page 1

A true mission work involves helping others who have no means to repay you back except perhaps, with an expression of gratitude. What this mission offers is hope for the less fortunate and the feeling that they are not abandoned. And for volunteers, it is the feeling of joy when we can make a difference in the lives of others while answering God's call to serve Him.

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

Birthdays

- Jan. 21 Purie Salar, LSS 18
- Jan. 23 Tony Brillantes, LSS 23
Emmy Espina, ME 25
Oliver Orosa, YE 11
- Jan. 24 Cookie Montemayor, LSS 16
- Jan. 25 Aileen Ciocon, LSS 6
Paby Ibarrola, LSS 17
Noemi Ilagan, LSS 14
Marie Lazaro, LSS 9
- Jan. 25 Iheanyi Ekweghariri, Mk 10
Neil Clarin, YE 10



Anniversaries

- Jan. 21 Bong and Merle Encarnacion, LSS 8
- Jan. 22 Gerry and Dimples Canlas, LSS 7
Marc and Therese Disla, LSS 23
Rey and Pen Perez, LSS 13
- Jan. 23 Bert and Lita Guerrero, LSS 17
Boyie and Stella Huelgas, LSS 1
- Jan. 24 Joey and Linda Viola, LSS 6

"The person who possesses Christian meekness is affectionate and tender towards everyone; he is disposed to forgive and excuse the frailties of others; the goodness of his heart appears in a sweet affability that influences his words and actions, presents every object to his view in the most charitable and pleasing light." - St. Francis de Sales

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

BLD YEAR-TO-DATE CASH FLOW AS OF JAN 13, 2006 - Week 2

Date	Weekly Receipts	Year-to-Date Receipts
1/13/06	\$ 3,525.00	\$ 6,483.00
	Weekly Disbursements	Year-to-Date Disbursements
1/13/06	(\$ 731.00)	(\$ 13,643.00)
Difference	<u>\$ 2,794.00 *</u>	<u>(\$ 7,160.00)**</u>

* Means cash surplus.

** Means cash deficit.



Our New Global Mission

ECSL sets up BLD-GK Ministry

The Executive Council of Servant Leaders (ECSL) last week established a new ministry in pursuance of our poverty alleviation mission. Recognizing *Gawad Kalinga* as an on-going, proven, and successful program of building houses for the poor – one compatible with our own Mission - the BLD Gawad Kalinga Ministry was created, “embracing a holistic approach covering spiritual, social and economic aspects of mission work.” The GK approach supports community development with livelihood and value-formation programs.

At the district level, a Project Coordinator will work with the Mission Steward and the Gawad Kalinga Foundation with respect to raising and monitoring funds for BLD-initiated GK projects, and keeping tract of such supported projects. Overall, the new Ministry will be headed by a Shepherd reporting directly to the SL for Mission.

BLD Newark and other North American districts are expected to play a major part as the funding arm of the projects, which will start with one in the Iloilo District where the Archdiocese has donated land; and the soon-to-be-launched *Kawal Kalinga* (Care of the Soldier) component, to be minded principally by the Armed Forces/ National Police District of BLD.



**Let us all pray for
our coming Emergence:**



“We should be thankful for and treat our participation in this process as sacred. For the Lord will be calling forth and anointing new Stewards to serve His beloved community.” (DCSpeak, page 3)

COUNSELS

Speaking with Authority

WORD: Dt 18:15-20; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9;
1 Cor 7:32-35; Mk 1:21-28

ORDER: “*If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts.*” (Ps 95:8)

THEME: Blessings of wisdom will be upon us when we teach with authority.

REFLECTION: “*On the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.*” (Mark 1:21-22)

A noted actor was called upon to give an oration. He stood up and recited Psalm 23 in an impressive performance. When he finished, everyone applauded. Then, an elderly priest stepped forward and recited the same Psalm. When he finished, there was not a sound in the room, but nearly every eye was filled with tears.

When asked what the difference had been, the actor said: “There’s no doubt that I know the Psalm backwards and forwards. But the Padre knows the Shepherd.”

This Sunday’s Gospel narrates how the people were amazed that Jesus taught with authority and that He commanded even the unclean spirits. The Greek word for “authority” used in the Gospel is “exousia”, meaning “out of being”. Therefore, an author is someone who speaks out of his/her own being. Jesus spoke out of His being –

□ page 4

Promise of the Week

“*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kinsmen, and will put my words into his mouth.*” (Dt 18:18)

God's Message in a Dream

John Bosco knew right from the start that he wanted to be a priest. In a dream, he received his calling to work with boys and lead them to Christ. Growing up, he devoted himself to studies and the fulfillment of his calling. Despite the lack of money and strong opposition from his family and teachers, he persevered in prayer and with God's help, he was ordained and started his vocation in Turin. Seeing how street urchins were driven away from church, he befriended one boy named Bart. Before long, he was working with more than 600 boys, gathering them for prayer, confession, Mass and games every Sunday. During the week, he met many in smaller groups, teaching them about Jesus, giving them reading and writing lessons and helping them learn a trade to earn a living. Everybody loved him and called him Don, the title given to a priest that time.

Don Bosco founded the religious order Society of Saint Francis de Sales or Salesians, with the objective to evangelize and work with boys. He later formed the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians with the help of Mary Mazzarello, to guide poor girls who were homeless or on their own and lead them to God's ways.

The Queen of Heaven appeared to him in a dream and led him to an enchanting garden. He was told to take off his shoes and walk down the rose-covered path. Sharp thorns pierced his feet which began to bleed, and the Lady said that he needed 'good shoes' that would make the pain bearable. Going back, he had companions who wanted to walk with him. But now, he became entangled in vines that prevented him from walking straight-through, with thorns that scratched his legs, body and head. What did this all mean? The road littered with roses and thorns presaged the care that John would provide for young people. He must wear the shoes of mortification to help him overcome the obstacles, sufferings and disappointments that would keep him from fulfilling his mission. The roses were the symbols of love and eternal reward.

"Never lose heart. With self denial and love, you will overcome every difficulty and finally reach the roses without thorns." This became Don Bosco's armor against all adversity. With consistency and persistence, keeping to the path of prayer and communion with the Lord Jesus, we too will be able to weather and overcome any storm in life. Our call may come in some form not as dramatic as a dream, but it is good to always be watchful and ready for that call to serve the Lord.

Call To Witness At Home

"Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you."

(Mk 5:19)

Do you remember the times when you found it difficult to relate to your family and understand their needs? Was it not a time of confusion and conflict? We could never understand why our spouse never took the time to take care of us or put more attention to our own needs. We could never understand why we had to forcefully enforce our own agendas on our children, regardless of the situation; when all we ever wanted was to make their lives a lot easier and less taxing. We could never understand why, in our urgent desire to protect them from the ugly realities of life, we were receiving defiance and anger in return. We could never understand why our very own family would not even try as much to understand us. We have battled our inner demons and fought constantly with our conscience trying to find answers to these questions. Why were all these things so hard for our family to understand?

Sound familiar? I cannot imagine myself going back to those dark days. Knowing Jesus and having an intimate relationship with Him is the ultimate life-altering experience that we, as a family, had ever been involved in. Allowing our Lord Jesus Christ to reign in our hearts made us more compassionate and understanding as a family, and we are now more focused in letting Him take hold of our lives knowing that all is well in His hands. Jesus made us change our whole perception of who we are and what family is all about; helping one another, lifting each other to Christ, considerate of each other, but most of all, the happiness that love brings to our lives. An abundant life that only He offers.

I know that I am only living my earthly life on borrowed time, knowing full well that it will come to an end one day and my soul will live an eternal life, but I have been blessed with a wonderful family in this lifetime. I am now a father who knows how to enjoy his children and who loves them dearly... A husband who is devoted and faithful to his wife... Ours is a family who serves the Lord with His grace! I could not imagine living my life for anything better. Now I understand. Now I know why.

DCSpeak

Our global BLD community is discerning new leaders. Locally, we began this process when the guidelines for the coming emergence were discussed at our recent District Leadership Conference. Interestingly, one of the readings for the day included the epilogue of the first letter of the Apostle John, which seeks to deepen the spiritual awareness of the Christian community and highlight our love for one another and confidence that if we ask God anything according to His will, He hears us. John reminds us that God protects His community and has given discernment to those who are in Christ.

The starting point for that discernment has to be prayer. We can all agree in prayer that the leaders that God Himself has chosen to guide this community should be emerged. If this can be our daily prayer individually and corporately for the coming month, we can hold on to the Lord's promise: *"If two of you agree about anything for which they are to pray, it will be granted to them by their heavenly Father."* (Mt 18:19)

We do not live in a perfect community because we are all sinners, but the will of God is perfect. Our goal is to seek not our own will as might be the case in a popular vote; rather, we are challenged to seek the will of God. We are asked to trust in the spiritual protection and authority of the Church itself in allowing our global Spiritual Director to discern the Executive Council of Servant Leaders who in turn will discern our District Council of Stewards. *"Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task."* (Acts 6:3)

Our personal discernment of the nominees is then essential for effective community discernment. It is our responsibility to be open to our Beloved speaking to us directly or through our brethren as the Spirit prompts, and to be purified from any personal motivations. We should be thankful for and treat our participation in this process as sacred. For the Lord will be calling forth and anointing new Stewards to serve His beloved community.

The sense of awe before such a mystery should generate powerful prayer that wells up within us. In our private prayer closets, this is the hour to intercede for the community and pray for the grace to travail like a mother in childbirth, emptying herself in anticipation of the birthing of something new in the Spirit. Let this be a season of prayer leading up to our Lenten offering so that on March 11 we can fall prostrate in prayer, saying, *"My Father, not as I will, but as You will."* (Mt 26:39)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEACHINGS IN FEBRUARY

- Feb. 4 **LSS 25** - Basic Bible Seminar (Books of Books, Approaches, Word of God, Response)
LSS 19-20 - Apologetics, Trinity, Mary and Church
- Feb. 17 **Singles** - Walking in the Spirit
John 6 - Teaching
Mark 10 - Teaching
- Feb. 18 **LSS 24** - Encounter with Jesus, Luke and John
LSS 21-22 - Advance Intercession, Orientation to Spiritual Warfare
- Feb. 24 **LSS 23** - Motivational Gift Test (MGT)
Service Ministry - Formation Teaching
Intercessory Ministry - Formation Teaching

YLSS # 11 March 18-19

- St. Mary's Church Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
- Salubungan on Feb. 3, 2006 at St. Mary's Church after the Healing Mass
- Accepting youths of ages 15-20
- Applications available at Secretariat or online at BLDNewark.com
- Deadline for submission: January 27th
- Contact persons : Marvin Venadas (Tel. # 973-562-0055) or Larry/Lennie DeGuzman (Tel. # 973-772-3752)

LSS #24 April 7-9

- St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

CASH FLOW AS OF JAN 20, 2006

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$ 3,725	\$10,208
Disbursements	4,954	18,597
Deficit *	(\$ 1,229)	(\$ 8,389)

* \$11,000 Medical Mission outlay contributed to our deficit.

news from page 1

As to the Father Paul Lehman GK Village, 34 homes have already been built and awarded to families in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija. Construction and landfill on 24 more units await the onset of improved weather.

All members and disciples are requested to be engaged in this new global mission, to help build communities and liberate the poor from the yoke of poverty. It is a mission to confirm the dignity of our brethren, for the praise and glory of the Name.

Counsels from page 1

out of who He was – out of where He came from.

The scribes and teachers interpreted the law of God for the people of God. They taught the Israelites how they should live and what they should believe. They were right in some respect, but somehow the reality of the word they taught was not part of them in the way it was with Jesus.

As we see in the story of His temptations in the wilderness, Jesus lived the word of God. He applied it to His own life even when it was hard to do so. He focused fully on doing what God wanted of Him and did it. When He spoke the truth, it was His truth as well as that of the Father, and this communicated itself to others.



The people were amazed not only because Jesus taught with authority, but also demons recognized that authority and obeyed His command to depart from those that they afflicted, calling Jesus as they did so: “The Holy One of God”.

As Christians, we are granted authority by God to speak in His name. We are called by Jesus to go out to preach and teach, to heal and to care for others and to show them God’s love.

Jesus gives to us a tremendous power and authority, and with it, a tremendous responsibility. But God gives us a choice. Many fail to exercise this authority, this power to speak for God, to help and to heal. Others end up using them for their own benefit or the benefit of their worldly masters. Of course, there are those who use the power and authority in accordance with the will of God.

All true power and authority comes from the Lord as revealed in Scripture. All else is either a corrupted version of this true power and authority, or comes from pure evil.

The Bible proposes tests that we can apply to those who claim to speak for God. First, the word they speak must come true. If they prophesy that something will happen, it must happen. Second, the word they speak must not contradict the Word of God in Scripture and Tradition. Third, the word they speak must glorify God, not themselves. Thus the humility of Mother Teresa is a true sign

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jan. 27-29 YLSS# 1 – Washington DC
Feb. 18 Youth Seminar, St. Mary’s Church Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

The Archdiocese of Newark, Office of Evangelization needs **2 office volunteers** to help process the in-baskets, send out mailers, organize and file documents & records at the Archdiocesan Center in Newark (in front of the Basilica) on **Tuesday, Jan. 31** and **Thursday, Feb. 2** from **10am to 4pm**. Please approach any Steward or email at dcs@bldnewark.com. Thank you!

BIRTHDAYS

- Jan. 27 Jaja Nacion, YE 9
Jan. 29 Nelson Ilagan, LSS 14
Jan. 31 Luz Amarante, LSS 10
Mila Mananghaya, LSS 16
Zer Florentino, LSS 24
Feb. 1 Nanie de Los Reyes, LSS 9
Feb. 2 Chris Francisco, YE 8

ANNIVERSARIES

- Jan. 27 Angel & Aida Calilap, LSS 14
Jan. 29 Henry and Aida Koryan, LSS 2
Jan. 30 Eddie and Amy Olegario, LSS 3
Jan. 31 Ray and Susie Atienza, LSS 25
Roger and Pina Coquia, LSS 6

of a prophet rather than the self-centeredness of some TV evangelists. And fourth, the person who speaks for God must produce good fruit. Thus, the lives of those who heed these prophets must change for the better.

When we put ourselves at Jesus’ disposal, when we go forth to speak His word, when we act according to the teachings He has given us, when we pray and study the word of God and ask God to use us to accomplish His will, then we will be speaking and acting with the power and authority of Christ, and wonderful things begin to happen.

DIRECTION:

- Be free of anxieties and adhere to the Lord without distraction.
- Teach and proclaim with authority that flows from the Word of God.

Visit our website at www.bldnewark.com.



Fr. Paul Lehman's Exhortation on Emergence: Present Nominees to Christ

The upcoming emergence process is not only an opportunity to engage in part of the process of subsidiarity but also one of individual spiritual growth. Like so many challenges in life we all face the temptation of separating our private spirituality and our growth with the Lord from our public and external face that we display to the world around us.

There is the temptation to believe that there is a basic disunity between body and soul, between happiness and holiness, between politics and religion. Admittedly, original sin has introduced disorder into every area of life. That is why God sent His Son, Jesus, to destroy these polarities. We shall never see perfect unity on this side of eternity. But we can be challenged to use every means at our disposal to overcome anything and everything that drives people apart.

Thus, the desire of the church and the Pope is ecumenism, the movement to bring Christians together into one church. Our efforts on this are the living out of the Will of Jesus, who prayed at the last supper that "they may be one as we are one."

What has this got to do with our emergence 2006 process? When we look at the list of nominees, we may logically and correctly examine and evaluate their "credentials", as they are known to us. (That is why I have reservations about leadership in Manila being part of an emergence process. In most instances we may not be fully acquainted with the individuals we are deciding on.)

However, I would challenge all of us to just go to the Lord and prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to be the decision maker. Secondly, as you go through the names, look into your hearts and discern a resonance produced there by the Holy Spirit. In effect what I am suggesting is the discernment of spiritual movements that reflects the discernment of spirits, taught so beautifully by St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Perhaps you will recall the "rules" for this discernment that I use during the aspirants retreat. These "rules" are not only practical in helping to discern a decision about covenanting, but can and should be used in major decisions throughout life.

(continued on page 3)

COUNSELS

Who am I?

WORD: Job 7:1-4, 6-7; Ps 147:1-6;
1Cor 9:16-19, 22-23; Mk 1:29-39

ORDER: Preach the Gospel willingly without recompense.

REFLECTION:

Who am I? What is the purpose of my life? These are the questions that we often ask ourselves. In the first reading, Job ponders these same questions... How do I find meaning in my life? Is my life defined by the work that I do or the role that I play? Why am I restless, miserable and hopeless?

We indulge ourselves with the good things in life, which by themselves are not necessarily bad, yet we still experience emptiness. What is our innermost desire? Saint Augustine wrote: "*You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.*" "*The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for: The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator.*" (CCC 27)

(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." (Ps 147:3)

Feast Day - February 10 **St. Scholastica**

St. Scholastica was the twin sister of St. Benedict. They were born around 480 to a Roman noble family in central Italy. The mother died at their birth. From infancy, Scholastica was dedicated to our Lord. Scholastica was devoted to her brother as she was to Jesus. When Benedict founded the Benedictine order and established his famous monastery, she founded a nearby convent. The convent was under the direction of her brother, so she was regarded as the first Benedictine nun. The twins visited each other once a year before Lent at a house some distance away, because she was not permitted to enter his monastery. They spent these times discussing spiritual matters.

St. Gregory the Great recorded a story that in the year 543, when Scholastica was dying, she asked Benedict to stay. However, he refused to stay overnight in her convent. She closed her eyes in prayer. A violent thunderstorm came up and her brother had to remain by her side. Three days later, Benedict saw in a vision the soul of his sister ascend in the likeness of a dove into heaven. He buried her in a tomb he prepared for himself. He died some years later and was interred at her side. St. Gregory said, *“so death did not separate the bodies of these two, whose minds had ever been united in the Lord.”*

St. Scholastica and St. Benedict gave themselves totally to God and gave top priority to deepening their relationship with Him through prayer. They sacrificed the opportunities they would have had to be together as brother and sister, in order to fulfill their vocation to the religious life. In coming closer to Christ, they found they were also closer to each other. Through their religious vocation, they found more brothers and sisters.

What is in our Hearts and Minds?

“Hear me all of you and understand” Mk 7:14 Before joining the BLD Community, I was one of those practicing Catholics who attended Sunday masses and during holidays occasionally. I heard the homily but did not practice it in daily encounters with others. I prayed when I needed something. My faith was only superficial. I wore the crucifix which is not the same as carrying the Cross. I busied myself to acquire worldly desires: wealth, property, fame, advancement.

When I joined BLD, I gradually changed. I realized that all the world’s possessions only provide temporary happiness. I learned that my value was not determined by valuables, that true security can only be found in GOD. To hear God’s word requires that our heart be open to Him. With the total surrender of our mind to His Spirit, we gain wisdom and obedience to His commandments.

Temptations always start in the mind. Jesus said *“From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts. Unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile.” Mk 7:21-23.* To resist and defeat temptations, we should keep our mind occupied with God’s Word, for it is our weapon against Satan and evil thoughts. St. Paul said *“Put on salvation as your helmet and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” Eph 6:17.* We can say NO to the devil when we consistently say YES to Christ.

God called us to serve Him in the BLD Community. Through our ministry service, we are taught to serve with humility for His glory. We learn to love each other and to love our enemies—which is not easy. By attending Friday worships, Living Word Groups and teachings, we are formed to be more like Jesus. Our faith is built up in the fertile ground that is BLD.

Newark Youth Sponsor First DC YLSS

Some two hundred fifty miles may separate the Youth of Newark and Washington D.C., but with the love of God, they are indeed one in Christ. The first Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar was held last weekend for the growing Youth Ministry in Washington D.C. Thirty two lambs came to know and accept Jesus Christ in their lives during this Spirit-filled weekend. Together with their shepherds, they praised the Lord with their newly-received gift of tongues, and celebrated after the graduation mass by filling the beautiful church of St. John Neumann with shouts of praise and loud singing.



A Newark contingent of shepherds and praise traveled to Maryland the Saturday before the LSS weekend to shepherd their lambs.

The following Friday, the whole team of thirty six shepherds, praise, and auxies departed from St. Mary’s in Rahway at 8:30 P.M. and arrived in Maryland just past midnight.

The LSS pastoral team included: Father Pete Literal-Spiritual Director; Leslie Calilap- God’s Love; Marie Francisco and Jen Uy (BLD DC) – New Life; Aron/Marivic de Castro & daughter Colette- Healing & Reconciliation; Dave dela Fuente- Growth; Stephanie Ikalina- Transformation.

We praise and thank the Lord for touching the lives of the lambs, and we especially thank the Newark Community for their intercession, the D.C. community for their hospitality, and all of the shepherds, co-shepherds, and auxies for dedicating their time to serve, drive, and pray.

Roe V. Wade: 33 Years Later

January 23 marked the 33rd anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* ruling in favor of abortion. Annually on this day, hundreds of thousands of pro-life advocates flood into the nation's capital and march through Washington D.C., passing the Capitol, countless office buildings, and ending their march at the steps of the Supreme Court. These advocates come from all fifty-states and all walks of life.

Every year, the Archdiocese of Hartford holds a banner that reads: "*You shall not stand by idly while your neighbor's life is at stake.*" (Leviticus 19:16) Women who have had abortions join the march bearing signs that say, "I regret my abortion." There is an indescribable look of sadness in their eyes. They stand beside a lamppost in front of the Supreme Court, and they tear up as the thousands of protestors march in front of them. Beside them, men hold up similar signs saying "I regret lost fatherhood."

We as a Catholic community must realize our obligation to defend life. Abortion is an attack against the family, a unit that God instituted. It is an attack against love, against true freedom (vs. the false freedom that pro-choice advocates use to justify abortion), & against life... those of the babies, as well as the mothers' physical and spiritual wellbeing. The Lord commands us to be counter-culture, a people of love, of life, & of truth. Can we come to terms with the truth about abortion? Can we stand up to oppose the most pressing evil of our time?

Fast facts about abortion: Since the *Roe v. Wade* ruling, *millions* of babies have been aborted every year. In comparison, Adolf Hitler and the Nazis oversaw the killing of over 12 million people, half of which were Jews. Josef Stalin was responsible for the death of 22 million people in the Soviet Union. Since *Roe v. Wade*, at least 1/3 of the present generation has been wiped out by abortion. On average, 4,000 babies are aborted each day. Women who have abortions are more susceptible to extreme depression, breast cancer, and sterility.

.....
(continuation of Fr. Paul's Exhortation)

Thus, I suggest you bring the list at prayer, spend a good hour of time in presenting each person to the Lord, and look into your heart as you prayerfully visualize the individuals. What is the Holy Spirit saying?

Some may object that this is not practical. I contend that if we do not approach the emergence this way, then there will be the danger of making the process a political evaluation, based solely on the qualities of the "candidates". As important as it is to evaluate the natural capabilities that should be obvious, to proceed without "spiritual discernment", is to say the least incomplete.

We are not voting for our friends or those who have the talents to lead. We are not a popularity club. But, we are a covenanted group of people who are hopefully growing in the Spirit who directs not only the way we pray but also the way we externalize that prayer life. **Bukas Loob sa Diyos**
"Open in Spirit to God"

Ministry Announcements

Youth Ministry

February 17-19, 2006 - Newark, NJ
Interdistrict Conference of Youth from North America
For details, contact Dave dela Fuente
(david_reuben@hotmail.com)

Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center

2006 Retreat Conference
17-19 Feb. 2006 at Clarion Hotel
Cherry Hill, NJ
Fr. Bill Halbing, Fr. Edgardo Arellano, Fr. Michael Semana, Al Barbarino, REFUGE
For more info, call: (856) 768-9228 or visit
www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf

TEACHING SCHEDULE

February 4

Basic Bible Seminar – LSS 25

February 17

Walking in the Spirit - LSS 24

February 18

Encounter with Jesus – LSS 24
Advanced Intercession – LSS 21 & 22
Orientation Spiritual Warfare – LSS 21 & LSS 22

February 24

MGT – LSS 23
Service Formation - LSS 23
Intercession Formation - LSS 23



THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

BLD YEAR TO DATE CASH FLOW As of 1/27/06 - Week No. 04

Date	Weekly Receipts	YTD Receipts
1/27	\$3,491.00	\$13,699.00
Date	Weekly Disburs.	YTD Disburs.
1/27	<u>\$11,729.00</u> \$8,238.00*	<u>\$30,306.00</u> \$16,607.00*

Means: Deficit*

Counsels from page 1

Our quest to understand our life's meaning begins with our desire to know God. To know God more, we must develop our personal relationship with Him through consistent personal, conjugal, family and community prayer and a thorough knowledge of His Word. In prayer, we praise God and express our gratitude for all that we have and all that we are. In prayer, we lift up our feelings and our desires to God and He hears us and grants us His mercy and forgiveness. The Psalmist promises: "*He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*" (Ps 147:3) In contemplative prayer, we seek to hear God and are enjoined to bring His comfort, compassion and healing to the afflicted.

It is easy to converse about the latest movie or show we have watched, yet we find it challenging to discuss the Sunday Mass readings or the homily with others. Understanding the Holy Scriptures may require more effort initially, yet as we make the commitment to immerse ourselves in the living Word, the Holy Spirit transforms our lives. Our community members are encouraged to take the time to read and reflect on the Sunday Mass readings before the start of the Friday Worship and on the Friday Mass readings before the start of each First Friday Healing Mass. As we are then able to open ourselves up to testify to the struggles and the victorious work of God in us, our Word Sharing Circle (WSC) and Living Word Group (LWG) are the means to minister to and encourage and pray for one another.

In the second reading Saint Paul said: "*I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.*" (1 Cor 9:22b-23) We have experienced the blessings and gifts of our Catholic faith through the BLD community and have seen that seed of faith bear good fruit. The BLD-Newark Covenant Community has been recognized in the Archdiocese of Newark as a Lay Association of the Faithful and we are being called to share our giftedness to others outside our community. Like Paul, we are to lead others to the path that Jesus prepared for salvation and share in the spreading of the good news.

As Disciples of Christ we must follow our Master's example of prayer and good works: "*Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed.*" (Mk 1:35) "*Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.*" (Mk 1:38)

Direction:

- * Share our giftedness to others beyond the boundaries of our community
- * Live our covenant pledge on prayers – personal, conjugal, family and community.
- * Be faithful to our WSC and LWG.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 3-5	YLSS #4 ME #13	Trenton Seattle
Feb 12	Agony/Washing	Trenton
Feb 10-12	Aspirant's Retreat	Washington, DC
Feb 17-19	SE#9	Seattle
Feb 18	Youth Seminar	Newark

BIRTHDAYS

3-Feb.	Emma De Borja LSS 13
4-Feb	Elise Espinosa MK 10
5-Feb	Tony Mabalot LSS 20
6-Feb	Dory Bonifacio LSS 8 Joey Cruz LSS 1 Andy Ruaya LSS 7
7-Feb	Tina Avisado YE 9 Albert Chan LSS 20
8-Feb	Alfred Lopez John 6
9-Feb	Devin Halaby MK 10 Onwuka Anyanwu LSS 23 Charlie Claricia LSS 24
10-Feb	Efe Osemeha MK 10 Norma Bernal LSS 7 Eileen Choolijian LSS 21 Eydie Unay LSS 24



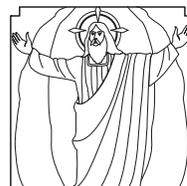
ANNIVERSARIES

7-Feb	Mosty & Ling Garcia LSS 20
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Erratum:

In the January 20, 2006 Transparency article "Emergence: Discernment, not Election", the "active status as of date" criterion to determine the eligibility of covenant disciples for inclusion in the Nominator List for the forthcoming General Emergence should be October 31, 2005, not Oct. 1, 2005 as erroneously published.



"The mouth of the just man tells of wisdom and his tongue utters what is right. The law of his God is in his heart, and his steps do not falter." (Ps 37:30-31)



Go Forth To Proclaim the Good News

We praise and thank the Lord for an abundant harvest of 35 BLD disciples who sealed their covenants in our Eucharistic Celebration held last February 3. These aspirants have completed their teaching requirements and 6-month discipling program under BLD's Christian Discipleship Formation Program (CDFP). Their desire to serve the Lord through their various ministries and evangelization programs will now be put into practice as the Community sends them forth to minister to God's people as shepherds. *"The person who has been evangelized goes on to evangelize others."* (Pope Paul VI. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*)

Let us welcome our brothers and sisters: Lou and Gayle Alejandro, Ed and Wilma Antonio, Weng Larobis, Joey and Jemma Reyes, Nony and Imelda Acuna, John and Beth Alonzo, Susan Fabe, Rex and Bobut Gongob, Nene Gutierrez, Nestor and Baby Lopez, Larry and Leni de Guzman, Tony and Juliet Mabalot, Ed and Myrna Magadia, Gen and Flory Mangasi, Art and Mel Nano, Oliver and Marissa Rangel, Rennie and Madonna Razal, Benny and Fanny Rodriguera, Sal and Marie Russo.

We pray that God continues to provide them with the strength and endurance they need to follow their calling as covenanted disciples of Christ.

What's Inside

Page 2: Reflections on Marcan Readings for next week

Page 3: Practicing Discernment for next month's Emergence

Special Supplement: Reports on Medical Mission and Washington DC Youth LSS; Profile of a (BLD) Leader

Ever wonder what his or her name is?

Let us dust off our ID's for the New Year!

Counsels

He Healed With Compassion

WORD: Lv 13:1-2, 44-46; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11; 1 Cor 10:31-11:1; Mk 1:40-45

ORDER: *"Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."* (1 Cor 10:31)

THEME: We become all things to all men when we are moved with compassion for the afflicted.

REFLECTION: When reflecting on our Readings for this Sunday, try to understand the circumstances behind the hopelessness and desperation of lepers who were considered outcasts in the Jewish society during those days. Under the Jewish law, a person who had the symptoms of leprosy was asked to voluntarily remove himself from society. If he did not do this on his own accord, the authorities made sure that he was punished and eventually banished into exile. Lepers had to keep distance from other people and go about wearing tattered clothes, grow their hair and beard, and shout "unclean, unclean" to warn others as he approached them. The religious authorities were the ones who determined whether a person had the disease. In the absence of medical and scientific understanding of such affliction, authorities attributed the leper's plight as a punishment from God for his sinfulness. In a sense, a leper was considered a living dead. No disease invoked more terror.

If we put ourselves in the situation of the leper in this Gospel, we can understand why he desperately begged Jesus to heal him. *"If you wish, you can make me clean."* (Mk 1:40) At the risk of defying Jewish law and catching the disease, Jesus' compassionate

page 4 

God's Promise For The Week

"I do will it. Be made clean." (Mk 1:41)

Do You Still Not Understand

"Do you not yet understand or comprehend? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes and not see, ears and not hear? And do you not remember, when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many wicker baskets full of fragments you picked up?" They answered him, "Twelve." "When I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many full baskets of fragments did you pick up?" They answered him, "Seven." He said to them, "Do you still not understand?" (Mark 8:17-21)

We hear the Lord ask a series of questions, and they're for all of us. In times of trouble, instead of answering these questions we question Him. We tend to believe only what we can see with our eyes, therefore we tend to have doubts and we start to ask our own series of questions, "God, where are You? Why me? What did I do to deserve this? How can You allow this to happen? Have I not been obedient to You?" We then forget about His love and mercy. Our hearts harden because He allows these misfortunes.

We all have crosses to carry and God challenges us everyday. Maybe things go wrong because God wants us to remember Him. He wants to remind us that He is with us and that we must believe in Him even when things are not going our way. We've heard about His countless miracles but we still doubt Him. We put our trust and rely on people rather than on Him. We need more convincing rather than believing His word alone. God will protect us and show us the way. Knowing that He will heal and forgive us with His undying love and mercy, we have to learn to surrender everything to Him.

Through these verses we are reminded that God will be there for us in times of need. He will not only satisfy our desires but will give us much more from His overflowing and immeasurable love and mercy for us. Let us find the joy to answer His questions.

Yes, Lord, we understand that You will not fail us. Yes, Lord, we understand that You are our Redeemer. Yes, Lord, we understand that You are our Savior. Yes, Lord, we can see and hear You because You have softened our hearts.

God's love and presence dwells within our hearts. We just have to remember that God is loving, generous and forgiving. Have faith, believe and trust that He is always with us. Let us open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to Him. Then and only then will we understand and comprehend.

Gradual Healing

St. Mark portrays our Lord Jesus in a vivid and dynamic manner, giving us fine detail in several episodes of his gospel narrative. To cite a few, he tells us that during the storm on the lake Jesus was in the stern asleep on a cushion (Mk 4:38) or that he named the sons of Zebedee "sons of thunder" (Mk 3:17) or that the blind man of Jericho was named Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46). There's the touching detail when Jesus raised the little girl from her deathbed, and ordered that she be given something to eat (Mk 5:43); or the young man who left his sheet behind as he fled from the garden when Jesus was arrested.

Then there's this account of the curing of the blind man in Mark 8: 22-26:

When Jesus and his disciples arrived at Bethsaida, people brought to him a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. Putting spittle on his eyes he laid his hands on the man and asked, "Do you see anything?" Looking up the man replied, "I see people looking like trees and walking." Then he laid hands on the man's eyes a second time and he saw clearly; his sight was restored and he could see everything distinctly. Then he sent him home and said, "Do not even go into the village."

The healing by Jesus of yet another person is not uncommon. But we can see something special in this particular healing. Not only was this the first man who was cured of his blindness, but he also was healed in "stages". The miracle took place just before Peter's confession in which the disciples began to *get a glimpse* of the way Jesus would go.

The blind man represents disciples like us who need healing of our spiritual blindness, and the ever enlightening touch of our Master.

Even as our Lord Jesus healed many, exorcised demons and performed miracles earlier with instantaneous results, yet His disciples were slow-witted and blind even as they witnessed His wondrous deeds and teachings. They only saw Jesus as the one who gave them bread and healed the sick; it took long for them to recognize Him as the Messiah, the suffering servant who gives life.

It is hard for today's Christian to follow our Lord's absolute and radical statement, *"Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."* (Mt 16:25) Jesus invites us to give our total trust in Him. Looking at Jesus with eyes of faith, we shall slowly but surely imitate our Lord.

In the Spirit of Transparency

The Secret of Leadership Discernment

The task of discerning and selecting the leaders of our community is one of the most important responsibilities we have for the Lord. It is most sacred and on it we build the community's future.

God has been faithful in raising servants who can lead us to a vibrant community life. He has already emerged the leaders He wants to anoint for the next three years. He wants us to celebrate in a prayerful process the giftedness of community and affirm His will so we may be one as He and the Father are one.

In the context of our leadership emergence process, this means pursuing His Word and not just complying with its minimal standards. We need to ask God to reveal to us the qualities of all the nominees. What are the leadership skills and untapped potential of new nominees who have served community in anonymity? What is our experience with our incumbent stewards? If God's word says change, retain or replace then we do what will please Him.

Community needs and leaders come in different shapes and sizes. We need to diligently pray so that we may recognize changing community needs amidst emerging gifts and talents in nominees who may be different from us in temperament and style. We need to transcend what is physical and recognize the leadership gifts and potential of all nominees so we may have a clear picture of who God wants to lead our global and local community.

God's call is for us to sit by Jesus' feet and prayerfully listen for His word. Until we attend to this responsibility, we will be constantly frustrated, not able to uncover the joys of a truly anointed leadership.

Our prayers gain spiritual momentum from the furnace of a fiery love relationship at Jesus' feet as true fulfillment of His Word is discovered only when we pray and wait on the Lord, listen to Him and then go and do what is necessary. We need a compliant and submissive heart. *"Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves."* (Jas 1:22)

Some of us focus on status quo, some on change, some on popularity and appeal, in deciding who to emerge as servant leaders but God has a way of negating the plans of men: *"The Lord frustrates the designs of peoples... the plan of the Lord stands forever through all generations."* (Ps 33:10-11) Instead of opting for our personal preference, let us allow God to prevail!

Obedience to God's Word is the secret of leadership discernment and on it we build the anointed leadership and unshakeable foundation of our community!

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LSS # 26 Orientation.

Tonight after worship, St. Mary's School

The DLC meets tomorrow.

Members unable to come, please send your representative. Agenda includes

- Emergence process.
- Covenanting policy.
- BLD-Gawad Kalinga.
- Business practices in community.
- Treasury Ministry presentation

Please pray for our community's leadership.

Pilgrims of Faith Marian Center

2006 Retreat Conference

Feb. 17-19, 2006 at Clarion Hotel

Cherry Hill, NJ

Fr. Bill Halbing, Fr. Edgardo Arellano,

Fr. Michael Semana, Al Barbarino, REFUGE

For more info, call: (856) 768-9228 or visit

www.geocities.com/pilgrimsfaith/2006/06RET2.pdf

Family Life Apostolate:

FE 11 & FE 12 Bowling Outing

Feb 25 Saturday, 9am-2pm

Garden State Bowl, Union NJ

Contact: King-Arlene Rigor or Ed-Grace Badiola

LSS # 26 Apr 7-9: Now accepting applications! Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic-Dee Lim, LSA.

FEBRUARY TEACHINGS

Feb 17 after worship

Singles Walking in the Spirit

John 6 Teaching

Mark10 Teaching

Feb 18 St Mary's 1-6PM

LSS 24 Encounter with Jesus
(Luke & John)

LSS 21-22 Advance Intercession,
Orientation on Spiritual Warfare

Feb. 24 after worship

LSS 23 Motivational Gift Test (MGT)

Service & Intercessory Ministries
Formation Teachings

Visit our website at www.bldnewark.com.

Counsels (from page 1)

reaction was to reach out and touch the leper as He declared, "I do will it. Be made clean." (Mk 1:41) This week's promise reflects His constant love and selfless giving to others. A leper in Jesus' time had no hope of receiving love and acceptance. Therefore, Jesus' healing touch also gave him back his self-respect and his place among his fellow human beings in society.

Ironically, a reversal of roles took place after the leper's healing. While the cured leper was eased back into society, Jesus could no longer openly enter a town because the man who was sternly warned not to tell anyone of his healing had publicized the miracle. Jesus had to stay away in deserted places because it was not yet His time to reveal the real purpose for His coming.

Today we have a better medical understanding of leprosy and we know that this disease is neither a spiritual affliction nor a defect of character. However, the kind of judgment and prejudice that the Jewish authorities put on the character of lepers is something that many of us are guilty of placing on others. We may have been subjected to such discrimination as well.

Many of us who came to know Christ through this community carried this stigma in our hearts. Rejection due to lack of understanding of a person is one of the reasons why we have interpersonal problems with members of our family, our church community or other groups. Because of this, many of us have been judged or have judged others, avoiding those who we think have an "unclean" character.

Christ heals us. With our continuous healing, we are being called to witness and imitate Him as his modern-day disciples. We testify to others our restored spirit and at the same time proclaim who Christ really is— the Savior of the World, Emmanuel, God with us.

Today we need to continue Christ's healing ministry to everyone, especially the poor, the marginalized, the imprisoned, the sick, and the brokenhearted. He wants us to go out into the world and show the same compassion with which He showered us by healing others through His name, and proclaiming Him as the Messiah who has come to save us all.

DIRECTIONS

- Accept your own weaknesses and brokenness before the Lord.
- Be understanding and compassionate to those who may not share your own views or beliefs.
- Be imitators of Christ in selfishly serving your respective ministries.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 11	DLC meeting, Library 2-6pm
Feb 10-12	Washington DC Aspirants' Retreat
Feb 12	Trenton Retreat - Agony/Washing
Feb 17-19	Seattle SE 9
Feb 18	Teachings for LSS 21, 22 and 24
Apr 7-9	Newark LSS 26

birthdays

Feb 10	Efe Osemeha Mark10 Norma Bernal LSS 7 Eileen Choolijian LSS 21 Unay Eudie LSS 24
Feb 11	Baby De La Cruz LSS 17 Marissa Rangel LSS 19
Feb 12	Avery Abad Mark10 Tyler Muslija Mark10 Tony Abad LSS 17 Yollie Cruz LSS 7 Tessie Mijares LSS 16
Feb 13	Beth Baluyot LSS 3 Benny Santiago LSS 13
Feb 14	Ding De Borja LSS 13
Feb 15	Margo Tolentino YE 11 Nelson Manzo ME 25



anniversaries

Feb 14	J.R. & Judy Garcia ME 23 Vic & Becky Napenas ME 19 Ramon & Vangie Vargas ME 22
Feb 15	Rose & Nelson Manzo ME 25
Feb 16	Nemia Ibanez ME 11

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

CASH FLOW AS OF FEB 3, 2006

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$9,066	\$22,765
Disbursements	<u>3,218</u>	<u>33,524</u>
Surplus (Deficit)*	<u>\$5,848</u>	<u>(\$10,759)</u>

* January Medical Mission contributed to our deficit.



DLC Discussed Upcoming Emergence

The District Leaders Conference (DLC) held its meeting last Saturday, February 11, 2006, at the library of St. Mary's church. The DLC is composed of coordinators of all the different ministries and apostolates. Together, they form a body that regularly meets once a month to plan, synchronize and implement the District programs and plan future activities.

The most notable of the topics discussed in the recent meeting was the upcoming "Emergence" on March 11, 2006 of the Council of Servant Leaders (5 positions) in Manila, the District Servant Leader (1 position) in Newark and the District Council of Stewards (5 positions) in Newark. Emergence is like an election (process of choosing leaders following the will of the people), but the main difference is that, it is following the will of God. Fidel Lim, a member of the District Committee on Emergence Overseers (DCEO), explained the rules and process to be followed by the covenanted disciples in the coming emergence. A follow-up meeting will be held before March 11th, to allow the dissemination of additional guidelines from the Manila CEO.

Other topics that were discussed were as follows:

- Necessity of discipline in the members' actions particularly, the children and youth, to avoid unfavorable impression by the parish of St. Mary
- Further enlightenment by Richard de la Fuente on the BLD-Gawad Kalinga Poverty Alleviation program
- Revisit and reiteration by Frank Belarmino of the BLD Newark policy of business practices
- Preliminary report by Nong Bustos on the recent medical mission to the Philippines
- Treasury report by Ruben Amarante on the 2006 budget of BLD Newark

The meeting was well attended, despite the impending snowstorm. It ended as planned, at exactly 6:00 PM.

COUNSELS

Be Humble and Forgiving of Each Other

WORD: Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25; Ps 41:2-5, 13-14; 2Cor 1:18-22; Mk 2:1-12

THEME: We become all things to all men when we gather in faith, intercede, and forgive others.

ORDER: "It is I, I, who wipe out, for my own sake, your offenses; your sins I remember no more. (Is 43:25) As my follower, you should do likewise to others.

REFLECTION:

We live in the age of science. In many instances and in many societies, science has even taken over the powers previously attributed only to God. Through science, practically all known diseases known to man have been conquered. Thus, science the healer. Animals can now be designed and cloned. Science the creator. Through the internet and computers, vast amount of information can be acquired to enhance and be instructed in any field of knowledge. Science the teacher. Using a series of numbers given after birth, we are tagged and taxed, traced if we break the law and taken cared of in our old age. Science the king.

Small wonder, we need faith to believe in God. For some, it's an insurance for that world still not covered by science: the afterlife. For many of us, God is the affirmation of the meaning of our lives, something which science cannot provide, with its bloodless focus on objectivity and what can only be proven empirically. We in the renewal, view
(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Blessed is the one who has regard for the lowly and the poor; in the day of misfortune, the Lord will deliver him." (Ps 41:2)

No Longer Two but One

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and the two shall become one flesh. So they no longer two but one flesh.” (Mk 10:7-8)



Marriage is a state of life in the Church. There are three things we should remember, as married members of the community. It is a sacrament, it is a vocation, and it is a pathway to sanctity.

God understands that it is not easy to live holy lives. It is not easy to sustain a lifelong relationship. But thankfully, He never leaves us on our own. He gives us the grace and the strength to carry our daily crosses. He never asks us to do the impossible. All we have to do is ask and trust Him, in accord with His will and divine plan.

God is the author of marriage. The book of Genesis tells us that *“God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: ‘Be fertile and multiply.’” (Gn 1:27-28)*

The Sacred Scripture also affirms that man and woman are created for one another: *“It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him.” (Gn 2:18)* *“The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man.” (Gn 2:22)* The woman, “flesh of his flesh,” is given him by God as a “helpmate”. *“That is why a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.” (Gn 2:24)* The Lord shows that this signifies an unbreakable union of their two lives by recalling what the plan of the Creator had been “in the beginning”: *“So they are no longer two but one flesh.” (Mk 10:8)*

We must respond to God’s grace to help us attain holiness in our married life. God is calling us to embrace marriage in a way that is pleasing to the Father. It is by following Christ and renouncing ourselves that we will be able to “receive” the original meaning of marriage and to live it with the help of Christ. With marriage, God took something good, which existed from the beginning of creation and restored it to the fullness of its goodness, by making it a sacrament.

The sacrament of matrimony gives the spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ loved His Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life. (CCC 1661)

Reflection on James 4: 1-10

How can You Draw Near to God?

As we go forth in our walk with the Lord, we continually strive to draw near Him. Temptations that steer us away from our calling, abound in our midst. We succumb to temptations that make us look after our own selfish interests, instead of those whose lives are affected by our decisions. We envelope our hearts and minds with envy, instead of joy, for the blessings that our good Lord has given others. As a result, we bring about disunity in our family and community. We separate ourselves from the love of our Lord.

All of us have experienced at some point in our lives, the darkness of total separation from the Lord. We have also experienced the lack of enthusiasm in our hearts to commune with the Lord. We need to draw our strength to resist temptation, from the Lord Himself. We need to surrender ourselves to Him, and offer Him our total selves, no matter how broken and sinful we are. Only He can purify our hearts, wills, and lives so we can ultimately draw ourselves closer to Him, and allow Him to fill our total being. Only by our Lord’s encompassing mercy and all-perfect grace can we truly resist the lurkings of the evil one, who is always finding ways to snap at our weakest points.

How do we surrender ourselves to be Lord and let Him know our desire? We can do so in prayer. Our prayer must always be a humble acknowledgement of our sinfulness and be directed to a supplication for the fulfillment of the Lord’s all-perfect Divine Will in our lives. Our prayer should never be for the fulfillment of our own self-serving interests. This does not mean that we cannot ask the Lord for the desires of our hearts. The Lord in His goodness, is always there to listen to us, but we must pray to Him and ask for His grace that He bless our desires to be in accord with His will. In addition to entrusting ourselves to the Lord and communing with Him in prayer, we also have to make a conscious will to avoid all occasions that will make us vulnerable to sin. We have to arm ourselves with His Word so we can be guided in our decisions to do only His Will. Drawing ourselves near to the Lord through prayer and developing a conscious will to live His Word, will deepen our relationship with Him and make our lives more meaningful.

“So submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.” (James 4:7-8)

In the Spirit of Transparency

Jesus, The Model of Christian Leadership

The following summary of Jesus' qualities as a leader from the book "The Collaborative Leader", is intended to aid discernment in the forthcoming general emergence.

Jesus was a listener, hearing people's pain, hopes and joy. When Jesus visits Martha and Mary, He deals compassionately with a domestic rivalry. He hears and responds to Martha (Lk 10:38-42).

Jesus was responsive. After being distracted by the woman suffering from hemorrhage, He reaches Jairus' house and was told the child had died. Jesus calmly enters, says that she is sleeping, commands her to get up, and states that she should be given something to eat (Mk 5:21-43).

Jesus was a creator of vision. The beatitudes are a vision of a new world where pain and suffering are acknowledged and integrated into people's lives as a means of achieving wholeness and union with God (Mt 5:1-12).

Jesus was authentic, letting Himself be known for who He was. He was not reluctant to share His fears with the apostles and to ask for their support. *"My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch."* (Mk 14:34)

Jesus was compassionate. His whole life was characterized by compassionate responses to those who experience pain of mind, body or soul. *"At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them."* (Mt 9:36)

Jesus was forgiving, freely taking away people's burdens and helping them set a new direction in their lives. He forces the accusers of the adulterous woman away with a single question about their own guilt. Then He urges her to sin no more. (Jn 8:1-11)

Jesus was straightforward, not dependent on rules and procedures to solve problems. When questioned about His disciples gathering wheat on the Sabbath, He says, *"The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath."* (Mk 2:23-28)

Jesus was generative, focused on others rather than on self. Such behavior started with the miracle at Cana (Jn 2:1-11). That pattern is repeated over and over as Jesus responds to request after request for help.

Jesus was inclusive, wanting all to enter in the fullness of life. Matthew's gospel closes with Jesus charging His disciples, *"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."* (Mt 28:19)

Jesus was empowering, giving over to others the

(continued on next column)

Ministry Announcements

LSS # 26 April 7-9: Now accepting applications! Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic-Dee Lim, LSA.

Family Encounter Retreat

July 21-23 in Malverne, PA

Now accepting applications! Please sign up early
Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz

TEACHINGS

Feb. 17 after worship

Singles Walking in the Spirit

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

Feb. 18 St. Mary's 1-6PM

LSS 24 Encounter with Jesus (Luke & John Module)

LSS 21-22 Advance Intercession, Orientation on Spiritual Warfare

Feb. 24 after worship

LSS 23 Motivational Gift Test (MGT)

Service and Intercessory Ministries - Formation Teachings

Mar. 4 St Mary's 1-6PM

LSS 23 CMP II Part I – Discipline, Speech, Handling Conflict, Fraternal Correction, Repairing Wrongdoing

LSS 25 Encounter with Jesus – Part I – Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the Old Testament, Development of the Gospel

LSS 26 Christian Parenting Part I

Mar. 17 after worship

Singles – Christian Service

John 6 - Teaching

Mark 10 - Teaching



Jesus, Model of Christian Leadership

responsibility and power to extend God's kingdom. After washing their feet, Jesus tells His apostles, *"I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit."* (Jn 15: 15-16)

Jesus was a person of integrity, committed to doing what He believed was the right thing. He was not cowed by Pilate's power: *"You would have no power over me if it had not been given to you from above."* (Jn 19:11)

Counsels *from page 1*

our God, as the fountainhead of love and true happiness, the justification of our trials and sufferings, the one, unchanging source of hope and belief in the goodness of our world; our salvation in this world and the next.

But in the reality of our everyday lives, and at times in our community, the influence of science sometimes clashes with our love for the Lord. Witness the harsh words sometimes exchanged between ministry members. For purposes of efficiency, with its component of resolving issues in a specific, short span of time and blended with the psychological apologia of “we’re just human”, loud, angry words are used to settle arguments and club opposing views. If our requests are not granted, restating them in a loud voice and in threatening words, often becomes the second step. In other instances, putting the burden of guilt on the other person is resorted to, by saying you just don’t understand the needs of our ministry.

What has happened to seeing the Lord in our neighbor? Of loving our brother and putting his interest first? Of making the change start with us and not with the other person? We say we all work for the Lord when we work in the community. Then we should use the way of the Lord too, by relating and transacting with each other in the spirit of humility and love. Blessed Escriba once said: “In our apostolic undertaking, don’t fear the enemy ‘outside’, however great their power. This is the enemy most to be feared: your lack of filial spirit and your lack of fraternal spirit.”

In requesting something from a brother, speak as if we are requesting something from the Lord, and not you are the Lord, asking something from your brother. If you think you have offended your brother when you act rudely towards him, you already did and immediately ask for forgiveness. And if you’re the offended party, be ready to accept your brother’s apology especially if you’ve been truly hurt, and even if you may not have taken offense. No matter what the urgency of a pending task may be, let us take the time to consider the interests of the person we work with.

In Sir 2:1, it is said, “*My son, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials.*” Our work in the community can be rough and wearying, with our burden lifted only by our love to serve the Lord. Let us not add to the trials of our brothers. Let us relate with each other with respect, gentleness, humility and above all, love. Let us always remember that our unity, the very reason for our anointing and existence, lies in our love for the Lord and for one another.

DIRECTIONS:

- Encourage the practice of fraternal corrections.
- Always see Jesus in dealing with one another.

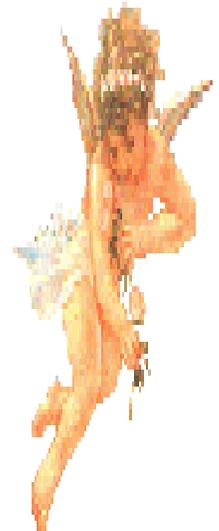
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb. 25 FE 11 & FE 12 Bowling Outing, Union, NJ
 Mar. 11 Newark ECSL, DSL, DCS Emergence
 Mar. 18-19 YLSS # 11, Newark
 Apr. 7-9 LSS # 26, Newark
 May 13 Healing the Family Tree, Community Retreat, Newark
 June 2-4 ME #27, Newark

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

Birthdays

Feb. 17 Reggie Avisado, LSS 15
 Nora Inos, LSS 11
 Juliet Mabalot, LSS 20
 Kev De La Cruz, YE 11
 Marc Brillantes, YE 11
 Feb. 18 Aida Calilap, LSS 14
 Aldo Pangilinan, LSS 13
 Anthony Isidro, YE 6
 Feb. 19 Bellie Narvaez, LSS 16
 Joey Reyes, LSS 15
 Feb. 20 Nila Castillo, ME 25
 Au Elope, LSS 17
 Tess Eusebio, LSS 4
 Feb. 21 Bernie Soluta, ME 25
 Daven Lopina, YE 11
 Feb. 22 George del Fierro, LSS 4
 Gigi Munante, LSS 5
 Joey Reyes, LSS 18
 Feb. 23 Miriam Abes, LSS 2
 Lilibeth Zanduetta, LSS 3



Anniversaries

Feb. 17 Charlie and Weng Larobis, LSS 18
 Feb. 22 Mon and Bingle Chan, LSS 2

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Feb. 10, 2006 -Week # 6

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 3,284	\$ 26,049
Disbursements	\$ 2,325	\$ 35,849
Surplus (Deficit)*	\$ 959	(\$ 9,800)*

Yearly Comparison

<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase (Decrease)</u>
\$3,284	\$2,525	\$ 759 In % : 30.06%



Healing of the Family Tree Retreat

The community is sponsoring the Healing of the Family Tree retreat on May 13th, 2006 at St. Mary's Church in Rahway. The retreat is about enlightenment, awakening, prayer and a process of cleaning up the effects of sin in our life and sins from past generations. The retreat master will be Father Michael Barry, a well-regarded charismatic priest from California belonging to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (SS.CC.).

We are blessed to have Fr. Michael because he is a holy man renowned for his gift of teaching, preaching and healing. Fr. Michael is a regular resource speaker at the yearly Southern California Renewal Communities' (SCRC) Conference. He is the spiritual adviser of several religious organizations in San Bernardino and Riverside counties in Southern California.

His religious order was founded in 1800 and has about 3,000 priests, brothers and sisters all over the world. Their congregation has dedicated their lives to sharing the love of God as expressed in the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary, and to a mission of healing and reconciliation for the whole world.

This one-day retreat is much needed during these times. Every one is therefore enjoined to attend. Inquiries regarding this retreat can be made to Joey and Linda Viola.

This Week's Issue:

- Counsels: Spirit-Led pp 1, 4
- Articles: p2
 - Ash Wednesday
 - Be Holy Because I am Holy
- DCSpeaks p3
- Ministry Announcements p3
- Community Calendar p4

COUNSELS

Spirit-Led

WORD: Hos 2:16b, 17b, 21-22; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12, 13; 2Cor 3:1b-6; Mk 2:18-22

THEME: We become all things to men when we are led by the Spirit in our calling.

ORDER: "Bless the Lord, bless His Holy Name and forget not all His benefits." (Ps 103: 1-2)

REFLECTION: Last week, we saw Jesus' divine nature in the miraculous healing of the paralytic. This week, we hear Him answer the question of fasting. He tells us the connection between the Old and New Covenants. In the Old Covenant, the bridegroom has not yet arrived; in the New, He is present in the person of Christ. With His coming begins the messianic times, a new era that is distinct from the previous one.

"The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were accustomed to fast. People came to him and objected, "Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" (Mark 2:18) In their defense, Jesus gives two replies in parables. A wedding feast is not time for the attendants of the bridegroom to be fasting. Jesus is clearly the bridegroom and His disciples, the attendants. A time will come, however, when the bridegroom will be taken away, then there will be times when fasting will be appropriate.

"Jesus continues with another parable. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak. If he does, its fullness pulls away, the new from the old, and the tear gets worse." At the first sign of stress, the new patch will

□ page 4

Promise of the Week

"...the letter brings death, but the Spirit gives life." (2Cor 3:6)

Ash Wednesday

We are approaching another important event in our liturgical calendar which this year falls on March 1st. Ash Wednesday is the start of a forty-day Lenten season. Jesus Christ retreated into the wilderness and fasted for forty days to prepare His ministry. We Christians imitate and join Him in His desert retreat through fasting, abstinence, alms giving and penance.

During this period, we are to remember our sinfulness, repent and beg for God's blessing of forgiveness. We recall God's infinite love for us, His incomprehensible desire for us to return to Him with contrite hearts. We recall with awe how God chose not to abandon us to our sins, but instead sent His only Son to reunite us to Him. We are to recognize that God's forgiveness comes at an infinite price - the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. *"But God proves His love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us"* (Rom 5:8).

His sacrifice compels us to heed His call for repentance. In the Old Testament, men repented of their sins by covering themselves with ashes and by clothing their bodies with sackcloth. *"O daughter of my people, gird on sackcloth, roll in the ashes."* (Jer 6:26) On Ash Wednesday, ashes are placed on our forehead to remind us of our frailty and brokenness, of the sorrow we should feel for our sins, and of the necessity of changing our lives. The priest dips his thumb into the ashes, marks our forehead with the sign of the cross saying, *"Remember man thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return"* (Gen 3:19). God made the first human being by breathing life into dust. Before God, human beings must remember that they are nothing more than dust and ashes.

The ashes come from the blessed palms of the previous Palm Sunday, which commemorate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Ash Wednesday should remind us that our eventual victory in Christ passes through the Calvary of our penance & mortification. We are reminded that we are mere creatures assured of sharing the enduring life of the Creator through baptism, through a journey of dying and transformation, through a life of turning away from sin and abiding in the Gospel.

We leave the church with ashes on our forehead, signifying our death and our hope of resurrection in the Lord Jesus. It is a sign that proclaims to the whole world our identity as Christians. The sign of the cross on our forehead is the sign of the presence of Christ in our life. It is a sign that we belong to Him.

Be Holy because I am Holy (1Pt:14-16)

The first letter of Peter to the provinces of Asia Minor before his death between 64 and 67 A.D. was to encourage the gentile Christians to remain faithful to their belief and conduct in spite of threats of persecution. By virtue of their baptism - claiming their sonship as God's image and likeness - they are Holy as their Father is Holy.

In our present time amidst our trials, sickness and hardship, we are reminded of the same virtue brought by our baptism. We are God's image and likeness. We are also called to be holy as our Father is Holy. What is then to be holy? What is needed to become holy? Being holy is coming "to know and encounter God with God". All we need to be holy is God. To know and love God is a gift from God. We can't love and know God without His gift. We can then say that to be holy is to be able to "love as God loves us".

Gerald May, a psychiatrist and spiritual counselor has this to say for God's reason in creating us: "God creates us for love; the call of our creation is for us to love God, one another, and ourselves". He also said that our basic desire for God is the human spirit, planted within us and nourished endlessly by the Holy Spirit of God. That the love God desires from us is one born of true freedom, love free from attachment, requires that we search for a deepening awareness of God, just as God freely reaches out to us.

In practical terms, we don't become holy if we come to God because we need a favor, a miracle or a cure from our sickness, but rather to encounter God allowing our love for Him grow deeper. We don't become holy if we reach out to God because we obliged ourselves and became burdened in the process, but rather to be touched, nourished and strengthened by His presence. We don't become holy if we serve others to get self satisfaction, self gratification or self fulfillment, but rather in serving others we are able to serve God and experience His love as we sacrifice to serve others. For Jesus said, *"what ever you do to the least of my people, you did it to Me"*. Let us all strive to be holy as God is holy. Let us all love one another as God loves us - freely and unconditionally.

CHILDREN - DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR PARENTS ARE?

BLD Newark has been blessed by the Lord for having very active ministries for our children. We have been blessed with our Mark 10 (divided into Cherubim and Seraphim), John 6, Youth, and even our Singles. This is a very unique blessing among global communities. Together with these blessings are challenges not only for those involved in these ministries but also for the whole community.

We had an opportunity to meet with most of the Core members of the ministries in-charge of the children last Friday and we want to share with you those challenges that the group had identified:

SPACE DURING FELLOWSHIP - Now that we have ample space for all groups, there is still an emerging problem in the space needed for the children during fellowship.

There is a need for a place for our kids to fellowship among their peers, to play, and to spend their 'extra energy' after their prayer meetings.

SUPERVISION - After the dismissal of the children at around 10:30PM, we need to have a focused group to supervise the children while they are either playing or on fellowship.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES - Perhaps other activities can be offered in different classrooms for those who are interested in movies, arts, dancing, keyboarding (Praise will start this lesson), etc. Volunteers who have special talents can share and offer a class for the children.

PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT - BLD Newark has been blessed to have fellowship after our worship and healing Mass. Not many communities are able to do this. However, the children are finding it difficult to compete for the time and attention of their parents during fellowship. The parents are mostly involved in meetings, serving, ministry business, or simply enjoying their classmates and friends. During this time, the children are left by unsupervised. The adults and parents need to look at this.

HOW CAN YOU HELP:

We are encouraging everyone to help us address these problems immediately and before the weather gets better. We want all parents to get involved in the ministries of their children. We need your participation in monitoring our children, before, during, and after our Friday activities.

Now that we are approaching spring, our challenge will be even bigger if the children start playing outside and in different spots within the compound of St. Mary's. We are concerned that if we do not address these issues in time, we can anticipate another bigger problem of

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Family Encounter Retreat, July 21-23, Saturday, in Malverne, PA. Now accepting applications! *Please sign up early!* Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz

Youth Ministry, August 4-5 - Newark, NJ
Inter district Conference of youth from North America (Seattle, Bay Area, Phoenix, Reno, Detroit, DC, Albany, Long Island, Toronto and Toronto) For details, please contact Dave de la Fuente (david_reuben@hotmail.com)

LSS 26 April 7-9: Now accepting applications! Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic-Dee Lim, LSA

TEACHINGS

Feb 24 after worship

LSS 23 Motivational Gift Test (MGT)
Service Formation Teaching
Intercessory Formation Teaching

Mar 4 St. Mary's 1-6pm

LSS 23 CMP II Part I: Discipline, Speech Handling Conflict, Fraternal Correction, Repairing Wrongdoing

LSS 25 Encounter with Jesus Part I
Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the Old Testament, Development of the Gospel

Mar 17 after worship

SINGLES Christian Service
JOHN 6 Teaching
MARK 10 Teaching

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Feb. 17, 2006 - Week # 7

	Last Week	Year to Date
Receipts	\$ 4,566.00	\$30,615.00
Disbursements	\$ 1,069.42	\$36,918.42
Surplus(Deficit)*	\$ 3,496.58	(\$6,303.42)
Yearly Comparison		
2006	2005	% Increase (decrease)
\$4,566.00	\$3,083.00	48.10
		\$1,483.00

looking for another venue because of disturbance in the neighboring community.

Parents, what are your ideas? We need your helping hand.

Counsels from page 1

pull and tear the weaker old cloth, and things will be worse than before (Mark 2:21). *“Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins.”* (Mark 2:22) As the wine continues to ferment and expand, the old containers have no more stretch and will burst. In other words, Jesus is saying it is time for change. We cannot mix our old self with our renewed self. It is time to open our hearts to the Spirit and get a whole new life.

The second reading contains relevant insights on how to live our lives as contemporary disciples of Christ. Would it not be wonderful if the words of Paul to the Corinthians could be applied to all of us? *“You are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by all, shown to be a letter of Christ administered by us, written not in ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets that are hearts of flesh.”* (2Cor 3:2-3) It is really a beautiful image to think that each one of us is a *“letter from Christ”*, addressed to all those around us. It expresses the difference between the new wine and the old wine. The old wine emphasizes external observance of laws and commandments but the new wine flows from deep within our hearts. *“The new covenant,”* says Paul, *“is not a covenant of written letters (tablets of stone or documents), but of the Spirit: the written letters bring death, but the Spirit gives life.”*

That was what the disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees did not understand. They were people more focused on the letter of the Law, on external observance. They thought that they were serving God, but were in fact adulterating the true spirit of the Law by reducing it to a set of legalistic observances. The followers of Jesus focused more on the commandment of love, the love that gives one's life for one's friends, the love that embraces both friends and enemies, the love that reaches out to the brother and sister in need. This is the new wine with which we need to be intoxicated.

With this new wine, our community should have a renewed Spirit within us. We should be flexible and open to change. With the leading of the Holy Spirit, we develop the thirst to know, the wisdom to understand, and the willingness to live God's Word. We must forgive those

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 25	FE 11 & 12 Bowling Outing Garden State Bowl, Union, NJ Details Contact: King & Arlene Rigor or Ed & Grace Badiola
Mar 11	Global Emergence – St. Mary's
Mar 18-19	YLSS#11, Newark
Apr 7-9	LSS#26, Newark
May 13	Healing the Family Tree, Community Retreat
Jun 2-4	ME#27, Newark

*May the blessings of the
Lord be upon you. . .*



BIRTHDAYS

Feb 24	Sandy Ikalina, LSS 12
Feb 25	Athena Lim, YE 11 Vicki Cruz, LSS 11
Feb 27	Samantha Olaso, John 6 Samantha Aglibut, John 6 Christian Francisco, John 6
Feb 29	Audie Chong, LSS 20 Pedro Martinez, LSS 23
Mar 1	John Michael Cam, Mark 10 R. Timothy Ombrete, John 6 Magalis Balanguet, LSS 23 Rosing Romualdo, LSS 19
Mar 2	Serge Bernatchez, LSS 10 Myrna Magadia, LSS 19 Irene Rodriguez, ME 25

ANNIVERSARIES

Feb 28	Sr Camillus Uzor ME 23
Mar 1	Carding & Rosing Romualdo
Mar 2	Tony & Alice Yanza

who have wronged us, and ask for forgiveness from those we have wronged. We must be compassionate and persevere in reaching out to our fellowmen through the community's mission of poverty alleviation. We must be credible witnesses of the Holy Spirit living in us, always ready to accept responsibilities that the Bridegroom assigns. Led by the Holy Spirit we must become all things to all men.

DIRECTION:

- ◆ Do not be afraid to accept responsibilities in the community, because the Lord will qualify you.
- ◆ Devote time to contemplative prayer to hear the Lord speak to your heart.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 12 Issue 9

Bulletin Edition

March 03, 2006

A Day of Fun

The FE11 & FE12 families had a fun bowling tournament last 25 February, 2006 in Garden State Bowl in Union, NJ. This event was an answer to hold more activities geared towards involving the whole family. Twenty-two (22) families played like children, throwing bowling balls resulting in the exchange of high-fives whenever the score ended in a strike or a spare or even a zero because the ball rolled into the gutter. Shouts of laughter or squeals of teasing, the objective of the camaraderie, were heard from each lane. FUN was very evident on that day. Everybody had smiles on their faces.

After the game, the group proceeded to have a late lunch at Max Buffet, a Chinese restaurant nearby. After the repast, awards were given in honor of the best in the game – those who got the highest scores, most number of strikes or spares, and the highest scoring team. There was even an award for the most honest player!

Honoring the family is the theme of the FE. Holding activities centered on the family and honoring God as a family is what the Family Encounter is all about. This augurs well for the next round of FUN FE activities.

In This Week's Issue

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COUNSELS

Clean Slate

WORD: Gen 9:8-15; Ps 25:4-9; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15

ORDER: "Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mk 1:15)

THEME: We keep God's covenant when we follow His ways.

REFLECTION: In this Lenten season, we are again reminded and given the chance to leave our past behind and start anew. Lent gives us the opportunity to look deeper within ourselves and see who we really are, and to rid ourselves of anything ungodly and unchristian. This would mean giving up our old lives and creating a new one.

But, are we ready to change our old habits? Are we really prepared for the slow, painful and uncertain conditions that we can encounter when we decide to discard our old self? What are we to do if we hear that familiar old whisper in the garden asking us to break our promise?

Remember that to change the outer aspects of our lives we must first change the inner attitudes of our minds. Change requires the substituting of new habits for old ones. It requires self-discipline. Self-discipline doesn't mean giving up the things of the earth; we are only exchanging them for better things. Discipline hurts, change often does, and there will always be some initial pain in reforming our lives.

The change of heart to which Lent calls us can be accomplished most of all through the power of prayer. Even though repentance and prayer are always appropriate, they are especially appropriate during Lent.

page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"He guides the humble to justice and he teaches the humble his way." (Ps 25:9)

Acts of Mercy

James clearly says, “*So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*” (Jas 2:17) Our primary motivation for mercy must be the greatness of God’s mercy to us through Jesus Christ. Everyone who is a follower of Christ must express his faith through acts of mercy. If God is merciful to us who are sinful and undeserving of him, we cannot but respond to Him by showing mercy and compassion to those in need around us.

As the very nature and message of the gospel is love, there are ways in which we give out our God-given time, talent and treasure to help others in need. Every action should be an act of love. By showing mercy, we show love, we put our faith in action. The seven corporal works of mercy (Mt.25:35-40) are the more popular and in some cases more immediate because they concern physical needs. Jesus regarded these acts as essential part of life when he calls service to those in need as service to Him when he said: “*what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.*” (Mt 25:45)

There are also seven spiritual acts which relate to our most important spiritual need; that is, help from God. We probably are doing more works of mercy than we realize. We are already loving and forgiving those who are close to us, our families, our co-workers and those in our community. However, have we given special attention to our sisters and brothers who are desperately in need and hurting? Sometimes we think of Christian living as something we’ll get around to in the future, when we have more time, when we feel more inspired or when we are spiritually more capable. Thinking that we can’t make a difference or feeling that whatever we do won’t matter much, holds us back from responding to those in need. Jesus did not wipe out all the diseases of the world but he cured many sick people as “*he went about doing good, curing all those oppressed by the devil.*” (Acts 10:38) He did not personally counsel every discouraged, confused person in his time, but he gave those whose lives touched his, a golden ray of hope. He told his disciples to go about doing the same. At the present time, he expects us to follow suit. We cannot fix everyone’s problems, but we can support and help a lot of people in many little ways. Mother Teresa said. “The important thing is not to do a lot or to do everything. The important thing is to be ready for anything, at all times, to be convinced that when we serve the poor, we really serve God.”

Grace Beyond Merit

The Book of Jonah instructs in an amusing way. It tells of a reluctant and disobedient prophet who complained to God and begged to die because his mission to have the Ninevites repent was a success. The Ninevites believed God, repented, and changed their evil ways to avoid judgment, contrary to Jonah’s expectation. The Lord has summoned us to repentance and contrition. Once undergone, he relents in his decrees of punishment. What the Lord wants is an interior and sincere conversion. Our Lord Jesus, made direct reference to Jonah (Mt 12:28-42) when the Pharisees were asking for a sign that they may believe

“The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mk1:15) were the first words of Christ’s teaching. Repentance is possible only if one believes that he is a sinner. John Paul II says that today’s man “have lost the sense of sin,” thus making it difficult for him to repent if he is not convinced that he has sinned or is a sinner. Are we convinced of sin? Do we see ourselves as sinners? The Catechism tells us (CCC 1847) “*To receive his mercy, we must admit our faults. Like a physician who probes the wound before treating it, God, by his Word and by his Spirit, casts a living light on sin.*” It is God through the Holy Spirit who aids us in discovering our sinfulness. God is the one who helps us to repent and convert. Without His grace and help, we cannot even know this or do this. All is grace—grace given to us beyond our merit.

God’s call to repentance is essentially a call to conversion. We are free to accept or reject it. Accepting God’s offer of forgiveness and mercy is to acknowledge our sinfulness before God who is love. It is also a call to be gratefully transformed by the power of that love. A rejection of evil that blind us to God’s love is a necessary requisite if we are to repent. Conversion is a change of mind and heart as reflected by outward changes in our behavior or how we relate to God and to others. It is a conscious, ongoing lifelong process where we are drawn deeper and deeper to God’s holiness. As Catholics, we express our contrition and inner transformation through Sacramental Healing and Reconciliation where we confess our sins and externalize the changes that occur within and our resolve to live according to God’s will. Confessing our sins is important. But the main focus of the Sacrament is on our personal and intimate experience of God’s merciful love that is more powerful than sin. It celebrates what God is doing for us, through us and with us.

From the desk of Fr. Paul Lehman

LENT



As we begin the joyful season of Lent (March 1, Ash Wednesday), our thoughts naturally turn to what we should do during this most important time of the year. When Easter arrives and as we look back, we can easily feel we did NOT DO enough or

GIVE UP enough. Thus, we can arrive at some kind of a minor or even major guilt trip.

The grace of this season is not the exercise of some kind of spiritual toughness. This ends us in the challenge to DO something. This mind set is the very antithesis of Christian life. Christianity is not something we do for God (He does not need anything we have to give. He already got everything). We like to produce and see the result of our actions, physical or spiritual. If we recall the grace of the Baptism of the Spirit, it is more about receiving and yielding than about doing.

Perhaps we should look for that inner silence and emptiness that makes us open for God. We fast not just to mortify our appetite but to empty our hearts more than our stomach. We give up things to make room for God.

The biggest challenge I would like to offer this Community is the challenge of inner silence. This silence opens our hearts to hear God. Perhaps this "hearing" needs explanation. When someone speaks to us we hear words and concepts and we are said to hear and listen. However, when God speaks to us we do not hear words or feel something. We only sense silence, thus, silence in the depths of our souls is where divine communication takes place through the darkness of faith.

The result of this descent into darkness and silence produces a lack of satisfaction and often a sense that nothing is happening. Yes in reality, intimacy between God and us is growing in that emptiness. That is why St. John the Cross can call the ascent to God a dark night both of body and mind.

This openness to silence can begin by examining the way we pray. Is our prayer time merely reciting prayers or reading Scriptures? As good as these practices are, there should be time to let go and not try to do anything except focus in silence on the presence of God.



MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LSS # 26 - April 7-9: Now accepting applications! Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic and Dee Lim, LSA

Family Encounter Retreat - July 21-23 in Malverne, PA. Now accepting applications! Please sign up early. Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz

MARCH TEACHINGS

Mar. 4 St Mary's 1-6PM

- LSS 23** CMP II Part I – Discipline, Speech, Handling Conflict, Fraternal Correction, Repairing Wrongdoing
- LSS 25** Encounter with Jesus (Part I) Road to Emmaus, Jesus in the Old Testament, Development of the Gospel
- LSS 26** Christian Parenting Part I

Mar. 17 after worship

- Singles** Christian Service
- John 6** Teaching
- Mark 10** Teaching

Mar. 18 St. Mary's 1-6PM

- LSS 24** Gifts & Fruit of the HS, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakona
- LSS 21-22** Healing & Deliverance
- All Shepherds** Shepherds Refresher Course

Mar 24 after worship

- Service and Intercessory**
Formation Teachings

cont... Lent

Begin by reading the Scriptures of the day (the Magnificat publication helps). When the mind has absorbed the meaning and lesson taught therein, close your eyes and let the Holy Spirit draw you into that silence when the Father, Son and Spirit dwell in perfect communion with one another.

They want so much to bring us into that relationship where only true happiness can be found. Taste and see. Die to live. Empty to be filled.

The Church knows well that Christ lives in the Sacred Scriptures. For this very reason... she has always venerated the divine Scriptures in the same way as she venerates the Body of the Lord....(Pope Benedict XVI)

Counsels *(from page 1)*

Lent paves the way for us to make a covenant or renew the broken covenant we made to our Lord. In our first reading, God realized what He had done and made a covenant with Noah, *“that never again shall all bodily creatures be destroyed by the waters of a flood; there shall not be another flood to devastate the earth.”* (Gn 9:11)

Usually, when we make a promise we expect something in return. We always ask God for help in times of trouble and promise that we will straighten up our lives once we get through our dire situation safely or once we are cured of our physical ailment. But, can we not follow the same thing as what the Lord has done when He made a covenant with Noah, and that is promising something without asking for anything in return?

This means that the covenant with Noah is singular and unilateral. There are no binding conditions placed on Noah or his descendants. God alone binds Himself to us in solemn promise out of His sheer and boundless generosity.

As a Community of covenanted and committed disciples, we are reminded to look back and reflect on the covenant we signed before the Lord. What was our real purpose when we agreed to seal our covenant with Him? Did we really understand and know by heart the conditions set forth in our covenant? Were we really going to make the extra effort to live up to the promises we made and incorporate those promises in our lives?

Thus, let us again begin and re-commit ourselves to our covenant. Let us first know and understand by heart the promises we have made and practice them daily. Let us always wear the pin that was given to us during our covenanting ceremony, so as to remind us of our covenant with God, just as God set His bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between Him and His people. Let us always be mindful of our brethren in the community who needs help in understanding and fulfilling their covenant with our Lord.

We know we cannot do this alone, so let us continue to approach Jesus with confidence, knowing that we will have His mercy and compassion in our time of need. This Lent, pray fervently that the Lord help us to let go of the rags of sin, so that He may clothe us once more in the rich grace of a new life.

DIRECTIONS

- ♥ Fast, pray and give alms during this Lenten season.
- ♥ Know by heart our Covenant pledges and actually apply them in our daily lives.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Mar. 11 Newark ECSL, DSL, DCS Emergence
- March 12 FE # 12, Reunion # 4, St. Mary's Library 1PM
- Mar. 18-19 YLSS # 11, Newark - St. Mary's Auditorium
- April 7-9 LSS # 26, Newark – St. Mary's Auditorium
- May 13 Healing the Family Tree - Community Retreat, St. Mary's Auditorium, Newark 8AM–6PM
- June 2-4 ME# 27, Newark - St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- June 10-11 Lord, Teach us to Pray - Community Retreat, St. Mary's Auditorium, Newark 9AM–5PM

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .



BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--|--|
| Mar.3 Edith Celebria, LSS 8
Stella Francisco, LSS12
Angie Sion, YE 11 | Mar.7 Genevieve Guzman, YCR 3
Patrick Salmo, YCR 5 |
| Mar.4 Ed de los Reyes, LSS 9
Dory Param, LSS 17 | Mar.8 Arlene Claricia, LSS 24
Jane Enciso, LSS 24
Henry Koryan, LSS 2
Joan Maniego, LSS 23
Mina Mantes, LSS 11
Jeff Pagdonsolan, YCR 4 |
| Mar.5 Rita Santos, LSS 18
Gep Espejon, YE 9 | Mar.9 Danny Palomares, LSS 17
Joven Soriano, LSS 15
Alan Laxina, YE 8
Kirk Inocencio, YE 10 |
| Mar.6 Grace Baquilod, LSS 2
Francia Edquilag, LSS17
Chidi Obi, YCR 6 | |
| Mar.7 Stella Huelgas, LSS 1
Michael Rangel, MK 10 | |

ANNIVERSARIES

- Mar. 4** Tony and Linda Avisado, LSS 8
Ver and Diana Nacion, LSS 17
Bert and Helen Pie, LSS 6
- Mar. 8** Gerry and Elma Garcia, LSS 3
Mario and Tess Lopez, LSS 23

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Feb. 24, 2006 – Week # 8

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$ 5,369.00	\$ 35,984.00
Disbursements	\$ 7,746.77	\$ 44,665.19
Surplus (Deficit)*	(\$ 2,377.77)	(\$ 8,681.19)

Yearly Receipts Comparison

2006	2005	Increase(Decrease)
\$ 5,369	\$ 3,569	\$ 1,800 In %: 50.43%



BLD 2006 GLOBAL EMERGENCE NEWARK DISTRICT

- A. Schedule of Activities on March 11, 2006, Saturday
- 9:30AM General Assembly/Opening Praise
 - 10:00AM Eucharist & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
 - 11:30AM Reading of the Functions of the Servant Leaders and District Stewards
 - 12:00 Noon Explanation of the Nomination Process
 - 12:00-3:00PM Accomplishment of the Nomination Forms
 - 3:00PM Nomination Process Ends
Issuance and Receiving of forms, tabulation, and submission of Results

B. Important Information Regarding Completion of Nomination Forms

1. Complete the Nomination slots as provided.
2. Indicate preference for Nominee's Apostolate for ECSL and DCS with their rank preference:
 - 3 for 1st Preference
 - 2 for 2nd Preference
 - 1 for 3rd Preference
3. Do not nominate yourself or your spouse.
4. Non-compliance with any of the above shall be grounds for invalidation of the nomination.

C. Absentee Nominations

1. Nominators who are unable to attend the Emergence Program and still want to participate in the process must provide a written request to the DCEO by March 11th stating reasons for their absence.
2. The DCEO (Rene Arribe, Audie Chong, Dan Dryer, Fidel Lim, or George McGehrin) will determine on a case by case basis whether an absentee nomination may be processed.

- D. Contact any DCEO member to discuss any concerns regarding the Emergence Program.

COUNSELS

Listening to God

WORD: Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Ps 116:10, 15-19; Rom 8:31b-34; Mk 9:2-10

THEME: We keep God's covenant when we listen to Jesus.

ORDER: *"This is my beloved son. Listen to Him."* (Mk 9:7b)

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday's gospel, we read the story of Jesus as He takes three of His disciples Peter, James and John and led them up a high mountain, and He was transfigured before them, and His garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them.

In Jesus' transfiguration, He is revealed as the One through whom God fulfills His divine plan from of old. Not only a new Moses, Jesus is also the "beloved son" promised to Abraham and again to David (Gn 22:15-18; Ps 2:7; Mt 1:1)

At the time of Jesus' transfiguration however, the disciples did not yet know who He really was. They thought of Him only as a Rabbi, a teacher. Thus, the question, *"who do you say I am?"* (Mk 8:29a) They could not yet comprehend what rising from the dead meant (Mk 9:10). But this magnificent act which the three disciples witnessed was the beginning of the unveiling of Jesus, enabling us to see the humanity and divinity of Jesus, and God's offering of His son Jesus as a living sacrifice. Jesus was the promise foretold by Moses that a prophet like him would come whom Israel would listen to (Dt 18:15,18). He was the

Continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"In your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing" (Gn 22:18)

Judging Others

“Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned.” (Lk 6:37) Jesus calls our attention to one of our most common faults, that of judging others. Most of us may not realize that making rash judgment is displeasing to God. In Luke 6:39, Jesus told this parable *“Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?”* to remind us of our own weaknesses.

Many of us are guilty of making rash judgments due to our pride and self-righteousness, causing us to become presumptuous and conceited. The Pharisee prayed *“O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector.”* (Lk 18:11) We, like the Pharisee, oftentimes take pleasure in recognizing the flaws in our neighbors. When we magnify the faults in others, we tend to overlook our own faults. We then fall into the trap of rationalizing our actions and leading ourselves to self-deception.

How do we remedy our pride and self-righteousness? *“The tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner.’”* (Lk 18:12) We need to recognize our sinfulness and pray for God’s mercy and forgiveness. We need to recognize our pride and humble ourselves before God. *“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”* (Lk 18:14)

Love heals our afflictions. We can avoid harsh judgment of others, if we develop warm, tender and loving relationships with them. Saint Paul teaches us *“Love does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.”* (1 Cor 13:5-6)

In Matthew 1:18-20, when Joseph found that Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit, he decided to divorce her quietly, but the angel of the Lord spoke to him in a dream to take her as his wife. This teaches us to allow God to do His work in us and that we may need to reserve our judgment of others.

When Jesus was being crucified, He prayed to the Father to forgive those who mocked Him and persecuted Him. Jesus exemplifies His great love for us, even when we have gravely sinned. He calls us to repent from our sins and to forgive those who have sinned against us. We need to correct our own faults before we can correct others, always in the spirit of love. When we do this, we conquer our pride and self-righteousness.

Compassion not Criticism

How often do we use the word of God to justify our wrongdoings or to protect ourselves from being criticized? When our brothers and sisters are trying to admonish us for something they are seeing that we are doing wrong, we sometimes tell them, *“Do not judge me lest you be judged, or take out the lumber in your eyes first before you take out the specs in my eyes, or you should give compassion and not criticism”*.

Is it compassion or criticism? It depends on how we look at it. If we humble ourselves, maybe we can take it as compassion, but if we let our pride take over, then it could be criticism. When people judge us or criticize us, our first reaction is to be offended. We express anger and we try to get even by calling them hypocrites. Have we ever thought that what they are saying may be true and that we may be doing something wrong?

Sometimes God uses others to correct our ways, to give us constructive criticism. God knows what is good for us and that He calls us to a change of heart. We need to be open-minded and open-hearted to God’s will for us. Jesus referring to the scribes and the Pharisees said *“Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice.”* (Mt 23:3)

The Lord calls us to bring to light the misconducts of others. We have to do this with great compassion. *“The word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, you shall warn them for me. If I say to the wicked man, You shall surely die; and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his wicked conduct so that he may live: that wicked man shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, on the other hand, you have warned the wicked man, yet he has not turned away from his evil nor from his wicked conduct, then he shall die for his sin, but you shall save your life.”* (Ez 3:17-19)

In this season of Lent, let us reflect on our Lord’s love, compassion and mercy for us, as He calls us to greater love, compassion and mercy for others.

Spiritual Leadership

Leading people to help them grow and to transform themselves to Christ's likeness is an exhilarating endeavor, grace-filled and immensely gratifying. Spiritual Leadership is a noble task that is assigned by God. It does not come arbitrarily. People do not become spiritual leaders haphazardly. They become leaders through the opportunities the Holy Spirit provides as they strive to become the kind of people God desires them to be. Spiritual leadership comes as a result of the working of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit equips people to lead others, guides leaders and authenticates their leadership. It is essential that leaders cultivate a deeply personal and vibrant relationship with God as they strive to become the kind of leader God wants them to become.

"Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mt 26-28) Leaders must constantly reflect on God's Word to see if they are keeping the standards that God has clearly established for leaders. They are called to become servant leaders. They take responsibility for what is presently happening in their community. When confronted with problems, leaders should ask themselves "What have I done that may have caused these problems? What is the Lord asking me to do to address these problems?" When the community struggles, genuine leaders do not point fingers at others, they ask God to show them the right path to take to overcome these hurdles. Leaders grow and learn. They continue to change and they experience the joy and satisfaction of being used by the Lord to make a significant difference in their community.

Scripture reveals how Jesus taught, guided and corrected the early disciples. The Lord develops leaders in an orderly fashion. God in His infinite wisdom and power develops you into a leader that He want you to become. Allow God to take all the time He wants to build your character. No person, no circumstance, no obstacle can prevent God from accomplishing His will in your life. It only takes your willingness to obey Him and to do what He asks you to do. Ultimately, God is the leader. God has the vision of what He wants to do. God does not ask leaders to dream big dreams for Him or to solve the problems that confront them. He asks leaders to walk with Him so intimately that when He reveals His plans, they will immediately adjust their lives to His will and the results will bring glory to God.

Ministry Announcements

LSS # 26 on April 7-9. Now accepting applications! Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic-Dee Lim, LSA

Community Retreat on May 13 8am-6pm. Healing the Family Tree with Father Mike Barry, SS.CC. at St. Mary's Auditorium.

MARK 10 Field Trip on May 13 1pm at Sandy Hook, NJ. Salt Marsh Ecology Trip (Seining Activity for all the kids). Parents must accompany their children. Please see Reuben/Cherry Vibar to sign-up and pay \$10 per adult. Children up to 12 years old are free.

ME # 27 on June 2-4 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA. Applications now available at www.bldnewark.com. Contact: Bebot and Grace Baquilod or the ME 26 Class and the MLA.

Community Retreat. "Lord, Teach Us to Pray" on June 10-11 9am-5pm with Father Don O'Connor, SVD, St. Mary's Auditorium

YE# 13 on July 7-9 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA

Family Encounter Retreat on July 21-23 at Malverne, PA. Now accepting applications. Please sign up early. Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz

Teachings

Mar. 17 after worship

Singles Christian Service
John6 Teaching
Mark10 Teaching

Mar. 18 St. Mary's 1-6pm

LSS24 Gifts & Fruit of the HS, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia
LSS21-22 Healing & Deliverance
All Shepherds, Shepherds Refresher Course

Mar 24 after worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teachings

Apr. 1 St. Mary's Church 1-6pm

LSS20 Apologetics, Sacramentals, Prayer and Salvation
LSS24 CMP1 Part I – Love, Faith, Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

Counsels

Continued from page 1

promise foretold by Isaiah that an anointed servant would come in whom God would be well-pleased (Is 42:1). The voice on the mountain attested to this.

As Christians we too are transformed when we listen to the word of God and partake of the Holy Eucharist with greater preparation. Paul tells us that *“He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring things into subjection to himself”* (Phil 3:21). God takes us with Him in Christ; just like Peter, James and John, in order that by listening to His Word, by meditating upon it in our heart, we might bear fruit in abundance through the practice of the obedience of faith.

The fulfillment of the old and new covenants required listening. Listening entails lending ear to, paying attention to, or paying heed to something or someone. When we lend our ear to something or someone, we do nothing because no action is required of us. The only things working are the nerves in the ear as we perceive the information. Paying attention on the other hand requires minimum action on our part. A student in class pays attention to the teacher and is motivated to take notes. Paying heed to, on the other hand, entails a deliberate effort to do something or become something. We are not only to lend our ears or pay attention but we are to concern ourselves with and act on something.

Christians are called to pay heed to, to listen and act on the word of God. In our covenant relationship with the Lord in community, we committed to a life of service to the Lord. We committed our time, talents and treasure. In this season of Lent, we are called to pay heed to this: *“This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him.”* (Mk 9:7b) Not only when things are good but even when we are tested. Our second reading assures us that when we don’t hold back but give our all. He who did not spare his own son, but offered him on the cross will be with us. And if God is with us who can be against us? (Rom 8:31-32) Listening and paying heed to Jesus may not be easy but when we choose to humbly concern ourselves with the Lord, entrusting our lives to Him, our God will give us everything. For He is faithful and just (1 Jn 1:9).

DIRECTIONS:

- ♦ Actively listen to God through humility, obedience, faithfulness and entrust our lives to Him.
- ♦ Be doers of the word and not hearers only (Jas 2:22).

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Mar 11 Newark ECSL, DSL, DCS Emergence
- Mar 12 FE12, Reunion 4, St. Mary’s Library 1pm
- Mar 18-19 YLSS11, Newark - St. Mary’s Auditorium
- Apr 7-9 LSS26 Newark, St. Mary’s Auditorium
- May 13 Healing the Family Tree-Community Retreat, St. Mary’s Auditorium, 8am–6pm
Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook, 1pm
- Jun 2-4 ME27-Newark -St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
SE16-Newark - Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
- Jun 10-11 Lord, Teach Us to Pray - Community Retreat, St. Mary’s Auditorium, 9am-5pm
- Jun 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada Inn, S. Plainfield, NJ, 8am–5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples
- Jul 7-9 YE13-Newark- St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- Aug 19 Community Day, Newark – St. Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ Grove #4

Birthdays

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mar 10 Girlie Aliparo LSS17 Maryann McGehrin LSS20 Mar 11 Mol Barredo LSS22 Aiko Raagas YCR4 Mar 12 Chemie Francisco YE11 Peter Obi, Mk 10 Mar 13 Mat Talag LSS8 Kelli Anyanwu YE9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mar 13 Jennali Reyes Mk10 Mar 14 Tet Almazan LSS3 Mathina Ngobidi ME 16 Randy Trinidad LSS 10 Mar 15 Ike Alimario LSS17 Deng Trillana LSS7 Mar 16 Art Nano LSS18 Faith Ikalina YCR3 |
|---|--|

Anniversaries

- Mar 10** Marc and Emma Belmonte ME25
- Mar 16** John and Beth Alonzo LSS19
- Ed and Nanie de los Reyes LSS9

The Lord's Provisions

Cash Flow as of Mar. 3 2006 – Week # 9

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 3,780.00	\$39,764.00
Disbursements	\$ 1,528.90	\$46,194.09
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 2,251.10	(\$ 6,430.09)

Yearly Receipts Comparison

<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>Increase(Decrease)</u>
\$ 3,780	\$ 3,270	\$ 510 In %: 15.6%



Newark Holds Prayerful Emergence

Praise The Lord!!! Obedience and discernment marked the March 11th general emergence as 70% of eligible nominators trooped to St. Mary's to select the global community's and BLD Newark's future leaders.

Following the CCEO guidelines, the emergence transpired quite smoothly. The DCEO consisting of George McGehrin, Rene Arribe, Audie Chong, Dan Dwyer and Fidel Lim administered the process.

The day started with the celebration of the Eucharist, officiated by Father Chris Panlilio. After the Eucharist, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed as nominators sought direction from the Holy Spirit. Before the nominations were cast, Pastoral steward Noel Trillana explained the functions of the ECSL, DSL and DCS, and the DCEO made a final explanation of the nomination process.

The DCEO spent over 11 hours spread out over 2 days to tally the nominations. They used 2-3 laptop computers to help them record, compute and report the results. Almost 12,000 keystroke entries were made.

The CCEO will receive the emergence results from all districts. The week after Easter Sunday, the Spiritual Director is expected to announce his selections for ECSL & DSL. The incoming ECSL will then discern the DCS for each full term district. The new leaders assume office on July 1, 2006.

We thank the DCEO and the entire community for their support and prayers.

COUNSELS

God's Holy Temple

WORD: Ex 20:1-17; Psalm 19:8, 9,10,11; 1 Cor 1:22-25; Jn 2:13-25

THEME: We keep God's covenant when we believe in the power of His word.

ORDER: "Love me and keep my commandments." (Ex 20:6b)

REFLECTION:

Jesus went up to Jerusalem and found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out. And He said: " Stop making my Father's house a marketplace." (Jn 2:13-16)

This bible verse presents to us a very different image of Jesus, the Son of God. Here we see Jesus forcefully driving out vendors, money changers, and farm animals out of the temple, overturning tables and causing chaos. This is the only gospel account that presents to us an image of Jesus which is in direct contrast to the lamb-like Jesus who meekly submitted himself to ridicule and mockery.

"Zeal for your house will consume me." (Jn 2:17b) Consumed with love and obedience for His Father, Jesus offered Himself as the living sacrifice to cleanse the temple of our hearts from sin. His body on the cross became the whip that drove out the darkness of the enemy.

The temple referred to in John 2 refers also to the sacred building that houses the gathering of God's people, a place of God's presence in Word and Sacrament. Jesus objected to the irreverence that made the temple into a den of thieves. He

(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week



"The Law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul."

Ps 19:8

The Winning Side, Christ's Side

In the world of competition, there are winners and losers. Understandably, everyone wants to win. Victors are accorded honor and recognition. Proofs of honor- certificates, medals, pins, or trophies- occupy a special place at home. Competitors prepare to win in various ways. Manny Pacquiao, for example, says a silent prayer before a fight. People love winners.

God loves us so much that He did not spare His own son to give us victory over sin and death. Rom 8:31 says, *“if God is for us, who can be against us?”* With God on our side, the enemy is guaranteed to lose. Just thinking about this makes me feel ten feet tall. On the other hand, Luke 11:23 says, *“... whoever is not with me is against me and whoever does not gather with me scatters”*. Those who are not with God are against Him, and who can win against Him?

The Lord God wants us to be always on His side. How? By knowing Him and abiding in His word. But even when we do something wrong, He would not allow us to be lost. In His mercy, He invites us to repent and receive His forgiveness that we may be brought back to His fold. When we fall again, He unfailingly picks us up, so long as we have sincere contrition in our hearts.

Those who do not return to Him are scattered. The scattered have no direction and no sure guide. They are lost in myriad of things, unable to get out of the maze. Only the Lord's guiding hand will remove their confusion and show them the right path. Amazing but so true.

How do we win? 1 Cor 9:24 teaches us, *“Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win.”* Victory is assured in Christ, but we have an obligation to persevere in following the Lord. Heb 12:1 exhorts us, *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us.”*

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ and manifests through us the odor of the knowledge of Him in every place.” 2 Cor 2:14. Be on the winning side, Christ's side.

Obedience in Love

After teaching His disciples about the law, Jesus said, *“Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*(Mt. 5:19)

Who could be a better model of obedience than Mary and Jesus? Mary, called to be the mother of the Savior of the world, said: *“May it be done to me according to Your word.”* (Lk.1: 38). Jesus, in order to fulfill the Father's perfect plan of salvation for each and every one of us, took on the punishment of a sinner although without sin. He was scourged, beaten and was crucified to death. Jesus obediently said to the Father, *“Your will be done”* (Mt.26:42b). Who can ever do the same?

Our God is a God of wisdom and power, of love and compassion. He writes His law into our hearts and minds and as we obey His commands, we draw closer to Him. We allow Him to take possession of our will, to completely obey Him. Obeying God makes us enemies of the world but through endurance we are not disgraced. *“Whoever acts like this shall never be shaken.”* (Ps. 15:5b)

After we encountered Jesus through the BLD community and regularly attended weekly worship and discipleship formation, we learned to pray and grow in God's Spirit. We follow Jesus and become more focused on Him. Despite many trials and temptations, we persevere to remain faithful to His words. God promised: *“My word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it.”* (Is. 55:10-11).

The root of obedience of faith is love – love of God and neighbor, the two greatest commandments (Mk.12:30-31). Jesus gave His new commandment: *“Love one another. As I have loved you, so also must you love one another.”* (Jn. 13:34). A small act which we do out of love for God and for our brothers and sisters is far greater than all the great works we do with little love. Jesus taught us by example – He died on the cross for love of us. Let us follow Him by the example of our own lives that we can lead others to Him, thus fulfilling the law of love. Let us all strive to be temples of the living God, by fulfilling Jesus' commandment as we honor and respect one another.

Covenant with God

"I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant. I have chosen David my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him. My hand will be with him; my arm will make him strong. My loyalty and love will be with him; through my name his horn will be exalted." Ps 89: 4, 21-22,25,27,29

Our covenant with God is not just a piece of paper or simple contract but a personal compact, a sacred agreement between 'me and my God'. It is a promise of self-giving which we cannot keep by our own strength but only with God's grace.

As the song goes, "I never promised you a rose garden". We should be prepared for the rough road ahead of us. Though we often fail, we must persevere in our walk with Jesus. We must not be discouraged by life's hindrances or oppressions. Instead, we must focus on God and seek His direction on how to live our covenant. It is Jesus who guides us and makes us strong in faith. Let us be renewed in the Spirit through prayer, worship, the Sacraments, study and ministry. Thus, our covenant with the God will withstand whatever changes in our circumstances- in time, space and people.

Our covenant calls us to serve the Lord in every possible way, guided by the wisdom and knowledge He bestowed on us. We must use His gifts to fulfill His tasks. His love should be radiantly mirrored in our lives. Our covenant obedience to God is the most valuable legacy that we can pass on to our children.

"He will cry to me. "You are my father, my God, the Rock that brings me victory. Forever I will maintain my love for him; my covenant with him stands firm" Ps 89:27, 29.

Our covenant calls us to get rid of our pride and to ask God for help, rather than acting on our own without God's blessings. We cannot always understand His wisdom, but we must always trust and follow Him even when what He wants us to do disagrees with our human wisdom. The Lord reveals but will never force His will on us.

Our covenant requires that we give our lives totally to Jesus, who is our Lord and Rock. By persevering in faithfully living our covenant, we give God honor and glory. Our covenant with Him gives us the confidence that He will carry us through and will not allow us to be separated from His peace. Let us have no fear, for He will be faithful to finish the work He began in us.

Ministry Announcements

YLSS # 11 this weekend

Please pray for all the candidates and those who serve

Community Retreat - Healing the Family Tree

with Father Mike Barry, SS.CC

May 13, 2006 8am-6pm at St. Mary's Auditorium. .

MARK 10 Field Trip - Salt Marsh Ecology Trip

(Seining Activity for all the kids).

May 13, 2006 at 1 pm at Sandy Hook, NJ.

Parents must accompany their children.

Please see Reuben/Cherry Vibar to sign-up.

Children 12 years old and below are free.

ME # 27 - June 2-4

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA.

Applications now available at www.bldnewark.com

Contact: Bebot/Grace Baquilod, ME 26 Class or MLA.

Community Retreat - "Lord Teach Us To Pray"

with Father Don O'Connor, SVD.

June 10-11, 9am - 5pm at St. Mary's Auditorium.

Solo Parent Encounter #8 - June 23-25

Now accepting applications. Please see Dolly and Bobby Fernandez.

TEACHINGS

March 17 after worship

Singles Christian Service

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

March 18 St. Mary's 1-6pm

LSS 26 Christian Parenting, Part I

LSS 24 Gifts and Fruit of the HS, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia

LSS 21-22 Healing and Deliverance

All Shepherds Shepherds Refresher Course

March 24 after worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teachings

April 1 St. Mary's Church 1-6 pm

LSS 20 Apologetics, Sacramentals, Prayer and Salvation

LSS 24 CMP1 Part I - Love, Faith, Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

"The Lord is with me to the end. Lord your love endures forever. Never forsake the work of your hands." Psalm 138:8

Counsels (from page 1)

recognized that these behaviors prevented His Father’s house from truly being “a house of prayer for all nations.” Everything that goes on in that temple—the recitation of common prayer, the commemoration of the work of redemption, the words and music of liturgy – recognize a sacred reality, a remembrance of the holiness of God

Let’s ask ourselves: “What of our present behaviors in St. Mary’s Church may cause us to offend Jesus terribly?” If our behavior in church will prevent our brethren from doing their living word group, from communing with God, when our words and behavior are not prayerful, then we will be like the vendors Jesus referred to as thieves. We will be stealing from the prayer time of others, disturbing their contemplative quiet, but most of all disrespecting the very presence of Jesus in the sanctuary.

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God which you are, is holy.” (1 Cor 3:16-17)

If Jesus felt so strongly about irreverent behavior in the Lord’s temple, imagine how He would be more so offended by thoughts, words and actions that defile our bodies. Our body is the temple of God, therefore, we must be careful — where it goes, what it does, what it ponders, and how it reacts. Our body should be suitable for worship. Our thoughts should be on God and His purposes. We should seek to understand God and His Word, guided by the Holy Spirit, in close fellowship with Jesus, continually communing with Him.

“In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.” (Eph 2:22) The Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit. As we seek to be united in one body, we must also be vigilant that our actions may not defile our community. We must be “fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church.” (CCC252) By God’s grace, He is enabling this community to move forward, to undertake new works of mission and evangelization. Let us support all that He has set for us to do with a zeal born out of a pure love for the Lord. Let us welcome God into our hearts, minds and will whenever we come together to worship, so He may forever be enthroned in our praises! Enthroned Him in the highest places of His Temple!

Directions:

1. Believe in the power of the Word in your life and witness to others in your Word Sharing Circles.
2. Maintain an attitude of reverence inside the church at all times.
3. Cleanse negative attitudes and behavior which defile the temple of God.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Mar. 18-19 **YLSS # 11 - Newark**
St. Mary’s Auditorium
- April 7-9 **LSS # 26 - Newark**
St. Mary’s Auditorium
- May 13 **Healing the Family Tree**
Community Retreat
St. Mary’s Auditorium, 8am–6pm
- May 13 **Mark 10 Field Trip**
Sandy Hook - 1pm
- June 2-4 **ME # 27 - Newark**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- SE # 16 - Newark**
Graymoor Friars of Atonement
Garrison, NY
- June 10-11 **Lord, Teach Us to Pray**
Community Retreat
St. Mary’s Auditorium, 9am–5pm
- June 17-18 **Prayer Counseling Seminar**
Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ, 8am–5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples
- June 23-25 **Solo Parent Encounter #8 - Newark**
- July 7-9 **YE# 13 - Newark**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- July 21-23 **FE # 13 - Newark**
Marlverne, PA
- Aug. 5-6 **Newark Youth Inter-district Conference**
St. Mary’s Auditorium

.....
BIRTHDAYS

- Mar. 17 Barbara, Pascoguin, ME 20
Victor Garcia, John 6
- Mar. 18 Letty Chua, LSS 13
Menchee Tibayan, LSS 17
Francis Muyalde, YCR 6
- Mar. 19 Joe Baluyot, LSS 3
Eugene Briones, YE 9
- Mar. 21 Gon Daulo, LSS 23
Jerry Pagdonsolan, ME 20
Kristle Navarro, YCR 4
- Mar. 22 Ginny Celentano, SPE 5
Glenn Cabrera, LSS 10
Perpetua Ekweghariri, LSS 20
Daniel Duma, YE 10
- Mar. 23 Katerina Chong, YCR 5



THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Mar. 10, 2006 – Week # 10

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$5,413.17	\$45,177.17
Disbursements	\$5,614.12	\$51,808.21
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$200.95)	(\$6,631.04)



35 Youth yielded to the Holy Spirit

“God added his testimony by signs, wonders, various acts of powers, and distribution of the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will.” (Hebrews 2:4)



Last weekend, March 17-19, the Youth held the YLSS #11 that was blessed with a bountiful harvest. Thirty-five youth received the gracious gifts of the Holy Spirit. The YLSS #11 Team led by our Spiritual Director, Fr. Paul Lehman, consisted of 31 shepherds, 10 co-shepherds, 55 auxies, 4 youth praise members, and 9 sharers. It was held at St. Mary’s auditorium.

The YLSS started with an Invocation Mass held last Friday, followed by a Shepherd’s Vigil, which ended the night. On Saturday, powerful and touching sharings were given by some of the youth. The lambs attended an evening Mass, followed by the baptism, where they experienced the awesome power of the Holy Spirit. The seminar was concluded with a Eucharistic celebration.

On behalf of the Youth, we thank the community for your prayers and support. Let us continue to pray for the YLSS #11 graduates, so that they may grow in the Spirit and live a more prayerful life.

A reunion will be held at St. Mary’s auditorium, on Sunday, April 2 at 1:00 pm.

What Jesus did in the Arizona dessert

YE 2, holler boo!

The Lord’s invitation to *“Come and See”*, was accepted by 19 candidates from BLD Phoenix last March 10 to 12. The Lord opened the Heaven’s doors and shined His light into the hearts of these young adults who were searching for Him all these years.

A group of 4 facilitators from the Newark Youth Ministry, including one adult chaperone, assisted to make the retreat a success. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit

(continued on page 2)

COUNSELS

Christians in a Modern World

WORD: 2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23; Ps 137:1-6; Eph 2:4-10; Jn 3:14-21

THEME: We keep God’s covenant when we live in His truth.

ORDER: *“Lift up the Son of Man, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.” (Jn 3:14b)*

REFLECTION:

In the first reading, *“... the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the Lord’s temple...” (2 Chr 36:14)*

As a result, God allowed the destruction of Jerusalem. Lack of faith, trust or loyalty to God is an act of infidelity. Abominations are disgusting or loathsome acts or things.

Let us look around our world today. Are we not seeing people practice infidelity and acts of abominations? Don’t we have a culture of death, when people practice abortion and euthanasia? Are people not polluting the Lord’s temple by the practice of homosexuality and pornography? Our body is God’s temple. We should keep it clean and worthy of God’s presence.

Are we not afraid or ashamed to say that we are Christians? Are we not ashamed to make the sign of the cross in public? Are we not ashamed to say “Merry Christmas? Why are people hesitating to mention God? Is it because we don’t want to offend someone or some group of people who don’t believe in God? But we

(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.” (Jn 3:21)

A Bonus from Heaven!



It has been four months since BLD Newark presented “*Somebody’s Praying Me Through*,” the musical production on the power of intercession and prayers. This project was undertaken for the primary purpose of evangelization. The Lord was indeed the main architect of this production because its success can only be attributed to His power and inspiration. The community, through our elders, exhorted the Overall Production Team to go forth, without concern for monetary returns. To break-even was sufficient. The elders asked the team to set the ticket price to the allowable minimum, to attract the maximum number of attendees. There were no solicitations made for the souvenir program, but a couple of members volunteered to donate some amount.

The Treasury Ministry provided the SMPT Team with the financial report of the project. Surprisingly, the Lord has blessed this community a BONUS of \$11,035.18 for being faithful and trusting in Him. The amount was taken from the ticket sales of \$37,830 less expenses of \$26,793.82. This “bonus” did not include the added “value” of acquired assets like audio and stage equipment, which can be used for other BLD activities.

The production’s primary offering was the musical gifts and talents of the community and those witnesses who shared their lives to touch others. The perseverance and diligence of the Marketing/Sales & Advertising/Promotion Team, as well as the vigilant financial stewardship of our Administration and Production Team, inspired many in the community to freely provide their time, resources and other talents. The show was indeed a victory for the Lord.

Details of the financial report can be made available through the Treasury Ministry upon request.

What Jesus did... (from page 1)

and their Spiritual Director, Fr. JP Villanueva, the graduates experienced spiritual healing. They were also ready to establish the foundation of the BLD Phoenix Youth Ministry.

Everyone was constantly reminded that, “the weekend is for the Lord- not for us”. The Lord’s presence was definitely seen in each candidate’s eyes. The Lord’s victory was an amazing experience that every one who served could not let go of. The parents of the candidates were moved to see that their children were happy to be with the Lord. All of these were made possible through the blessing and guidance of our Almighty King. Praise the Lord!

A Reflection on John 4: 43-54

I Believe

The 4th chapter of John’s gospel, verses 43-54, is about the healing of the royal official’s son, through the life-giving words of Jesus, as He told the official, “*You may go; your son will live.*” (Jn 4:50) It was his trust in the words of Jesus that saved his son’s life and confirmed his faith. He learned on his way home, that his son was healed exactly the same hour Jesus said those words to him.

Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding in Cana, the town next to Caparnaum, where the official lived. This miracle and the testimony given by the Samaritan woman (see Jn 4:4-42) were more than enough to convince him, who Jesus was. Having tried all human resources, he took this quantum leap of faith and took this opportunity to plead Jesus for his son’s life.

After knowing all about Jesus and His word, do we still hold on to our own convictions and rely on our own, when we meet difficulties in life, especially those that matter between life and death? Are we like the royal official, who have reached that point in our spiritual journey, that only God, in Jesus’ name, can we obtain favors, even the impossible?

In my life, my faith began to deepen when I was six years old. I also witnessed the first miracle in my family, as the Infant Jesus of Prague fulfilled His promise, that at the ninth hour of one’s flying novena, their request will be granted. His first promise is, “*Ask, and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened to you.*” The second promise is, “*Whatever you ask the Father in My name, will be granted.*” The third promise is, “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass.*” All these promises are to be granted through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In 1954, on my Dad’s 35th birthday, he fell from a cliff, after being hit by a boulder while battling the rebels and was missing for five rainy days. It was on the ninth hour of my mom’s flying novena, that her prayer was answered, as the phone rang telling her that they have found my Dad.

Miracles abound for those who claim Jesus’ words. Suddenly, our pains are gone and we find ourselves living the gospels with Jesus by our side, with all that He is, saying, “*If you remain in Me, and My words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.*” (Jn 15:7)

Let us, with Mary’s intercession, entrust ALL, in Jesus name. AMEN.

Let Us Strengthen Our WSCs

Community growth is a blessing, but it can be a bane to intimacy. It is a blessing because growth comes from God, whose anointing produces fruitfulness in the community. It is a blessing because growth brings an expanded capacity to give and to receive love. It is a blessing because every new member is a gift, just as the community is a gift, from the Son to the Father and through the Spirit, to us.

Growth can be a bane to intimacy, because sheer numbers constrain friendships. Is it possible to be intimate friends with a hundred people, much less instantly remember their names? Is it possible to keep mental track of the community's worship attendance, that we might be able to say to those who didn't, I missed you last Friday? How would a member feel if his presence is not missed, or if no one shows interest in him? Would he feel like he belongs? Would he be motivated to remain in community?

To be clear, we desire and welcome community growth. But along with it, we advocate the intimacy and attentive care that a family or small community can give its members. Is this a realistic ideal to have in a large and growing community like ours? The answer is YES, but it would mean strengthening the Word Sharing Circles (WSC), our community's basic pastoral unit.

What does strengthening the WSC involve? Following are some suggestions:

- Keep each circle small and intimate, consisting of 5-6 couples or 10-12 individual members at the most. Each WSC would remain in their home ministry or apostolate.
- Provide the WSC ample time for Word ministry and fellowship after corporate worship. Use the WSC guidelines from Manila, but be flexible and allow use of alternative reflection materials to meet the unique needs of WSC members.
- Empower the WSC with the "twin engines" of communion and mission. Release and unify the gifts of members for ministry within the WSC and outside the community.
- Make the circle shepherd accountable for the pastoral care and well-being of the circle members, and for mission fruitfulness. Stewards and coordinators in turn should provide monthly pastoral care to circle shepherds.

(continued on next column)

Ministry Announcements

LSS # 26, April 7-9. Now accepting applications. Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic-Dee Lim, LSA

Catholic Day of Renewal. April 8, 2006, 9am-4pm Eucharist/Recollection/Teachings/Workshop with Fr. Bill Halbing and Fr. Paul Lehman. Topic: *Deliver Us From Evil*. Corpus Christi Chapel, 215 Kipp Ave., Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604. Contact: George & MaryAnn McGehrin 201-933-5983 or georgemaryann@hotmail.com Bring your own lunch. Free will offering will be taken.

Community Retreat. Healing the Family Tree with Father Mike Barry, SS.CC.

May 13, 8am-6pm at St. Mary's Auditorium.

ME # 27, June 2-4 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA. Applications now available at www.bldnewark.com. Contact: Bebot and Grace Baquilod or the ME 26 Class and the MLA.

Solo Parent Encounter #8, June 23-25. Now accepting applications. Please see Dolly and Bobby Fernandez.

TEACHINGS

Mar 24 after worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teachings

Apr. 1 St. Mary's Church 1-6pm

LSS 20 Apologetics, Sacramentals, Prayer and Salvation

LSS 24 CMP1 Part I – Love, Faith, Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

Apr. 21 after worship

Singles - Christian Community

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching



Let Us Strengthen Our WSCs

- Develop growth tracks for WSC members, e.g. to become circle shepherds of their own WSCs with growth in spiritual maturity and gifts.

Much like the home churches of the early Christians, the WSCs are the basic cells or building blocks of our community. When we strengthen our WSCs, we also solidify our communion, and thus position ourselves for a fruitful mission.

Counsels from page 1

believe in God! Are we not free to exercise our beliefs? Let us then be bold to proclaim that we are Christians and be a witness to the power of the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord of our life!

Is there a struggle between light and darkness going on in our lives? This is the question asked by the people and the apostles to Peter, after his speech at Pentecost. We know now that Peter’s speech was the truth. We should also be asking this question constantly to remind us of our covenant.

There is no doubt that we need Jesus in our lives, as He is the light and the truth. We must however, do our part. We have to know the teachings of the Catholic Church. We have to pray always, read the Sacred Scriptures and meditate on the word of God.

As Christians, we have the light of Christ. So let our light shine wherever we are. Let us continue to persevere. We must never give up. We keep God’s love when we live in His truth. How? What are we to do?

Let us look at the life of Jesus Christ and compare it to ours. How close or far we are to His image and likeness depends on our relationship with Him. How faithful we are to our covenant is a good yardstick to know where we are. Let us never allow ourselves to be separated from Him. Let us find the time to reflect on our lives and ask ourselves how we are doing.

To live the life of Christ is not easy. It requires a life of disciplined prayers, Bible readings, reflections and meditations. Why? By nature, man prefers darkness instead of light. We are still enslaved to concupiscence, the desires of the eyes, sexual lust and pride. We can overcome these worldly desires if we have Jesus Christ in our hearts.

But we are not hopeless because God is rich in mercy and compassion. We have the Church and our community to form us to be followers of Christ. We look at our community as an instrument of God to help us. It is in the community where we learn the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church. It is in the community where we learn to be patient and to control our temper and our tongues. To live our covenant means to love God and each other. It means to see Jesus in each of our brethren. *“For God so loved the word that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.”* (Jn 3:16)

DIRECTION:

Witness the power of the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord in your life.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- April 2 Newark YLSS # 11 Reunion, 1pm - 4:30 pm, St. Mary's Auditorium
- April 7-9 LSS # 26, Newark – St. Mary’s Auditorium
- May 13 Healing the Family Tree - Community Retreat, St. Mary’s Auditorium, 8am–6pm
- Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook–1pm
- June 2-4 ME# 27, Newark – Easton, PA
- SE # 16, Newark – Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
- June 10-11 Lord, Teach Us to Pray - Community Retreat, St. Mary’s Auditorium, 9am–5pm
- June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am–5pm
- Open to all Covenanted Disciples
- June 23-25 Solo Parent Encounter #8, Newark
- July 7-9 YE# 13, Newark- Easton, PA
- July 21-23 FE # 13, Newark - Malverne, PA

Birthdays



- Mar. 24** Imma Anyanwu, LSS 15
- Emerson Anyanwu, YE 11
- Mar. 25** Marilyn Alejan, LSS 7
- Obioma Anyanwu, LSS 23
- Lucy Robles, LSS 17
- Mar. 26** Lou Alejandro, LSS 18
- Mar. 27** Cely Ocaya, ME 25
- Mel Biason, YE 11
- Mar. 28** Merle Encarnacion, LSS 8
- Way Gomez, LSS 1
- Ricky Laguatan, ME 23
- Dulce Samonte, LSS 23
- Mar. 29** Oscar Masias, ME 25
- Mar. 30** Duke Okoli, ME 25
- Leah Alata, YCR 5

Anniversaries

- Mar. 26** Felix and Perpetua Ekweghariri, LSS 20
- Joe and Helen Madrigal, LSS 13
- Mar. 27** Tony and Juliet Mabalot, LSS 20
- Mar. 28** Ding and Cora Fadri, LSS 2

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Mar. 17, 2006 - Week # 11

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 3,426.00	\$ 48,603.17
Disbursements	\$ 5,061.36	\$ 56,869.57
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$ 1,635.36)	(\$ 8,266.40)



John 6 at Holy Face Monastery

Last Saturday, March 25, the John 6 Ministry took a trip to experience first hand praying the Stations of the Cross at the top of a hill at the Holy Face Monastery in Clifton, New Jersey. Guided by our “titos and titas,” we went through the most peaceful and serene landscape which brought a solemn atmosphere for prayers. There were 20 of us mostly from John 6, some from the Youth ministry and our parents who braved the bitter wind and chilly weather.

Situated in the rear of the church, on lovely scenic grounds filled with coniferous trees stands a chapel, called the “Hall of Saints” circled with large statues of Mother Mary, St. Lorenzo Ruiz, St. Joseph, St. Lucy, St. Jude, St. Benedict and some other saints. Also featured in the chapel is a mural of Christ’s image, a full size reproduction of the Shroud of Turin that clearly marks the pain and suffering on Jesus Christ’s face on His way to Calvary.

The day ended with a mass at the Alejan’s residence celebrated by our very own Fr. Dave Sison followed by a highly spirited praise practice.

The trip was very meaningful for us in understanding how Jesus Christ died on the cross and why He did it— to save us!

Fr. Paul Lehman and Fr. Bill Halbing to conduct teaching on “Deliver Us From Evil”.

(Through the following article, we invite you to attend this teaching. The teaching is based on Neal Lozano’s book “Unbound- A Practical Guide to Deliverance. Date: April 8 from 9am-4pm. Venue: Corpus Christi Chapel at 215 Kipp Avenue, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604. Target audience: those called to receive or to give deliverance.)

Freedom is Truth Known and Lived:

In the supreme expression of His covenant love for man, God gave Himself totally to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. The supreme expression ☞ page 3

COUNSELS

Carrying Servanthood With Humility

WORD: Jer 31:31-34; Ps 51:3-4, 12-15;
Heb 5:7-9; Jn 12:20-33

ORDER: “Whoever serves me must follow me ...
“(Jn 12:26a)

THEME: We keep God’s covenant when
we thank God in our sufferings.

REFLECTION: “Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servants be.” (Jn 12:26a). For tonight’s worship, we would like our focal point to be on this Scripture verse. We would like to study its meaning so we may know how to accomplish God’s order as followers of Jesus.

It is obvious that as followers, we ought to be able to follow what the teacher tells us. However, that is easier said than done because what Jesus did was anything but easy. And also we know that Jesus is God—that’s why we hear people reasoning “because He is God and I am just a man.” The Lord knew we’d be terrified, so He tells us and assures that “with man it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible” (Mat 19:26), putting emphasis on the key words “WITH GOD.”

If you have been in the community for several years now, you would have definitely remembered what it was like when you began to follow Jesus. Based on my personal experience, at the onset, we were released from many of our troubles, worries, anxieties, and pains, and that sense of freedom was sincerely beautiful, really miraculous. Then later we came to a point when problems were expected but because we learned to trust in Jesus

☞ page 4

Promise of the Week

“When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” (Jn 12:32)

Compassion and Forgiveness

One of the dramatic episodes in the life of Jesus is described in John 8:1-11. It is the account of the woman caught in adultery, who was brought to Jesus. The crowd gathered to stone her for her sin, which was the penalty under the Jewish law. However, Jesus responded by saying to the crowd: “*Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.*” (Jn 8:7) The crowd was sobered by these remarks and dispersed. Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to her, “*Neither do I condemn you. Go, (and) from now on do not sin any more.*” (Jn 8:11). Compassionate and forgiving love towards sinners is the essence of Christ’s teaching in this gospel. We also see the extraordinary depth and breadth and generosity of God’s mercy.

God’s desire is not to condemn us, but to save us. He sent His only Son to die on the cross to bring us forgiveness of our sins. He also wants to bring us into deep communion with Himself by making us His sons and daughters.

During this season of Lent, let us reflect upon our lives and try to discover what areas need changing. We reflect upon the sins we have committed and make reparation for them by doing penance, fasting and almsgiving. Underlying this time of reflection is the deep understanding that God has offered us forgiveness through His Son.

Forgiveness has two dimensions: we need to receive forgiveness, and we need to grant forgiveness. Each of us needs to be forgiven for things we have done against God and/or against our neighbor. When we ask for and receive forgiveness for something we have done wrong, or something we have done to hurt another, we experience a new freedom. In the very act of recognizing we have done wrong, in exercising the courage to approach another and admit the wrongdoing, and in asking for their forgiveness, we grow in the image and likeness of God. Is this not what happened to the woman caught in adultery? The Lord Jesus was the only one who could cast the first stone at her. He was the only one in the crowd, who is *without sin*. But He did not do so. His love transformed her into a new person and freed her from her sin.

As Christ is compassionate and forgiving towards us, let us also be the same towards others, especially our family, our co-workers and our brethren in the community. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to give us the grace to forgive and be made new in Christ.

REAL KINSHIP

“If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the works of Abraham.” (Jn 8:39)

What exactly did Abraham do that we should emulate? Does being a son of Abraham involve doing what he did in every particular thing? No, it is doing what he did in the essential thing, namely, believing God’s promises. In Galatians 3:6, it says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*” Abraham, indeed, was a man of faith. Therefore, those who have faith are children of Abraham. (Galatians 3:7) Like Abraham, we have to abide in Christ. We have to live in Him and from out of Him. We have to depend upon Him for everything, relying upon Him for our very life. Abraham believed that everything he is called, and everything he is, is only possible because he is in Him. His genuine faith resulted in action, in doing the will of the Lord.

St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians, “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus and if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendant, heirs according to the promise.*” elucidates that anyone can become beneficiary of God’s promises to Abraham if one has the faith of Abraham. To be God’s adopted son is to receive Jesus Christ by faith. For without faith, it is impossible to please God. (Hebrew 11: 6)

In our day to day living, do we depend upon ourselves, upon our loved ones? In performing our ministry work, do we depend upon own capabilities and strengths? Or do we open ourselves up and begin to live from out of dependency upon Jesus for everything as God shows us how? Do we fully believe that God is the source of everything, that we cannot do anything without Him but in Him we can do everything? To belong to Jesus, to be a son of Abraham, we must truly believe in this truth. We must walk in that faith, and live from out of that faith. We must simply retire to a position of resting in and depending upon Jesus. Then His life, the fruit of the Spirit, will gradually shine through us. But it won’t be because of our efforts. It will be because we rested from our efforts and simply began to abide in Him. This is what “real kinship” is all about.

Heavenly Father, pour upon us the gift of faith, the kind of faith that works itself out in love, so we may walk in Truth and grow up to be Your intended sons and daughters. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

DCS Speaks

After much confusion, anticipation and anxiety the much-awaited emergence is now over. The turning point for most of our covenanted disciples was the Eucharistic celebration that made many of us realize that it is the LORD who decides who will lead His community in the next three years. As the outgoing DCS ponders how quickly the time has passed we are grateful that we were tasked to do a job that none of us was worthy to perform – it was only through the grace of GOD that we leave our positions with the community very much intact and fruitful. We were blessed to see the increasing focus on outward activities by our members. Our medical mission, soup kitchen, parish assistance, Fr. Paul's GK village and diocesan involvement have gained ground as our disciples are transformed through communion with mission.

In process is the updating and auditing of our financial records so our revenues and expenses will be transparent to all members and outside agencies. There were other matters that we have not accomplished and may have caused some members to be disappointed. We apologize for our shortcomings and trust that it must be not part of the Lord's plan during our tenure. As we pass the torch to the new DCS we exhort our whole community to pray for them and to give them our valued support. Like the outgoing DCS, none of the new DCS volunteered to have the job. They believe that their covenant mandates them to serve as the LORD has called them through the prayerful discernment of our members and elders.

In closing we would like to thank the DCEO for the wonderful job they have done and we are grateful to all of you who prayed for this emergence to be blessed by the LORD.

from page 1

of our covenant love for God is to give ourselves totally to Him- free from all ungodly attachments and influences, and therefore one in Spirit with His Son Jesus Christ.

Deliverance from ungodly attachments and influences is part of our ongoing life's struggle as Christians. Yes, our Lord Jesus Christ won for us our freedom through the Cross in Calvary. Yet we know that the evil one constantly seeks to snatch this freedom away from us (1 Pt 5:8). For this reason, St. Peter exhorts us to "be sober and vigilant".

Through lies, the evil one will entice us with temptations. Through disruption and division, he will oppose our good works. If given an opening, he will attach himself to our persons and hold us in bondage. 

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LSS # 26 - April 7-9: Now accepting applications! Visit www.bldnewark.com or contact Vic-Dee Lim, LSA *Please pray for all the candidates and those who serve.*

Singles Ministry. April 21 9pm-11pm An Introduction to Theology of the Body.

Presented by Damon Owens, Archdiocese of Newark NFP Coordinator

MARK 10 Field Trip. May 13-1 pm Salt Marsh Ecology Trip (Seining Activity for all the kids)

Sandy Hook, NJ Parents must accompany their children. Please see Reuben/Cherry Vibar to sign-up and pay \$10 per adult. Children up to 12 years old are free.

Teachings

Apr. 1 St. Mary's School 1-6 pm

LSS 20 Apologetics, Sacramentals, Prayer and Salvation

LSS 24 CMP1 Part I – Love, Faith, Renewing the Mind, Walking in the Spirit

Apr. 21 after worship

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

from previous column.

He will exploit what is in our past: sinful responses to hurts, unforgiveness, dabbling in the occult, self-inflicted curses (making a pact with the devil), family sin (anger, violence). He will exploit what is in our present: worldly attachments, pride, repeated sins, exposure to occasions of sin- whether places or friends, etc.

"You belong to God, children, and you have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (1Jn 4:4). While the enemy is real, he is puny and vanquished before our Almighty God. The enemy's strength lies in his deception and our ignorance. When we know God, when we abide in His Word, when we stand in His authority and when we live in His Truth, we will not be deceived.

"...the Truth will set you free" (John 8:32)! The Truth will convict us of our sinfulness and bring us to repentance and faith, to giving and asking forgiveness. The Truth will expose the lies of the devil, enabling us to renounce and resist the enemy and his works. And when we submit ourselves totally to Jesus' authority, His Truth will empower us to live up to our identity and destiny as God's covenant children and heirs whom *"He delivered from the power of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of His beloved Son"* (Col 1:13).

Counsels from page 1

we grew and became strong in our faith. We loved Jesus more and more because we believed He hears our prayers. Looking back, we realize that those experiences are stages of growth in the Lord, and part of a normal pattern of discipleship. However that was the easy part which we call in the M.E. weekend, the honeymoon stage. Now we get to the real discipleship formation-as the saying goes "where the rubber meets the road". Through the years of service in the community, we grow stronger in our faith but time will come that He will quietly invite us to the next phase and that is how to be a humble servant of Christ. This call is the major turning point in our walk with Jesus.

Everyone is invited, but many will find it too difficult, others will eventually stop from moving on to this later stage and few might not even give it a try. In this later stage, the Lord's invitation is for us to embrace "humility" which is such a simple word but totally profound and multi-layered.

Have you realized that this is a call for us to understand and practice humility? If you are not sure, let us ask ourselves the following questions.

Do we recognize that an example of humility is to ask for forgiveness although we are not at fault? What did Jesus ask the Father when He was dying on the cross?

Can we recognize that obedience to those above us, although we perceive that they might be wrong is humility too? There could be some disagreement about what I have addressed here, but if you ponder deeper the bottom line is still humility.

Can we recognize that not to be recognized as someone important means you have successfully applied humility in your life?

Can we recognize that dying to all our desires and accepting God to take control of all our life's situations is the beginning of humility? *"Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit."*

Do we in fact accept the poor as a reflection of God's love in this world?

Do learn humility is a long process where the Lord will break our pride down and break our spirits for several purposes and one of them is to learn total surrender, that we are not in control but Jesus.

And so we now understand why in Psalm 51:19, David writes: *"My sacrifice, God, is a broken spirit; God, do not spurn a broken, humbled heart."*

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- April 2 YLSS # 11 Reunion, Newark – St. Mary's Auditorium 1pm-4:30pm
April 7-9 LSS # 26, Newark – St. Mary's Aud.
May 13 Healing the Family Tree - Community Retreat, Newark St. Mary's Aud. 8am-6pm
Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook - 1pm
June 2-4 ME# 27, Newark - St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
SE # 16, Newark - Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
June 10-11 Lord, Teach Us to Pray - Community Retreat, Newark St. Mary's Aud., 9am-5pm
June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am-5pm. Open to all Covenanted Disciples

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .



BIRTHDAYS

- Mar. 31 Mahyeen Bernatchez, LSS 10
Rizza Ruaya, LSS 8
Eric Duma, YCR 6
Apr. 1 Edgar Bueser, YCR 4
Jeremy Lim, YCR 5
Ryan Demegillo, YLSS 9
Apr. 3 Nick Raagas, LSS 6
Lucy Sheridan, SPE 6
Apr. 4 Francis Ogbonna, Mk 10
Apr. 5 Pat Santos, LSS 15
Chrissy Sun, Mk 10
Christine Pena, YLSS 7
Karimah Newton, YE 11
Apr. 6 Lani Hernandez, LSS 19
Apr. 7 Cecil Salonga, LSS 17

ANNIVERSARIES

- Apr. 3 Dondon and Hermie Tenchavez, LSS 24
Apr. 6 Willy and Myrna de Luna, LSS 8

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Mar. 24, 2006 – Week # 12

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$ 4,111.00	\$ 52,714.17
Disbursements	\$ 16,337.31	\$ 73,206.88
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$ 12,226.31)	(\$ 20,492.71)

DIRECTION: 1. Give glory to God at all times, especially during times of trials and sufferings.



2. Die to yourself and serve the least of your brethren, especially those outside of the community and in your respective parishes.



“Lord, Teach Us To Pray” Retreat

The Pastoral Ministry is sponsoring a community retreat entitled “Lord, Teach Us To Pray”, on Saturday and Sunday, June 10-11, 2006, 9AM-5PM at St. Mary’s Church Auditorium. The retreat master will be Father Don O’Connor, SVD. He is the Director of the “House of Prayer” at the Divine Word Missionaries at Riverside, California. Fr. Don returned from Papua New Guinea in 2001, after serving in the South Pacific for 30 years. Since his sabbatical studies, he has been involved in retreats and spiritual direction in this country. He brings a missionary dimension in his meditations and sharings. He draws on his long time experiences as a pastor, teacher and spiritual companion.

The following are excerpts and subjects of talks;

1. “We will start with JESUS, how he prayed and how he taught his apostles to pray and how prayer played a very important role in people who are serious about following the Lord”.
2. “This leads us to PRAYING OUR EXPERIENCES, which involves inviting God into every aspects of our lives”.
3. “To do this, we will follow the old age method of prayer called LECTIO DIVINA, where we meditate on a particular scripture text that help us pray through the experience or emotion that we are feeling”.
4. “We will experience some difficulties and roadblocks in our effort to pray. And so we ask the Holy Spirit for His gifts of HEALING”.

God’s Promise for the Week

“The Lord God is my help, therefore I am not disgraced, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.” (Is 50:7)

COUNSELS

“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”

Word: Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-20; Phi 2:6-11; Mk 14:1-15:47

Order: Obey – “*Not what I will but what You will.*” (Mk 14:36b)

Theme: We obey His will when we die to our stubbornness and hardheartedness.



Reflection: “*My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why so far from my call for help, from my cries of anguish? My God, I call by day, but you do not answer; by night, but I have no relief.*” (Ps 22:1-2)

Our human nature cries out to God when we experience distress, pain, suffering, loss, or sorrow. We may wonder if God does not hear our cries. We may wonder if the Father has abandoned us, as we cry, just as Jesus cried out when he was crucified: “*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*” (Mk 15:34). But our Father loves the world so much and hears the cries of his people. He sent His only beloved Son, Jesus, who took on our sufferings and lifted up our prayers to the Father. - “*Jesus emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.*” (Phil 6:7-8)

Why do we experience that God has abandoned us? We must consider that perhaps this is the time of testing and strengthening of faith. We must remember

(continue on page 4)

The Importance of Trust

When Jesus said these things, He was troubled in spirit, testified and said, *“Mostly assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray me”*. (Jn 13:21)

My profound experiences have brought me into the darkest days when my heart was broken. God gave me a bountiful blessing that I know I greatly deserve but had been taken away from me. My friends whom I trust dearly betrayed me with jealousy and envy. I isolated myself with anger and hatred grew. Distrust was created with separation and pain. Revenge was not my option because I feel that God is always beside me. He gives me strength and courage to face the challenges and trials. I know God had plans for me. He knew what was best for me and my best interest at heart. He sent me to the BLD ME where I received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I thank you Lord, for giving me steadfast love and mercy. You led me to a life, walking and following You. I now have peace within me. I had forgiven those who have hurt my feelings.

To you my brothers and sisters who have been deceived and betrayed, Jesus knows how you feel. Put your trust on Him and lift your burden to Him. He cares about you because He loves you. Trust Him faithfully and He will empower you to be able to forgive those who hurt you. If we harbor sins, such as greed and selfishness, it will provide an opening for Satan to hook us into committing sins which can ruin us and very possibly, those around us whom we love. Satan will gain control of our lives the same way he did to Judas. Judas betrayed Jesus for the price of thirty pieces of silver (Mt 26:15). But he regretted his actions and went back to the chief priest and tried to right his wrong by returning the money and confessing to them that he had betrayed an innocent man (Mt 27:4). The priest however rejected the money claiming that they have nothing to do with him.

Sickened by the outcome of his actions, Judas threw the money on the floor of the Temple and went out and hung himself (Mt 27:5). It is hard for us to understand why Jesus chose Judas to be one of His disciples. We know however, that He selected Judas with much prayer and consultation with His Father (Lk 6:12). Jesus said, His soul was troubled because one of His disciples was going to betray Him. Judas betrayed the loyalty and that unfaithfulness was, understandably, troubling to the Lord. Prophecy foretold that someone was used by God to fulfill His purpose and that purpose was to act as a part of the means by which Jesus Christ would go to the cross and die to redeem the world.



The Virtue of Humility

“I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do”. (Jn 13:15)

What comes to mind when you reflect on Jesus washing the disciple's feet? What comes to mind when you stare at the cross?

A glimpse in Jesus' time tells us that house guests customarily had to wash their feet prior to entering the host's home. This

menial task, however, was one designated to the office of a slave- the servants. The roads of Palestine were unsurfaced and uncleaned; inches of dust inhabit the surface on dry weather, quickly turning to liquid mud during wet conditions. People wore sandals which offered very little protection from the harsh elements; hence, the washing of the feet was necessary.

John's account of this event shows our Lord, Jesus Christ, demonstrating the virtue of humility-the Master/Teacher, washing His disciple's feet. Jesus knew that His hour of ultimate humiliation and sacrifice was at hand, yet, with this anticipation of greatest injury, and betrayal, He embraced it with utmost humility and love. He also knew that His hour of glory was coming, yet He showed no ounce of pride, no hesitation to do the will of The Father-the journey to the cross. The more people hurt Him, the more Jesus loved them.

Humility is the gateway to all the other virtues. One cannot serve if he is not humble. One cannot love if he harbors pride in him. Above all, one cannot approach God if he is not humble. Humility is the very foundation of prayer (CCC 2559). It is this virtue that our Lord showed as a model to follow. Man prostrates himself in prayer, cognizant of the fact that we do not know how to pray as we ought (Romans 8:26).

Jesus, the new Adam, remained focused on His mission, His eye on the cross, the very cross that would expiate our sins and liberate us from death. Beyond the cross lies not defeat, but the glory and victory that restored man's divine sonship. I exhort our community to be imitators of Christ, especially during the lenten season, so that our Lord and Savior be magnified and be visible through us. Pick up your cross daily. Turn away from sin and avarice. We must die to self so that we may live in Christ.

“The greatest glory in life is the glory which comes from sacrifice” (William Barclay).

From the desk of Fr. Paul Lehman

The Sacred TRIDUUM



Years ago the holy season of Lent ended on Holy Saturday at noon. The celebrations of Holy week over the years began more and more to be “anticipated”, celebrated early in the day or even the evening before. The great Easter vigil ended up on Holy Saturday morning

instead of in the evening where it properly belong. It was usually performed in the early morning in parish churches. No matter how critical we may be of some of the liturgical reforms following the Second Vatican Council, the reform of Holy Week is truly a return to a truer and more obvious celebration of the most important mysteries of our Christian faith, the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Easter now properly begins with the Mass of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday evening. Actually, the last three days of Holy Week, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are looked upon as one long day of the paschal or Easter mystery.

Every Mass is a celebration of the Last Supper, but the uniqueness of the Holy Thursday liturgy includes the washing of the feet of twelve people. This act of “service” connects the mystery of the Eucharist with practical service to the entire Body of Christ. We extend Eucharistic service by humble tasks which may include even washing the feet of one another.

The liturgy on Good Friday is not a Mass, but a Scripture and Communion service. The Eucharist is distributed from hosts that have been consecrated at the Mass of the Last Supper, the evening before. This may give us pause, since you would think that of all the days of the year, Mass, the sacrificial offering of the Body and Blood of Jesus, should be celebrated on Good Friday. We are reminded on Good Friday how empty our life would be without the Eucharistic sacrifice, offered daily on our altars.

Holy Saturday offers no day time Masses. We are encouraged to make it a quiet day, a day to remain at the tomb in reflection on the sacrificial death of our Lord. Unfortunately Holy Saturday is one of the busiest days of the year. Yet, can we not encourage us all to grab a few precious hours for silence and

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 8, 2006, 9am - 4pm

Deliver Us From Evil Teaching/Workshop

Teachers: Fr. Bill Halbing and Fr. Paul Lehman
Corpus Christi Chapel, 215 Kipp Ave, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ
<http://www.rc.net/newark/corpuschristi/>

April 21, 2006 9pm-11pm (Singles Ministry)

An Introduction to Theology of the Body.

Presented by Damon Owens, Archdiocese of Newark, NFP Coordinator

MARK 10 Field Trip. May 13 @ 1 pm

Salt Marsh Ecology Trip, Sandy Hook, NJ
Parents must accompany their children. Please see Reuben and Cherry Vibar to sign-up. \$10 per adult, children up to 12 years old are free.

Marriage Encounter #27 - June 2-4, 2006

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Applications now available at www.bldnewark.com Contact: Bebot and Grace Baquilod or the ME 26 Class and the MLA.

Community Retreat. “Lord, Teach Us to Pray”

with Father Don O’Connor, SVD.
June 10-11 9am– 5pm at St. Mary’s Auditorium.

Solo Parent Encounter #8 - June 23-25.

Now accepting applications. Please see Dolly and Bobby Fernandez.

Youth Encounter #13 - July 7-9

at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA

Family Encounter Retreat - July 21-23 in Malverne, PA

Now accepting applications. Please sign up early.
Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz

Youth Ministry, Newark - Aug. 5-6 at St. Mary’s Audtrm Inter-district Conference of Youth from North America

(Seattle, Bay Area, Phoenix, Reno, Detroit, DC, Albany, Long Island, Trenton and Toronto). For details, please contact Dave de la Fuente (david_reuben@hotmail.com)

TEACHINGS

Apr. 21 (after worship)

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

May 06 (St. Mary’s 1-6pm)

LSS 26

Christian Parenting Part 2

Intro to Intercession

LSS 25

Encounter with Jesus, Mark

Matthew, Intro to Commitment

contemplation? Even though these days of Holy Week are not technically holy days of obligation, all Christians are encouraged to participate not only in the liturgical rites, but in a deeper search of the scriptures that can supply many moments of a more profound appreciation of the Father’s love for us shining through the face of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

what Jesus said to the apostles, *“All of you will have your faith shaken, for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be dispersed.’”* (Mk 14:27) When we feel like we are abandoned and lost sheep and we cannot find our way to the Father, we must seek the help of our Good Shepherd. We must abandon our wrong ways and sins that separate us from the Lord, casting us into darkness.

What must we do? When Jesus invited Peter, James and John to sit with Him while he prays, Jesus invites us all to pray with Him. He said to Peter, *“Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.”* (Mk 14:37-38) We must therefore pray with Jesus. When we pray with Jesus, we enter into His presence and we share his experience of profound sorrow. We must continue to pray even in the middle of intense pain and suffering. We must continue to cry out to the Father expressing not our despair and hopelessness, but total reliance and a strong faith. We must pray just as Jesus laments, at the garden of Gethsemane (Psalm 22-Lamentation) : *“Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will.”* (Mk 14-36). His humanity experiences intense agony for his impending passion and death, but His divinity surrenders to the will of His Father. *“Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit’; and when he had said this he breathed his last.”* (Lk 23:46)

As disciples of Christ, we must share His passion, death and resurrection. We must welcome suffering as part of God’s plan. Padre Pio offers us his exhortation of Resignation to God’s Will:

“Be comforted with this divine thought that your spiritual and physical pains are the test of the Divine Will. All lovers of Jesus must conform themselves always more to this divine and eternal model. Jesus went to the limits of abandonment of the spirit. Jesus wanted to experience in his humanity this incomprehensible pain of seeing Himself abandoned by His Heavenly Father.

You should rather humble yourself before God than be distressed if He reserves for you the sufferings of his Son, and makes you experience your weakness. You should offer up to Him the prayer of resignation and hope, even when you fail through frailty, and thank Him for all the benefits with which He continually enriches you.”

Directions:

- ♥ Keep watch and pray always; be ready to bear the sacrifices as we obey God’s will in our lives.
- ♥ Encourage members to write their personal passion, death, and resurrection to acknowledge God’s will in their lives and to build their faith.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- April 7-9 LSS # 26, Newark – St. Mary’s Aud.
- May 13 Healing the Family Tree - Community Retreat, Newark St. Mary’s Aud. 8am–6pm
- Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook - 1pm
- June 2-4 ME# 27, Newark - St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- SE # 16, Newark - Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
- June 10-11 Lord, Teach Us to Pray - Community Retreat, Newark St. Mary’s Aud., 9am-5pm
- June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – 8am–5pm
- Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ .
- Open to all Covenanted Disciples
- June 23-25 Solo Parent Encounter #8, Newark

BIRTHDAYS

- Apr 07** Cecil Salonga, LSS 17
- Apr 08** LoriAnn Chelborg, SPE6
- Maria Dauilo, LSS23
- Cora Pidlaon, LSS3
- Zeke Newton, YC5
- Ben Florentino, YC5
- Apr 09** Ed Eusebio, LSS4
- Daisy Pabatao, SPE6
- Apr 10** Jeff Magadia , YE10
- Jane Cruzada, SE
- Apr 11** Keem Espejon, LSS7
- Mark Elgueta, SE
- Apr 12** Judy Ratcliffe, LSS22
- Renzi Razal, LSS22
- Fred Salar, LSS18
- Allen Veluz, SE13
- Kim Solema, YC5
- Che-che Solema, YC5
- Apr 13** Lita Alfaro, Singles
- Apr 14** Nick Feliciano, LSS8
- Apr 15** Max Cristobal, YE10
- Apr 16** Gene Reyes, ME22
- Mark Serrano, SE13
- Randall Cruz, Jn 6
- Liz Perez, YE5
- Apr 17** Libby Gutierrez, LSS18
- Remy Hernandez, LSS20
- Boy Navarro, LSS17
- Erika Reyes, Jn 6
- Apr 18** Elgy Garcia, LSS22
- Eddie Olegario, LSS3
- Apr 20** Angie Vargas, LSS22
- Apr 21** Jose Vibar, Singles



- Apr 08** Nonong & Soc Punzalan, LSS10
- Mario & Cecil Salonga, LSS17
- Apr 12** Joe & Cecil Canlas, LSS6
- Tom & Norie Derowitsch, LSS22
- Apr 14** Babot & Tess Farinas, LSS6
- Rey & Cora Guerra, LSS22
- Apr 16** Emil & Willy Tan, ME23
- Apr 18** Lawrence & Joy Anyanwu, LSS21
- Apr 19** Ed & Grace Badiola, LSS24

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Mar. 31, 2006 - Week #13

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$ 3,776.80	\$ 56,490.97
Disbursements	\$ 5,016.60	\$ 78,223.48
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$ 1,239.80)	(\$ 21,732.51)



BLD in the Service of the Church - Developing the Web of Faith:

rcanevangelizationcommunity.org

We rejoice in sharing with you the good news of what God had done with BLD in one of its first acts of service to the Church!

In February, 2006, a BLD volunteer team was formed to assist the Archdiocese of Newark Evangelization Office in performing their daily tasks. The team's mandate was to help clear the work backlog and render part-time help on a continuing basis.

After an initial meeting with the Evangelization Office coordinator, it became apparent that the immediate need was to have a system capable of communicating evangelization events and programs to the public, and to create a database facility to enter contacts and parish information. Cognizant of this need, the team took a proactive and aggressive approach in addressing how to handle these tasks effectively.

The team faced many challenges: from determining system specs to designing, developing and proving the system to achieving its target cost and timeline. Mindful of the use and popularity of the internet in reaching the public, the team set to develop a website which will bring fervor to evangelization. Blessed with "prompting" from the Spirit, the team developed a system with the following functionalities:

- o post evangelization events online via flyers.
- o broadcast these events to the public by sending group emails.
- o connect people universally through testimonies and prayers.
- o share evangelization community news and events' photos.
- o enter contacts and parishes' information gathered on a continuing basis.

All these system features and functions were designed for ease of use and access. The website information, graphics, background and color were carefully selected to brighten and bring interest to the Archdiocese's evangelization efforts.

On April 4, the BLD volunteer team presented a simulated demonstration of the ➤ page 3

COUNSELS

Reconciliation and Peace

WORD: Act 4:32-35; Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; 1Jn 5:1-6; Jn 20:19-31

THEME: We obey His will when we open our hearts to peace and reconciliation.

ORDER: *"Do not be unbelieving but believe.."* (Jn 20:27b)

REFLECTION: Easter brings one very important blessing - Peace. Jesus spoke of peace three times in our gospel reading. He greets the disciples with peace, then gave them three important gifts that the Resurrected Jesus brings: reconciliation, gift of the Holy Spirit, and mission.

"Peace be with you". This must have been a common greeting of Jesus to the disciples. Earlier on, Jesus left them a similar message in John 14:27, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid"*. It is ironic that even with this instruction, Jesus found the disciples hiding in the room, with locked doors, for fear of the Jews. Before Jesus stood in their midst, most of them must have been filled with remorse, guilt and despair over the crucified Master that they abandoned.

This greeting from the Prince of Peace was what they needed. When Jesus showed them his hands and his sides, their sorrow turned to joy. Their hopes were revived. Jesus proved to them that he was not a spirit, not a ghost. They saw clearly that this was indeed the resurrected Christ. Jesus is alive, but he never mentioned anything about their failure, about their weaknesses. Deep within their hearts, they knew that they were restored. They knew that they were forgiven and ➤page 4

Promise of the Week

"Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you forgive are forgiven them ... (Jn 20:23)

Fr. Paul Lehman's Easter Message:

The Victory of Easter.

When we look at the spiritual battles of earthly life, we can be discouraged from setting our goals too high. After all we are only human. How can we attain to great holiness when even the saints are imperfect? Again I remind us that holiness is not what we do, but what we allow the Lord to do in and for us.

He has risen! We are also called to rise! What does that mean? It can be such a prosaic statement that loses its force, because it seems so abstract. St. Paul was very much aware of the struggle. It would be interesting, and perhaps shocking to find out exactly what Paul was struggling against. But that is really unimportant. Young people struggle with their sexuality. We older ones who have our desires under control can fall into a worse sin of pride because of our success. We all need Easter, the assurance that we can all rise to new and more satisfying life even while we are here in this mortal frame.

A short time ago, we were encouraged to enter into the dying and death of Holy Week. Now we are called to proclaim the Easter victory. St. Augustine called us "Easter people and our song is Alleluia." Just saying it is not proclamation. Claiming the victory when are struggling with temptation is the way to overcome the onslaughts of our weakened human nature and the temptations of Satan who attacks us when we get serious about God.

Liturgical celebrations can be an exciting way to claim the victory and enjoy even here on earth the satisfaction of knowing that Jesus has conquered death. And if he has conquered death, he certainly can conquer the small problems and temptations that seem so monumental to us.

I encourage you all to celebrate the Easter Vigil, that very special liturgy that literally flames with life and joy. If we are not excited about Easter nothing will move us. The excitement I offer you is the experience of finding the Lord when you struggle in your daily prayer and seem so often to end up in a dry and distracted state. That is the moment to let go and experience the sense of a presence that is really the risen Lord calling us. He is calling us to die to what we think should be prayer and to enter what is really the intimacy that the risen Lord wants to share with us. The contemplative life is the full flourishing of the prayer of the victorious to Christian who has claimed the victory of Jesus as his very own. Live and rejoice! The Lord is with you!

BLD Global Mission Building the Filipino through BLD-GK

For the past 40 years, our home country has been in deep crisis. The Philippines continues to be plagued by deteriorating political and economic conditions. The poor have become poorer, with no clear light of redemption.

Poverty has forced the vast majority of Filipinos to live below the dignity of man, lacking in money and education, lacking in the capacity to be productive. But why has poverty shackled an otherwise industrious and gifted Filipino nation? One reason could be because those who were in a position to help allowed the perpetuation of greed, corruption, indifference, vice, oppression and despair through their inaction.

We who have been so blessed in our new country can and must help bring back hope and transformation, integrity, accountability and trust on a massive scale. We need to build lives...build communities. We need to help rebuild the Filipino nation. We need to help transform the heart of every Filipino.

The transformation must start with us. Discussing and dwelling on the sad plight of our countrymen is useless if we remain passive and indifferent. Then we are nothing but an empty gong. We will be neither cold nor hot, and spewed out by the Lord. An active role in nation building awaits all of us. If we unite our efforts, we can have an impact on poverty alleviation. Our community action will bring strength. In solidarity and communion, we can accomplish God's work!

With this in mind, BLD has forged a partnership with Couples For Christ (CFC) and GK to establish the BLD-GK Global Mission. Our Lord's hand in this partnership is clear, for the BLD-GK mission program transcends barriers among the ranks of God's people. We are one in spirit and heart with CFC and truly one in Christ, in word and deed. With them and with all other GK advocates, we share a noble task in nation building, in bringing the uncompromised Word of God to the poorest of the poor in the Philippines and other countries. It is in Christ alone that wholeness will be restored and poverty eliminated forever.

As we embark on our global mission, we claim God's promise in Isaiah 65: "*I am about to create new heavens and new earth; the things of the past shall not be remembered... no longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there, or the sound of crying; no longer shall there be in it an infant who lives a few days or an old man who does not round out his full lifetime... they shall live in the houses they build and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant.*"

LSS26 Reveals the Spirit's Masterly Touch

The Palm Sunday weekend will long be a cherished memory for all the participants of the Life in the Spirit Seminar #26. It was the first time the LSS was held at St. Mary's, our worship venue. Despite many challenges, the commitment to serve and love for the Lord among the shepherds, sponsoring class, prayer warriors and all other auxiliaries prevailed.

Seventy candidates (see the list on the Insert) through the help of their shepherds opened themselves to the wonderful Baptism in the Holy Spirit which occasioned the start of their new life. "I will put my spirit in you that you may live... thus you shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek 37:14)

Fr. Tito Ignacio was the spiritual director and everyone appreciated his wisdom and the touch of humor that he sprinkled in each talk session. His teachings and the testimonies of the sharers were anointed and powerful. The weekend saw renewed bonding and new friendships as all worked in harmony like one big family. By Sunday morning, one could not help notice the bright faces of everyone, especially the candidates whose warm smiles of appreciation were a reflection of Jesus smiling back on all of us.

Our BLD community would like to thank all of the members whose service showed the devoted disciples' love for our Lord Jesus Christ reigning in their hearts. *We welcome our brethren, the graduates of LSS 26!*

from page 1

website to the Evangelization Commission headed by Bishop Edgar da Cunha. The commission responded warmly and positively and approved the commissioning of the website.

The Archdiocesan Evangelization Office will officially launch the website in time for the forthcoming Pentecost. To create public awareness, a broadcast memo will be sent by the Evangelization Office to the parishes requesting them to announce the launching of the website in their parish bulletins. The Archdiocesan newspaper, the Catholic Advocate, will also be requested to publish an article about the website. All these efforts will help in reaching a greater number of parishes, parishioners and the general public to the Church's work of evangelization. Please visit rcanevangelizationcommunity.org and invite your email contacts to do the same.

"And you will say in that day, Give thanks to the Lord, acclaim his name; make known his deeds among the nations... Sing praise to the Lord for his glorious achievement; let this be known throughout all the earth" (Isaiah 12: 4-5)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Singles Ministry. April 21 9pm-11pm An Introduction to Theology of the Body. Presented by Damon Owens, Archdiocese of Newark NFP Coordinator.

MARK 10 Field Trip. May 13-1 pm Salt Marsh Ecology Trip (Seining Activity for all the kids) Sandy Hook, NJ Parents must accompany their children. Please see Reuben/Cherry Vibar to signup and pay (\$10 per adult). Children up to 12 years old are free.

ME # 27 - June 2-4 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA. Applications now available at www.bldnewark.com Contact: Bebot and Grace Baquilod or the ME 26 Class and the MLA.

Community Retreat. June 10-11 9am- 5pm "Lord, Teach Us to Pray" with Father Don O'Connor, SVD. at St. Mary's Auditorium.

Solo Parent Encounter #8 - June 23-25. Now accepting applications. Please see Dolly and Bobby Fernandez.

YE# 13 - July 7-9 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA

Family Encounter Retreat - July 21-23 in Malverne, PA. Now accepting applications. Please sign up early. Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz

Inter-district Conference of Youth from North America - Aug. 5-6 in St. Mary's. Organized by the Youth Ministry of Newark. Attendees from BLD Seattle, Bay Area, Phoenix, Reno, Detroit, DC, Albany, Long Island, Trenton and Toronto. For details, please contact Dave de la Fuente (david_reuben@hotmail.com)

TEACHINGS

April 21 after worship John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching

May 6- St. Mary's 1-6pm

LSS 26 Christian Parenting Part 2 Intro to Intercession
LSS 25 Encounter with Jesus, Mark Matthew, Intro to Commitment.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of 04/07/2006 - Week No. 14

	Last Week	YTD
Receipts	\$3,097.00	\$59,587.97
Disbursements	\$1,769.72	\$78,168.42
Surplus (Deficit)	\$1,327.28	(\$18,580.45)

Counsels from page 1

reconciled to their Master.

The disciples must have been overwhelmed when again he said, *“Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”* And with that he breathed on them and said, *“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”* John 20:21-23. Another gift given to the disciples was the Holy Spirit. After the disciples were reconciled to Jesus, he breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit. The very same disciples who were previously filled with despair and weaknesses were transformed and empowered to become agents of peace and reconciliation. All fear was gone because “God has not given us the spirit of fear but of love and of power and of a sound mind.”

Just as God breathed life into dead clay and brought forth man, by His breath, God breathed life into dry dead bones (Ez 37 - reading in our LSS invocation). Just as God’s breath and words create and renew, Jesus breathes the life of the resurrection and forms His Church, through which He gives new life through the forgiveness of sins- the ministry of Reconciliation.

“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” With the Lord’s power and authority, Jesus sends His disciples to go forth in mission and proclaim the Good News. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 makes this clear, *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us...”*

As a covenant community, we must remember that the Resurrected Jesus who empowered his disciples is *“the same yesterday, today, and forever.”* (Heb 13:18) The gifts of peace and reconciliation, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and readiness for mission must remain as the basic foundation of our work in BLD. Our encounter programs and LSS must continue to reconcile marriages, families, and members. We must be renewed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. We must continue to live our new life in the Spirit and persevere in our transformation through our teachings (CDFP) and ministry work. With one heart and mind we must continue to grow as a community, faithful to our covenant, and ready to be “sent forth” in mission.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- April 29 LSS 26 reunion at Mary’s from 1-5pm.
May 13 Healing the Family Tree –Community Retreat St. Mary’s Auditorium, 8–6pm
Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook - 1pm
June 2-4 ME# 27, Newark - St. Francis Retreat House Easton, PA
SE # 16, Newark - Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
June 10-11 Lord, Teach Us to Pray –Community Retreat St. Mary’s Auditorium, 9am-5pm
June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am–5pm. Open to all Covenanted Disciples
June 23-25 Solo Parent Encounter #8, Newark
July 7-9 YE# 13, Newark- St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
July 21-23 FE # 13, Newark – Marlverne, PA
Aug. 5-6 Newark Youth Inter-district Conference, St. Mary’s Auditorium
Aug. 19 Community Day, Newark – St. Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ Grove #4

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 4/22 CieloArribe, LSS21
Allan Bautista, SE13
Bong Montemayor, LSS5
Kristine Duma, YE3 | 4/26 Pearl Antonio, ME23
Alan Cam, LSS17
Teresa Nwaneri, LSS22
Ditas Saberon, LSS9
Triff Col, YE3
Jeff Campomanes, YE11 |
| 4/23 Gigi Cabunag, LSS6
Maggie Lim, Jn 6
Juliene Martin, Jn 6
April Santos, YE8 | 4/27 Zita Cruz, LSS14 |
| 4/24 Ruby David, LSS16
Rudy Luyao, LSS8
Jeffrey Narciso, YE11 | 4/28 Olive Encarnacion, LSS9
Evelyn Francisco, LSS10
Michelle Lim, Jn 6 |
| 4/25 Vic Lim, LSS9
Linda Viola, LSS6
Neil Lopez, Jn 6 | |



ANNIVERSARIES

- 4/22 Serge & Mahyeen Bernatchez, LSS10
4/24 Bong & Ruby David, LSS16
Nelson & Noemi Ilagan, LSS14
4/28 Dodee & Susan Aglibut, LSS12
Trif & Effie Col, LSS9

DIRECTIONS :

1. Be a good steward of our personal and community resources and ensure that no one is in need.
2. Be of one heart and mind with others.

LSS # 26 Graduates: "We are a New Creation!"

Daniel Abad, Corazon Alforque, Soledad Andaya, Edmundo & Pearl Antonio, Teddy & Larissa Avisado, Melina Briones, Jayson Bustos, Caesar & Pinky Calingo, Jason Casimiro, Michael Chua, Stephanie Consul, Armida Costin, Benjamin & Marivic Del Rosario, Ahmed & Mariuxi Diaz, Fanny Discaya, Carlo & Zenaida Dugenio, Alberto & Melody Edradan, RP Encarnacion, Luisito & Lydia Fajardo, Lourdes Florentino, Mary Grace Fondevilla, Art & Jackie Garces, Reynaldo & Benedicta Garcia, Christopher Gonda, Andrew Ignacio, Benjamin Imasa, Virgilia Kelly, Gillian Lamela, Mark Lamela, Joseph & Eunice Laurelli, Felicisima Lumauig, Vincent & Prescilla Magadia, Jay Malabanan, Allyson Mangalonzo, Kristin Mapili, Nicole Martin, Alejandro & Luz Mendoza, Ellen Montemayor, Nikolai Montesclaros, Nikki Narciso, Chay Pangilinan, Jeffrey Paredes, Bonnie Perez, Michael Perez, Stephanie Perez, Rafael Placido, Nena Ramos, Rebecca Recento, Leah Reigle, Mark Romero, Mark Rublano, James Tayco, Raymond Vasquez, Quintin & Camille Viernes, Sergio & Lolit Yap.

A Lamb's Sharing

The Spirit in Me

Two weekends ago, I attended LSS 26 at St Mary's. The LSS didn't just start that weekend; it began a few weeks before when I met my shepherd to prepare me spiritually for my encounter with the Lord. We discussed my life, my faith, and my perception of God's role in it, as well as my



calling as a child of God. Through these conversations, the Lord used my shepherd to guide me to a better understanding of God's Love for me. I discovered where in my heart I needed spiritual healing, that I might allow the Holy Spirit to free me of fears, doubts, worries and other distractions.

After the Mass on Friday night, I stood with a good number of LSS 26 lambs waiting for confession. I've never seen so many people anxious to confess their sins to a priest before. We all knew that we needed to clear our hearts to fully open to the Spirit.

Saturday was filled with praise and talks, sharing and teachings. The most memorable sharing for me that day was from my SE 15 class shepherd. Through his words, my heart was opened to feel the presence of God and His love. I was touched by his sharing, and I was in tears. Then the awaited moment came with the celebration of the Eucharist, followed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Before the Blessed Sacrament, I renewed my baptismal vows. When I surrendered myself to Jesus, I started to truly experience the Spirit within me. The Spirit lifted my arms and spoke to me. I knew not to fear or doubt, so I continued to allow the Spirit to stir through me. The Holy Spirit led my body into the position of Jesus on the cross, and I was asked if I was willing to give my life for the sake of others. I replied that I would do whatever the Lord calls me to do.

As I was in prayer, I received certain gifts to help me better understand my calling and God's Love and Spirit within me. I was in a state of awe when the night concluded. Sunday was similarly filled with praise and worship, and meaningful teachings and sharing. During the Mass, I felt the Holy Spirit move in me again. Since then, I've been aware of His presence in me.

"And I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you Forever- the Spirit of truth...But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."
(John 14: 17-18)

Serving the Lord at LSS 26

"Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2 Cor 9:6)

If service has its rewards, then I could say that ME Class 25 was lavishly rewarded. The jubilant faces of seventy LSS candidates, with their hearts filled with the Holy Spirit, said it all. We had accomplished our mission and the outcome was a bountiful harvest indeed. Alleluia!

The challenges to the sponsorship of LSS 26 were immense, but deep in our hearts there was never any doubt that we could pull it through. We believed that if we were doing God's desires, we could not fail. Everyone in our class had contributed time, effort, talents and countless prayers that have kept us one in spirit. Many times emotions got the better of us to remind us of our humanity and our fragility when faced with the demands of the task at hand. But in the end our profound faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in our shepherds, team leaders and in each other prevailed and strengthened us.

We were members of the same body (Eph 4:16), moving towards a common goal. Some had multiple or harder tasks but not a word of complaint was raised. We all did our share without questions. Our minds and hearts were set; we were doing all we could for the glory of God. We were exhausted but high in spirit; ecstatic and almost eager to do more. There was no better time to thank God for allowing us to be instruments of His love. *"Now unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."* (Phil 4:20)

The shepherds have been a profound inspiration to us and the tremendous planning of the leaders had made the job easy for everyone including the directors to whom we have put our trust and obedience (Heb 3:17). We were blessed to have leaders that have been enthused by the Holy Spirit to guide us during the momentous weekend. It is now clear that God had worked through them, empowering them with wisdom and perspective. Their directives were highly regarded and carried out dutifully.

This eventful weekend will have an enduring and residual effect in our Christian lives. The experience has left us with much deeper appreciation, care and love for each other. The awareness of each other's strengths and weaknesses supplemented our respect for each one's distinctiveness and dignity. We are all children of God, and felt our connection with the Father Almighty, His Son our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The wonderful LSS weekend is over, but our spiritual journey goes on.

A Richly Rewarding Experience

A week after being covenanted, we received a call that would greatly enrich our lives. At first, our reaction to the call to shepherd in LSS # 26 was of disbelief. But we heard ourselves saying "okay" although deep inside, we were nervous and felt unworthy. We knew of others who were more gifted than us. Later on, we learned that if God called us to shepherd, He will empower us.

We had so many questions going through our minds and felt overwhelmed. Our shepherds reassured us that everything will be fine and to rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance. Preparing for the sessions gave us an opportunity to have more time together as a couple, in prayer; in scripture reading; and in Eucharistic Adoration.

After worship in our first shepherding session, we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. We did not expect the openness of our lambs as they readily shared their reflections. In the following sessions, we grew more relaxed and confident. We became more sensitive to the presence of the Holy Spirit. As the LSS weekend drew closer, we found ourselves in frequent arguments. We were warned about spiritual warfare and were advised not to be discouraged. We applied what we learned: to continue to pray daily and to cover ourselves with the precious blood of our Lord.

It was an awesome experience to feel the trust of our lambs as they shared their burdens and problems with us. As we listened to them, we were amazed at how the Lord gave us words to say. In Lk 12:12, the Lord said, *"For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what you should say."* This made us realize that the Holy Spirit was truly with us throughout our sessions.

At our last meeting, we could not help but thank our lambs for trusting us and for enriching us with this experience. They were not the only ones who healed; we too were blessed with renewal. At the baptism in the Spirit, we could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit inside the candle-lit room as the assembly started praising in tongues. The best part was hearing one of our lambs speak in tongues.

The success of this LSS was made possible by the teamwork of the BLD community and Father Tito. We must always remember that God loves us, that sin separates us from Him, that Jesus is the only way to the Father, and that we must accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We praise and thank the Lord for using us- broken as we are- as instruments of His grace.



The Essence of God is Love

This is a summary of “*An Introduction to the Theology of the Body*”, presented to the Singles Ministry last Friday, April 21, 2006, by Damon Owens, Archdiocese of Newark NFP Coordinator.

The “*Theology of the Body*”, is a collection of 129 short talks delivered by Pope John Paul II from September 1979 through November 1984. The Pope’s main thesis is, “The body, in fact, and it alone is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world, the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus to be a sign of it.”

“*God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: ‘Be fertile and multiply...’*” (Gn 1:27-28). God revealed His divine mystery in the human flesh. “God’s very being is love. By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret: God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange.” (CCC 221) We profess that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

The different kinds of love are: **Eros**, the root word for erotic and is experienced as romantic love. Eros comes and goes. **Philo** is brotherly love. Friendship is marked by our willingness to do for others. There are different kinds of friends: co-workers, acquaintances, good friends, best friends. **Agape** is the supreme love because God is the source of this love. It is an act of will, it is **free, full, faithful** and **fruitful** gift of self.

The sexual act can only be an act of agape love within the Sacrament of Matrimony. The marriage vows is the expression of this covenant, which is an exchange of persons... **willingly, totally, exclusively** and **open to the gift of life**.

COUNSELS

Believe and Follow the Scriptures

WORD: Acts 3:13-15; Ps 4:2, 4, 7-9;
1Jn 2:1-5; Lk 24:35-48

THEME: We obey His will when we open our minds to believe and follow the Scriptures.



ORDER: “*The way we may be sure that we know him is to keep his commandments.*” (1Jn 2:3)

REFLECTION:

What an astounding turn of events! The man with whom the disciples had traveled all over Palestine, the one they followed for three years, the one they saw die on a cross, now stood before them and told them that God had raised Him from death. It’s no wonder they were startled and terrified and thought He was a ghost.

“*Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.*” (Lk 24: 45). As questions arose in their hearts, Jesus showed them the marks of crucifixion on His hands and feet. He opened their minds to the Scriptures. Aren’t some of us like the apostles? We won’t believe unless we can see with our own eyes. We need to see in order to believe. The truth is, we also need Jesus to open our minds to the Scriptures which we hear at every Mass or during our Friday Praise and Worship. Being familiar with the doctrines of the Church is not enough to change our lives. We need to be brought face to face with the real presence and power of Jesus in the Scriptures. *(continued on page 4)*

God's Promise for the Week

“... *whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him...* (1Jn 2:5)

The Bread of Life



“So they said to Jesus, ‘Sir, give us this bread always.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.’” (Jn 6:34-35)

It may be simple to understand these words but do we really have a deep understanding of our Lord’s message and its relevance to our salvation? The Scripture verses mentioned above depict men asking for the eternal bread.

Jesus called on his followers to believe in Him and at that time even with His presence in their midst, many still turned away and chose not to believe. *“But I told you that although you have seen (me), you do not believe.”* (Jn 6:36) In today’s world, many still would rather rely on human intellect, science and even listen to false preachings based on personal interpretations. We do not see yet we believe. To believe is to understand His words, value His sacrifice and follow His footsteps.

It is by faith, that we believe with our hearts and minds that the Eucharist is truly the body and blood of Jesus, the bread of life. *“Jesus said to them, ‘Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day.’”* (Jn 6:53-54) The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Christian life. What material food produces in our bodily life, the Eucharist wonderfully achieves in our spiritual life. Jesus is the true bread who can truly satisfy the hunger in our hearts. Communion with flesh and blood of the risen Christ provides food, nourishment and strength to our souls. To grow in our Christian life, we need the grace of Jesus, through the Eucharist. Let us partake this sacrament of love with deep reverence and awe.

In our community, we learn and gather spiritual strength from each other. All that we have in this temporal world has an end, but to have Jesus, the bread of life, is the ultimate sustenance of our spiritual being. So together without hesitation and with purest intentions in our hearts, let us continue to walk in His path and do His will. Through the Holy Spirit, our eyes are opened to see His light. With open arms, let us embrace our Lord’s love and compassion. Let us lift our praises to our Father, Who gave us Jesus, the bread of life, so that through His Son, we may have eternal life.

DCSpeak

Leadership Transition

Change can be challenging even for a covenanted community like BLD. Change in leadership especially leadership transition can be burdensome for any organization, even for a spiritual community whose leaders’ functions are reflected in titles such as ‘stewards’ and ‘servants’. The key to managing this change and transition rest in the collaboration of all leaders, both incoming and outgoing.

As we wait for the announcements of our new leaders, our prayers must continue, just like Moses, a favorite model in organizational and transition management by both corporate and spiritual organizations. *“Then Moses said to the LORD, ‘May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, set over the community a man who shall act as their leader in all things, to guide them in all their actions; that the LORD’S community may not be like sheep without a shepherd.’”* (Numbers 27:15-17)

According to the succession process in the BLD Charter, we will have a new set of leaders every three years. Starting July 2006, the new set of leaders in our global community will start their term: the Executive Council of Servant Leaders (ECSL), the District Servant Leader (DSL) and the District Council of Stewards (DCS). This change will also involve to a certain extent, members of the District Leaders Conference (DLC, coordinators of ministry and apostolate), who are appointed by the DCS and whose term of office is co-terminus with the appointing DCS.

Borrowing the transition model of Bill Kemp, a Christian author, who uses the automotive imagery of **“getting in gear”**, as a unifying metaphor. Our community and leadership will transition as follows:

- Step one is **“park”**. This entails a period devoted to gaining a clear understanding of our community’s present condition. This is usually done by the leadership during a Disciple’s Assembly where the DSL, the DCS, and the DLC report the current conditions of the community including the DIPs and other parish-assisted missions.
- Step two, the leaders shift into **“reverse”**. This is where we examine our community goals and our past history, norms, and tradition. A review of our charter and covenants and our district’s role and relationship to global BLD community is done in this gear. This is done through a spiritual retreat guided by the Spiritual Director, by the incoming and outgoing leadership followed by planning meetings. *(continued on page 3)*

DCSpeak - continued

Leadership Transition

- Step three involves a shift into “neutral”. Before the leadership team moves forward, this is the time that the new set of leaders examines the road ahead for potential obstacles, and evaluates the community’s strength and weaknesses. The new leaders then formulate their objectives, both short-term and long-term and identify the newly appointed DLC members. The new organizational structure is then presented to the community.
- Step four is “drive”. This is the time in which our new leaders actually begin to implement the new plans and changes. This is usually done after the new set of DCS plans together with the new set of DLC and BOT, and present their objectives and implementation plans during a Disciple's Assembly.

A great help during this transition period will be coming from all DLC members and the DIPs. Through the existing organizational structures, reports and updates from each coordinator will flow through their respective stewards, then to the DSL, who will consolidate for the whole cluster, and report to the Executive Council of Servant Leaders in Manila. Each of our DIPs (District in Progress, which includes Trenton, Washington DC, Rockland, Albany, Los Angeles, and Phoenix) will also provide their current update in a similar way, through the DIP coordinators, who are also members of the DLC, through the mission steward. Each coordinator will report the current state of each ministry/apostolate through their managing stewards. A complete set of manual, procedures, and guidelines will be compiled and relinquished to the incoming successors. A profile of the core members together with the recommendations will also be a part of the report.

All leaders and new coordinators will be asked to submit their updated Form 6 (Personal Information Sheet) prior to their final appointment by the CSL (Council of Servant Leaders) in Manila. After confirmation, the blessing and anointing is done on a Eucharistic Celebration by our Spiritual director and blessed also by the Archbishop during a Eucharistic Celebration at the Basilica Cathedral in Newark.



There is no doubt that through the reading of the Sacred Scriptures, the soul is set aflame in God and becomes purified from all vices. (St. Jerome)

Ministry Announcements

Community Retreat. *Healing the Family Tree* with Father Mike Barry, SS.CC.

May 13, 8am–6pm at St. Mary’s Auditorium.

ME #27 - June 2-4 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA. Applications now available at www.bldnewark.com. Contact: Bebot and Grace Baquilod or the ME 26 Class and the MLA.

Community Retreat. “Lord, Teach Us to Pray” with Father Don O’Connor, SVD.

June 10-11, 9am – 5pm at St. Mary’s Auditorium.

Solo Parent Encounter #8 - June 23-25. Now accepting applications. Please see Dolly and Bobby Fernandez.

YE 13 - July 7-9 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA.

Family Encounter Retreat - July 21-23 at Malverne, PA Now accepting applications. Please sign up early Contact: Oddie & Jho Martin, King & Arlene Rigor, Ed & Grace Badiola, Peter & Rose Cruz, or Tito & Ann Cruz.

TEACHINGS

May 6 St. Mary’s School 1-6 pm

LSS 26 Christian Parenting Part 2, Intro to Intercession

LSS 25 Encounter with Jesus, Mark, Matthew, Intro to Commitment

May 19 after worship

Singles - Christian Speech

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

May 20 St. Mary’s School 1-6 pm

LSS 21-22 Shepherds Training – Part 1

LSS 24 CMP I, Part 2, Word, Flesh, Devil, Body & Blood, Service & Community

May 26 after worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teaching



THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of Apr. 21, 2006 - Week # 15

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 6,714.04	\$ 66,302.01
Disbursements	\$ 2,091.04	\$ 80,259.46
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 4,623.00	(\$ 13,957.45)

Counsels from page 1

"You are witnesses of these things." (Lk 24:48) He was counting on His apostles to be witnesses to all that have been revealed in the Scriptures: His passion, death and resurrection. The preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins should now be widespread, and that they are His chosen witnesses to all of these.

There are people who may have heard about Christ, about religion, about forgiveness, but they have not been led to repentance or have experienced the Lord's forgiveness. They run away from their true selves and turn away from God. Some are spiritually lost, because no one witnessed to them about God's love and His saving power. This could be a family member or anyone the Lord brings into our lives. They depend on us to give this witness, reflecting the better way of life with our Lord. They could hear but not see what are most important in life, such as God's love, grace and mercy. They can, however, see these by the changes they make in someone's life.

This ties in with the Word direction given to our community, exhorting us to be doers of His word and not hearers only. As Pope Benedict says, there are four stages to become doers of the Word and not merely hearers. First, is to be acquainted with the word of God in the Scriptures. Second, is to study and meditate on the Word. Third, is to talk with God in prayer, for the more we pray to Him, the more we get to know Him. And last, is to live the life of Christ. Being obedient to God's will is taking all these stages into heart.

John says in the second reading, *"The way we may be sure that we know him is to keep his commandments. Whoever says, 'I know Him', but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* (1Jn 2:3-4) One might ask, which of His commandments? Certainly all of them, but it is more the challenge Jesus gives us in the Gospels. Love your neighbor. Forgive your enemies. Take care of the sick, the widow and the prisoners. It is in keeping these commandments that the love of God is truly perfected in us, making His presence visible to others.

Just as the first disciples were commissioned to bring the Good News of His glorious resurrection to all, so, we too, who have encountered the Lord are called to be witnesses to His love and His victory in our lives. We could point out Jesus and invite others to come and see, and to listen. But what could be more convincing than seeing that the impossible had happened? If through our witnessing in our word and actions, they could see

(continued on next column)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Apr. 29 LSS # 26 Newark, Grand Reunion - St. Mary's Auditorium, 1-5 pm
- May 13 Healing the Family Tree - Community Retreat, St. Mary's Auditorium, 8am-6pm
Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook-1pm
- June 2-4 ME# 27, Newark - Easton, PA
SE # 16, Newark - Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
- June 10-11 Lord, Teach Us to Pray - Community Retreat, St. Mary's Auditorium, 9am-5pm
- June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar - Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am-5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you!

Birthdays

Apr. 28

Olive Encarnacion, LSS 9
Evelyn Francisco, LSS 10
Val Gabisan, LSS 4
Michelle Lim, YCR 5

Apr. 29

Flory Mangasi, LSS 19
Paul Vibar, Mk 10

Apr. 30

Mila Macaisa, LSS 23
Steph Rigor, YLSS 10

May 1

Leni Chan, LSS 16

May 1

Efren Cruz, LSS 7
Joe Pascoguin, LSS 20

May 2

Gerry Canlas, LSS 7
Matt Cruzada, LSS 14
Danny Labung, LSS 15
Cora Guerra, LSS 22
Gian Solema, YLSS 9

May 4

Nathan Osemeha, Mk 10



Anniversaries

- Apr. 28 Dodee and Susan Aglibut, LSS 12
Trif and Effie Col, LSS 9
Arnold and Cely Ocaya, ME 25
- Apr. 30 Aldo and Meg Pangilinan, LSS 13
Frank and Atet Mendonez, LSS 20
- May 1 Romy and Leni Chan, LSS 16
Gil and Lucille Jose, LSS 21
- May 1 Ben and Letty Chua, LSS 13
- May 4 Pete and Betty de la Cruz, LSS 2



our lives transformed by Jesus- as individuals and as a community, then they too will believe.

DIRECTIONS:

- Be doers of the word and not hearers only.
- Witness the victory of Christ, His passion, death and resurrection, in your life.



LSS 26 Graduates Recount Weekend Experience at Grand Reunion

On April 29th, Saturday, approximately eighty people, gathered together for the LSS 26 Grand Reunion at St. Mary's auditorium in Rahway. The event started with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist officiated by Fr. Noel Morales and supported by Praise. Right after the Mass, the 22 lambs and their shepherds who came to the reunion got together for shepherding and lunch. Following lunch, the lambs, especially those who missed the chance to share during the LSS Weekend, were encouraged to recount their LSS experiences. A lot of them shared how the Holy Spirit touched them during baptism. One lamb spoke of her experience of seeing Jesus in all His radiance walking toward her. Others shared the various gifts they received, ranging from the gift of tongues, vision, and prophesy. Still others expressed how grateful they were to everyone specially their shepherds for helping them prepare for the LSS weekend. After the sharings, the lambs reflected on their assigned readings (Romans 3 and Colossians 8) and participated in a highly inter-active fun-filled Bible Quiz Game which challenged their familiarity with scriptural verses. Moderators of the game were Vic Lim and Ed Malantic of the LSA Ministry. The grand reunion wrapped up at around 5:00 pm with a closing prayer.



COUNSELS

A Flock of Good Shepherds

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

THEME: We are one flock when we gather and care for others more than ourselves.

ORDER: Be like the Good Shepherd: "*The Good Shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep.*" (Jn 10:11)

REFLECTION:

The readings for the day best describe what our community should always be, to be one flock united and guided by His love with a mission to seek and care for others.

The order from our readings exhorts us on how we can be good shepherds, individually and as a community. Although we are merely under shepherds of our Lord, we have the responsibility as His disciples to be like Him, giving every talent we possess to care for others, within and outside of our community.

Within our community, we need to be more consistent and dedicated in ministering to each other. Our responsibilities as shepherds of our own flock extend beyond the time when we are officially the shepherds of the lambs assigned to us. Rather, we have to make a longer and a more consistent commitment to being shepherds of our own people. Our responsibilities as shepherds are not limited to building a community but also keeping our community as one body in Christ.

Continued on page 4

God's Promise for the Week

"They will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd." (Jn 10:16b)

The Only Way

One late night I was coming home from an errand, it was freezing outside as the cold winter wind blasted through the area. Then I realized that I forgot to turn the light on by the doorstep. As I reached for my keys in my jacket, I could not see a thing; all I could hope for was to find the right key. I must have tried four or maybe more, before I finally got hold of the right key to open the door. I sighed in relief from the blistering cold outside. As I settled myself down, I stared at my front door key, amazed by its importance.

Our faith is almost like a key, it is the only way one can enter God's front door. In John 6: 68-69, *Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."* We can only thank Jesus for all the miracles, so that we may believe in Him.

Like Peter, we try and walk with the Lord struggling with the same question when faced with trials. We still wonder whom to ask because of our human frailty to reason; we raise our doubts when the trials start to bare down on our backs. But we all know what God wants us to do: believe in Him, to have that faith that He is the One True God, the only one who can give us all what we want including eternal life. Peter's presence reminds us of the presence of the church and its importance. *"Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me."* (Jn 12:26) In this passage, God tells us what we need to have and the direction to His House.

Countless times Jesus reminds us to believe in Him. He opens His arms wide enough, welcoming each one of us, especially during the Lenten Season. It is only our acceptance of that invitation that will give us the chance to have that privilege to follow Him where He wants us all.

Like everyone else, my faith needs to be nurtured each week, to keep it strong and prepare me for the trials ahead. If everything is possible with God, and we just work on that faith each moment of our lives, then we definitely are in His Hands.

As for me, my house key will never be looked at the same way again, for it will always remind me of my faith, the only way to God's Kingdom.

Remain in Darkness

The old and new testaments are replete with characterization of darkness as evil. In Genesis, God created the heavens and the earth, and darkness covered the earth. Apparently, God saw darkness as eerie and moved quickly to contain it. He said, *"Let there be light," and there was light. God saw how good the light was and separated the light from the darkness.*" (Gn 1:3-4) Job in protesting his affliction, likened darkness to death, *"Before I go whence I shall not return, to the land of darkness and of gloom, the black, disordered land where darkness is the only light."* (Jb 10:21-22) Nothing thrives in darkness - plants cannot grow in darkness, and humans cannot survive in darkness. Darkness is synonymous with death. So which do you prefer, to remain in darkness or to remain in the light?

The theme, "Remain in Darkness" came from John 12:46 when Jesus said, *"I came into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me might not remain in darkness."* Jesus shows us how to remain in the light. *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (Jn 14:6) He enjoins to follow in His footsteps. Failure to follow in His footsteps has serious consequences. He said, *"Whoever rejects me and does not accept my words has something to judge him: the word that I spoke, it will condemn him on the last day."* (Jn 12:48) In John 3:18-20, we are told, *"Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned,"* because the *"the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light."* Jesus urges us to be the light of the world so that, *"your light must shine before others that they can see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly father."* (Mt 5:16)

God gave us free will to determine our destiny. The path we choose depends on how we handle life's situations. The choices we make in our everyday lives determine whether we remain in the light or in darkness. Often, life's experiences help to define our lives. We should put our faith in God, for out of evil, God can bring good. In all situations, we must listen to that silent inner voice which tries to weigh the choices we make. To this effect, prayer becomes a powerful tool that helps us make the right choices; it gives us the inner strength, confidence, and courage to work out solutions to the complex problems that tend to enslave us to darkness.

**MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR
COVENANT LIFE**

Celebrating the Easter Season

Message from Fr. Paul Lehman

With this beautiful month of May upon us, we may forget the powerful events of Holy Week and Easter, and move too rapidly into the next moment in our lives. We should be reminded that we are still in the Easter season. The church wants us in a sense to enjoy and savor the victory of Easter. That is why we celebrate Easter for fifty days, ten days more than in Lent. The final Easter day is the great feast of Pentecost, June 4th. God will always have a human body, a glorified human body to which we are all called some day to share. Easter is the exaltation of the human body.

A few weeks ago on April 21st, Damon Owens, Natural Family Planning Coordinator in the Archdiocese of Newark, gave a beautiful sharing to our singles on the "Theology of the Body", a compilation of 124 talks given by our previous holy father, Pope John Paul II. This has been explained as a revolutionary approach to sexuality and marriage. Marriage and sexuality from the very beginning of creation have been used in Scripture as an icon or pointer to a very intimate relationship that God wants to enter into with the human race. When we reflect on the Christian revelation, we see a further development of God's desire for intimacy with us in the person of His Son, Jesus. He is the bridegroom. We are the bride. The human body deserves our respect, because we are challenged to use our bodies as Jesus did. Jesus continues to use his glorified body in the celebration of Sacraments, especially in the Holy Eucharist. We are called to look upon our bodies as holy vessels, reflecting in our lives the very body of Jesus. The point of the Pope's "Theology of the Body" is to use our bodies and anything connected with the body with deep respect.

Many of our adults do not realize how easily pornography can be obtained on the internet. May I suggest that our parents do our children a favor by installing and downloading software that can filter out undesirable material? May I offer the following protections? These are only some of the possibilities that can be of help to you and to your children. For a summary of available filters try "internetfilter review" along with www.bsafefhome.com/harvestusa/, and webchoice.net. Explain to your children that the installation of such programs does not indicate a lack of trust, but rather a loving protection against the weaknesses of our human nature. May we be practical in our dealings with weakness and temptation while at the same time always pointing to the ideal man, Jesus our risen Savior.

Ministry Announcements

Mark 10 Field Trip

May 13, 1pm at Sandy Hook, NJ
Contact Reuben/Cherry Vibar to sign up

Community Retreat. "Healing the Family Tree" with Fr. Mike Barry, SSCC

May 13, 8am-6pm at St. Mary's Auditorium

Marriage Encounter #27

June 2-4 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton PA
Contact Bebot/Grace Baquilod, ME26 Class or MLA

Community Retreat. "Lord, Teach Us to Pray" with Fr. Don O'Connor, SVD

June 10-11, 9am-5pm at St. Mary's Auditorium

Solo Parent Encounter #8

June 23-25 at Ramada Hotel, Piscataway, NJ
Contact Bobby/Dolly Hernandez

Youth Encounter #13

July 7-9 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contact Mario/Cecille Salonga or Marvin Venadas

Family Encounter Retreat #13

July 21-23 at St. Joseph by the Hills Malverne, PA
Contact Oddie/Jho Martin, King/Arlene Rigor, Ed/Grace Badiola, Peter/Rose Cruz or Tito/Ann Cruz

Teachings

May 6 at St. Mary's School, 1-6pm

LSS 26- Christian Parenting Part2, Intro to Intercession
LSS 25 -Encounter with Jesus, Mark, Matthew, Intro to Commitment

May 19 after worship

Singles - Christian Speech
John 6 - Teaching
Mark 10 - Teaching

May 20 at St. Mary's School, 1-6pm

LSS 21-22, Shepherds' Training Part I
LSS 24, CMP I PART 2, Word, Flesh, Devil, Body & Blood, Service & Community

May 26 after Worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teaching

Counsels

Continued from page 1

Likewise, as individuals, we need to be part of a community so we can continuously grow spiritually and be more prepared in answering God's call to share the good news.

In the parable of the lost sheep, we are encouraged to seek for anyone who is lost and wandering in darkness. Our success in bringing someone back to the path of righteousness should be a reason for celebration and a more joyous occasion than just our success in keeping those who are within our community.

The very foundation of our faith in God is love for others. Such love should be constant and consistent, since His love for us is eternal. Our main responsibility as disciples of Christ is to spread the Gospel in words and in deeds. We should have the courage to do so with our firm belief that the Holy Spirit is guiding us when we do His will.

The designation of our community as a Private Lay Association of the Faithful is an anointing from God and not from men. We are anointed and empowered to go beyond the confines of our community. We are mission ready! Although we have supported and guided a few groups or flocks, we need to keep offering and extending our community's strengths and talents to more groups. Let us continue on this mission with more energy and enthusiasm and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and be inspired by His word in John 10:16; *"I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd."*

While we are doing our mission as individuals or as one community, we have to always be Christ centered. We should lift up to Him all our works and every difficulty we encounter in doing His will. Christ should be the ultimate influence in our lives as we take refuge in Him alone; (*"Better to take refuge in the LORD than to put one's trust in mortals."* (Ps 118:8))

He is truly the Good Shepherd. Only through His divine guidance can we find salvation. This is best expressed in the first reading; *"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)

Therefore, as we go on our mission to bring others out of spiritual darkness, we should always realize that we can only claim that Jesus is in us if we see Jesus in others.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May 13

Community Retreat. *"Healing the Family Tree"*
at St. Mary's Auditorium 8am-6pm

Mark 10 Field Trip at Sandy Hook, NJ 1pm

June 2-4

ME #27 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton PA

SE #16 at Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY

June 10-11

Community Retreat. *"Lord, Teach Us to Pray"*
at St. Mary's Auditorium 9am-5pm

June 17-18

Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ
8am-5pm Open to all Covenanted Disciples

Birthdays

May 5 Dee Lim, LSS 9

Angel Luis Matos, LSS 23

Naida Villanueva, LSS 17

May 6 Rory Olaso, LSS 2

May 7 Ricky Maniego, LSS 23

May 8 Angel Mijares, LSS 16

Armi Sion, ME 25

May 9 Chito Magahis, LSS 17

May 10 Tony Avisado, LSS 8

Em Catelo, LSS 17

Veluz Eguia, LSS 16

Bobí Luardo, LSS 17

Beth Valeriano, LSS 18

May 11 Geng Bustos, LSS 22

Frank Venadas, LSS 14

Anniversaries

May 5 Rey & Sylvia Duma, LSS 9

Rene & Ditas Tolentino, LSS 15

May 6 Danny & Cora Labung, LSS 15

Reggie & Fil Malabanan, LSS 21

May 7 Maco & Nim Col, LSS 23

May 9 Casey & Malyn Tanseco, LSS 6

The Lord's Provisions

Cash Flow as of April 28, 2006 – Week # 17

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 4,109.00	\$70,411.01
Disbursements	\$ 3,985.80	\$84,244.26
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 2,251.20	(\$13,833.25)

DIRECTIONS:

♦ For DCS and DLC - Assess the effectiveness of Pastoral Care at all levels: Encounter classes (Class shepherds), LSS Shepherding, Ministry/Apostolate level, WSC (circle shepherds)

♦ Observe and conduct weekly WSC properly.



Newly Committed Disciples

The blessings of the Holy Spirit were truly upon the Bukas Loob sa Diyos community, as Healing Mass on May 5, 2006 culminated in the commissioning of BLD's newest Committed Disciple members. A total of seven couples, members of LSS 24 and 22, respectively, were commissioned in accordance to the BLD Christian Discipleship Formation Program by Fr. Dave Sison. They were - Ed & Grace Badiola, Carlito & Arlene Claricia, Peter & Maryrose Cruz, Ray & Cora Guerra, Art & Josie Punla, Dondon & Hermie Tenchavez, and Ed & Eydie Unay. Proudly in attendance were the class shepherds, Henry & Aida Koryan and Tony & Linda Avisado. The grace-filled Friday worship was sponsored by the Solo Parents & Youth Ministries. The Healing Mass was co-celebrated by Fr. Dave Sison, Fr. Chris Panlilio, and Fr. Robert Ramirez. The celebration was made more joyous by the angelic voices of the Youth Praise Ministry.

The community was filled with the Holy Spirit as they listened to Fr. Sison's homily on the *Bread Of Life*. Fr. Sison's homily was so appropriate for this occasion as most of these newly committed disciples were first invited to the Lord's service as members of LSS 24, on April 2005, the year declared by the late Pope John Paul II as the year of the Eucharist. Indeed God's hands were at work as the couples declared their commitment in continuing their walk with the Lord.



COUNSELS

Be Connected with Jesus

WORD: Acts 9:26-31; Ps 22:26-28, 30-32;
1 Jn 3:18-24; Jn 15:1-8

THEME: *We are one flock when we cling to Jesus, the True Vine, without whom we can do nothing.*

ORDER: *Remain in me as I remain in you.* (Jn 15:4)

REFLECTION:

The Gospel talks about the necessity of being connected with Jesus. We need to be connected to Jesus just as the branches are connected to the vine. He is the Vine and we are the branches. We can never take the place of the vine; likewise we can never produce fruit on our own independent of the vine.

Jesus says that only those branches which are connected to the vine can bear fruit. *"Because without me you can do nothing."* Without fruit we are dead branches but with the fruit, it is the sign that Christ is working in us and through us. The most outstanding fruit of all is, of course, the love we reveal in our relationships with God and with others.

Separated from Christ we are like a branch that has fallen from the tree to be collected and thrown into fire and burned. Such separation is not physical. It is a separation of identity. It comes from rejecting or refusing to accept the Way of Jesus as our way of life. It is a rejection of life and the choice without Jesus will only lead to decay and death.

But, there is the great promise. *"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you."* The promise has an important and essential condition: we need to be IN Christ and have our lives totally guided by His "words", that is, His teaching and His example of life. *(continued on page 4)*

God's Promise for the Week

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you." (Jn. 15:7)

A Sign from Heaven



I had a vision of luminous lights emanating from our Lady of Ocotlan's image face during our pilgrimage to Mexico. As I was praying and looking at her face, everything changed. I saw the Lady's face surrounded by very bright lights predominantly in yellow

and gold with no dimension. I was uttering the word "beautiful" over and over again according to my wife. I never knew it was a vision until an "elder" told me.

We all desire a message from heaven to reinforce our faith. We want a sign from God that our senses can perceive. Our renewed minds have this innate desire to be with him on earth and in heaven. We want to experience a sign from heaven in whatever form, to secure our spirituality. It is also our human tendency to doubt, be skeptic and pass judgment. ***"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"*** (Mt 14:31b)

What would it take to completely embrace Jesus into our hearts and let him rule our lives? We believe in him but in times of trouble our faith dwindles and our earthly desires come into surface.

Let us try to fully understand how our Lord works for us. He shows his heavenly gestures to us sometimes in ways we cannot fully understand. When we are called and we respond to his calling, a message from heaven comes to us. If we understand and truly follow his will, we will be amazed of how many more revelations will come from him. ***"But without faith, it is impossible to please him, for anyone who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."*** (Heb 11:6)

Our materialistic attitude makes us less equipped to discern what is not made obvious to us. Today our sinfulness requires greater signs. We want something spectacular that our senses can fully apprehend. Have we become such a stiff-necked people that our way with the Lord becomes conditional? Does everything have to adjust to our earthly ways otherwise we become weak and we degenerate to be infidels? We ask the Lord to grant and bestow us many things in our lives but we neither contemplate nor reflect what is due to Him. Do we want the Lord to serve us, instead of us serving Him?

Signs from heaven are around us. Let us discard our ambivalence to God's ways. Let us have faith in our Lord that will never hesitate, vacillate and compromise. Let us all be doers of his words and we will always see signs from heaven. ***"...whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."*** (Jn 14:21)

No Other Way

Recently, my family and I visited the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA. This was to celebrate the Octave of Easter Sunday, now becoming a popular tradition of the church known as Mercy Sunday. God wants the whole world to know about His great mercy and honor it on this special day.

The "Chaplet of Mercy" is a powerful prayer revealed to a polish nun, Saint Faustina Kowalska. Jesus promised, "I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in my mercy..." "Jesus I trust in You", this bold proclamation of faith in Christ defines us, marks us and gives us renewed hope in a world afflicted by sorrow and misery of sin. The Lord gives us graces in many ways especially through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

Totally consecrating ourselves to the Lord Jesus gives immeasurable glory to God. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Truly, Jesus is the only way to salvation, we must respond as He calls us to follow Him. He is Eternal Truth, "Incarnate Word", begotten not made but one being with the Father. He is the source of life and only in Him do we have life to the fullest.

Like Moses, we put off our sandals as we approach the burning bush and hear God say, "I am who am." This amazing truth of divine revelation — God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Three Persons distinct from one another but One Indivisible God, is absolutely a great mystery.

The teachings and spirituality of Saint Louise de Montfort, a French saint of the seventeenth century was greatly admired by Pope John Paul II. He taught us closer union with Jesus through His mother. No one is more conformed to Jesus in humility, faith, obedience and purity than the Blessed Virgin Mary. Whenever anyone blesses her as the day Elizabeth did, she immediately praises Jesus and recites her canticle, "My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God..." Mary Immaculate is the living tabernacle, the Ark of the covenant. It is through her that Jesus comes to us. It is likewise through her that we must return back to Almighty God.

Praying through Mary's intercession directs our hearts and minds to worship the Triune God. She is the obedient daughter of the Eternal Father, the loving mother of the Incarnate Word, and the faithful spouse of the Holy Spirit. Thus, there is no other way to God's heavenly reward, it is total consecration to Jesus through a true devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary — a blissful union of perfect hearts and everlasting love.

Only If God Wills It



In John 14: 13-14, it reads, ***“And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.”*** This passage in the scripture is a straightforward statement, which does not require any greater thoughts on what Jesus meant. It simply tells us that whatever we ask the Father through him, will be granted because He wills it. God is merciful, after all, that is what God is in general and in particular, God is kind. He is kind in dealing with us.

In Matt 6:25-34, Jesus speaks of the Father’s knowledge of what we all need and assured us that we shall not worry for he will take care of us. God does us many good acts every day, all our life. The awareness of them is most important if the world, if we, shall be kind also. And this is, after all, what we desire. These favors God does for us everyday are often small and unfortunately we took them for granted. There is already the mere fact that we are here alive, that we were born. How many kind acts did our parents by God’s inspiration do us long before we were born, when they taught us how to walk, how to speak, and how to pray. Then there is our health. It could be better at times, but we manage to do our job. Do we thank the Lord for our appetite? Do we consider this as a special favor God does us? When we ask the Father favors, we must consider always that God who does us many favors daily enables us to do other people such kind acts, but let us also consider the importance of kind deeds. When Jesus said that we can ask “anything” – must be within this framework.

Every week, many of our brothers and sisters in the community submit petitions and prayer requests, may it be for spiritual, physical, emotional, financial, marital and family concerns believing that whatever they ask the Father in Jesus name will be granted. So it is, because the Lord sees the kind acts and deeds in every petitioner. We want to be kind in action by doing people favors. To do people favors is the best of our time and it comes back as blessings on us. We should never dwell on our kind actions in our own mind but believe that God wills them because of the operation of his grace. God’s will for our wellness will always be his constant desire for all because he loves us.

Glorifying God



“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.” (JN 15:7-8)

To be a true follower of God, I should gain control over my blind selfishness. Many never enjoy God’s love because they never really tried to reach and follow Him. People pay too much attention to their unreasonable natural desires and blind human appetites. Our wants are mostly more of what are necessary. In order to become the master of our life, rid ourselves of all unnecessary desires. Learn to live with less for ourselves and we will find more time for our Lord. The secret of union with God lies from separating myself from earthly desires. Let us turn our back to whatever threatens our union with our Lord.

We tend to manage our lives by our own ways, trusting ourselves more than our Lord. I want to be in full control. Some resign to God’s will, but make few exceptions. In these exceptions we trust ourselves more than God. With these matter we sinned rather than to have our plans changed. Our loyalty is too imperfect because of our false self-respect. Our God is all powerful. He could give us whatever we need. Being all wise and all knowing, He knows what’s best for us. My mind is so small that I cannot even begin to understand how much He loves me. I may rest assured that He wants only what is truly best for me. True, there are times when I am puzzled at the things which God permits to happen. This is only another proof of my smallness. The most intelligent thing I can do is to place my life in His hands, to let Him direct my daily life as His will. This I do by my patience, understanding, generosity, and unselfishness in my daily activities. When I must provide for myself, I should do it without too much concern or anxiety, and without disregard for justice and charity.

No words can describe the peace which God gives to those who sincerely wants His will above all else. We are created for eternal happiness with God in heaven. Everything else must take second place in our life. Without God we lose everything. Nothing on earth can bring any lasting happiness. Let us never sin for the sake of anything. I want to live for perfect happiness for which God created me. May our God grant us the wisdom to think, speak and act each day as His divine will. All glory and honor belong to our God.

Counsels from page 1

And this is confirmed by today's Second Reading: "Beloved, if (our) hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God and receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him." And what are those commandments? They are basically two: "That we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ" and "That we love one another as he told us to". We should only ask for things that will draw us closer to Christ and to be faithful in His Spirit and such a prayer will certainly be answered.

Jesus in His wisdom did not put on us the responsibility to produce fruit, but rather to remain in a relationship with Him in which the Spirit could produce fruit in our lives. Jesus knows that this kind of life comes through Him, and so He does not put the stress on being fruitful but rather on the need to remain intimately attached to Him, conducting our life in union with Him, and allowing His life to live in us. And from this spiritual vitality the fruit comes.

We have to take time to be with Jesus every day, somehow, to go and sit with Jesus, to take quiet time with Jesus, to talk to Jesus, to give Jesus our problems, our burdens, our pains, our concerns, our worries, our fears, our health, our family, our heart and soul, and listen to Jesus, and let Jesus talk to us and hold us and guide us. This is how we remain in Him, by being with Him, every day and throughout our days, to put ourselves in his presence first and foremost.

We can also remain in Jesus by being in community, a community that remains in Jesus, a community that helps one another return to Jesus, a community that is centered and rooted in Jesus, a community of prayer, a community that tells the story of Jesus, a home where Jesus would consider his own. We have to help each other follow Jesus and be with Jesus.

The more we become people of prayer, the more we can remain in Jesus, then the more we will be able to be good productive branches on the vine of Christ, bearing good fruit for God and really becoming disciples as Jesus desires. Let us all become a fruitful branch on the vine of Jesus, by accepting him in our lives.

DIRECTIONS:

Love not only in words or mere talk but also with action and in truth... 1Jn3:18

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of May 5, 2006 - Week # 18

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$4,848.00	\$75,259.01
Disbursements	\$4,952.30	\$89,196.56
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 104.30	\$13,937.55

Ministry Announcements

Mark 10 Field Trip

Tomorrow - May 13, 1pm at Sandy Hook, NJ

Contact Reuben/Cherry Vibar

Community Retreat. "Healing the Family Tree"

with Fr. Mike Barry, SSCC

Tomorrow - May 13, 8am-6pm at St. Mary's Auditorium

Marriage Encounter #27

June 2-4 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA

Contact Bebot/Grace Baquilod, ME26 class or MLA

Community Retreat. "Lord Teach Us to Pray"

with Fr. Don O' Connor, SVD

June 10-11, 9am-5pm at St. Mary's Auditorium

Singles Encounter #16

June 16-18 at Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY

Contact Richie/Aileen Escobinas, (201)214-1846 / (917)930-6470

Solo Parent Encounter #8

June 23-25 at Ramada Hotel, Piscataway, NJ

Contact Bobby/Dolly Fernandez.

MAY TEACHINGS

May 19 after worship

Singles-Christian Speech

John 6 - Teaching

Mark 10 - Teaching

May 20 at St. Mary's School, 1-6pm

LSS21-22, Shepherds' Training Part I

LSS24, CMP I Part 2, Word, Flesh, Devil,

Body & Blood, Service and Community

May 26 after worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teaching

BIRTHDAYS

May 12 Frank Belardino, LSS3

Edith Rosales, ME 25

May 13 Flor Baculio, LSS20

Fely Escobar, LSS 16

Reggie Malaban, LSS21

May 14 Lory Jacobo, LSS23

Sabrina Guiao, Mark 10

Kevi Larobis, Mark 10

May 15 Kristian DeLaCruz, Mk 10

Dodong Demegillo, LSS11

Winnie Feliciano, LSS 8

May 16 Precy Narciso, LSS 8

May 18 Susan Aglibut, LSS 12

Boboy Guzman, LSS 18

ANNIVERSARIES

May 14 Lary & Leni DeGuzman, LSS19

May 16 Eli & Lucy Navarro, LSS13

May 17 Joel & Lani Hernandez, LSS19

Oliver & Marissa Rangel, LSS19

May 18 Charlie & Arlene Claricia, LSS24



Congratulations to all newly appointed ECSL and DSL!

On May 17, 2006, Nonoy Zagala, head of the CCEO, read the letters of Archbishop Angel Lagdameo announcing the appointments of the new Executive Council of Servant Leaders and District Servant Leaders during the Corporate Worship of BLD Manila at the Santuario de San Antonio Parish Church.

Let us congratulate all the new servant leaders and pray for the Spirit's anointing on each one of them in their life and ministry. This heartfelt sentiment and prayer is offered especially for our incoming DSL for the Newark cluster, Rene Castaneda. Let us bless them with our congratulations, love, support, and prayers.

The Healing of the Family Tree

The Healing of the Family Tree retreat was held last Saturday, May 13th at the St. Mary's church auditorium.

Fr. Mike Barry of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, a well-known resource speaker at the Southern California Renewal Communities (SCRC), conducted the retreat. He talked about the patterns (history) of sinfulness and negativity in our lives. He managed to keep the congregation in a jovial and alert mood throughout the day with his mixture of wit and relevant holy scripture passages.

Josephine (Pen) Perez touched the community with her sharing about her life's amazing experience of God's healing grace and mercy. During the Eucharistic Celebration, the participants offered the completed "Genogram", a genealogy diagram that shows the negative patterns in the family tree, to the altar. This reinforced the healing process. The retreat was concluded with an individual healing prayer. Fr. Mike Barry prayed over each participant.

More than 200 BLD members and St. Antoninus' parishioners attended the retreat to experience God's love and healing mercy. This retreat was, indeed, filled with God's presence and it is through the collaborative effort of Pastoral, Intercessory, Praise, Liturgical, Technical, and Secretariat ministries that made this day a beautiful day of healing, mercy and love.

COUNSELS

Love Others as God has loved us

WORD: Acts 10:25-26; 34-35, 44-48;
Psalm 98:1-4; 1 Jn 4:7-10; Jn 15: 9-17

THEME: We are one flock when we love one another as Jesus loves us.

ORDER: *"Beloved, let us love one another because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love."* (1 Jn 4: 7-8)

REFLECTION:

John takes us to the heart of the Christian discipleship:
Love others as God has loved us.

This Sunday's gospel speaks about how we should practice our faith. It teaches us how to love one another not by how often we say "I love you" but by how well we understand each other's feelings, tolerate each other's behavior, sacrifice and minister to each other's needs.

In community, we gather in the Spirit as a christian family. We join together to remind each other of Christ's immeasurable love for us. We do not only talk about Him and share the story of our faith, we also share His life and we accomplish this by knowing and loving him not only in word but, more importantly, in deed. We become one flock under His care, united by mutually loving and caring for one another as Jesus loves us.

Jesus taught us that the love the Father has for Him is the same kind of love He has for His disciples. He immediately connected love with obedience. *If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have*

(continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love...I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete." (Jn 15: 10a-11)

The Work of the Spirit



“But when he comes, the Spirit of Truth, He will guide you to all truth..”

Jn 16:13

The Holy Spirit, the third person in the Holy Trinity, is "**The Spirit of Truth**", "**The Paraclete**", "**The Helper**". The Spirit came from heaven to do various critical missions: to complete the teaching ministry that Jesus had started, to provide an accurate understanding of the gospel to the apostles, and to sanctify men with graces and blessings through the sacraments. The Spirit of Truth is the apostles' advocate, as well as ours. It is He who counteracts Satan's work of deception and corruption.

God's truth to us men is through divine revelation - the work of the Spirit. Jesus taught the disciples not in complex terms, but in simple ways. Think back to your grammar school days and recall the fun times with your ABC's, instead of chewing on the complexities of algebra. It is for the same reason Jesus taught in laymen's ways, often in parables, in order to bring the "good news" to their level of understanding. For this very same purpose, the Advocate came to continue the revelation, to testify to the truth that Jesus is "**The Logos**", "**The Word and Reason**", the very mind and being of God sent to earth for our salvation.

Revelation is ongoing. It is an operative, dynamic state of understanding. It is not something that we do or create on our own. It is God's gift to us through the work of the Spirit. It would be erroneous to assume that revelation ended at the last book of the bible. God did not stop talking at the end of A.D. 120 (William Barclay). God did not cease to speak at the end of John's Book of Revelation; rather, He is actively communing and talking with us everyday and continuing to reveal Himself to us. God is still imbuing us to what Jesus meant and bringing us to a greater supernatural dimension that paves the way to the salvation of our souls.

With much urgency, I encourage us all to listen well and discern the will of the Father. To discern is to "cut away" the many external as well as internal influences that muffle God's voice. Remain steadfast in your faith through prayer and works of mercy. Be obedient to God's word, for it is in obedience that you reciprocate the love of our Father. We are one with Him, part of the universal family that He loves. The more we aspire Jesus, the more we know Him. The more we spend time with Him, the more He is able to reveal Himself to us. Humble yourself and let the Spirit of Truth lead the way.



"For even if I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing as I observe your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ." Colossians 2:5

Christian Confrontation

Man is broken, community is imperfect, and brother will inevitably offend his brother. All too often in these situations, we respond in very human ways: fight, flight, or fright. Their consequences are detrimental to community. Jesus taught us how to deal with such situations: "*If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone*" Mt 18:15.

Christian confrontation is love made visible, through the genuine, caring, direct, and timely sharing of our perception of another's behavior to that person. The purpose of confrontation is to begin a *loving dialogue* with that brother, aimed at righting, improving or deepening our relationship with one another. Because confrontation is not easy, many look for excuses not to confront. But excuses do not heal but rather pile up hurts and resentments. And with the "heaping" of more slights-real or imaginary, trust is eroded, the cancer of suspicion spreads to others, and brethren find themselves warring with each other rather than the enemy.

The Lord requires us to embrace confrontation as a way to win over our erring brethren to Him. Since it leads to correction and reconciliation, Christian confrontation is essential for our spiritual good. Hence, everyone must embrace it as a way of love. A greater burden of perseverance in witnessing this way of love falls on those entrusted with the caring and feeding of the flock. "*If I preach the gospel...an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it*" 1 Cor 9:16. Woe to us if we do not practice what we preach! "*...For you realize that we will be judged more strictly, for we all fall short in many respects*" Jm 3:1-2.

There are four rules to Christian confrontation for both the confronter and the confrontee:

- * The peace of Christ must control your heart.
You must have overcome your anger and frustration. You are able to focus the goodness of the person and can sincerely empathize with him.
- * The wisdom of Christ direct your mind.
You must be emptied of any judgments of the person. You are willing to listen without any preconceptions. You acknowledge that you yourself are a sinner needing the Lord's mercy.
- * The love of Christ must guide your behavior.
You must have died to the need to be proven right, or to punish the erring brother. You will confront the behavior, not the person. You will repent for what you have done or not done to contribute to the situation. Your goal is to do the Father's will.
- * Pray for the Spirit's anointing before, during, and after the confrontation.

Word Sharing Promises

In the conduct of the Living Word/Word Sharing Circles, it is important that members of the Circle bind themselves with the following promises:

The Promise of Grace (Col 3:5-14)

I will love you and accept you as my brothers and sisters, no matter what you say or do, or what you don't say or don't do. I will love you in whatever form you come.

The Promise of Truthfulness (Eph 4:25-32)

I will not hide from you what I feel about you, good or bad, but I will seek in the timing of the Spirit to deal with you openly and directly but in a loving and forgiving way, so that you are affirmed when in need.

The Promise of Sacrifice and Prayer (Phil 2:1-11)

Particularly in our gatherings, but throughout the week as well, I promise to make your needs more important than my own – as we talk, worship and pray together. I will pray daily and diligently for you. I will work to be sensitive to the Spirit concerning you.

The Promise of Availability (Acts 2:43-47)

I will seek to serve you with my time, energy, wisdom, finances and material goods. When you need my physical aid, I will be present with anything I have.

The Promise of Reliability (Heb 10:19-21 and Lk 9:57-62)

I will regard the time, which my group spends together weekly, as time under the discipling hand of Jesus in our midst. I will not grieve the Spirit or hinder His work in the lives of my brothers and sisters by my absence, except in emergency. By His permission and through prayer along will I consider absence.

The Promise of Accountability (Exe 3:16-21 and Mt 18:12-20)

I give you the right to question, confront, and challenge me in love when I seem to be failing in any aspect of my life under God. I trust you to be in the Spirit and led by Him when you do so. I need your correction and reproof so that I may ever better fulfill my God-given ministry among you.

I Promise not to be defensive (Prov 12:1,15: 13:1, 10, 18)

The Promise of Confidentiality (Prov 10:9;11:9-13;12:23; 13:3; 15:4; 18:6-8) *I realize that much of what we share would be harmful to you who shared it, were it repeated in other company; therefore personal matters stop here. I will confine our sharings of personal matters within our circle. I will say nothing outside the group that might be injurious or embarrassing for anyone of you.*

The Promise of Outreach (Mt 25:31-46)

I promise to find ways to sacrifice myself for those outside our fellowship or faith in the same way that I have promised to sacrifice myself for you, my brothers and sisters. I will treat unbelievers exactly as if they were believers. I will do it in Jesus' Name so that others are added to the Kingdom of God in His love.

Ministry Announcements

ME # 27 - June 2-4

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA.

Applications forms are available at www.bldnewark.com

Contact: Bebot/Grace Baquilod, ME 26 Class or MLA.

Community Retreat - "Lord Teach Us To Pray"

with Father Don O'Connor, SVD - **June 10-11**

9am – 5pm at St. Mary's Auditorium.

Singles Encounter # 16 - June 16-18

Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY

Contact: Richie/Aileen Escobinas

(201) 214-1846/(917) 930-6470

Solo Parent Encounter #8 - June 23-25

Ramada Hotel, Piscataway, NJ

Contact: Bobby/Dolly Hernandez

Youth Encounter #13 - July 7-9

St Francis Retreat House, Easton PA

Contact: Mario/Cecille Salonga or Marvin Venadas

Family Encounter #13 - July 21-23

St. Joseph, Hills Malverne, PA

Contact: Oddie/Jho Martin, King/Arlene Rigor, Ed/Grace

Badiola, Peter/Rose Cruz, or Tito/Ann Cruz

TEACHINGS



May 19 after worship

Singles Christian Service

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

May 20 St. Mary's School 1-6pm

LSS 21-22 Shepherd's Training - Part I

LSS 24 CMP I PART 2, Word, Flesh, Devil,
Body & Blood, Service & Community

May 26 after worship

Service and Intercessory Formation Teachings

June 3 St. Mary's School 1-6 pm

LSS 23 CMP II Part 2 – Giving, Witnessing,
Suffering, Discernment

LSS 21-22 Shepherd's Training-Part 2

"Sing a new song to the Lord, who has done marvelous deeds, whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory." Psalm 98:1

Counsels (from page 1)

kept my Father's commandments and remain in His love." Jn 15:9-10. This command is further reinforced in 1 Jn 4:20 which says, "If anyone says I love God and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.." In this verse, it is clearly emphasized the bond between love of God and love of neighbor. Love of God becomes a lie if we shut out our neighbor or hate him altogether. Love of neighbor; therefore, is a path that leads to a relationship with God.

In God and with God, we can give love even to those people that we do not like or know. Through His grace, we learn to look at others from the perspective of Jesus Christ. Seeing with the eyes of Jesus enables us to give much more to others. If God is not present in our life, then we are incapable of seeing in others the image of God. Love of God and love of others are inseparable.

Yet, we can not render this love for neighbors by our single, individual effort alone. As in all commands given by the Lord, this great commission to love others is a collective responsibility; one that is best lived out and fulfilled in community. Love; therefore, needs to be organized through a *formation of the heart*, which leads to an encounter with Jesus. This encounter will awaken our hearts and spirits to the practice of loving others as a consequence of our love for God.

Thus, the direction for this liturgical week is an exhortation from the DCS to participate in the Living Word Group and Word Sharing Circles. Word Sharing Circle is the primary forum of our pastoral care program by which BLD, as a community, express our response to God's covenant love by nurturing and caring for one another. This process enables us, Christ's disciples, to return God's love by offering ourselves in the same love for the wholeness and well being of others. It allows ministering to each other's needs and burdens. It provides an opportunity to learn and apply the Word of God in one's personal, family and community life. The fact that Word Sharing Circles are held at the conclusion of every corporate worship is indicative of its importance in discipleship formation and community building.

Through the refining fire of the Holy Spirit, we are being transformed into the likeness of Christ. Through the power of God's love and our practice of love for our neighbors, we are made holy so we may shine towards others in the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Our inheritance of God's Kingdom awaits us, not because we deserve it, but because our Lord gives endlessly.

God loves you! God loves me! God loves all of us! This is the unique joy that will come our way, more fulfilling than any other, because it completes us.

Directions:

- * Participate in Word Sharing Circles.
- * Learn and practice the Community Word Sharing Promises

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- June 2-4 **ME # 27 - Newark**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- June 2-4 **ME # 27 - Newark**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
- June 16-18 **SE # 16 - Newark**
Graymoor Friars of Atonement
Garrison, NY
- June 17-18 **Prayer Counseling Seminar**
Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ, 8am-5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples



BIRTHDAYS

- May 19 Olga Abroguena, LSS 25
Jun Bustos, LSS 22
Dens Mantes, LSS 11
Olga Paraguya, LSS 25
Chris Racinez, SE
- May 20 Ray Atienza, LSS 25
Sue Bueser, LSS 18
Norma Lacsamana, LSS 7
- May 21 Nina Amarra, SE
Butching Reynoso, LSS 13
- May 22 Tino Garcia, LSS 8
Rachel Japson, SE
Joe Pring, LSS 16
Estephan Rosales, YLSS 11
Kimberly Samonte, SE 13
Rose Zoleta, LSS 6
- May 23 Yen Aman, LSS 7
Jay Malabanán, SE 12
Rey Protacio, LSS 7
- May 24 Sylvia Duma, LSS 9
Kevin Gongob, YLSS 10



ANNIVERSARIES

- May 20 Gerry & Marie Somera, LSS 6
- May 22 Obioma & Onwuka Anyanwu, LSS 23
- May 23 Mon & Dulce Samonte, LSS 23
- May 25 Zaldy & Bing Espinosa, LSS 12

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of May 12, 2006 – Week #19

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Receipts	\$ 5,475.65	\$ 80,734.66
Disbursements	\$ 3,151.05	\$ 92,347.61
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$ 2,324.60)	(\$ 11,612.95)

visit our BLD Newark website @ www.bldnewark.com



Formation Servant Leaders Visit Newark

Kiko & Aida Josef, Formation Servant Leaders from Manila, met with BLD Newark's Formation Apostolate, DLC & DCS last May 18, 2006 to discuss formation and other global community matters. The well-attended meeting included a representative from BLD Trenton.

Kiko complemented BLD Newark for being a model to other districts and for its good fruit which has benefited the Christian Discipleship Formation Program (CDFP). He exhorted the district to continue to spread the good news by being good witnesses to others within and outside our community. He asked us to persevere in our faith and to serve selflessly as a way of thanking the Lord for all the blessings we received. Kiko said that our Gawad Kalinga and Medical Mission efforts are good examples of our faith in action.

Kiko reported the following key accomplishments of the current ECSL:

- The BLD Statutes have been finalized and ready for submission to the Vatican as part of the global community's application to become an international private lay association of the faithful. Msgr. Paul Cuison, a canon lawyer from the Philippines, reviewed the Statutes. Kiko added that Archbishop Lagdameo is seeking the endorsement of the bishops of the dioceses where BLD districts are located to support our application with the Vatican.
- BLD has adopted Gawad Kalinga as a mission program and is signing a Memorandum of Agreement establishing a partnership between BLD and Gawad Kalinga at the end of this month. A BLD-GK Ministry has been formed in Manila to coordinate the efforts of all BLD districts in support of this new mission program.

Kiko shared the current ECSL's intention to modify the emergence guidelines, based on lessons learned from the recently-concluded global emergence. An open forum followed wherein attendees asked questions, received clarifications, and gave suggestions regarding our formation program.

COUNSELS

You Are To Be My Witnesses

WORD: Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47:2-3, 6-9;
Eph 1:17-23; Mk 16:15-20

ORDER: "Go unto the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." Mk16: 15

THEME: We are one flock when we believe and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.

REFLECTION:

"YOU ARE TO BE MY WITNESSES." Acts 1:8. These are very plain and yet very powerful words because they signify what Jesus wants from each and every one of us. These words express the deepest reason why we are all here, why we have our prayer worship and why we have this community and this Church. We come here as a response to the love of Jesus and our pledge to one another as a community. We come not because we are asked but because we want to be here. Friday night is supposed to be our night to relax and unwind after a tiring workweek. And yet we are here as the visible, physical and concrete evidence of the love of Jesus Christ.

As a response to Jesus' love, He asks us to believe and proclaim the Gospel. He asks us to share His love to others especially those who are lost and confused in the maze of lies of this world. He asks us to overcome the feelings of complacency, the excuse of busyness and the thoughts of unworthiness. He does not want us to leave this task of spreading the Gospel to the priests, deacons or nuns, or to the leaders of our community. He asks us to keep alive our encounters with Jesus Christ and to continue to renew our lives. To be good witnesses must become our aspiration so that other

> page 4

Promise of the Week

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned."
(Mk16:16)

God Who Is Always Right On Time

The eleventh hour is a figure of speech that refers to the final moments before a certain deadline, or something that implies that some sort of end is near. I'm all too familiar with the actuality of the phrase and just how it plays out in real life.

According to the psalm, "Our God is a God who saves; escape from death is in the LORD God's hands," even though you may feel like it's the end for you, God shows you that He's always there, raising you up from even the deepest rock bottom. Though some things just aren't comparable to the phenomenon of death, some events are just as devastating.

I grew up in a healthy environment, living in suburbia and attending a private school. Naturally, in adolescence it becomes a life mission to conform to your peers. I succeeded until the summer before high school. From then on, things just seemed to decline; it was as though someone tied a bucket of rocks on top of my head and just kept adding to it as the days went by.

I went to private school from Pre-K to 8th grade. Of course I expected to attend a private high school, "just like everyone else." My parents had just bought a house because our family had grown too big to fit three adults, a teenager, and two kids in a two-bedroom apartment, so there was no money for tuition [and purchasing laptops directly from the school was mandatory]. My parents tried to enroll me in the local public high school, but there was a problem.

When you're young, you feel as though you're invincible. "Nothing can hurt me," you think, "life is good." Then someone throws a brick in your face and all of a sudden you're not so super anymore. The brick that hit me was "papers"... or the lack thereof. It was only when attempting to enroll in public high school did I find out that I wasn't eligible to go there, even though I'd grown up in this country since my grandmother flew me over the Pacific Ocean to live with my parents, who were residing in Brooklyn at the time. My grandmother almost lost me at the airport because I was what you could call "makulit" and let go of her hand to look at a toy in the window. I was about two then. I was at a loss because this meant I would be a drop-out against my will. I prayed, my parents prayed... their friends prayed.

Then one day, something weird happened. It was about two days before the 1999-2000 school year started. A check had come into the mail for about \$3,500 from a source that to this day my father has no knowledge of. We believe it was some sort of rebate for something.... I don't know. It oddly enough was the exact amount needed for the first year's tuition for the private high school, which didn't require papers as long as they got your money, give or take a few dollars.

There it was, God saving me from a fruitless future, but not before teaching me how to ask to be saved. What a guy!

My parents and I had been petitioned for permanent residence by my grandmother in January of 1991 and we were just waiting for the priority date to come up so our papers could be processed. Fast forward to a few years later to the ripe old age of 20, when I've already had time to cope with the fact that I couldn't attend any major university [just junior college], take out a student loan, take up any major BUT nursing [because the hospital would "petition" me just in case], work, leave the country, and even DRIVE.

After fourteen years of waiting, the government had finally caught up with my family's petition and it was finally our turn to begin the process of attaining the once thought to be unattainable: endless opportunity through a legal status.

I used to get so sad and jealous listening to the people in my college speak with heavy accents about going on vacation to their home countries as they walked to their cars and drove themselves to work. Now it was our turn to have a chance at a better future.

Our awesome lawyer bent over backwards, if not more, for us. Everything ran smoothly; fingerprints, physicals, and piles and piles of paperwork were all worked out. Then one day, we were scheduled to interview for Permanent Resident status, manifested by those things infamously known as Green Cards.

So far so good. "What a great birthday present," I thought, "To: Me - Love, God." They didn't need to see me for the interview though, because I was only 20. My parents and lawyer/Tito went in. I shook and shivered and looked pretty crazy rocking myself back and forth in the room full of about 100 people going through the same thing. Then they finally came out.

Something was wrong; a document was missing. It wasn't just any document, oh no. It was one that had to be notarized by a notary public and signed by my grandmother... who lives in California. The document was due back at the building by 3:00PM, and at the time it was about 11:30AM. I drove us all to my house [I just got my permit the day before], and my parents and lawyer/Tito worked frantically to get my grandmother to fax the document as soon as possible. The printer ran out of ink, nobody was answering their phones, people were at work, nobody had a car... so many problems, all on the same day.

Long story, short.... We managed to get the document faxed over by 2:30. BUT...

Even though we got the document to the building before the 3:00 deadline, it was to no avail. The clerk noticed something he hadn't noticed in his first review of the applications. Under the background check for my mother, it was marked as still being in progress. Therefore, no one was approved. Bummer.

Our lawyer said that we would be alright, that these things happen more often than not, and that it should take around 120 days (*> con't to page 3*)

Introducing CSGI

In the next couple of months, a new spiritual gifts identification process, called the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory (CSGI), will be rolled out in the community. This is intended to expand on and eventually supplant the current Motivational Gifts test used to identify the gifting of newly committed disciples for the initial purpose of aiding the discernment of the ministry they're best suited for.

The CSGI, and the CSG Discernment Program of which it is a part, promises to be a multi-purpose instrument for deepening our spiritual life whether we are a new member in the community or a covenanted disciple of long standing. It offers a broader understanding of charisms : its meaning and uses, both as tools for accomplishing our mission or calling and as clues as to what these missions might be.

CSGI differs from the MGT in two respects: it aligns one along 24 spiritual gifts or charisms vs MGT's six ; whereas the MGT offers a snapshot of our gifts at a particular point of time, the CSGI provides leads for our possible gifts which we can then discern and develop on our own in our own time.

Beyond these differences, the CSGI also complements our spiritual formation whether we are new or old in the community. As newly committed members, it sets us off to search our inner selves to find out the ways to serve the Lord with true joy and without burn-out. As covenanted disciples, the CSGI can take us to the next level of our spiritual life by pointing us to the offices where our charisms lie, whether it be as pastor, teacher, evangelist, prophet or apostle.

As the appreciation of our individual charisms spread throughout the community, we can perhaps look forward to a climate of less personal conflicts, where we can avoid judging others knowing that their actions arise from specific spiritual priorities. If only for this heavenly possibility, we should welcome the use of the CSGI and its lessons on finding out God's will in our lives and how He will gift us to do His calling..

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of May 19, 2006 - Week # 20

	Last Week	Year to Date
Receipts	\$3,336.00	\$ 84,070.66
Disbursements	\$12,350.00	\$ 104,697.61
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$9,014.00)	(\$20,626.95)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 2-4: ME #27 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton PA. Contact Bebot/Grace Baquilod or the ME26 Class and MLA

June 16-18: Singles Encounter #16 – Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY, Contact Richie/Aileen Escobinas 201-214-1846/917-930-6470

June 17-18: "Prayer Counseling Seminar" – Ramada Limited, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am-5pm (open to all covenanted disciples)

June 23-25: Solo Parent Encounter#8 - Ramada Hotel, Piscataway, NJ, Please see Bobby/Dolly Hernandez

July 7-9: Youth Encounter#13 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA, Contact Mario/Cecille Salonga or Marvin Venadas

July 21-23: Family Encounter Retreat #13 at St. Joseph by the Hills Malverne, PA, Contact Oddie/Jho Martin, King/Arlene Rigor, Ed/Grace Badiola, Peter/Rose Cruz or Tito/Ann Cruz

TEACHINGS

May 26 after *Worship* Service and Intercessory Formation Teaching.

June 3 CMP II Part 2 – Giving, Witnessing, Suffering, Discernment (LSS23Newark) Shepherd's Training Part 2 (LSS 21-22)

June 17 Encounter with Jesus Part III – Luke, John (LSS25) New Creation Realities – GIP – Prayer, Praise & Worship (LSS26)

June 23 Service & Intercessory Formation

July 1 Understanding Corporate Worship/ Prayer Leadership (LSS23 Newark) Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia (LSS25 Newark)

.....from page 2

before we hear from them again.

My parents and I were pretty scared. I was to turn 21 two weeks from that day, and once you turn 21, you start all over again. 14 years of waiting and worry all go down the drain. That was in March. It's May now.

Two weeks ago, we got our green cards in the mail. No need for another interview or any further paper filing. They didn't exclude my acceptance just because I was 21 already because I was under age when we had the initial interview. This was the real 11th hour; the one my parents and I had been waiting for since January, 1991. This was God, yet again, making His presence known through tragedy and triumph. He teaches us the virtue of patience through these close-calls and to ask Him for help even when it seems like we can't be helped. God is always there for us; at the inception of our souls, throughout our lives, at 11th hour... and He is always right on time. 🙏

Counsels from page 1

people may know of the love and mercy of God. We must continue to fulfill our responsibilities in our community and the Church with zeal and devotion because there is no job so small or insignificant in the eyes of God if it is performed from our hearts.

The feast of the Ascension clearly reminds us that we are only passing through on earth. Our existence here is only temporary and preparatory to our afterlife. It follows then that it is important to lead a good life and take care not only of our souls but also of other people's. Jesus said "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. This is not a suggestion but a command. This command emphasizes Jesus' message that we are all brothers and sisters, and that we belong to one flock when we believe and proclaim His gospel.

If we truly love Him in our hearts, we must obey and serve Him through others. We must live for one another. If we are for one another, we do not have to worry about saving our own souls, because it shows we have a loving and merciful heart. Remember what He said, "Whoever finds his life will lose it and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Matthew 10:39.]

In continuing the Lord's mission, we need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The Ascension marked the end of Jesus' earthly ministry and signified the start of the reign of His Holy Spirit on earth. In John 14:25-26, He said, "I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name- He will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you." We do not have to be killed or persecuted for our beliefs. We do not need healing power or any great talent. We just have to emulate Jesus Christ and live His Word in our daily lives.

The teachings, the retreats, the soup kitchen, the advocacy in our community are some of the means of strengthening the Holy Spirit within us. The regular partaking of the sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist will make us one with Jesus Christ. And so through the small things we do, we will be able to show our family and those around us the love and compassion in our hearts.

DIRECTION: Let us all heed the last will of Jesus Christ as we follow the direction as discerned by our District Council of Stewards: *Be empowered by the Holy Spirit in living your new life and be bold in witnessing.*

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- June 2-4 ME #27 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton PA
June 16-18 SE #16 at Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am-5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you. . .



BIRTHDAYS

- May 26 Richie Bernal, LSS12
Vulet Chong, LSS 20
Philip Go, LSS21
Aimee Pena, LSS2
Eunice Ukaegbu, LSS19
May 27 Danielle Jose, YCR6
Louie Lomuntad, SE
Maggie Manuel, SPE15
Romy Silao, LSS3
Chung Yap, YE12
May 28 Fidel Lim, LSS21
Mely Romero, LSS17
Chris Talag, SE
Timothy Talbot, Mk10
May 29 Dhemie Alba, LSS25
Anthony Duma, LSS23
Bing Duma, LSS10
Joel Hernandez, LSS19
Nancy Hernandez, LSS23
Christine Ogboma, JN6
Mario Salonga, LSS17
Casey Tanseco, LSS6
May 30 Sonny Naviamos, LSS18
Nitz Villavicencio, LSS8
May 31 Angel Calilap, LSS14
Island Raagas, LSS6
Miles Sotelo, LSS16
June 1 Nong Bustos, LSS14
Adeline Clesca, LSS24
Al Maglasang, SE12
Art Monta, LSS11
Sonny Naviamos, LSS11
Carmen Soto, LSS14

ANNIVERSARIES

- May 26 Vic & Gigi Munante, LSS5
May 27 Oscar & Sandy Joson, LSS22
27 Rod & Mely Largoza, LSS12
27 Bobi & Genie Luardo, LSS17
27 Mon & Leonie Mariazeta, LSS20
May 28 Tony & Marlene Brillantes, LSS23
28 Jim & Emggie Yap, LSS15
May 29 Ray & Tessie Salmo, LSS22
May 30 Mark & Angela Brancato, ME25
30 Gerry & Tonette Pagdonsalan, LSS20
30 Riel & Gina Sabale, LSS25



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 12 Issue 21

Bulletin Edition

June 02, 2006

The New Servants

Ephesians 4:11-12 *“And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ”*. The chosen ones may change but the objective remains the same – build the body of Christ here on earth.

Using the above as the guiding principle, we welcome and congratulate the new servant leaders of BLD-Newark starting 01 July 2006 for a term of three (3) years ending 30 June 2009. Richard DelaFuente together with Fr. Paul Lehman presented them to the community last 19 May 2006 for the DSL and 26 May 2006 for the DCS.

District Servant Leader :

Rene and Sally Castaneda

Evangelization : Nestor and Becbec Laxina

Mission : Joe and Beth Baluyot

Formation : George and Cathy Del Fierro

Pastoral : Lito and Gigi Vibar

Management : Frank and Sally Belarmino

The new servants, the result of the emergence weekend that was conducted last April 2006, will be presented to the Community during the July healing mass. They will be anointed to take office from then on. The coming weeks will be dedicated to providing a smooth transition between the outgoing and incoming servant leaders.

To the outgoing DSL and members of the DCS, we thank the Lord for the dedication that you have given the BLD Community. To the incoming DSL and members of the DCS, may the Holy Spirit continue on guiding you to lead the community into His service.

“With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit” Eph 6:18

“Those who are victorious I will feed from the tree of life, which grows in the paradise of my God, alleluia” Rv 2:7

COUNSELS

Live By The Spirit

Word: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-31, 34; Gal 5:16-25; Jn 15:26-27, 16:12-15

Order: *“You also testify because you have been with me from the beginning.” Jn 15:27*

Theme: We live by the Spirit when we manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit



Reflection: On Pentecost day, we celebrate the feast that commemorates the birthday of the ‘Church’ as the people who find their strength in the one Spirit. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the ‘Church’, the Church was made manifest to the world. In the upper room,

the apostles were filled with God’s Holy Spirit but the disciples did not stay in that room luxuriating in what they had been given. They all burst out telling the world how much God loves everyone and how He wants everyone to experience that love. The deepened release of the Holy Spirit upon them has allowed the attainment of what is beyond their most sublime aspiration: the manifestation of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in them, to come about. Moved by the Holy Spirit, they all began to bear witness to God’s love.

The Acts of the Apostles continues down to our own day. The same Spirit is with us and is inviting us to

(continue on page 4)

God’s Promise for the Week

“Live by the Spirit and you will certainly not glorify the desires of the flesh.” Gal 5:16

Supplement of Faith

Today's "modern" belief, according to some secular scientists, has lost the relevancy of a God. They claim that scientific study should be limited to understanding reality only in finite terms. Most of them dispute the reality of God on the basis of their "scientific" knowledge.

Faced with these challenges, Pope John Paul II through his encyclical letter dated September 14, 1998, urged Catholic bishops to study many commonalities and reconcile seeming differences between faith and reason.

St. Peter was experiencing the same problem when he wrote his own encyclical (2nd) letter addressing Christians in Asia Minor. False teachers sought to corrupt the faith, denying the second Advent of Christ and the end of the world. They challenged the very basis of their faith. Alert to this dilemma, Peter wrote theological discourses to his followers, helping them to understand and live their lives with hope for those who are in waiting for the second Advent.

First, Peter affirmed the promises of salvation and of eternal life. In the words of the Magnificat, "he shall put down the mighty from their thrones... he shall fill the hungry with good things and the rich he shall send away empty."

Second, however, he argued that faith by itself is not enough. Faith must be "supplemented" with virtue. In other words, Peter warned the faithful that they ought to be ready themselves realistically for a long haul. If they are to live in the earthly realm, they must embrace piety for holiness. Virtue is a quality of human living in moral community. The meaning of virtue here is specific: self-control, devotion, endurance and love.

Third, Peter reminded his church that knowledge comes from virtue. Knowledge, of course, is an understanding of God. In other words the depth of understanding that affirms that the ultimate creator of all things is God and that this is the God we worship. This does not exclude epistemology, the rational search for meaning and for understanding in life, to probe the depths of reality, that our faith is well grounded on a very firm rational foundation. All these too are necessary if the life of faith is to be lived fully.

Today, we are no different from Peter's audience. We should be equally concerned about the moral character of our society. We must examine our own responsibility in creating together with our neighbors a moral future. We must be constantly engaged in the upliftment of our extended family – our BLD community. And most of all, as our beloved John Paul II wanted, we must be ready to defend the rationality of our faith. *"For this reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge."* (2Peter 1:5).

Saint Justin

Saint Justin said, "We cannot be accused or condemned for obeying the commands of our Savior, Jesus Christ." Justin was a martyr who was beheaded in 165 at Rome and died for his love for God. Jesus gave up his life for the whole world, and Justin gave up his life for Christ. Can we give up our lives for our faith like Justin did? By the grace and love of God, we should and will be able to follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our One and Only Savior.

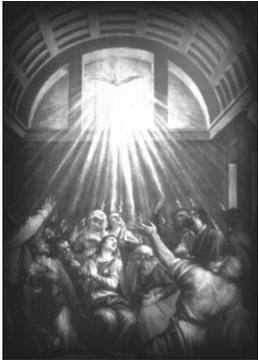


Justin was born in Neapolis, the ancient Sichem. His father did not teach him anything about God and he was spiritually lost at a young age. He began to search for answers meeting historians, philosophers, poets and orators. It was until he met an old man who told him about Jesus Christ. He began to read the Bible and built a passion for Christ. He decided to become a Christian and do God's works.

Justin's prior knowledge of philosophy did not make him vulnerable to doubt but only made him a stronger Christian. He was able to confidently argue why the Lord is much more concrete than philosophy. He gave answers to those who questioned and followed the Christian obligation of speaking out about their faith to others. According to Justin, faith was not a justification but a preliminary to justification which is achieved by repentance, change of heart, and a sinless life according to God's testaments.

Before Justin's death he told the judge, "there is nothing which we more earnestly desire than to endure torments for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ; for this is what will promote our happiness, and give us confidence at his bar, where all men must appear to be judged." He understood that he will be sentenced to death but never once did it cross his mind he rather live in the world than die for the Lord.

May all of us possess a kind of faith similar to Justin's. A kind of faith that propels us to do anything for the Lord. A kind of faith that treats the Lord as above all things. The Lord should always be the priority of all priorities. Our scheduled activities dedicated to the Lord should always prevail over all other activities. Sunday Masses, holidays of obligations, BLD Worships, charity works and other related activities should always be above anything else. Again, I pose the question, can we give up our lives for our faith like Justin did?



We come to the glorious end of the Easter season with the great feast of Pentecost. Jesus told the saddened apostles at the last Supper that if He did not go away the Holy Spirit could not come. This must have been very confusing for them, since they never heard of this Holy Spirit, and besides why would they trade this Holy Spirit for the loving presence of their beloved master who was at that moment sitting in their midst! The reality they did not understand at that time was that the Holy Spirit would make their relationship with Jesus much more intimate. It is the risen Jesus in His glorified body that exists now, and it is this Jesus that not only wants to be with us, but in a certain sense to interpenetrate our very existence. He wants to “abide” in us with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This can be done only through the work of the Spirit which Jesus himself sent to the apostles on Pentecost and even now wishes to send over the whole world. Since Jesus is one with the Holy Spirit, when the Spirit comes, Jesus comes with him, to dwell in us. This essentially is what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is all about. When we sense the loss of feelings, ideas and imaginings during our prayer time, this could well be the Holy Spirit emptying us, so we can be filled with a new sense of presence. This may not “feel” good, but it could be Jesus telling us to leave the thoughts, feelings and imaginings to follow him into the emptiness of divine intimacy just as he told the apostles that he was going away. It could well be an invitation to yield to a deeper contemplative experience with him. Look at the Eucharist! You see the appearance of bread, but what is really there is Jesus, even though you do not see, feel or taste him. Looking at the Eucharist can teach us to pray in the emptiness of prayer.

May I use this opportunity to encourage a greater use of the charismatic gifts, especially tongues, during Friday worship and First Friday Mass. Let us make our praise time an occasion to enthusiastically raise our voices to the Lord, uplifting our spirits to adore and praise Him. Let us make an effort to make the prophetic message at the end of worship be relatively brief. It is not a teaching or mini-homily; it is a word from the Lord. It is not validated unless at least one person “confirms” the word, by a simple raising of the hand. This means that the message proclaimed was spoken directly to his or her heart. Relatedly, let us try to limit the prophecies to three.



Sandy hook was a great experience!

We did so many things and had lots of fun! First, we ate lunch, played some volleyball and just waited for the rest of the group to come. While waiting, Tito Reuben even caught a horseshoe crab; we even named it Mr. Crabs (from Sponge Bob).

After that we were introduced to our tour guide Jenny, who gave us a brief history of Sandy Hook. We were surprised to learn a lot of things about Sandy Hook, like it used to be an army camp. She told us all the rules and instructions for getting to the salt marsh. As we walked through the bushy trail, we were warned not to touch any plants especially poison ivy.

Although Sandy Hook offers a lot of marine activities, Mark 10 picked the Salt Marsh program. There were a lot of things to do like seining, seeing and taking care of the baby sea creatures, looking for crabs, observing the planktons through the microscope, and much more! We had to put on these seining outfits so we wouldn't get hurt, and we had this big net to catch things with. We caught so many different sea creatures like horseshoe crabs, pipefish, shrimps, snails, mussels, and different kinds of fish and crabs! It was really cool and fun! All the 19 children and 17 Titos and Titas had a great time!

Afterwards, we played some volleyball and enjoyed the rest of the day.

I thank the Lord for letting me experience the beauty of His creation in Sandy Hook!

TEACHINGS

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| June 3 | CMP II Part 2 – Giving, Witnessing, Suffering, Discernment (LSS 23 Newark) Shepherd's Training Part 2 (LSS 21-22) |
| June 17 | Encounter with Jesus Part III – Luke, John (LSS25)
New Creation Realities – GIP – Prayer, Praise & Worship (LSS26) |
| June 23 | Service & Intercessory Formation |
| July 1 | Understanding Corporate Worship/Prayer Leadership (LSS23 Newark)
Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia (LSS25 Newark) |

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

renew and deepen our commitment to live the message and person of our Lord Jesus Christ. This same Spirit is sending us out to the diverse and needy community of the world to be witnesses of God's love in Christ. Evidently, it is through **living by the Spirit** that we, as a community, can fulfill this mission. However, the real challenge is: How can we truly manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us, be effective in speaking the Gospel and see dramatic changes in the lives of people around us, and effectively bring many people to join the community to encounter Christ more deeply?

Firstly, we need to fully examine ourselves. Individually, we need to search our hearts and ask ourselves these questions: Do we give in to our selfish desires and listen to the dying gasps of the flesh instead of following the leading of the Holy Spirit all the time? Do we pray and meditate on the Scriptures as a regular part of our Christian walk? How can we sincerely bear witness to God's love to others and allow God's love to flow freely through us when we serve if we do not work toward greater holiness on a daily basis? Secondly, as members of the BLD community, we need to practice the virtue of humility in every way and at all times. How can we encourage others to join the community if we do not live the Gospel and do not testify to the truth consistently by demonstrating inconsiderate words and actions toward others? Lastly, we need to walk steadily through life by the Holy Spirit and as we go through our life, we have to ask the Holy Spirit to guide our every move so others may see the Holy Spirit moving in us and among us.

It is evident that only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we will be able to testify to the truth and at the same time accomplish remarkable feats. Apart from Him, wisdom becomes folly. St. Paul says in Galatians 5:18 *"But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under law."* It is not "wise and persuasive words" which would bring people to faith in Christ, but a *"demonstration of spirit and power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God"* (1 Corinthians 2: 4-5).

Through God's grace, let us now live by the Spirit so that the good fruit that the Holy Spirit has prepared for us will be manifested in us. Let us carry God's light and love within our community to the people who still wait in darkness, and let us go out to the world and testify!

Directions:

- ♥ Let us sincerely search our hearts and see if we are truly living in the life of the Spirit.
- ♥ Invite others to encounter Jesus through our community.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- June 2-4** ME #27 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton PA
- June 16-18** SE #16 at Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
- June 17-18** Prayer Counseling Seminar Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am-5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples

BIRTHDAYS

June 2	Mary Rose Cruz	LSS 24
	Blandie Montemayor	LSS 5
	Mary Rose Tan	LSS 21
June 3	Gia Cueto	ME 25
	Mabel Omay	LSS 9
	Ed Unay	LSS 24
June 4	Tilay Angbetic	LSS 9
	Expie Ornillo	LSS 14
	Alyssa Alcudia	YE9
	Ann-Ann Alejan	YLSS7
June 5	Ernie Doropan	LSS 12
	Tony Nwaneri	LSS 22
	Chuck Tanseco	LSS 23
June 6	Bobby Escalante	LSS 14
	Anthony Kramer	LSS 11
	Mel Hobayan	LSS 12
	Val Valonzo	LSS 22
June 7	Bebot Baquilod	LSS 2
	Bobby Romero	LSS 11
	Mark Bustos	LSS 23
June 8	Al Gatchalian	LSS 10
	Vic Malantic	LSS 20
	John Rafanan	SE 13

ANNIVERSARIES

June 2	Johnny and Leonora Ramos	LSS 10
June 3	Chito & Aileen Ciocon	LSS 6
	Ad & Nancy Hernandez	LSS 23
	James & Malou Minano	LSS 23
June 4	George & Cathy del Fierro	LSS 4
	Al & Edith Rosales	ME 25
June 5	Audie & Vulet Chong	LSS 20
June 6	Jun & Zeny Isidro	LSS 14
June 7	Butch & Emily Herrera	LSS 14
June 8	Benru & Elsa Etcubanas	LSS 5
	Mel & Remy Hernandez	LSS 20

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of May 26, 2006 – Week #21

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$ 5,008.00	\$ 89,440.00
Disbursements	\$ 2,978.00	\$ 104,128.00
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 2,030.00	(\$ 14,688.00)

The Feast of Pentecost Brought to Life in ME 27 Graduates

The feast of Pentecost brought special graces to the graduates of ME 27 in the recently concluded marriage encounter held at St. Francis retreat House in Easton PA. A Holy Spirit filled weekend, most couples considered the encounter as the best weekend in their lives. It brought to fulfillment the day of Pentecost into their lives, insofar as the Lord infused them with His blessings of a new beginning, with Him at the center of a new life.

Sharing how the Lord touched their marital relationships, tears of gladness were evident in all candidates. The Lord blessed our community with 25 couples and one priest under the pastoral care of Father Paul Lehman, together with the touching sharing of Manny & Judy San Luis and Aron & MarivicDeCastro.

The sponsoring class of ME 26 and the auxies from ME 25 did a remarkable and inspired job of making the ME weekend a memorable and successful one. Bong & Merle Encarnacion are the anointed class shepherds of the following ME 27 graduates:

Rollie/Emma Aquino, Sam/Desa Balcon, Boi/Tess Booc, Mike/Judy Cadavillo, Cez/Pinky Calingo, Jojo/Amy Clemente, Jun/Bel Cruz, Chris/Ann DeGuia, Alicio/Mila DeLaPena, Rod/Peachy Garcia, Carlo/Zenaida Guiang, Joey/Arlene Lagdameo, Jule/Em Laput, Beling/Lucy Leyco, Nelson/Virgie Mayo, Dado/Josie Mendoza, Jun/Angie Osoteo, Elmer/Daisy Pacia, Rudy/Bebsie Paguio, Willie/Bebot Reyes, Jonathan/Paulette Sabol, Mandy/Lita Santos, Bebot/Becca Soquite, Rey/Nerrie Tuason, Gene/Bing Ymbong and Father Joseph Kim.

Let us all together welcome with gladness to our community, the latest harvest in our Lord's vineyard, the graduates of ME 27.

MAKE COVENANT NEWS
A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE.

COUNSELS

The Great Commission

WORD: Dt 4, 32-34, 39-40; Ps 33:4-6, 9, 18-20, 22; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 28:16-20

ORDER: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (Mt 28:19)

THEME: We live in the Spirit when we make disciples of men in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION: The first words that were uttered by our LORD at the beginning of His ministry were, "*Rabbi, where are you staying? Jesus answered – come and you will see.*" In the gospel reading tonight, we hear His last words – "*Go and make disciples of all nations.*" The Savior's ministry of preaching, healing and teaching, together with His passion, death and resurrection were accomplished between these two short words – "*Come*" and "*Go*".

God chose among all the peoples of that time the nation of Israel to "*Come*". He promised to take care of them; He will be their God and they will be His people. And we know how many times they turned their backs on Yahweh and worshipped other gods. They ignored and sometimes killed the Lord's prophets. But instead of abandoning them, He sent His only begotten Son at the appointed time to be offered as a sacrifice so that they and the rest of mankind could be saved.

The apostles and disciples of Jesus came down from the mountain to follow the Master's command, "*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to teach to observe all of His commandments.*" And

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Promise of the Week

"Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Mt 28:20b

Everthing for His Glory

The Evangelist's narration is short but much can be derived from it. As Jesus and his disciples sit, people of all economic backgrounds place their contributions to the treasury. The rich put in much. A poor widow put in two small coins. The Lord remarked that the other people gave from their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, gave all.

The story is relevant today. Jesus' remarks remind us that we are stewards of the earth. In return, man is responsible to be good stewards of his God-given talents, time, and treasure. How do we use them? Do we hone our skills so we can have optimum use for them? Do we use them for self-aggrandizement or God's glory? Do we assist others who are less endowed physically, intellectually, and economically? Do we realize that all we possess are God's and we will make an accounting of what we used them for?

The story of the widow's mite is related to other parables, including the talents, the barren fig tree, the salt, and leaven, and many more. The gist of the stories is that God is extremely generous. We, in turn, must share what we have with others. Give until it hurts. We cannot just give when convenient. We must give in whatever situation we are. We cannot say, "I will volunteer when I am less busy next year" or "I will contribute when I am more financially able". The future may never come. We must think of serving the Lord today. *Nunc coepi! Right now! Lest, there be no tomorrow for me.*

When we are generous, God returns the favor a thousand fold. But we should not give for the sake of the reward. Give because you love him. We must not call attention to ourselves when we give. Do not let the left hand know what the right hand is doing. In order words, give in secret; otherwise, if you give with fanfare, you would have already received your reward. Instead, you want to receive your reward from the Father in heaven.

The widow reminds us of virtues we must pray for so we can be more like her. She had faith that God will take care of her. She had much love for God and she was docile to promptings by the Holy Spirit. She was humble and pure of heart. Whether the temple treasury was used solely to take care of God's house or to assist the poor, the widow gave to show her love for the Lord and her fellowmen just as the Lord had taught us in the two great commandments. What a great example she is to us! Let us pray to the Holy Spirit in this period after Pentecost for his fruits and gifts.

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

Let the good times roll! True to that saying, when life is filled with roses and honey—when it seems as if there's no limit to what we can spend; when there's an abundance of food, friends, luxuries, and happy situations—we say to ourselves, "I did it myself... these were my accomplishments, my honor, my way." The last thing we think of is God. If we do put God in our program (whether consciously or not), more often than not, it is to use Him to further our own personal agenda or hidden motives.

But life is not always pleasant. There are conflicts, hard times, senseless tragedies, impossible problems, sickness, or even death. It is during those times that we start to seek God. But after turning Him away for so long, He now seems so distant... that our prayers simply bounce off the ceiling, that we feel emptiness in whatever spiritual exercises we do, that our prayers go unanswered. The truth is that overcoming this spiritual distance is a crucial part of maturing our relationship with the Lord. That pain and suffering that we experience is a test of character and challenges us to further develop our faith.

Nothing comes close to the suffering that Christ's disciples had endured. Paul fought to the death for the love of God. He never buckled under pressure from the wicked, nor did he falter while he was on the brink of death. While imprisoned and condemned, he thought not of his own personal safety, but rather only of remaining steadfast to his mission of spreading the gospel of Christ.

At the point of death, Paul used his last breath to pass on words of encouragement and wisdom to Timothy, his young apostle. Paul knew that his time here on earth was coming to an end, and he urged Timothy to persevere and to remain deep in his faith.

However, like Peter, we are often weak. Human as we are, we sometimes feel the need to distance ourselves from God. "If we deny him," the Lord will also step back and let us go our own way until we feel our need to return to Him. But as promised, even if we are faithless, "He remains faithful," as Jesus will never reject his own. Again as promised, if we live and endure with him, we shall reign with him in his kingdom. When we reach the deepest levels of our faith, we begin to realize that we praise God in spite of the pain, thank God during the trials, trust him in midst of temptation, surrender to him while in suffering, and love him despite all the odds. It is then that the Lord will stand with us, deliver us from every evil, and preserve us for His heavenly kingdom. Indeed, great is Thy Faithfulness!

St. Anthony de Padua

St. Anthony is one of the most beloved of saints and is regarded as the patron of seekers of lost articles. Anthony's wealthy family wanted him to be a great nobleman, but for the sake of Christ, he became a [poor Franciscan priest](#).

In his younger years, he occupied his time mainly with study and prayer. Gifted with an excellent understanding and a prodigious memory, he soon gathered from the [Sacred Scriptures](#) and the writings of the [Holy Fathers](#) a treasure of theological knowledge.

Inspired by the first [Franciscan](#) martyrs who had suffered death in Morocco, he too was inflamed with the desire of martyrdom and resolved to become a [Friar Minor](#) that he might preach the Faith and suffer for [Christ's](#) sake. He followed their footsteps and went to [Morocco](#) to evangelize.

His public ministry started when one day a scheduled speaker failed to appear and the brothers pressed him into speaking. He impressed them so that he was thereafter constantly travelling, evangelizing, preaching, and teaching theology through Italy and [France](#). He would preach especially in areas where heresy was seen as strong, for with the zeal of an apostle he undertook to reform the morality of his time by specifically combating the vices of luxury, avarice and tyranny.

A gifted speaker, he attracted crowds everywhere he went. Like the early disciples, he felt that he was anointed by the Holy Spirit with the gift of speech. Although he died at a youthful age of thirty six, his life is a fulfillment of his desire to serve the Lord with his triumph in finding lost souls and converting them to embrace the Christian way of life.

St. Anthony's life is a model that we, as disciples of Christ, should emulate. Like what he did in his early years, we should be more pre-occupied with prayer, together with learning and understanding God's word. With this comes the empowerment and anointing by the Holy Spirit as we fulfill God's call for us to spread the Gospel.

By abandoning the fame and fortune that were made available to him from childhood and embracing instead the life of a poor Franciscan priest, he is a symbol of humility and dedication to serve the Lord.

He expounded on the need for us to be good witnesses of God's love. When we become a good example for others, then we are becoming good teachers for others to follow. Let us always be inspired and guided as disciples by the following excerpts from one of his teachings:

"Let your words teach and your actions speak. It is useless for a man to flaunt his knowledge of the law if he undermines its teaching by his actions."

A Class Shepherd's Reflection

Sometime ago, my wife and I received a call from our DCS informing us that we were being considered for discernment as Class Shepherds for the next marriage encounter. Our immediate reaction was of one of reluctance, especially as we were aware of the immense responsibility attached to the assignment. We have heard of how demanding and challenging the task can be. We also thought of our own inadequacies and unworthiness of being entrusted with guiding many couples in their spiritual journey.

We thus prayed for His enlightenment and soon we realized that our initial hesitation was actually not just out of fear but more on our claim of exclusive ownership of the job being assigned to us. We forgot that we were just going to be His servants and vessels of His work. We were oblivious of the fact that He is the one who began the good work and He is the one who will complete it. Our loving and merciful Lord touched our hearts and minds and made us see the light. Hence, we accepted the new assignment, let go of our fears and let God take control of our lives.

That decision was a turning point in our lives. It deepened further our commitment to serve the Lord. We will forever cherish the day we said 'yes' to Him on this new assignment. We are truly grateful to our Lord for giving us the grace and the privilege to be His instruments in bringing our brothers and sisters closer to Him. We have lifted up all our cares to our Lord and completely trust and believe in His ways. We know that we are mere under-shepherds because He is the only true Shepherd.

Our experience as Class Shepherds has been very enriching for us as a couple and as followers of Jesus Christ. Despite our fears, insecurities and other human limitations, through the grace of God, we have been able to shepherd our flock to the best of our ability. It is indeed a truism that it is not us but Him who qualifies us for the work discerned for us in our community. It is not uncommon to think that we could be lacking in some of the required qualifications, causing us to feel unworthy to be called His servants. But if we stay focused and let Him work in us and through us, nothing is impossible because we become one with Him. And who are we to question or refuse His call? As members of a community of believers, we entrust our lives and aspirations to our God who speak to us through His anointed leaders. As a couple who continually aspire to do nothing but what pleases Him, His will is what we desire and His word is our guide.

Counsels from page 1

so they went forth, not knowing what was ahead for them, but trusted in His promise that He will be with them until the end of time. And God was true to His word. Ten days after His ascension, they received power from above as they were anointed by the Holy Spirit. The Church that Jesus promised to build came to be at Pentecost.

Empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church blossomed despite the vicious persecutions that she suffered. Crossing many nations and generations, we are now recipients of this gift of God. All of us in this Church heard the call to "Come". Like the first disciples, we must first learn about our Lord, our faith and our Church so that we could be equipped to "Go and make other disciples". Our community's Christian Discipleship formation program was designed not only to learn more about our faith so we could teach and defend it, but also to nurture the deep bonding and personal relationship we have with our Lord.

Our task to make disciples in this day is more challenging and difficult. The western world is so focused on the material and the secular. Birth rate among Christians in the last 20 years has dropped to about 1.5%, brought about by contraception and abortion. Lately, the push for same sex marriage will lessen this percentage even more. Compare this to the recent increasing birthrate statistics for Muslims – 15%, Hindus – 12% and Buddhist -10%. Christians are going to face an uphill battle for souls.

Christians are still being persecuted in countries where other religions are predominant, or where any practice of religion is prohibited. Unfortunately, there is also a lot of division among Christians, even within the Catholic Church herself. And so for us modern day disciples, our work to evangelize and spread the good news is more challenging. The easy thing to do is just to enjoy our fellowship, to stay within the confines of our like-mindedness and the calm shallow waters of our comfort zones. But that would be like hiding our heads in the sand.

The Lord's commission is not a request but a command and so we have to obey. We have to rely on the inspiration and power of the Triune God. We have to do it in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We must trust that our Savior's word will remain even when heaven and earth pass away. The Lord has given us the assurance that the Holy Spirit will equip us in our every need, and His word will never abandon us!

DIRECTION: Encourage your classmates and LSS lambs to finish their Christian discipleship formation.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of June 6, 2006 – Week # 22

	Last Week	Year-to-Date
Receipts	\$ 3,790.00	\$ 93,230.00
Disbursements	\$ 6,482.00	\$ 110,610.00
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$ 2,692.00)	(\$ 17,380.00)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 16-18 Singles Encounter #16 – Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY, Contact Richie/Aileen Escobinas 201-214-1846 / 917-930-6470

June 17-18 Prayer Counseling Seminar – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am–5pm. Open to all Covenanted Disciples

June 23-25 Solo Parent Encounter#8 - Ramada Hotel, Piscataway, NJ, Contact Bobby/Dolly Hernandez

TEACHINGS

June 17 Encounter with Jesus Part III – Luke, John (LSS25), New Creation Realities – GIP – Prayer, Praise & Worship (LSS26)

June 23 Service & Intercessory Formation

May the blessings of the Lord be upon you...

BIRTHDAYS

June 9	Ralph Almonte	LSS4
	Bong David	LSS16
	John Nguyen	SE7
	Mike Ibanes	SE4
June 10	Arlene Ching	SE12
	Ceryl Guinto	LSS22
	Manny San Luis	LSS4
	Tess Tope	LSS20
June 11	Alinoel Navia	John 6
	Bobut Gongob	LSS19
	Johnny Ramos	LSS10
June 12	Charlene Paule	Mark 10
	Josie Magahis	LSS17
	Ely Valle	LSS10
June 13	Demelina Valonzo	Mark 10
	Chi Ekweghariri	YLSS9
	Steve Oliveira	YLSS11
	Wilma Antonio	LSS18
	Tony Yanza	LSS13
June 14	Haddisah Magnoncia	YLSS11
	Leonida Cruz	LSS11
	Benson Del Rosario	SE13
	Chuck Okereke	ME21
	Vicki Rasalan	LSS2
	Gerry Somera	LSS6
June 15	Cris Manaois	LSS10
	Mike Luzzi	LSS14

ANNIVERSARIES

June 9	Joven & Lisa Soriano	ME15
June 10	Noel & Marilyn Alejan	ME7
	Nong & Tricia Bustos	ME14
	Gary & Mill Camacho	ME17
	Danny & Grace Palmores	ME17
	Eunice & Ouezie Ukaegbu	ME19
June 11	Jovy & Emily Lucero	ME13
June 12	Lee Dela Fuente	ME1
June 13	Manny & Judy San Luis	ME3
	Allan & Naida Villanueva	ME17
	Ike & Ely Alimario	ME17
June 14	Lando & Dory Bonifacio	ME8



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS - NJ / NY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 11 Issue 23

Bulletin Edition

June 16, 2006

DLC Hears Good News, Tackles Issues

The DLC met last Saturday, June 10th, at St. Mary's library and discussed the following subjects:

RCAN Evangelization Website Project - Dom de la Cruz and Raffy Obrera jointly reported on the successful launch of the RCAN Evangelization Website www.RCAN.org/evangelization. This powerful tool for archdiocesan evangelization was written-up in the May 24th Issue of the Catholic Advocate. The project was a collaboration between the Archdiocesan Evangelization & Communication Offices and BLD Newark.

Raffy's demonstration of the website's capabilities and applicability to BLD's own operations aroused the DLC's interest. Raffy also demonstrated the features of the Life in the Spirit Apostolate (LSA) website.

Venue Security & Discipline - Reuben & Cherry Vibar spoke of the need for cooperation among parents and children in maintaining discipline and ensuring the safety of everyone within St. Mary's premises on Friday nights. Several unguarded entrances to the facilities were identified as security vulnerabilities, particularly when children are playing without supervision. Various proposed solutions were discussed and will be followed-up, including those from a Youth Ministry member who recommended a more family-oriented Friday worship and fellowship.

Financial Report - BLD Newark's auditor, Gary Camacho, discussed a draft of the community's 2004 audited financial report prior to finalization. Recommendations were made on improving financial management and reporting.

Mission Report - Tony Garcia of the Mission Apostolate reported the progress of the BLD-supported Nigerian Prayer Group "Amazing Grace", which is planning its first ME weekend and is appealing for BLD's support.

Final Statutes - The Final BLD Statutes document was received from Manila. Archbishop Lagdameo has requested diocesan bishops were BLD districts are located to endorse the BLD's statutes as part of the community's application with the Vatican to become a private association of the faithful.

Counsels

Nourished By Christ

WORD: Ex 24:3-8; Ps 116:12-13, 15-18;
Heb 9:11-15; Mk 14:12-16, 22-26

THEME: We live in the Spirit when we are regularly nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ.

ORDER: "Take it; this my body... This is my blood."
(Mark 14:22, 24)

REFLECTION:

Our theme this week encourages us, as we strive to live our New Life in the Spirit, to be "nourished regularly by the Body and Blood of Christ." It is a timely message as we observe with the universal Church the Solemn Feast of Corpus Christi.

We find this spiritual nourishment in the frequent reception of the Eucharist. Our sincere intention will give us the grace of a growing understanding of the Real Presence, the Eucharist as food for our soul and its sacrificial character, pleasing and acceptable to God the Heavenly Father.

In His act of breaking the bread at the Last Supper, Jesus was as though saying, "What I am giving you now and what you are taking is my body." No less in our liturgy, the bread becomes the very body of Christ, as the Lord has said: the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh. He conserves the appearances of bread and wine but changes them into the reality of His flesh and blood.

There is no room for any interpretation in the direction of symbolism or metaphor in the meaning of the text. The Council of Trent defined this solemn truth in these words: "If anyone says that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God, or that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given us to eat,

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God's Promise For The Week

"For this reason he is mediator of a new covenant... so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance" (Heb 9: 15b)

Keeping Your Promise

I have made my covenant with the Lord. It is stronger than the one written and signed on paper because it was written in my heart. This is the reason why the guilt that I feel whenever I sin is so great that the forgiveness that I need from the Lord seems tremendous and insurmountable. I feel like I do not deserve any forgiveness, except by His Word. On the other hand, I think the Lord allows me to fall into sin sometimes because whenever I repent, I would spend more time communing with Him.

The trek to discipleship is a long and winding road. It is like an uphill climb every time, littered with sharp stones and broken glass. So what is my covenant with the Lord? That I will always start the day communing with Him, not with anybody else. Easy? No, it is tough!

Why “communing” instead of talking? The dictionary defines talking as exchanging words between participants. Communing is not just exchanging words but being one with the person. Hence, receiving the body and blood of Christ is called communion. Translated: there is much more involved – not just words but the life and being of the person as a whole.

Most days, my guardian angel wakes me up to be able to keep that appointment. However, there are days when it seems that he was in a hurry, for he ends up skipping me. So, I wake up facing a decision – should I begin my day by parenting or fulfilling my spousal responsibility, or should I give priority to my spiritual covenant? It should be an easy decision – my covenant with the Lord first. But I tell you, it is not!

If there is one thing that I am sure of, we should all strive to keep our promises. Our credibility is established when we keep our word. *Palabra de Honor*, a Filipino value from the time of Spanish colonization, means word of honor, and is a requisite quality of those who keep their promises. And those who entered a covenant with the Lord!

Lord, grant me the grace that I will always be able to keep my covenant with you. I should put you first before anything or anybody else. As what Bo Sanchez, a Filipino lay preacher wrote in his book – ‘grant me the grace to be consistent – consistent in seeking you first above all’. Mt 5:33 says, ‘*Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow*’.

The Lord is my inheritance and my cup; he alone will give me my reward. The measuring line has marked a lovely place for me; my inheritance is my great delight (Ps15:5-6)

St. Romuald – Founder and Abbot

St. Romuald was born in Ravenna probably in 906 and died at Val-di-Castro on June 19, 1027. In his youth, St. Romuald indulged in the usual thoughtless and even vicious life of the tenth century noble, yet he felt greatly drawn to the eremitical life. When he was 20 years old, his father killed a relative in a duel over an estate. Horrified by the incident, he entered a Benedictine monastery at Clesse to do a forty days’ penance for his father. This penance led to his entry into religious life as Benedictine monk.

After seven years at Clesse, St. Romuald went to live as a hermit near Venice, under the guidance of a holy man who had him recite the Psalter from memory everyday. St. Romuald, whose aim was to restore the primitive rule to the Order of Saint Benedict, succeeded in founding several hundred monasteries in both Italy and France. For five years, the glowing founder was tormented by furious attacks by the demon. He repulsed him, saying, “O enemy! Driven out of heaven, you come to the desert? Depart, ugly serpent, already you have what is due you.” And the shamed adversary would leave him.

St. Romuald’s father, Sergious, was moved by the example of his son that he entered the religious life near Ravenna. He too was attacked by hell and thought of abandoning his vocation. St. Romuald went to visit him and showed him the error of devil’s ruses. His father died in the monastery, in the odor of sanctity. St. Romuald himself died as he had foretold twenty years before, alone in his monastery of Val-di-Castro, in an advanced and abundantly fruitful old age.

A reflection on St. Romuald’s life shows us how God brings good out of evil. In his youth, St. Romuald was much troubled by temptations of the flesh. He resisted them by finding solitude, his time alone with God. Through these times of refreshment and communion, he received the wisdom and strength with which he established hundreds of monasteries. Just like St. Romuald, we should find our quiet times and quiet place with God. We should bring the Lord into all life’s situations, especially those which are seemingly hopeless. When we live a life of prayer, Jesus becomes the center of our being. His presence assures us of His peace, protection and guidance until the end of age. God Himself will usher us before His throne of grace, where we will dwell in His mercy and love forever.

A Reflection on Matthew 6,1-6,16-18

For the LORD

God created us for good. As God, He deserves all homage, all honor, and all praise. As we receive good things from Him, we are to share them for the good of others. Our actions should be intended to win His approval, and our life lived to become one in Him and with Him.

He specially approves our almsgiving, prayer and fasting. These acts originated from the chosen people of God. They were practiced and taught by Jesus Himself, as well as by His apostles. (Acts 9, 36. Galatians 2:10) Their main objective is love - to satisfy God, to obtain favors from Him, and to atone for sins.

In Mt 6, Jesus deals with our motives and conduct toward God and man. However perfectly we may act toward man, our life is imperfect if we neglect or fail in our duties toward God. God does not forbid giving in public, but that spirit which desires publicity when giving. Giving anonymously is better, but public giving is allowed to stimulate good in others. If we give, we give only to please God, and receive His praise. If we give to win the praise of others, we lose our eternal reward. So we must decide which reward we desire - the immediate or the eternal. For every act we do to our neighbor, Jesus reminds us that we too do it to Him.

Prayer unites us with God and obtains for us all kinds of healing, blessings and favors. It fuels our daily lives because God, in His divinity, joins us who are frail in a very personal way. The Holy Mass and the rosary, if offered with filial devotion, becomes an aroma of worship that rises to God's throne. St. Augustine once said, "If we want our prayer to fly towards God, we must give it two wings - almsgiving and fasting."

When we fast, we must purify our bodies, show a cheerful face, and keep our intentions known only to God. Jesus fasted and prayed in solitude many times before He died.

In our lives, wherever we may be, we're never out of opportunities to please our Lord God. Almsgiving, prayer and fasting are considered high acts of religion, for they lift our hearts and spirits to God, Who made us strictly for His own satisfaction and glory. And it is in these moments of prayer and fasting coupled with almsgiving that we please Him most. They are most endearing to God because we are alone with Him, to love Him with all our minds, our hearts, our souls, and our strength!

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

2006 Graduation and Thanksgiving Mass

Fr. Paul Lehman will bless the graduates of 2006 at the Eucharistic Celebration Friday July 7, 2006.

For sign ups contact:

Alan & Tess Cam (201) 659-5417

e-mail: atetscam23@hotmail.com

Bert & Helen Pie (732) 213-3109

e-mail: bertlenpie@aol.com

Singles Encounter #16

Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
June 16-18, Contact Richie/Aileen Escobinas
201-214-1846/917-930-6470

"Prayer Counseling Seminar"

Ramada Limited, S. Plainfield, NJ

June 17-18, 8am-5pm

(open to all covenanted disciples)

Solo Parent Encounter#8

Ramada Hotel, Piscataway, NJ

June 23-25, Please see Bobby/Dolly Hernandez

Youth Encounter#13

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA

July 7-9, Contact Mario/Cecille Salonga

or Marvin Venadas

Family Encounter Retreat #13

St. Joseph by the Hills, Malverne, PA

July 21-23, Contact Oddie/Jho Martin,

King/Arlene Rigor, Ed/Grace Badiola, Peter/Rose Cruz or Tito/Ann Cruz

Community Retreat.

"Lord, Teach Us to Pray" with Fr. Don O'Connor, SVD
Sept 30-Oct 1, 9am-5pm at St. Mary's Auditorium

TEACHINGS

- June 17** Encounter with Jesus Part III –
Luke, John (LSS25)
New Creation Realities –
GIP – Prayer, Praise & Worship (LSS26)
- June 23** Service & Intercessory Formation
- July 1** Understanding Corporate Worship/Prayer
Leadership (LSS23 Newark)
Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit,
Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia
(LSS25 Newark)

The Lord says: If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me; whoever believes in me, let him drink. Streams of living waters shall flow out from within him. (Jn 7:37-38)

Counsels *(from page 1)*

let him be anathema."

The words of consecration of the chalice pronounce that the blood of Christ is poured out, clearly showing that the Eucharist is a sacrifice for the redemption of mankind. Christ achieved our Redemption by offering His own blood. Through His death we are called to "receive the promised eternal inheritance." We are now children of God, because Jesus has died for us and his death has ransomed us. *You and I have been bought at a great price.* (1 Cor 6:20)

The sacrifices of the Old Covenant such as the one described in the First Reading were in fact a preparation for and anticipation of Christ's sacrifice; a mere and imperfect pre-figurement of the new and definitive Covenant of God with men. St. Paul says, "Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant."

Pope Pius XII wrote, "Our Redeemer, captivated by his boundless love for us, chose to rescue us, at the cost of his blood, from eternal death. If we serve him faithfully until we die we shall obtain from the Lord forgiveness and eternal life. Such were the terms of the testament, mediation or compact between Jesus Christ and God" (Reflections on the Passion).

Christ is really, truly and substantially present in the Eucharist. We ought to take careful preparation and observe utmost decorum to acknowledge the Real Presence of our God in the Eucharist (see our Directions below). We also show our special love for our Lord and Savior in silent adoration and contemplation before the Blessed Sacrament.

Christ's redemptive sacrifice obtained for us, once and for all, *the good things to come*: the heavenly and eternal benefits proper to the messianic age—sanctifying grace and entry to heaven. The Eucharist is an anticipation here on earth of possession of God in eternal blessedness.

Vatican II teaches that our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of His body and blood "in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us."

(Sacrosanctum Concilium)

DIRECTIONS

- Observe reverence inside the church at all times.
- Prepare for the proper reception of the Holy Eucharist by going to the sacrament of reconciliation, observing fasting, in our decorum while in church.
- Be faithful to our commitment and covenant pledges.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.BLDNEWARK.COM

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- June 16-18 **SE #16** at Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison, NY
- June 17-18 **Prayer Counseling Seminar** – Ramada, S. Plainfield, NJ 8am-5pm
Open to all Covenanted Disciples

birthdays

- June 16 Paulo Luardo John 6
Patrick Merlos YE 12
Fred Mananghaya LSS 10
Frank Mendonez LSS 20
Allen Polixa LSS 12
- June 17 Noelle Jose John 6
Zaldy Espinosa LSS 12
- June 18 Norie Nazareno LSS 10
Boy Parker LSS 11
Vener Santos LSS 5
- June 19 Charles Masisado Mark 10
Analyn Alcruz LSS 13
Frederick Atienza LSS 10
Rene Fruelda LSS 15
Zaldy Pagdanganan LSS 16
Joey Viola LSS 6
- June 20 Ekweghariri Chika YE12
Feli Africa LSS 23
Fely Cruz LSS 11
Ver Limtian LSS 14
- June 21 Ogechi Ukaegbu John 6
Jun Gopez LSS 10
Janet Rodaje LSS 11
- June 22 Elsie Lim LSS 14

anniversaries

- June 16 Abel & Yollie Trinidad ME 21
- June 17 Anthony & Yoli Kramer ME 10
- June 18 Tony & Teresa Nwaneri ME 21
Tim & Charie Paule ME 22
Roy & Judy Ratcliffe ME 22
- June 19 Niéto & Nora Lopez ME 19
Randy & Beth Trinidad ME 10
- June 20 Lito & Millie Constantino ME 22
Boy & Emie Dacasin ME 20
Erwin & Marie ME 25
Ed & Eydie Unay ME 24
- June 21 Mars & Veny Dela Cruz ME 16
Ver & Addie Limtian ME 14
- June 22 Ed & Francia Edquilag ME 17
Fr. Noel Morales ME 18
Frank & Beth Valeriano ME 18

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

CASH FLOWAS OF JUNE 9, 2006 WEEK #23

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Receipts	\$10,961.00	\$104,191.00
Disbursements	\$21,310.00	\$131,920.00
Surplus (Deficit)	\$10,349.00	\$27,729.00

BUKAS LOOB SA DIYOS COVENANT COMMUNITY

JUNE 9, 2006

A Tribute to Sonny, Best Friend and Comrade-In-Arms - Donnie de Vera

“May another take his office.” (Acts 1:20)

No one had exerted a greater influence in my adult life, and enkindled a greater zeal to know and serve God than Sonny, the man whom I looked up to as my best friend, big brother, and extremely patient mentor, who was used by the Lord to lead me to “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” His unquenchable passion for truth and justice, his overwhelming compassion for the poor and the disenfranchised, and his uncompromising commitment to excellence in servant-leadership, oftentimes embarrassed and alienated men of lesser moral fiber and spiritual conviction. This was how our relationship started. What I had initially—and erroneously—perceived as self-righteous superiority and an impractical advocacy of things unworldly, or otherworldly, became the HOLY GRAIL against which I now measure the aspirations and fruitfulness of both my secular and spiritual life.

Sonny was a relevant and contemporary reflection of Christ to me. No one, for me, could more clearly and convincingly translate the thoughts and delights of Jesus’ Heart in written and spoken language. It was this extraordinary gift of facility in receiving and communicating God’s Word that motivated Sonny to excellence in serving His Lord, and in demanding no less from those who were called to serve with him. He was controversial, but uncompromising in pursuit of the Truth; he was firm and unmoving in God’s Truth, but patient and forgiving with those who stray from it; he was, akin to all of us, far from perfect, but he strove consistently for EXCELLENCE. It was his incorrigible passion for excellence that humiliated and humbled—but at the same time, inspired and animated—lesser men to greatness.

Sonny was undeniably a pleaser of God, not of men. He was not an architect of rigidly structured, corporate organizations, but a builder of ecclesial communities, which moved in and were animated by the ENLIGHTENED and DISCIPLINED FREEDOM of the Holy Spirit. He was not a man of unreachable dreams, but of attainable vision; not of shallow camaraderie, but of enduring mission. Our Lord Jesus Himself warned us in the Gospel that single-minded advocacy and allegiance to God’s Truth, and to His Kingdom’s values and norms, would alienate and separate us from the world, and from those whose vision is confined to its temporal, physical, and visible sphere. Our Lord made Himself a willing victim of this. Sonny believed humbly in his heart that “no servant is greater than his master,” and often allowed himself to be an unwitting victim of ostracism, ridicule and calumny to stand up for his conviction that there is only one way to love and serve the Master—unequivocal and unflagging EXCELLENCE in all that He calls us to be and to do.

As I stand before this community which had become—and remains to this day—a meaningful chapter in my and my wife’s apostolate, I vividly recall Sonny’s standard response to acclamations that he, together with his wife, Bai, and dear Fr. Adorable, constituted the true founders of BLD: “Let it just be a historical footnote.” It is my most ardent hope that the servant-leaders of the global community will not allow the legacy of their selfless dedication and sacrifice to fade with the pages of history.

I now close this tribute to my friend and brother, Sonny, with the exact words with which he faithfully closed each of his glowing testimonies to his Lord and Master—in grateful appreciation for revealing Himself through Sonny, and for Sonny’s gift of articulating His Way, His Truth, and His Life in words and speech that erudite and simple, rich and poor, great and lowly, could understand—’Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!’

May I now request the congregation to stand and render a final ovation to Sonny, a good and faithful servant of the Lord, who now rests in the peace and joy of the Master he loved so unconditionally and served so excellently!

BUKAS LOOB SA DIYOS COVENANT COMMUNITY

BLD NEWARK EULOGY FOR SONNY DE LOS REYES JUNE 9, 2006 Richard de la Fuente, June 2, 2006

I begin with two scripture verses on the qualities of wisdom and fruitfulness, qualities that remind me so much of Sonny de los Reyes, whose death last week we still mourn, and whose life, now in the everlasting, we will always celebrate.

“Some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.” Mt 13:8. “The wise man is esteemed for his discernment, yet pleasing speech increases his persuasiveness.” Pr 16:21

There are many here tonight who have been blessed with having personally met and known Sonny de los Reyes. There is an equal number of you who have not met him, but have heard about him. You might understandably be wondering, who is Tito Sonny, and what does his life and work mean to me and to BLD? I tell you, if you have met Christ through BLD, you have met Sonny, directly or indirectly.

I was one of those blessed with having personally met and worked with him. The day I met Sonny de los Reyes marked the beginning of my new life in the Lord.

It was on August 21, 1992, close to 7pm at the parking lot of the St. Joseph’s Retreat House in Maplewood, NJ. My wife Lee and I had just parked the car, still agitated and frustrated after almost an hour of trying to find the venue for BLD Newark’s ME1 weekend. We were about to give up and go home, when by divine intervention, we found someone who gave us good directions to the place. A few minutes later, we arrived. Sonny immediately met and greeted us. His charming smile disarmed us, his gentle voice soothed us, and his welcoming words warmed our hearts. He carried our bags, escorted us to the registration desk, showed us to our room, accompanied us to the dining area for a light supper. Soon, we discovered that he and his wife Bai were one of our ME couple sharers, and that Sonny had founded the BLD community and was its head servant leader. Their sharing reinforced my initial impression of Sonny: that he was a man of God, and God was vibrantly visible in Sonny. Looking back, I can truthfully declare that the Lord changed the direction of my life and marriage forever during that weekend, and that He used Sonny and Bai de los Reyes as instruments of His saving and transforming grace, not only during our ME weekend, but I now realize, for the rest of my life.

As you can surmise by now, that ME weekend was also the birth of the BLD Newark community. Founder and father of the larger BLD community, Sonny was there at the birth of his new child. He never said it directly to us in words, but his actions spoke quite eloquently of his pride and joy in BLD Newark. Over the course of the next 12 years, Sonny visited and stayed with BLD Newark for days or sometimes more than a week at a time, 4 or 5 times a year. To put Sonny’s commitment to Newark into perspective: Sonny then had many important and pressing responsibilities. In addition to being BLD’s head servant leader, he was the president of LAIKO- the national association of the laity in the Philippines, an implementing arm of the Catholic Bishops Conference. He was President of Habitat for Humanities Philippines, President of several non-profit foundations serving the Church, President of his own management consulting business. Moreover, he was a husband, father and grandfather. The time that Sonny invested on us was therefore his way of self-donation. When viewed now from the perspective of returns or fruitfulness, we have by his commitment of time been tremendously blessed by the Lord.

The BLD Newark community was the primary beneficiary of Sonny’s service at Habitat, which paid his travel expenses to the US several times a year to attend Habitat board meetings. As soon as his Habitat meetings were over, Sonny was off to Newark to be with the child which others jealously called his “nino bonito”- his favorite child. As ego-boosting this thought may be to us, it will be a mistake to think that Sonny as a father of the global community had favorites among his children.

But he clearly saw in BLD Newark and in other new districts in North America an opportunity to reshape BLD into the pattern and form and substance of the “sound community” model that the Spirit had revealed to him. You have to know a little bit of BLD history to understand why Sonny lavished his attention on Newark. In the late 1980’s, Sonny led BLD in the Philippines through a discernment of its community model and culture, the offshoot of which was to dismantle its “fortress” model- which was basically being inward focused, in favor of the “salt of the earth” model, which required a balanced focus on strong communion and strong mission. That discernment led to other changes and paradigm shifts towards the sound model, e.g. the BLD Vision, Charism and Mission statement, a new governance structure, a discipleship formation program, an excellence in worship model, and eventually, the BLD Covenant of Communion. But the old fortress culture

appeared to be the resistant to change and difficult to dismantle.

In Newark, Sonny found a community of students who were hungry to learn, eager to serve, willing to accept the price required to grow in maturity and discipleship. Sonny invested his time, his wisdom and talents, and his very self to guide the growth of this new child. He was available and present to us, whether in person, by telephone, by fax or by email. Every time he visited, Sonny -although tired from his trip and his other business meetings, would spend a day and night, even weekends, to teach, mentor and share his life and wisdom with Newark's inexperienced leaders and members. From Sonny, we received our first community teachings on God, faith, prayer, Scripture, Church, discernment, community building, discipleship, stewardship and mission. Sonny was the coach and mentor of our first Tricords and stewards, our first coordinators, our first prayer leaders, our first teachers, our first sharers—and when I say our, I don't only mean BLD Newark, but BLD USA. The Lord used Sonny to pick, shape, form, and lovingly tend these BLD first fruits in the US who were to build new BLD districts, outreaches and missions and serve the Church in the continent.

It is with this insight of Sonny's vision of a "sound community" that I now recall the first BLD North America conference at Bath, New York almost 12 years ago. Sonny called for this weekend meeting of BLD Newark and BLD Toronto Tricords and Coordinators- then the only districts in NA, to discern the NA Vision, Mission and Charisma. When the Bath discernment was completed, the team produced a BLD NA Vision/ Mission and Plan that was faithful to Catholic belief, consistent with BLD principles, militant in its defense of the faith, and energetic in its mission engagement. I saw a jubilant Sonny after the conference. On the way back to NJ, he remarked that what the Spirit had done in Bath will facilitate the entire community's transformation to the "salt" model. Along the way, we saw a beautiful rainbow, perhaps a sign confirming the Bath discernment.

Has BLD completed its transformation to the "salt" model? We would be foolish to say that we have, but although we are far from our journey's destination, we clearly are in the right direction and making some good progress. Here are some of the reasons why I say this. From 2 BLD districts in NA in 1992, there are now 22 districts and districts-in- process. To give you a perspective on this growth, there are about 21 BLD districts in the Philippines and Hong Kong. There are about 2,000 active BLD committed and covenant disciples in NA, compared to the estimated 100 disciples at the time of the Bath discernment. BLD NA districts serve their dioceses or parishes in one way or the other. Newark, which has been an association of the faithful these past 3 years, has been the yeast in the decision of the global community to apply for Vatican recognition as an international association of the faithful. This designation will usher in BLD's fuller participation in the life and mission of the Church. More districts have ministries to the elderly, sick and poor. For example, BLD Newark and BLD Long Island send medical missions to the Philippines every year and serve in soup kitchens. BLD Newark cluster disciples and members have given to homes through Gawad Kalinga to benefit almost 200 poorest of the poor families in the Philippines. In this, Newark has also been the yeast in the global community's decision to adopt GK as a BLD mission program. BLD just signed a partnership agreement with GK Tuesday this week and formed the BLD-GK ministry.

Brothers and sisters, we may not have yet achieved Sonny's vision of sound community, but we are headed in that direction. And if we are on course, it is because Sonny has started us on course. If we hold true to the sound community principles that he espoused, we will fulfill his vision. We truly have been so blessed by God through His servant Sonny de los Reyes.

The Lord, in His infinite love and wisdom, has touched all of us in BLD through His servant Sonny. Whether you realize it or not, you who are in BLD, you and I, have come to know Christ because Sonny faithfully followed the Lord. Directly through Sonny, for those of us whom Sonny himself served as teacher, sharer, mentor, co-discerner, father, brother or friend, or as when I first met him, the carrier of my bags. Indirectly through Sonny, for those of you who were served by any of his students, and his students' students, and so on. The Lord has blessed Sonny with a fruitfulness that is a hundredfold. We are part of Sonny's fruit, and we have been so blessed.

With the death of Sonny, we have lost a rare gem of a man. But Sonny's luster, which radiates from the Light of Christ Himself, will always shine in each and every one of us whom he has touched in way or another in this community, so long as we follow Christ, just as he, Tito Sonny de los Reyes, followed Christ: obediently, humbly, with our minds directed by His wisdom, our hearts controlled by His peace, and our lives empowered by His love.

Thank you Sonny, for giving us BLD. Thank you Lord, for giving us Sonny de los Reyes.

Sonny, may your spirit be now joined to the Spirit of the Master whom you so faithfully followed, in Jesus' Name, we pray....Amen!



PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR

God's love abounds in the Prayer Counseling seminar held last June 17 and 18 at the Ramada Inn. The intensive, 2-day seminar was ably conducted by Counselors Noel and Letty Trillana, Lith Golamco, Aimee Peña, and Lee dela Fuente, who altogether managed to keep the group in a very alert and jovial mood the entire weekend.

Day 1 started with praise and worship led by Boy and Des Parker of the Pastoral Ministry, immediately followed by the introduction of the four basic laws of Elijah, corroborated by the inspiring talks on Recognition of Fruit-to-Root Patterns, Repentance and Restitution, Accomplishing Forgiveness, Bitter Root Judgments and Expectancies, and Hearts of Stone and Inner Vows. The day ended, as always, with a Eucharistic Celebration by Fr. Chris Panlilio, with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:00pm. During the Celebration, each one presented his completed seminar questionnaire as a mass offering.

Day 2 opened with praise and worship led by Jun and Fely Escobar of the Intercessory Ministry, followed by an enriching talk on Honoring Father and Mother, after which ensued a lively chain of thought-provoking Q's & A's. Other presentations on Basic Trust, Performance Orientation, Pre-natal Wounds and Sins filled the afternoon session, with the small groups continuing on with their practicum. As in the previous day, Day 2 closed with a Eucharistic Celebration by Fr. Kim, assisted by Deacon Bong David.

DSL Richard and Lee de la Fuente, with participants from Rockville, Washington DC, Phoenix and Newark, composed the 93 members who attended the seminar. By God's grace, it is hoped that their participation will meet the Community's objectives of enhancing its covenanted members' pastoral and healing gifts through prayer counseling, and developing more prayer counselors for the Community. Indeed, the seminar turned out to be a weekend of God's healing, mercy and love.

COUNSELS

Live for Christ

WORD: Job 38:1,8-11; Ps 107:23-26, 28-31; 2 Cor 5:14-17; Mk 4:35-41

THEME: We live in the Spirit when we believe in the power of Jesus in our lives.

ORDER: *"Be quiet! Be still!"* (Mk 4:39b)
He died for us. Live for Him.

REFLECTION: "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, Behold the New has come" Paul, a prisoner of Christ draws our attention as he calls us to "Behold ...It behooves us to slow down and stop for a moment and see for ourselves what has replaced the old and how much newness we have become, how much Christ is in us." John the apostle says "He must increase, I must decrease!" In Galatians, Paul says "Yet I live no longer I, but Christ lives in me", In Christ, we have become a new creation... He made us his living temple, a new body, He gave us His Spirit, with a new language and He gave us renewed mind the mind of Christ. He gave us a new life with a new purpose, a new inheritance rich with his Glory and His Cross. He made us citizens of heaven - a new home. Jesus Christ gave us all, so he can live in us that we might live for Him. For St Paul, A New creation simply means a True disciple.

From our Gospel reading, the imagery of the disciples in panic after a great storm of wind arose beating into their boat in the company of Christ is a poignant moment that exposes the realities of our human condition. How easy we go in and out of New creation, like pistons of a car engine! The old suddenly surfaces out wanting to replace the new.

No disciple goes through life without encountering fearful storms and waves that threaten to swamp and engulf us.

Lost of job, being accused innocently, >page 4

Promise of the Week

"So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold new things have come." (2 Cor 5:17)

In the Spirit of Transparency BLD, On The Threshold of A New Era of Service

The recent exchange of letters between Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo, BLD's Spiritual Director, and Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark officially proclaimed the good news that BLD is on the threshold of a new era of service to the Church and to the least of Christ's brethren.

BLD to seek Vatican Recognition as a Private Association of the Lay Faithful. On May 8, 2006, Archbishop Lagdameo wrote Archbishop Myers: "...the BLD Covenant Community will submit to the Vatican in Rome the Statutes of the Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community as a Private Association of the Lay Faithful. The BLD Statutes contain the nature and purpose, vision and mission and other bylaws of the Community. It explicitly defines the BLD Covenant Community Mission of building communities of disciples of Jesus Christ who will renew and strengthen the Christian faithful through programs of Christian encounters and renewal, programs of discipleship formation, spiritual growth and pastoral care and programs of servant leadership and poverty alleviation."

BLD seeks Archbishop Myers' endorsement of BLD Statutes "Since the BLD Covenant Community has a district and is part of your diocese, I humbly request Your Excellency to review the attached BLD Statutes and to confirm your endorsement of the BLD Statutes as the guiding principles of the BLD Covenant Community's mission work in your diocese... I thank you for the invaluable support that you have given and continue to give the BLD Covenant Community in your ecclesiastical diocese."

Archbishop Myers hails new BLD-GK Partnership for the Poor On June 2, 2006, Archbishop Myers wrote Archbishop Lagdameo on the poverty alleviation work of BLD: "It certainly seems that the partnership that has been codified between the BLD Community and Gawad Kalinga/Couples for Christ will continue the valiant and effective efforts to liberate the underprivileged and the poorest of the poor in the Philippines from the bondage of poverty. These efforts to alleviate poverty and ensure dignity for all God's People are certainly rooted and empowered by our Christian faith. May the Lord Jesus continue to be your guide and His Spirit continue to bring consolation and hope to the people who are served by the selfless efforts of all the members of this new partnership.

Archbishop Myers blesses BLD-GK efforts to give care to the poor "I note that Gawad Kalinga" translated in English means 'to give care.' As you and the affiliates of this partnership 'give care' to the poorest of the poor, may you all profoundly experience the care and love of Jesus Christ each day of your lives."

With confidence in Christ our Leader, let us boldly embark on this new life of service that He has called us to!

By Their Fruit

Webster's Dictionary defines 'prophet' as a person who speaks for God or by divine inspiration. Sociologist Max Weber divided prophets into two types: emissary, where a person believes that he has received an important message that must be communicated to others and exemplary, where a person's religious authority is based on experience that serves as an example.

In our times today, we have people, as in the Old Testament, who claim to have directly encountered God and received messages from God. While it is true that God still reveals Himself to people, how do we authenticate the words spoken are from God? Deuteronomy 18: 21-22 said, and I quote, "If you say to yourselves, 'How can we recognize an oracle which the Lord has spoken?', know that, even though a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if his oracle is not fulfilled or verified, it is an oracle which the Lord did not speak. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously, and you shall have no fear of him." The Life Application Study Bible stated two ways to tell when people are speaking for the Lord: (1) we can see whether or not the prophecies come true - the ancient test for judging prophets, (2) we can check their words against the Bible. Anyone who speaks against the Bible is not of God and therefore is a false prophet.

Our Lord warned us about false prophets. He admonished, "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but underneath are ravenous wolves." (Mt 7:15) He advised us to be wary of people who pretend to be religious but whose motivation and main focus is to enrich themselves and to gain power. . "Just so, every good tree bears good fruit, and a rotten tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree bear a good fruit." (Mt 7: 17-18) False prophets magnify themselves and minimize God thus, they bear bad fruits.

On the contrary, when people's lives and behaviors epitomize the truth and the love Jesus embodied in the Holy Scripture, they become a good example and a true witness to others. They become a living Christ. "By their fruits you will know them..." (Mt 7:16).

Prophet or not, we can also bear fruits. When we follow Jesus and obey His laws in words and in deeds, we remain in Him and bear good fruits. As Jesus said, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciple." (Jn 15: 7-8)

FE - A Close Encounter of a Different Kind.

In this day and age, wearing two or more hats is nothing new to someone who is a parent, multitasking seems more synonymous to that description. You can easily get caught up in a whirlpool of responsibilities, without knowing what you're missing. That was before my wife and I decided to join the Family Encounter without being invited. We just made that decision to STOP ourselves, from what was becoming more than a task on its own, oh the pains of PARENTHOOD. Raising these children that surround us each day, who, as time goes on, grow with minds of their own. Our failure to catch up with what goes on, in their lives became a burden to both of us. Everyday, we make decisions that involve risk, this one did not involve any and it is a win-win situation. Our question to ourselves was, why not?

We then realized, how limited we know about them. Surprisingly enough, we live with them everyday. Strange, is an understatement. We survive the weekend, with LOVE and PRAYERS as food for our hearts and minds.

My wife and I never felt so good about a decision, which involved our children. The feeling was a whole lot better than the feeling you get after driving 20 feet out of Disneyworld's main gate. It's a close encounter of a different kind. One thing is sure; the feeling of excitement lasted longer after driving away, from the main gate of St. Joseph of the Hill, in Malvern, Pennsylvania.

A year has gone by, and yet those things that we've learned from that encounter have stayed with my family, not as a memory but an experience to lean on.

Too many good things can be said about it, but you have to experience it, to appreciate what it is like discovering the beauty of your family in a different light. Do not compare it to a car wash, because it is not. It will be a process that runs like SOAK, WASH, RINSE, and SPIN, the REPEAT.

You will soon discover, that you just added another channel to your communication line to your children, both helpful and healthy. You will find out that your language skills just got even better. Your wife will finally stop telling herself, she married an alien. Your friends will start to think you have special powers, because you can actually talk to your children. That is a feat in itself, would you agree? Sure, there is another FE to come; they said good things happen to those who wait, but REGRET leaves a bad taste in your mouth.

As that old saying goes, "You can't win it, unless you're in it."

St. Cyril of Alexandria

St. Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop and Doctor of the Church (June 27), was born at Alexandria, Egypt. He was nephew of the patriarch of that city, Theophilus. Cyril received a classical and theological education at Alexandria and was ordained by his uncle. He accompanied Theophilus to Constantinople in 403 and was present at the Synod of the Oak that deposed John of Chrysostom, whom he believed guilty of the charges against him. He succeeded his uncle Theophilus as patriarch of Alexandria. In 430, Cyril became embroiled with Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, who was preaching that Mary was not the mother of God, since Christ was divine, and not human, and consequently she should not have the word Theotokos (God-bearer) applied to her.

He persuaded Pope Celestine 1 to convoke a synod at Rome, which condemned Nestorius, and then did the same at his own synod in Alexandria. Celestine directed Cyril to depose Nestorius, and in 431, Cyril presided over the third General Council at Ephesus, attended by two hundred bishops, who condemned all the tenets of Nestorius and his followers before the arrival of Archbishop John of Antioch and forty two followers who believed Nestorius was innocent. When they found what had been done, they held a council of their own, and deposed Cyril. Emperor Theodosius 11 arrested both Cyril and Nestorius but released Cyril on the arrival of Papal Legates who confirmed the council's actions against Nestorius and declared Cyril innocent of all charges. Two years later, Archbishop John, representing the moderate Antioch bishops, and Cyril, reached an agreement and joined in the condemnation, and Nestorius was forced into exile. During the rest of his life, Cyril wrote treatises that clarified the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation and that helped prevent Nestorianism and Pelagianism from taking a long-term deep root in the Christian community. He was the most brilliant theologian of the Alexandrian tradition. His writings are characterized by accurate thinking, precise exposition, and great reasoning skills. Among his writings are commentaries on John, Luke, and the Pentateuch, treatises on dogmatic theology and Apologia against Julian the Apostate, and letters and sermons. Among his theological treatises are works on the Holy Trinity, and a number of treatises on the Nestorian controversy. He was declared a doctor of the church by Pope Leo XIII in 1883. His feast day is observed on June 27th.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

CASH FLOWas of June 16, 2006 Week # 24

	Last Week	Year to Date
Receipts	\$12,666.00	\$116,857.00
Disbursement	\$1,549.00	\$133,469.00
Surplus (Deficit)	\$11,117.00	(\$16,612.00)

Counsels from page 1

threats of deportation, illness and cancer, death of love ones. Be aware, even a squall of our brokenness, our worldliness, complacency, our past can violently cast a stormy shadow and batter and decimate us.

We find ourselves groaning the same apostolic cry "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" We are a people prone to doubt, we become cynical so easy, we become anxious. We love to brood, we quit, we disappear. Even with our best human efforts is not good enough.

Pope John Paul II said that the greatest weakness of an apostle is fear. What gives rise to fear is the lack of confidence in the power of the Lord, this is what oppresses the heart and tightens the throat. The apostle then ceases to witness "Fear is the enemy's greatest ally. In 1st John 4:18, "he who fears is not perfected in love." If we allow ourselves to give way to fear, we too shall cease.

Jesus is always ahead of us, he is the initiator and in Him there is nothing more that we want. To His loving disciples He asks: "Why are you afraid? Have you not have faith?" Faith is unmerited grace, a gift of God that has been planted into our hearts.

The primacy of faith, our trust in Jesus, generates courage. Jesus has the power to reign and quiet and still over all turbulence inside and outside of us. There is no fear in His love, and his perfect love drives out fear.

We are altogether in this voyage led by our divine navigator - Jesus himself. Where is the ship bound? Shall we just dock it in safe harbor and enjoy the comfort of the known, familiar, and comfortable? Are we ready to sail to distant places, assume new responsibilities and new struggles? Jesus said, "Let us cross to the other side where the unbelievers, the poor, the lost, the imprisoned, the naked and the homeless are.

As it is written in Hebrew 11:1 - Our faith in Christ, we find "the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen." This is not a cruise but a voyage to the unseen, but never blind, to the unknown that only God knows.

The voyage with Christ is a voyage of Peace that the world cannot give, rich in Hope that will not disappoint and laden with courage and confidence that can endure all storms, a voyage driven by the mighty Wind that will bring the fruit of this community to the new ends of the earth as new witnesses to the love of God, so rich in power! Such is his promise.

DIRECTION:

1. Share how the Lord transforms our lives.
2. Live your new life by putting on the mind of Christ.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

July 7-9, Youth Encounter#13 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA. Contact Mario/Cecille Salonga or Marvin Venadas.

July 7, 2006 Graduation and Thanksgiving Mass - Fr. Paul Lehman will bless the graduates of 2006 at the Eucharistic celebration.

July 21-23, Family Encounter Retreat #13 at St. Joseph by the Hills Malverne, PA. Contact Oddie/Jho Martin, King/Arlene Rigor, Ed/Grace Badiola, Peter/Rose Cruz or Tito/Ann Cruz.

TEACHINGS

June 23 Service & Intercessory Formation

July 1 Understanding Corporate Worship/ Prayer Leadership (LSS23 Newark) Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia.

BIRTHDAYS

6/23 EddieAlmaria, YLSS11	6/27 Manzo Ronel, YE 12
Troy Coronel, LSS 13	Bebie Alberto, LSS 1
Irma Santiago, LSS 7	Ruben Amarante, LSS 1
6/24 Jamie Pagdonsolan, Mark 10	Rudy Bialza, LSS 15
Danny Tan, Mark 10	Marlene Brillantes, LSS 23
Tiffany Anyanwu, Mark 10	Romy DeLeon, LSS 17
Steve Banom, YLSS 9	Daniel Dwyer, LSS 22
Tess Tolentino, SPE 5	Nonette Leano, SPE 1
Tita Valonzo, SPE 4	Soc Punzalan, LSS 10
6/25 Melissa Lim, YLSS 8	Lally Reyes, LSS 19
Lawrence Anyanwu, ME 21	6/28 Dick Zulueta, LSS 12
Annie Javellana, SE 9	Tony Cifra, SE
Hans Sison, SE	6/29 Rhia Eusebio, YLSS 7
6/26 Grace Badiola, LSS 24	Oleen Solon, YLSS 6
Jerome Capistrano, SE 9	Gio Cabunag, SE 4
Janet Echeverria, SE 2	Peter Cruz, LSS 24
Hum Flores, LSS 18	Marivic Francisco, LSS 10
Bert Golanco, LSS 7	Gerry Garcia, LSS 3
Sandy Talbot, LSS 23	Pauline Ibarrola, LSS 17
Jun Trinidad, Jr, LSS 9	David Marconi, SE 8
	Jenny Perez, LSS 16
	Benrubs Austria, SE
	Jovs Aguila

ANNIVERSARIES

June 23	Marion & Fe Pakula	ME14
	Pete & Precy Pajela	ME25
	Manolo & Mely Romero	ME17
June 24	Angel & Tessie Mijares	ME16
June 25	Tony & Tates Abad	ME17
	Jojo & Tet Almazan	ME3
	Jun & Jane Entrada	ME4
June 26	Ben & Virgie Capan	ME3
	Joey & Cynthia Reyes	ME15
June 27	Ency & Baby Alberto	ME1
	Pedro & Chona Martinez	ME22
June 28	Boboy & Maris Guzman	ME18
	Ronnie & Mila Macaisa	ME23
June 29	Mol & JC Barredo	ME22
	Larry & Carina Ibarrola	ME23
	Fidel & Alegria Lim	ME21
June 30	Gene & Lally Reyes	ME22



We Congratulate and Welcome the 49 Graduates of Single Encounter # 16

Brian Aguilar, Cheryl Alejandro, Ron Alfaro, *Audrey Atienza, *Yen Yen Balcon, Stephanie Belonia, Jonjay Bondoc, Gabby Bonifacio, Chris Booze, Jutt Bustos, Pat Cabrera, Valerie Calilap, Katrina Cam, Ray Campomanes, Olivia Cuasay, *Melanie de Bella, *Darleen de Guzman, Bernard de Leon, Kristine de la Cruz, Anabelle Duma, D Fernandez, Jaime Fune, Paolo Gonzalez, Janet Harrington, Chris Harrington, MJ Harrington, Michelle Ignacio, *Tim Javier, Ryan Manguiat, Melissa Martinez, Joanna Mercado, Jay Nacion, Jerry Orellana, *Riz Pagdanganan, *Tricia Paloma, *Chay Pangilinan, Lauren Pascual, Nick Punzalan, *Mart Razal, Michael Relucio, Michael Rementilla, Anthony Reyes, Camille Salvador, *Mel Soquite, Alyssa Santa Ana, May Tolentino, Alvi Trillana, *Chris Trinidad, Jackie Zulaybar. (* Coordinators).

SE16 was held on June 16-18, 2006 at Graymoor Friars of Atonement, Garrison NY. Spiritual Director - Fr. Paul Lehman. Facilitators - Flo Fudalan, Pam Pascual, Pol Lazaro, Eric Cruz. Class Shepherd - Emil/Baby Canlas.

ME 27 Gives Thanks for Memorable ME Weekend

Last June 24th at St Mary's in Rahway, ME27 gave thanks to God, the Pastoral Team, sponsoring class of ME26, auxies from ME25 and their sponsors for giving them an ME weekend in Easton, PA that they will long remember. The class shepherds led the Praise and Worship, where God's Word challenged those present to have the humility and advocacy of St. John the Baptist and to be the "Light to all the Nations."

In their pastel colored attires, the class feted their guests with a dance number to the tune of "Heaven is Less an Angel" and a heartfelt action song rendition of the Filipino praise song "Humayo at Ihayag", followed with another Filipino song, "Lift Up Your Hands". The class then treated their guests to a hearty and delicious, yet simple meal prepared by the class.

The ME27 class met DCS members, and enthusiastically received the presentations of the representatives of the Youth, Singles, John6, Mark10, Teaching and Liturgical ministries. The class spent the rest of the afternoon getting to know one another better and gave testimonies on how the ME Weekend positively touched their lives. "It is too little, he says, for you to be my servant..., I will make you a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." (Is 49:6)

COUNSELS

Jesus-Divine Healer

WORD: Wis 1:13; 2:23-24; Ps 30:2,4,5-6, 11,12,13; 2 Cor 8:7,9,13-15; Mk 5:21-43

THEME: Only with faith in Jesus can we graciously do His work to heal.

ORDER: "Do not be afraid, just have faith." (Mk 5:36b)

REFLECTION:

In our Gospel reading we have two contrasting stories of two different persons being healed on the same day. One was a child of 12 on the verge of dying. The other was a woman who had been suffering hemorrhage for 12 years, an affliction considered unclean and lowly much like a leper. Jairus, the father of the 12 year old girl, an elder in the synagogue is well to do and influential, while the woman with the hemorrhage is impoverished and a social outcast. What they have in common, both are facing certain death but both demonstrated considerable faith in Jesus.

"God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living." (Wis 1:13). Death was not part of God's plan for us at the beginning but because of sin "death entered the world." (Wis 2:24) To encounter Jesus' gift of life we have to overcome our fears and reach out in humility and acknowledge Christ as our Savior. Such an act of faith can lead us to salvation and salvation brings us everlasting life.

"She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse." (Mk 5:26) She finally came to Jesus as a last resort. She took it upon herself and pressed her way through the crowd then touched Jesus' cloak. Immediately her bleeding stopped and knew she was healed of her disease. Seeing the woman kneeling upon Him, Jesus said "Daughter, your faith has saved you." (Mk 5:34) Jesus was touched by the woman's faith. (continued on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"*your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your Affliction." (Mk 5:34)

The Right Stuff

“Seek good and not evil, that you may live.” (Am 5:14)

This and the following verses point to justice, as Amos was the prophet of justice. Amos was very specific to what the people were doing, that angered God. They oppressed the poor and prevented them from getting justice in the courts. They persecuted good people, took bribes, practiced idolatry, trampled on the needy, cheated and made huge profits in their business dealings. God, in turn, punished them with earthquake, famine, turned their festivals into mourning and more, to commensurate for their evil ways. He proved to them, that vengeance is inflicted to those who don't know Him, and disobey Him. For those who were faithful, God established them in their lands with rich and plentiful harvests, and He promised them that they will no longer be exiles. As for the lawless, they were consequently destroyed.

God's justice stands firm and forever, and His mercy endures forever. He rewards the good, and punishes the wicked. Justice means conformity to moral laws or conduct. It means merited reward or punishment. As a Christian, it means giving to others their due, tempered with mercy. It means applying the golden rule at all times.

In our present times, not much have changed but worse, with same sex marriage and abortion in the picture. How are we responding to them? Do we rally in protest through the media? Do we vote wisely? Do we perform corporal works of mercy? Do we decrease, that Jesus may increase through our spiritual gifts? Are we all working together, to produce good and lasting fruits, or are we caught up working for and serving mammon, forgetting the plight of the poor, the needy, and the suffering, around us?

Justice is making wise decisions that satisfy God and our neighbor, and not ourselves. It is constantly praying for others and doing our best to meet their needs in their crisis. Our actions should be guided by principles of moral ethics, rather than legal rights. Jesus said “All power and authority has been given to Me, in heaven and on earth”.

God designed us after His image and likeness and gave us all we need to be like Him, that we may live with Him forever. Therefore, when He finds us with the right stuff upon His return, we will be richly rewarded, for He is a just God. Let justice flow like a stream and righteousness like a river that never goes dry. Then, the Lord of Hosts will be with us, and will be gracious upon us!



Lord, Bless Our Youngsters !



“Rise up, shrill in the night, at the beginning of every watch; Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord; Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your little ones.” (Lam 2:19)

We live in a society that has practically neglected the spiritual welfare of our young. Many parents have

the conception that since they work very hard to give the best to their children, they are already doing enough of their parental responsibilities. But they are not aware that their children could be deprived of their attention and guidance.

How many children of today get into trouble with school authorities, hurt their bodies by taking drugs and seek pleasure in dangerous and self-destroying ways? We, adults, must teach our young the way to live in God's Truth so they can be directed to a better life. There are a lot of sufferings going around among kids. Oftentimes, they are lost in the complexity of life as they gaze at circumstances surrounding them; helpless at times to cope with what is right or wrong. Where are the parents, the guardians? Where are their role models, the ones they can lean on and seek advice from? Our youngsters need us. They need us to teach them the Christian values, to witness to them these values and to lead them to the peace and love of Jesus. We must teach them how to pray by being prayerful ourselves. We show them a good moral life by living it.

Too much misery is experienced by our young when they are left out on their own, when not taught properly our Christian faith. They grow up spiritually malnourished and easily fall into temptations and vices- leading to a miserable life. It is sad to see a teenager choosing the wrong value because we were not there to show him the right one. And if we do not pay attention quick enough to correct that, it could very well become a habit that harvests only perdition.

In this era of Internet, television shows and movies- our youngsters are bombarded with things and activities that could pollute their young minds. We must be vigilant and pray devotedly to the Lord to protect and safeguard our young from the sins of this world.

Admittedly, too many youngsters suffer from emotional and spiritual hunger due to lack of care and guidance. There is no substitute for time lovingly spent with your children. We must be there for them... giving comfort and guidance especially when they stumble.

Lord, we lift up to you our youngsters. Bless them with a holy life, one of peace and abundance. Amen.

Surrendering To God

A new batch of disciples are going to be covenanted next Friday just as the District's new stewards and servant leaders are anointed for a new 3-year term. In both ceremonies, one of the prominent pledges to be made will be to surrender to God – to His will and authority, to His Word and grace. What does this pledge truly mean? In a world of so many vital and often conflicting claims on our lives, is this blanket allegiance to one cause, to one governing truth, really achievable? Let's look at what it entails.

One of the first things we surrender to the Lord is our time. For the newly covenanted, this means time more conscientiously used for prayer, reading and reflecting on the Word and word sharing, and for a more active presence in the community through the ministries they're assigned to serve and through mission work and witnessing when called to do so.

But God doesn't give us extra hours when He calls us to do His work. We have to find the time in the same 24 hours He gives everybody else. And so we re-prioritize, finding comfort and resolve in the thought that what we value is what we give our time to. At this point of our lives, we need to fix in our hearts that our relationship with God trumps watching TV, dressed-up parties, trips to the mall or Atlantic City or even, as one disciple related once when he chose to forego it, an all-expenses-paid junket to Las Vegas.

Another aspect of our life we re-evaluate and thereafter evolve in surrendering to God is our self concept and the myriad ways we define it as a result of habits and experiences. Surrender requires humility, submission and obedience - qualities which may have become foreign to those who've had a life-long drive for success and recognition for which they have been amply rewarded.

As disciples, we're asked now to die to our old selves: to serve instead of expecting to be served, to see the other's perspective first before our own in any transaction, to resist seeking recognition for ourselves and attribute our successes to the Lord's benevolence, and to submit to the community's culture even if we may find it sometimes unfair, choosing to trust the Lord's hands on how things are and will be,

One of the more difficult things to surrender to the Lord in our community is our money. Tithing – the giving up of 10% of our income to the Lord - requires a leap of faith in acknowledging that everything we own belongs to the Lord. It even becomes a bigger leap for those who don't deem themselves to have enough. Yet tithing works: not only do we not lack for anything when we do; we even receive surpluses from unexpected sources.

At the very heart of surrender is trust in the Lord, trust in His love and compassion, trust that He will always do what is best for us. For those who are on the eve of their covenanting or of being charged with the leadership of the community and really for everybody in the community, we may want to take some quiet time to reconsider how we are surrendering or have surrendered to the Lord. Are there areas in our lives that we haven't yielded yet to Him?

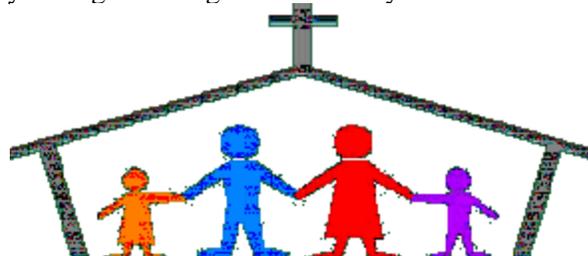
Family Encounter Experience

My family and I attended the Family Encounter last year and it was truly a great experience. It revealed to me what family was all about and gave me a new and positive perspective about my own family. This family encounter gave us the opportunity to learn more about each other in a deeper and more personal level. I never realized how distant I was from my own family members.

I was a bit hesitant in attending the family encounter. I didn't know how I would survive the weekend, while carrying so many burdens on my shoulders, and spending so much time with my family. Furthermore, I was afraid that my spiritual dryness would affect the way I would open up to them.

Something came over me when I finally realized that this is my family... a family that I've taken for granted for so many years and now I'm so thankful to have. I grew to love my family in such a way I have never loved them before. I'm blessed to see my family renewed and stronger than ever.

After the family encounter, we learned to love and respect each other more than we did before, and to love Christ as a family the way He wanted us to. Being a family is a lifetime experience that each family member has to take part in and work hard together to make it all work. I must admit that my parents and I still have a few arguments from time to time, but the family encounter has influenced my parents and me to approach each problem or situation with kindness and understanding. We would talk things out and try to see the situation on the same level, instead of being close-minded and using harsh words. My younger brother and I now see the importance of our brother-sister relationship. Our family relationship continues to grow each day through God's grace and mercy.



THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash Flow as of June 23, 2006 Week # 25

Date	Weekly Receipts	YTD Receipts
6/23/2006	\$4,000.00	\$120,857.00
	Weekly Disburse	YTD Disbursement
6/23/2006	\$9,909.00	\$143,378.00
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$5,909.00)	(\$22,521.00)

Thank you for your generosity!

Counsels from page 1

When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official the crowd started saying “Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?” (Mk 5:35) Jesus sensed that Jairus’ faith started to waiver and said “Do not be afraid, just have faith.” (Mk 5:36) Jairus’ faith was laced with fear but he trusted Jesus and his daughter was raised up from death. Our faith may still be imperfect and perhaps many of us tried everything before we come to the Lord. In His goodness we will never be sent away empty handed.

What is faith? “Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.” (Heb 11:1). It is not based on our senses or what we feel or see. Jesus does not want us to be a doubting-Thomas. Faith in God is giving ourself completely to Christ. Without faith we can not please our Lord no matter how much work we do for Him. Ephesians 2:8-9 says “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast.”

How do we acquire Faith? We learn faith as we listen to God’s Word. When we go to Mass and attend our Friday worship we equip ourselves with knowledge through the Word. Our formation program together with encounters, ME and LSS nourishes our faith. Our daily reading of the scripture soaks us with the Word of God. Romans 10:17 say, “Thus faith come from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.” God does not promise us that there will always be a cure, but God does promise there can always be healing. Even as our bodies may succumb to disease, we can grow in trust and love, ready for the healing that finally awaits us beyond this life. The promise of Christ is clear. If we seek healing, we will receive it.

As disciples of Christ we must confirm our personal conviction to God as exemplified by Jesus in His undying trust and obedience to the Father. Jesus brought healing to His people by proclaiming the good news of God’s kingdom. Healing comes to us through repentance, deliverance and reclamation of our faith in Christ. Only faith in Jesus can we walk with the assurance of His mercy and grace for He has promised “your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.” (Mk 5:34)

DIRECTIONS:

- Encourage all members to share their faith through Word sharing, praying the community intercessory petitions, healing ministry and faith testimonies.
- Be generous in love towards one another.



MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 30, Youth Emergence at St. Mary's Auditorium, followed by a celebration for our youth high school graduates.
July 7, Graduation and Thanksgiving Mass.

For sign ups contact: Alan & Tess Cam (201) 659-5417
e-mail: atetscam23@hotmail.com or Bert & Helen Pie (732)213-3109 e-mail: bertlenpie@aol.com

July 7-9, Youth Encounter#13 at St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA Contact Mario/Cecille Salonga or Marvin Venadas
HM Summer Camps

- Week-long camps run by Servant Sisters, Brothers and Priests of Home of the Mother in Pleasant Mount, PA
- Teaches boys/girls the necessity of prayer life and holiness
- **Boys encounter:** July 23 – July 30
- **Girls encounter:** July 30 – August 6
- Contact: Yvette Silao (856) 764-1554, bvm85@aol.com

TEACHINGS

- July 1** Understanding Corporate Worship/Prayer Leadership (**LSS23 Newark**). Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Pneumatika, Charismata, Diakonia (**LSS25 Newark**).
- July 15** BBS(LSS26); Apologetics (LSS 21-22)
- July 21** Christian Witnessing (Singles); Mark 10 Teaching; John 6 Teaching
- July 28** Book of Books (Solo Parents) ; Service Formation; Intercessory Formation

BIRTHDAYS

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| 7/1 | Ling Garcia, LSS20 | 7/5 | Zachary Larobis, Mark 10 |
| 7/2 | Ency Alberto, LSS1 | | Irwin Eusebio, John 6 |
| | Abel Trinidad, LSS 21 | | Paul Garcia, LSS 9 |
| | Nelda Dwyer, LSS 22 | | Zeny Isidro, LSS 15 |
| 7/3 | Raul Gutierrez, Mark 10 | | Marie Jean-Bart, LSS 22 |
| | Nicole Lopez, John 6 | | Fr. Paul Lehman, ME 8 |
| | Alice Bautista, LSS 23 | 7/6 | Al Pena, LSS 2 |
| | Emma Belmonte, LSS 25 | | Jim Ferrara, SPE 3 |
| | Mosty Garcia, LSS20 | | Pauline Montemayor, SE 13 |
| | Choly Relucio, LSS 10 | | Shy Ronquillo, LSS 17 |
| 7/4 | Celeste Atienza, LSS 10 | | |
| | Rod Beltran, SPE 2 | | |
| | Erik Cosio, SE5 | | |
| | Liberty Del Rosario, SE 1 | | |
| | Roselyn Encarnacio, SE 11 | | |
| | Julie Ico, LSS 5 | | |
| | Julita Trillana, LSS 7 | | |

ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 6/30 | Gene & Lally Reyes, ME22 |
| 7/4 | Tom & Dorie Beary, ME25 |
| | Gerald & Nell Cabildo, ME25 |
| | Rollie & Adel Camposagrado, ME18 |
| | Emil & Baby Canlas, ME7 |
| 7/6 | Frank & Malou Venadas, ME15 |



Seeking God's Will in Community

In all our community affairs, we turn to prayer and God's Word in order to align our will with our Lord's and set our actions according to His true plan for all of us. We turn to Scripture because we know that God speaks and works through His Word. Through Scripture we discover wisdom and direction. We are able to distinguish God's purpose from our own personal aspirations, plans and motivations.

Seeking God's will and plan for our community is more than the work of a disciple or ministry. It is the Spirit in action upon peoples' hearts which are **empty of self**. They are inordinately detached from any preferences, any biases and are ready to jump on any leading that the Spirit will provide, given God's abundant grace. Since the Spirit acts through people, some may be gifted to lead the community in discernment. They are given a 'spiritual eye' to transcend masks, facades, even confusion and are able to get to the heart of the issues. They listen intuitively and are quite sensitive to the goings-on and instinctively know what place they have in God's plans.

The process of discernment, in order to qualify as work of the Spirit more than man's, should be governed by love, otherwise it amounts to nothing (1 Cor 13:1-3). It should create in everyone a sincere desire for what is right and a sharp sensitivity to what is sinful and morally wrong. It upbuilds fellowship by providing greater unity, more power, wisdom and character (Ephesians 4:11-12). Anything that breeds contempt and anger, disunity and confusion only reveals non surrender and the strong existence of the "I". It shows that some hearts are not in the proper place and are quite distant from the Lord implying the greater need for prayer, meditation and mortification. Peace and prayerful thanksgiving should be the prevailing mood and atmosphere.

In all these, we need to be accountable and humble as our discernment may be bound by our imperfections and can be shallow or simply erroneous.

(continued on next page)

COUNSELS

Believe and Listen ...

The Foundation of our Faith

WORD: Dn 7:9-10,13-14; Ps 97:1-2,5-6,9;
2Pt 1:16-19; Mk 9:2-10

THEME: We witness to the glory of Jesus when we listen to Him.

ORDER: *"This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him."* (Mark 9:7b)

REFLECTION:

Our Gospel reading is a manifestation of the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ as witnessed by some of His disciples (Peter, James, & John). The witnessing is not only from what they saw but also from what they heard from our Heavenly Father which becomes the very foundation of our faith, that Jesus is the Son of God.

Faith has to come from the heart. Surrendering ourselves to God's will has to come from the heart. How much we believe from the heart that Jesus is the Son of God is the only way to measure our faith in Him. The level of our faith has a direct correlation to the choices we make in life or how much we are guided by His word. Only if we are always guided by His word can we claim that we *"Listen to Him"* (Mk 9:7b).

Listening to God means constant obedience to His Word. We cannot choose the time when we can only be obedient. It has to be constant as our love for others and each other. The major struggle that we often encounter in our faith is how we listen to God. We are affected by the baggage that we carry because of our humanness.

(continued on next page)

God's Promise for the Week

"You will do well to be attentive to it"

(2 Peter 1:19b)

continued



Our baggage includes among others our worldly attachments. They influence us in filtering the many voices we hear. During those times when we are blinded by our self interests, we selectively choose to listen only to those that satisfy our personal desires. We cannot have preconceived ideas and prejudices when we discern His will. Only when we listen with an open heart and mind can we be effective listeners of God's word.

Our community has its own moments of transfiguration. Our anointing as a Private Lay Association of the Faithful is a transfiguration. It is the fruit of our being guided by the Holy Spirit; when we listen to His will; when we answer His call to service.

The emergence of a new leadership in our community is call for another moment of transfiguration. It is a new chapter in the life of our community. It is another challenge that we can face with courage for as long as we listen to and follow God's will.

As individuals, we too have experienced our own moment(s) of transfiguration. Whenever we feel the closeness of our Lord is an instance of our transfiguration. We feel the joy, the peace, and the holiness of His presence in our lives. It is a moment we all pray for. It is an experience we want to last forever.

We feel as if we are floating in the air, or maybe on a mountain top. But we cannot stay on this mountain top forever. We cannot stay in our comfort zones. For if we do, then we are not listening to God's will; we are not answering God's call.

We have to descend from our mountain top. We have to tell others our own moments of transfiguration. We have to share our knowledge of how we can feel the closeness of our Lord. To guide others so they too can experience their own moments of transfiguration. We need to have the courage and the perseverance to do His will. Our faith in Him should withstand all the challenges we face, but only if we believe and listen. Then we shall see the glory that awaits those who follow the path of righteousness.

"You will do well to be attentive to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." (2 Pt 1:19)

DIRECTIONS:

- Listen to God through the daily reading of His Word and through prayer.
- Listen to each other as a community. The Lord may be speaking to us through our brethren.
- Continue to pray for each other and for the whole community, so that we may be one in mind, heart, and Spirit.

Ministry Announcements

- August 4-6 Youth Interdistrict Conference**
Contact Dave Dela Fuente (201)874-2450 or Ian Laxina (973)704-1853
- August 13 Family Encounter#13 Grand Reunion**
St. Mary's from 11 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Community Calendar

- August 19 Community Day**
Johnson's Park, Piscataway, NJ
Picnic Grove #4
Contact Rey and Penn Perez (FLA Ministry)
- October 6-8 Life in the Spirit Seminar #27**
St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ

Teaching

- August 18 Excellence in WORSHIP - Youth**



Birthday



- August 25 Robert Pie - YE 1 & YLSS 2**

Seeking God's Will ... continued



Community life is a continuing process of discernment to seek God's will. As such, we need to ask our hearts if our witnessing and the fruits of our work are leading our brethren to Jesus. Are we able to build each other up in Christ? In what way do we love our co-workers? Or have we become a clanging gong or a noisy cymbal? If we have to stretch far and wide to come up with a response, it is best that we keep still and let the indwelling Spirit take control, go in deep prayer, be humble and learn from others.

THE LORD'S PROVISION

Cash Flow as of July 28, 2006 Week # 30

Date	Weekly Receipts	YTD Receipts
7/28/2006	\$15,139.00	\$178,921.00
Date	Weekly Disburse	YTD Disbursement
7/28/2006	\$3,954.00	\$193,119.00
Surplus (Deficit)	\$11,185.00	(\$14,198.00)

Thank you for your generosity!



Thirty two new disciples made their pledge

On August 4, 2006, after our first Friday healing mass, thirty two candidates made their five point pledge as committed disciples of the BLD community. Twenty three candidates were from ME 25, three from ME 24 and six from ME 23. They professed total surrender to our Triune God and to church authority, to continue in their formation programs, to have regular prayer time and reflection of the Word and to have solidarity with other community disciples.

Father Paul Lehman exhorted them: "Pursue your call to discipleship with zeal and dedication that you maybe called to the fullness of servanthood." After their anointing, the gathered assembly, joyfully welcomed these new committed disciples of the Lord.

Trudy Aboyme; Dhemie/Divine Alba; Ray/Susie Atienza; Mark/Emma Belmonte; Rolly/Nila Castillo; Romy/Lynn Castillo; Ramie/Emmy Espina; JR/Judy Garcia; Ricky/Evelyn Laguatan; Larry/Carmen Larobis; Malou Minano; Arnold/Cely Ocaya; Pete/Precy Pajela; Don/Irene Rodriguez; Al Rosales; Riel/Gina Sabale; Dulce Samonte; Nes/Cecile Vasquez

What is Discernment?

Discernment is a process that leads to a decision that is rooted in prayer. The key to every discernment is selfless love that is able to praise God in all things.. Discernment is fundamental in the life of a person or a community Through this process, we pay attention to our passions and our interior movements to determine the best way to please God.

Discernment requires love and a deepening, experiential knowledge of God. It brings prayer to action. Openness to God is an important aspect of discernment. It slows us down from judging others as we objectively seek to understand the here and now. When a discerned decision is made, it is premised on peace.

The Ignatian discernment reveals, that seeking God's will, maybe characterized by consolation or desolation.

Continued on page 2

COUNSELS

The Bread of Life

WORD: 1 Kgs 19:4-8; Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9; Eph 4:30-5:2; Jn 6:41-51

THEME: We witness to the glory of Jesus when we believe that Jesus is the bread of eternal life.

ORDER: Be imitators of God and live in love, as Christ loved us. (Eph 5:1-2a)

REFLECTION:

"This is enough, O Lord! Take my life for I am no better than my fathers." (1 Kgs 19:4b) More often than not, we are too quick to give up and succumb to self-pity! We lose hope in the midst of suffering, and drive us to doubt the existence of God. Even though we have seen many miracles that God has performed in our lives, we continue to doubt.

The same was true more than 2000 years ago. After multiplying the loaves of bread and fish to feed a large crowd, the people grumbled among themselves when they heard Jesus claim: *"I am the bread that came down from heaven."* (Jn 6:41) They told Jesus: 'Our ancestors had manna to eat in the desert; according to scripture, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' Jesus said to them: *"I solemnly assure you, it was not Moses who gave you bread from the heavens; it is my Father who gives you the real heavenly bread. God's bread comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."* (Jn 6:31-33) *"Your ancestors ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven for a man to eat and never die. I myself am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he shall*

Continued on page 2

God's Promise for the Week

"Amen, amen I say to you whoever believes has eternal life." (Jn 6:47)

Counsels

Continued from page 1

live forever; the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world." (Jn 6:49-51)

If Jesus is in our midst today and conveying these words to us, who among us would not react with disdain? Could we imagine ourselves to be appreciative listeners to this Jesus who just proclaimed Himself the "Bread of Life"? Could we be a kind and gracious audience to Him, willing to accept this new idea and accommodate His provocative claim? Could we be so bold to declare what we think He meant by those words? The crowd then and we, today, had all experienced hunger. Literally and figuratively we all got hungry. The alarming degree of consumerism, the insatiable desire for great accomplishments and the lavish concern for our self-esteem make us more "hungry" for things that fail to sustain us. We want to have an abundance of food, certificates of recognition like degrees and diplomas, better jobs, bigger homes, expensive cars, nicer bodies, better economy, peaceful nation and the list goes on and on. The message Jesus is trying to impart to us is something many of us would rather not listen to. He tells us that we are filling our bellies and our spirits with food that do not sustain because our aspirations are inherently deceptive. Jesus is basically asking us, which bread is different from all others? This thought provoking question could have a paralyzing effect. We could get caught up in the paralysis and miss the best part of the message, i.e., the Good News.

Sometimes, we don't understand why things happen. Faith calls us to believe even when we do not understand. There are mysteries that we cannot fathom. It is better for us to leave them as mysteries and let God reveal them to us if and when He chooses. Let us just do what He tells us to do. Like what Elijah heard in the first reading, Jesus tells us: 'Arise, wake up, eat and be nourished. You will not make the journey if you do not grasp what I am trying to tell you.' What is He telling us? Is Jesus telling us to shift our ideas and understanding of what can really feed us, nourish us, sustain us and strengthen us? Is He calling us to a deeper relationship with Him that is transforming? Does He challenge us to discern which bread is different from the rest and enthusiastically encourage us to eat the bread He offers us? What is Jesus asking of you today?

DIRECTIONS:

- ◆ Remove all bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, reviling and malice.
- ◆ Be kind to one another, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.

Weekly Collection Reports for the Wk ending Aug 4, 2006	
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$4,053.00
Other Collections	1,489.00
Total Collections	\$5,542.00

What is Discernment? Continued from page 1

Consolation is a spiritual movement of peace. The test of consolation as a gift from God, is in its objective. Does it lead us to pleasing God or does it satisfy a selfish end? What leads us to God, essentially, come from God. Hence, we should be cautioned that our generosity towards God and neighbor, maybe twisted by an evil spirit, and turn our kind gesture into a selfish end. How then do we determine if the consolation leads to God? If we are at peace, then our consolation in our discernment is of God and therefore united to His will.

Desolation is a state of spiritual emptiness. It is also called darkness of the soul, turmoil of spirit and restlessness which arises from disturbances due to lack of faith, hope and love. Desolation maybe caused by spiritual darkness because the soul is unaware of God's activity in ones interior life. It could be a challenge to trust God in this time of spiritual dryness. In desolation, one may feel a strong absence of God yet He is 'hiddenly' present.

Desolation may be used by God for our spiritual growth. To remain faithful to God and to ask for the grace of endurance in time of desolation is a sign of spiritual maturity. God, therefore, uses desolation to let us sieve through our preferences and values and to let us examine any sloppiness in our spiritual walk.

God uses desolation for His purpose as He ushers in a period of waiting and refraining from making a decision. He uses it as a test of one's faith to live out a commitment made in consolation amidst changing paradigms.

Discernment brings spiritual benefit to our human experiences. It is living out our faith that enlightens us as we work for God in today's world.

Ministry Announcements

Aug 13 FE 13 Grand Reunion - St. Mary's Rahway

Teachings

Aug 18 Excellence in Worship - Youth

Community Calendar

Aug 19 Community Day, Johnson's Park, Picnic Grove #4
Piscataway NJ, Contact: Rey and Penn Perez

FLA Ministry

Oct 6-8 Life in the Spirit Seminar #27 - St. Mary's Rahway

Everlasting Light - BLD Christmas Musical is Back

Audition for: Vocalist, Instrumentalists, Dancers
Contact: Frank/Malou; Randy/Beth; Casey/Malyn

Coming Soon

Official BLD- Newark Songbook



FE 13 HOLDS GRAND REUNION

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord!

Last Sunday, August 13th, the class of Family Encounter #13 experienced anew abundant blessings of the Lord's mighty presence at their beautiful thanksgiving celebration. The day started with a spirit-filled, powerful worship led by their class shepherds, the Rigor family.

The new FE class expressed their gratitude to God for their memorable Encounter weekend, and to the pastoral team, sponsoring class of FE 12, praise and other auxies for their time, love, and humble service.

Joyfully, they sang 3 inspiring songs: Household of Faith, The Body Song, and The Prayer. The parents danced while their children sang "The Prayer." They then reprised "The Body Song" joined by FE 12 families, proclaiming together that we are the Body of Christ, united in mind, body, and soul. Truly, the spirit of God's love, joy, peace, and unity reigned in the hearts and minds of everyone present.

In the subsequent sharing, the families gained further encouragement as they realized the importance of treating each family member with respect, understanding and love. *"Children, obey your parents for this is right that it may go well with you and that you may have long life. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord."* (Eph 6:1, 3-4)

The grand reunion was, indeed, the day that the Lord wonderfully and beautifully made for FE 13 families and to all who willfully and lovingly serve Him.

To You O Lord, we give thanks with a grateful heart.

Is it God acting or not?

Beloved, do not trust every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1

Experience shows that a community discernment process, although done in prayer, could have serious hearing problems when its members and leaders find it difficult to hear, much more patiently listen and apply God's messages into their plans. At times discernment is used as a tool against a contending alternative or to defeat it in a struggle for power and influence, or just to pick at them until they quit or retreat. The whole work of love gains color as winners and losers emerge.

COUNSELS

THE FEAST

WORD: Prv 9:1-6; Ps 34:2-7; Eph 5:15-20; Jn 6:51-58

ORDER: We witness to the glory of Jesus when we receive Him in the Eucharist.

THEME: "Understand what is the will of the Lord."
(Eph 5:17b)

REFLECTION:

Sunday's Readings contain the invitation to the greatest Feast one could ever receive. In the parable of The Feast in Mt. 22:2, the king sent out his servants to invite all the famous and the rich. They did not come, so he sent his servants to the streets to bring the destitute instead. In our Gospel scene, Jesus invited everybody, saying: *"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."* (Jn 6:51) The Jews rejected him. Just as in the king's banquet, those initially invited did not find it important to accept the invitation. In both Gospels, only those who were desperate and burdened eagerly came. Christ beckons us: *"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* (Mt 11:28) The healing we receive manifests in us, making us living witnesses to the glory of our Lord.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians in the 2nd Reading tells us the reason why we carry such burdens and why it is important that we accept the Lord's invitation. With His Body and Blood, Christ allows His Holy Spirit to live within us so that we may always know the truth, and be spared due to our lack of wisdom of the ways of the world. *"Be filled with the Spirit."* Eph 5:18.

We usually bring presents for our host. The value

Promise of the Week

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day."
(Jn 6:54)

Counsels from page 1

of our gift is directly proportional to how much we value our host. When Christ invites us, the only thing He wants us to bring is our humble, broken selves. In return, He will give us the most wonderful present we desire, which is the gift of life, wrapped in the protective presence of His Holy Spirit in us.

People would do anything to be invited to the banquet of the rich and famous. Very few of us would ever receive such invitation. On the other hand, everyday Christ invites us to a Feast far greater than any earthly banquet. As Catholic Christians, we know and believe in the real truth about the Holy Eucharist. We should be exultant and accept this invitation at all times and share this Feast with others. *"Taste and see the goodness of the Lord."* (Ps 34)

The Book of Wisdom speaks of the amount of preparation that a host makes to prepare a feast for an important guest. Christ made the greatest preparation that any host could make. He came down from heaven, suffered and died for us. He invited us to partake of His Body and Blood, which has been sacrificed for us, and to continue to do this even when He is gone, with a promise that He will always be present.

Whenever we receive an important invitation, we painstakingly take our time to make sure that we look good before our host. When Christ invites us to His Banquet, many of us are not as prepared. Although we need to, Jesus encourages us to "come as we are." Our outside appearance is unimportant to Him. It is who we are inside which matters most. Thomas A. Kempis' reflection on "Examination of Conscience" to prepare oneself for Christ in the Holy Eucharist explains that Solomon spent seven years building a Holy Temple for the Ark of the Covenant. He also explains that "Noah worked a hundred years building the ark that he and a few others may be saved." Christ comes to us physically through the Holy Eucharist. Yet how much preparation do we make? How much time do we spend to come to His Feast of our salvation?

DIRECTIONS

- Consciously prepare yourself to be worthy to receive the Lord.
- Receive the holy Eucharist as often as possible.
- *Give thanks always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father. (Eph 5:20)*

Weekly Collection Reports

for the week ending August 11, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$ 3,974.00
Other Collections	<u>\$ 6,122.00</u>
TOTAL COLLECTIONS	\$10,096.00

Is it God acting or not? from page 1

When a community loses sight of its true purpose, acts according to peoples' personal wants and needs and not according to the leading of the Spirit, its starts to wither, loses its vibrancy, even its life. When this transpires, God suffers grief at the thoughtless process and choices it may have made.

With discernment, we are always faced with a simple choice: is it God acting or not? Satan roams around us and tries to mislead everyone. But there are also man's own inner voices which can work against God — we could call this our dark side. Discernment is a serious community matter that those who shall conduct it should be spiritually ready to undertake. It is not a matter of position or authority, but their relationship with God, their prayer life and faithful study of the word. It is a matter of just how well they know God and His voice.

What then are the prerequisites in order for a discernment process to be possible?

1. Hearts filled with peace and love.
2. Genuine desire to do God's will; willingness to set aside one's own preconceived agendas, attachments to particular alternative(s), result(s).
3. Continuing commitment to a life of deep prayer, and particularly to prayer of listening and contemplation.
4. A well-developed and practiced skill in recognizing the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, or "marks" of the Spirit.
5. Willingness to invite others to participate in the discernment process.
6. Willingness and opportunity to allow as much time as necessary for the discernment to emerge with clarity.
7. Willingness and ability to live out the discerned choice, and test the results of the choice.

God may speak but a discerning body may never recognize the voice of God with absolute clarity. But with the Spirit in full control and hearts totally empty of self and completely detached from the alternatives, God's voice will resonate in peoples' hearts.

God's acting leads community to wisdom, character, boldness, and unity.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Aug 19 Community Day, Johnson's Park
Picnic Grove #4 Piscataway, NJ
Contact: Rey and Penn Perez
FLA Ministry

Sept 23 BLD-Newark 10th Annual Golf Outing
Harkers Hollow Golf Club, Harmony, NJ
Details: Kelly Concepcion, Carlito Claricia,
and Rey Guerra

Oct 6-8 Life in the Spirit Seminar #27 St. Mary's
Church, Rahway Contact: Vic & Dee Lim



A Household of Faith

The BLD Community celebrated its 14th year of praying and creating wonderful memories together last Saturday, August 19 2006. This was held in Johnson Park Grove # 4, Piscataway, NJ. It was truly a blessing from the Almighty as He gifted us with a very pleasant weather – no rain and a not too hot weather.

The day started right with the community giving due praise and worship to our Lord led by the Badiola family from FE12. This was immediately followed by the Pledge of Sportsmanship, which culminated the start of the celebration. Teams were gathered in preparation for the games prepared by the Sports Committee. The Red Guardians for members whose last names begin with A thru C, the Blue Angels D thru J, the Green Titans K thru P, and the Yellow Halo Q thru Z.

Fr. Ed Abano celebrated the mass around noontime with our very own adult praise ministry providing music. Fr. Abano exhorted the community to continue the good works it had started and to always lead the children closer to the Lord. ME 22 and ME 23 classes then served lunch, while the class of ME 24 maintained cleanliness and order throughout the whole place.

After lunch, the community was treated to a surprise presentation from the different ministries. It started with a heartfelt and beautifully choreographed dance number from the Golden Years Ministry, a skit presentation ended by a song of praise from the Solo Parents Ministry, a dance number from John 6, a surprise ‘maski-paps’ number from Singles Ministry, action songs from the Mark 10 children, a skit from the Word

page 2 >

BLD-GK
BLD's New Mission
Newark Launch: Sept. 8

COUNSELS

Be faithful in service and in love

WORD: Js 24: 1-2a, 15-17, 18b; Ps 34: 2-3, 16-21; Ep 5: 21-32; Jn 6: 60-69

THEME: We witness to the glory of Jesus when we remain in humble service of the Church.

ORDER: “Be subordinate to one another in reverence for Christ” Eph 5:21

REFLECTION: Our month-long theme of witnessing to the glory of Jesus is capped this week with the call for remaining in humble service of the Church. It is no coincidence that this exhortation: remain in humble service of the Church – arises beautifully out of this Sunday readings and addresses several aspects of our lives as disciples.

First is the call to remain, which in the common literal sense means to stay behind after others leave; much like what Peter did in tonight’s Gospel after other disciples, who could not fathom or got offended by the words of Jesus, left and returned to their old ways. Peter showed loyalty to Jesus by remaining and defined its other dimension – faithfulness- by declaring he’s staying because Jesus has the words of eternal life.

“To whom shall we go?” asks Peter. This line has been considered as one of the greatest statement of faith in the entire Bible. Picture Peter as he said this. Do you see him as pleading and helpless, resigned to his fate and close to tears? Or do you see him grinning with the knowing smile of someone who made the happy choice to follow Jesus not out of a rigorous intellectual process but through a trusting leap of faith, unregretful and totally convinced of the rightness of his action. This faith enabled Peter to look beyond the flesh in Jesus words on the

page 2 >

Promise of the Week

“The lowly will hear me and be glad.”
 Psalms 34:2

Counsels from page 1

Eucharist and see the Spirit that gives life to the flesh. This is the same kind of faith we are full of when we remain and speak of faithfulness to Jesus.

Next we look at "humble service". Our first reading tells us that who to serve is a free and deliberate decision, not one to be made on a whim and under coercion. It is in a similar vein that we had or should have considered our decision to pledge our covenants as community disciples. To follow Jesus is a commitment, involving not just a re-juggling of our schedules but a re-prioritizing of our values and, in many occasions, a turning around in the direction of where our lives were going. It is a resolution that has continuity as well as urgency, one that has to be reaffirmed everyday. As Joshua says: "*Decide today whom you will serve... As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord*". Js 24: 15.

Likewise in the second reading, St Paul reminds us, as married couples, of our commitment to our spouses: "*Wives, be subordinate to your husbands...Husbands, love your wife...*" Eph 5:22, 25 Although in these post-feminist times the first rejoinder sounds harsh and incorrect, both lines ring true in the context of humble Christian service. Christian service is always humble. The essence of service and humility is the same: we place the concerns of others ahead of our needs and desires. It is not that as disciples we should think less of ourselves for we cannot deny the achievement God has allowed us to pursue. Rather, we should think of ourselves less and put more of God and others (and in this instance our spouses) in our thoughts and the conduct of our actions.

The glue that unites service and humility in the reality of our daily lives is love and the example of God's love for us and for His Church. God's relationship with His Church is particularly instructive. This relationship is based on trust and applicable whether the church we speak of is the apostolic Church, our little church: our family, or our covenant community. We should see them as God's way of making His presence near and real to us. In all three levels, only loving and nurturing trust can bind us. Our life in His church consists of constantly seeking His will and that we remain firm in this resolve whether it's convenient or not.

DIRECTION:

- > Wives, be subordinate to your husbands as to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church.
- > Serve the Lord cheerfully and sincerely.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- 9/ 23 *BLD Newark 10th Annual Golf Outing* 1:00 pm
Harkers Hollow Golf Club, Harmony, NJ Details:
Kelly Concepcion, Carlito Claricia & Rey Guerra
- 9/ 30 *Deliverance Training*: 10am-4pm - St Antoninus
Rectory, Newark. Contact person: Fr. Paul Lehman
- 9/30 *Lord, Teach Us to Pray (for ALL)*, 8am-6pm
St Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ. Contact
person: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Ver/Diana
Nacion, Boy/Des Parker, Dens/Mina Mantes (Pastoral
Ministry) Jun/Fely Escobar (Intercessory Ministry)
- 10/29 *Dinner Dance (Sunday)* 4:00 - 10:00 PM
St Demetrius Cultural Ctr. Carteret, NJ Contact
persons: Roger & Pina Coquia, Jun & Jane Entrada
- 11/18 *Prayer Counseling Seminar* (for covenanted
disciples) 7:30am-9:30pm Ramada Limited, South
Plainfield, NJ Contact persons: Libby Gutierrez,
Romy/Leni Chan,
- 11/19 7:30am-6:30pm Ver/Diana Nacion Boy/Des
Parker, Dens/Mina Mantes (Pastoral Ministry)
Jun/Fely Escobar (Intercessory Ministry)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LSA Ministry - Oct 6-8 *Life in the Spirit Seminar #27*
St. Mary's Church, Rahway Contact persons: Vic & Dee Lim

Praise Ministry - *Everlasting Light* - BLD Christmas
Musical is back Audition for: Vocalists, Instrumentalists, Dancers
Contact persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco; Randy/Beth Trinidad;
Frank/Malou Venadas.

TEACHINGS -

- 9/15 After worship: DISCERNMENT Newark
Singles, John 6, Mk 10
- 9/16 LSS 27 Christian Parenting
LSS26 10am-6pm Encounter with Jesus
Shepherds Refresher Course for Covenanted Disciples
CMP I Make up class LSS21-22, LSS25 & Singles.
- 9/22 After worship: Service Formation, Intercessory
formation, Solo Parent M (BBS) Approaches

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Reports

for the Wk ending August 18, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$4,250.00
Other Collections	7,685.00
Total Collections	\$11,935.00

Thank you for your generosity.



from page 1

Ministry, and a song from Youth.

The day ended so fast as we again experienced the whole community working hand in hand and at the same time having fun together. Truly we are a household of faith.



Fr. Paul Speaks

One of the most important elements of the Christian life is the making of decisions and choices. Some decisions are unchangeable or at least very difficult to change, e.g. priesthood and marriage. Some decisions are of lesser importance and made every day.

As the individual Christian “yields” his mind and will to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, these decisions become more and more the work of God and less the work of the flesh. Yielding to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit gradually replaces the “flesh” or self-centered part of our nature with the Spirit, who becomes the principal agent in our choices and decisions. Some decisions are made quickly, but even these can be the work of God.

Other more serious decisions take time and a process of discernment. A decision to say a prayer during the day is probably an inspiration and normally followed by the Christian, who is becoming increasingly sensitive to the direction of the Spirit. An attraction to marry or receive Holy Orders demands a discernment process, which may take a good amount of time before a decision is made.

St. Ignatius of Loyola has written about decision making and the discernment process in two separate but connected sections in his “Spiritual Exercises”. Ignatius deals with decision making which he calls “making an election” In every election, Ignatius presumes the good intention to praise God and to save my soul. In addition, the matters of the election or choices made should also be good in themselves.

This “election” is centered on the intellect with a listing of pros and cons. It is almost like making a list for and against, and then praying and analyzing and eventually coming to a conclusion and making the decision.

However, St. Ignatius is more comfortable in encouraging us to discern the “spirits”. It seems that this technique is less assuring and more subject to misinterpretation. But St. Ignatius encourages us to look at our interior movements of consolation and desolation. If these movements are truly supernatural and if we sincerely believe that God is trying to direct us, then more attention should be paid to what goes on in our hearts. It is important that these moments of consolation and desolation be truly supernatural. They are not just good or bad feelings.

Obviously these two approaches to decision making overlap. I believe we do not get enough attention to the “discernment of spirits”. Yes, if we are truly baptized in the spirit, we believe that God is always communicating with us.

(☞ Page 3)

COUNSELS

Live up to the BLD Mission

WORD: Dt.4:1-2, 6-8; Psalm 15:2-5;
Jas 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27; Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

THEME: We live the Father’s word when we care for orphans and widows in their affliction.

ORDER: “Be doers of the word and not hearers only...” (James 1:22)

REFLECTION:

In our community, it is a cause for joy when we witness the transformation in peoples’ lives. When everyone responds to God’s invitation to a life of love and service in a land of holiness, we rejoice in the restoration of the loving relationship between God and His people. We subsume our personal interior motivations and learn to speak God’s truth from our hearts, abide by His will and dwell in His presence. We express the depth and sincerity of our interior relationships with God as we witness as a community blessed with wisdom, humility, and grace and whose every deed gives glory to God. Thus, we share in His act of healing our land and restoring man’s dignity and his good and godly nature. We live God’s Word by “*being doers of His Word, not hearers, only.*” James 1:22

“All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.” But the highest gift is God’s Word, the indwelling of Christ through the power of the Spirit. The Word is not something to be simply heard, as something external. It must take root in one’s existence and lived out in one’s journey. By being doers of the Word, we live in the spirit of Jesus’ love and maintain a morally upright reputation founded only on God’s gift of grace.

In the context of our faith in Christ, one key principle that has touched not one but all of us is the matter of doing godly acts rather than merely contemplating them. (☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“Whoever acts like this shall never be shaken.” Psalm 15:5



The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.....

Our spiritual formation, as individuals or as a community, goes through development stages. As in any endeavor where we go through some learning process before we start the execution of what we learned, our spirituality undergoes a similar process where we first learn of God's will before we answer His call to service. This is the ideal process in the development of our relationship with the Lord.

However, our spiritual maturity can bring us to that stage where we simultaneously keep learning more about God while at the same time, we seek for opportunities where we can share His love to others, especially the less fortunate. When we seek or readily answer a call to serve our marginalized brothers and sisters, then we can claim that we live by His word in Luke 4:18 "***The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.***"

Our anointing becomes not only ceremonial but also spiritual when we help others not just for the sake of providing for them, but also when we feel their pain, their struggles, their hardships; when we share their crosses; when we give them hope; when we treat them the way our Lord treats them. Most of all, we are anointed when we not only bring Jesus to them but also when we see Jesus in them.

Our community offers us the opportunities to help the poor through our nursing home visitations, soup kitchen, the GK project, and the medical mission. We should not wait for the call to serve in these missions, but we should seek and readily offer ourselves to be a part of these endeavors. We have to believe from our hearts that these are not our missions, but rather, they are God's missions that He wants to do through us.

Our anointing as disciples of our Lord calls us to go beyond our comfort zones. We serve not to seek our own comfort but to primarily provide care for others with love and compassion. As in the words of Mother Teresa of Calcutta; "*It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.*"

Going on a mission of mercy is an offering of ourselves to the Lord. We need to come clean before Him for only then can we feel His anointing.



The Word of God

“

They were all amazed and said to one another, "What is there about His Word? For with authority and power, he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." (Luke 4:36).

The Word of God is something far greater than any words spoken or heard, written or read by human beings. It is God's eternal glory for the 'Word' is God Himself. The first verse of John's gospel says, "***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***" This is the reason why God's Word is so powerful and with authority.

"Through Him was life, and this life was the light of the human race." (John 1:4) Indeed, the Word of God is our source of life. The people in Capernaum were amazed with Jesus because through His Words, the forces of evil were defeated. People encountered God and were opened to the thoughts of the Father. Through His Words, they were restored to wholeness.

Moreover, God's eternal plan for our salvation started when the Word of God took on flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1:14) Jesus was born into our world, sharing our humanity, for the sake of our salvation. He came to earth to transform us through His own grace and truth. He took our fallen nature and put it to death on the cross so that we might be restored to His divine nature. In 1 Peter 1:23, it says, "***You have been born new, not from perishable but from imperishable seed, through the living and abiding word of God.***"

Undeniably, it is difficult to fully comprehend the depth of His Word. However, we can experience His power and authority in our lives through the life of Christ given to us by the Holy Spirit. Everyday, we meet Jesus in prayer, in the Eucharist, and when we read and listen attentively to His Word and reflect on His Word with an open heart, mind, and spirit. God's Word comes as a loving, grace-filled invitation from our Heavenly Father to us to become more and more like Jesus.

Like the man with the unclean spirits, are we going to allow Jesus to cleanse our hearts and minds and fill us with a new life? or Are we too anxious of its consequences that we reject His beautiful invitation to live a new life and be like Christ?

Do we forgive and forget?

Even if we are one family in Christ, there is something negative that can transpire in our midst. In our brokenness, we are bound to sin, offend and hurt one another. Thus in Mt 18:21—19:1, God exhorts us to confront and give each other unlimited forgiveness, the way God has forgiven us.

When remorse for one's sins can hardly be seen and neither can restitution be offered, the heart of the aggrieved hardens and a hurt becomes a grudge. When this happens, one may turn away from any possible reconciliation and do what he abhors. He fails to practice what he preaches and his actions and related witnessing become far from the ideals of a Christian disciple.

Because sin has prevailed in our world, God highlights man's continuing need for reconciliation. The one who is hurt and aggrieved is to confront the offender in an effort to gain reconciliation. If the offender does not acknowledge his fault, one should bring other witnesses because reconciliation will never happen without the confession by the one at fault just as reconciliation cannot transpire without the forgiveness to be given by the offended party. The willingness of the aggrieved to approach the offender indicates one's willingness to forgive.

'Forgive and forget' is always everyone's advice to people who are hurting. But the advice does not become an antidote to any hurt; neither does it turn into a healing balm when it does not flow from a sincere and repentant heart. An unforgiving heart will eventually flow into one's actions, one's words and one's witnessing. It compounds one's sinfulness and leads others to more sin.

It is unthinkable that at times we who are forgiven fail to forgive. In our brokenness, we can only receive forgiveness yet find it impossible to forgive from the heart. Our forgiveness is highly conditional. We cannot forgive seventy times seven, even in the Name of our Lord!

Today let us aim at being better persons, at being reconciled with God's family by baring our souls to one another and seeking God and His grace so that we may receive His compassion and in so doing be able to give love and understanding to those who have hurt us.

True forgiveness comes from the heart, authentic and consistent with our actions and God's Word, made possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Paul Speaks....(continuation from Page 1).

He does this not only in our mind and common sense, but, also in the heart. This is where a sense of presence is necessary not only for contemplative prayer, but also for looking into the heart and discerning these interior movements.

Hence, trust your inner leading. The Holy Spirit loves you and want to lead you not only to truth but to fulfilling life vocation.

Ministry Announcements

Word Ministry

Place your order for Magnificat 2007 Issue 
Contact Persons: Zita Cruz, Leggie Lim, or Norma Luna
Deadline: October 6, 2006

LSA Ministry

Life in the Spirit Seminar # 27 - October 6-8
St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ
Contact Persons: Vic & Dee Lim

Praise Ministry

Everlasting Light - BLD Christmas Musical is back!
Audition for vocalists, instrumentalists, dancers
Contact Persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco, Randy/Beth
Trinidad, Frank/Malou Venadas

Official BLD Newark Songbook (Coming Soon)

TEACHINGS

Sept 15 after worship

Singles Discernment
John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching

Sept 16 St. Mary's School 1-6pm

LSS 27 Christian Parenting
LSS 26 Encounter with Jesus
Covenanted Disciples Shepherds' Refresher Course

Sept 16 St. Mary's School 10am-6pm

LSS 21, 22, 25, & Singles CMP 1 - Make up class

Sept 22 after worship

Service Formation
Intercessory Formation
Solo Parent (BBS) Approaches

"Sing a new song to the Lord, who has done marvelous deeds, whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory." Psalm 98:1

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports: ending August 25, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$3,904.00
Other Collections	\$ 855.00
Total Collections	\$4,759.00

Thank you for your generosity!!

Counsels (from page 1)

Our faith has emboldened our fellowship to be equipped for mission work: to bring Christ's gospel to every man by caring and loving for orphans and widows in their affliction, by ministering to the temporal, emotional and spiritual needs of the elderly, the infirm, the immigrants, and the unemployed.

We build community to become God's vessel of healing and transformation as we proactively involve ourselves in breaking the yoke of poverty programs, like serving in soup kitchens, nursing home visitations, yearly medical missions to the Philippines, and recently, through Gawad Kalinga (GK), a Spirit-inspired process of nation building, transforming impoverished areas in the Philippines into vibrant villages on which will rise a new Philippines we can all be proud of.

In today's gospel, Jesus reveals to us that just as living His Word means being doers of His Word; religion is not a matter of man-made rituals and tradition but of being authentically faithful to God's Word, a faithfulness that can only flow from the goodness of one's heart. To be acceptable to God, one must cleanse his heart and mind of what is not of the Lord, of anything that comes from within that defiles. We must learn to confront the motivations of our yearning to do good when we feel conflicted and internally impeded in our work for the Lord. Likewise, we can recognize that our work is aligned with God's will when the fruits of our work consistently upbuild our fellowship and uphold those whom God has sent our way.

A community mission to help the poor, orphans, and widows may make us feel virtuous, as indeed, it is an act pleasing to God. But by itself, it does not guarantee drawing us closer to God's heart. The gauge of whether we are in good standing with God is measured not only by good works, regular church attendance, and observance of church laws and precepts but by the selfless kind of love we have for our neighbor that Jesus Himself modeled for us.

The community has intuitively and instantly recognized Gawad Kalinga as fortuitously aligned with our long-standing mission to break the yoke of poverty and thus, was quick to embrace the project as our own. This experience has taught us to be open to such gifts the Lord presents to us. Let's live up to God's Word for this week and look for how much more can we care for our own widows and children. Let's engage our minds and hearts to find real and effective programs to uplift our elderly, infirmed, illegal immigrants, and unemployed.

DIRECTION:

- **Minister to the temporal, emotional and spiritual needs of the elderly, the infirmed, the immigrants and the unemployed.**
- **Support the breaking the yoke poverty alleviation program.**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Sept. 23 1pm **BLD Newark 10th Annual Golf Outing**
Harkers Hollow Golf Club, Harmony, NJ
Contact Person: Kelly Concepcion
- Sept. 30 10am-4pm **Deliverance Training**
St. Antoninus Rectory, Newark, NJ
Contact Person: Fr. Paul Lehman
- Sept. 30 8am-6pm **Lord, Teach Us to Pray (for ALL)**
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
Contact Person: Pastoral Ministry & Intercessory Ministry

BIRTHDAYS

- Sept. 1 Mike Rasalan, SE 4
Sept. 2 Carolyn Trillana, Mark 10
Sarah Marcial, Mark 10
Justin Reyes, Mark 10
JC Barredo, LSS 22
Brian Buonanni, LSS 19
Yannie Faustino, ME 16
Rafi Fernando, SE 5
- Sept. 3 Fe Almaria, LSS 2
Fidez de los Angeles, SE 3
Emmie Manulat, SE 2
- Sept. 4 Kristine Villanueva, Mark 10
Jesraye Flores, Mark 10
Janella Llave, John 6
Nonoy Acuna, LSS 19
Sally Belarmino, LSS 3
Ben Chua, LSS 13
Jessy Ogbonna, LSS 19
Cely Reside, LSS 11
Lily Sison, LSS 8
- Sept. 5 Mon Campomanes, LSS 6
Marji Gayanilo, LSS 17
Dondon Tenchavez, LSS 24
- Sept. 6 Ken Cebedo, Mark 10
Marilyn Bernante, LSS 23
Stacy Ong, LSS 21
Benny Rodriguera, LSS 19
Malyn Tanseco, LSS 6
Reuben Vibar, LSS 2
- Sept. 7 Manolo Romero, LSS 17
Ditas Tolentino, LSS 15



ANNIVERSARIES

- Sept. 1 Oddie & Jho Martin, ME 15
Sept. 4 Mat & Luz Talag, ME 8
Sept. 5 Ted & Hilda Briones, ME 8
Val & Luz Gabisan, ME 3
Ed & Myrna Magadia, ME 19
Tony & Cely Rosal, ME 10
Bert & Lily Sison, ME 8
George & Maryann McGehrin, ME 20





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 12 Issue 35

Bulletin Edition

September 8, 2006

Under-Shepherd Gathered The Lambs At Salubungan

God, our ultimate Shepherd blew His horn last Friday, September 1st, to gather the community in St. Mary's Church, Rahway for the Healing Mass and Salubungan, which means "encounter". Many responded to God's call when 101 candidates signed up for the Life in the Spirit Seminar. Many were graduates of ME 27, Solo Parents and Singles Encounters. The LSS under-shepherds were introduced to their lambs by the Shepherd Coordinator, Bong and Merle Encarnacion by calling out their names and made connection by waving and raising hands

After the Mass, the participants were ushered to the assigned meeting rooms where they formally introduced themselves to one another and Lambs' and Shepherds' kits were also distributed. This will start the five week preparation where the under-shepherd with love and care will prepare their lambs for the big event which is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on October 6-8, 2006 at St. Mary's Church.,

The LSS team is headed by Seminar Coordinator-Manny and Nette Manguiat, Action Team Coordinator-Gary & Mil Camacho, and Piety Team Coordinator- Ben & Letty Chua.

The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning He opens my ear that I may hear. Isaiah 50:4



PLEDGE OF LOVE 2006

COUNSELS

"Ephphata Means Be Opened"

WORD: Isaiah 35:4-7a; Psalm 146:7-10; James 2:1-5; Mark 7:31-37

THEME: We live the Father's word when we show no partiality in our ministry work.

ORDER: Be open. Show no partiality in everything that you do.

REFLECTION:

In the first reading, Isaiah tells everybody, "Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, He comes with vindication; with divine recompense He comes to save you." (Is 35:4) This is a great encouragement to those who are broken and afraid. Isaiah also prophesied the changes in human beings, as well as in nature, that will accompany God's coming. The eyes of the blind will be opened, the deaf will hear; the lame will leap like a stag, and the mute will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert and the burning sands will become pools.

The Gospel of Mark is a confirmation of Isaiah's prophecy in the first reading. When Jesus said "Ephphatha", which meant "Be opened", instantly, the man could hear perfectly, and he could speak. When Jesus heals, it may be both physical and spiritual. Being open may mean physical opening of body parts or simply being open to the Holy Spirit.

Some Catholics may be highly qualified in their secular profession but are basically illiterate in their faith. It is because they are too pre-occupied with worldly treasures and pleasures that they have no time to listen

(continue on page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"...God chooses those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that He promised to those who love Him..." (Jas 2:5)

The Exaltation Of The Cross



We celebrate the feast of the exaltation of the cross on September 14th. It is the oldest feast in the Christian calendar. The tradition began in the fourth century when St. Helena discovered the true cross of Christ.

We often fail to see the importance of the cross and yet it is central to our faith. It is a sign of the depth of Jesus' love for us. On the cross, He gave us everything He had. He gave us His love and He gave up His life for us. *"There is no greater love than this: to lay*

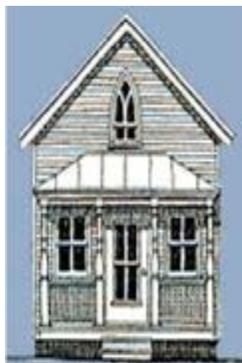
one's life for one's friends." (Jn 15:13) The cross is a reminder that love entails suffering to the point that we sacrifice our way to please another.

In Jn 12:24-26, Jesus says: *"unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain, but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it, anyone who hates his life in this world, will keep it for eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me."* Jesus' statement seems confusing. How can we find life through death? What is the power in the cross that He is teaching us? There is strength in voluntarily sacrificing our self-interests. It is in dying to ourselves for Christ that we find self-fulfillment. The only real duty of a Christian here on earth is to bear witness to Christ. We cannot follow Him unless we are willing to renounce everything for His sake. A disciple does not have an option of carrying his cross or not. The power of the cross in our lives does not depend on its weight but on how it is carried.

Dying to self does not mean just saying no to our feelings. Remember that as Jesus embraced the shame and the infamy of the cross for us, our lives now belong to him. Since our lives are surrendered to Him, we let Him rule our lives completely. When problems arise, we should not have murmurings and disharmony among us. It is the power of the cross that makes us to forgive those who harm us and reject us. It stops us from working and living in ways that would be detrimental to our immortal souls. Praying and being patient when it is difficult to pray and to be patient are good ways to witness to the power of the cross. The call of the cross is death, but only temporary death. Ultimately, its reward is eternal life.

Because of the cross and the resurrection of Christ, we have new life. The grain of wheat has completely disappeared and has produced new life. If we have learned this lesson from the Master, then the power of the cross is in our lives.

Journey to a "Home"



My experience at the "Home of the Mother" camp was great. It was religious camp but it was not just praying and vigil. We had a lot of fun and education as well. I loved it so much I want to go back next year. The weekend before, my family was part of the FE 13 sponsoring class. When that was over, we started heading for the camp. My Dad didn't know how to get there, so my Mom called the

place and asked for directions. We had been on the road for 3 hours straight and the gas gauge was 2 bars from empty. I then said a short but strong prayer. God truly listens, because we not only found a gas station and filled up the near-empty tank, but we found out it was already very close to the Home of the Mother Retreat House. Finally, when we got there, it was cold and damp outside. A helper of the camp and a brother came to help us. The brother told me to go to the barn. There, I saw some kids from BLD. They just finished watching a movie. Since it was the first night, we had to go to sleep right away. Next morning we had morning prayers, breakfast, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, adoration, and benediction. WOOH, awesomely out of this world!!

In the afternoon we had sports and games, which included tug-of-war, soccer, football and capture the flag. Swimming, lunch, sports and games again, and more swimming followed. Before I knew it, it was time for dinner. After the meal, we heard mass before watching a movie and called it a day. We did these activities Monday, Tuesday and Friday. We hiked on Wednesday and Thursday. The walk was hard, but it was worth it. We were then able to swim at a lake and and saw a beautiful waterfall.

Sunday was the last day of camp. Mom, Dad, with my Ate (older sister), Kuya (older brother) and Artoo, our dog (the other brother) came to pick me up. They ran to meet me and gave me a big hug. We stayed for awhile and played dodge ball after the Sunday mass. My Ate and Kuya joined us too in the dodge ball game. We really had much fun and we all did not want to leave. After seeing how close the guys and I became, and hearing about the fun activities we got to participate in, even my college-bound brother wants to go next year.

It was an awesome all week experience. I told my parents that I'll go again next year. I encourage parents to put your kids in the camp to take a break from the world.

Even if a person is caught in some transgression, you who are spiritual should correct that you also may not be tempted. Galatian 6:1

Transparency

An essential element of accountability in community affairs is transparency. This means informing, reporting, responding to requests for information and conducting one's affairs in a manner that can be easily understood. It implies a community spirit of openness to disclose truth in all its affairs without reserve and discrimination.

Accountability through appropriate disclosure of facts in community's affairs eliminates any spirit of scrutiny among members and sets it in a loving and peaceful disposition. Transparency in every dimension of governance and stewardship, ministry and apostolate, fundraising events and financial management allows the Spirit in everyone to work and build an understanding and loving attitude towards a decision, a circumstance or an action taken by community. It upbuilds as it speaks the truth. Everyone's earnest desire is to be vulnerable and open to community, making it a minimum standard procedure rather than an exception.

We come together as one body to mobilize God's given gifts, both material and spiritual; to make a positive change in the lives of people as we seek to alleviate poverty and evangelize the world around us. Because we act upon the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the initiative and goodness of selfless servants of the Lord, our fellowship has been blessed with moral, legal and fiduciary responsibility to our members, supporters and benefactors, as well as the general public.

It is our duty to oversee the conduct of our affairs, ensuring that an effective system is in place to carry out regular activities, account for financial and other resources, and making certain that no issue falls through the cracks in steering the fellowship toward the fulfillment of its mission.

Good governance and prudent leadership start with commitment to embrace ethical practices at the highest level which go beyond policy and paperwork to actual practice. Enforcement of guidelines must be buttressed by strict adherence to both the spirit and letter of the law that govern spiritual communities and foundations, including the rules on self-dealing and regulations of general application.

Today, God wants to know what we have done to live up to our commitment to excellence and transparency in our work.

- Are we committed to integrity in all our transactions and dealings?
- Are we committed to avoid conflicts of interest and if conflicts arise, the resolution of the actual or apparent conflicts in our relationships?
- Are we committed to treat our members and

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

Word Ministry

Order for Magnificat 2007 (1 year Subscription)

Contact: Zita Cruz, Leggie Lim, or Norma Luna

Deadline: October 6, 2006

Please, get your order forms from the Word Ministry

LSA Ministry

Oct 6-8 Life in the Spirit Seminar #27

St. Mary's Church, Rahway

Contact persons: Vic & Dee Lim

Praise Ministry

Everlasting Light – BLD Christmas Musical is back

Audition for: Vocalists, Instrumentalists, Dancers

Contact persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco;

Randy/Beth Trinidad; Frank/Malou Venadas

Official BLD-Newark Songbook (Coming Soon)

Youth Ministry

Sep 22 YE13 Reunion #2

8-11:30 pm at the Library,

St. Mary's Church, Rahway

Youth activity reflection- (Encounter with Jesus in the

Bible) Woman at the well

Teaching- BBS I (after a short worship)

Reinforcement activity- Identity, Looking for the real me

TEACHINGS

Sep 15

After worship

DISCERNMENT

Singles

John 6

Mk 10

Sep 16

10am-6pm

Christian Parenting

LSS 27

Encounter with Jesus LSS26

Shepherds Refresher Course for Covenanted Disciples

CMP I (Make up class) LSS21,

LSS22, LSS25 & Singles

Sep 22

After worship

Service Formation

Intercessory formation

Solo Parent Ministry (BBS)

Approaches

CMP 2 (Make up class) LSS21,

LSS22 & Singles

Sep 23

9:30am-7pm

Washing of the Feet LSS23/LSS24

Agony Retreat

Transparency.....

- supporters with love, respect, fairness and good faith when they seek transparency?
 - How compliant are we to both the spirit and the letter of the law in the way we keep our records in order?
- “Putting away falsehood, speak the truth, each one to his neighbor, for we are members one of another”* (Ephesians 4:25).

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

to God's calling. We may not realize it, but many of us have become deaf and being deaf, we cannot speak. There are those who may be good at listening, yet they do very little speaking or sharing. "Hearing the Father's word" implies listening, understanding, making the message one's own and living it out in word and action. It involves a total commitment to the way of life that Jesus calls us to follow. A constituent part of that commitment is a growing openness to hear what Jesus says to us and a growing ability to share our faith with others.

The reading from James is a strong challenge to a society like ours which values people primarily on the basis of wealth and position. James insists that our faith in Jesus should not allow favoritism. There should be no distinction between the rich and the poor. We should always remember that our beloved God never had preference for the rich. In fact He chose a manger in a lowly stable to be the birthplace of His Son, our Lord Jesus. By the same token, Jesus Christ chose Peter, a humble fisherman, to be the head of His church. God gave us a model and it's up to us to follow.

Let us ask ourselves today, "How do we treat people in our community, particularly in our ministry?"

As we move forward and witness for our Lord, let us show no partiality in our lives and ministry. With great fervor, let us bless both rich and poor, illiterate and educated with the same love Jesus has given all of us. Let us treat everyone, our well-heeled friends, relatives, or the marginalized, with the same understanding and care each one seeks in this broken world. When confronted with people we are not in agreement with, those who have hurt us and even those who annoy us, we should receive them as Christ receives our sinful hearts, with humble compassion and forgiveness. When they present ideas that up-build, we should be open to them and believe that God speaks through every open heart. With God's grace and prayer, let us totally strive for parity in all our relationships and be free of discrimination in areas of sex, race, religion, class, and occupation. Let us make sure to serve, not only the rich, but also the poor, in material wealth and in spirit.

The goodness that flows from our hearts will always vindicate us and reveal our faithfulness to the Father's word. "However, if you fulfill the royal law according to scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors." (Jas 2:8-9)

DIRECTIONS:

- ◆ Be open to the calling of the Holy Spirit in your ministry assignment.
- ◆ Be sensitive to the needs of your brethren by being a good listener.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Collection Report for the Week Ending Sept. 1, 2006

Tithes/Love Offering/Mission \$ 3,775.00
 Other Collection \$ 7,130.00
TOTAL COLLECTIONS \$ 10,905.00

Thank you for your generosity.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Sept. 23** 1:00 pm **BLD Newark 10th Annual Golf Outing**
 Harkers Hollow Golf Club, Harmony, NJ
 Details: Kelly Concepcion, Carlito Claricia & Rey Guerra
- Sept 30** 10am-4pm **Deliverance Training**
 St Antoninus Rectory, Newark
 Contact person: Fr. Paul Lehman
- Sept 30** 8am-6pm **Lord, Teach Us to Pray (for ALL)**
 By: Fr. Don O'Connor, SVD
 Director of House of Prayers,
 Divine Word Missionaries
 St Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
 Contact: Pastoral Ministry and
 Intercessory Ministry
- Nov 18-19** 7:30am-9:30pm **Prayer Counseling Seminar**
 (for covenanted disciples)
 Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
 By: Elijah House Graduates - Noel/Letty
 Trillana, Lee Dela Fuente, Lith Golamco
 & Aimee Pena
 Contact: Pastoral Ministry

BIRTHDAYS

Sept 9	Dominick Salar	Mark10
	Angelo Dela Fuente	LSS4
	Susan Fabe	LSS19
	Gillette Viterbo	SE1
Sept 10	Abigail Fabe	Mark 10
	John Alonzó	LSS19
	Bong Baculio	LSS20
	Mauricio Paredes	LSS21
	Jun Reyes	SE9
	Edna Reynoso	LSS13
Sept 11	Romy Bernal	ME7
	Kris Borja	SE6
	Annie Estalilla	SE12
	Kat Gatchalian	YE13
Sept 13	Cora Castillo	LSS13
	P.J. Magahis	SE5
	Carlos Masisado	LSS21
	Lisa Soriano	LSS13
Sept 14	Michaela Arambulo	Mark 10
	Jonathan Reyes	John 6
	Mark Delos Reyes	SE11
Sept 19	Stephanie Olaso	John 6

ANNIVERSARIES

Sept 8	Romy & Norma Bernal	ME7
	Daniel & Norma Dwyer	ME22
Sept 9	Mark & Cristy Valonzo	ME13
Sept 10	Ronnie & Mickee Pacia	ME20
Sept 12	Paby & Pauline Ibarrola	ME17
	Rudy & Rita Santos	ME18
Sept 13	Rene & Cielo Arribe	ME21



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS - NJ / NY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 11 Issue 37

Bulletin Edition

September 22, 2006

BLD-GK launched in Newark!

Our community celebrated God's transforming grace when it launched BLD-GK mission last Friday in a simple yet very moving and heartwarming ceremony. This mission unites us with the Filipino dream to give everyone a better life in an integrated, holistic, and sustainable alternative solution to poverty. The alleviation of extreme poverty is the primary objective of BLD-GK as it seeks social stabilization and renewal that will restore the God-given dignity of man to the faceless, impoverished and oppressed Filipino as it gives new life to our community's vision and mission.

What began as a simple but daring initiative has become not only a growing international multi-sectoral partnership but a peaceful social revolution driven by a vision of a new Philippines without slums, a noble nation where homage is paid not for who a man is or what he owns but for what he is and what he does. The social transformation that GK has brought about has been astounding as slums disappear and lives are transformed. Rich and poor, Muslims, Christians, the government and the private sector, people from all over the world, are building communities together, redeeming one family at a time, one person at a time.

The poor of the Philippines are rediscovering their dreams and are being empowered to build better futures for their families. Thousands of beneficiaries and donors have been transformed, increasing by the day. Addressing the systemic roots of poverty, oppression and instability in the Philippines, GK promises to bring our fellowship into deeper seas as it brings back the Filipino nation to a path of justice and equality while strengthening the spirituality of its members through a transformation that is founded on the principle of authentic self-giving.

Our covenant goes beyond a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus, embracing what He was all about, caring for the poor, His people.

page 3 

Counsel

Loving Others More Than Ourselves

WORD: Wis 2:12, 17-20; Ps 54:3-8;
Jm 3:16-4:3; Mk 9:30-37

ORDER: *"If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."
(Mark 9:35)*

THEME: We live the Father's word when we place others ahead of us and serve the needs of all.

REFLECTION: Do you show more respect to an office clerk or a company CEO? Do you listen more attentively to high school drop-out or to the Dean of a University? Our society is structured around achievement and status and as such, we have unknowingly adopted the false values of respecting those whom we see are "better" persons. We have even brought this structure in our own households. As an example, we do not ask our young children's opinion because we feel they are not mature enough therefore, their opinion is not that important.

This Sunday Readings are a reminder and a command to us Christians to witness to the world our Christian attitude. Jesus commands all of us to take this posture of accepting others as better than ourselves. The wisdom behind this attitude is difficult to appreciate in our extremely materialistic society. The worldly values inundating us through the media, the schools, and government may seem overwhelming, but it can not drown-out the Christian message. To say that your brother is better than you not only shows humility but also the genuine love of Christ.

Let us understand and practice the Lord's word:

page 4 

God's Promise For The Week

"Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me, and whoever receives me receives not me but the one who sent me" (Mark 9:37)

My Brethren

He was told. *"Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside and they wish to see You."* He said to them in reply, *"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it."* Luke 8:20-21

Brethren is defined as members of the same group, e.g. family, class or community. It can also be defined as members of a church or other religious groups.

On several occasions in the bible our Lord referred to all of us as His brother and sister. By His acknowledgement, all racial boundaries dividing mankind were removed. Every creature is equal in the eyes of our Lord.

Both the Old and New Testaments teach us to turn away from the immoral ways of the world and become true followers (brethren) of Christ. God will restore to immortal life all who love him in this life, but those who have not accepted this immortal principle cease to exist at death.

Through His life and works, our Lord taught and showed us His unconditional love, which He asked us to share with our neighbors. "If you love me tend, feed & love my sheep." Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me." Ironically we live in a world where everyone competes with one another. Success is measured by how many times we can outdo our neighbor no matter what it takes. It is this human weakness which keeps us apart not only from our brothers and sisters but also from our Lord.

His love was the reason why He sacrificed His life for us. Living by example, our Lord taught us how to love one another, even our enemies. By doing so, we free ourselves from the bondage of sin. He wants us to share His undying love to others. Being a brother or a sister to someone should have no boundaries. We should in the same manner as Christ be able to embrace every person no matter who he is or what his social status is.

We, as Christians and BLD members, are tasked to propagate Christ's teachings. Our Lord does not want us to stop within the confines of our community. Through our monthly teachings and mission work (Medical mission, Gawad Kalinga, etc), we help foster brotherly love within and outside the community. Our mission helps bring us back to our senses that our life's purpose is to spread God's undying and unconditional love to every creature on earth. A true Christian is someone who not only listens to Christ's words, but also acts on what he has heard.

Feast Day: September 30

ST. JEROME

Recognized in the Roman Catholic Church as the patron saint of translators and librarians, St Jerome was a Scripture scholar who wrote commentaries that even today are a great source of inspiration for us. Although best known for his literary works, he is also well known for his bad temper. Jerome considered anyone who taught in error as an enemy of God and the truth, and he went after him with his mighty and sometimes sarcastic pen.

Born about the year 342 at Stridonius, Jerome, whose full name is Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus, was not baptized until about 360, when he began his pursuit of rhetorical and philosophical studies in Rome. There, he became fluent in Latin and Greek. After a few years, he traveled with his friend Bonosus, to Gaul where he began his theological studies. During a serious illness, he had a vision which persuaded him to lay aside all secular pursuits in order that he could dedicate himself wholeheartedly to God.

The commission to translate the Bible from Greek into Latin determined the course of his scholarly activity for many years. Called the Vulgate, this bible translation was his most important achievement. In the sixteenth century, the great Council of Trent pronounced Jerome's Vulgate the authentic and authoritative Latin text of the Catholic Church. The Bible now ordinarily used by English-speaking Catholics is a translation of the Vulgate. As one scholar said, "No man before Jerome or among his contemporaries and very few men for many centuries afterwards were so qualified to do the work."

The most important historical work by Jerome is the book *De viris illustribus*, written in Bethlehem in 392. It contains short biographical and literary notes on 135 Christian authors, from Saint Peter down to himself.

Jerome traveled extensively in Palestine marking each spot of Christ's life with an outpouring of devotion. After spending five years in the desert of Chalcis to give himself up for prayer, penance and study, he finally settled in Bethlehem in a cave believed to be the birthplace of Christ.

Jerome died peacefully on September 30, 420 and was buried under the church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. In the thirteenth century, his body was translated to the Sistine Chapel of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome.

The Lord is close to the broken hearted; those whose spirit is crushed He will save. (Psalm 34:19)

BLD/GK (from page 1)

It is an active covenant that must be transformed as a catalyst for change.

Our faith calls us to action. Yet it is difficult for us to see our neighbor in need. Our global mission has provided us the most appropriate means towards social action as we are able to bundle straws with GK and other organizations to lift the Filipino people from their dehumanizing existence.

For us to pursue our noble objective of redeeming the poor from their bondage, we need a united effort. To be fruitful, we need cohesion and coherence, in place of any fragmentation which may impede our momentum in mobilizing talent, time and treasure.

Let us respond to the cry of roughly 30 million Filipinos who live in abject poverty, barely living on less than \$2.00 a day, sleeping hungry every night. There is a dehumanizing deprivation of basic needs that destroys the fabric of the family. Let us fully support GAWAD KALINGA and allow our Lord to transform and renew our hearts and minds as we help rebuild the Filipino nation by bringing back dignity and hope to our countrymen.

Let us work with GK without preconceived notions. Let us get down and dirty, engaged and involved, and the Holy Spirit will lead us to what God wants us to do for him.

The bigger task is to have people with hearts for the poor so that they will dedicate themselves to the work. With hearts totally open to the Spirit, God will open the floodgates of generosity from all sorts of sources. Funding is the least of GK's problems. Share your life, not only your resources and your time! Share what you have- your mind, your heart, your strength. Be a BLD-GK Financial Partner! Be a BLD-GK Advocate! Be a BLD-GK Volunteer! Be among the one million GK Bayani!

Our Spiritual Director Archbishop Angel Lagdameo exhorts us to translate our passion for Christ and express our compassion for our fellow Filipinos. He proclaimed that BLD generosity will not be lacking. It is not unbelievable. We only have to believe and this will be the miracle of love!

It is time to pick up the challenge. No one is too poor that he cannot share. No one is too rich that he cannot care. It's about time we become true Christians, true heroes to our own people. We remember what Jesus said: *"Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do unto me."*

By waiting and by calm you shall be saved, in quiet and in trust your strength lies. Isaiah 30:15b

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Word Ministry

- All Ministry Coordinators & Class Shepherds Place your order for Magnificat 2007
Contact: Zita Cruz, Leggie Lim, or Norma Luna
Deadline: October 6, 2006

LSA Ministry Oct 6-8

- Life in the Spirit Seminar #27 St. Mary's Church, Rahway. Contact Vic & Dee Lim

Praise Ministry

- Everlasting Light – BLD Christmas Musical
Audition for: Vocalists, Instrumentalists, Dancers
Contact persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco;
Randy/Beth Trinidad; Frank/Malou Venadas

Youth Ministry Sept 22

- YE 13 Reunion #2, 8-11:30 pm at the Library, St. Mary's Church, Rahway
Youth activity reflection - (Encounter with Jesus)
Woman at the well
Teaching: BBS 1 (after a short worship)
Reinforcement activity-Identity, looking for the real me
- Sept 23. Apple Picking @ Masker Orchards, Warwick, NY. For particulars contact:
201.659.5417; 201.889.4238; 201.233.6991

Singles Encounter #17 Nov. 3-5, 2006

- Graymoor Spiritual Life Center
Garrison, New York 10524
Contact: Marion Balcon 848.311.0811
myanelle.balcon@gmail.com
Emil/Baby Canlas 551.265.0719; 551.265.0720
elericem@optonline.net

TEACHINGS

Sept 22 After Worship

1. Service Formation
2. Intercessory Formation
3. Solo Parent M(BBS) Approaches

Sept 23

- (9:30am-7pm) LSS 23&24- Washing of the Feet & Agony in the Garden Retreat
- (10-6pm) LSS 21,22,25 & Singles-CMP 2 - Make up class

Oct 20 After Worship

1. Singles (Suffering) 2. Mark 10

Oct 21

- (1-6pm) LSS 26 - Encounter with Jesus (Mark & Matthew)
- LSS 27- Christian Parenting (Part 2/2)
Intro to Intercession
- LSS 24 - CMP 2 Part 1
- LSS 21 & 22 - Apologetics

Oct 27 After Worship Word of God

1. Solo Parents 2. Service 3. Intercessory

Counsels (from page 1)

"If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all." (Mark 9:35) In the secular world, we say practice makes perfect. Would it be different in the Christian world? Consider this example. In the secular world, if we were wronged, we will make sure that we get even by pointing out the transgression and having the wrongdoer punished. We won't let go until we are satisfied. In the Christian world, when someone wrongs us, we follow the prescriptions about fraternal correction in Matthew 18:15-17. But more importantly we will forgive the transgressor. If we don't, our own sins will not be forgiven by God! For men, it is not easy to forgive, but with Christ, we have the power to forgive, for nothing is impossible with God. If we practice forgiveness, we will grow in the grace of forgiveness. If we practice what is good and pleasing to the Lord, then we are perfected in Christ, and we truly become His Disciples.

During the Church's infancy, St. James letter specifically addressed conflicts in community. The first reading for this Sunday teaches us why such things come about, but more importantly for us to know where it's coming from.

The Lord's forgiveness and love is the very foundation of Christianity. In the Gospel reading, the Lord prepared His disciples to accept their participation in the Lord's suffering by telling them, **"The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him." Mk 9:31b.** If we are truly disciples of Christ, and indeed we are, then how come our Christianity is the first to go out the window when trouble arises? **"Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from? Is it not from your passions that make war within your members? (James 4:1)**

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, **"When ridiculed, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we respond gently. We have become like the world's rubbish, the scum of all, to this very moment. I am writing you this not to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me." 1 Cor. 4:12b, 16.**

Lord Jesus, look upon us with mercy and kindness from our weaknesses. Help us to show our love of others more than ourselves by the generosity of our forgiveness. We realize that we are impulsive because of our passions. We ask of You to grant us Your forgiveness and help us to align our desires to You that we may all be one in Your name. Amen.

Directions:

1. Always see others as better than yourselves.
2. Direct the desires of your heart to align with that of the Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Sept. 23 BLD Newark 10th Annual Golf Outing
1:00 pm Harkers Hollow Golf Club, Harmony, NJ
Details: Kelly Concepcion, Carlito Claricia & Rey Guerra

Sept 30 Deliverance Training -

St Antoninus Rectory, Newark
10am-4pm Contact: Fr. Paul Lehman

Sept 30 Lord, Teach Us to Pray (for ALL)

8am-6pm By: Fr. Don O'Connor, SVD
Director of House of Prayers, Divine Word Missionaries.
St Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
Contact: Pastoral & Intercessory Ministry

Oct 29 Dinner Dance (Sunday);

St. Demetrius Cultural Center, Carteret, NJ
4:00-10:00pm Dance Ticket
Contacts: Rick/Nards Santos; Vic/Mila Malantic or Fidel/Leggie Lim;

Nov 10 -12 John 6 Crossing Retreat -

Ramada Limited, S. Plainfield
Contact: John 6 Ministry

Nov 18 7:30 am - 9:30pm Prayer Counseling

Seminar (for covenanted disciples)
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
By: Elijah House Graduates-
Noel/Letty Trillana, Lee Dela Fuente,
Lith Golamco & Aimee Pena

birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 9/19 Clarita De Leon GYM | 9/25 Michael Al Ompod Mark10 |
| 9/22 Eddie Antonio LSS18 | Nicholas Arceo Mark10 |
| Romy Cuy LSS10 | Filmore Flores LSS18 |
| Maris Manansala LSS22 | Bert Revelo LSS23 |
| Barbara Gargaritano SPE5 | 9/26 Elana Pascoguin Mark 10 |
| 9/23 Megan Siojo Mark10 | Mylene Ramos-Toral SPE7 |
| Tony Arambulo LSS8 | Aurelia Camposagrado SPE4 |
| Lino Bawalan LSS23 | 9/27 Ely Alimario LSS17 |
| Tess Lopez LSS23 | Oliver Santos LSS17 |
| Tony Rosal LSS10 | Evelyn Nanola SPE5 |
| Alan Villanueva LSS17 | 9/28 Abi Castaneda LSS17 |
| 9/24 Nestor Laxina LSS4 | Kelly Conception LSS13 |

anniversaries

- 9/27 Norby & Way Gomez ME 1
9/28 Bill & Sandy Talbot ME 22

THE LORD'S PROVISION

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week
ending September 15, 2006

Tithes, Love Offerings, Mission	\$3,459.00
Other Collections	\$7,980.00
Total Collections	\$11,439.00

Thank you for your Generosity



Called to Intercede and Called to Serve

The Agony in the Garden and Washing of the Feet Retreat was held last Saturday. It was attended by: ME 24 – 15 members, ME 23 – 26 members and a member of ME 20. George



and Maryann McGehrin led the opening praise and worship. Msgr. Paul Schetelick conducted the spiritual and theological teachings. Fely Escobar, Emma De Borja, Rudy Santos and Jun Escobar provided their sharing on Agony In the Garden. Rita Santos, King Rigor, Bobot Gongob and Trif Col gave their sharing on Washing of the Feet.

The Agony in the Garden was taken from Matthew 26:36-46. The word “intercessor”, comes from the Latin word *inter-cedere*; *inter* means group, among, with, between and *cedere* means to yield, submit, inferior to. Jesus prayed in the olive garden called Gethsemane (Hebrew for oil press). In the middle of olive garden is usually found the oil press. Jesus was being pressed like an olive when He takes on our sins, the violence and the evil of humanity. Jesus came into this garden to undo the first garden, the garden of Eden. He is the only one who can change what happened to humanity. Jesus prayed: “...My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.” (Mt 26:39).

The Washing of the Feet was taken from John 13:1-20. During the public ministry of Jesus, the feet of the guests of royalties were washed by slave-servants. Jesus said to Peter: “...Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me.” (Jn 13:8). Jesus assumed the role of a slave when He washed the feet of His disciples. Jesus calls us all to servanthood in order to become worthy of our Father’s Kingdom.

The day concluded with Eucharistic Celebration by Msgr. Schetelick.

The retreat was a collaborative effort between the Intercessory, Service, Praise and Teaching Ministries.

COUNSELS

Self-Knowledge

WORD: Nm 11:25-29; Ps 19:8,10,12-14; Jas 5:1-6; Mk 9:38-43,45,47-48

ORDER: “Do not prevent him... for whoever is not against us is for us.” (Mk 9:39-40)

THEME: We belong to Christ as His disciples when we call on God to cleanse us of our faults.

REFLECTION: Do we really know ourselves? Self-knowledge is a pre-requisite to our inner reformation. As long as we are ignorant of our defects and of our real nature, all our efforts to overcome our defects will end in failure. Self-reflection leads to self-awareness, genuine examination of conscience, and honest and sincere contrition. It is only at this point, when we can sincerely and honestly call on God to cleanse us of our faults. What Socrates once said, “the unexamined life is not worth living”, is very true!

A thorough knowledge of our defects and a true examination of conscience are important for us to know what to pray for and what to ask from God. In Psalm 19:13-14, the psalmist was asking, “Who can detect heedless failings? Cleanse me from my unknown faults. But from willful sins keep your servant; let them never control me. Then shall I be blameless, innocent of grave sin.”

In the first reading and the first part of the Gospel, we learned that the kingdom of God is open to everyone. This is the broad principle of divine tolerance. And God’s promise is, “anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ... will surely not lose his reward.” (Mk 9:41)

□ page 4

Promise of the Week

“Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christwill surely not lose his reward.” (Mk 9:41)

The Feast of the Guardian Angels

The feast, which began centuries ago, celebrates the angels who help bring us to God. There are two Catholic feasts honoring angels. The first is at the end of September and the second is at the beginning of October. September 29th is the feast of the Archangels who are the only named angels in the Scripture; they are Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. The feast of the Guardian Angels is celebrated on October 2nd.



Catholics believe that guardian angels are intelligent spiritual creatures assigned to care for and protect every person on earth. Each person has a guardian angel throughout life. These angels are to assist the person in attaining his eternal salvation. They can act as emissaries between the person and God. The existence of angels recalls for us the creedal statement we pray each Sunday at Mass: “We believe in what is seen and unseen.” Angels are part of God’s unseen creation whose vocation is to serve God’s will.

The concept of an angel assigned to guide and nurture us is a development of Catholic doctrine and piety, based on the Scripture:

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.” (Mt 18:10)

“Are they not all ministering spirits sent to serve, for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?” (Heb 1:14)

How great the dignity of the soul, since each one has from his birth an angel commissioned to guard it. (St. Jerome in his commentary on Matthew)

Belief in the reality of angels, their mission as messengers of God, and man’s interaction with them, goes back to the earliest times. Cherubim kept Adam and Eve from slipping back into Eden; angels saved Lot and his daughters out of Sodom and Gomorrah; in Exodus, Moses follows an angel, and at one point an angel is appointed leader of Israel. Michael is mentioned at several points, Raphael figures large in the story of Tobit, and Gabriel delivered the Annunciation of the coming of Christ.

What a wonderful care God gives each of us! So special that He has provided each one of us, with our own guardian angel. God loves each of us personally and desires for each of us to return to Him.

Move On...”The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand”

“Whatever town you enter and they do not receive you, go out into the streets and say, ‘The dust of your town that clings to our feet, even that we shake off against you.’ Yet know this: the kingdom of God is at hand.” (Lk 10:10-11)

To have a fuller understanding of the Scripture verses mentioned above, we have to take it in its full context. Our Lord sent His disciples to different villages to proclaim the good news. He encouraged them to move from one village to another and not be discouraged if they fail in their efforts. His reason is expressed in Luke 10:2, *“The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”*

As individuals and as one community in Christ, we too are encouraged to spread His words and His love to all. Let us continue on our journey to seek those who are living in darkness so they too, may feel the joy of a close relationship with our Lord and Savior. As we do His will, let us shake off the “dusts” of failure, struggles, trials, pains, and disappointments. And on our way to Jericho, let us not take another route just to avoid the opportunities and the related difficulties in helping and reaching out to others.

Sometimes, we are paralyzed by failure or simply by the thought of it. We need to realize that our inaction for fear of failure is worse than failing to accomplish the goal that we set forth, especially when we are doing God’s will. Let us have the initiative and courage to start and complete our work. As abundant as the harvest, are the tasks that lie ahead of us.

The modern amenities in life make our job a lot easier than the early disciples. They walked to go from one village to another, carried nothing with them as they performed God’s work. Yet, they rejoiced at the completion of their tasks, for love of God and others. We no longer have to work as they did, but we can learn from their sacrifices and put as much love in doing God’s will. All it takes is our willingness to serve Him and to take the lead as we go His way.

As disciples of Christ, we are encouraged to “move on” even in times of failure; to continue on our mission even when we stumble; to finish the race when we are grasping for breath. For at the finish line, the glory of the kingdom of heaven awaits those who persevere.

Changes and New Assignments

In the next couple of weeks, the new assignments of ministry coordinators and covenanted members as well as the creation of two new ministries will be announced. This is the next phase in the continuing process of community growth and renewal.

This reorganization is a slow and deliberate process. It requires the matching of individual preferences, gifts and spiritual development, with the community's vision and mission and particular apostolate needs. In many instances, those who have been ministry coordinators for three years or more have been moved, to allow a new generation of leaders to rise up in the ministries. For the moved coordinators and members, it provides new avenues for spiritual nourishment and opportunities to serve. In some instances, the preferences of members were observed while in others, the gifting of the members or needs of the community took precedence.

The process was not an exact science and relied heavily as should be, on the Lord's grace. In one of the two days of main deliberation, the DCS felt directed to take the risk of going into uncharted waters, and raise up as coordinators, spiritually mature but untested members, based on the words the Lord told Peter in Luke 5:4, "...Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." The importance of assigning the covenanted members at the same time as the coordinators, was also pointed out in another reading from 1 Cor 3:7-9: "*Neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters are equal...for we are God's co-workers...*"

Of the two new ministries, one has been "in process" for a while, but has not been truly operational: the Witness Development Ministry. This ministry is charged with developing sharers for all the community encounters, seminars and retreats. It now has a new coordinator couple, with elder disciples as coaches for sharers. The other new ministry is Evangelical Services, which aims to enhance all the evangelization efforts of the community and includes initiatives like "Everlasting Light".

All these changes and reassignments are exciting, but at the same time, fraught with uncertainty and pain of separation from ministry members you've grown comfortable working with. But our community is like a teenager (we in Newark are, after all, going on our 14th year.), and as such, still subject to growing pains. We find comfort in the belief that what we are, ➤

An Awesome Gift

John 3: 16 says, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.*"

If anyone ever asks you to share the gospel in 25 words or less, quote John 3:16.

John 3:16 is one of the most widely quoted verses from the Christian Bible. It has been called the "Bible in a nutshell", because it is considered a summary of some of the most central doctrines of Christianity.

According to one writer, John 3:16 teaches that the love of God is limitless; it embraces all mankind. No sacrifice was too great to bring its unmeasured intensity home to men and women. God gave the best he had to give: Jesus, His only beloved Son. He was given so that all, without distinction and exception, who believe in Him might be rescued from destruction and be blessed with eternal life. The love of God is the source of the gospel of salvation and life.

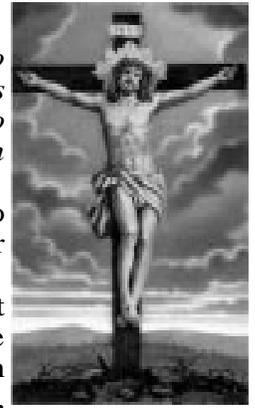
God's gift of infinite compassion is demonstrated in John 3:16. God's love for us is overwhelming. Can you even think of an instance in your life where you would be willing to give up your child's life to save someone else? Yet, God allowed His Son to bear all the sins of humanity on that cross. His death was necessary. Someone had to pay the price for those who believe in eternal life.

We are special to Him because He created us to be like Him. Not the way we look, but in the way we are intended to be by our nature. We are created to be perfect like Him, but because that very nature means we have free will, we also have the ability to choose right from wrong. God could have created us to be like robots and just do everything He tells us to, but He does not want that!

God loves us! When you love someone, you want them love you in return. You want them to love you because they want to love you, not because they have to love you! Free will insures that any love God gets from us would be real and from the heart!

If it is not for God's love, there would be no incarnation, no taking on of human flesh, no coming of Jesus, and no eternal life. God's love is so amazing. Jesus is an awesome gift.

what we do and what we can be in the community, are all rooted in our love for the Lord, who brought us together in BLD and who will always be there to equip us and guide us in all that we do for Him.



Counsels from page 1

In our community, we have members with different gifts and talents that are needed for building the kingdom of God. We should encourage everyone to take part in our community by offering our talents wholeheartedly, and not withhold them, for the reason that we are not in our desired ministry. Jealousy is a two-edged sword. We should not be jealous of another's talents. Instead, let us encourage and foster cooperation and collaboration from all members in community.

The spirit of obedience to authority helps us develop self-knowledge and to know our real defects. By the spirit of obedience to authority, a discipline practiced by religious orders, the monk's attention is directed to his own shortcomings and imperfections. This enables him to meditate and reflect deeply on his attitudes in life.

As we become obedient to our elders, we believe what we read from the first reading: "...Taking some of the spirit that was on Moses, he bestowed it on the seventy elders..." (Nm 11:25) The elders of the community are likewise gifted with the anointing and they, by anointing our coordinators, in turn, are asking God to bestow that spirit onto the coordinators as well. Consequently, the same spirit of God is on each and every elder and coordinator of the community. This anointing is carried through by the obedience of all concerned, in providing governance to the community.

The 2nd reading must be considered as part of the teachings of Jesus about the godless rich and on our entire **dependence on wealth instead of God**. There is nothing wrong with being rich, as long as we give as much as we can to help the poor and support the church. Jesus' friend, Lazarus came from a family of substantial wealth. However, Lazarus was the one who provided for the many needs of Jesus' ministry.

"The law of the Lord is perfect... The decree of the Lord is trustworthy... The fear of the Lord is pure...The statutes of the Lord are true, all of them just;... By them your servant is instructed; obeying them bring much reward." (Ps 19:8,10,12)

DIRECTION:

1. Intensify your prayer life and your commitment to read the word of God daily to nourish your relationship with the Lord. Reconcile with God through the sacraments.
2. Have a daily reflection of your life; check what areas of your life to be cleansed by the Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- 9/30 **Deliverance Training** - St Antoninus Rectory, Newark 10am-4pm *Contact:* Fr. Paul Lehman
- 9/30 **Lord, Teach Us to Pray** (for ALL) 8am-6pm By: Fr. Don O'Connor, SVD Director of House of Prayers, Divine Word Missionaries St Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ *Contact:* Pastoral Ministry and Intercessory Ministry
- 10/29 **Dinner Dance** (Sunday); St. Demetrius Cultural Cntr, Carteret, NJ 4:00-10:00pm Dance Ticket *Contacts:* Rick/Nards Santos; or Fidel/Leggie Lim;
- 11/3-5 **Singles Encounter #17** Graymoor Spiritual Ctr Garrison, NY *Contacts:* Mario Balcon #848 391 0811; Emil/Baby Canlas #551 265 0719
- 11/10-12 **John 6 Crossing Retreat**- Ramada Limited, S. Plainfield *Contact:* John 6 Ministry
- 11/18-19 **Prayer Counseling Seminar** (for covenanted disciples) 7:30am-9:30pm Sat. 7:30am-6:30pm Sun. Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ By: Elijah House Graduates-Noel/Letty Trillana, and Lee Dela Fuente, Lith Golamco & Aimee Pena *Contact:* Pastoral Ministry

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Word Ministry All Ministry Coordinators & Class Shepherds Place your order for Magnificat 2007 (1 year Subscription) *Contact:* Zita Cruz, Leggie Lim, or Norma Luna *Deadline: October 6, 2006* Please get your order forms from the Word Ministry

LSA Ministry Oct 6-8 Life in the Spirit Seminar #27 St. Mary's Church, Rahway *Contact* persons: Vic & Dee Lim

Praise Ministry Everlasting Light - BLD Christmas Musical is back Audition for: Vocalists, Instrumentalists, Dancers *Contact* persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco; Randy/Beth Trinidad; Frank/Malou Venadas Official BLD-Newark Songbook

TEACHINGS

- Oct 20 After Worship 1. Mark 10
- Oct 21 LSS 26- Encounter with Jesus (Mark & Matthew) (1-6pm)
LSS 27- Christian Parenting (Part 2/2) Intro to Intercession
- LSS 24- CMP 2 Part 1
LSS 21 & 22- Apologetics
- Oct 27 After Worship
1. Word of God - Solo Parents
2. Service
3. Intercessory

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Reports for wk ending Sept. 22, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$4,180.00
Other Collections	1,103.00
Total Collections	\$5,283.00

Thank you for your generosity.



Lord, Teach Us To Pray BLD Community Retreat

"Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.'" Luke 11:1

Last Saturday, September 30, 2006, was a blessed day for 150 attendees of the **"Lord, Teach Us To Pray"** retreat held at St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ. It was started with a spirit-filled praise and worship led by Romy and Leni Chan.

The retreat was under the direction of a vibrant charismatic, experienced pragmatist, and eloquent retreat master, Fr. Don O'Connor (SVD). Its main objective was to guide members in their pursuit to develop a dynamic, intensified, and effective personal prayer life, which is essential to the building of an interactive, steadfast, and fruitful relationship with the Lord.

Normally, this retreat is a four-day event. However, Fr. O'Connor was able to provide a valuable, useful material in one day. Handouts were utilized to complement his instructions. The topics covered were:

- > **How did Jesus pray?** (Jesus prays to the heavenly Father (John 17). Jesus prays about his life experiences and the apostles' life experiences).
- > **Praying Scripture, Method of Lectio Divina** (Spending quality time with the Lord, which includes: quieting the soul, reflective reading, gestation or contemplation, meditation, 2nd reading (reasoning and interaction), and personal prayer).
- > **Praying Our Experiences** (Pray the scripture by using our feelings - The Feel Wheel. Example: for feeling overburdened; we need to be at rest - Matthew 11: 28-30, John 15:4
- > **Our Surrender to God** (We all suffer loss from the moment of our birth till our dying breath. Instead of holding onto something, we must surrender our lives to God's care and guidance).

There were silent meditation and confession after the last talk in preparation for the Healing Eucharist. The retreat was concluded with a healing mass and benediction.

COUNSELS



The Marital Covenant

WORD: Gen 2:18-24; Ps 128:1-6;

Heb 2:9-11; Mk 10:2-16

THEME: We belong to Christ as His disciples when we are faithful to our calling.

ORDER: What God has joined together, no human being must separate.

REFLECTION:

Women during the time of Moses were treated like animals or slaves at the mercy of the husband, who could do away with them for any reason. The Pharisees tested Jesus by asking him this question: *Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?* Jesus clearly communicated to them that in the beginning, God made man & woman and joined them together to become one flesh. Jesus did not only protect the woman's dignity but also restore the original purity of marriage as instituted by God in the beginning of creation. He left them in no doubt about His position, emphasizing that marriage is a state of life, ordered by God himself. It is a divine event; a lifelong union between one man and one woman, joined together by a pledge of love and loyalty made in the presence of God. It is a union that cannot be undone. Therefore, after a man and a woman are united as husband and wife, there is no power on earth, short of death, that can free them to remarry. As Jesus clearly stated, *"What God has joined together, no human being must separate."* (Mark 10: 9)

The solemn pledge, made at the altar of God, to love each other for better or for worse, should not trip lightly off any tongue. Married couples should follow Christ's teaching on (☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Happy are all who fear the Lord; who walk in the ways of God. What your hands provide you will enjoy; you will be happy and prosper." Psalm 128:1-2

Who is my neighbor?

Jesus has given us the two great commandments as the foundation of all law. It is easier to understand the precept of the love of God as the basis of all Christian life than that of brotherly love. Jesus bound these two commandments so closely that the one cannot subsist without the other. God commands us to love Him not only in Himself but also in His creatures. He desires this to such an extent that He considers anything done to His creatures as done to Him. As Jesus said, *“Amen I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.”* Matthew 25:45

We all are of the same heavenly Father who has chosen us to be His adopted sons. We, then, are brothers and sisters and neighbors to one another. We often find it difficult to fulfill the precept of universal charity because we make our love of neighbor depend on his relation to ourselves instead of his relation to God. We think that we have a motive of refusing our neighbor our love if he displeases us. Jesus tells us to love our neighbor, lovable or unlovable for God’s sake. He went beyond the egocentric interpretation of the scribes and Pharisees about neighbors as friends that He commands us to love even our enemies. It is God who is the true motive of loving our neighbor. Our neighbor may sometimes be disfigured by faults, by sin or even by vices but still remains the image of God, which the virtue of charity ought to make us recognize, respect and love in every man regardless of his condition.

The parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) is the highest example of a most merciful and compassionate charity. The unfortunate man represents each one of us, robbed and wounded by the world, the devil, and our passions. But on our route was a good Samaritan par excellence, Jesus, who was moved by compassion for our state and brought us help by His sanctifying action.

God requires the concrete proof of our love for Him to be shown in the way we behave toward our neighbor. We cannot deceive ourselves into thinking that we love God if we do not love our neighbor; who, like us, is the living image of our heavenly Father. In reality, God is insistent upon being loved in the neighbor that He makes this love an essential condition of our eternal salvation.

We should, therefore, conquer our selfishness and look higher. Let us look to God, for he who loves Him, loves all that is loved by Him.



Martha's Complaint

We’re all familiar with the story of Martha and Mary (Lk 10:38-42) who welcomed Jesus to their home. We relate to them as we ourselves are the Lord’s own disciples. In our formation program, we learn the importance of hearing the words of the Teacher. Having grown in knowledge and love of the Lord, we then go on to serve in ministry and mission.

Both the sisters are worthy objects of our emulation, for they show fervor for Jesus each in her own way. St. Luke describes Mary *“who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak”* (v 39). She’s in the posture of a disciple before her master, like St. Paul who described himself in Acts 22:3, *“At the feet of Gamaliel I was educated.”*

Such focus and commitment is no less shared by Mary’s sister, Martha, who is not seated before the Master but is *“burdened with much serving”* (v 40).

In our commissioning ceremony as BLD committed disciples, we profess total surrender to our Triune God. We commit to Church authority, to continued formation, regular prayer, reflection of the Word, and solidarity with community brethren. Who will doubt that this profession requires dedication and commitment? Many times, the disciple shall waver and weaken, pulled away by laziness, many conflicts and worldly attachments.

Like Martha, we may cry out, *“Lord, do you not care?”* Burdened and oppressed, we too will despair and complain. When we compare ourselves with other disciples, we call Jesus’ attention: *“My work is harder! Must I do all the serving? Send someone else to help me!”*

Should we then give up? Our commissioning may be a mere ceremony, but we should often contemplate on what our commitment is. We’ve agreed to our 5-point pledge, and engaged to assume a disciple’s obligation wherever that leads.

Our formation is something that we should often fall back on, for it is during this period that we grow in the virtues of service and intercession; acquire our love for God’s life-giving Word; and are equipped in all the ways that the Lord’s BLD community in its wisdom shepherds all its disciples. But this also means that we should be diligent, humble and yielded during our period of formation.

We need not point out to our all-knowing Lord whatever inequities we may see around us. Christ sees and allows these things to happen for His own reasons and some wonderful plan that is beyond our present understanding. Our call is to focus on the One Whom we serve, to encourage our brethren and promote unity and to do everything out of love. Let our eternal hope overcome all trials. This is the better part.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

Psalm 133:1

Father Paul Speaks: Baptism and Confirmation

It is my joy and privilege to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to two of our BLD members: Filmore Flores, from BLD Newark and Alan Ramirez, from BLD Rockland.

Normally, a Bishop is the ordinary minister of this Sacrament but delegation from the Bishop can be given to a priest to perform the ceremony.

I was able to schedule the celebration of this Sacrament on October 6th, as part of the Invocation Mass, preparatory to the LSS weekend. There is a very close connection between **Baptism and Confirmation** even though they are two distinct Sacraments. Baptism gives us new birth into God's life; Confirmation builds on this new birth and gives us the spiritual maturity to witness our faith as empowered Christian adults.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a new coming of the Spirit and a renewal of the Sacrament of Baptism. However, because of the close relationship between Baptism and Confirmation, the LSS weekend is also a call to deepen our Christian life both for those born again Christians in Baptism and for those who have also received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Our LSS weekends are very powerful ones. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is the basis of all our relationships and ministries as a covenant community. Although we can be baptized in the Holy Spirit without having received any of the Sacraments, there is a relationship between the Baptism of the Spirit (which is not a Sacrament) and the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. The LSS weekend should open us up to the great power we have received through these two Sacraments.

The Sacraments of Confirmation seems to be more connected to the Baptism of the Spirit since both refer to the person of the Holy Spirit. Even though this is true, the first step in our incorporation into Christ is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is subsequently strengthened by Confirmation.

Ordinarily, we encourage those who have been baptized and confirmed to be participants in the LSS weekend but we do not make this as a condition as long as the participant is open to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation in the future.

The form of the Sacrament of Confirmation is a very simple one: **"Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."** The notion of sealing implies a stamping. It is an indelible seal like Baptism and Holy Orders that can be received only once. These three Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders locate us in a special position within the Church. They are administered not only for the spiritual growth of the individual, but also to empower us for ministry.

May each Life in the Spirit Seminar renew and deepen the power of the Holy Spirit within us and, in turn, open us more to the graces that have already been given to us in the wonderful Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

Ministry Announcements

LSA Ministry

Life in the Spirit Seminar # 27 - October 6-8
St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ
Contact Persons: Vic & Dee Lim



Word Ministry

All Ministry Coordinators and Class Shepherds:
Place your order for Magnificat 2007 Issue
Contact Persons: Zita Cruz, Leggie Lim, or Norma Luna
Deadline: October 6, 2006

Praise Ministry

Everlasting Light - BLD Christmas Musical
All vocalists, please pick up your CDs and songbooks after worship at the Gym

Intercessory Ministry

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com

TEACHINGS

Oct. 13-15

LSS 21-22 Aspirants Retreat

Oct. 20 - After Worship

Mark 10 Teaching

October 21 St. Mary's School 1-6pm

LSS 27 Christian Parenting (Part 2/2)
Introduction to Intercession

LSS 26 Encounter with Jesus (Mark/Matthew)

LSS 24 CMP 2 Part 1

LSS 21-22 Apologetics

Oct. 27 - After Worship

Solo Parents Word of God

Service Teaching

Intercessory Teaching

Nov. 4 St. Mary's School 1-6pm

LSS 23 Advance Intercession

LSS 24 CMP 2 Part 2

Nov. 17 - After worship

Solo Parents Response BBS

Singles Christian Giving

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

Nov. 18 St. Mary's School 1-6pm

LSS 27 New Creation Realities, GIP Prayer,
Praise and Worship

LSS 26 Encounter with Jesus (Luke/John)

Counsels (from page 1)

marriage, which directs them to obey God and not man. However, fulfilling the vow that they made to each other and to God can be very challenging and difficult. It is through their faithfulness to God's calling; their fear of the Lord; their enduring love for Jesus; and their child-like trust in the Holy Spirit that they will be able to withstand any trial and hardship that may come their way. Moreover, it is very important for married couples to speak words of encouragement and demonstrate gratitude in a thoughtful way at all times. They must always be forgiving and never go to sleep angry. They should avoid giving negative comments and criticism. A good marriage is like a masterpiece painting. It is not so much about finding the right partner as being the right person in God's masterful hands.

As we cooperate with God's divine plan, our lives become beautiful and we begin to see our partner as a blessing instead of a burden. Our marriage and family become ways for God to bless other marriages and families. This Sunday, we are called to reflect on the dignity of marriage and on the permanence of marriage commitment.

Yes, blessings await those who follow the way of our Lord. The union of husband and wife can also be blessed with children. The father honored and has authority over his wife and children stemming from his obedience to and honoring God. *"Like a fruitful vine, your wife within your home, like olive plants; your children around your table."* Ps.128:3. As a community, we are reaping this blessing as we remain faithful to our Lord. The children in our community are multiplying. Indeed, they are so blessed because being in the community, they will grow up knowing how much we love the Lord and what it means to have faith in God. Also, in our community, they will learn to understand that bringing them up in faith by providing them with numerous activities is a responsibility that we take seriously as individual families and as a community.

Undeniably, our children do not always behave inside the church. Sometimes, they make too much noise, or do things they were instructed not to do. However, if we keep them away from Sunday mass or from Friday worship, they will not know God, find a need for God, or have faith in Jesus Christ. In Mark 10:14, Jesus says, *"Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."* Therefore, as true disciples of Jesus, we must bring our children to Him and never stop them. 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct. 29
4-10 pm **Dinner Dance**
St. Demetrius Cultural Center
Carteret, NJ
For tickets, contact Ricky/Nards Santos or Fidel/Leggie Lim
- Nov. 3-5 **Singles Encounter #17**
Graymoor Spiritual Center
Garrison, NY
Contact Persons: Marion Balcon
841-391-0811, Emil/Baby Canlas
551-265-0719
- Nov. 10-12 **John 6 Crossing Retreat**
Ramada Limited
South Plainfield, NJ
Contact: John 6 Ministry
- Nov. 18-19 **Prayer Counseling Seminar
by Elijah House**
Ramada Limited
South Plainfield, NJ
Graduates: Noel/Letty Trillana,
Lee Dela Fuente, Lith Golamco &
Aimee Pena
For covenanted members
Contact: Pastoral Ministry

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports: ending September 29, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$3,539.00
Other Collections	\$8,977.00
Total Collections	\$12,516.00

Thank you for your generosity!!

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Let us be grateful that the Lord has granted us the gift of children and let us all be reminded that we are temporary stewards graced by God to take care of our children.

DIRECTION:

- * Always have a child-like trust in the Lord in everything that we do for the community.



LSS 27 WEEKEND AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH

101 graduates hearkened to the call of God and opened their hearts and minds to His Spirit during the Life in the Spirit Seminar #27 held at St. Mary's Church, Rahway, New Jersey on Oct 7-8 week-end. The pastoral team was headed by Fr. Paul Lehman, BLD Spiritual Director. Witnessing to God's goodness and victory in their lives were shared by Sam and Rory Olaso, Tita Valonzo, Glenn, Gerry and Gigi Cabunag, Reuben and Cherry Vibar, Girlie Aliparo and Nestor and Becbec Laxina.

The graduates of LSS27 are Lita Aguila, Ron Alfaro, Carmen Angbetic, Rollie & Emma Aquino, Joseph Arambulo, Audrey Atienza, Sam Balcon, Desa Balcon, Yenyen Balcon, Stephanie Belonia, Daniel Beup, Gabby Bonifacio, Nancenciano and Theresa Booc, Jeremy and Jutt Bustos, Michael and Judith Cadavillo, Rico Cairme, Norma Calara, Valerie Calilap, Cezar and Mylene Calingo, Katrina Cam, Ray Campomanes, Ollie Canieso, Monica Canlas, Enrico and Anamarie Clemente, Armida and Joseph Costin, Valentin and Ma. Isabel Cruz, Olivia Cuasay, Melanie De Bella, Christian and Anna De Guia, Darleen de Guzman, Anabelle Duma, Fedelita Dumlaog, Nelda Fulgencio, Carmelita Gain, Evanina Galema, Mary Joy Dia Garcia, Divino and Lilibeth Guiang, Rosario Guinto, Tim Javier, Fr. Kim, Jose and Arlene Lagdameo, Jules and Emily Laput, Avelino and Lucita Leyco, Mario and Winnie Magparangalan, Reynalda Manahan, Ryan Manguiat, Melissa Martinez, Nelson and Virginia Mayo, Josefina and Diosdado Mendoza, Joanna Mercado, Jay Nacion, Robert O'Brien, Eileen O'Hara, Elmer and DaisyPacia, Riz Pagdanganan, Marilyn Pagmanua, Rudy/Bebbie Paguio, Lauren Pascual, Nick Punzalan, Mart Razal, Michael Relucio, Michael Rementilla, Cathy Salvador, Rowena Sanguir, Alyssa Santa Ana, Lucy Sheridan, Carlo Sipaco, Francis Soquite, Rebecca and Mel Soquite, DJ Tabao, Eva Tejada, May Tolentino, Alvi Trillana, Chris Trinidad, Rey and Neri Tuazon, Angelita Valeroso, Aileen Veluz, Rudy and Algene Ymbong, and Jackie Zulaybar.

The Holy Spirit was truly present in the hearts of the candidates and the workers who made the week-end possible.

COUNSELS

"Give Up All and Follow Him"

WORD: Wisdom 7:7-11; Ps 90:12-17; Hebrews 4:12-13; Mark 10:17-30

THEME: We belong to Christ as His disciples when we are totally committed to Him.

ORDER: "Go sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven, then come follow me." (Mk 10:21b)

REFLECTION:

The writer of today's gospel narrates the meeting of Jesus with a rich young man on one of His many journeys. The young man follows after Jesus, appearing to be excited to finally catch up with Him no doubt having heard of the wisdom of Jesus, the Rabbi. He has one very specific question as he is intent on securing his destiny as best as he can. "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17), asks the young man, but he was saddened by Jesus' reply and he went away from Him.

The man is considered blessed by human standards; he is young, wealthy and according to him righteous and obedient to the law. We can say that most of us in community can identify with this young man. We are in a decent financial situation, some may have more than others but no one is destitute. The young man claims that he has observed the law from his youth. For most of our lives, we too would have been trying to obey the commandments. In fact, we are in community to learn the ways of the Lord and we serve in order to practice what we've learned.

Indeed, it is difficult to detach our selves from our possessions. There are so many things, material and spiritual, that can keep us from fully surrendering to the Will of God. We get attached to relationships, positions, roles, responsibilities, points of view, etc. Jesus knows so well

(continue on page 4) 

God's Promise for the Week

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:3)

Behold Thy Mother



“When Jesus saw his Mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his Mother, ‘Woman behold, your son’. Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your Mother’ “ (John 19: 26-27).

Friends or classmates customarily ask about my Mother, she being a teacher from back home. When I answered their

queries and told them that she passed away fifteen years ago, their usual response is “Oh! I’m sorry to hear that. God bless her soul”. After hearing this reply, questions about her stop.

In spite of the distance, I was in constant communication with my Mom. She became very ill that she had to be hospitalized and later bed-ridden. That time, I had been busy and my schedule became hectic due to a heavy workload. My attention was so focused on my job and my family that I lost communication with my Mom. My wife kept on reminding me to check on her condition. My answer “Yes, I will” but as days pass by, I would forget. There was almost a year of no communication between me and my Mom until one night, my wife received the news that my Mom had a heart attack. Shocked and shaking, I felt like there was a knife stuck in my chest. Guilt was what I felt.

After a few weeks, I had the chance to speak with my Mom. I was so excited to hear her voice but when I heard it though, I broke down. I can hear her slurred voice but could not understand a word. She was crying, trying to tell me something, but the words were incomprehensible. I blamed myself for everything. I was not able to sleep that night. I remember my Mom used to tell me that “a mother bears a child, although she knows the pain that accompanies childbirth.” She endured the pain and discomfort of childbearing because it brought about new life and self-fulfillment.

Two weeks later, after my talk with my Mom, Dad called me from the Philippines telling me that she passed away. He found her dead inside her bedroom. I did not see my mother up to the time she was buried. I was not even able to touch her or give her the care that she needed when she needed me. I was not able to ask for forgiveness from her. For more than one and a half decade, I kept this to myself. The Life in the Spirit Seminar paved the way to let go of all my bitter root judgments in life. I was able to ask forgiveness from my Mom through the Holy Spirit. I miss my Mom so much, but I have the confidence that someday I will see her, and behold her. Do you? Would you behold your mother?

Luke, The Evangelist



Luke the Evangelist, the great apostle of the Gentiles, is a Syrian of Antioch, a physician by profession. Noted as well was his being a good painter. He became a disciple of the apostles and later followed Paul until Paul’s martyrdom. Having served the Lord

continuously, unmarried and without children, filled with Holy Spirit, he died at the age of 84 years.

Luke the author of both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles is the most versatile of all New Testament writers. As Luke’s account, “*many have undertaken to compile a narrative of events which have been fulfilled by our midst, precisely as those events were transmitted to us by the original eyewitnesses and ministers of the word*” (Lk 1:1-2). His own inspired writings are of the highest standing and most authentic commentary of sanctity. We find emphasis on the human love of Christ, on His compassion for sinners, for women, for the outcast and for the poor. “*The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor*” (Lk 4:18). Some of the most beautiful prayers are only found in this Gospel - the Magnificat (Lk1:46-55), the Benedictus (Lk 1:68-79) and the Nunc Dimitus (Lk 2:29-32). In the Acts, Luke stressed the importance of the Holy Spirit. Materials only found in his Gospel include much of the account of Our Lord’s birth and infancy and boyhood, some of the most moving parables, that of the Good Samaritan and that of the Prodigal Son, and three of the last words of Christ on the Cross: “*Father forgive them*” (Lk 23:24), “*You will be with me in Paradise*” (Lk 23:43) and “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*” (Lk 23:46).

Luke’s Gospel message is God’s love for all people, and His joy when they return to Him. His Gospel themes center on the mission that every physician and Christian healer should uphold. God did not make him the great historian among the four gospel writers without a purpose. He wanted this part of history handed down from generation to generation - with great accuracy. So important is this skill that every physician and caregiver should possess. Obtaining accurate patient history is the most important step before effective treatment begins and so as subsequent knowledge and charting of patient progress become a part of healing. So is our knowledge on the life and history of Jesus, that it is so important for us to know Him, to read the Gospel before our own spiritual and physical healing begins. Blessed are the people who acknowledge that God is the Healer behind every man’s skill and every man’s ability to heal.

Fearful Heart

"I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but after that can do no more" (Luke 12:4). Hypocrisy thrives on making a good appearance and masking what we don't want others to see. It's a game people play to impress a certain individual or a group to gain acceptance.

"I shall show you whom to fear. Be afraid of the one who after killing has the power to cast into Gehenna; yes, I tell you, be afraid of that one" (Luke 12:5). Fear is a powerful force. It can lead us to panic or it can spur us to faith and action. The good news is that God's light both exposes the darkness of evil and sin and overcomes hatred with love, pride with humility, and pretense with integrity and truthfulness. God gives grace to the humble and contrite of heart to enable us to overcome the insincerity and hypocrisy in our lives.

The Bible tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It is appropriate to have a "proper" fear of God - not a fear that drives us away from HIM, but a fear that draws us close. A "healthy" fear of God leads to spiritual maturity, wisdom and right judgment and it frees us from the tyranny of sinful pride, cowardice — especially in the face of evil, and spiritual deception.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them has escaped the notice of God. Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows" (Luke 12:6-7). If God is concerned with such minor things such as sparrows and hair, how much more shall He show concern and demonstrate His love for those who are His people? So when we come to God, we find that we don't need a mask because God knows all our imperfections but He still loves us and values us anyway.

"I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God. But whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God"(Luke 12:8-9). Jesus knows that his disciples will be tested and he assures them that the Holy Spirit will give them what they need in their time of adversity. He warns them, however, that it's possible to spurn the grace of God and to fall into apostasy out of cowardice or disbelief.

Therefore, the fear of God is the antidote to the fear of losing one's life. Godly fear is reverence to the One who made us in love and who sustains us in mercy and kindness. So, if we are not afraid of the wrong thing, then we will also not be afraid to speak that which is to be revealed - the Gospel. AMEN!

"God will always give what is right to his people who cry to Him night and day, and he will not be slow to answer them."

Luke 18:7

Faith Thru Love

It was for liberty that Christ freed us. So stand firm and do not take the yoke of slavery a second time! Pay close attention to me, Paul, when I tell you that if you have yourself circumcised, Christ will be of no use to you. I point out once more to all who receive circumcision that they are bound to the law in its entirety. Any of you who seek your justification in the law have severed yourself from Christ and fallen from God's favor. It is in the Spirit that we eagerly await the justification we hope for and only faith can yield it. In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision, not the lack of it counts for anything; only faith, which expresses itself in love. (Gal. 5:1-6 paraphrased)

Jesus gave us freedom but the freedom He gives makes us embrace His cross so that we may serve one another in love. Salvation is His gift to us. We do not acquire it by following a set of laws or rules but in our faith in Him. In regards to our salvation we do not need to be circumcised as prescribed by the Mosaic law but we need to be united to Jesus in love. This union cannot take place without the help of the Holy Spirit. Although salvation and transformation are God's gifts to us He also requires our cooperation. With our free will we can choose to sin. Paul puts a special emphasis on our loving service toward each other. We should help the weak in faith with love and patience. Let us not be arrogant because we know more than our brothers and sisters. Like Christ, let us help each other carry our burdens. The law of Christ is love, not rules and regulations. The Spirit gives into our lives love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control. We cannot yield His fruits if we do not walk in His life. Let us ask Jesus to send us His Spirit that He may transform our lives. Amen.

TEACHINGS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Oct 13-15 | Aspirants Retreat – LSS 21-22 |
| Oct 20 | Mark 10 (After Worship) |
| Oct 21
(1-6pm) | Encounter with Jesus,
(Mark & Matthew) – LSS 26
Christian Parenting (Part2/2)
Intro to Intercession – LSS 27
CMP 2 Part 1 – LSS 24
Apologetics – LSS 21 & 22 |
| Oct 27
(After Worship) | Word of God – Solo Parents
Service / Intercessory |
| Nov 4 | Advance Intercession – LSS23
CMP Part 2/2 – LSS24 |
| Nov 17
(After Worship) | Response BBS – Solo Parents
Christian Giving - Singles
John 6 & Mark 10 |
| Nov 18 | New Creation Realities, GIP Prayer,
Praise & Worship – LSS 27
Encounter with Jesus,
Luke, John – LSS 26 |

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

what “good” we try to do for His kingdom but the reality is that what is good by our standards will always be veined by human sinfulness. St. Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, urges us to “*use the word of God to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.*” (Heb 4:12).

Jesus designed communities to provide us the opportunity to develop in an environment that will enable us to have saintly virtues. Here we learn to do things for the love of Jesus, for the knowledge that He died that we may have eternal life. So what is it that we may still lack? “*Go sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven, then come follow me.*” (Mark 10:21b) All of us certainly heard, “follow Me,” but what about the rest of His command? Jesus in His loving goodness approached us rather differently. He first enabled us to know Him better, He showered upon us many spiritual blessings, and now He waits.

Through the ages, Jesus cries for His people to help the poor, the sick, the homeless and all those marginalized by society. He gifted the wealthy with the poor to give them the means to be sanctified despite their wealth. He is waiting for us to respond with the same generosity to our neighbors as He did to us. Have we not given enough, Lord? Since we joined this community we have given our time, talent and treasure. What is enough by our standards may be very different from the heavenly standard. For every action we take, every gift we are asked to give to our needy brethren, let the Holy Spirit tell us what is enough. If we truly seek His counsel, He will answer us. If we are prepared to listen and obey, He is ever present with His instructions. It will not be easy for He will demand a generosity far more than we think we can afford to be. He will expand our hearts and our capacity to give. He will convict us of our many possessions, attachments, manners, status-symbols, that feed our pride, self-importance, image, and keep us from being more Christ-like.

God has brought to us the mission of Gawad-Kalinga to support as a community. We are being given the opportunity to help the poorest of the poor in the Philippines. We have the Medical Mission, to help those in desperate need of medical care, the soup kitchen to feed the hungry of Newark, and the many other needs presented to us. Let us identify with the poor rather than the rich, so that we may hear our Lord say, “*Blessed are you, the poor in spirit, for yours is the Kingdom of heaven.*” (Mt 5:3).

Do we have a chance to have eternal life with all our baggage? Jesus reply is, “*For human beings it is impossible....but for God, nothing is impossible.*” (Mk 10:27).

DIRECTIONS:

- ◆ Use the word of God to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.
- ◆ Be accountable to God in everything that you do.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

PRAISE MINISTRY

Everlasting Light – BLD Christmas Musical
All Vocalists, please pick-up your CDs and songbooks after worship at the Gym

INTERCESSORY MINISTRY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com

JOHN 6

Crossing sponsoring class/auxie mandatory meeting on Sunday, October 15 at St. Mary’s library, 2:00 pm-6:00 pm

YOUTH

Morality in the Information Age

Guest Lecturer: Fr. Martin Okoro
October 20, 2006 (Friday)

BBS 2 Youth Edition (Teaching)

Relationships with others: Problems & Possibilities (Workshop)

October 21, 2006 (Saturday)

Venue: TBA @ YE 13 Reunion

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Oct 29

4-10pm

Dinner Dance (Sunday)

St. Demetrius Cultural Center, Carteret, NJ

Dance tickets contacts: Ricky/Nards

Santos or Fidel/Leggie Lim

Nov 3-5

Singles Encounter #17

Graymoor Spiritual Center Garrison, NY

Contacts: Marion Balcon 848-391-0811

Emil/Baby Canlas 551-265-0719

Nov 3-5

Marriage Encounter #28

Don Bosco Marian Shrine, Haverstraw, NY

Contact: Bong/Merle Encarnacion

908-654-7454 or any member of ME27

Nov 10-12

John 6 Crossing Retreat

Ramada Limited, So. Plainfield,

Contact: Reggie/Orange Avisado

732-851-5851

Nov. 18-19

Prayer Counseling Seminar

(for covenanted disciples)

7:30-9:30pm (Saturday)

7:30-6:30pm (Sunday)

Ramada Limited, So. Plainfield, NJ

by: Elijah House

Graduates- Noel/Letty Trillana, Lee Dela

Fuente, Lith Golamco & Aimee Pena

Contact: Pastoral Ministry

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Tithes/Love Offering/Mission \$ 4,216.00

Other Collection \$ 3,301.00

TOTAL COLLECTIONS \$ 7,517.00

Thank you for your generosity.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 12 Issue 41

Bulletin Edition

October 20, 2006

Come, Follow Me!

Twenty-six Committed Disciples of BLD-Newark attended the Aspirants' Retreat last weekend. They have demonstrated their commitment to follow our Lord by their regular attendance in the community Friday Worships and Healing Mass, by completing the teaching requirements for the Christian Discipleship Formation Program (CDFP), by their prayer lives and by their faith witnessing. Please lift up in your prayers the following Aspirant Disciples as they discern the Lord's call to them and as they continue their Discipling journey in the next few months: Margaret Aliparo; Rene/Cielo Arribe; Glenn Canlas; Abigail Castaneda; Kim Castaneda; Norie Derowitsch; Dan/Nelda Dwyer; Evelyn Francisco; Gil/Lucille Jose; Fidel/Leggie Lim; Paul Magahis; Reggie/Fil Malabanan; Carlos/Fe Masisado; Joe/Adelle Orosa; Ofel Paypon; Lally Reyes; Rey/Tessie Salmo; Paul Verzosa.

Fr. Paul Lehman provided the teachings and five Covenanted Disciples shared their faith experiences on the topics of Discipleship, Cost of Discipleship, Test of True Discipleship, Community and Rewards of Discipleship.

The word *disciple* was derived from the Latin *discipulus*, *pupil* and from *discere*, *to learn*. The disciples learned from Jesus as they sat at His feet, listened to His words and followed His ways. This was the start of a deep relationship with the Lord.

The Aspirants' Retreat weekend was a continuation of the LSS Baptism of the Holy Spirit. We have to let go and yield to the Holy Spirit. Everything that we do should be under the directions of the Holy Spirit. We have to be consistent in our prayers to become intimate with Jesus. We are all called to holiness, to share in our Father's life and to experience His love. To follow Jesus, we must be detached from worldly possessions and must be freed from the slavery of sin. We must accept Jesus as our Lord and personal Savior.

Counsels

“Servanthood”

Word: Is 53:10-11; Ps 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22; Heb 4:14-16; Mk 10:35-45

Theme: We belong to Christ as His disciples when we serve the needs of all.

Order: *“Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant.” (Mk 10:43b)*
“Whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all.” (Mk 10:44)

Reflection:

As we approach the end of our Liturgical year, we notice how the Scripture readings are focused on preparing the disciples to be leaders. The previous week's themes were: Self-knowledge, Faithfulness, Self-giving, and tonight it is Servanthood. As Jesus and the disciples ascend towards Jerusalem, to complete His mission, we too are being prepared to understand what is needed for our mission, as we continue to follow Jesus.

Jesus is very explicit on the requirements for those who want to follow Him. First, he said: If you want to follow me, you must deny yourself, carry your cross, and then follow me. (Mk 8:34) Contrary to what the world requires for wealth, power, and prestige, Jesus then defines the requirements for those who want to be great: he said, they must be the servants of all. (Mk 10:43b) And for those who want to be first, he said, they must be slave of all. (Mk 10:44) In our community, these are basic guidelines for those who want to lead. We call them servant-leaders.

(continue on page 4) 

GOD'S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

“If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life.” (Is 53:10)

A GREEDY HEART

Is it a sin to be rich? Reading the gospel, it would seem like it. As written in Mark 10:25, Jesus said that *‘it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.’* Reading through, it seems like if I need to follow God, I can not be rich. However, financial blessing is a blessing from God and from no other. It seems like it runs contrary to each other – financial abundance is a blessing from God but being rich is a deterrent to be entitled to heavenly kingdom.

In the parable as told by Jesus, the land owned by the rich man produced a bountiful harvest. As solution to his problem, he built a bigger barn to store his harvest. Since he will be storing so many good things that can last him for years, he planned to rest, eat, drink and be merry. However, that night will be his last. During his lifetime, he was not able to ‘store treasures’ that are *‘rich in what matters to God’* (Luke 12:21). Instead, he stored treasures for himself.

What are sins then related to being rich? Getting to be rich but in doing so, one stepped on somebody’s toes. Or the wealth was received from illegal ways. Or for a person to be consumed to lead his/her life driven by making himself/herself financially rich. Amassing tremendous wealth and not sharing it with the less fortunate.

Going back to the parable, the keyword is ‘rich in what matters to God’. Thus, going back to the question, is it a sin to be rich? Definitely not as long as you use whatever ‘richness’ the good Lord has blessed you into doing good works. Use the gifts and blessings that came from the Lord to be able to spread the Word. Show to everybody the face of the Lord in whatever you do. Extend the love to everybody.

Dearest Lord, create in me a pure heart

- * a heart that will only have space to praise You
- * a heart that will be big enough to extend love to my friends and my enemies
- * a heart that will not be focused on amassing wealth but knowing how to share whatever it is that I have to everybody, especially the less fortunate
- * a heart that will be empty of sin and full of good works
- * a heart that You will hold and take care of because I am yours

Amen.

“In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus.” (Phil 2:5)

A COLD HEART

How mighty is the Lord? How come no one alive can solve the mystery of nature? Science is almost exhausted in finding out a solution. Think about it. No one

knows exactly when birth and death comes about, or beginning and end. Man’s wisdom, which feeds from pride, allows him to believe that he will be untouchable someday.

His belief continues as he tries to gain control of what surrounds him. But when disaster comes, all he could do is ask mercy for the devastation that befalls him.

While God has the most merciful heart, He also has the “coldest of hearts”. He promised to punish the unprepared. Unannounced, much like the way He created everything that lives, is when He will make His judgment over everyone that lives. Man will never find out who really is in control, until the very end, just as much as, he did not know how his life begun.

“You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.” Luke 12:40

Procrastination over Preparedness, would definitely be, Man’s major setback. I say that because I am almost always caught in the realm of worldly matters than what God really offers me. How much of what I really do matters to Him. I am almost convinced that I have not prepared enough. The fact that I know, that I could really do more than I should, makes me realize that I am in the short end of His measuring stick.

God made everything simple, including His law. He allows everyone the benefit of making mistakes, and even forgives all of them. His fairness in His judgments will be made accordingly. Now, that is just my guess brought about by my faith in Him.

Would we receive fair judgment? In Mathew 25 :40-46 our Lord set a simple qualification as to who would make it to Heaven and who would suffer the fires of Hell:

“Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me, What you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me. And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

Mysteries abound. They are facts of life. We have to acknowledge that there are questions that we may never answer in our lifetime. So far, no one has. We have to acknowledge we all receive the gift of creation. Trusting in the Divine Providence is not an act of irrational mind. It is an act of humility which we all can freely choose to have.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

God expects us to be proficient in handling community conflicts, reconciling opposing parties and preserving peace.

Since some people are more competitive and contentious than others, those who are tasked to shepherd a community need to beseech God for the spiritual strength to restrain pride and anger in assuaging contending parties.

How does one manage conflict and preserve the TRUTH?

- Conduct prayerful dialogue asking one to pray for his own understanding
- Focus on the root of the conflict, not peripheral issues
- Ask both parties to establish and agree on a principle detached from their viewpoints based on God's Word
- Ask both to examine their viewpoint in the light of the principle; identify gaps between positive and negative values
- Ask both to suggest how they can modify their viewpoints to fulfill the requirements of the Word; resolutions on attitude and action
- Ask both how they can help each other live out their resolutions
- End with a prayer, asking one to pray for the other
- Schedule follow-up pastoral meetings to assess progress
- If prior efforts did not work out, consider constituting a new independent body to mediate and address the conflict
- Always speak the truth in love, never conceal it.

Our community is filled with men and women who may receive no worldly reward, not even the recognition of being peacemakers yet they speak and stand by the truth at all times. They are sometimes rejected as they may bring out in people, aggression, fear and servile regression, envy, jealousy, even the worst from people. Yet they stand firm on the truth. This is why we have hope, no matter how bad things can get.

Our strength as a community lies in the commitment of disciples to abide by God's will. It lies in their yearning to be more Christ-like. It is in the truth they hold in their hearts which is with God... immortal for all eternity.

Considering structures of authority in community, the truth may be denied but what is important is not recognition... it is reality!

Let us ACT on the truth, live by it, no matter the circumstance. One who is truthful makes an impact in the lives of people, becomes a light of the world, a "Light in the Lord". But woe to everyone, "After receiving knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains sacrifice for sins but a fearful prospect of judgment and a flaming fire that is going to consume the adversaries." **Heb 10: 26-27**

Always be sincere, hate what is evil, hold on to what is good and **true**. Be peacemakers and you shall be called sons of God!

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

PRAISE

Everlasting Light - BLD Christmas, All Vocalists, please pick-up your CDs and songbooks after worship at the gym

INTERCESSORY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com

YOUTH

BBS 2 Youth Edition (Teaching) Relationships with others; Problems & Possibilities (Workshop) Sat., October 21, 2006
Venue: TBA @YE 13 Reunion

MARK 10

Parents of Mark 10 children are encouraged to dress up their children as their favorite saint, angel, priest or nuns on October 27, they will be processing after the worship in the church and later in the gym. Everyone is invited to bring goodies/small tokens/gifts for the children as they parade in the gym

TEACHINGS

Oct 21 (1-6pm)	Encounter with Jesus (<i>Mark & Matthew</i>)	LSS 26
	Christian Parenting II (<i>Part 2</i>) & Intro to Intercession	LSS 27
	CMP II (<i>Part 1</i>)	LSS 24
	Apologetics	LSS 21-22
Oct 27	Word of God	SP
After worship	Teaching	Service Intercessory
Nov 04	Advance Intercession	LSS 23
	CMP II (<i>Part 2</i>)	LSS 24
Nov 17	Response BBS	SP
	Christian Giving	Singles
	Teaching	John 6 Mark 10
Nov 18	New Creation Realities, GIP	LSS 27
	Prayer, Praise & Worship	
	Encounter with Jesus, (<i>Luke & John</i>)	LSS 26

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

Summarizing the themes of this month, our community is being reminded of the distinct characteristics of our servant leaders:

- Self-knowledge – does not take public opinion before acting but discerns the best direction; knows that he is to please God and not everyone.
- Faithfulness – to our covenant and serving others in obedience to God, ‘not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money but eager to serve’ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.’ (1Pt 5:2-3)
- Self-giving – does nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility considers others better than himself. (Ph 2:3)
- Servanthood – humbly serves without expecting any return, motivated by Love.
- Inter-dependence – works in unity with members of the Body of Christ

It is very difficult to assume leadership in our community. However, there is nothing impossible with God (Lk 1:37). Our servant-leaders rely on the promises of God and in His faithfulness. Our servant-leaders are anointed to receive the grace that is always sufficient. (2Cor 12:9). Even when there are surmountable tasks, our servant-leaders rely on God’s promise that will enable them to do all things through Christ who empowers. (Ph 4:13).

Let us therefore continue to lift our leaders in prayers, and support them in performing their tasks in obedience to God. Do not forget that all Christians are leaders. Those who follow Christ are servant-leaders. Yes, you too must be a servant-leader.

As we celebrate Mission Sunday, instead of asking what Jesus can do for you, ask what you can do for Jesus. Discern for the best way you can serve others and be a servant of all, in obedience to His command.

DIRECTIONS:

- * Encourage and pray for all the leaders of the community
- * Follow Christ and be the servant of all

“If people love me, they will obey my teaching. My father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”

(John 14:23)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Oct 29
4-10pm**

Dinner Dance (Sunday)
St. Demetrius Cultural Center,
Carteret, NJ
Contacts:
Ricky/Nards Santos or
Fidel/Leggie Lim

Nov 3-5

Singles Encounter #17
Graymoor Spiritual Center,
Garrison, NY
Contacts:
Marion Balcon: 848-391-0811
Emil/Baby Canlas: 551-265-0719

Nov 3-5

Marriage Encounter #28
Don Bosco Marian Shrine,
Haverstraw, NY
Contacts:
Any member of ME 27 or
Bong/Merle Encarnacion:
908-654-7454

Nov 10-12

John 6 Crossing Retreat
Ramada Limited,
S. Plainfield, NJ
Contact:
John 6 Ministry

Nov. 18-19

Prayer Counseling Seminar
(for covenanted disciples)
by Elijah House Graduates:
Noel/Letty Trillana, Aimee Pena,
Lee Dela Fuente, & Lith Golamco
Ramada Limited,
S. Plainfield, NJ
Contact:
Pastoral Ministry

**Sat.
7:30-9:30pm
Sun.
7:30-6:30pm**

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Collection Report for the Week Ending Oct. 13, 2006

Tithes/Love Offering/Mission	\$	3,350.00
Other Collection	\$	5,705.00
Total Collections	\$	9,055.00

***Thank you
for your generosity.***



Community To Present “Everlasting Light”

Once again, BLD Newark will produce Claire Cloninger & Mark Hayes’ Everlasting Light Musical production, an enduring bestseller that communicates a timeless message that is relevant to today’s world- offering the Light of the World as our only hope in the darkness that surrounds us. It was over five years ago that our community put together all its time, talent and resources to this production which touched many who came to watch the musicale. Since then, the songs from this musicale have been sang during our community’s Christmas liturgical celebrations.

Excerpts from the Composer/Arranger team which inspired them to write this musicale:

“...I was struck with how much darkness and disaster we all deal with on a daily basis. For this reason, especially at Christmas, we celebrate God’s light that has come into the world – the light that no amount of darkness has ever been able to extinguish. (John 1:5) I am learning to look at current events in the light of Christ, for I have found that only in Him am I able to find peace with the past, joy in the present moment, and reach out to the future with hope.” – Claire Cloninger

“...I sensed a desire to create a Christmas musicale that would communicate a relevant message to today’s church. More than just experiencing the warm feelings of Christmas and the intangible “specialness” of the season, people are looking for hope and for real answers to crushing problems. “Everlasting Light” addresses some of these problems and offers hope and answer.....I pray that “Everlasting Light” will be as fun to sing as it was to write and that it will truly bring His light and joy into your life this season.” - Mark Hayes

COUNSELS

Jesus is Calling You

WORD: Jer 31:7-9; Ps 126:1-6;
Heb 5:1-6; Mk 10:46-52

ORDER: Take courage, get up, Jesus is calling you

Theme: We belong to Christ as His disciples when we witness to others to respond to His call.

REFLECTION: The scene in the Gospel focuses on Jesus curing Bartimaeus, a blind beggar. Jesus stops and directs those in the crowd. “*Call him.*” So they did call to Bartimaeus; “*take courage, get up, He is calling you.*” Mark 10: 49 How blessed are those who hear these words. We in the community have heard this invitation through the encounters and retreats. In any case, and in every case, Jesus has something in mind when he calls us, to a deeper sense of purpose in our family life, our work, and in our community. But notice that Jesus gives Bartimaeus the opportunity to say for himself what lies most deeply within his soul. “*What do you want me to do for you?*” (Mark 10:51) The blind man replied to Him, “*Master I want to see.*”

Today, the Lord comes to us and asks us, as he asked Bartimaeus, “What do you want me to do for you?” May our response be “Lord we want to see .” See what? We want to see you in others, in the faces of those we love and in the faces of those we find difficult to love. Lord, we want to see you in our prayers, in the sacraments especially the Eucharist. We want to see you Lord behind the distressing masks of the poor, the sick

page 4

Promise of the Week

“Go your way, your faith has saved you.” (Mk.10:52)

Doing Good Deeds, 24/7

Is there a suitable time to doing good works for our neighbors and for God? This seemed to be the question Our Lord addressed in Luke 13: 10 – 17, the curing of invalid woman. As Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath, His attention was caught by a woman *who for eighteen years had been crippled by a spirit; she was bent over, completely incapable of standing erect. When Jesus saw her, he called to her and said, "Woman, you are set free of your infirmity." He laid his hands on her, and she at once stood up straight and glorified God.*

The ruler of the synagogue indignant that Jesus had cured on the Sabbath said to the crowd in reply: "There are six days when work should be done. Come on those days to be cured, not on the Sabbath day." The Lord said to him in reply, "*Hypocrites! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath untie his ox from the manger in order to feed and water them on the Sabbath? This daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for eighteen years now, ought she not to have been set free on the Sabbath day from this bondage?*"

They could not answer a word. And how could they argue against that glaring statement of truth? How can they serve the need of animals on the Sabbath and not the need of their fellow human beings?

In this scene, the Pharisees showed us again a perfect example of an attitude that is hypocritical, censorious self-righteousness. Here they could not see the magnificence of her healing – not so much because it was done on the Sabbath, but because they did not do it. If those Pharisees could have performed that miraculous power themselves, they surely would have done so, Sabbath day or not. But because they did not do it, it was nothing but a needless work on a Sabbath.

The Pharisees showed us what the virtue of charity is not. On the other hand, Jesus taught us that charity starts from the heart. That charity is essentially wishing well, not necessarily just doing well. There are times we are not the doers of the good works. But if we rejoice over the good that others are able to do for them, then we make that good action our own. We become part of it. While it is wonderful virtue to do noble works, it is even greater deed to rejoice in the good that others do. The Pharisees could have been a part of that great act of curing a helpless woman if only they have genuine eagerness in their heart!

All Souls Day With Love

The commemoration of all the faithful departed is celebrated by the Church on November 2 and is called All Souls Day. This feast day was instituted in order that those who have no special suffrages offered for them may be remembered. It was started in 998 A.D. by St. Odilo of Cluny, Italy, where masses for the dead were said the day after All Saints Day. Today, the lists of departed souls are placed on the altar, as the priest offer mass in their honor.

In the Greek rite, the commemoration of the dead is held on the eve of Pentecost. The Armenians celebrate it one day after Easter. Mexicans have processions to cemeteries bringing food, flowers and music. Hungarians distribute food, toys and clothes to orphans. Polish people keep their windows wide open all day and all night. Filipinos offer masses, prayers, and food and visit their departed relatives' graves.

The Church teaches that man, who is body and spirit, is created by God, and that man's spirit is immortal and will not perish when it separates from the body at death. Christian belief is that our spirit will be reunited with our body at the final resurrection. All who die in God's grace and friendship but still imperfectly purified are indeed assured of their eternal salvation, but first undergo purification necessary to obtain the beatific vision in purgatory. It is a temporary place for purification (church suffering) as they progress to heaven where they become saints (church triumphant). We, the living (church militant), are reminded of Jesus' parable about the poor man, Lazarus, and the rich man Divas. The children at Fatima were shown purgatory and hell by the Blessed Virgin Mary.

While time is on our side, let us examine our conscience every night and truly repent for our sins. Let us avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation often. Let us faithfully follow Jesus who taught us how we might have eternal life. When the day of the Lord comes, we will find Him on His judgment seat with His love and mercy that endures forever. Our Father listens to the prayers of His beloved children. Let us pray for our beloved departed, and offer them up in Holy Mass. As in 2 Maccabees 12:39-45, let us make atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin. Let us be generous to them in their need. Today we live, tomorrow we die, but we are all called to be saints. DEO GRATIAS!

Ready To Serve: A Personal View



In over ten years as covenanted disciples, we were called to serve in four different ministries and enjoyed self-satisfaction in each. Yet within ministries as well as individually, we could

not remain static, but are always called upon to “become more”, like a fire that must spread fanned by the wind of the Spirit and even at the risk of burning up some “old growth” to allow the light to penetrate to the new.

For us, each move was unsettling at first. We had become familiar with the ministry tasks and the intimacy of those whom we served with and opened up to in our Word Sharing Circles. A new ministry would require us to be vulnerable again to strangers and learn to trust. Even our previous ministry experiences could not be relied upon in our new assignments and our sense of inadequacy pushed us to return to that child like quality of utter dependence on God. We derived courage from the last part of our community foundation verse: “*Having heard the word, they embrace it with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance.*” Luke 8:15

When we were called by our anointed leaders to serve in each new ministry, we simply said “Yes Lord” without hesitation. We didn’t analyze the work required in relation to our perceived abilities but instead relied on what we believed to be a spiritual element to the DCS discernment that would allow us the opportunity to grow and to use our unique gifts to best serve the needs of the community according to God’s plan. We kept to heart our community norms in our Covenant of Communion which urged us to “be always ready to serve in whatever capacity the Community is calling us”, confident that we would be made capable to do our tasks by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

We each bring not only a variety of gifts to the community, but are also at different stages on our own personal spiritual journey. As

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERCESSORY : Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com.

JOHN 6 : announcement- Crossing sponsoring class/auxie mandatory meeting on Sunday, October 29 at St. Mary’s library, 1:00 pm-6:00 pm.



TEACHING MINISTRY

- Oct 27 1 Word of God – Solo Parents
- After worship 2 Service
- 3 Intercessory
- Nov 4 Advance Intercession – LSS23
- CMP Part 2/2 – LSS24
- Nov 17 Response BBS – Solo Parents
- Christian Giving - Singles
- John 6
- Mark 10
- Nov 18 New Creation Realities, GIP
- Prayer, Praise & Worship – LSS 27
- Encounter with Jesus, Luke, John – LSS 26

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. James 1:12

part of the corporate Body of Christ expressed through the BLD community, we are each vital to the life and growth of the community. “Each one must be helped to grow. We truly need the power of the Holy Spirit to accept what we have been given and to accept what others have been given.” Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth*.

“Living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into Him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body’s growth and builds itself up in love.” Eph 4:12-16

Counsels from page 1

and the lonely. Ultimately we want to see Jesus forever face to face in heaven, smiling on us with love. But so often we're blinded.

Sin, worries, pain and suffering blind us. The inability to forgive robs us of our sight that we fail to see clearly the good things our Lord has done in our lives, in our marriage, in our family and in our community. May our eyes be focused more on what is good than what brings us down, so like the Psalmist we can sing *"The Lord has done great things for us; Oh how happy we were."* Psalm 126:3

The response of Jesus to Bartimaeus is both a dismissal and a pronouncement. *"Go your way"*, says the Lord, *"your faith has saved you"* (Mark 10:52) Because of Bartimaeus' humility, openness and persistence, his encounter with the Lord is so profound that it marks a definitive change in his life and he becomes a disciple. What about our encounters with the Lord? Has it made our lives better and made us stronger disciples? Has it given us strength to continue our journey with our Lord despite persecutions? Have we allowed our busy lives to become obstacles that hinder our relationship with the Lord? Did we go back to our old life as if nothing had happened in our encounter with Jesus or did we receive it as an opportunity to be a witness to others to respond to His call? Bartimaeus received his sight immediately. He was saved and healed and followed Jesus. Just like St. Peter's mother-in-law, who as soon as she had been cured of a severe fever, used her health to serve others. As we see the work of Jesus in Bartimaeus and in our own lives, we must remember that the healing we see is not an end or goal in itself. Rather, we are healed to help others. We are saved to share and to serve. The service we each give to our community no matter how small, visible or behind the scenes are much needed, all worthy and more importantly, most pleasing to our Lord.

Faith is a gift of God. It was Bartimaeus' faith that led him to recognize and seize the opportunity to cry out to Jesus, to persist in the face of opposition, and come to Jesus when called, leaving his cloak, his most



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct 29 (4-10pm)Dinner Dance (Sunday)
St. Demetrius Cultural Center Carteret,
NJ Dance tickets contacts:Ricky/Nards
Santos or Fidel/Leggie Lim
- Nov 3-5 Singles Encounter #17 Graymoor
Spiritual Center Garrison, NY Contacts:
Marion Balcon#848-391-0811 Emil/
Baby Canlas 551-265-0719
- Nov 3-5 Marriage Encounter #28 – Don Bosco
Marian Shrine, Haverstraw, NY
Contact: Bong & Merle Encarnacion
908-654-7454 or any of the members
of ME# 27
- Nov 10-12 John 6 Crossing Retreat – Ramada
Limited, S. Plainfield, Contact: John 6
Ministry
- Nov.18-19 Prayer Counseling Seminar (for
covenanted disciples)Sat.7:30am-9:30pm;
Sun.7:30am-6:30pmRamada Limited,
S.Plainfield, NJ by: Elijah House
Graduates- Noel/Letty Trillana, Lee
Dela Fuente, Lith Golamco & Aimee
Pena Contact: Pastoral Ministry

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending

Oct. 20, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering \$ 2,998.00

Other Collections \$ 8,668.00

Total Collections \$11,666.00



"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above"



precious possession behind. Bartimaeus was physically blind, yet had a seeing mind. His faith opened him up to the work of Jesus in him. That is an important message for us as well as we answer the call of Jesus and follow Him.

DIRECTION:

Be a good witness of your faith at home, at work and in the community



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 12 Issue 43

Bulletin Edition

November 3, 2006

Dinner Dance Annual Fund Raiser



Just as Jesus performed His first miracle at a social gathering (Wedding feast at Cana-John 2:1-11), we must first give thanks to our Lord for His presence at our Annual Dinner

Dance which was held last Sunday night at the St. Demetrius Cultural Center in Carteret, NJ. For the 175 BLD brothers, sisters, family and friends who attended this annual fund raiser, the entertainment and food provided added to the social gathering that allowed all to enjoy the different styles of dance and song.

We were especially blessed to have some of our own BLD members entertain us with ballroom dances throughout the night. Also, we had a BLD Father and daughter sing beautiful renditions of favorite ballads which brought those in attendance to an extended time of applause for their performance.

In addition to the ticket sales for the event, much needed funds were raised for the BLD Newark community from several raffles that were sold. The excitement in the air was experienced by all as they waited anxiously for the winning numbers to be read off for various door and grand prizes.

A multitude of thanks is given to the many generous prize donors. Least but certainly not last, our gratitude is extended to the Hosts of this gala event, the couples from ME20 & ME21 who were dressed magnificently in formal wear (Barongs for the males & evening wear for the females with corsages).

Praise Be Jesus Christ Now and Forever. Amen!

COUNSELS

Love of God and Neighbor

WORD: Dt 6:2-6; Ps 18:2-4,47, 51; Heb 7:23-28; Mk 12:28b-34

THEME: We love the Lord with all our being, when we love our neighbor as ourselves.

ORDER: Love the Lord with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength. Love your neighbor as yourself.

REFLECTION:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" is the first and greatest commandment of God to every man and the second is: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mk 12:30-31)

Before we can apply God's commands, there is a need to review our motivation to love and flesh out what are embedded in our hearts. If the driving force for being obedient to God is anything but love, we may be pursuing everything from a wrong perspective. We may give up and fail our Lord as we encounter obstacles along the way. If our attitude toward loving God and neighbor is as a matter of duty and obligation or anything other than His love for us, we can only expect tougher times ahead of us.

As Christians we should renew our hearts and minds daily with God's Word and the amazing truth of His love. God's love as we all witnessed in Jesus and His Cross never ended in Calvary but was only the manifestation of its beginning.

God gave us His Son at the cross before we understood its implications. *(continued on page4)*

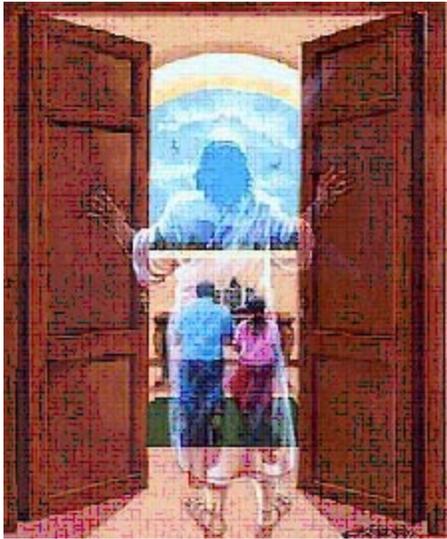
God's Promise for the Week

" You are not far from the kingdom of God"

(Mk12:34)

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE

God's Invitation To Serve With His Love



In Luke 13:10-17, Jesus was condemned by a Pharisee for curing a sick woman on a sabbath. Jesus

As a charismatic community we are faced with the same situation. In most BLD activities – ME, LSS, SE, YE, teachings, etc., we are given manuals

to use. These manuals are provided as guides and not to be looked upon as the “Holy Bible”. They are provided to bring about efficiency, order and harmony.

Jesus invites us to serve others with God’s love! The question that needs to be satisfied when situations call us to deviate from these manuals is “Will I genuinely and sincerely share Jesus’ love if I deviate from the manual procedures?”

Like Jesus who healed the sick woman on a sabbath, when we help our brothers or sisters lighten their burden out of love, we have served with God’s love. When we help our brothers and sisters to know and experience God, we have served with God’s love. We need the Holy Spirit for our inspiration to serve. When our inspiration is not from the Holy Spirit, our actions lack sincerity, become artificial and empty because they are done to satisfy our interests or motives.

We may have experienced pains and disappointments in serving when we were not recognized or appreciated for what we have done. The pains and disappointments may have inhibited us to continue serving. We need to be healed of these pains and disappointments by the love of Christ.

Extreme care is needed in serving. We need to know where our energy, motivation and inspiration to serve comes from and to define our purpose to serve. Our service becomes fruitful when we find meaning, joy and peace and when we recognize that we can not serve without God’s help.

For our services to become acceptable sacrifices to God, they need to be done with God’s love. God’s love is the Holy Spirit, which is the love of the Son to the Father and the Father to the Son that unites them into One Holy Trinity. God’s love unites us to one another and to God.

How would we answer God’s invitation to serve? Would we serve with the “Eyes of God’s love” or with human eyes?

Unswerving Commitment

“If anyone comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.” (Lk 14:26)

Is this really what it means to be Jesus’ true disciple? Why is He asking us to do something that we perceive as impossible? Indisputably, each one of us regards our life as very important and loves every member of our family so much; therefore, it is not easy to follow Jesus and be obedient to His will every step of the way.

In the community, sometimes, we serve God through our brothers and sisters with much reservation. Sometimes, our family affairs, social events, work, and state of health come as “the priority”. Sometimes, when we get overwhelmed from the demands of our ministry and work, we cannot hold onto the commitment we made to God and others because the cost is too much. When we made a commitment to God, we said, “Lord, we will serve you with all our hearts and strengths”. However, we do not always renounce anyone or anything that stands in the way of our commitment to Jesus.

Before starting a new project or taking on a new responsibility or assignment, we usually ask this question first, “Do I have the necessary resources (money, people, and time) to accomplish it?” If the answer to this question is ‘NO’, oftentimes, we say, “I will think about it.” or, “No, I have prior commitments.” Sometimes, we would make all kinds of excuses to be relieved of the task, which would have been a perfect opportunity for us to fulfill our vow to the Lord.

To be a disciple of Christ, we must, first, know our priorities in life? Is Jesus our number one priority? What does the unswerving commitment of discipleship call us for? Before we make our vow to the Lord, it is very important to know what it takes to be a true disciple. We need to stop, reflect sincerely on God’s word, and listen to God attentively, and then ask ourselves this question: “Am I ready to commit myself to God completely without reservations and make Him always my first priority and remove whatever gets in the way to keep my vow? If there’s hesitancy or doubt, we have to ask the Lord to grant us

His grace, because only by His grace can we learn to prioritize our lives, so the demands of the gospel do not conflict with the concerns of our family and our own well-being. If we believe in our hearts that we will be able to follow Him whatever it takes, we need to ask our heavenly

Father for His continued grace to lead us to His Son, every step of the way so we will not swerve.



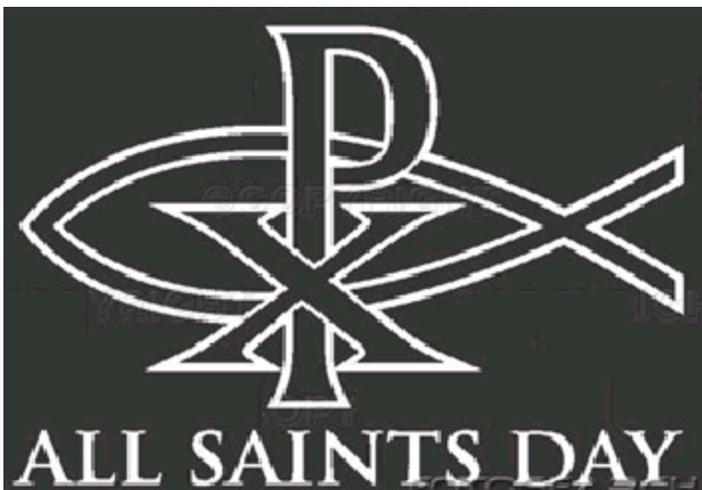
Fr. Paul Speaks

Communion Of Saint

As the liturgical year begins to wind down, nature itself seems to be reminding us that the visible beauty we find all around us does not last. The leaves are fast disappearing. The warmth of long summer days is ended. All Saints day and All Souls day are important pauses on our earthly journey to heaven. We can pray to the saints as we believe they pray for us. Why some find the intercession of the saints a problem always puzzled me. If we can pray for one another here during our earthly life why can we not pray for one another when we get to heaven?

My mind goes back to the first day I arrived in the Philippines on November 1st 1985. Everyone was at the cemetery. I thought they were a day early, since All Souls day was the next day. I facetiously said that Filipinos think that all their departed relatives go right to heaven.

On Thursday, October 18th, the feast of St. Luke, I reflected on the meditation in the Magnificat, which quoted a passage from the memoirs of Father Cizek who was confined in a Soviet prison for twenty-three years. He reflects on "time". "Each day should be more than an obstacle to be gotten over, a span of time to be endured, a sequence of hours to be survived. For me, each day came forth from the hands of God newly created and alive with opportunities to do his will." That impressed me. I thought if I were in that situation I might despair. How could I be priest in prison? Yet Father Cizek could say: "That is what my priesthood demanded of me, as it demanded of every Christian". Welcome each day as gift in time from God to grow holy, and to spread the good news of God's love whether convenient or inconvenient, whether in a physical prison, or just plodding through the ordinary and unexciting moments of life. Time is our precious gift now. Some day eternity will embrace us and carry us home to be with all our heavenly brothers and sisters.



Ministry Announcements

Intercessory Ministry

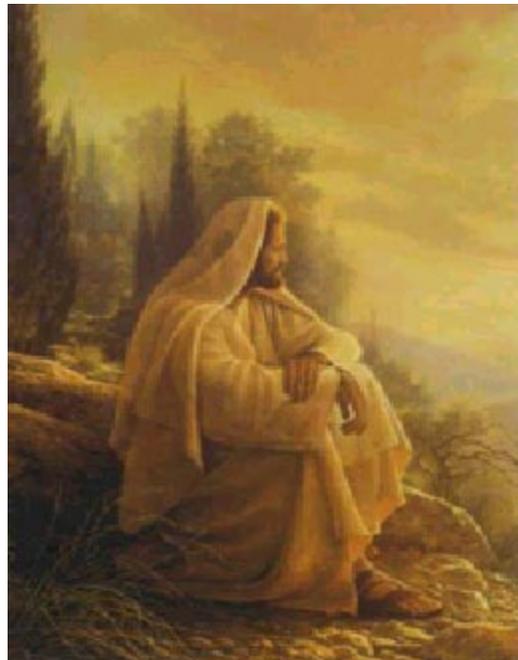
Prayer request and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com



Nov 4 Advance Intercession - LSS23
CMP Part 2/2 - LSS24

Nov 17 Response BBS - Solo Parents
Christian Giving - Singles
John 6
Mark 10

Nov 18 New Creation Realities, GIP Prayer,
Praise & Worship - LSS 27



Counsels from page 1

He gave us His Spirit when we understood and accepted our need for Him. As such we should nourish our hearts with more of Him as we go through life's ups and downs. Refreshed by God, the Holy Spirit is able to work in us and we are able to understand in a greater way the true and immeasurable love God has for all of us.

As our understanding of God's love for us deepens, our desire to reciprocate and give our all to God simply flows into our words, our actions and eventually into our life. With the Holy Spirit empowering us, we are able to love God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our strength; and love our neighbor as our self. We are able to commit to God and give Him our lives.

One true way of showing love is by following what Pope John Paul II has asked us in one of his apostolic letters "Novo Millennio Ineunte". He has asked us to work towards spirituality in communion, which means we should know how to 'make room' for our brothers and sisters, bearing 'each other's burdens' (Gal 6:2) and resisting the SELFish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy.

We know from experience how easily we can fall into sinful attitudes and actions within our family and in our interaction within God's church. The more we open our hearts to God's amazing grace and forgiving love in prayer, the more we will be formed in self-giving and self-sacrificing love; the more we will be able to empty our hearts and show that we love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength and our neighbor as our self.

A believer who really loves God has but one desire: to grow in love for Him by practicing fraternal charity with great care. Such a man ardently aspires to be united with God and His brethren. The more we love God's people, the more we shall enter into that stream of love with which God surrounds all men. Rejoice for "*God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.*" (1 Jn 4:16)

In the context of our spiritual community, let us find ways so that we may best exemplify our fulfillment of Jesus' order to LOVE. Let us pursue concrete ways to express our love for God and for our neighbor in everyday life. Let us allow LOVE to overflow into our relationships by building each other up in Christ!

DIRECTIONS:

- Make a conscious effort to see Jesus in everyone you meet each day.
- Show our love to the Lord by supporting community initiatives that address the needs of our neighbor.

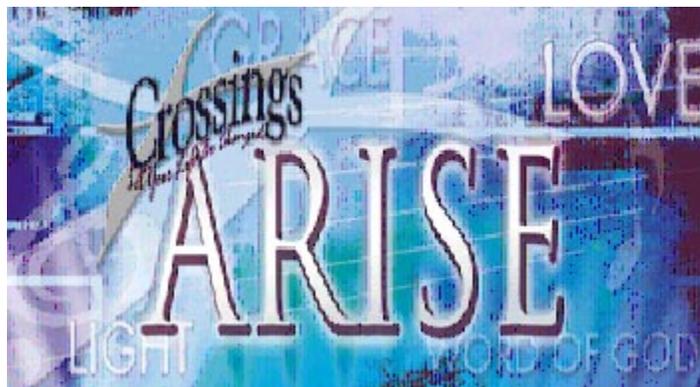
Community Calendar

Nov 3-5, Singles Encounter #17.

Graymoor Spiritual Center Garrison, NY
contacts: Marion Balcon #848-391-0811 or Emil/Baby Canlas 551-265-0719.

Nov 3-5, Marriage Encounter #28.

Don Bosco Marian Shrine, Haverstraw, NY
contact: Bong/Merle Encarnacion 908-654-7454, or any members of ME #27.



Nov 10-12, John 6 Crossing #7 Retreat.

Ramada Limited, South Plainfield
contacts: Reggie/Orange Avisado or Boyet/Zita Cruz.

Nov 19, LSS #27 Grand Reunion.

St. Mary's Auditorium, 1-5 p.m.

Nov 18-19, Prayer Counseling Seminar.

(covenanted disciples only & make your own room reservation) Ramada Limited, South Plainfield #908-753-8900 Conducted by: Elijah House Graduates - Noel/Letty Trillana, Lee Dela Fuente, Lith Golamco & Aimee Pena. Contact: Pastoral Ministry.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending

October 27, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission	\$ 3,747.00
Other Collections	\$ 11,398.00
Total Collections	\$ 15,145.00

"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above."

New BLD Newark Ministry Assignments

In line with the emergence of new district leadership five months ago, the DCS of BLD Newark sought to infuse the community ministries with a new spiritual wind of servant leadership and servant-hearted membership. In the process, a new set of coordinators were brought up from more recent ME classes and many disciples who have served more than 3 years in their ministries have been reassigned to new ministries, most of them in accordance with their preferences.

Ministry coordinators serve upon the discernment and discretion of the DCS. They are the extensions of the DCS' authority on the ministry level for the implementation of the community's vision/mission as well as for the fostering of community values, norms and policies. Among their major responsibilities are to provide pastoral care for their members and assist in the development of their ministry gifts. Like their members, they are also expected to model good witnessing of covenant life to all brothers and sisters in the community.

Ministry members participate in community life primarily through their attendance in Worship, their ministry work and in their Word Sharing with other members of their ministry. They are encouraged as expressed in the community norm on availability, to be always ready to serve in whatever capacity their ministry and the community needs them to be diligent, orderly, and productive in the performance of their work. Secondary ministry members share their charisms and talents in the ministry as long as it doesn't interfere with their work in their primary ministry.

As we all look ahead to another exciting period of fruitful service to the Lord, we take courage and encouragement from Ephesians 4:12-16: ***Living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into Him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting***

Spiritual Director - Fr. Paul Lehman

District Servant Leader - Rene Castaneda

EVANGELIZATION Stewards -Nestor & Bebec LAXINA

LSA - ***Raffy/Maris OBRERA**, Vic/Mila **MALANTIC**, Rennie/Madonna **RASAL**, Frank/Betty **VALERIANO**, Joey/Gemma **REYES**
LITURGY - **Ed/Nanie DE LOS REYES**, Serge/Mahyeen **BERNATCHEZ**, Tony/Juliet **MABALOT**, Ver/Diana **NACION**, Ed/Amy **OLEGARIO**
MLA - ***Gary/Mil CAMACHO**, Ed/Tess **EUSEBIO**, Babot & Tess **FARINAS**, Frank/Atet **MENDONEZ**, Vic/Becky **NAPENAS**, Glenn/Luz **SANTOS**, Aldo/Meg **PANGILINAN** (2ND)
FLA - ***Manny/Nette MANGUIAT**, Rene/Cielo **ARRIBE** (2ND), Fidel/Leggie **LIM** (2ND), Reggie/Fil **MALABANAN** (2ND), Rennie/Madonna **RAZAL** (2ND)
PRAISE - ***Randy/Beth TRINIDAD**, Dodie/Susan **AGLIBUT**, Bong/Flor **BACULIO**, Bing/Sue **DUMA**, Benru/Elsa **ETCUBANAS**, Ed/Susan **FABE**, Nick/Winnie **FELICIANO**, Norby/Way **GOMEZ**, Libby **GUTIERREZ**, Bobbi/Genie **LUARDO**, Reggie/Fil **MALABANAN**, Gerry/Tonette **PAGDONSALAN**, Gerry/Remy **POLICARPIO**, Virgil/Olie **QUIAMBAO**, Fred/Purie **SALAR**, Ricky/Nards **SANTOS**
SOLO PARENTS **Bobby/Dolly FERNANDEZ**, Nestor/Letty **DE GUZMAN** (SPE8), Vic/Dee **LIM** (SPE9)
EVANGELIZATION SERVICES - **Casey/Malyn TANSECO**, Dom/Jessie **DELA CRUZ**, Al/Mariter **OMPOD**, Aldo/Meg **PANGILINAN**

FORMATION Stewards -George & Cathy DEL FIERRO

DISCIPLING - ***Gerry/Gigi CABUNYAG**, Roger/Pina **COQUIA**, Romy/Dading **CUY**, Ollie/Annie **FELIBRICO**, Henry/Aida **KORYAN**, Sam/Rory **OLASO**, Manny/ Judy **SAN LUIS**, Bong/Blandie **MONTEMAYOR** (2ND)
INTERCESSORY - ***Jun/Fely ESCOBER**, Ike **ALIMARIO**, John/Beth **ALONZO**, Rene/Cielo **ARRIBE**, Lando/Dory **BONIFACIO**, Joel/Lani **HERNANDEZ**, Danny/Cora **LABUNG**, Benny/Fanny **RODRIGUERA**
SERVICE - ***Trif/Efi COL**, Rolly/Adele **CAMPOSAGRADO**, Rex/Bobut **GONGOB**, Joey/Lheena **JOSE**, Ed/Myrna **MAGADIA**, Carlos/Fe **MASISADO**, Mon/Leonie **MARIAZETA**
TEACHING - ***Jovy/Emily LUCERO**, Ding/Emma **DE BORJA**, Zaldy/Bing **ESPINOSA**, Paby/Pauline **IBAROLLA**, Sundee/Neneng **IKALINA**, Charlie/Weng **LAROBIS**, Oddie/Jho **MARTIN**,

George/Maryann McGEHRIN, Rey/Pen PEREZ, King/Arlene RIGOR, Rudy/Rita SANTOS,
Rene/Ditas TOLENTINO

WITNESS DEVELOPMENT- * *Joey/Linda VIOLA*, Richard/Lee DELA FUENTE

WORD - **Robin/Amy GUIAO*, Theo & Eric AMADOR, Fidel/Leggie LIM, Bong/Blandie
MONTEMAYOR, Joey/Cynthia REYES, Benny/Sally SANTIAGO, Reggie/Orange AVISADO
(2nd), Bobbie/Genie LUARDO (2ND), Oddie/Jho MARTIN (2ND), Frank/Malou VENADAS (2ND)

MANAGEMENT Stewards -Frank & Sally BELARMINO

SECRETARIAT - * *Jun/Zeny ISIDRO*, Roger/Kookie BESA, Jonas/Emy CEBEDO, Chito/Olive,
ENCARNACION, Keem/Gigi ESPEJON, Ding/Cora FADRI, Fil/Hum FLORES, Ver/Addie LIMTIAN
Nestor/Nora LOPEZ, Joe/Helen MADRIGAL, August/Carmen SOTO Art/Yen ARMAN (2ND)

TREASURY - **Bert/Helen PIE*, Jun/Geng BUSTOS, Tony/Fely CARRERA, Angel/Lucille JOSE
Chito/Josie MANGAHIS, Flor/Gen MANGASI, Angel/Lisa MIJARES, Louie/Cholly RELUCCIO,
Joven/Lisa SORIANO

TECHNICAL- * *Manolo/Mely ROMERO*, Allan/Aida VILLANUEVA

ISAIAH 58- * *Kelly/Tess CONCEPCION*, Ruben/Luz AMARANTE, Ben/Letty CHUA,
Butching & Edna REYNOSO

BOARD OF TRUSTEES- *DCS*, Kelly/Tess CONCEPCION, Jun/Jane ENTRADA, Jun/Zeny ISIDRO,
Chito/Josie MANGAHIS, Manny/Arlene MANGALONZO, Bert/Helen PIE, Manolo/Mel ROMERO

MISSION Stewards -Joe & Beth BALUYOT

PARISH- * *Tony/Zeny GARCIA*, Emma/Inma ANYANWU, Mon/Sandy CAMPOMANES, Nick/Lita
CENTENO, Long CRUZADA, Pete/Betty DELA CRUZ, Cris/Ampy ESCOBINAS, Fred/Mila
MANANGHAYA, Art/Melba NANO, Charlie/Nette OPINION, Joe/Lanie RESTAINO, Romy/Yvette
SILAO, Rey/Rose ZOLETA

DISTRICT (INCLUDES MEDICAL MISSION)- *Nong/Tricia BUSTOS*, Noel/Marilyn ALEJAN
Mario/Susan BORJA, Ted/Gilda BRIONES, Audie/Vulet CHONG, Mostly/Ling GARCIA, Mel/Remy
HERNANDEZ, Oliver/Flory SANTOS, Eric & Theo AMADOR (2ND)

DIOCESAN - * *Angel/Aida CALILAP*, Norie/Miriam ABES, Ency/Baby ALBERTO,
Tony/Baby ARAMBULO, Linda/Charlie BOLCER, Dodong/Loring DEMIGILIO, Nong/Soc
PUNZALAN, Oliver/Marissa RANGEL, Sal/Marie RUSSO, Frank/Malou VENADAS

DIP SHEPHERDS - Phoenix - Chito/Aileen CIOCON, Interim-Wash DC - Jun/Jane ENTRADA,
Albany NY - Nick/Island RAAGAS, LA – Jojo/Malou MIRASOL, Rockland - Ramon/Bingle CHAN

GAWAD KALINGA * *Willie/Myrna DELUNA*, Boyie/Stella HUEL GAS

PASTORAL Stewards -Lito & Gigi VIBAR

JOHN 6 - * *Boyet/Zita CRUZ*, Reggie/Orange AVISADO, Zer/Charlotte FLORENTINO, Boy/Maris
GUZMAN, Ilona MONTEPARA, Ronnie/Mickee PACIA, Ernest/Nellie SUN, Lilibeth ZANDUETA

MARK 10 - * *Reuben/Cherry VIBAR*, Tony/Tates ABAD, Vic/Nanette ARCEO, Jayjay/Aby
CASTANEDA(2ND), Eddie/Nene GUTIERREZ, Nelson/Noemi ILAGAN, Vic/Gigi MUNANTE,
Tony/Theresa NWANERI, Joe/Barbara PASCOGUIN, Rizza RUAYA, Marie SOMERA,
Cookie/Tess MONTEMAYOR (2ND),

PASTORAL- * *Dens/Mina MANTES*, Nonie/Imelda ACUNA, Emil/Karen CANILLAS, Carlota CASALS,
Juancho/Carrie CIOCON, Romy & Leni CHAN, Ed/Nore EGUIA, Bert/Lita GUERRERO,
Jose/Helen NAVARRO, , Boy/Des PARKER, Al/Aimee PENA, Ed/Pat SANTOS, Mat/Luz

TALAG, Noel/Letty TRILLANA, Serg/Mahyeen BERNATCHEZ (2ND), Ed/Amy OLEGARIO (2ND)

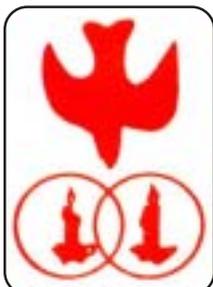
SINGLES - * *Manny/Arlene MANGALONZO*, Emil/Baby CANLAS - SE16, Bong/Ruby DAVID - SE17

YOUTH - * *Alan/Tess CAM*, Chie FRANCISCO, Larry/Leni DE GUZMAN, Mike/Ciony LUZZI,
Mario/Cecil SALONGA, Tony/Alice YANZA

GOLDEN YEARS- * *Tony/Cely ROSAL*, Jun/Norma LUNA, Fe PAKULA



Weekend Wonder For ME 28 Class



“In Christ, we were chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the one who accomplishes all things according to the intention of His will.”
(Ephesians 1:11)

The just-concluded ME 28 class saw the participation of 18 couples, a widow and a nun in a Spirit-filled weekend held at the Don Bosco Marian Shrine in Haverstraw, NY. Guided by our Father, His Son and the Holy Spirit, the candidates heard and were deeply touched by the testimonies and teachings of the Pastoral Team, headed by Fr. Pete Literal, Nestor and Becbec Laxina and Casey and Malyn Tanseco. It is through their anointed sharings that the class opened up their hearts to the love and the healing mercies of our Lord, and also brought smiles and joy on their faces.

The community wishes to extend their blessings and loving arms in welcoming the new members of the BLD Community: Bonny and Eu Eutiquia, Al and Au Cinco*,

(continue on page 3, col 2)

A Warm Welcome To SE #17

Once again, God’s love for mankind was beautifully manifested on November 3-5, 2006! He has made it possible for 38 young adults to realize that they are loved and precious in His eyes. Hearing some of each other’s testimonies, they rejoiced to see the number of young adults of their age also searching for God. God has invited them to an intimate personal relationship with Him towards holiness, expressed in their sincere repentance in the sacrament of Penance. They have responded wonderfully with their eagerness to share the Lord’s love

(continue on page 4, col 2)

COUNSELS

“Sacrificial Giving”

WORD: Kgs 17:10-16; Ps146:7,8-9, 9-10; Heb 9:24-28; Mk 12:41-44

THEME: We love the Lord with all our being when we give the little we have, trusting in God’s provision

ORDER: *“Do not be afraid to give....The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry”*
(1Kgs 17:13-14)

REFLECTION:

“Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.” (Mk 12: 43-44)

Today’s gospel from Mark seems to have a lot to do with money. Giving money is good. In fact, I believe that we all like to give. And we are good at it. If someone in the community came forward with a problem; financial or otherwise; we would respond quickly. Most of us are a witness to that and some are beneficiaries to that. However, there’s more to today’s gospel than just money and giving.

We know that God wants us to give, love and help where we can. We also know that Jesus calls us to look after our church, our community and the people around us. We know that we have brothers and sisters who are less fortunate than we are. We know all that. And that places us firmly into the story we read today from St. Mark.

(continue on page 4, col 1)

God’s Promise for the Week

“The Lord keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry.” (Ps 146:7)

Faith To Forgive

One of the main themes of the Gospel of Luke is discovering God's mercy. In His love and compassion, He forgives our sins. As disciples, we are called to love others unconditionally, even those who hurt us, as well as to forgive and lovingly correct those who lead others into sin.

Several years ago, the cover of a magazine grabbed the world's attention. It was a picture of John Paul II and the would-be-assassin Mehmet Ale Agca. The pope held the hand that holds the gun that was meant to kill him at St. Peter's Square. The pope's visit to Rome's Rebibbia Prison was an extraordinary moment of grace when he forgave the prisoner and said, "I forgave him as a brother". Violence was transformed. Like the pope, we can offer forgiveness to people who hurt us. Like Our Lord on the cross, we can say, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Forgiveness is not immediate restoration of trust nor does it mean, "We just had to take it". It does not depend on the offender's repentance, as the case of deceased family members or friends. It does not begin with, "It's okay, just forget it". Forgiveness is a decision – a process of involving action on our part. It begins with us not with the alleged offender. It is a journey that begins with alienation and moves toward reconciliation. It takes courage because it involves facing the enemies of our heart.

When we feel disconnected from a relationship with others and with God, we experience a sense of separateness. Disillusionment, failed expectations, addiction, feelings of unbelongingness to a place or group, social or emotional alienation become an inevitable part and fabric of our daily lives. Like the pope, we can begin to visit our own prisons – places of hurt and resentment that imprison us. We need to find new paths through our brokenness and become transformed to imitate God's love and mercy.

"Return to me with your whole heart (Joel 2:12) or as the psalmist sings, "A clean heart create in me, O God (Ps 51:12) or from the Evangelist Mark, "Repent and believe in the Gospel" speak of this transformation. We are called to a "CHANGE" – a "CONVERSION" of heart, actions and perceptions.

(continue on page 3, col 2) 

We Get and Forget

When I started my walk with the Lord, I realized so many valuable blessings that have been given to me and my family. Simple daily circumstances that unfold in our lives show God working in my life. The morning sunshine that wakes me up every morning brings me new hope for the day, especially if I had a bad day the previous day. I feel that a new day is a fresh start. The laughter and giggles of my children brightens the family atmosphere in our home. It warms the house with joy and a sense of belonging. I also receive small Thank you notes from my six year old daughter made of pictures and scribbles. The colorful pictures she creates from her small hands touch me in a deeper way. It reminds me of the words "thank you "and I love you". Too often these words are said spontaneously and more often the

meanings of these words are not sincerely coming from the heart. If my daughter remembers to thank me for being there, I begin to ask myself, "When do I thank the Father for all the things and blessings He has given me?"

In Luke 17:18, "*Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?*" I am called to be more thankful to God the Father because without Him, I am nothing. I get all the countless blessings that I sometimes forget to thank God for all these graces that come my way. I have learned that we can express our thanksgiving to God the Father in different ways—like personal prayers, group prayers and worships, joining the Eucharistic celebration and

communing with God by being one with Him through His Body and Blood. Aside from this, I clearly realized that this thanksgiving must be expressed outwardly to others especially our family, friends and community. This is the only way that we can live our faith. I learned to forget all the negative factors that affect my relationship with my family and close that chapter in life and move on. Forgiveness will flow once I learn to forget all the situations that hinder me from having a harmonious and spiritual life. We are all called to live our faith by living a grateful life to the Father and by not being forgetful of His overflowing mercy.

Lord, I thank you again for all that we are and all that we have. Everything we are, O Lord we owe it to YOU and we offer them all for Your greater glory.



A Servant's Attitude



As we work in our assigned ministries, we are often times faced with diverse attitudes, ideas and personal idiosyncrasies from our brothers and sisters in the community. Sometimes we feel, in our thoughts and outwardly through our words and actions that these diversities become a source of frustration if other ideas do

not coincide with ours. When our ministry contemplates its direction in serving Him, sometimes we have preconceived ideas on how our ministry should work. Our way with the Lord differs at times.

When this happens, we are guilty of human endeavor rather as true servants. Serving the Lord has no ifs or buts', this way and that way. Human precepts oftentimes get incorporated in what we think the Lord wants us to do. The result is righteousness in our own way. While it is true that the Holy Spirit touches us in different ways, there is a common pathway and this direction had been written for us to follow as we grow in faithfulness to our Lord.

As servants in Christ, we cannot confer any form of distinction or recognition to each other especially in our ministry work. Praising and acknowledging each other's work should be discouraged, if not eliminated. We cannot count the ways we serve Him or expect something in return. We serve because we love Him. To be a servant of the Lord is not only a privilege but a duty. Unwarranted self esteem and spiritual pride have no place in a servant's heart, for the heart of a servant rests in His words. It is imperative that the exacting rigors and responsibilities of a servant of Christ be followed with perseverance, conformity, dedication, fidelity and without reservations as Jesus followed faithfully the will of His Father.

There is no human measure of authentic discipleship in Christ. Only He knows. We should do our God given duty to our Lord and master, to do less is not a servant's attitude. We should have an open mind to the Lord and embrace His kingdom with all our hearts, so we will be able to hear His commands, see His ways, speak His words and do His will. We have to try to carry His cross and be cognizant of the arduousness of servant hood, whether we like it or not... We should have a heart that is full of love, peaceable, sincere, truthful, humble, gentle,

(continue on next column)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERCESSORY MINISTRY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at Bldnewark.com

TEACHINGS

- Nov 17** *(After Worship)*
Response BBS – Solo Parents
Christian Giving - Singles
John 6
Mark 10
- Nov 18** New Creation Realities, GIP Prayer,
Praise & Worship – LSS 27
Encounter with Jesus, Luke,
and John – LSS 26

ME 28 Class (cont. from page 1)

Greg and Martha De Pol, Pauling Estalilla, Sister Theresina Estalilla, Nonoy and Car Estiler, Boying and Celia Felicilda, Julius and Gaye Foronda*, Alvin and Nelia Mangubat, Lee and Tess Mende, Ned and Vi Montecillo*, Benjie and Beth Ombrete*, James and Freida Pecardal, Larry and Helen Pighini, Vito and Peggy Quattrocchi, Roy and Rachelle Santos*, Noli and Cynthia Sarabia*, Ferdie and Aileen Umahon*, Raul and Joy Wong and Walter and Jean Zissler. Efren and Yollie Cruz are the ME 28 Class Shepherds.

* Class Coordinators

Faith to forgive (cont. from page 2)

The journey of forgiveness takes patience and time. It invites us to embrace our broken hearts, confront our reactions, refocus our perceptions, work with our resentment or anger, and speak our truth with love. We make forgiveness happen. We watch, we listen, we bow in prayer, we lean toward the future, and we stand in hope. We resolve to do our best and God takes care of the rest.

A servant's...(continuation)

merciful, and compliant not jealous or desiring recognition. This is possible if "our will" dies and "thy will" reigns in our hearts. We should be subordinate to each other and enslave ourselves to Christ to really have a servant's attitude.

"When you have done all you have been commanded, say 'we are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do.'" (Lk 17: 10)

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

If Jesus was sitting down here watching as we put our envelopes or love offerings in the baskets, he would see a lot of giving. However, the question is, would we be credited in the same class as that widow in the gospel who gave everything she had – her two small copper coins? Would we be worthy of special notice? As an example of real sacrificial giving?

Like the widow in the temple, the widow of Zarephath also gave everything she had for God's work, she gave her son's, and her own, last meal to a foreigner, to the prophet Elijah, whom she believed was a man of God. Neither of the two widows in today's scripture readings knew what the outcome of their giving would be for themselves. But both of them had the faith to really risk - to really sacrifice - to really give all that one has to God. To really give all that one has for what is right and good and true in the trust that God somehow, somehow, will use that sacrifice and honor it.

Honor it not for the sake of us - the giver, rather honor it for the sake of the work of God in this world. Honor it for the sake of the Kingdom, for the sake of others in need, for the sake of the peace that God promises to the world.

How do we give in comparison to this? How much do we sacrifice for the work of bringing health and hope to the world, to this community? What kind of faith do we have? We hope to be like the widow in our scripture tonight, giving all we have, even our whole living, remembering God to the final hours of our lives. But are we like them?

Brothers and sisters, there are times when we are uncertain of our calling. We do not know if we are really able to serve God. We often feel inadequate when we look at ourselves in comparison to others. Many of us come with nothing evident to offer. We bring fear, vulnerability, neediness, confusion, embarrassment, and loneliness. We bring our poverty. And that is OK! But during those times, remember to trust in God by offering what we have. What I am talking about here is not just generosity. It is not just giving, or tithing, or donating. It is not even about money but about trust and faith in God. Remember the widow of Zarephath who gave her last meal and the widow who gave her last coins, and trust - as they did - and as Jesus did - when He gave His life for us on the cross.

DIRECTIONS:

- ♥ Do not give from your surplus wealth.
- ♥ Give tithes faithfully and from your heart.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Nov 10-12** **John 6 Crossing Retreat**
Ramada Limited, So. Plainfield,
Contact: John 6 Ministry
- Nov. 18-19** **Prayer Counseling Seminar**
(for covenanted disciples)
7:30-9:30pm (Saturday)
7:30-6:30pm (Sunday)
Ramada Limited, So. Plainfield, NJ
by: Elijah House
Graduates- Noel/Letty Trillana,
Lee Dela Fuente, Lith Golamco &
Aimee Pena
Contact: Pastoral Ministry
- Nov. 19** **LSS #27 Reunion**
St. Mary's Church, 1-5pm

*May the blessing and favor of the
Lord be upon those who are
celebrating their birthdays and
wedding anniversaries this week.*

SE #17 (cont. from page 1)

to others in their lives. May God's glory shine in their lives reflecting who we are - His image and likeness.

Let us all give a warm welcome to our new SE members, namely: Ames Abdon*, Nani Adlawan, PA Advincula*, Jan Austria, Mariel Belmonte*, Raquel Casino, Ashley Clack, Neil Clarin*, Triff Col, Nina Collado, Pam Cotorino*, Justin Cruz, Jennifer Cuevas, Lea de la Cruz*, Hanna de Vera, Kat del Fierro, Michael Etcubanas, Len Etcubanas*, Mayen Garcia, Phoebe Garcia, Dave Gonda, Dens Gutierrez, Joel Jimenez, Aggie Lukaszewicz, Jen Mabalot*, AE Mangalili, Jeff Mendiola, Christian Mendoza*, Mark Mercado, Russell Monasterio, Joyce Padilla, Rey Paguio, Ron Paguio, Tricia Pajela, Tim Paule, Artis Santos, Coy Soquite, Hedi Villanueva*. We pray that they may continue to be steadfast in their walk with the Lord. God is truly good to all of us!

* Class Coordinators

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending Nov. 3, 2006

Tithes/Love Offering/Mission	\$ 3,210.00
Other Collections	\$ 8,987.00
TOTAL COLLECTIONS	\$ 12,197.00

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.



Crossing Into Jesus' Warm Embrace

It's another weekend of joy and excitement for the new John 6 Crossing Graduates #7. Another weekend where the new members were touched and renewed by their faith, and looking forward to attend to their new ministry, John 6.

The youth moderators, auxies, youth sharers, Fr Paul, Fr. Dave, as well as, the adult members of John 6 did their share this weekend given to us by the Lord. They worked effortlessly and happily for His vineyard for the favorite members of His kingdom- our children.

The new members of John 6 are: James and Gracie Abes, Lea and Ianna Alhambra, Tia Arias, Tommy Avisado, Trisha Bolasig, Rachelle Camposagrado, Justin Canillas, Jan Cepeda, Jeffrey Chatterjie, Jethro Cruz, Mitchell Cruz, Elle Espinosa, Jesraye Flores, Darren Guiang, Erika Lim, Justin Lucero, Bryan Manansala, TJ Matias, Harley Minano, Seb Moral, Jeanelle Nacion, Alexa Orosa, Jamie Pagdonsalan, Nico Pejo, Teptep Racaza, Meg Siojo, Timothy Talbot, Jess Uy, Tiffany and Paulette Villarin

We welcome the new John 6 members. May they continue to strengthen their faith, trust in the Lord, and keep their commitment to Him. May the Lord's blessings be upon them and their families. Amen!

"He made no distinction between us and them, for by faith He purified their hearts" (Acts 15:19).

Bible Trivia

The Naked Truth

Can we speak of the Bible and trivia in the same breath? Yes, we can.

1. Which prophet walked around naked for three years?
2. Who went naked as a way of wailing over the fate of Jerusalem?
3. Where did a follower of Jesus go to escape an angry mob by running away naked?
4. Which disciple, busy at his daily work, was caught naked by Jesus?
5. Who embarrassed his wife by shamelessly exposing himself while dancing for joy?

COUNSELS

"Are You Ready for Jesus' Second Coming"

WORD: Dn 12:1-3; Psalm 16:5, 8-11;
Heb 10:11-14, 18; Mk 13:24-32

THEME: We love the Lord with all our being when we are prepared to stand before the Son of Man.

ORDER: Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to stand before the Son of Man.

REFLECTION:

God's message in this Sunday's Readings comes across without any ambiguity or doubt. Be ready to face judgment for nobody knows neither the day nor the hour when we will be called from this life. A practical way to see how we stand in relation to God and to the things of this world, is for each one of us to ask ourselves: How would I fare if I were called to render an account of stewardship tonight?

When we speak of accountability, there are two things the Lord asks of us. Love God with all our hearts, mind and strength, and love our neighbors as our self. These are God's commandments and it is through these virtues that we can enter the Kingdom of God. We will be judged on the degree and quality of our love.

Jesus stresses that the test of our love for Him lies not in words but in actions. We are called to be True Witnesses and to become humble servants to each other. There are many tangible ways of showing love and respect for one another. We have listed some and it is our prayer that you embrace them too:

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God's Promise for the Week

"You will show me the path to life, abounding joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever." (Ps 16:11)

Lord, Please Let Me See

“What do you want me to do for you?” He replied, “Lord, please let me see.” (Lk 18:41)

In a few weeks, I would be marking my second year with BLD. Tracing back from my first introduction to “my walk with the Lord”, I ponder this question: “Am I able to see Jesus yet?” In this passage from Luke, we are told of the deep faith that the blind beggar displayed. Evidently, he heard of Jesus of Nazareth, and of all the good works that Jesus has been accomplishing. Although this beggar has not actually witnessed Jesus’ miracles, he believed. He didn’t need further proof. All he had were other people’s accounts of Jesus’ works. Immediately, he believed that he is the son of God, and he is able to deliver him from his infirmity.

How many times has Jesus made me see and I was reluctant to believe? I, of all people, should be most thankful to the Lord at every moment of my life. He was there when I sat alone in the neonatal ICU with my 27-week old premie desperately praying to the Blessed Mother. He was there on Sept. 11, 2001 when my husband decided to leave an hour early for work, providentially avoiding the horrors that might have been. He was there four years ago when my daughter was diagnosed with stage 3 cancer. How many more times does he have to perform major miracles in my life before I unabashedly declare: “Yes, Lord, I believe! I see that You are my savior, my deliverer, my rock, my fortress!”

Yet, as soon as things are made good for me, and my life gears back into its normal, comfortable hum, I instantly forget of God’s mercy and goodness. My prayer life becomes routine, monotonous, uninspired. I become blind once again, and unable to see all the goodness, the little miracles that He allows into my life everyday.

To walk with the Lord, I must be able to see Him in everything and everyone around me: my family, my work, my friends, my brothers and sisters in Christ, even my adversaries. I must always be able to recognize him in the people and situations that I face everyday. And, like the blind beggar in Jericho, I must be willing to fully rely on His grace that He will equip me with the sight to discern what it is He wills me to accomplish.

Lord Jesus, let me be able to see you in all the circumstances of my life. Let me be able to discern Your will, and make it my own. Let me possess faith as deep as that of the blind beggar from Jericho, so that I may see the path leading to you. Amen.

Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions (Lk 12:15)

A Day Of Thanksgiving



Thanksgiving was a celebration by the Pilgrims who landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts on November 21, 1620. A year after they landed, they gathered together to rejoice and thank God for their bountiful harvest, and were joined by the Indian King Massasoit, who, with ninety men, brought five deers, and with all abundance in food, feasted for three days. Because of its proximity to Christmas and as set by Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1039, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November.

We are all pilgrims in this world, traveling to our final destination. Like the Pilgrims of 1620, we always look up to God who makes all things happen to become what we are, or where we are today. I will always remember the day I landed on American soil. I was elated because my dreams finally came true. Every time that day comes (June 20), I say a prayer of thanksgiving, and celebrate it in a special way.

Filipinos show their gratitude by offering prayers or a thanksgiving mass, and prepare bounteous Filipino dishes and delicacies on every important day. Together with others, we offer food in Church, sing ‘God Bless America’ on Thanksgiving Day and share our heritage, gifts and good fortune with everybody including the less fortunate. We are grateful for the opportunities we are blessed with, from good paying jobs to abundant food; but most especially the gift of freedom and democracy. We have so much to thank God for, even in the midst of difficult times. They are numberless as the stars above. Have we forgotten God’s promises to us?

Whenever and wherever we gather to eat, we say our thanks to God, our Divine Provider. Native Indians give thanks to a higher power who gives life and its wonders; the Jews celebrate Sukkot to give thanks to God for the earth’s bounty. For us, Catholics, our Eucharistic celebration is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which we express our gratitude to God for all He has done. Everyday is a prayer of thanksgiving as

(continue on page 3, col 2) 

The Community Authority God Desires

Past and present relationships in community reveal different beliefs and attitudes toward authority and power and the related virtue of obedience.

Both leader and follower cannot exist without the other, implying their unity as the living body of Christ. Every God abiding disciple exercises some form of authority in community just as obedience is expected from everyone. Any distinction between them is merely functional, not essential. What is crucial is the relationship of love and trust in Christ.

United in diversity, authority is expressed through humility before God and obedience to the will of Him Who alone is called Father. It is never an expression of human pride and does not project shades of "infallibility." It is the experience of the mystery of God through the Spirit who guides the Church incarnate and exercised as mutual subordination of love in Christ.

All too often authority is confused with the power to compel others to do something. Such destroys the harmony of mutual relationship of a people uniquely guided by the will of God. It degenerates into disobedience and unfaithfulness, subjection and domination.

God gifted every man his freedom of choice, never forced anyone to follow Him. God spoke with authority but never imposed His will -even upon those who rejected, condemned, betrayed, crucified and killed His beloved Son. As such, the whole life and ministry of community should be like that of the Father, loving and forgiving, never dominant, demanding and condescending.

Those in authority must embody the attitude of the Father. Their responsibility is to respond to the needs of everyone *'with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our strength and with all our mind'* (Luke 10:27). As such authority means, above all, love towards one's neighbor *'with one's whole power'* (Mk 12:30). It is not control over others, but commitment to them, even to *'the least of one's brethren'* (Mt 25:45), *'even unto death'* (John 15:13).

Present structures in community will continue to exist for order. They should be able to follow the mutual relationship of Father and Son, imitate Christ, our Lord, who on several occasions was asked by what authority He acted and to which He never answered explicitly. Rather, He responded by the way He lived, by the authority of love incarnate.

Authority duly instituted by decree is arbitrary autocracy and is outside Christ-like love. It demands honor and respect more than it gives and upbuilds. The authority God desires for our fellowship is the kind we all espouse, one that is life-giving and lived in the *'laying down of life for one's neighbor'* (John 10:11).

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERCESSORY MINISTRY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at Bldnewark.com

EVANGELIZATION MINISTRY

Everlasting Light tickets now on sale at \$20
Show date/time : Dec 17 at 2PM and 7PM
Contact-Reggie/Fil Malaban (908) 522-1154

TEACHINGS

Nov 17 Response BBS – Solo Parents
(*After* Christian Giving - Singles
Worship) John 6
Mark 10

Nov 18 New Creation Realities, GIP, Prayer,
(*1-6 PM* Praise & Worship – **LSS 27**

St. Mary's) Encounter with Jesus (Luke,
and John) – **LSS 26**

CMP2 Part 1 (Discipline, Speech,
Fraternal Correction, Handling
Conflict, Repairing Wrongdoing)
– **LSS 25**

Thanksgiving (*cont. from page 2*)

the priests celebrate the Eucharist daily throughout the world.

This Thanksgiving Day, I want to thank God for His whole creation that fills me up; His grace and blessings, especially to the soldiers who are making the ultimate sacrifice of their lives, fighting for freedom abroad. On bended knees, let us consecrate this great nation to its Patroness - Mary, the Immaculate Conception, and ask God, in Jesus name, to make America whole again, leading all nations in prayer; that soon, our soldiers will be home to celebrate more thanksgiving.

Together, let us sing GIVE THANKS WITH A GRATEFUL HEART, GOD BLESS AMERICA, and finally, THANK YOU, LORD !!!

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your request known to God. (Phil 4:6)

Bible Trivia Answers:

1. Isaiah (20:3) 2. The prophet Micah (1:8) 3. Gethsemane (Mark 14:51-52) 4. Simon Peter (John 21:7) 5. King David (2 Samuel 6:20)

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

1. Jesus is in others who seek Him and His ways, as I do. I am called to love others as Jesus loves them. All of us are called to be servants to each other and to the mission of bringing the good news of Jesus.
2. I am called to join others in community. I am called to be a disciple of Jesus and to invite others to discipleship as well. We are called to form together the Body of Christ, the Kingdom of God on earth.
3. In living the call of community, we build on the love that Jesus gives us and shared with one another. But before I can love them, I must first show them respect and give them their due in justice. While love is a higher responsibility, it is empty without justice. I must see myself as responsible for the service I give and accountable for the service I offer. I must give the gift of accountability, the mature expression of responsible love.
4. I am accountable for the work I do; I must do the work with integrity and excellence deserving of the Lord. I am accountable for my brethren in community. I am accountable for them before God. I will not mock or disparage those who abide by the standards of faithful and diligent stewardship.
5. I must obey the appointed community leaders when they speak in God's Name or govern in God's authority. I must feel free to express my disagreement with propriety and respect yet submit to their discerned decisions. I must keep Jesus' witness to the truth that love is the heart of service, and service is the heart of leadership. If we do not serve, we can not lead. God ordains order; and leaders are accountable to the Lord for order in the community.
6. I will serve in the function I am appointed to, according to the needs of the community – not according to my preferences. I am chosen to serve according to the gifts I can offer and to my faithfulness to the covenant, rather than by reasons of affinity, convenience or favor.
7. I fully understand that the greatest service I offer the community is to love my brothers and sisters in community. The love I give others, exactly as Jesus loves me, is unconditional. If I do not receive love from my brothers and sisters, perhaps it is because I have not given it first to them. I

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Nov. 18-19** **Prayer Counseling Seminar**
(for covenanted disciples)
7:30-9:30pm (Saturday)
7:30-6:30pm (Sunday)
Ramada Limited, So. Plainfield, NJ
by: Elijah House
Graduates- Noel/Letty Trillana,
Lee Dela Fuente, Lith Golanco &
Aimee Pena
Contact: Pastoral Ministry
- Nov. 19** **LSS #27 Reunion**
St. Mary's Church, 1-5pm

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

Counsels (cont. from col.1)

can not reap what I have not sown. I can not receive what I have failed to give. So when I can not see love in the community, I need to first ask myself and others who know me, have I offered my love first before expecting love from others? Or have I demanded love without first offering them my own?

God is like a gardener. He grows roots deep in the ground of grace that we might "hold fast till the end" so that we will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. We lack no spiritual gift as we wait for the Second Coming of the Son of Man. Though we do not know when the appointed come will come, we stand assured by God's faithfulness to His covenant to us that nothing will go wrong for the one who waits for the Lord with confident expectation. He will strengthen us to the end.

DIRECTIONS:

- ♥ Be accountable in everything you think, say and do.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending Nov. 10, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fast for Poor **\$ 4,771.00**

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 12 Issue 46

Bulletin Edition

November 24, 2006

PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR WEEKEND

“Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother’s eye.” (Lk 6:42)

The scriptural passage above was the Order for the just-concluded Prayer Counseling Seminar held last Nov 18 and 19 at the Ramada Inn. The intensive 2-day seminar was conducted by Counselors Noel and Letty Trillana, Lith Golamco, Aimee Peña, and Lee dela Fuente, all graduates from the Elijah House, a ministry founded to train Christian counseling for inner healing.

As in the past, Day 1 was started with praise and worship, this time led by Libby Gutierrez of the Pastoral Ministry. It was immediately followed by the introduction of the four basic laws of Elijah, and enhanced by the inspiring talks and presentations on Recognition of Fruit-to-Root Patterns, Repentance and Restitution, Accomplishing Forgiveness, and lastly, Hearts of Stone and Inner Vows. Small group sessions and Q&A’s added flavor to the afternoon teachings. The day ended with a Eucharistic Celebration by Fr. Robert Ramirez, with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 12:00am. During the Celebration, each one presented his completed seminar questionnaire as a mass offering.

Day 2 opened with praise and worship led by Ver and Diana Nacion of the Pastoral Ministry, followed by enriching talks on Honoring Father and Mother, Basic Trust, Prenatal Sins and Wounds, and Performance Orientation. After lunch, the small groups continued on with their practicum, followed by Q&As, with a heartbreaking Counselor/Counselee Demo highlighting the afternoon session. As in the previous day, Day 2 closed with a Eucharistic Celebration by Fr. Chris Panlilio. The day wrapped up with the distribution of certificates to all participants.

A total of 109 covenanted members from both BLD Trenton and Newark attended the seminar. It is hoped that their participation will meet the Community’s objectives of enhancing its covenanted members’ pastoral and healing gifts through prayer counseling, and developing more prayer counselors for the Community. By God’s grace, the seminar turned out to be another weekend of His healing, mercy and love.

Counsels

“WHAT IS TRUTH?”

Word: Daniel 7:13-14; Psalm 93:1-2, 5; Revelation 1:5-8; John 18:33b-37

Theme: We love the Lord with all our being when we proclaim Jesus as King of our lives.

Order: “Listen to my voice.”

Reflection:

In celebrating the feast of Christ the King, we are confronted with the most significant question in the history of mankind. What is truth? Man has gone to the moon and achieved phenomenal strides in many areas of science and technology, yet still grapples with this age-old question. This Sunday’s Gospel reading could not be more appropriate for the one who was born to testify to the truth. It is very meaningful in that it reveals the central issue in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Although the reading was about Jesus’ trial, a deeper reflection reveals it was Pilate and his capacity to live the truth that was being tried. Jesus said, “I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.” John 18:37. Pilate brought himself to condemnation when he failed to listen to the voice of truth. Like Pilate, we too are tried by the way we behave when challenged by truth. Would you report an anomaly in your workplace despite the fact that it may cost you your job or that people may resent you? Sometimes the problem lies not in knowing the truth but, rather, in accepting and dealing with the truth.

Truth can be as simple as distinguishing black from white and as complex as in a jury *(continue on page 4)* 

GOD’S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

“His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away; his kingship shall not be destroyed” (Dan 7:14b)

GIVE ALL, NOT LEAST

“When Jesus looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasury and he noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, “I tell you truly this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood.” Lk. 21:1-4

The “poor” and the “needy” always have a special spot in our Lord Jesus Christ’s heart —the “poor” like the widow in this gospel account of Luke; those poor in spirit mentioned in The Beatitudes (Mt. 5:3); the five thousand men who followed Him across the Sea of Galilee that prompted Jesus to multiply the five loaves of bread and two fishes to feed them (Jn. 6:1-15); the many sick believers He cured and those leading sinful lives He transformed, as told in all four gospel accounts.

The poor widow had so much faith in the good Lord’s providence that she gave everything that she had. She completely placed her trust in the Lord and thought less of herself by not setting anything aside for her bare necessities but rather, she thought more of others. With this, she fulfilled God’s two greatest commandments in the gospel account of Mk. 12:30-31: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

In this present day and age, do we give like she did? The amount she gave maybe a mere pittance in our eyes but she definitely gave from her poverty and from her knowledge of God’s providential love. Or, do we give like the others in the gospel of Luke —though much more than two pennies but from our excesses? Spiritually, we become the ‘poor and needy’ —the ones who very much need God’s grace to know more about Him and His overwhelming generosity; the ones who have to know and feel our desperate need for Him; the ones who have to know that without Him, we are nothing and are lost. Just like the poor widow, let us humble ourselves before the Lord by surrendering to Him all our needs, hopes and desires because we have a God who loves us so deeply and generously takes care of all our needs. Let us empty ourselves before Him and follow His directions that we may deserve to be called His disciples.

“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.” (Mt 6:33)

WHAT IS APOLOGETICS?

“In the beginning. . .God.” The first words of the Bible (Gn1: 1) affirm an essential teaching of the Christian faith: *Before all else, God is*. It’s a reality that seems obvious to most Christians, yet many people doubt or deny it.

Challenges are often issued to other articles of the Christian faith as well, such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to specifically Catholic beliefs, such as the unique authority of the Pope. For this reason, Christians — and Catholic Christians in particular — often find themselves defending their beliefs in conversations with non-believers.

The Greek word for “defense” is *apologia*. Our English word “apology” is derived from it. In its classical definition, “apology” did not mean an admission of wrong, as the modern English word suggest. Rather, an apology was a defense or justification of a belief. For example, students of philosophy or the classics are familiar with Plato’s *Apology*: an account of Socrates’ defense of his teaching.

In the present context, then, “apologetics” refers to the reasonable defense of the Christian faith. It is one aspect of what our Lord Jesus talked about when he urged us to love God with our entire mind (Lk 10:27). Faith is not opposed to reason; in fact, reason, rightly understood, is a support to faith.

The foundations of Christian apologetics were laid by our Lord himself when he presented “many proofs” of his resurrection (Acts 1:3), including his appearance to skeptical, hard-nosed, “doubting” Thomas and the other apostles (Jn 20:24-29).

St. Paul likewise engaged in apologetics, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks of the truth of Christianity. The apostle’s approach to sharing and defending his faith should encourage Catholics today to follow his example.

What is a relic? A relic is an object, especially a piece of the body or a personal item of someone of religious significance, carefully kept with an air of veneration as a tangible memorial. The word relic comes from the Latin *reliquiae* (remains).

Why do we venerate relics? Since the earliest days of the Church, Christians showed deep respect and reverence for the remains of the holy men and women who were models of sanctity. Veneration is a way of both honoring the work that was accomplished by these saints, as well as asking that saint to help us on our pilgrim way though his/her prayerful intercession. As St. Thomas Aquinas writes in the *Summa Theologica*: “Wherefore in memory of them, we ought to honor any relics in a fitting manner, principally their bodies, which were temples of the Holy Spirit dwelling and operating in them, and destined to be likened to the body of Christ by the glory of the Resurrection.”

ST. ANDREW



Andrew, like his brother Simon Peter, was a fisherman. He became a disciple of the great St. John the Baptist, but when John pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Andrew understood that Jesus was greater. At once he left John to follow the Divine Master. Jesus knew that Andrew was walking behind Him, and turning back, He asked, "What do you seek?"

When Andrew answered that he would like to know where Jesus lived. Our Lord replied, "Come and see." From then on, he chose to follow Jesus. Andrew was thus the first disciple of Christ. Next, Andrew brought his brother Simon (St Peter) to Jesus and Jesus received him too, as His disciple. He promised to make them fishers of men, and they left their nets for good. It is believed that St. Andrew was responsible for spreading the tenets of Christian religion through Asia Minor and Greece. He is said to have been put to death on a cross, to which he was tied, not nailed, in order to prolong his sufferings. He lived two days in that state of suffering, still preaching to the people who gathered around the beloved Apostle.

We learned from this life story that God chose ordinary people like Andrew, and his brother Simon Peter, the fishermen, who can be disciples of God. Disciples of God can be ordinary people like you and I. Most people aren't really looking for Bible scholars who can explain everything to them. They need someone like you and I who can speak to them honestly from the heart about the greatest need in their life: the need to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is written: "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." (Rom 14:11)

We see that it is indispensable that the Gospel be proclaimed to all. God wills or desires to use all believers, to make known to others the authentic saving message of the Gospel. As Christian believers in the BLD we have an essential role in proclaiming the Good News.

Let's take a closer look at some strategies we can adopt in carrying out this holy mission.

- T-alk** Simply talk to others about your experience of God. Share blessings and answered prayers. Do not hesitate to share biblical – based wisdom.
- L-ove** Let the love of Christ be demonstrated in relating with others. Lead by example.
- C-onnect** Invite people to attend spiritual activity like retreats or Friday Worship. Followers learned from Jesus as they listened to His Word. Follow-up and call them up during the week to see how they're doing.

EVERLASTING LIGHT... the promise

It seems like it was only yesterday when we first helped out in BLD's production of the "Everlasting Light" in 1998. We were knee-deep in our ministry work when we were called upon to prepare the vocals for this production. We did the auditions, looked at the line-up and at ourselves and asked, "What did we get ourselves into?" But as soon as we progressed into our rehearsals, we began to see beyond the faces of the cast and crew; we saw the entire community. The youngest to the oldest cast member flowed with exuberance for fellowship and brotherhood that brought the spirit of Christmas welling up in everyone's hearts. It seemed like the whole community took on this color of joy and warmth-one that you see in a Norman Rockwell Christmas tableau. We felt sucked into this setting, and within it witnessed several scenes from old-time Christmas favorites such as "The Christmas Carol," "It's a Wonderful Life" and "Christmas on 34th Street," all rolled into one. You see, the bits and pieces of drama from these different stories are what the community is all about. Much like a Christmas story, through all the joys and sorrows, successes and failures, harmony and disunity, our story also has the promise of a happy ending-the promise of living happily ever after for our Savior is born! The prelude to another wonderful and joyful Christmas which our community will experience this year is within our grasp, for God has blessed us with another chance to have "Everlasting Light."

EVERLASTING LIGHT... revisited

Seven years ago, some of us were blessed to watch this beautiful and inspiring Christmas Pageant presented by BLD Newark. I feel even more blessed because I watched the show seven times.... The production of Everlasting Light brought our entire community together then, from the Mark 10 to the adults. Back then, our membership was through ME#12. Our numbers have doubled since then. My heart overflows with thanksgiving because through the years, the Lord has been faithful and blessed our community with more members and more talent. As I watch the rehearsals now, I cannot help but be grateful to our God!

"Everlasting Light, A Christmas Carol in a Dark World" promises to be bigger and better this year! Bring your family and friends to this heart-warming show! This is an endeavor that is truly inspiring, so together, let us bring in the Season of Light!

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS
Week Ending Nov. 17, 2006

Tithes and Love Offering **\$4,018**
All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

deciding the fate of an accused person. What usually happens is that we do not see things as black or white but we see them as shades of gray. People make excuses, tell half-truths, and facts become hidden, misleading or distorted. Moreover, when something is repeated over and over, it becomes an accepted truth. Advertisements and media marketing are good illustrations of these. They are done to make us conform to certain situations or lead toward desired conclusions. And because of their prevalence and effectivity, they seep into our attitudes and behavior without our realizing it.

Truth is reality. Everything in this world will pass away but Jesus Christ will not. He proved it already. Jesus Christ is the only truth. In all his words, in all his ways, his works, his life, his manifestations, in all that he is, he is the truth. Jesus Christ came to give us the truth about love and forgiveness and through him God the Father was able to fulfill his promise of salvation for all mankind. Truth is loving your neighbor and looking after one another. It is asking for forgiveness and giving forgiveness, being kind and patient with one another. It is peace and justice for all. If we always make it a point to go back to Jesus Christ in all circumstances in our lives, then we will be assured that his truth will guide us.

There is a story about the "Truth Shop." Inside the store was a polite salesgirl who asked: "What type of truth do you want to purchase, partial or whole? The whole truth, of course." You replied. "No deceptions for me, no defenses, no excuses, no rationalizations. I want my truth plain and unadulterated." She waved you to another side of the store. The salesman there pointed to the price tag. "The price is very high, Sir." He said. "What is it?" You replied, determined to get the whole truth no matter what it cost. "Your security, sir." Hearing that, you put your head down and turned away. Giving away your security meant losing control of situations in your life - your prestige, power, fortune, ego and lifestyle. You wanted the whole truth, when faced with the steep cost you settle for the partial truth. You may be ready to give up some but not all.

Somehow, we are not inclined to give everything completely to our Lord and King. There is that desire to retain or hold back part of ourselves. In effect, we are still insecure about the truth that Jesus Christ is offering us. This is the reason why we ask the question, "What is truth?" We either want to control and balance our lives with it or we are afraid to accept and deal with it.

DIRECTION:

Designate a quiet place and dedicate a quiet time to pray and reflect on the word of God.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Dec 3** ME 28Grand Reunion St. Mary 1-5 pm
Dec 15 Family Worship St. Mary 8 pm
Dec 17 Everlasting Light Cost: \$20.00
 Felician College, Lodi, NJ
Contact Persons:
 Reggie/Fil Malabanan (908-522-1154)
 Show times: 2:00 PM (Matinee) & 7:00 PM
Dec 22 Christmas Mass St. Mary 8 pm

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERCESSORY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation/ in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max). email to rguia@comcast.net, flimjr@yahoo.com

BIBLE TRIVIA

LAUGHERS and DANCERS

- Whose entrancing dance proved fatal for John the Baptist?
- Who held a feast with dancing when his son returned?
- Who danced with all his might when the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem?
- Who laughed when she heard she would bear a son in her old age?
- Who came out dancing after David killed Goliath?
- What is the only book in the Bible to mention God laughing?
- Who told Job that God would certainly fill a righteous man with laughter?
- What old man laughed at God's promise that he would father a child in his old age?
- What graven image did the Israelites dance in front of?
- What book says there is a time to weep and a time to laugh?
- Who, in the Beatitudes, does Jesus promise laughter to?
- Whom did Jesus speak of as dancing in the streets?
- What instrument is usually associated with dance in the Bible?
- What book says that laughter is foolishness?
- What Old Testament character's name means "laughter"?

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | The daughter of Herodias (Mt 14:6-8) |
| 2 | The father of the prodigal son (Lk 15:25) |
| 3 | David (2 Sam 6:14) |
| 4 | Sarah (Gen 18:10-12) |
| 5 | The women of Israel (Ex 18:6-7) |
| 6 | Ps (2:4; 37:13; 59:9) |
| 7 | Bildad (Job 8:21) |
| 8 | Abraham (Gen 17:17) |
| 9 | The golden calf made by Aaron (Ex 32:19) |
| 10 | Ecclesiastes (3:4) |
| 11 | Those who weep (Lk 6:21) |
| 12 | Children (Lk 7:32) |
| 13 | The timbrel or tambourine (Ex 15:20) |
| 14 | Ecclesiastes (2:2) |
| 15 | Isaac (Gen 21:3-6) |



LSS 27's Reunion of Love and Faith

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, refutation, for correction and for training in righteousness so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work"*.



Once again, our God has come through on His promise to send the Holy Spirit to bestow the gifts of love and faith to the LSS 27 disciples. The new disciples witnessed to the glorious power of our Lord through the grace of transformation they received in their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The importance of reflecting on Scripture readings and applying God's message to our daily lives was imprinted on the disciples' minds. Through the Scripture study exercises, the LSS 27 group participated in a joyful questions and answers session. They expressed the hope that their prayerful reading of the Scripture will further strengthen their personal relationship with our Lord, allowing them to be faithful and adoring children of God.

The Holy Spirit's goodness, generosity, and compassion glorify our God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The LSS 27 disciples now have an awareness of their weaknesses and frailty as human beings. They have a new appreciation of how God has made a way for them to enter into His holy presence perfectly cleansed and acceptable to Him. In Acts 1:8, *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses"*.

Faith



The Power of a Promise

God's Promise for the Week

"All the paths of the Lord are kindness and constancy toward those who keep His covenant and His decrees" (Ps 25:10)

COUNSELS

Make way for the Lord

WORD: Jer 33:14-16; Ps 25:4-5,8-9, 10-14; 1 Thes 3:12-4:2; Lk 21:25-28, 34-36

THEME: We prepare for the coming of Christ when love for all abounds in us.

ORDER: *"Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."* (Lk 21:36)

REFLECTION:

"And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." (Lk 21:27) Jesus speaks of the second coming as a known fact, a certain event we can expect to take place. It is a prophetic description of the end of time, the Day of Judgment. Jesus' coming will be marked by recognizable signs, signs which will strike terror in the unprepared and wonder in those who are ready to meet the Lord.

In this day and age, there are still a vast number of people who have not heard of Jesus Christ, just as there are those who have heard of Him but willfully deny Him as the Messiah. What does it take, then, for the whole world to accept Christ as the Savior? Is it not enough that God the Father sent His only Son to die on the cross so that all may be saved and have eternal life? Or is it spiritual blindness that causes the persistent refusal to heed God's word of grace and salvation, thus preventing some of us from recognizing the obvious signs that will precede Jesus' second coming? *(continued on page4)*

Being Faithful

A Reflection on Matthew 25:14-30 (Parable of the Talents)

A talent is something inherent in a person-learned-but given as a blessing from the Almighty Father.

In the parable, the master gave three of his servants his possessions. The first servant was given 5 talents, the second 2 talents and the third one talent, each according to his own ability. The first two servants doubled the talents entrusted to them. The third servant returned the only talent given to him without doing anything about it. The master was sorely disappointed in the third servant that he retrieved the talent that was given to him and gave it to the first servant. As a conclusion to the story, Jesus said to the people who were listening to Him, *'For to everyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away'* (Mt 25:29).

Similarly, not everyone in community is given the same talents. Some will have more and others will have less. However, what matters is how we make use of our talents to grow in spiritual maturity, to life in Christ. There are many ministries where our talents can be used for the sake of the Gospel. If we have the gift to teach, there is the Teaching Ministry, tasked with discipleship formation. If we have the gift to write or publish, there is the Word Ministry, tasked with the proclamation of God's Word. If we have the gift of good works, there are the Service and Mission Ministries, including Gawad Kalinga, tasked with servanthood to the brethren, particularly to the poor. Regardless of where our talents are applied, the important thing to remember is who we are in Christ, to stay focused on Him and to the use our gifts for His purposes. We are but His humble servants whom He has saved so that He can use us to bring others to His fold.

Lord, let us recognize the gifts You have given us. We are here to serve in Your vineyard. May we be faithful to Your word that our lives and talents may be dedicated to the mission that you have entrusted to us. Teach us to become living witnesses to Your love. Allow us to share our life with You to every person we meet. May our ears hear and heed Your words. May our mouths proclaim Your glory in our lives. May Your embrace keep us close to you, that we may not stray in the face of adversaries. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



Hail Holy Queen



Sent from God the Father, the angel Gabriel announced good tidings to the Virgin Mary: "The Holy Spirit of the Lord would come upon you and the power of the highest would overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son

of God. (Lk 1:35) Mary replied, "Be it unto me according to thy Word". (Lk 1:38) This Scripture verse reveals the Blessed Trinity: The Lord and Father, the Holy Spirit, and the Son of God. Mary's acceptance of God's will brought her into the heavenly family as the Mother of the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her acceptance of God's will likewise ushered in humanity's inclusion to the heavenly family, through Jesus Christ- the Son of God and the Son of Mary, who was "made flesh and dwelt amongst us".

Mary is the ever virgin, the favored one, full of grace, blessed among women, who was conceived without original sin and its stains. In Jesus Christ, Mary brought forth the Life and Light of the world. Her obedience to God's will reversed the disobedience of Eve. Gabriel's greeting in Latin 'Ave' is the name Eva in reverse (Dr Scott Hahn). As the second Eve, Mary became the instrument through whom humanity was given its salvation from the bondage of death. While Eve believed the serpent, Mary's believed the word of God spoken through the angel Gabriel.

The first ark of the covenant contained the Ten Commandments inscribed by the finger of God, the manna from heaven and the priestly rod of Aaron. The blessed womb of Mary, the second Ark of the Covenant, contained the Word made flesh, the Son of God, the Bread of Life, the Great High Priest and Savior who destroyed death and restored our life in God. The first ark, made of wood, could never be found. The second ark was assumed into heaven, where she stands by the side of her Son as the Queen of Angels, prophets, patriarchs, martyrs and saints.

Mary's yes to God's call was not a struggle. Her obedience was not out of fear, but out of love of God. Let Mary always be our inspiration and intercessor, who brings us comfort as our mother of perpetual help. We know that to this day, she is working hard to bring Christ to all. Let us pray the rosary every opportunity we have. According to St. Teresa of Avila, this string of beads is a chain that pulls down Heaven to Earth.

With the Blessed Mother, love comes first. Sacrifice ends when love begins.

Fr. Paul Lehman's Message

Spiritual Insight



With Christmas so closely upon us we quickly get caught up into the swing of the "holidays". We do thing right, in terms of going to Church and saying our prayers, but I sense that we often lack the awareness of our own inner spiritual movements especially during these distracted times. The awareness of these inner movements easily escape us because of the demands of our job, duties (even our BLD commitments), concerns, getting ready for the "holidays", etc.

I have been doing some reading on St. Ignatius' rules for discernment of spirits. The term "rules" might be misleading He is referring to a process of AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING and finally ACTION. I have been recommending this method of spiritual insight during the Aspirants' retreat weekend. We are often affected by what can be interpreted as a bad mood or some emotional distress. In reality it could be an attack from the devil himself, but it can also flow from our own negativity and the wounds of original sin along with the sad state of the seductive world around us.

There are different areas of which we can be aware. When we commit a sin we (hopefully) become aware that we did something wrong. The proper response is repentance and reflection as to the causes that led us into sin. This is called MORAL awareness. There is also PSYCHOLOGICAL awareness in which we become aware of our moods, emotions, or feelings. These moods are not sinful, even if they can set us up for sin. Then there is what St. Ignatius calls SPIRITUAL awareness. I believe that we do not often fully realize the spiritual attacks that can take place within us. It is very easy to write off these spiritual attacks of inner desolation, lack of peace and tranquility, along with a spiritual lazy feeling as just another mood or even a testing from God. In reality they are always to be rejected, even if they are not sinful.

In the community we often "take authority" for instance before worship, teachings or meetings. This is a very healthy practice. Our first line of defense is to ask the Holy Spirit to make us aware of what is going on inside of us, and to give us the wisdom to understand that this is an attack.

The action we take is a conscious rejection of the attack, accompanied by an explicit prayer of petition asking the Lord to remove the desolation. Pray during this holy season not only to refocus on the beauty of the Incarnation, but to reject the subtle spiritual attacks that can weaken and even destroy our relationship with God, as well as the relationships we should cherish in our community life.

Ministry Announcements

Word Ministry.

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.)

Email to rguiao@comcast.net and flimjr@yahoo.com

Mission Ministry.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the entire Community for all the gifts that were donated for our less fortunate brothers and sisters in Irvington, NJ

Bible Trivia

They Did It First

1. What King had the first birthday party in the Bible?
2. Who was the first Christian martyr?
3. What is the first commandment in the Bible?
4. The first book of the Bible named after a woman?
5. Who is the first prophet mentioned in the Bible?
6. Where did Jesus work his first miracle?
7. What was the first of the ten plaques of Egypt?
8. Who was the first king of Israel?
9. Who were the first foreign missionaries?
10. Who was the first shepherdess?
11. Who was the first disciple chosen by Jesus?
12. Who told the first lie?
13. What was the first animal out of the ark?
14. Where the disciples were first called Christians?
15. Who was the first shepherd?
16. Who planted the first garden?
17. The first commandment with a promise attached to it?
18. Who was the first apostle to be martyred?
19. What is the first color mentioned in the Bible?
20. Who was the first murderer?

1. Pharaoh, at the time Joseph was in Egypt (Gen 40:20)
2. Stephen (Acts 6:7-8:2)
3. "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28)
4. Ruth.
5. Abraham (Genesis 20:7)
6. Cana (John 2:1-11)
7. The river turns to blood (Exodus 7:14-24)
8. Saul (1 Samuel 10:1)
9. Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13)
10. Rachel (Genesis 29:9)
11. Simon Peter (John 1:42)
12. The serpent (Genesis 3:4)
13. The raven (Genesis 8:7)
14. Antioch (Acts 11:26)
15. Abel (Genesis 4:2)
16. God (Genesis 2:8)
17. "Honor your father and mother" (Dt 5:16; Eph 6:2-3)
18. James (Acts 12:1-2)
19. Green (Genesis 1:30)
20. Cain (Genesis 4:8)

honors his parents.

The promise is that the person will have a long life if he

Counsels from page 1

Are we willing to sacrifice and be ready to carry our own cross to follow Christ? Jesus never said it was going to be easy when He asked His disciples to follow Him. The consolation His disciples received was the promise that He would never leave them alone, even in their time of tribulation. In the same way, the saints and martyrs who underwent torment and death all knew that the saving presence of Christ was with them in all circumstances.

"The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah." (Jer 33:14). Our hope is in heaven and in the promise that when the Lord returns, He will establish justice and righteousness and vindicate all who have been faithful to Him. His judgment is a source of hope for those who trust in Him to receive the greatest gift of redemption and adoption as children of God, through Jesus' death on the cross.

God wants for us to be with Him in His Kingdom, but we are sometimes distracted by the world and lose our focus. By His death on the cross, Jesus offers us true freedom from the power of sin and death. Do we then choose to be overwhelmed by the fear of Divine wrath rather than be consumed with the love of God?

"Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth." (Lk 21:34-35). Jesus warns us of the temptation to slacken off, to become lethargic or to fall asleep spiritually. It is very easy to get caught up in the things of the present moment or to be weighed down with troubles that divert our focus from him. The Lord knows our shortcomings and struggles and He gives us the grace to bear our burdens and to walk in His way of holiness. To be indifferent or passive is unacceptable as we are called to actively seek Him. God wants to work in and through us for His glory. He expects us to be vigilant and to pray especially for the strength to persevere in faith, to endure trials that come our way, and to escape from temptation to sin, especially from apostasy, the denial of Christ out of fear or pride.

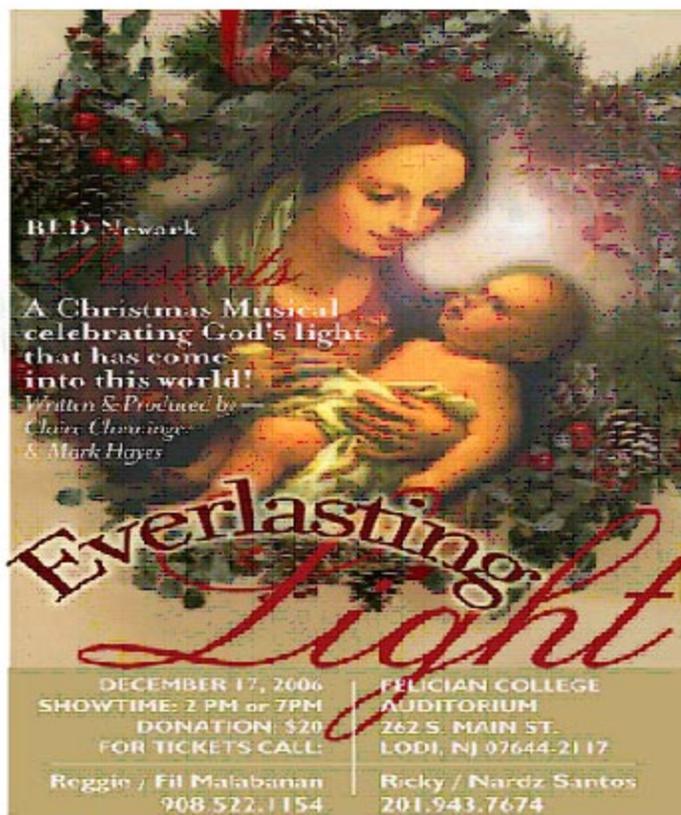
Let us ask ourselves. Have we truly prepared ourselves to meet the Lord upon His return?

DIRECTIONS:

- + Conduct yourselves to please God.
- + Prepare and preserve your spiritual lives during the holidays by receiving the sacraments during the month, specially the sacrament of reconciliation.
- + Share the love of Christ with the least of your brethren.

Community Calendar

- Dec 9** **ME 28 - Grand Reunion.**
St. Mary's from 1-5 p.m.
Christmas Party for the Poor.
Blessed Sacrament, Irvington, NJ
9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
ME 15 - Reunion.
Chan's Residence, E.Hanover, NJ
2:00 p.m. - whenever.
- Dec 15** **Family Worship.**
St. Mary's at 8:00 p.m.
- Dec 22** **Christmas Mass.**
St. Mary's at 8:00 p.m.

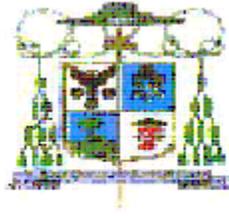


THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

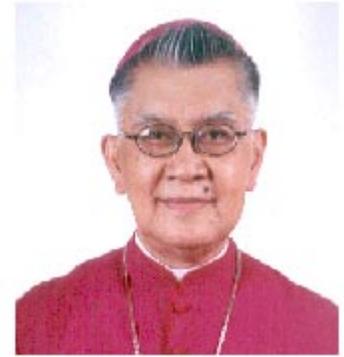
Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending
November 24, 2006

Tithes & Love Offering \$ 3,074.00

*"All good giving and every perfect gift
is from above."*



Archdiocese of Jaro



**Bukas Loob sa Diyos Newark District
Evangelization Services Ministry**
c/o Richard & Lee de la Fuente

MESSAGE

Evangelization as a ministry is a must in any church apostolate, because it opens the Christian community to the Gospel which is personalized in JESUS CHRIST.

The project may be a musicale production engaging many people to be united in one purpose. But this is the channel through which the true meaning and message of Christmas are passed on to people.

May your Advent preparation and Christmas celebration be truly indicative of JESUS CHRIST, the Returning King. Truth to tell, He whose return we are waiting for is already in our midst: sacramentally through the Eucharist; mystically through his union with every person, especially the poorest; and prophetically through his assurance of being with us until the end of the ages. He is with us as Emmanuel, God with us.

God bless the benefactors, sponsors and donors and all the participants in this laudable Christmas project.

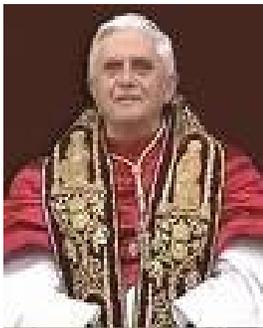

+ ANGEL N. LAGDAMEO
Archbishop of Jaro and
BLD Spiritual Director

November 23, 2006



Pontiff Sends Condolences for Deadly Typhoon

VATICAN CITY, DEC. 1, 2006 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI expressed his sadness on receiving



the news of the deadly typhoon that struck the Philippines and left 198 people dead in its wake.

A telegram sent in the Pope's name by Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone to the apostolic nuncio in the Philippines, Archbishop Fernando Filoni, "assures all those affected of his closeness in prayer" and "commends the deceased to the loving mercy of Almighty God," invoking "upon the grieving families and all those injured ... divine strength and comfort."

The message added that the Holy Father is also praying "for the rescue workers and all involved in providing practical assistance to the victims of this disaster, encouraging them to persevere in their efforts to bring relief and support."

Typhoon Durian struck Thursday. Strong winds and rains brought tons of mud and rocks the size of vehicles into some villages. About 260 people were reported missing today.

Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.
Mark 11:25

Visit our website at www.bldnewark.com.

COUNSELS

He Must Increase, I Must Decrease

WORD: Bar 5:1-9; Ps 126:1-6; Phil 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6

ORDER: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His path." (Lk 3:4)

Theme: We prepare for the coming of Christ when our words and actions proclaim our trust in Him.

REFLECTION: Tonight's gospel reading pointed to the long awaited promise by the Lord to his chosen people. The Jews had been laboring under the burden of being defeated, oppressed and exiled for so many centuries and they have not seen a prophet among them for the last 300 years. Malachi was the last prophet whose last words were "Lo, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, Before the day of the LORD comes, the great and terrible day." (Mal 3:23). In the fullness of time, as described in Matthew 3:4, God sent a man who wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locust and wild honey, living in the desert just like his predecessor Elijah, in 2 Kings 1:8, but this man's mission was greater than all the other prophets of old. This man was John the Baptist whom Jesus, in Luke 7:28, said "I tell you, among those born of women, no one is greater than John." What was so special about John? His birth was announced and what name he will be given by an angel to Zechariah his father. God sanctified him with the Holy Spirit in womb so he jumped for joy in Elizabeth's womb when the Blessed Mother visited his home. He was given the privileged of baptizing Jesus and saw the heavens opened as the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove > page 4

Promise of the Week

"The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Lk 3:5b - 6)

God's Calling

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that



will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another." (Jn 15:16-17) As disciples of Christ, His command applies to all of us.

It is clear that God first chooses us. In John 15:19, Jesus tells us where He chose us from. He did not choose us out of the vast majority of those who are seeking God. He did not choose people who were first inclined to Him. He did not choose people who had already chosen Him. The world is described in this passage as being against God and hating Him. *"If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world, the world hates you."* (Jn 15:18-19)

We can rest in and take joy in the encouragement that Christ's decision is the foundation of our faith, not our decision (see John 1:13) nor are we here by accident. Even our births are not unplanned. Christ's love is a powerful, strong, trustworthy love that cannot fail. He loves each one of us with this awesome love. *"God is love"* (1 Jn 4:8). Love is the essence of God's character. We are here because of His Divine love.

Finally, we can take comfort that if Christ has chosen us, we will not only bear fruit, we would realize how completely we are loved and cared for by Divine Providence. Each one of us is called for a mission unique to each one of us. For this, He fitted us with the right talents, the distinct personality and the proper disposition. The primary mission He wants for us, is to seek our true common vocation, which is the living fulfillment of His Holy Will and to have the courage to follow it cheerfully.

Do we then, as individuals and as a community, listen to our Lord's calling? Do we help each other and pray together to discern our individual gifts, talents and limitations? Above all, do we recognize our deepest desires – to find which path our Lord wishes us all to walk, as He asks us "Follow Me"?

Our Lady of Guadalupe

"Know for certain that I am the perfect and perpetual Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God through whom everything lives, the Lord of



all things, who is Master of Heaven and Earth." These were spoken by Our Lady of Guadalupe on her first apparition on December 9, 1531 to Juan Diego, a Mexican peasant and one of the early Indian converts to Christianity. This first apparition was in Tepeyac as Juan made his daily morning 15-mile walk over undulating terrain towards Tlaltelolco

to hear Mass. Our Lady beckoned to "Juan Diegito", first revealed herself as the Mother of the True God, and then informed Juan Diego of her desire: "I ardently desire a teocalli (temple) be built here for me where I will show and offer all my love, my compassion, my help and my protection to the people."

Juan's faith in God and his love of the Blessed Mother enabled him to recognize that the Lady was truly God's Mother. Though Juan Diego knew that given his lowly status he would not be able to convince the Bishop of Mexico City of the apparition and our Lady's request, he obeyed her and took courage to carry on the mission she had entrusted him to do. He went to the bishop's residence and he recounted the apparition and the Lady's request. Though Bishop Zumarraga listened to Juan in disbelief not only once but a second time the next day, Juan persisted in humble obedience and undaunted faith specially when our Lady told him that it was necessary that he would undertake the mission and that it would be his assistance the Lady's wish would be accomplished.

On the December 12, 1531 apparition, our Lady had asked Juan to pick fresh flowers in bloom from the Tepeyac hill, a miracle in itself since it was winter time, and asked him to place the flowers in his tilma (cloak) and open his tilma only in the presence of the bishop. When Juan opened his tilma in the bishop's presence to show the flowers, on the tilma was the picture of the Lady. This was the sign that the Lady (> page 3 pls

Stay Awake

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.” (Mt 25:1)



God made each of us after His image with souls and singular beauty. But evil spirits love it, plot and strive to defile its Godlike image; to pollute every soul which is betrothed to the Lord.

The ten virgins symbolize the way to heaven. Five were wise and prudent, the other five were foolish and unwise. Some provided abundant nourishment for their lamps with oil; others were careless thinking only of the present.

Divided equally, each group signifies how they prepared to meet the bridegroom – preparing to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who preserved their five senses – considered as gates of wisdom, pure and undefiled by sin, kept them pure to Christ as a lamp, so the light of holiness shone clearly from each of them. The other five corrupted themselves by multitude of sins, defiling themselves of evil, and bore transgressions.

The oil represents wisdom and righteousness which is poured upon the body, the light of virtue is kindled making its good shine before men so that our Father in heaven is glorified.

The light resembles the prophetic word which gives encouragement to temperance nourished by acts and faith of the people. “They shall burn it until morning” – means until the coming of Christ.

Supply oil with good works and prudence being purged from all corruption which would weigh us down. Fill your vessels with righteousness, for the hour is coming when you must rise and meet the bridegroom, leaving on one side the fascinations and pleasures of life which confuse and bewitch the soul.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERCESSORY : Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com.



WORD : Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community through an article (450 words max.) Email to Rguiao@comcast.net; flimjr@yahoo.com



MISSION : We would like to extend our gratitude to the entire Community for all the gifts that were donated for our less fortunate brothers and sisters in Irvington, NJ



(from Our Lady of Guadalupe.....)

had given the bishop that Juan had truly spoken the truth, thus convincing the bishop to build the chapel the Lady had requested. Indeed Juan Diego, through his perseverance, became the instrument that helped build the church and spread Christianity in Mexico. The only picture of the Blessed Virgin bequeathed upon humankind drew the pagan Aztecs to come in multitudes to view the image and this drew them ultimately to the feet of her Divine Son. Our Lady's promises of blessings towards the Mexican people materialized because Juan Diego gave his fiat to her.

MAKE COVENANT NEWS **A PART OF YOUR** **COVENANT LIFE.**

(from stay awake..)

Be abundantly equipped for the task and be prepared. Be alert with the light of faith and alive with oil of charity, with an attitude of a bride meeting the bridegroom; know that it is not enough to be 'inside' the kingdom, the church, the community, but be on the watch and prepare for Christ's coming.

WATCH with the heart, faith, love, charity and good works. **MAKE** ready the lamps, make sure they do not go out. **RENEW** with inner oil of upright conscience.

“Therefore, stay awake for you know neither the day nor the hour.” (Mt 25:13)

Counsels from page 1

descended on the Savior. As he grew in holiness, people started to reform their lives through his preaching and led them to ask if he was the expected Messiah. John answered that he is a voice of one crying out in the desert – Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. He also said “I have baptized you with water, that One is coming after him, whose sandals straps he is not worthy to untie – He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” He pointed out Jesus to his disciples saying – Behold the Lamb of God and allowed them to follow the Lord. John the Baptist’s last words were “*He must increase and I must decrease.*” (Jn 3:30)

As modern day disciples of Jesus Christ, we too are to imitate the example of John the Baptist. He never forgot who he was and the object of his mission. Admittedly it is difficult because in the hustle and bustle of the workload in our fast growing community, we have often neglected to take the time to seek God’s counsel and to sit patiently at His feet. We consider the validity of our decisions based on time and expediency, instead of asking the Creator of time and the One who has the perfect plan. In the rush to get things in order, we have at times created disorder and in the process have inflicted deep wounds of mistrust and division. There is no doubt in my mind that all of us have the best of intentions, but sometimes we forget to discern the consequences of our actions. The one word that describes the theme of this week is – Witnessing – with our words and actions to show the world that we are true Disciples of Christ. Let us again embrace the two basic values that we have learned when we first joined this community – Humility and Obedience, so that as we prepare for the Coming of the Lord, we can be united as one community of faith, knowing how to forgive and be forgiven, looking to the future with trust and confidence in the Lord and in each other. May the words of the prophet Baruch be fulfilled – “*Behold the joy that comes to you from God. Here comes your sons whom you once let go, gathered in from the east and from the west. By the word of the Holy One, take off your robe of mourning and misery. Put on the splendor of glory from God forever.*” (Bar 4:36-37,5:1)

Direction:

- Nurture your prayer life through meditation of the Word and live it.
- Reconcile with your brothers and sisters in your life as your offering to the Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Dec.9 **ME 28** –Grand Reunion, St.Mary’s 1-5pm
Christmas Party for the Poor Blessed Sacrament, Irvington, NJ 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
ME15 Reunion 2:00 p.m., Chan Residence East Hanover, NJ
- Dec. 15 **Family Worship** St. Mary’s 8:00 p.m.
- Dec. 17 **Everlasting Light** – Felician College, Lodi, NJ Cost \$20.00 Show times: 2:00 p.m. (matinee), 7:00 p.m.Contact Persons: Reggie/Fil Malaban (908) 522-1154
- Dec. 22 **Christmas Mass**, St. Mary’s 8:00 p.m.

**BIBLE TRIVIA
MIRACLES OF JESUS**

1. How was the woman with the issue of blood healed by Jesus?
2. What woman got up and started doing household chores after Jesus healed her of a fever?
3. What unproductive tree did Jesus wither by cursing it?
4. Where did Jesus work his first miracle?
5. Who appeared with Jesus at his miraculous transfiguration?
6. Which apostle did Jesus enable to walk (briefly) on water?
7. What disciples did Jesus call after blessing them with an enormous catch of fish?
8. Whom did Jesus send to catch a fish that had a coin in its mouth?

- Answers :**
- 1. She touched the hem of his garment (Matthew 9:20-22)
 - 2. Peter’s mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14-15)
 - 3. A fig tree (Matthew 21:19)
 - 4. Cana (John 2:1-11)
 - 5. Elijah and Moses (Matthew 17:1-8)
 - 6. Peter (Matthew 14:28-31)
 - 7. Peter, James, and John (Luke 5:4-11)
 - 8. Peter (Matthew 17:24-27)

The Lord’s Provision

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week
 📌 Ending Dec. 1, 2006 📌
 Tithes, Love Offering; \$3,320.00
 Thank you for your continued generosity!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

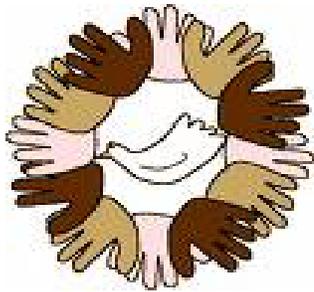
Volume 12 Issue 49

Bulletin Edition

December 15, 2006

LOVE, UNITY ABOUND ME #28 CLASS REUNION

Last Saturday, December 9, 2006, the largest assembly ever gathered to attend a reunion of any kind in BLD witnessed the graduates of ME Class # 28 celebrate their Grand Reunion at St. Mary's Church Auditorium. It was a day of thanksgiving as the Class of ME # 28 expressed their gratitude to the class of ME # 27, along with those who served, for their unselfish and tireless effort, assistance, and most importantly, their love and prayers shown during the ME weekend.



The festivities started with a praise and worship by the Class Shepherds, Efren and Yollie Cruz, with their prayers focused on love and unity, healing and forgiveness. It was followed by the traditional sumptuous lunch that was especially prepared by the class. Truly a group effort, the ME #28 proceeded with a presentation to the community of songs like "You'll Never Walk Alone", "I Believe" and dance to the beat of "Celebrate, Jesus, Celebrate". Their final number was a first of a kind to an ME class – they composed and sang an ME 28 Theme Song, the melody adapted from a classic song, "You're Just In Love".

After their presentation, they listened as Coordinators from Mark 10, John 6, Youth and Intercessory Ministries spoke of the respective ministries. They were followed by an exhortation from the Evangelization Steward, Nestor and Becbec Laxina, encouraging the class to pursue a life of conjugal prayers, openness to the Holy Spirit and togetherness with one another.

The Grand Reunion ended with couples sharing the changes that have occurred in their lives. They relived their memorable weekend, and expressed their desire to deepen their ME experience through prayers and a closer relationship with God.

COUNSELS

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Word: Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-6;
Phil 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18

Theme: We prepare for the coming of Christ when we practice righteous living.

Order: 1. Rejoice in the Lord always
2. With thanksgiving make your request known to God

Reflection:

In this Sunday's Gospel, the people who were filled with expectation for the coming of the Messiah asked John the Baptist, "What should we do?" He said to them in reply: "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none."; "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed."; "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages." (Luke 3:10-14) God's message for this third Sunday is a call for righteousness. It exhorts us to live honorable lives because God is a God of righteousness and justice. Preparing for His coming is about living righteously by being faithful to His commandments and Gospel. John gives practical advice on how we should live: share what we have with those in need; be honest in our dealings with others; and, exercise authority for the good of others. John's words today cast an important light on Jesus' mission, one that is the heart of Christmas, but which can get overlooked amidst the hustle and bustle of the Yuletide season. The true spirit of Christmas lies in the loving presence of the Spirit of Jesus in our hearts: to reach out to the needy, comfort the sick and the lonely, extend justice to the oppressed, give hope to the hopeless and to live a holy life.

(continue on page 4) 

God's Promise for the Week

"Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:7)

A MAN OF INTEGRITY



St. Joseph was a descendant of King David destined to be the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Bible declares him as the “righteous man” (Matthew 1:19) and by God’s divine plan he was chosen to be the father of Jesus, the Redeemer and the Savior of the World... He was the fulfillment of the scripture prophecy that the Messiah would come from the house of David.

In 1870, Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church. His story and legacy is simple yet so rich in character, worthy of humankind’s emulation.

Joseph was a simple, village carpenter, a working man and not rich, for the skeptical Nazarenes ask about Jesus” is this not the carpenter’s son?”(Matthew 13:5).

We knew Joseph was a just, faithful and compassionate man. Discovering Mary was pregnant after they were betrothed, he knew deep in his heart that the child was not his.

Mary could have been easily thrown to man’s cruelty and become an outcast but Joseph took the better part of compassion. The Matthean gospel reveals his character. Joseph was “unwilling to expose her to shame” (Mt 1:19) and he took her as his wife in spite of the risk of public ridicule and gossip.

Joseph was an obedient and faithful servant, able and willing to do whatever God wants without question. His Faith was so strong and resilient. When an angel, came to him and warned him of danger to his family, he immediately without question traveled to an unknown country with his family and the baby.

We knew Joseph was a good father. He protected, mentored and took Jesus as his very own son, with a fatherly care like of our Father in heaven.

He is a just man rooted with an unshakable integrity who loved God and loved his family. He led them to prayer and faithfulness to God’s commandments.

He is an honorable man so favored by God. After the mother of God herself, no one has ever been so blessed with virtues as of St Joseph. He shows us the perfect model of a true disciple. In humility, fortitude, gentleness, manliness of character, in chastity of life, in the fruit of the Spirit, he was a man of God. He is the model of fathers on earth, a protector of the family.

He represents the patron of the church rightfully because he epitomizes the working class people and the poor. As a saint in heaven, he continues to act as the husband and father to his family and the Church. His patronage extends over the mystical Body of Christ, over the Christian family and to all individual who in their need appeal to his charity, character and powerful intercession.

PROFOUND FAITH



Everyday, we are challenged to choose between faith and fear; between confidence and doubt. In Genesis 2:28, God blessed male and female, saying, “*Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.*” As married couples, we experience mixed emotions of pregnancy, from joy to fear. We willingly shut our door to new life because we believe that children are burdens because of

the enormity of work, sacrifice and economic liability involved in caring for them. In serving God through our brothers and sisters in the community, when we get overwhelmed from the demands of our ministry and work; when people do not think the way we do; or when things do not happen the way we want it to, we try to hold back in the commitment we made to God and others because the cost is too much. We hold onto our God-given talents and gifts; and, intentionally, disregard our mission here on earth. We think about what will best serve us than what will best serve God. We place our trust in our own insights and are always anxious about the future.

Like us, Mary found herself powerless to lead her own life. Yet, unlike us, she was wise enough not to try. Instead of resisting, she rejoiced. She believed that what the Lord had said to her will be accomplished (Luke 1:45) and did not think about the consequences. Her trip to Judah to visit Elizabeth was evidence of her strong belief. During her visit, “*When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb.*” John found joy even in the darkness of the womb! Likewise, Elizabeth, who was filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, “*Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.*” Luke 1:41-42. Elizabeth declared that Mary is blessed, not because she possessed superior spirituality, but because she accepted and followed God’s word. This is how we ought to respond to the gospel.

When was the last time we had a demonstrable reaction to the gospel of Christ? Will we refrain from embracing the new, afraid of disappointment and frustration? Or will we imitate Mary and follow God’s Word? In Luke 11:27-28, a woman called out and said to Jesus, “*Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts at which you nursed.*” Jesus replied, “*Rather, blessed are you who hear the word of God and observe it.*” Evidently, we must believe in God completely as Mary did, for it is in believing that we will be able to live the gospel to the fullest.

As we welcome the new year, let us ask God to grant us the grace to trust in Him completely so we will be blessed and live a fruitful earthly life.

Happiness is not the absence of conflict but the ability to cope with it.

CANTICLE OF MARY



This is also known as Mary's song of joy and exultation to the Lord or commonly called the Magnificat. It is an ecstasy of praise and thanksgiving as well as an expression of her humility for the inestimable favor granted to her by God.

According to the Gospel of Luke 1:46-55, after the Annunciation by which Mary is informed by the Archangel Gabriel

that she's pregnant with Jesus, she visited her elderly kinswoman, Elizabeth. In the narrative, after Mary greeted her cousin, Elizabeth's unborn child moved in her womb, and when this was noticed, she sang the Magnificat in response.

Mary's hymn of praise to God lifts us up to the heavenly realm of His Divine Plan of Salvation through the incarnation of His Son, our Lord Jesus. She drew strength from her humble recognition between the finite and the infinite – God's majesty and His unfathomable mercy to save us and her own lowliness as a handmaiden of the Lord to become a vessel for His plan of redemption.

Mary's divine motherhood is a mystery confessed and proclaimed in the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus in 431. It declared her the "Theotokos" or God-bearer. Jesus, the Incarnate Word, Word made flesh became man for our salvation through the Blessed Virgin Mary, the pure and perfect, "Ark of the Covenant".

In 1854, Blessed Pope Pius IX's "Ineffabilis Deus" defined and declared the dogma of Immaculate Conception. "That by a singular grace and privilege granted by the Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary was preserved free from the stain of original sin from the first instance of her conception". She is the worthy Mother of God, the "hyperdulia" that is extremely esteeming and honoring her more than all other saints as the masterpiece of grace and foremost in holiness after her Son, our Lord Jesus, true God and true man.

Mary, the Virgin of Nazareth, is the Holy City of God wherein the Blessed Trinity dwells and finds its resting place or sanctuary. She is the Obedient Daughter of God the Father, the Beloved Mother of God the Son, and the Faithful Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

Mary teaches us that the source of our joy and one sure support is our Lord Jesus Christ. With firm trust, let us sing with Mary a magnificat of praise and thanksgiving to God. She pointed to us the hope of God's promised salvation through the mystery of incarnation. A great hope blossoms in the hearts of all the faithful! In this joyful season of Advent, we expect and await the coming of our Savior in time and through eternity. Come, Lord Jesus, Come!



If people love me, they will obey my teaching. My father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. (Jn 14:23)

APOLOGETICS

Mary: Honor Your Mother

1. Why do Catholics consider Mary so important?

Mary is of tremendous importance to all humanity because it was through her that God chose to send us His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, singled out Mary as God's most blessed woman. In Luke 1:48, Mary says that all generations will call her blessed. This means both Catholics and non-Catholics.

Catholics also recognize Mary's powerful role as an intercessor before God in heaven. In John 2, we read how at the wedding feast of Cana, Jesus performed His first miracle, changing water into wine, at the request of His mother. Jesus moved up the timetable of His public ministry for a relatively minor reason-to save a newly married couple from a social embarrassment-solely because Mary asked. Mary can serve a similar role for us when we offer our prayers to God through her.

2. Why do Catholics refer to Mary as their mother?

The "woman" identified in Revelation 12:1 is she who gives birth to a "male child destined to rule all the nations." In Revelation 12:17, "Then the dragon came angry with the woman, and went off a wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus," we are considered "[Mary's] offspring" because we keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus. Following this logic we see this "woman" is Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother.

In John 19:27, we read some of Jesus' final words on the cross, "behold your mother." Although they were spoken to the Apostle John, spiritual writers over the centuries have seen John as a sort of Everyman. In other words, our Lord's final act before dying on the cross was to give us His mother to take as our own spiritual mother. We are also offspring because, as adopted sons and daughters of God, we are also brothers and sisters in Christ.

3. Why do Catholics call Mary the "Mother of God"?

If a man were to introduce his mother, he would not say, "This is the mother of my body." Even though he received his soul directly from God and his body through his parents, he would still say, "this is my mother," both body and soul.

In Galatians 4:4, Paul points out that God's Son was born of a woman, "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of woman, born under the law." Matthew 1:23 (quoting Isaiah 7:14) states that the nature of a Savior, Emmanuel, means "God is with us." Elizabeth refers to Mary as the "Mother of my Lord" (Luke 1:43); Lord, to the Jewish people, refers only to God. Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ, who is both God and Man. Therefore, Mary is truly the Mother of God, even though Jesus did not receive His divine nature through her.

Source: Basic Apologetics: How to Defend the Catholic Faith from the Bible

Trivia Answers: 1. Like trees walking (Mk 8:22-26); 2. The widow of Nain (Lk 7:11-15); 3. Cana (John 4:46-54); 4. Blindness (John 9:1-7); 5. He healed her on the Sabbath (Lk 13:11-14); 6. His hometown, Nazareth (Lk 4:29-30); 7. Almost mute (Mk 7:31-35); 8. Five (Matt 14: 15-21); 9. In a dream (Matt 1:18-21); 10. The angel Gabriel (Lk 1:26-38)

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

God's grace of true joy and peace comes to us, not from the satisfaction of our physical and material needs, but from living righteously and loving others in the true Spirit of Christ. In Philippians, St. Paul says it succinctly: "Your kindness should be known to all . . . Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:5,7)

This Advent season is the appropriate time to re-examine our ways, to make good changes in our lives and to restore our relationship with God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is also the right time to reconcile with those who have hurt us through love and forgiveness in order to bring peace and unity into our families, among our brothers and sisters and into our communities. Discords and broken relationships will not bring us the true peace and joy of Christmas for they block the flow of God's love into our hearts.

"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God." (Phil 4:6). This Christmas season is the time to "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil 4:4) and to cast away all our fears and anxieties for God is in our midst to help, guide, support, comfort and to heal us. This is the time to pray for the things we want from God and to thank Him for all His graces and blessings that He has bestowed upon us, most especially the gift of His beloved son. It is the time to remember and pray for our deceased loved ones, the sick, the needy, the lonely and the oppressed throughout the world. Then, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will surely reign in our hearts.

Two thousand years ago, a small child named Jesus, the epitome of God's love, was born of a faithful virgin in a remote manger in Bethlehem. Today, the Spirit of Jesus is being reborn in the cradle of our hearts. As faithful Christians, we are the new Jesus. We are being called by God to follow the example of His beloved son to live His commandments of love and His Gospel, and to share them with others. The greatest gift that we can give to our brothers and sisters particularly the least of our brethren this season is to share Jesus with them. Only then, shall we grasp the true meaning and experience the real beauty and joy of this Christmas season.

DIRECTION:

- Support the Christmas drive of our Mission and all gift giving programs to help the poor this season.
- Observe righteous living by practicing random acts of kindness

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS Week Ending Dec. 8, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission, Fast for Poor

\$3,384

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERCESSORY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com

WORD

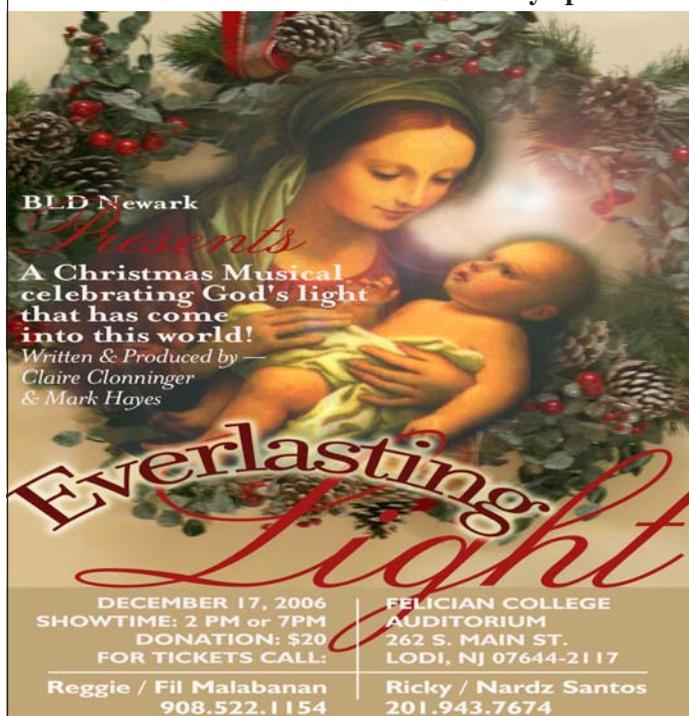
Share your walk/faith/transformation/ in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max). email to rguiao@comcast.net; flimjr@yahoo.com

MISSION

We would like to extend our gratitude to the entire Community for all the gifts that were donated for our less fortunate brothers and sisters in Irvington, NJ

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Dec 22 Christmas Mass St. Mary 8pm



BLD Newark
Presents
A Christmas Musical
celebrating God's light
that has come
into this world!
Written & Produced by —
Claire Cloninger
& Mark Hayes

Everlasting Light

DECEMBER 17, 2006
SHOWTIME: 2 PM or 7PM
DONATION: \$20
FOR TICKETS CALL:

FELICIAN COLLEGE
AUDITORIUM
262 S. MAIN ST.
LODI, NJ 07644-2117

Reggie / Fil Malabanan
908.522.1154

Ricky / Nardz Santos
201.943.7674

BIBLE TRIVIA

MIRACLES OF JESUS

1. When Jesus healed the blind man of Bethsaida, what did the man say people looked like?
2. What widow had her dead son brought to life by Jesus?
3. Where was Jesus when he healed the son of an official from Capernaum?
4. What was the affliction of the man Jesus healed by sending him to the pool of Siloam?
5. Why did the people complain when Jesus healed a woman who had been stooped for 18 years?
6. Where was Jesus when he miraculously escaped from a crowd that was going to push him off a cliff?
7. What was the other affliction of the deaf man Jesus healed in the Decapolis?
8. How many loaves of bread were used to feed the five thousand?
9. How was Joseph told about Jesus' miraculous conception?
10. Who announced Jesus' conception to Mary?

Archbishop Lagdameo's 2006 Christmas Message



The focus of attention during this season is ordinarily Advent and Christmas: the period of preparation for the Birthday of Jesus and Christmas itself. We have been doing that.

Let us change perspective this time. Let us take the perspective of a real waiting and preparing for JESUS CHRIST as the Returning King. Not Jesus Christ in the garment of swaddling clothes, lying in a box where animals feed, surrounded by shepherds and kings. But Jesus Christ in royal garment, seated on a throne, surrounded by the angelic hosts. Jesus Christ the Returning King “to judge the living and the dead.” *“See, the Lord is coming and with him all the saints. Then there will be endless day”* (Zech. 14/5, 7).

But he whom we are waiting for in some sense is even helping us. He is with us sacramentally, in the Eucharist we offer and receive in Holy Communion. He is with us mystically, in his identification with our humanity through the incarnation; *“Whatever you do to the least of my brethren you do unto me.”* (Mt. 25/40) He is with us prophetically as he promised: *“I am with you always until the end of the world.”* (Mt. 28/20)

In this context, we can facilitate the birth of Jesus Christ in the world of our relationships, professions and business. Whenever there is repentance and forgiveness, Jesus Christ is born anew. Let the Advent and Christmas season be an occasion to renew your zeal and dedication in preparing everyone for the Returning King, his birth in the circumstances of our life.

Did you ever think that one such occasion is Gawad Kalinga? And the many projects and instances you have to better the lives of people? You are the channels of Jesus Christ the Returning King!



Archdiocese of Jaro


 + ANGEL N. LAGDAMEO
 Archbishop of Jaro and
 BLD Spiritual Director

COUNSELS

Living in Faith through Love, Obedience, and Sacrifice

WORD: Mi 5:1-4a; Ps 80:2-3,15-16,18-19;
Heb 10:5-10; Lk1:39-45

THEME: We prepare for the coming of Christ when we live in faith like Mary.

ORDER: Stand firm and shepherd your flock by the strength of the Lord.

REFLECTION:

The gospel tells us about Mary’s heartfelt obedience to the will of our Lord and her visit to Elizabeth, who also was pregnant with John the Baptist. As a young unmarried woman, who became pregnant in those days, Mary risked disastrous consequences. Knowing that God was asking her to serve Him, she graciously submitted to His will. Mary’s life is an epitome of living in faith for the Lord with love, obedience, and sacrifice.

This divine revelation will undoubtedly make us look deeper into our hearts to see whether or not we are living in faith and reflect on our own inner transformation. Are we really living in faith as God desires it? Has the Holy Spirit rooted deep in our hearts through our process of renewal via our encounters and CDFP? Do we have, above and foremost, love in our hearts to God and our neighbor?

To be a true disciple of Christ, one has to have the greatest virtue of all-LOVE. Agape love is the cardinal virtue under which all others must line up. It centers on the needs and welfare of the one loved and the sacrifices necessary to authentically be in conjunction with this supreme virtue. In **Matthew 22:37-39**, Jesus clearly tells us the two greatest commandments; loving our Lord and loving our neighbors as ourselves. In **John 13:34-35**, He tells to love one another as He loved us and this is how we should live as disciples of Christ.

(☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“Blessed are you who believe that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.” (Lk 1:45)



Holy Innocents

"Thus says the Lord: In Ramah is heard the sound of moaning, of bitter weeping! Rachel mourns her children, she refuses to be consoled because her children are no more."

Jeremiah 31:15

This was the Scriptural passage quoted by Matthew, the Evangelist, as he narrates the story of the massacre of the holy innocents. Jesus came into our world as an infant. When news reached King Herod the Great that astrologers were looking for the "newborn king of the Jews," it evoked fear in him. He was afraid of this helpless infant! His subtle attempts to locate the whereabouts of this infant king failed. The astrologers did not return to give him the information he needed. In his frustration and anger, he decided on a brutal solution. He ordered the massacre of all newborn male children in Bethlehem and its surrounding areas. This horrendous murder of innocent male infants is commemorated by the Church on December 28th, just a few days after Christmas. It is inconceivable that a powerful king would be so protective of his throne that he would destroy so many innocent lives. How could he justify killing all those children just because he didn't find the one he was seeking? Perhaps, if he had the matter investigated further, he could possibly have discovered that Jesus came not to snatch the throne away from him but to give him new life. Maybe, he would've found out from the prophets that Jesus came to liberate us from Satan and sin.

As much as we hate what King Herod did to those babies in Jesus' time, I believe it is premature to judge him before we have examined our own lives. In our day and age, did the Supreme Court of our country not choose death over life by legalizing abortion in 1973? From that year to the present time, we have murdered babies in the millions and we called it women's free choice. The infants Herod had destroyed were only a handful compared to what our civilized society has been destroying and continues to destroy. Modern society has engaged in wars that victimized many innocent people whose lives were forever changed by the inhuman treatments they have received. Injustice upon injustice continues to thrive in our world today. Let us pray to our Divine Savior to lead us into repentance for the modern slaughter and injustice that are taking place in our day.

Lord Jesus, Herod used his power to kill innocent children in your time. Today, Lord, give us the grace and the power to prevent the helpless members of our society from suffering, especially the unborn. Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, give us Your peace. Amen.



Perseverance

"You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved." Mt 10:22

In the Gospel of Mathew 10:22, the scriptural reading is very prophetic of the difficult challenges awaiting us when we follow our Lord, Jesus Christ. At the time of Jesus, these words were particularly directed to the Apostles themselves since each one of them was asked to leave everything behind, including all of their possessions and loved ones, to come follow Him. During that time, they were still suspicious and uncertain of Jesus' intentions since He was relatively unknown to them and to leave everything behind for the sake of following Christ was very difficult indeed. Not only will they endure the wrath of their loved ones for abandoning them but they would also suffer great anguish knowing that following Jesus, who proclaims himself as the Savior and the Son of God, meant persecution and even death in the hands of the Romans. However, despite these horrendous circumstances confronting them, still they all heeded the call of Christ and became "Fishers of Men".

And so the question arises, "**How much are you willing to endure to follow Christ?**"

As we all know, Christianity is generally more acceptable nowadays and we are no longer persecuted for our faith, but let us question ourselves and examine our conscience to see if we are truly deserving of our faith. What if preaching the words of Christ to your friends, family members and the group of people you socialize with will put you at odds with them? Would you be willing to put a strain in your relationship with your inner circle in the name of Jesus or would you play diplomacy and be selective of whom you preach to? What if the phrase "***But it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved***" was not included in the gospel of Mt 10:22, would you still be able to endure the pains of disdain and rejection knowing that there is no reward waiting for you?

All I know is that every single one of these questions is painful to imagine, and anytime I entertain these questions, it seems I am driving the nails on Jesus' hands deeper, penetrating the cross.

Living in Christ is a lifetime mission and difficult indeed, and is a challenge faced by all His believers, young and old alike. If the price for bringing closer to Christ those whom we love the most is pain and sorrow, then so shall it be! If feeling the anguish and pain is my reward in sharing the passion of Christ, then so shall it be!

DCS Christmas Message to the Community

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the good Lord's choicest blessings be upon all as we celebrate a very special event – the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

In this day and age when the true meaning of Christmas has been overshadowed by a society of secularism and commercialism, let us keep the real essence of Christmas alive in our hearts and that is – Jesus is reason for the season. Let us maintain old traditions and create new ones. Let us pause to appreciate our lives' simple pleasures. And most importantly, let us put our lives in perspective by remembering Jesus' humble birth.

Somehow not only for Christmas
But all the long year through
That joy that you give to others
Is the joy that comes to you;
And the more you spend on blessing
The poor and lonely and sad;
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to make you glad.

John Greenleaf Whittier
1807-1892

May Jesus who was born in a manger be born again in your hearts. And may the wonders of love fill your hearts with joy this Christmas and all through the year.

Sincerely,

The District Council of Stewards

Nestor and Becbec Laxina
Stewards – Evangelization

George and Cathy del Fierro
Stewards – Formation

Frank and Sally Belarmino
Stewards – Management

Joe and Beth Baluyot
Stewards – Mission

Lito and Gigi Vibar
Stewards - Pastoral



Apologetics Part 2

MARY: HONOR YOUR MOTHER

4. Don't Catholics worship Mary?

No. Catholics worship God alone, as is commanded in Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:13-15). However, Catholics honor Mary, as Christ Himself did, in obedience to the fourth commandment (honor your father and mother).

In Luke 1:46-48, "*my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.*" The Bible records Mary's own words, that say all ages [generations] will call her blessed. Catholics frequently refer to Mary as "the Blessed Mother" and "the Blessed Virgin." Every time they pray the Hail Mary, Catholics repeat the words of Scripture ("blessed art thou among women," Luke 1:42). In doing so they honor her, as a vehicle God chose to send His Son, and bring about the redemption of mankind. They also honor her for humbly submitting herself to God's will ("Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word," Luke 1:38), in contrast to the disobedience of Adam and Eve, which brought sin and death into the world.

5. Doesn't the Bible (Matthew 13:55-56) teach that Jesus had brothers?

No. Jesus was Mary's only child. When the Bible refers to Jesus' brothers, it is referring to other relatives, probably his cousins. Some examples from Scripture offer support to this position. Genesis 14:14, "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants" (KJV) refers to Lot as Abram's "brother" but we know he is Abram's nephew from Genesis 11:27. Lot was actually the son of Abram's brother Haran.

Matthew 27:56, "*among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee*" shows that some of those identified as Jesus' brothers in Matthew 13:55-56 were not his actual brothers but most likely his cousins.

Since there were no Hebrew or Aramaic words for "cousin" or "nephew," the term "brother" was commonly used. Today, some biblical translations (i.e. the RSV-CE) will more appropriately use the term "kinsman" to indicate a family relationship.

Additionally, if Mary had had other children, it would not have been appropriate for Jesus to assign her into the care of the Apostle John, "When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son" (John 19:26). In the Jewish culture, the alleged "other children" or "brothers" would have been responsible for taking care of their mother.



Source:

Basic Apologetics – How to Defend the Catholic Faith from the Bible

Counsels (from page 1)

So it goes without saying that for us to love God authentically, we must also show genuine love to our brothers and sisters. If we want to follow Him, we must demonstrate such love in order for our faith to be valid. This is the strength we need by which we should shepherd our community and the one standard by which God will judge our love for Him. It is, therefore, not surprising that the first fruit of the Holy Spirit is love.

A sine qua non in manifesting Christian love is honoring one another and respecting what is right. Respecting one another helps us to predispose ourselves to do the right thing concerning one another. It also disciplines and inculcates in our minds to respond promptly to situations and concerns in the community in a manner pleasing to God. Through this mutual honor and respect, love grows in everyone of us.

If we have Jesus in our hearts, we obey out of love. We become concern about the comfort, happiness, peace, and joy of others. Our lives become intertwine for mutual support, mutual endurance, and Christian witnessing to sustain each other. Mutual love and obedience produce the harmony that is conducive to spiritual growth, stability and peace.

In a community of believers, obedience to authority should never be mandated, compelled, or imposed to be absolute, rather, it is asked for by deference, respect, courtesy, and prayers through a loving heart. ***“Obey your leaders and defer to them, for they keep watch over you and will have to give an account, that they may fulfill their task with joy and not with sorrow, for that would be of no advantage to you. Pray for us, for we are confident that we have a clear conscience, wishing to act rightly in every respect.”*** (Heb 13:17-18) Our Lord desires obedience of faith from us through our free will and through our hearts’ desire to be with Him.

Let us characterize and show our love by teaching the truth to others and minister to each other's needs. Let true love set an example by serving others and encouraging each of us to grow in faith. Forgiving, understanding, enduring the brokenness and idiosyncrasies of others, and sacrificing on their behalf should be our common avenue in handling community issues.

Let us give to our Lord as a sin offering, our brokenness, our pride and arrogance, our jealous hearts, our judgmental attitude, and our performance oriented ways. To live in faith means we have to be reconciled to our Father in heaven with love, obedience, and sacrifice as our pathway of light. Above all, let His truth be our guide in our daily lives. Let us all see the face of Jesus in the faces of our families, our neighbors, our brothers and sisters in the community.

DIRECTION:

- * Maintain reverence in Church especially while the Rosary is being recited.
- * Encourage your community brothers and sisters to attend class reunions and corporate worship.



MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERCESSORY MINISTRY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com



WORD MINISTRY

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to rguiao@comcast.net; flimjr@yahoo.com

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Community Reconciliation
January 13, 2007
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

TEACHINGS

January 5th after worship

ME 28 Basics of Prayer

January 6th St. Mary's School 1-6pm

LSS 23 Healing and Deliverance

LSS 25 Christian Maturity Program II Part 2
(Christian Discernment, Christian Giving, Christian Suffering, Christian Witnessing)

LSS 27 Basic Bible Seminar
(Approaches, Book of Books, Response, Word of God)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports: ending December 15, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor \$ 3,306.00

.....
*All good giving and every perfect gift
is from above.*



May the blessings of the season shine upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week!



Bringing Good Tidings to Cabiao GK Villages

Last Saturday, December 16, 2006, a contingent of BLD Newark and UST Medicine Class 1976 members went to the Cabiao, Nueva Ecija site that makes up the Fr Paul Lehman Gawad Kalinga (GK) Village and the UST Medicine Class 1976 GK Village. The mayor, Gloria Congco, and the site team caretakers headed by Lito and Netchie Saturnino, Ernie Garcia, Floro Yapes and Bebot Bolisay led the GK communities in giving the group a very warm welcome. The contingent not bothered by the heat of the bright sun then took turns in painting a house in the trademark bright colors. They toured the different livelihood efforts of wig making, high-end rattan furniture making and Christmas decorations which the members bought from the site.

They were then feted with a program which opened with an original song sang by the GK Sibol kids. Their hearts melted and their eyes welled as they were serenaded with the song, "Sa tulong mo at pawis ko may pag-asa ang ating bayan." The eight new recipients were then introduced followed with the contingent handing over the ceremonial key to the recipients. Before they left the group then gave medicine and a cavan of rice to every family of the two GK villages.

As the contingent saw the face of Christ in the people they served, their hearts filled with joy. It was easy to see a new group hard core of GK supporters as they boarded the bus home.

What's Inside:

Christmas and New Year's Greetings

Page 2: From the Teaching Ministry - For 2007, many of us will form our New Years resolutions. But be comforted that we need only trust in God for He has already laid His Plan(s) for us.

Page 3: From Word Ministry: One silent night in Bethlehem, God filled the earth with hope so real, joy so pure and love so true.

COUNSELS

In Our Father's House

WORD: Sir 3:2-7, 12-14; Ps 128:1-5; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:41-52

ORDER: "Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Col 3:17)

THEME: We are in our Father's house when we honor and obey our father and mother.

REFLECTION: In two days, we shall be welcoming the New Year. In the midst of the Christmas season, we hear in the Gospel a powerful message that should resonate with the Christian disciple the whole of the coming year. We hear the child Jesus say, "I must be in my Father's house." Our servant leaders make this the worship theme for the first month of the year of the global BLD community: As children of God, we must strive to be in our Father's house.

Consider what it is to be in the Father's house. Step back farther and consider the Father's house itself. Could it be any other than holy? Thus, a primary condition to be welcome, to persevere to stay in the Father's house is to be free from sin and remain in God's grace. To remain in unrepented sin is not only to be unworthy; the soul will lose the desire to be with the Lord, being steeped in and habitually enamored with dwelling in the world and the paths of evil.

On the Sunday after Christmas, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Family. It is timely for us to affirm that the family is the sanctuary of life, where life, both born and unborn, is to be welcomed and nurtured. Without family, there can be no life, and without life, there can be no family. When the meaning of "family" itself is being attacked and perverted, we should reflect on its primal role in God's plan for mankind and ask Him to bless our families.

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"Whoever reveres his father will live a long life; he who obeys his father brings comfort to his mother." (Sir 3:7)

Christmas and New Year's Greetings

From the Teaching Ministry: For 2007, many of us will form our New Years resolutions. But be comforted that we need only trust in God for He has already laid His Plan(s) for us.

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope. When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the LORD, and I will change your lot.” (Jer 29:11-14)

We bless and thank the Lord for the BLD community as it is faithful to the pursuit of God’s plan of loving goodness which He fully revealed when He sent His beloved son Jesus and the Holy Spirit. And *“the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.”* (Jn 1:14) Indeed that the Word lives among us is no less truer than in the BLD where members pray and seek the Lord with all their hearts, strive to know Jesus more and more by knowing Scriptures and grow to love God more and more by worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth.

The Teaching Ministry would like to join all ministries and apostolate in embracing the New Year 2007 with thanksgiving in our hearts. For God gives us a future full of hope, new mercies every morning and golden opportunities each day to draw all people to pray, worship the Lord and serve the Lord by serving others. We take this opportunity to thank all the community elders, teachers, leaders, class shepherds, ministries and all community members for their continuing support of the community’s Formation Program. We welcome the new members and look forward to sharing the Word of God with them. We enjoin all loyal disciples in the community to embark on a continuing post covenanting formation program. As we walk hand in hand in a collaborative spirit with the different ministries, we reach out to all members of all ages as we remain faithful to the Ministry’s vision and mission to form, inform and transform Community members for the work of ministry and guide them to a deeper personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are blessed and humbled by the privilege of serving the community all for the love of our Savior, the Son of Man, Lord Jesus Christ, who did not come to be served but to serve.

From the Golden Years: May the love, peace and joy of this Christmas season remain in our hearts and may our Good Lord keep us always in His loving care to bless us with good health and happiness throughout the New Year, as we pray:

Give us the courage and the strength to face the new challenges of the coming year with faith, love and hope in Christ. Cast away all the darkness and the obstacles that hinder us from loving you and one another. Lord, keep us united in your love as one body in Christ with one heart and one mind just as you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one. This we ask through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

From the District Mission: May the New Year bring into our hearts the real message of the coming of our Lord from the time of His birth in a manger up to His death on the cross. It is a message that is consistent with all His teachings. It is a message that is the key to our salvation and life eternal. It is a message that we have to live consistently to feel joy of our oneness with Him. It is a message that defines the very foundation of our faith. It is the message of love and humility.

From Executive Council of Servant Leaders, ECSL: As we commemorate the birth of the Infant Jesus, the Messiah, we celebrate, as well, our Father’s confirmation of love for all mankind. So great is the love of our Father for us that He allowed His Son to be born in humble humanity, despite His glorious divinity. Let us rejoice and prepare our hearts to celebrate this Christmas feast with love and thanksgiving.

From John 6: Let us keep Christ as the heart of our Christmas, the reason for all our joy. Let us reflect on the season’s true meaning....the birth of a dear little boy. Whenever we see decorations that sparkle and tree lights that glimmer and glow, Let us remember the star that shone brightly and lit up that night long ago. Whenever we wrap up our presents to others and dream of the gifts we’d like best, Let us remember God’s gift of a savior...the gift that outshines all the rest. Let us keep Christ as the heart of our Christmas and take time to think of His love—— The secret to feeling the true Christmas spirit and knowing His peace from above. Let us pray for one another that Christ’s spirit be with us this Christmas and always have a blessed New Year *“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for He has visited and brought redemption to His people.”* (Lk 1:68)

Christmas and New Year's Greetings continue

From the Youth Ministry: As we turn the page on the year just past, preserving lessons learned and friendships earned to the storerooms of our lives, we now open our hearts to the fresh start of a new year. We pray that the New Year leads us to the simple joys of service to neighbor, just as Christ lived His life in service to us.

From Word Ministry: One silent night in Bethlehem, God filled the earth with hope so real, joy so pure and love so true.

May the gifts we share this season be a reminder of God's precious gift to us.

Let's pave the way for the birth of Christ and continue to fill our homes and community with His heavenly peace and the glorious light of His love.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

From Teaching Ministry: Blessed New Year to one and all!! First and foremost, we give thanks to Almighty Father for the gift of His Son.

"And he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb...a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." (Luke 2:21, 32)

We give thanks to Almighty God for the privilege of being Catholics. In our hearts we know we can trust in the Lord. He knows us better than we know ourselves. He even knew us before we were born (Ps139).

From individuals: "Make a wish upon a star." As kids, we often are told that if we make a wish, it may come true with just a bit of luck. Whether you make a wish when you throw a penny into a well, when you blow out your birthday candles, or when you when you see a shooting star, we've all been told at one point or another to make a wish. We follow a shining star that leads us into hopeful dreams and ideas that inspire us to aim for our goals that one day bring us to the final place where we desire. Unfortunately, in the world today we're blinded by many things such as work, classes, term papers, exams, and meetings that we can't focus on we want to reach for.

The BLD Youth would like to make the New Year's wish and resolution to be able to see that guiding wishful light again, but not from a star. We want to be able to be guided by the light of Jesus. In this we pray in Jesus' name for the New Year.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERCESSORY

Prayer requests and petitions can now be submitted through our website at bldnewark.com

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).

Email to rguiao@yahoo.com;

cblmont@hotmail.com

Teachings

Jan 5, 2007
After worship

Basics of Prayer – ME28

Jan 6, 2007
1:00-6:00 pm
St. Mary's

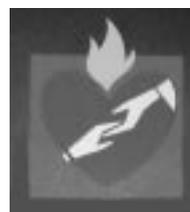
Healing and Deliverance –
LSS23

Christian Maturity Program II
Part 2 – LSS25

Basic Bible Seminar – LSS27

Jan 12, 2007
After worship

Basic Bible Seminar – Solo
Parents



**Stop a moment and reassure yourself
that no matter how difficult things seem,
no matter how uneasy events make you feel,
God has a higher purpose,
though it may not be revealed in our lifetime.**



Counsels *from page 1*

Keeping our eyes focused on the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph will help us with our specific theme for the week: We are in our Father's house when we honor and obey our father and mother. The BLD disciple is more than familiar with the Fourth Commandment: it is the first among God's commands that concern the relationship between people, and is the only commandment that carries a promise.

Sirach 3 leaves no doubt that God wills this to be so. The Lord sets a father in honor over his children; a mother's authority he confirms over her sons. Obeying the Fourth Commandment carries corresponding blessings, brings cleansing. He who honors his father atones for sins. Kindness to a father will serve as a sin offering. This honor and respect is due even to old and infirm parents. Failure to render respect blasphemy and merits a curse from God (v16). St. Paul is no less explicit: "*Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord.*" (Col 3:20)

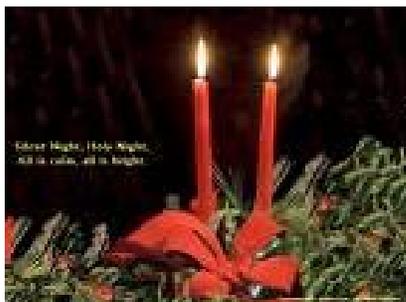
Parents in turn have a solemn responsibility to their children and their upbringing. "*Do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged.*" (Col 3:21) This is so important that the Apostle repeats it elsewhere: "*Do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up with the training and instruction of the Lord.*" (Eph 6:4)

The Gospel scene holds up as our example none other than the Child Jesus who, having astounded the teachers at the temple with profundity of understanding, returned humbly with his parents to Jerusalem. There, he was obedient to them... advancing in wisdom and age and favor before God and man. Mary and Joseph, in their great love for their lost son, looked for him in the big city with great anxiety. This Holy Feast invites us to contemplate how it must have been in that humble house in Nazareth — the love, respect and caring between parents and child.

These familial responsibilities extend beyond our immediate family — to our BLD family, the universal Church and, in a real sense, to the whole family of mankind. For the love of God impels us to love our neighbor, to integrity of character whomever we deal with. There can only be order, respect and love in our Father's house.

DIRECTION:

1. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord.
2. Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 12-16, 2007 Medical Mission, Lingayen, Pangasinan



God does not comfort us to make us comfortable, but to make us comforters. (Dr. Jowett)

"The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble." (Ps 9:10)

"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." (Jn 14:23)

"Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5)

"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the decision of the LORD that endures." (Prv 19:21)

Happiness is not the absence of conflict but the ability to cope with it.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending Dec. 22, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering - \$2,564.00

"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above."

