



Fr. Paul Invites Disciples to Recollection

Dear brothers and sisters, may I take this opportunity to invite all of our committed and covenanted disciples to join us next week, January 13th. at 9:30 am at St Antoninus for what I hope could be the beginning of regularly scheduled recollection days for the members of our community. I prefer not like to advertise this as a response to very real issues that have faced the community in recent months. If we gather to discuss “issues” on this occasion, we will be going in a direction that will be completely opposite to the vision I have for this day. I do not want to sweep issues under the rug. There certainly is room for real dialogue on matters that affect community life. They should be addressed, but I beg you not now! Reserve them for another day.

I also do not want to minimize these problems. However, I am completely and utterly convinced that the real problem is not what it appears to be. The real problem is a spiritual one. The evil one is doing a “job” on us. I would like to point, with the help a one of the greatest spiritual minds of the Church, St. Ignatius of Loyola, to the spiritual attacks that are piggy-backing on the top of these issues. The external problems are obvious. What is not so obvious is the underlying, subtle and deceptive dimension that we either ignore or minimize. Let’s make this a day of fasting except for those who may need to eat. I want to address in the first place the Ignatian “rules” for discernment, and a general challenge to look into the dimension of our prayer life both personal and conjugal. We should finish with the Mass of Saturday before 5pm.



Visit our website at
www.bldnewark.com



COUNSELS

A STAR IS BORN

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

ORDER: “Come to do him homage.” (Mat. 2:2b)

Theme: *We are in our Father’s house when we accept the revelation of Christ in our lives.*

REFLECTION:



The word “Epiphany” means to make manifest, reveal, or bring out of concealment. The Epiphany is the manifestation and revelation of God in the lives and hearts of all peoples. The poetic words of “Third Isaiah” capture the coming of the Lord in the following way: “Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick clouds covers the peoples; But upon you the Lord shines, and over you appears his glory.”

No doubt, we would expect some great divine sign. The words of the poet help us to lift our

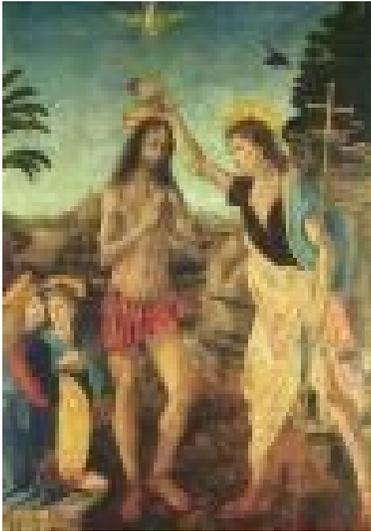
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Promise of the Week

“He shall rescue the poor when he cries out,
and the afflicted when he has no one to help him.”
(Ps 72:12)

WATER AND FIRE

"I am baptizing you with water; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit of Fire"



Both water and fire are essential to live. It is said that a man can live for many days just with water. It is also said that a man can survive from being frozen just with fire from a candle. The church uses signs and symbols for us to understand and experience

God's power and love. In the general introduction of the Rite of Baptism for Children it says, "Through baptism men and women are incorporated into Christ and are freed from the power of darkness. They are formed into God's people, and they obtain forgiveness of all their sins. They are raised from their natural human condition to the dignity of adopted children. They become a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit. Hence, they are called, and are indeed, the children of God (number 2). Further, baptism is the sacrament by which men and women are incorporated into the church, built into a house where God lives, in the Spirit, into a holy nation and a royal priesthood (number 4)."

John the Baptizer came and baptized with water. He invited people to repent so that their may be washed clean. Jesus came and baptized with the Holy Spirit. He washed people's sins and raised them from their natural human condition to the dignity of adopted children of God, becoming His new creation. In Baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit and become His temple. In Confirmation, we receive the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As in Baptism, the seal of the Holy Spirit is indelibly imprinted on our soul. Clothed with His character, we are equipped to bear witness for Jesus to the

□ (page3 column1)

ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

In the Gospel of Mark 1:29-39, the people who witnessed the healing miracles of Jesus were amazed by his teaching authority and his ability to rid the possessed of unclean spirits. Jesus' power to bring physical healing and liberation from demonic possession are indicative of his authority and the authenticity of the Truth he preaches. He is the bearer, the bringer, the embodiment of God's Good News for the human race, which restores our relationship with God.

Since God is the ultimate authority, the entire universe operates within his authority system. As such, he has delegated this authority to Jesus. In Matthew 28:18 Jesus Himself said to His disciples when He gave the great commission: "All power in heaven and earth has been given to me." God speaks to us now "through a son whom He made heir of all things and through whom He created the universe" (Hebrews 1:2).

By this, Christ is God's mediator for the new covenant in which we now live. Clearly, our authority in religion is in Christ. Christ is in the Scriptures, which is God's Word to man. Christ is likewise in Church Tradition and the teachings of the Magisterium. In Scriptures, Tradition and Magisterium, God has given us all we need to guide us in our journey of life. These are the divinely established standard of authority for us believers.

The world's view of authority places men over one another. Because of the competitiveness of men created by The Fall and his sinful human nature, the world operates under command structures and executive decisions. The Lord taught us that authority is about servanthood,



about loving, feeding and tending

(page3 col.1)

(continuation: Ultimate Authority)

His flock. As Christians, we are brothers and sisters, children of One Father and members of one family. Christ is an authority of love, not coercion. Christ's servanthood is the highest expression of His humanity and Divinity. His unconditional and perfect love for us should be our motivation to submit to God's perfectly ordered authority. We should also submit to the leaders he placed over us, "...for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account." (Hebrews 13:17)

Since the beginning of time God has been in control. Everything begins and ends with Him, as there are no boundaries or authorities to restrain the execution of His power. From shapelessness and darkness, all creation - seen and unseen- came into being by the power of His Word. Regardless of how empty or dark our lives and circumstances may seem, our faith tells us that this is not the plan of God, the Ultimate Authority. For His Son, His Word, Jesus Christ came so that we may have life and have it to the fullness.

Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
(Ephesians 5:10)

(continuation Water and Fire)

entire world and to work for the building of the body of Christ.

As Catholics, we are set aside by Jesus to truly believe and practice the grace we received from Baptism and Confirmation. We are called to remain clean from sin and proclaim God's Word to all we come in contact with. We are to live the dignity of being adopted children of God by loving one another as Jesus has loved us. Loving by serving one another with humility and sincerity as Saint Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians 13:4-7 "*Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interest, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.*"

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

TEACHING MINISTRY



- 01/05 (After worship) **Basics of Prayer** –ME28
01/06 1:00-6:00 pm, St. Mary's
Healing and Deliverance – LSS23
Christian Maturity Prog. II Part 2 –LSS25
Basic Bible Seminar – LSS27
01/12 (After worship) **Basic Bible Seminar** –
Solo Parents
01/19 (After worship) **Mark 10 Teaching**
John 6 Teaching
Youth Teaching
Introduction to the Word - Singles
01/20 1:00-6:00 pm, St. Mary's
Gifts and Fruits of the H.S – LSS26
Christian Parenting – ME28
01/26 (After worship) **Intercession Formation**
Service Formation
Introduction to the Word – Solo Parents

The path of the just is like shining light, that grows in brilliance till perfect day.

(Proverbs 4:18)

We welcome comments or advice:
Please email to: rguiao@yahoo.com, cblmont@hotmail.com

We must pray without ceasing, in every occurrence and employment of our lives - that prayer which is rather a habit of lifting up the heart to God as in a constant communication with Him. - Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

(Acts 20:35)

Counsels from page 1

hearts and heads to the heavens. What do we see? "His star is rising." The wise men have come to worship. King Herod would like to go in order that he might destroy this threat to his power. Gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh are at the ready. Yet, what did the Wise Men find at the stable in Bethlehem?

The gospel of St. Matthew offers a shocking scene. "The star which they have observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child was and on entering the house they were rejoiced at finding the child with Mary his mother." The star in the sky pointed to One who gives the Light of Life. The power revealed in that place was the power of Love made visible. That which was manifested is the revelation of "God's secret plan, unknown to men in former ages, but now revealed by the Spirit to the holy apostles and prophets" (Ep 3: 4-5) and the secret plan of grace has been revealed to each of us.

Let us, for a moment, reflect on why Christ was sent by the Father? Did Jesus volunteer to be a Savior for us? Let us return in the Book Genesis 3:15, just after the fall of man, the Father promised to redeem man from the bondage of evil, which will come from the offspring of the woman (Mary). It says "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head, while you will strike at his heel." The fulfillment of the Father's promise came into being when he chose Mary to conceive a son as revealed in Luke 1:30-31, "Then the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus." In Luke 2: 6,7a, "While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son." In Luke 2: 11, the angel appeared to the shepherds and said, "For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord."

Jesus became human so that God's love can be made visible. Out of great love of the Father for us, he sent Jesus and became man that we may be like God. He became human that ☐

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- 01/13 9:00 a.m.-4:00, **Community Recollection**(Committed & Covenanted Disciples) St. Antoninus Church,
- 02/12-16 **Medical Mission**, Lingayen, Pangasinan, Philippines
- 04/14-16 **LSS#28**, St. Mary's
- 06/1-3 **ME#29**, St. Francis Retreat House Easton, PA

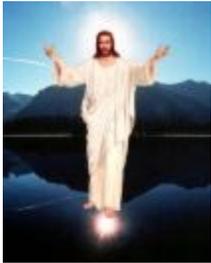
The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Report
for the Week Ending
Dec. 29, 2006

Tithes, Love Offering -
\$ 3,774.00



"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above"



*You have not chosen me;
I have chosen you.
Go and bear fruit that will last.
(John 15:16)*

Counsels continuation.

we may be divine. He endured the cross and shed his blood that we may be saved from sin and rise to new life. On this day of Epiphany, of revelation, we know in which direction points our hope of glory. This day of manifestation is one in which our daily vocation is brought to light as well.

For we are to continue the Epiphany, the revelation of God, by our daily witness to love, forgiveness, faith, compassion, courage and hope and so help each other to lift up our hearts and follow Christ's Star. By letting God continue to reveal his grace through us, others will come in order to praise God. What we present to the Child this day is not gold, frankincense or myrrh. God wants something much more precious, our HEARTS.

DIRECTION:

Offer the myrrh of healing and reconciliation not only to those whom you have offended, but also those who have offended you.



The Examen of Consciousness

The prayers and methods of praying suggested here are based on nearly five-hundred years of Jesuit spiritual tradition. St. Ignatius believed that he received a gift from God that not only enriched his own Christian life but was meant to be shared with others. This way of praying allowed Ignatius to discover the voice of God within his own heart and to experience a growth in familiarity with God's will.

This is a prayer where we try to find the movement of the Spirit in our daily lives as we reflect on our day. This prayer can be made anywhere through this method of praying you can grow in a sense of self and the Source of self; you can become more sensitive to your own spirit with its longings, its powers, its Source; you will develop an openness to receive the supports that God offers. Try to be in a place where you are least likely to be disturbed.

1. Recall that you are in the presence of God. No matter where you are, become aware that God is present within you. Ask the Holy Spirit to let you look on all you see with love. *"Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous or boastful, it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; ... it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right ... Love hopes all things."* (1 Cor 13:4)

2. Spend a moment looking over your day with gratitude for this day's gifts. Be concrete and let special moments or pleasures spring to mind!

3. Ask God to send you His Holy Spirit to help you look at your actions and attitudes and motives with honesty and patience. *"When the Spirit of truth comes he will guide you into all truth."* (Jn 16:13) The Holy Spirit inspires you to see with growing freedom the development of your life story. The Spirit gives a freedom to look upon yourself without condemnation and without complacency and thus be open to growth.

4. Now review your day. This is the longest of the steps. Recall the events of your day; explore the context of your actions.

5. The final step is our heart-to-heart talk with Jesus. Here you speak with Jesus about your day. You share your thoughts on your actions, attitudes, feelings and interactions. You may feel led to seek forgiveness, ask for direction, share a concern, express gratitude, etc.

Having reviewed this day of your life, look upon yourself with compassion and see your need for God and try to realize God's manifestations of concern for you. Express sorrow for sin, and especially ask forgiveness for the times you resisted God's light today. Give thanks for grace, the enlightening presence of God, and especially praise God for the times you responded in ways that allowed you to better see God's life. Resolve with Jesus to move forward in action where appropriate. You might like to finish your time with the Lords Prayer.

COUNSELS

A Sacramental Life

WORD: Is 62:1-5; Ps 96:1-3, 7-10;
1 Cor 12:4-11; Jn 2:1-11

ORDER: *"Do whatever He (Jesus) tells you."*
(Jn.2:5b)

THEME: *We are in our Father's house
when we do whatever He tells us.* (Jn 2:5b)

REFLECTION: In the year 2001, Pope John Paul II added the wedding of Cana as the second Luminous Mystery. The mystery of Light begins with the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan river where Our Father in heaven and the Spirit like the dove reveals Him. *"You are my beloved Son with You I am well pleased."* This mystery continues to unravel with the lips of our Mother Mary at Cana as she addresses to us today: *"Do whatever He tells you."* (Jn 2:5b)

Among all of us creatures no one knows and no one can introduce Christ's profound mystery better than Mary. This motherly counsel is a prologue of Jesus Christ's ministry as he embarks and sets the tone of what discipleship is all about, what it is to be a follower of Christ. Jesus said, *"I have given you a model to follow so that as I have done for you, you should also do. As I have loved you so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another."* (Jn 13:34-35)

Our Gospel reading overflows with God's unfathomable affection for us. How fitting it is for the plan of God to pick a special wedding occasion for Jesus' first miracle. For what happened here will leave a lasting liturgical remembrance of its meaning and purpose. From the very beginning at the time of his creation, He knew that it was not good for man to be alone, God made us to draw together in families. (page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

*"You shall be a glorious crown
in the hand of the Lord"*
(Is 62:3)

Twelve Ordinary Men

What made twelve ordinary men give up everything they had to follow Christ and become “Fishers of Men”? What drove these twelve ordinary men to achieve greatness and make a tremendous impact on how we live our lives today, 2000 years after they had accepted the mission Christ bestowed upon them? We may never know the real answers to these questions, but one thing we know for sure is that they all believed in Christ as the Son of Man who spoke of the truth; the truth for mankind to return to God’s mercy and favor; the truth about being naked and bare of all things and wealth when the time comes for us to come before His Father’s judgment.

Their faith in Christ as the Messiah and the Son of God was so passionate that it drove each one of them to achieve heights of unwavering proportions at that time, going to hostile and unfamiliar places in spreading the word of God and teaching the good works of Christ, knowing death is inevitable for doing such Christ-like deeds when Christianity was only known to a few who have witnessed our Lord’s crucifixion. It is no different at this time and age when there are still places on earth where people are persecuted for their beliefs, where even death is still a possible punishment for trying to change a society’s way of living.

What we’ve learned so far in this day and age is that we still have a long way to go in humbling ourselves and learning from these twelve ordinary men whom Christ imparted with His words of life and wisdom, but this also opens a window for us to make a difference and continue the good works that Christ and His Apostles started.

Christ is no longer asking us to give up everything that is dear and beloved to us in order to follow Him, such as our families and friends, but rather to use them to set good examples of good Christian living; a family who is prayerful to God and devoted to the teachings of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Let us use this chance to change the world through compassion, understanding and love the way He taught the twelve ordinary men whom He chose to become “Fishers of Men”. Let the ordinary person in you be the carrier of God’s words of wisdom! Let the ordinary person in you break boundaries and barriers to offer the peace and loving hand of Christ to all mankind!

“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.” (Jn 15:16)

“Do Whatever He Tells You”

These are the words of our Lord’s mother from the story of the wedding in Cana (Jn 2:1-11) where she was invited together with Jesus and some of His disciples. When the wine ran short, our Blessed Mother told Jesus, “They have no wine” (Jn 2:3) and further told the servers to do whatever Jesus told them to do.

“Do whatever He tells you”, an expression of faith and trust especially that of our Blessed Mother who is the ultimate Christian role model. It tells us that Mary has total trust in the Word of God and possesses sure knowledge of God and His promises. Her faith stood strong; she knew that Jesus could do whatever was necessary in the situation as long as the servants obeyed. She lived with her eyes fixed on Jesus Christ treasuring His every word: “*And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.*” (Lk 2:19)

Our dear Lord Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding banquet by turning water into wine and impressed upon the minds of His disciples, who were present, that His power was the power of God, opening their hearts to faith. “*Do whatever He tells you*”, bids us to imitate our Blessed Mother’s faith who in her confidence and knowledge knew that she will get an answer from her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

As Mary urges the servants to do what Jesus commands, presents to us as a means of learning from her to know Christ, to discover him, and to understand his message. When we see Mary and listen to her, we always see her pointing to her Son. Like the Holy Spirit, she is always turning our attention to her Son Jesus, to the Incarnate God, the Word made Flesh, our Lord and Savior who gave death to sin and gave us the promise of eternal life with Him in heaven. The first miracle performed by Jesus Christ, at the wedding feast in Cana gives us an insight into the great kindness of His mother and into her influence on her Son. Jesus Christ worked His first miracle upon His mother’s request, despite His own acknowledgment that “*His hour has not yet come*” (Jn 2:4). From this account, we can easily see how promptly and powerfully the Blessed Virgin Mary intercedes for her children.

Let us ask our Blessed Mother to help us do whatever Jesus tells us to do. Let us continue to seek Him in His church, in the Sacraments, in the pages of the Holy Bible and in the people that we meet. Let us keep on praying that our joy in doing God’s work be fueled with love, faith, hope and trust in Him and His promises.

MINISTRY CORNER:

The BLD Community continues to spread the "Good News" by holding Life in the Spirit Seminars and Reunions. It fosters a deep spirituality - a stronger faith and prayer life. The LSS creates a NEW LIFE - a life-transforming experience that hungers and thirsts for the LORD, the zeal to know, to love and serve HIM. Anyone can easily relate whatever he experienced: a new awareness and perspective in life that the Holy Spirit bestows upon him. He can bear witness to the Truth and seek things that are above, things that are eternal and infinite, which brings ultimate and perfect peace, love and joy.

As one of the ministries of Evangelization Apostolate, LSA will continue to support the needs of the BLD Community in performing its tasks as a Private Lay Association of the Faithful. Its established processes are enhanced thereby making it responsive to the needs of all workers within the community as well as in the parishes.

The Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS) is primarily an evangelical tool, which takes the basic message of Christianity and proclaims it anew so that those who hear it can make an authentic and deeper commitment to the Lord, which will allow them to receive a fuller experience of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

The Bukas-Loob Sa Diyos LSS is an adaptation of the original Life in the Spirit Seminars developed by the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Among the revisions BLD introduced is the pre-seminar shepherding concept, which is unique and specific to its experience. Although the seminar covers a period of seven weeks, which correspond to the seven topics, the Community presents all seven talks during the seminar proper.

As we seek to help build the Church through the LSS, we should bear in mind the following goals. 1) Help participants to establish, re-establish or deepen their relationship with Christ. 2) Help participants yield to the action of the Holy Spirit in their lives. 3) Become member of a faith community that can share their Christian life of service using the gifts, fruits and charisms offered through the Holy Spirit and, 4) Begin a new life of discipleship and growth in relationship with Christ.

LSA usually conducts Seminar during the months of April and October. Openings are announced during Friday worships and through the BLD website: bldnewark.com or through the LSA website: 2000hailmarys.org/lisa. To be considered, an applicant shall attend LSS orientation and fill-up information and commitment sheets.

Through collaboration with other ministries and use of the Internet, Life in the Spirit Seminars can easily be supported anywhere and anytime. All glory and praise be to God!

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

SINGLES MINISTRY: Archdiocesan Council for Young Adults Outreach Service Day
Jan 20, 2007, 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Volunteers needed, contact:

Eric Cruz (JCruzer@gmail.com) or
Lee Ann Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

- Forest Hills Nursing Home-Newark
- Blessed Sacrament Food Pantry-Newark
- Coat Sorting-Hillside, NJ

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

TEACHING Schedule:

Jan 12, 2007 - After worship
Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents

Jan 19, 2007 - After worship
Mark 10 Teaching
John 6 Teaching
Youth Teaching
Introduction to the Word - Singles

Jan 20, 2007 - 1:00-6:00 pm • St. Mary's
Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit – LSS26
Christian Parenting – ME28

Jan 26, 2007 - After worship
Intercession Formation
Service Formation
Introduction to the Word – Solo Parents

Feb 2, 2007 - After worship
Motivational Gifts Inventory – LSS24

Feb 3, 2007 - 1:00-6:00 pm • St. Mary's
Understanding Corporate Worship
LSS24 & LSS25
Prayer Leadership – LSS24; LSS25
Encounter with Jesus – LSS27

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report
for the Week Ending January 5, 2007
Tithes, Love Offering \$2,997.00

"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above."

Counsels

(continued from Page 1...)

This occasion is the seed of community, a long term community of two persons that will grow into a family, a community, the way of the Church. Christ's presence dignified this occasion into a sacrament, a covenant involving an exchange of persons, a relationship based on His love and trust.

Each person is committed to love each other in sickness and in health, in honor and in glory. To mourn together, to rejoice together, to delight in each other, and to make each other's condition our own. It requires walking away from my "me first" rugged individualism towards you, giving instead of receiving. It is a celebration of differences and transcending into one as "bones of my bones and flesh of my flesh". It is a sacred process.

In our generation we have seen families and community fall into a rapid decline. When families fail, communities suffer. Over a century ago, most marriages ended only with the death of a spouse. Today most marriages end bitterly in separations and divorce. Infants and children are abandoned, many struggle with anger, miseries, bitterness from pains and betrayal of life's crucifixion.

God understands our human condition and knows man's desperate need, so He chose this wedding in Cana to foreshadow something greater to come. The night He was betrayed, He took the cup, gave thanks and instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist, a new covenant in His Blood which will be shed for us. He was a visitor who never left the wedding because He wanted to confer His own life that we can live with Him, move with Him, and have our spirit together. He wants us to become like Him, one with Him and one with the Father and the Spirit, the true family of love and truth.

As we are gathered in His Name, we become Christ's Body the Church. We are His bride and Jesus is our Bridegroom. We are espoused with Him that we become the temple and home of our covenant sealed with His Blood.

Community, like marriage, is not free of problems. One would not argue that we need more than six empty jars for all the many gallons of community problems and issues. With our Eucharistic Lord, they are nothing, there are no problems that cannot be solved or issues that cannot be resolved.

His glorious presence refines our ways and thoughts and purifies our hearts, so that we are able to appreciate each other's limitations, our own inadequacy and imperfections, that allow us to see each other as Christ sees us, no longer as broken mortals, but His very own child so precious He died for us.

DIRECTION: Live the fullness of the Spirit by nourishing a sacramental and prayer life.

Visit us on the web
www.bldnewark.com

Make Covenant News A Part Of Your Covenant Life!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jan 13, 2007 • 9:00 am-4:00 pm
Community Recollection
(Committed & Covenanted Disciples)
St. Antoninus Church
- Jan 13, 2007 • 10:30-11:30 am
BLD Mission ~ Nursing Home Visit
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic
Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto
(engeng@optonline.net)
- Jan 14, 2007 • 2:00 pm-6:00 pm
SE17 Reunion
Bong & Ruby David's residence
329 Wayne Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302
- Jan 19-21, 2007
Singles Encounter #2 – Washington, DC
Contact: Glenn Canlas
Invazian21@yahoo.com
- Jan 21, 2007 • 11:00 am-5:00 pm
FE13 Reunion #3
St. Mary's auditorium
- Feb 10, 2007
Pastoral Ministry ~ Nursing Home Visit
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic
Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto
engeng@optonline.net
- Feb 12-16, 2007
Medical Mission
Lingayen, Pangasinan
- Apr 14-16, 2007
LSS28 - St. Mary's
- Apr 21-22, 2007
YLSS12 - St. Mary's
Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am-8:00 pm)
Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am-3:00 pm)
- Jun 1-3, 2007
ME29 - St. Francis Retreat House
Easton, PA



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 03

Bulletin Edition

January 19, 2007

Community Recollection

The intensive one-day Community Recollection held on January 13, 2007 at St. Antoninus Church, Newark, New Jersey, was conducted by Fr. Paul Lehman, BLD Newark's Spiritual Director.

The day started with praise and worship led by Boy and Des Parker of the Pastoral Ministry. It was immediately followed by the introduction of "Awareness of the Inner States". *Inner States* consists of the following:

1. Contemplative (i.e. Divine indwelling)
2. Psychological – tendency to act and react in habitual ways (anger, fear, discouragement, sexual, etc.)
3. Moral – conscience ("Examine fidelity to Word" and "Importance of Prayer and Contemplation")
4. Spiritual – tendency to be more than psychological; spontaneous affective movements, often unaware and precedes moral awareness; consist of the following:
 - a. Consolation – perceptible experience of God's love
 - b. Desolation – discouragement, fear, loss of hope, sadness
 - √ Non-spiritual: e.g., death, finances
 - √ Mystical purification: from God – always good
 - √ Sadness diminishes spiritual energy

Non-spiritual desolation, like physical tiredness and depression, is a springboard for Spiritual Desolation. Forms of Spiritual Desolation are:

1. Darkness of soul: confusion
2. Movement to earthly things: feels no attraction to prayer- downward pull
3. Agitation and temptations
4. Lacking experience of faith, hope, and love.
5. Slothful and sad as if separated from God.

It is never from God even if He permits it. It leads to thoughts, from emotions to mind, and uses the mind to realize what is going on. *(continue on page 3)* 

COUNSELS

ONE BODY IN CHRIST

Word: Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10; Ps 19:8-10,15; 1Cor 12:12-30; Lk 1:1-4, 4:14-21

Theme: We are in our Father's house when we are one in the body of Christ.

Order: Let there be no division in the body; have the same concern for one another. (1 Cor 12:25 paraphrased)

Reflection:

"As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit." (1 Cor 12:12-13)

In his Letter to the Corinthians, Paul continues the theme he began last week, reminding us that we have been favored by God with many gifts, intended not for just our own individual benefit, but for the good of the whole community.

This is very true in the BLD community. Just as the physical body has many parts, so also our community which comprises many different people, each with different abilities and interests, but the one Spirit of God gives all of these various gifts. We, in community, were filled with this same Spirit in baptism. We must spend the rest of our lives appreciating our own gifts and the fact that the Spirit enlivens those around us however different their skills and interests may be.

Paul further states a compelling argument for recognizing the various gifts each person has. There can be no question that the parts of the body must work in concert with one another in order for the entire body to function. No part is insignificant, and no part is so *(continue on page 4)* 

God's Promise for the Week

"Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it." (1 Cor 12:27)

Responding to God's Word

"The mystery of the Kingdom of God has been granted to you. But to those outside everything comes in parables, so that 'they may look and see but not perceive, and hear and listen but not understand, in order that they may not be converted and be forgiven.'" (Mk 4: 11-12)

Discernment as defined by the Encarta dictionary means keenly selective judgment. In our growth as Christians, it is a seed sown by God in us, nurtured and cultivated by our "yes"-our active participation- in recognizing the gift and exercising it in our everyday circumstances so that it can be fertilized and grown. How do we discern? In order for us to ensure that we are keeping a fertile ground for the seed, one gift in a vast array of gifts that come from God, we must first soak ourselves in His Word. Reading and reflecting on the Bible or Magnificat daily, attending and participating in the teachings, spending time in fellowship with our brethren, serving in church and our BLD community are ways of saying "yes" to our Lord. In our daily living, we are confronted with moments wherein we are beckoned to be disciples. Yet, are we fertile and ready for His calling?



In this reading from the book of Mark 4: 1-20, Jesus' parable of the sower is recounted. Jesus tells the story to the crowd saying, "Hear this!" implying urgency that the message he is about to impart is of great importance. The parable is rich in similes, as Jesus describes the different conditions of the ground upon which the seed lands. He then ends His teaching by saying,

"Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear."

Are we ready to hear His calling? Do we conduct ourselves in our community so that we cultivate the soil upon which His seeds are sown? Are we responding in a manner which pleases our Lord? As Mark further describes in his account, after the crowd has dispersed, the twelve apostles questioned Him. They wanted to dig deeper into Jesus' message, struggling to understand what the parable really meant. Jesus satisfies them by explaining the true meaning of His figurative story (i.e., Mk 4: 14-20). Thus, in using the parable of the sower, Jesus challenges the apostles to pay attention and reflect on the lesson at hand. Similarly, as we soak and reflect ourselves in God's words we allow Jesus to explain to us its real meaning. As we live the lessons that we learn, we are slowly transformed, just as the twelve apostles were transformed, so that the seed that has been sown amongst us may reap a bountiful harvest for the Lord.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. (Mt 5:8)

APOLOGETICS

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

St. Timothy

Bishop of Ephesus & Martyr

The Angel of Ephesus - Jan. 26 (A.D. 97)

Timothy means “one who honors God.” He was a missionary, pastor, and bishop. His contemporaries were Paul, Silas, Luke, Mark, Peter and Barnabas.

Saint Timothy was a convert of Paul born at Lystra in Asia Minor. His mother, Eunice, was Jewish but his father was a pagan (Greek). When Paul arrived at Lystra, Timothy, his mother, and grandmother (Lois) converted to the faith, with Timothy already knowledgeable in the holy scripture. Seven years later, on his return, Timothy was a grown man, and it was at this time that Paul had Timothy circumcised. And this was the beginning of Timothy accompanying Paul in his journeys to cities in Europe, Asia Minor and Greece. This also was the start of Timothy, being Paul’s confidante, with Paul calling him his dearly beloved son, and Timothy calling Paul, his spiritual father and mentor.

Paul made Timothy the first bishop and pastor of the church at Ephesus, where Timothy later on received the first letter from Paul, (from Macedonia) and the second letter (from Rome), where Paul was held in prison, and martyred with Peter, eventually.

Many years later, it was on the feast day of the goddess Diana, whose temple stood in Ephesus, that Timothy met his martyrdom, when a pagan struck him down because he was exhorting them to renounce their idols and embrace Christianity.

In 1 Timothy, Paul wrote Timothy on topics about worship, criteria for church leaders and warning against false doctrine. In 2 Timothy, Paul encouraged him to “remain faithful to the things you have been taught”, with emphasis on God’s word.

St. Titus - Bishop

The Apostle of Crete - Jan. 26 (End of AD 100)

Unlike Timothy, Titus was a pagan and a Greek-speaking convert. Nothing is recorded about the circumstances of his conversion or initial encounter with Paul. He is first introduced as a companion of Paul and Barnabas in the Council of Jerusalem in A.D. 50.

Titus is well known for his work as a peacemaker, negotiator and reconciler in the Corinthian church. Because of this, Paul was determined to assign Titus to the island of Crete, knowing the church there was unruly and was invaded by false teachers. Trusting in Titus’ spiritual earnestness and skilled diplomacy, he left Titus in Crete to finish the job.

Paul wrote his third pastoral letter to Titus (the first two, to Timothy) from Rome, during his second imprisonment, to encourage him in his Cretan ministry, and to send him to Dalmatia, now called Yugoslavia. Both were to meet in Nicopolis for the winter, but Peter and Paul got martyred before this meeting took place. Titus returned to Crete later, and became Bishop, till he was an old man.

The theme of Paul’s letter to Titus is Christian leadership. “Doing right is the result of thinking right.”

Comm. Recollection *(cont. from page 1)*

Actions and responses to desolation is to reject them and never change self against the desolation (some things can change; health, burdens, responsibilities). We are encouraged to resort to the following:

1. Prayer: petition toward God to counter sense of separation
2. Meditation: truth of God’s faithful love counters confusion and darkness by light of faith; counters disquiet by peace; deepens faith, hope, love
3. Penance: lengthened prayer

Fr. Paul also covered “Lectio Divina” which consists of reading the scriptures, praying and meditating in silence upon the word of God, waiting for the Holy Spirit’s prompting to impart to us His holy will regarding the readings.

The final module was “Implementing Discernment into Ministries” which was a workshop by ministries. The workshop encouraged sharing among ministry members about practical ways of how to integrate the teachings into our personal and community life. The exercise is supposed to make us more aware of the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives, to become more familiar with the voice of God within our own hearts in order to be more attuned to knowing His will in all that we do. In conducting the workshop by ministries, participants could agree to hold one another accountable and support one another in this endeavor through their attention to the 5 W’s of Wellspring: knowing the Source, their ministry Work, Warfare, Witness, and Word-sharing thereby setting parameters or correcting in love and building up one another. At the end, everyone was asked to share their resolutions with other ministries.

The recollection was concluded with a Eucharistic Celebration. Instead of a homily, Fr. Paul asked everyone to meditate in silence on the readings and practice “Lectio Divina”. By God’s grace this Community Recollection turned out to be another weekend full of His healing, mercy and love.

TEACHING		
Jan 19	After worship Introduction to the Word Teaching	Singles Mark 10 John 6 Youth
Jan 20	St. Mary’s 1-6pm Gifts & Fruits of the Holy Spirit Christian Parenting	LSS 26 ME 28
Jan 26	After worship Intercessory Formation Service Formation Introduction to the Word	LSS 24 LSS 25 Solo Parents
Feb 02	After worship Motivational Gifts Inventory	LSS 24
Feb 03	St. Mary’s 1-6pm Understanding Corporate Worship and Prayer Leadership Encounter with Jesus	LSS 24 & 25 LSS 27
Feb. 09	After worship Basics of Prayer	Solo Parents

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

great that it can take the place of the others. As Paul says, if everything were an eye, how would we hear or smell? Even the parts that embarrass us are given honor, even honor greater than the other less embarrassing parts.

What does this mean when applied to our community? Each task is necessary and noble. No one is insignificant, and no one can claim superiority over anyone else and let us think of someone in community who causes us embarrassment. Far from being shunned, that one is to be given greater honor. We know, brothers and sisters, that this message is both encouraging and challenging.

We could trace this to Paul's response to a tendency in the Corinthian Community to value some gifts such as speaking in tongues over other less-spectacular ones. Paul's hierarchy reverses their expected order, placing the gift of speaking in tongues in the last position. How do you think Paul would respond to the hierarchies in our churches? If he were to look at our BLD community, would he be assured that all members were exercising their gifts? Would he need to correct some who consider themselves more important than others?

But brothers and sisters, have no anxiety at all. Worry not for Jesus assures us when He read a passage from the prophet Isaiah in which the anointed of the Lord spoke, proclaiming good news to those who have been without favor, the poor, the captives, the blind, the prisoners - and all those who are in pain, struggling and often rejected - will have their situations reversed. Indeed, the entire Gospel of Luke is about change in the present reality, when what is expected is turned on its head. By reading this passage, Jesus not only assures the church, His Body, that He is the Anointed One of God, the fulfillment of God's promises, but also as a revolutionary. He is a preacher of a new world order in which the disenfranchised find favor and the despised are chosen. He offers hope to those without hope. He offers the downtrodden in our community the desire to carry on knowing that He comes for their sake.

Today, brothers and sisters, let us live the Paschal Mystery, and what does living the Paschal Mystery mean? It means that as members of one body in Christ, we have to continually look for the poor, captive, blind and oppressed among us. We don't have to look very far! "Today, this passage has been fulfilled" is now true only when we ourselves respond to those around us who need a nourishing, strengthening, joyful word. This means that God's Word isn't something we only hear on Sundays or corporate worship, but becomes a living word in our hearts, inspiring us to be in our very selves' living Gospel. As we gradually grow into being anointed by the Spirit, we, like Jesus, are the fulfillment of the scriptures.

DIRECTION:

- ◆ Treat each other with compassion, respect and love.
- ◆ Align your thoughts and actions with the precepts of the Lord.

For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:13)

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; cblmont@hotmail.com

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every *second Saturday* of the month. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@oponline.net)

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Council for Young Adults Outreach Service Day on Jan 20, 2007, 8am-1pm. Volunteers needed, contact Eric Cruz (JCruzer@gmail.com) or Lee Ann Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

- * Forest Hills Nursing Home - Newark
- * Blessed Sacrament Food Pantry - Newark
- * Coat Sorting - Hillside, NJ

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jan 19-21** **Singles Encounter #2** Washington DC
Contact:
Glenn Canlas - Invazian21@yahoo.com
- Jan 21** **FE13 Reunion #3 11am-5pm**
St. Mary's auditorium
- Feb 10** **Pastoral Ministry - Nursing Home Visit**
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic
Contact:
Ency & Babie Alberto: engeng@oponline.net
- Feb 12-16** **Medical Mission**
Lingayen, Pangasinan
- Apr 14-16** **LSS 28**
St. Mary's
- Apr 21-22** **YLSS 12 Sat 7:30am-8pm; Sun 7:30am-3pm**
St. Mary's
- Jun 01-03** **ME 29**
St. Francis Retreat House
Easton, PA
- Jun 08-10** **SE 18**
Graymoor Spiritual Center
Garrison, NY

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Week Ending Jan 12, 2007

Weekly Collection Report **\$4,179**
Tithes, Love Offering

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.



DC Singles Encounter No. 2

“Now to him who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work within us” (Ephesians 3: 20).

Once again we claim victory in God’s name for an awesome weekend at DC Singles Encounter # 2 held at the Bolger Center, Potomac, Maryland last Jan. 19 – 21. It was by the grace of God and hard work of the BLD DC members that this venue was found at the last minute in lieu of the previous venue which was inevitably shut down due to health hazard. Although feelings of anxiety and confusion were felt, we were comforted when we placed our trust and faith in Him. As it says in Proverbs 3:5-6 *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, on your own intelligence rely not; In all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths”*.

The pastoral team was led by the Spiritual Director - Fr. Pete Literal, Facilitators – Maris Manansala, Jen Mendiola, Ron Bernal, Geoff Canlas and Glenn Canlas who gave their testimonies to the 26 candidates to renew their lives with Jesus.

Together with the DC Pastoral team, SE# 1 sponsoring class, Newark Singles were joined by 18 praise and auxies, DIP shepherds Jun and Jane Entrada and Singles ministry coordinators Manny and Arlene Mangalanzo to support the weekend.

We praise and thank the Lord for allowing us to be part of this Spirit filled weekend. It was designed by our Almighty God, full of healing and rejoicing. Let us all celebrate the DC SE#2’s beautiful encounter with our Lord!

“All your works give you thanks, O LORD and your faithful bless you.” (Psalm 145: 10)

***By waiting and by calm, you shall be saved,
in quiet and in trust your strength lies.
(Isaiah 30:15)***

COUNSELS

“The Love That Binds Us With God And One Another”

WORD: Jer 1:4-5, 17-19; Ps 71:1-6, 15, 17;
1Cor 12:31-13:1-3; Lk4:21-30

THEME: We are in our Father’s house when we fulfill Christ’s words in Scriptures.

ORDER: *“Stand up and tell them all that I command you.”*(Jer 1:17b)

REFLECTION:

Our first and foremost calling is our dedication to the greatest commandment to simply love God and one another. God loved us first and a perfect example of that Divine love is when He said to Jeremiah, *“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.”* (Jer 1:5) There is no doubt that before each and every one of us was formed in our mother’s womb, the Lord God already knew us. Out of His great love for us He gave us Jesus to show us that real love is a gift of self to others, a willingness to sacrifice for the good of another, even to the point of death.

How do we enter into and live this kind of love that is revealed by Christ? We must be thoroughly convinced of God’s infinite love for us and allow ourselves to be fully loved by Him. We are called to share in this sublime life of love which is God. We can live on in His love by keeping His commandments, the most comprehensive and challenging of which is *“Love one another as I have loved you.”* (Jn 15:12), for *“...whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him.”* (1Jn 2:5)

(continue on page 4, col 1)

God’s Promise for the Week

***“Love bears all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things. Love
never fails.”*** (1Cor 13:7-8a)

NUNC DIMITTIS “Song of Simeon”



Nunc Dimittis is the prayer recited by Simeon at the Presentation of Jesus at the temple. Simeon the Righteous also known as the Elder, God-receiver, is a just and devout man of Jerusalem who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the savior. When Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to

the temple in Jerusalem to fulfill the requirement of the Law of Moses for consecration of the first born son, Simeon was there and he took Jesus in to his arms, blessed God and prayed: “Now, Master, you may let Your servant go in peace according to Your word, For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

Simeon was a man who was just towards others and devout towards God. With much fervent prayers and with patient expectation, his whole life was in tune with the Holy Spirit. He was found daily in prayer and worship and in humble and faithful expectation for the day that the Lord would comfort His people. As the days and months grew into years, he never lost hope. He immediately recognized the Lord’s presence when Joseph and Mary presented the child Jesus in the temple. Through eyes of faith and by the Holy Spirit’s revelation, He prophesied that Jesus was to be a “revealing light to the Gentiles”. Jesus came not only as light and salvation for the people of Israel, but for all nations as well.

February 2nd is the day traditionally been called “Candlemas” because at the presentation of the Lord in the temple, Simeon called Jesus, a revealing light to the Gentiles. Candles and light serve the purpose of revealing. We do not turn on the lights to see the lights, but rather to see what the light reveals. Candles reveal by being burned up, consumed. So it’s with us. Jesus provides the light. All we must do is to be willing to be set on fire. Jesus calls us the Light of the world. We live and die to reveal Jesus. We are like candles being consumed and dying in order to give light of Christ to the world.

Lord, just like Simeon, may my life be in tune with the Holy Spirit. May the prayer recited by Simeon, which I promise to pray as many times will result in my seeing Jesus as my salvation, light and glory. Amen.

TRUE FAITH

Four years ago, my husband was diagnosed with a brain tumor located on the upper left side of his brain. This caused him to be paralyzed on the right side of his body. Seeing my husband in that condition and seeing our children’s reactions could have brought me down to tears and helplessness, but true faith made me strong and calm as I did my best to comfort them. Because of my very strong faith, I knew that we were going to get through it with the help of our Almighty God and through the powerful intercession of our Blessed Mother. True faith sustained us all throughout this ordeal.

In September 2002, while I was at work, I heard a soft voice saying “There will be a miracle in October”. I knew it was the Blessed Mother’s voice but I couldn’t fathom what it meant at that time. I thought that maybe I’ll win the lottery but eventually had to push this wishful thought aside.

I put those thoughts aside until my husband was diagnosed with the brain tumor on October 22, 2002. Two out of three brain surgeons said that it was operable. My family decided to go for the operation which was scheduled on October 29, 2002. Based on what the MRI showed, the surgeon called it 99.99% being a tumor and .01% as an infection.

The Blessed Mother’s message came back to my mind. I told my husband that this is the miracle in October heard from our Blessed Mother! There will be no tumor! “*Do not be afraid; just have faith*” (Mark 5:36).

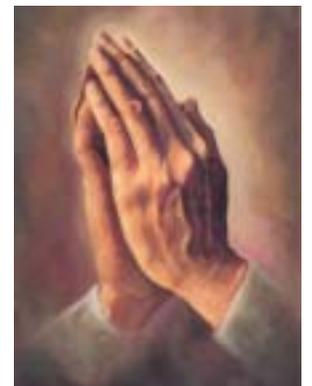
The operation took place and no tumor was found. Instead, only an abscess was found which they drained. No invasive surgery was performed. The surgeon remarked “your husband beat the 99.99 % odd.”

Praise and thanks be to God! This was God’s answer to our prayers and to the prayers of numerous people, the BLD community, our ME classmates and friends and families from many homes and places. And most of all, the miracle in October happened as our Blessed Mother has said.

After intensive physical/occupational therapy and follow-up tests, my husband was home for our 30th wedding anniversary on December 23. Praise and thanks be to God, he’s back to form, walking and up and about.

His healing continues in body, mind and spirit. Our faith as a family grows. Our older son said “The true measure of a man is his faith. Dad’s faith got him through.” “*Your faith has saved you*” (Mark 5:34).

And we all made it through because of faith! Praise and thanks be to God for the gift of faith.



MOMENT OF PRAYER



PRAYER FOR MY CHILDREN

Heavenly Father, make me a better parent
Teach me to understand my children
to listen patiently to what they have to say
and to answer all their questions kindly
Keep me from interrupting them

or contradicting them

Make me as courteous to them

as I would have them be to me

Forbid that I should ever laugh at their mistakes

or resort to shame or ridicule

when they displease me

May I never punish them

for my own selfish satisfaction

or to show my power

Let me not tempt my children to lie or steal

and guide me hour by hour

that I may demonstrate by all I say and do

that honesty produces happiness

Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me

And when I am out of sorts, help me, O Lord

to hold my tongue

May I ever be mindful that my children are children

and I should not expect of them the judgment

of adults

Let me not rob them of the opportunity

to make their own decisions

Bless me with the bigness to grant them

all their reasonable requests

and the courage to deny them privileges

I know will do them harm

Make me fair and just and kind

worthy to be loved and respected

and imitated by my children

KEEP THEM WARM WITH GOD'S LOVE

“And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. And 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” (Col3:14-15,17).

BLD Singles joined other single members of the Archdiocesan Council for the Youth and Young adults in its 11th Annual Coat drive which officially began on

(continue on next column)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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). Send to rguiao@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

MISSION MINISTRY

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed.

Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

TEACHINGS

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| January 26, 2007 | Intercession Formation |
| After worship | Service Formation |
| | Intro. to the Word – Solo Parents |
| February 2, 2007 | Motivational Gifts Inventory – |
| After worship | LSS24 |
| February 3, 2007 | Understanding Corporate |
| 1:00-6:00 | Worship – LSS 24; LSS25 |
| St. Mary's | Prayer Leadership – LSS 24; LSS 25 |
| | Encounter with Jesus – LSS27 |
| February 9, 2007 | Basics of Prayer – Solo Parents |
| After worship | |
| February 16, 2007 | Mark 10 Teaching |
| After worship | Youth Teaching |
| | Basics of Prayer - Singles |
| February 17, 2007 | Christian Maturity Program |
| | Part I – LSS26 |
| | Christian Parenting 2 – ME28 |

Keep them warm... (cont.)

November 1st. This year's goal was to collect 30,000 gently used warm winter coats. Last year, 28,000 coats were collected and distributed.

The day began with prayer and breakfast at the Community Food bank- 31 Evans Terminal Rd., Hillside, NJ. The coats were sorted accordingly and were to be picked up by 200 non profit agencies which requested these for their clients.

The group was joined by the Spiritual director of the Council- Sr. Loretta DeDomenicis.

The Singles ministry Archdiocesan Council representatives -LeeAnn Aguila and Eric Cruz regularly attend the council's meetings and coordinate the ministry's outreach activities monthly as part of the ministry's Evangelization/Mission role.

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

Oftentimes sin gives us the feeling of unworthiness as we reflect on the extent of God's love in spite of what we have done. We cannot imagine God taking the time or energy to love us as individuals much more so as sinners. We wonder how He could possibly keep track of a billion individuals in the world and be in a loving, caring and intimate relationship with each one. If we want to take delight and rejoice in God's love and feel loved by Him, we must believe that His omnipotence and a personal relationship with Him can exist simultaneously.

Love is perfected by our charitable acts towards others, pure and unmotivated. Perfect love enables us to live among the unlovable without being harsh or contentious, without being influenced by them, but rather doing them good. The greatest exercise of charity is when God asks us to endure with patience certain situations, as inevitable and deplorable they might be. The best opportunities for the practice of charity are offered us by those who by their harmful conduct give us many occasions for forgiving them, for returning good for evil and for suffering injustice for the love of God. Moreover, it is always possible for difficult people to be converted and become good, which should be one of the strongest motives to incite us to love them more.

It takes all kinds of people to make a Christian community like ours. We must imitate Jesus' love and accept the differences and shortcomings of one another without being self-righteous. Community requires sacrifices. It literally pulls us out of ourselves. To live in community, we have to stop thinking of ourselves but consider the perfect love the apostle Paul wants us to have: mercy, compassion, mutual forgiveness, and that love which leaves no room for divisions or dissensions, which overcomes strife and forgets offenses.

Perhaps we need to challenge ourselves to see the boundlessness of love and plug into its power to renew the world. But we often feel paralyzed because of our environment, our histories or by people's expectations that we are afraid to do what we feel the Lord is calling us to do. Through our baptism and by His grace, He has consecrated us for a Divine service. He wants us to be His voice, to pass on His words. We have to break out of our molds and freely do what God calls us to do right here and right now, no matter what the consequences, no matter what the reaction of others would be. We must believe that He will be with us as we open ourselves to His Divine love and allow it to be active in us. No Christian action can be performed without active love.

(continue on next column) 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 10, 2007	DLC Meeting St. Mary's
Feb 10, 2007	Pastoral Ministry Nursing Home Visit Hamilton Plaza, Passaic Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)
Feb 12-16, 2007	Medical Mission Lingayen, Pangasinan
Feb 17, 2007 1:00 pm-6:00 pm	John 6 Crossing #7 Reunion & Teaching St. Mary's
Apr 14-16, 2007	LSS #28 (St. Mary's)
April 21-22, 2007 Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am-8:00 pm) Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am-3:00 pm)	YLSS #12 (St. Mary's)
June 1-3, 2007	Marriage Encounter #29 St. Francis Retreat House Easton, PA
June 8-10, 2007	Singles Encounter #18 Graymoor Spiritual Center Garrison, NY

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)

In supernatural life the Christian's state of life or death depends on the presence or absence of charity. "Whoever does not love remains in death." (1Jn 3:14) Love is the measure by which we will be measured. Finally, love is the uniting force that binds us to God and one another.

DIRECTIONS:

- ♥ Practice love
- ♥ Be patient
- ♥ Rejoice with the truth

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending Jan. 19, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fast for Poor **\$ 3,518.00**

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.



VATICAN OFFICIAL NOTES CATHOLICS' 3 WEAKNESSES

CHALLENGE IS TO RETURN TO ROOTS, HE SAYS

TREVISO, Italy, JAN. 29, 2007 - The modern Catholic world suffers from three main weaknesses, says the secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

According to Bishop Giampaolo Crepaldi, Catholics during the last decades have shown the following weak points: the promotion of the notion of secularism as neutrality, thus weakening its identity; an inability to understand that the issues of life and bioethics are also social and political issues; and the failure to promote the Church's social doctrine in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

The Vatican official opened a recent seminar on "The Common Good and the Social Doctrine of the Church from the Second Vatican Council to Benedict XVI."

"We have all endured many difficult periods in our recent history," said Bishop Crepaldi at the Jan. 20 seminar, sponsored by the Italian Episcopal conference. "We have not always succeeded, despite the careful guidance of the Magisterium, in resisting leaps forward, partisan interpretations and the weakening of our identity.

"A theology of the separation between faith and politics has been alternating with a theology of direct engagement, while, at the same time and almost undetected, a culture of agnosticism and relativism was advancing, becoming imposing and almost dictatorial, striking the very heart of the Christian message and radically hindering its reception."

Bishop Crepaldi contended: "Once we lose sight of the fact that man is 'capax veritatis,' it is impossible to think that he can be 'capax Dei.'"

According to the prelate, the current Catholic challenge is to reflect in depth on "our own roots because the anthropological question has now become the social question."

"We will not be able to make a valid contribution to the common good," he said, "unless we expand the culture of life, from bioethics and beyond bioethics, and succeed in making it a true social and political culture."

COUNSELS

HEAR I AM, LORD SEND ME

WORD: Is 6:1-2a, 3-8; Ps 138:1-5, 7-8
1Cor 15:1-11; Lk 5:1-11

ORDER: "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch. Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."
(Lk 5: 4 and 10)

THEME: We obey the Lord's call when we leave everything to follow Him.

REFLECTION:

Upon our Lord's word and command, Simon Peter obeyed and dropped the nets unto the sea and caught an enormous haul of fish that their nets were breaking. Realizing such a great catch as a miracle, Simon humbled himself and fell to his knees in repentance saying, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." (Luke 5:10) Then Simon and his companions left everything and followed Him.

In the first reading, the Prophet Isaiah, like Simon Peter, had a revelation of the Lord that humbled and frightened him. "Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" (Isaiah 6:5) However, the touch of an ember from the altar cleansed him of his sins and freed him from all his wickedness and guilt. Once purged and purified, Isaiah was able to hear the cry of the Lord's heart. "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" At once, without further hesitation, the prophet Isaiah answered, "Here I am, send me!" (Isaiah 6:8).

God longs to commission every one of us, just as He commissioned Isaiah and Simon Peter. Did we say "Yes" to Him? Or, did we just shrug off our shoulders with coldness because of our personal desires? Or, was it because we felt we are inadequate and could not do the task?

☞ page 4

Promise of the Week

*"The Lord will complete what He has done for me."
(Psalm 138:7)*

GOD'S GOODNESS

Genesis describes how God, with His infinite power and precise planning, started all things in a dramatic way. Each day, according to the bible, God affirms that what he created is "good." He then created Adam and Eve, whom he made in a special way, to His image and likeness. They are to be stewards of all that He made. Thereafter, he reaffirmed that everything he had made is very good.

Let us pause for a while and try to figure out what God may have been feeling at that time in Genesis. Did you ever gaze on a beautiful sunrise? Walked down a quiet path while snow is softly and lightly falling? Get overpowered by the majestic trees of a mountain slope? God in His endless love, plan to share this experience with man. There is something else He needed to put in order for a relationship to build. God did not want puppets, but lovers like himself. He gave man the freedom to choose.

Unfortunately, man sinned by falling into the trap of doubting God. Unsettled at the thought that God is withholding something from him, man decided to take matters into his own hands with total disregard of what God asked him to do. At man's downfall, God must have been crushed when He asked man, "Why did you do such a thing?"

The prophets have voiced God's lamentation over man's dark decisions. They have revealed God's faithful heart by announcing His intentions of bringing us back.

The Lord calls you back, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit. For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great tenderness I will take you back. In an outburst of wrath, for a moment I hid my face from you, but with enduring love I take pity on you says the Lord, your redeemer (Isaiah 54: 6-8).

Surely I, the Lord, do not change, nor do you cease to be sons of Jacob. Since the days of your fathers you have turned away from my statutes, and have not kept them. Return to me and I will return to you (Malachi 3: 6).

What greater love and goodness would be when our Lord assumed the flesh of His servants to redeem us from the darkness which we webbed ourselves into. The incarnation is the ultimate statement of a King, to win the love of His most lowly creature. The passion and death of Christ is the ultimate sacrifice by which the useless servants will be won back into His arms.

Jesus promised so many other things. He will prepare a place for us in heaven. The Holy Spirit will aid us continually to keep us in the right track. God is undeniably setting up the course for our reunion, with Him.

So now the question is, should we respond to, or doubt His goodness?

MEN'S FREE WILL

"When they heard the sound of the Lord God moving about in the garden at the breezy time of day, the man and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden" (Genesis 3:8).

Why hide from the Lord God? If Adam and Eve did something right, they chose on their own "free will" to eat the apple in the garden, then why were they now hiding from the Lord God? Adam and Eve's exercise of their free will, their disobedience to the word of God had led them to a consequence of sin that all generations of us have inherited. Such can be the consequences of the exercise of free will. What exactly is free will? Merriam-Webster dictionary has two definitions – 1. Voluntary choice or decision and 2. Freedom of humans to make choices that are not determined by prior causes or divine intervention. I was pleasantly surprised when the term "divine intervention" showed up in the dictionary definition. Yes, the Lord God has blessed us from day one with free will. If you might have noticed, there was no high wall, no guards, no barbed wire built around the apple tree to physically prevent Adam and Eve from eating of the apple. There was "only" the clear instruction from the Lord telling Adam and Eve "*you shall not eat it or even touch it lest you die*" (Genesis 3:3). Adam and Eve had the free will to obey or disobey the Lord. They were also amply warned by God of the consequences of their actions if they decided to disobey his word. Now came these two words that seem to be completely contrary to free will, Obedience and Consequence. Every choice or decision we make under free will comes with it a consequence, which can be good or bad. How then do we know in advance if the consequence of our actions will be good or bad? We then come to the next word, obedience. The funny thing about obedience is that it seems to directly contradict free will. Obedience does not contradict free will; rather, obedience is a very helpful tool that guides us to make that free will decision. Where then do we get these "obedience" guidelines? The Lord Jesus in his infinite love and compassion for us, knowing fully well that we could very easily squander our free will on actions of dire consequences, has provided us the road map to free will living, the Basic Instructions Before Living Earth – BIBLE. The message is simply – exercise our free will in obedience to the word of the Lord and the consequences will be a life of freedom with Him.



FR. PAUL SPEAKS
THE USE OF PROPHECY

The following is for the most part a repeat of suggestions I made some time ago for the use of prophecy during the quiet time of our regular Friday worship. St. Paul in his comment on the charismatic gifts considers prophecy to be of great importance in the life of the church. *“Set your hearts on spiritual gifts- above all the gift of prophecy”* he says in *1Cor. 14,1*. When we are baptized in the Spirit the charismatic gifts become available to the community. The gift of praying in tongues becomes available to all. Some do not receive this gift of tongues immediately, but with repeated prayer and yielding, tongues can become a regular part of the prayer life of everyone...The other gifts, including prophecy, are distributed according to the particular needs of a particular community. This gift of prophecy demands a great sensitivity to the inspiration of the Spirit both on the part of the person who in giving the prophecy as well as the persons who are listening to the prophecy. Genuine prophecy is a direct message from the Lord, and is much more than a pious thought, idea, or exhortation which can arise within us during our prayer time. Everyone can give a genuine prophecy at least sometime. The discernment of a truly prophetic word depends more on what happens to the hearers than the urgency felt by the one uttering the prophecy. I would now add suggestions for the use of prophecy during Friday BLD worship.

First, the prophecy should be relatively short and uncomplicated. Sometimes a simple few ordinary and undramatic words are truly a communication from the Lord. Secondly, it should be audible. Come to the microphone. Thirdly, there should not be too many. It is hard to determine what “too many” means. Perhaps three is normally enough. Giving a prophecy in tongues is relatively unusual, and demands an interpretation. This category of prophesying in tongues is distinct from praying in tongues which does not expect an interpretation. The purpose of prophecy is to encourage, up build or correct. It is never harsh, even when a correction has to be given. The DCS has been recording the prophecies, and discussing them, even though the anointing comes during the moments the prophecy is given. The practical direction that I would give to the whole community and to the prayer leaders for a particular worship is to ask for CONFIRMATION. The prayer leaders can simply ask for a show of hands indicating that the prophecy has touched that particular person. This is the only proof that the prophecy is valid. This gift and its fine tuning is another sign that the BLD community is truly listening to the Lord.

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@comcast.net; flimjr@yahoo.com

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month.

Teachings

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Feb 2, 2007
After worship | Motivational Gifts Inventory
LSS24 |
| Feb. 3, 2007
1:00-6:00 pm
St. Mary's | Understanding Corporate
Worship -- LSS24 & 25
Prayer Leadership
LSS24 & 25
Encounter with Jesus – LSS27 |
| Feb 9, 2007
After worship | Basic of Prayer – Solo
Parents |
| Feb 16, 2007
After worship | Mark 10 Teaching
Youth Teaching
Basic of Prayer -- Singles |
| Feb 17, 2007
After worship | Christian Maturity Program
Part I -- LSS26
Christian Parenting 2 -- ME28 |

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Reports for the
Week Ending Jan 26, 2007**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor -
\$2,564.00**

“All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.”

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. (Mt 10:38)

Counsels from page 1

We can hear the call of discipleship, if we are in deep prayer. We know how God picks apostles to be prophets. He chooses broken men to be His disciples and He is consistent in picking them. Mindful of the importance of trust being accorded to the Lord, let us acknowledge that He is the master who chooses us, sinners. Let us ask Him to enlighten and guide us along the way so we can grasp easily and respond affirmatively to His calling. Truly, we are all sinners but if we only obey and cooperate with our Lord and rely not on our own abilities, we can easily soak ourselves with His word and receive direction through daily readings, because He speaks His words through the Bible. God guides and calls us to witness and to spread His word for His greater glory.

Indeed, we can truly serve God if we align our attitude with that of our Lord. As we proceed with our mission, let us remind ourselves to examine the deepest corners of our hearts. Are we discerning in all our actions? Do we know where we are going? Are we going there to serve for the glory of God? Do we understand what we are supposed to be doing? Are we consistent with God's intentions in doing the work? Do we relate and work well with others involved? If our eagerness and willingness to serve the Lord are true then it is fitting and proper to do what we say instead of just lip service. After all, we want to follow Him! Therefore, we should learn to know Him, love Him and serve Him by denying ourselves in serving the needs of our brothers and sisters, who may be longing for God's love and peace in their own lives. All for the glory of God and not for our own selfish desires.

Good discipleship may involve activities within our personal journey. Such activities may include receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation, attending Mass and receiving the Holy Eucharist, adoring the Blessed Sacrament and leading a prayerful life. We shall maximize the use of our listening ears so we can be childlike, teachable and truly trusting in the Lord thereby cultivating a deeper relationship with HIM. In doing so, we receive His grace and merciful assistance as we work for the tasks He assigned to us. *"Your right hand saves me. The LORD will complete what he has done for me; your kindness, O LORD, endures forever; forsake not the work of your hands."* (Psalm 138:8)

So brothers and sisters in Christ, when the Almighty Father asks us, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" How should we react? Without any reservation, we should rise up and answer our dear God, "Here we are Lord, send us!"

DIRECTION:

- 1. Do not be afraid to be used by the Lord to do his mission for his grace will be sufficient to complete it.**
- 2. Let the Lord Jesus be the focus of your ministry. Do not rely on your own ability rather trust the Lord. He will equip you to do His works.**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

<u>Feb 10, 2007</u>	Pastoral Ministry Nursing Home Visit -- Hamilton Plaza Nursing Center, 56 Hamilton Ave, Passaic, NJ 07055 Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)
<u>Feb 12-16, 2007</u>	Medical Mission Lingayen, Pangasinan
<u>Feb 17, 2007</u> <u>1:00 - 6:00 pm</u>	John 6 Crossing #7 Reunion & Teaching -- St. Mary's
<u>Mar 2, 2007</u> <u>After Healing Mass</u>	LSS28 & Youth Ministry's YLSS Salubungan
<u>Mar 10, 2007</u>	Nursing Home Visit -- Amazing Grace Ministry
<u>Apr 14-16, 2007</u>	LSS28 -- St. Mary's
<u>Apr 21-22, 2007</u>	YISS12
<u>Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am - 8:00 pm)</u>	St. Mary's Auditorium
<u>Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am - 8:00 pm)</u>	

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Dear Lord

We humbly ask you to bless
and sanctify our home
and all the members of our family

We offer you our gratitude
for all that you have done for us
for all that you have given to us
and for the example of family virtues
set for us by your own Holy Family

We consecrate ourselves to you
our trials and our joys, so that our home
may ever be a shine of peace, purity, love,
labor and faith

Please protect and bless each member of our
family from all forms of danger, calamity, evil
and temptation

Jesus, Mary and Joseph
look with compassion and love
on all families throughout the world

Give all of us the graces
to be dutiful and pious as parents
and holy and obedient as children
so that our home on earth
may foreshadow the love and happiness
of our home which is prepared in heaven.

AMEN.





Committed Disciples Anointed

“Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth. I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me”. (John 17:17-21)

February 2, 2007 marked a memorable highlight in the spiritual walk of 14 members who were commissioned as committed disciples during solemn ceremonies held at the end of the community's 1st Friday Eucharistic celebration at St. Mary's Church Rahway. Wonderful are the Lord's ways, that through God's Grace and blessing He instilled in each one of the new committed disciples a strong desire to know, to love and serve Him more in accord with His plans.

The new committed disciples will now continue to complete the CDFP (Christian Discipleship Formation Program). One of the highlights of the next phase of their formation is the Aspirants' Retreat, which will help them discern their calling to become covenanted members of the community.

The Lord be praised as the whole community congratulates Edith Rosales, Bernie Soluta and Novie Soluta, all from ME25/LSS25; from the Solo Parents Ministry- Virginia Alcantara, Andrea Medina, Cristina Jacobos, Natividad Perez Gloria Rada, all from SPE # 7 and Lino Bawalan of SPE # 6; from the Singles Ministry-- Flo Fudalan and Roselyn Encarnacion from SE # 11; Earl Manguiat, SE # 4; Ryan Garcia, SE# 10; and Annie Estalila Malabanán, SE#12 .

*Make Covenant News
A Part of Your Covenant Life!*

COUNSELS

True Happiness

WORD: Jer 17:5-8; Ps 1:1-4, 6;
1Cor 15:12, 16-20; Lk 6:17, 20-26

ORDER: *“Follow not the counsel of the wicked, nor walk in the way of sinners, nor sit in the company of the insolent, but delight in the law of the LORD and meditate on his law day and night.”*

THEME: We obey the Lord's call when we joyfully serve Him.

REFLECTION: In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus' "beatitudes" (happiness or blessedness) both astonished and incited his listeners to discover the true source of happiness and joy. Jesus showed them how misery could be transformed into happiness. Jesus' way of happiness, however, is one that demands a transformation from within – a conversion of heart and mind which can only come about by the grace of God and through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Those of us in the BLD Community who have experienced the rewarding and refreshing Life in the Spirit Seminar weekend know that the gifts that lay dormant since our Baptism are stirred and put to use when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit. Most of us would say that that is the beginning of our conversion. Indeed, as we turn to God and resolve to mend our ways, the process of transformation kicks in and continues for as long as we live. Conversion is a continuous process.

 (page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

“Blessed is the one who trust in the Lord,
whose hope is the Lord.” (Jer 7:7)
“... whatever he does, prospers.” (Ps 1:3)

Open the Eyes of My Heart

Lord, open the eyes of my heart! Most of my life, I've believed I was following the way the Lord wanted me to live. I have always tried to be good at whatever role was given to me. I was an obedient daughter, a loving sister, a hard working nurse, a faithful wife and mother. I took pride in all my accomplishments especially in helping my sisters and brothers get their education, come the U.S., and have a better life. I was sure I was doing everything right.

In November 2000, I accepted the ME invitation with the thought that my husband needed the retreat, not me. I soon realized that I was wrong, for while I try to live a clean good life, God was not in its center. I've always tried to be in control but when problems and struggles arise, I became angry, frustrated and bitter. I asked God why these things were happening and how I didn't deserve these bad things. My faith was confined to Sunday mass, short morning and evening prayers, occasional novenas and donations to church and charities. My faith was weak, limited, demanding and ungrateful.

When God converted me through BLD, He helped me look deep inside my heart and taught me how to pray, how to trust Him and how to love. Then God gently rid my heart of blinding bitterness, unforgiveness, doubts and pride. In their place I was given a faith founded on love, trust, patience and gratitude. It was not easy. It was a slow process but God never gave up on me. God changed my heart and renewed my life. I've learned to make peace with my past. I forgave those who mocked and judged us harshly in the past because of our poverty. I've learned to appreciate where I've been with all its heartaches and struggles because it was God's plan. I am a better person today for these experiences taught me tolerance, humility and gratitude.

Today, I try to live my faith every single day in every aspect of my life. At home and at work, I find even the smallest opportunity to make a difference in the day of my family, patients and co-workers- be it a helping hand, a kind word, a smile a shared laughter. I try to go to daily mass and start and end my day with a thanksgiving prayer. I'm forever grateful that the eyes of my heart have been opened to the endless possibilities and blessings our good Lord gives to those who believe and trust in Him. I pray that I will never ever return to the way I was before.

"God's Authority"

But turning and looking at his disciples, Jesus rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts!"
Mk 8:33

Jesus rebuked Peter because Peter suggested that Jesus should not *"go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised."* Mt 16:21. The devil wanted to frustrate God's plan through Peter's resistance, hence Jesus' response. Jesus rebuked Peter because of His devotion to His earthly mission, which He undertook in obedience to the Father's will and His love for us.

Jesus' authority stems not only from being God as in Matthew 28:18, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me"*, but more so because He is Love, infinite and divine. If somebody can somehow love as deeply, as unconditionally and as faithfully as Jesus could, that person would have power and authority. Mother Theresa was a simple nun who was able to form a worldwide community because she loved much. She was with Love. Governments exercise authority over its citizens because they serve the common good. *"For no authority exists except by God's permission. The existing authorities have been established by God"* Romans 13:1.

Also, because *"the Lord of all shows no partiality, nor does He fear greatness, because He himself made the great as well as the small, and He provides for all alike; for those in power a rigorous scrutiny impends."* Wisdom 6:8. There is accountability for those in authority. And there is no one who can do the work of God better than God Himself.

"By calling God "Father," the language of faith indicates...that God is the first origin of everything and transcendent authority; and that He is at the same time goodness and loving care for all his children." – CCC 239. God's authority flows from His love for His children. He is our Creator; He is the Source of all life; He is Love.

In our community "authority is legitimately exercised only when it is used to implement the statutes and policies and guidelines of the BLD Covenant Community, and the decisions of the governing body of the BLD Covenant Community. – Article 4.1 BLD Statutes. No member possesses authority in his or her personal capacity. When the governing body is one there is authority. When there is unity among its members, there is Love.

BLD is a community devoted to God's mission, obedient to the Father's will. It is a community of God-lovers and lovers of His flock. God's authority rests on those who are thinking God's thoughts and not human thoughts.

Be Like Clay to the Potter's Hand

Every parent knows how hard it could be to get a point across to a child despite repeated Instructions and explanations. Jesus had a tough time with the Pharisees who resisted His message because of self or group interest. He had a tough time with His Apostles who could not understand who He was and what His mission was, although they were eyewitnesses to His teachings, preaching, miracles, and to His life of service, love and truth.

After the second miracle of the bread, Mk 8:1-12, Jesus took notice of the apostles who seem to be infected by the virus of Herod's corruption and the Pharisees' hypocrisy. He warned them not to absorb the yeast of Herod and the Pharisees. He peppered them with questions to awake them: *Are your hearts so hardened you do not understand? Do you not see with your eyes or hear with your ears?* Mk 8:17-18

The Pharisees knew the words of scripture so well but they failed to perceive the Living Word in front of them. They settled for a text and missed the Person scripture spoke about. The words of scripture fell off their lips like dead leaves. Similarly, the Apostles' minds were blocked by their own perceptions and expectations of the true mission of Christ. They looked for signs to believe.

We find that we are oftentimes like the Pharisees and Apostles. We struggle with our unbelief, lack of trust, doubts and cynicism. We ignore the teachings of Jesus and the life He witnessed. We give more importance to the laws of man rather than the laws of God. We insist on seeing objective evidence, relying solely on reason to be convinced of a truth.

When we are ruled by pre-conceived notions and judgments, our hearts are hardened. We are unable to see things with our eyes of faith, unable to transcend our own humanity to appreciate spiritual truths and insights from God. We become too self-interested to bother about loving and serving God through others. We let pride consume us rather than be the examples of humility.

Our faith rests on the foundation of Jesus. His Word is the lamp that enlightens every step we take in our life's journey, giving us a clear sight of the obstacles and pitfalls to avoid as well as the clearings and tracks to follow. Through the Holy Spirit, we have the power of God to ward off the lure of lies and deception, and to grow in the truth of Christ's teaching. Let us be the person that God wills us to be. Submit ourselves to the hands of His Spirit as clay submits to the potter.

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 rguiaio@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

TEACHING Schedule:

Feb 9, 2007 • After worship
Basics of Prayer – Solo Parents

Feb 16, 2007 • After worship

John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

Youth Teaching

Basics of Prayer - Singles

Feb 17, 2007 • Christian Maturity Program

CMP Part I - LSS26

Christian Parenting 2 – ME28

Feb 23, 2007 • Intercessory Formation Teaching

Service Formation Teaching

Christian Parenting 1 Part 1 – Solo Parents

Mar 3, 2007 • Shepherds Training Part 1

LSS 23; LSS 24

Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 2 – LSS 26

Encounter with Jesus – LSS 27

Mar 9, 2007 • LSS Orientation – LSS 28

Christian Parenting 1 Part 2 – Solo Parents

Mar 16, 2007 • John 6 Teaching

Mark 10 Teaching

New Creation Realities – Singles

Youth Teaching

Mar 17 & 18, 2007 • Teachers Development Program

Newark Clusters & DIP's

Mar 23 • Intercessory Formation Teaching

LSS Orientation – LSS 28

Service Formation Teaching

Christian Parenting 2 Part 1 – Solo Parents

Mar 30 • Motivational Gifts Inventory

LSS 25

Mar 31 • Shepherds Refresher Course –

Covenanted Disciples

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending February 2, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for the Poor \$3,832.00

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.

Correction: Collection on Jan. 26, 2007 was \$ 4,259 and not \$ 2564 as published.

Counsel (continued from Page 1...)

As we empty ourselves of everything that is not of God, we create more room for the Holy Spirit to fill the emptiness of our hearts. We become dependent on and trusting in God. We begin to seek nourishment and strength in God's Word and Spirit. We find that the more we read and reflect on the Word daily, the better we come to know God and the more we serve him with joy in our hearts.

The psalm declares that to be blessed is to be like a tree planted near running water which yields its fruit in due season, and whose leaves never fade. This imagery suggests a great strength and vitality.

We will be happy with God's strength and vitality if we follow the way God points to us. The prophet Jeremiah helps us to understand what that way is. He writes: "*Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose hope is the LORD.*" Jer. 17:7. He continues in the imagery of the first psalm to say that a person who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord is like a tree planted beside running water.

We know how necessary water is for living things. After a refreshing spring rain, vegetation turns green with life. But in a dry spell during the summer, they become brown and barren. It is no wonder that the Sacrament of Baptism uses the symbol of water since it is in baptism that we first receive the life of God, the gift of his divine grace, and begin to share in his happiness.

But without a continuous flow of God's life-giving water, our lives can turn brown and barren. Without God's grace we become very unhappy. Our chief source of God's refreshing grace is the Mass, during which we hear the Word of God proclaimed in the Scriptures and we receive the Eucharist itself. God's Word is nourishment for our faith and the Eucharist is nourishment for God's life within us. As the Word enriches our faith, so the Eucharist gives us the strength we need to live in accord with our faith.

We believe we know what happiness is, but its reality is elusive. Sometimes we might think our condition is far from one which brings about happiness, but God has a different way of looking at things. We can be happy when we are poor if our poverty makes us turn to God and to trust in him. We can be happy when we allow hunger to make us yearn to have God fill the emptiness of our hearts and not only our bellies. We can be happy when we are weeping if our sorrow centers on our failure to do God's will in all things.

God wants us to be happy. Embracing God and following His way of life is the only way to be blessed, to be truly happy.

DIRECTION:

1. Read and reflect on the word of God daily.
2. Serve the Lord joyfully in your ministry.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 10, 2007

Pastoral Ministry ~ Nursing Home Visit
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Center
56 Hamilton Avenue, Passaic, NJ 07055
Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto
engeng@optonline.net

Feb 12-16, 2007

Medical Mission
Lingayen, Pangasinan

Feb 17, 2007 • 1:00 - 6:00pm

John 6 Crossing #7
Reunion & Teaching
St. Mary's - Rahway

March 2, 2007 • after the Healing Mass
YLSS & LSS Salubungan

March 10, 2007

Amazing Grace Ministry
Nursing Home Visitation
Contact: Eme & Ima Anyanwu
(973) 342-9933 cell#

Apr 14-16, 2007

LSS28 - St. Mary's

Apr 21-22, 2007

YLSS12 - St. Mary's
Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am-8:00 pm)
Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am-3:00 pm)

Seton Hall Univ. and The People of Hope *Presents....*

Fr. Rainero Catalamessa
A Preacher To The Papal Household

An evening of spiritual renewal, music, evangelism & prayers, (within a Catholic context)

February 21, 2007 (Ash Wednesday).

Doors opens at 6:45 p.m.

Seton Hall University
South Orange Campus, Walsh Gymnasium

COST IS FREE! Registration is required

by February 15, 2007. Seats are limited.

For reservations call: 973-378-2600

or via email: universityevents@shu.edu

PRAYER FOR MY PARENTS

Lord Jesus, I thank you

for giving me my mother and father

Enlighten me so that I may realize
the depth of their love and the greatness
of the sacrifices they have done for me

Look upon them with mercy and love
and reward them for their untiring generosity,
love and care for me

Please grant them health of body, peace of soul,
happiness of family and your bountiful grace

Protect them from dangers and temptations
and keep them always in your peace and love.

AMEN.



Christ Shines Through the Sick, Says Pope

Tells of Church's Closeness to the Suffering



VATICAN CITY, FEB. 12, 2007 - The countenance of Christ shines in the face of every sick person, says Benedict XVI. This was the Pope's message to the ill on Sunday, as the Church

observed World Day of the Sick.

The Holy Father spoke at the end of the Mass for the sick, presided over by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, the vicar of Rome, in St. Peter's Basilica.

"In the face of every human being — even more so if he is suffering and disfigured by illness — shines the face of Christ, who said: 'As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me,'" Benedict XVI said.

The Pontiff said he wanted the day to express to all the sick the "material and spiritual closeness of the whole Christian community."

He added: "It is important not to leave [the sick] abandoned and alone, while they are having to face such a delicate moment of their lives. Therefore, those have great merit who, with patience and love, put their professional competence and human warmth at their service.

"I am thinking of the doctors, nurses, health agents, volunteers, men and women religious, priests who look after them without reservations, as the Good Samaritan, not paying attention to their social condition, the color of their skin or their religious affiliation, but only to that which they need."

After the Mass, a procession with candles was held in St. Peter's Square as night fell, reminiscent of the atmosphere in Lourdes.

At the end of his address the Pope referred to "the grotto of Massabielle, where human suffering and hope, fear and confidence are found."

COUNSELS

Loving Your Enemy

WORD: 1 Sm 26: 2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23; Ps 103:1-13; 1 Cor 15:45-49; Lk 6:27-38

THEME: We obey the Lord's call when we return hatred with love.

ORDER: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you." (Lk 6:27)

REFLECTION:

The art of forgiving and seeking forgiveness can only be acquired by reflecting on the life of Christ. His dying moments in Calvary bring us to the essence of loving those who hate and despise us most. As He uttered these inspiring and saving words, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they are doing" (Luke 23:34), He totally diminished and devalued our concept of an "Enemy."

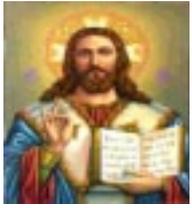
Christ tells us, "Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?" (Lk 6:31-32) Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan's reflection on this Sunday's readings says, "If we only love those who love us, we are acting from personal interest here. When we are sure of a return for our gift or our kindness, we are not acting from the motive of charity." In this light, we would be hard pressed in this community if we do not give the utmost value to Christ's important commandment of loving others, especially those who despise and persecute us.

Who is your enemy? Look around you — your home, your office, your church, this community. Has anyone ever been jealous, envious or antagonistic toward you? Has anyone ever tried to interrupt your plans, steal your ideas or derail your future?

(☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you." (Lk 6:38)



Wisdom

“All wisdom comes from the Lord and with him it remains forever.”

(Sirach 1, 1)

Wisdom was so important in the Old Testament that several of its books sought to teach it. Wisdom literature includes the books of Wisdom, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Sirach and Job.

Some Wisdom literature passages even present wisdom as a person speaking of itself (see Prov 8, 35: *“For he who finds me finds life, and wins favor from the Lord”*). Christian tradition sees in this personification of wisdom a foreshadowing of the New Testament’s revelation of Christ as the Word of God.

A secular definition of wisdom tells us that wisdom is the ability, developed through experience, insight and reflection, to discern truth and exercise good judgment. Sirach 1, 1 points to us that our personal search for wisdom and discernment for truth will fail unless we listen to the voice of God and to the teachings of our Church. We will grow in wisdom as our life in the Spirit matures and makes our relationship with the Lord a top priority. Worldly wisdom is all around us and unless we are can truly discern the truth about it we will fall in its seducing trap. Important issues of our day have many people confused because they have not listened to (or worst, disregarded) the wisdom of the Church and hence God’s. What else explains why so many Catholics and other Christians approve of abortion, gay unions, pre-marital sex, questionable birth control practices, euthanasia, and embryonic stem cell research and so on? St. Paul long ago told us *“we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles”* (1 Cor 1, 23). God needs us to evangelize and that also means standing up for the truth and illuminating them about such issues even at the risk of experiencing ridicule.

“The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord” (Sir 1, 12). Growing in wisdom, like conversion, is a life long process that begins with our desire to please our Lord and to have reverence, respect and awe for his Word, to have a fear that abhors anything that offends God and breaks his commandments.

The Church teaches us that wisdom (as well as fear of the Lord) is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1831). We can then fervently pray like King Solomon (see Wisdom 9) and ask the Holy Spirit to bestow wisdom upon us for the good of our families, parishes and workplaces. We should especially pray for those in positions of authority (government officials, religious leaders, corporate CEOs) so they are blessed with wisdom as they carry out their duties.

Lordship

Lordship is defined by Webster in the English dictionary as one of the following: 1.) the rank or dignity of the lord used as title, 2.) dominion – the authority or power of the lord, 3.) the territory under the jurisdiction of a lord, 4.) synonymous with the word “power”

Lordship in the Bible (1 Peter 5:1-4) pertains to that of being a shepherd to the flock that tenderly cares for his sheep. The Lordship that we experience from Jesus is far different from the kind of authority we might expect. Jesus is not a distant, indifferent ruler who erects barriers between himself and his people, as great kings and emperors have done throughout history. Most of the time, it is us who makes barriers for Jesus to come to our lives. As humans, we always wanted to take control of everything that we do in our lives. It is very difficult for us to yield to Jesus and let him take control.

The Holy Spirit wants to show us more and more how desirable it is to live under Jesus’ authority. He wants to convince us that living for ourselves only leads to heartbreak and loneliness, but living for Jesus and his people leads to a life of adventure, fulfillment and great accomplishment. He wants to show us that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation and that this new creation has the capacity to do the very thing that Jesus did while he walked among us.

We will know that the Holy Spirit is at work within us comes as we are convinced that our sins are forgiven (1 John 1:9). The Holy Spirit wants to show us that every one of our transgressions has been washed away in Jesus’ blood. As we allow the Spirit to unfold this truth to our hearts, nothing will be able to keep us from confessing our sins and receiving the forgiveness that Jesus won for us on the cross. In fact, we will learn to run to Jesus with every area of darkness, eager to know his power to cleanse and heal us.

Is there a part of your life that you feel powerless to change? Do you know that you can turn to the Holy Spirit at any time and receive his love, his joy and his power? Ask Jesus to immerse you in his Spirit. Ask him to give you a new experience of the Spirit and a deep confidence in his love for you. Believe that your life can be changed on this day of joy and celebration.

Holy Spirit, we give you praise and honor. Come, Holy Spirit and fill us and your whole Church love and joy. Take control of our lives.



Teaching Ministry Corner

In his last words to the apostles, the Lord Jesus Christ gave them a mission: “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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt 28:19-20).

Closer to home in BLD Newark, the Teaching Ministry (TM) strives to fulfill the call to go *ad gentes* as catechists addressing the formation needs of the members in the community. As disciples with teaching roles, TM is called upon to guide the faithful towards a renewed fervor in spreading the Good News by witness and word, through the support and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the one Spirit that has given TM a special grace to enlighten the minds of others.

Within the BLD community, TM is charged with the implementation of the CDFP (Christian Discipleship Formation Program) for the adult members of the community but it is also mindful about ministering faithfully to all age groups as the community members are divided into ministries based on age (Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles, Solo Parents, Couples and Golden Years).

This approach is helpful in a fast growing community. TM wholly supports the community’s focus on the importance of providing a formation program that encompasses community members all ages. TM continues to focus on helping the different ministries to reach out with Jesus’ life-changing love to disciple young adults, teens and children. In this way the adults and young people can engage in dialog with one another and grow in faith through teaching, praying and worshiping side-by-side. TM prays that the community’s formation program bear much fruit in so many ways especially when through the instrumentality of the community teachings it brings affirmation for each community member that they have value in the community (regardless of age) and when the relationship of support of each other’s concerns, interests and activities is further nurtured.

In serving to meet the formation needs of the community members of all ages, we plan accordingly. The great commission is, for example, fulfilled when they personally minister to the other members of the community, such as when the younger members take time to talk to an elderly member—and thus extending Jesus’ loving touch to another member.

In the end, TM would like to help the community maintain a sustained commitment to the commission *ad gentes*. For after all, the Church believes such a commitment renews the whole Church, strengthens the faith of individuals and communities, reinforces their Christian identity, and gives rise to fresh enthusiasm for overcoming the challenges and difficulties of the moment (cf. Redemptoris Missio, 2).

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@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month
Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact:
Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

TEACHINGS

Feb 16, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching
Singles - Basics of Prayer
LSS 28 - LSS Orientation

Feb 17, 2007 (Saturday)

LSS 26 - Christian Maturity Program Part 1
ME 28 - Christian Parenting 2

Feb 23, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

LSS 28 - LSS Orientation
Intercessory - Formation Teaching
Service - Formation Teaching
Solo Parents - Christian Parenting 1 Part 1

Mar 3, 2007 (Saturday)

LSS 23 & 24 - Shepherds Training Part 1
LSS 26 - Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 2
LSS 27 - Encounter with Jesus

Mar 9, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Solo Parents - Christian Parenting 1 Part 2

Mar 16, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching
Singles - New Creation Realities
Youth Teaching

Mar 17 & 18, 2007 (Saturday & Sunday)

Teachers Development Program –
Newark Clusters/DIP’s

Counsels (from page 1)

Has anyone ever harmed you, kept you from achieving your goals, or sought to thwart God's purpose in your life? These things are what make someone your enemy. If a struggle with an adversary who ignites your hatred has managed to rob you of all peace that permeates your family, your relationships or even your physical health, then you've already been devoured by an enemy.

The Old Testament law called for an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. But if we try to justify our way of dealing with enemies from the Old Testament, we place ourselves back under the bondage of the law. Jesus clearly orders us: "*Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you...for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.*" (Lk 6:27-36). Jesus was not contradicting the law here. He was only reversing the spirit of flesh that had entered the Mosaic Law where anyone who caused an injury was to be similarly recompensed. But under Christ's ministry of grace, Jesus' command to love our neighbors was meant to include even our enemies.

Noteworthy in this Sunday's reading is the emphasis given to forgiving our leaders. In the 1st Reading, David had the opportunity to kill Saul who had persecuted him. But seeing beyond Saul's humanity and recognizing the anointing that God has placed upon Saul, he showed respect to God by sparing his adversary's life.

In our community, our leaders are nowhere near the sinfulness and unfaithfulness of Saul. They are upright and faithful believers of God. However, they do not have the monopoly of time and resources as Saul did to study things before making decisions. Our leaders in this community are just like you and me. They have 9-5 jobs, a family to support both financially and morally. Their decisions may not be perfect. While we ask forgiveness for our mistakes, we find it hard to forgive our leaders for their own misjudgments. We seek to question and challenge the very anointing that God has placed upon them through this community. David, on the other hand, whose life was in danger, respected God's anointing on Saul.

The 2nd Reading speaks about death and resurrection, old and new life, the "Adam of earth" and the "Adam of heaven." We only have to die to ourselves to achieve this conversion. How we humbly deal with our perceived enemies here on earth will transform us and be made worthy to be called children of God. Perhaps, with God's grace, our faith and the thought of our own need for forgiveness will enable us to be merciful to those who offend us.

DIRECTIONS:

- * Respond with love and humility when faced with conflict.
- * Always be ready to forgive.
- * Always see Jesus in others.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Feb 12-16, 2007

Medical Mission, Lingayen, Pangasinan

Feb 17, 2007 (1:00 pm - 6:00 pm)

John 6 Crossing #7 Reunion & Teaching
St. Mary's School Library, Rahway, NJ

Mar 2, 2007 (After Healing Mass)

YLSS Salubungan & Adult LSS Salubungan

Mar 10, 2007

Amazing Grace Ministry - Nursing Home Visit
Contact: Eme/Imma Anyanwu cell #973-342-9933

Apr 13-15, 2007

LSS #28

St. Mary's, Rahway NJ

Apr 20-22, 2007

Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am - 8:00 pm)

Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am - 3:00 pm)

YLSS #12

St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ



PRAYER FOR A HAPPY MARRIED LIFE

Dear Lord,

You well know the sacrifices, problems and hopes, which come to all who embrace married life.

Give us the grace and love for one another and unite our hearts in unselfish harmony so that mindful of the needs and wishes of each other we can live a devoted life serving you, by our faithful care for the family, which you have given us.

Grant us patience that we may help each other to serve and love you here on earth.

May we never violate our pledge of love and fidelity. May we accomplish your will in all things so that we may deserve to enjoy together in heaven the happiness of eternity with you.

AMEN.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report for the Week
Ending February 9, 2007**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor**

\$ 3,584.00

*All good giving and every perfect gift
is from above.*



Pope Cites 3 Weapons to Combat Evil Promotes Lenten Charity, Prayer and Fasting

ROME, FEB. 22, 2007 (Zenit.org)- Works of charity, prayer and fasting are spiritual weapons to combat evil, Benedict XVI said during Mass on Ash Wednesday.

In his homily, delivered in the Basilica of St. Sabina on Rome's Aventine Hill, the Holy Father presented these "useful instruments" as the condition "to live authentic community renewal."

"They are the three fundamental practices, also appreciated by the Jewish tradition, because they contribute to purify man before God," the Pope said. "These external gestures, which should be done to please God and not to win the approval and praise of people, are pleasing to him if they express the heartfelt determination to serve him alone, with simplicity and generosity."

"Fasting, to which the Church invites us during this time, is not born from motivations of a physical or aesthetic order, but springs from the need the person feels for interior purification, to be detoxified from the contamination of sin and evil."

Benedict XVI said that fasting educates in "those healthy self-denials that free the believer from his 'I,' and make him more attentive and ready to listen to God and to serve his brothers."

"For this reason, fasting and the Lenten practices" of prayer and works of charity, in particular almsgiving, "are considered by the Christian tradition spiritual 'weapons' to combat evil, evil passions and vices," the Pope said.

Unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.
(Matthew 18:3)

Make the Covenant News a part of your covenant life.

COUNSELS

"Called To Worship And Serve"

WORD: Dt 26:4-10; Ps 91:1-2,10-15; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13

THEME: We obey His call when we worship Jesus, our God and Him alone we serve.

ORDER: Set in front of the altar of the Lord the first of your labor.

REFLECTION:

How prepared are we to obey His call and worship the Lord, our God, serving Him alone? Obedience was at the very core of Christ's union of love with the Father. Our life too should be a life of devotion and reverence for God. We indicate our willingness to worship and serve God alone when we are able to put all He has given us upon the altar and rely totally upon Him. "*When I am afraid, in you I place my trust.*" (Ps 56:4).

In the first reading, Moses describes the proper attitude for worship. Having brought their first fruits and set them before the altar of the Lord, God's people bow down in His presence.. "*that you may learn always to fear the Lord, your God*" (Dt 14:23). With confidence, then we are able to approach the throne of grace, and pray for God's protection "*...so that the Lord, your God may bless you in all that you undertake*" (Dt 14:29). Likewise, in Malachi 3:7b,10, God said "*Return to me, and I will return to you...bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me in this, says the Lord of Hosts: Shall I not open the floodgates of heaven, to pour down blessing upon you without measure?*"

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God's Promise for the Week

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Rom 10:13)

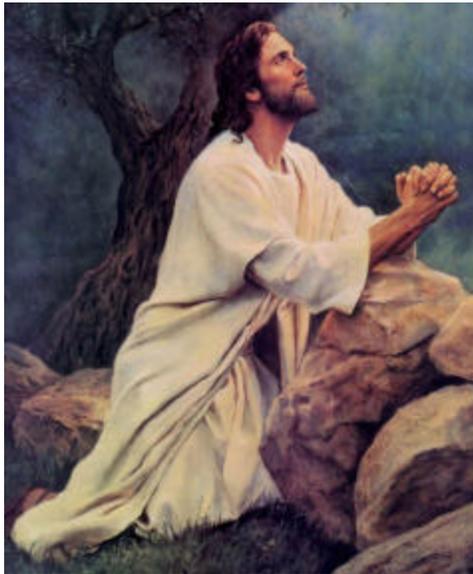
GOD CENTEREDNESS

“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. I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt. 5:19-20)

In this scene, our Lord, after delivering His great sermon on the mount, having shown His disciples His recipe for true happiness and peace in the beatitudes, was now answering one of the real problems in their minds: what about the Mosaic Law, the Ten Commandments? He explained that He had not come to destroy it, but to bring it to completion and perfection. He then continued explaining by citing examples of disobedience. The first example given by our Lord was concerning charity towards our neighbor. Of course, murder was forbidden. But according to our Lord, even the slightest infractions against charity are wrong. Getting angry unnecessarily or ridiculing our neighbor, falsely accusing him of suspected ulterior motives, laughing at him or scorning him – all such offenses are intolerable for Christians.

Deeper reflection on this, we can readily see why our Lord included this seemingly minor offense in His prohibition, *“But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother, ‘Raga,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin and whoever says, ‘You fool’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna.” (Mt 5:22)*. The physical harm of murder or any lesser physical injury is only one way in which we can seriously hurt our neighbor. In the very real sense however, we can hurt him more by our sharp tongue and razor-edge sarcasm. The knife of ridicule or false accusation plunges more deeply than steel and wounds the sensibilities of our neighbor. And quite often, the injury is not simply of the moment. More often, this eat deeply into a person’s consciousness and give him an inferior feeling about himself. The ultimate result can be so far-reaching. He can become resentful, nervous and hateful and the natural reaction to fight back comes to fore. And it all began with unnecessary and mismanaged anger.

Our community needs this important commandment from our Lord. Although we are prayerful and totally sincere to have a good relationship with our Lord and our neighbors, we let ourselves fall into Satan’s trap and forget about being God-centered always. We tend to find faults or suspect ulterior motives from our fellow servants without thinking that it would deeply hurt them. Good fun and laughing with one another is fine. But ridicule, insults and false accusations have no place in our community.



CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Works of mercy are charitable actions where we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and physical needs. Jesus Christ taught that men not only receive and experience the mercy of God, but that he is also called to practice mercy toward others. *“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7)*. Corporal works of mercy is defined as follows:

1. Feed the hungry/Give drink to the thirsty. This start out with the many little things we can do for others such as providing a hot meal or a cold cup of water for a loved one. A way of satisfying our brethren’s hunger is to share with them whatever we have.

2. Clothe the naked. How many things do we own that we do not give away because we feel so attached to them? We have accumulated so many that our closets are bursting out at the seams.

3. Shelter the homeless. Men living in abandoned cars or on the streets are in desperate straits, and agencies which help them need both material and spiritual support. Aging relatives may become homeless when they are forced to leave their homes or apartments. They are unwelcome or ignored in their own homes because they can not do anything more. Homelessness is defined as a lack of shelter or companionship. We are called to assist even in resettling them.

4. Comfort the imprisoned. Helping captives or the imprisoned is not limited to joining a prison ministry or volunteer organizations. Some people are imprisoned within the walls of their own homes — such as the handicapped, the sick, the elderly, the new mother with little or no help. For them, comfort may be provided by a visit, a shopping trip, a helping hand once a week, or merely a short chat on the telephone.

5. Visit the sick. When we touch the sick and the needy, we touch the suffering body of Christ. A short visit to a hospital room, a prayer said at a neighbor’s bedside, or time and talent shared at a local nursing home are sources of blessing for the person being visited and for those who volunteer.

When we leave this world, we will be judged according to how much we have given away and how much we have sacrificed. Let us not be satisfied just by giving money. The materially and spiritually poor need the work of our hands, the love from our hearts.

The Divine command is set forth in the most stringent terms by Christ, and the failure to comply with it is visited with the supreme penalty of eternal damnation (Mt 25:41).

(continue on next page, col 1)

APOLOGETICS : FASTING AND ABSTINENCE (PART 1 OF 2)

(Source: CATHOLIC REPLIES by James J. Drumme)

Q. What is the official Church teaching on abstaining from meat every Friday? What other foods could we abstain from? When were meatless Fridays instituted?

A. The custom of abstaining from meat on Friday goes back to the first century A.D. According to the *Didache*, a second-century collection of the teachings of the Apostles, the early Christians fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays. This included abstaining from meat on Friday in commemoration of the Passion and death of Jesus on Good Friday. Saturday replaced Wednesday as a day of fast in the Western Church around the year 400, and abstinence without fast was generally observed on all Fridays and Saturdays throughout the year until the 19th century, when the bishops of the United States obtained from Rome dispensations from the Saturday abstinence.

While there were other changes in the laws and customs in this century, it was not until 1966 that Pope Paul VI issued an *Apostolic Constitution on Penance* that completely reorganized the discipline of fasting and abstinence. After declaring that “by divine law all the faithful are required to do penance,” the Holy Father said that Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent would be day of penance and that “their substantial observance binds gravely.” He also said that abstinence from meat is to be observed on every Friday throughout the year which does not fall on a holy day of obligation, and he gave the bishops’ conferences in each country the authority to “transfer for just cause the days of penitence” and to “substitute abstinence and fast wholly or in part with other forms of penitence and especially works of charity and the exercises of piety.”

On November 18, 1966, the U.S. Catholic Bishops said that “Catholics in the United States are obliged to abstain from the eating of meat on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays during the season of Lent. They are also obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday. Self-imposed observance of fasting on all weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended. Abstinence from flesh meat on all Fridays of the year is especially recommended to individuals and to the Catholic community as a whole.”

Corporal... (cont. from page 2)

As Mother Theresa has said “Jesus comes to meet us. To welcome him, let us go to meet him. He comes to us in the hungry, the naked, the lonely, the alcoholic, the drug addict, the prostitute, and the street beggars. He may come to you or me in a father who is alone, in a mother, in a brother, or in a sister. If we reject them, if we do not go out to meet them, we reject Jesus himself”.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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). Send to rguia@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

MISSION MINISTRY

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed.

Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

FROM THE DCS

Tapes of Fr. Paul’s talks on Jan 13th Community Recollection date is now available through Aileen O’Hara of St. Antoninus. Price: 3 tapes for \$10. Please e-mail her at shamrock2go@yahoo.com

TEACHINGS

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Feb. 23, 2007 | LSS Orientation – LSS 28
Intercessory Formation Teaching
Service Formation Teaching
Christian Parenting 1 Part 1 – Solo Parents |
| Mar. 3, 2007 | Shepherds Training Part 1 – LSS 23; LSS 24
Christian Maturity Program 1 Part 2 – LSS 26
Encounter with Jesus – LSS 27 |
| Mar. 9, 2007 | Christian Parenting 1 Part 2 – Solo Parents |
| Mar. 16, 2007 | Teachers Development Program –
Newark Clusters/DIP’s |
| Mar. 23, 2007 | Intercessory Formation Teaching
Service Formation Teaching
Christian Parenting 2 Part 1 – Solo Parents |
| Mar. 30, 2007 | Motivational Gifts Inventory – LSS 25 |
| Mar. 31, 2007 | Shepherds Refresher Course
- Covenanted Disciples |
| Apr. 13, 2007 | Christian Parenting 2 Part 2 – Solo Parents |
| Apr. 20, 2007 | John 6 Teaching
Mark 10 Teaching
Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare
– Singles
Youth Teaching |
| Apr. 27, 2007 | Intercessory Formation Teaching
Service Formation Teaching
New Creation Realities - Solo Parents |

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

Psalm 91: 14-15 confirms *“Whoever clings to me I will deliver; whoever knows my name I will set on high. All who call upon me I will answer”*.

As we enter into this Lenten season, we can not help but look into our own conduct as Christians. To be able to serve God alone and not man or mammon, we must be in constant prayer, as Jesus was. Reading the Sacred Scriptures and reflecting on God’s Word, makes us realize in our own affliction and that *“not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the Lord”* (Dt 8:3).

We must empty our souls of material concerns and life’s turmoil and return to what is essential as we emerge towards God -our source. Everyday we encounter various temptations, which we will be able to overcome only if we are filled with the Holy Spirit as Jesus was. At His baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and from then on, wherever He goes, He goes forward in the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit. Indeed the title “Christ” means the “Anointed One” and we, too as Christians must likewise be led by and move in the Spirit. He was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert. He ate nothing but rather emptied himself. He prayed to the Father and used the word of God to refute the devil. *“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”* (Rom.10:8). We too are called to this same life of holiness. *“Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind...as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct”* (1 Peter 1:13a, 15a).

“Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect” (Rom 12:2). St. Paul is asking us to transform our minds to that of Christ so that we too may be able to say “thy will be done” to our Savior and all- powerful God. We imitate Christ when we follow His example. Jesus declines the devil’s offer of an empire, relinquishing the expectation that those who rule are to be served and honored, and instead serves and honors all. We serve Jesus when we serve others, not from our own strength but from God’s presence in us. We should always be filled with and go forth in the Holy Spirit, instead of relying too much on our own intelligence and abilities. When we worship Jesus and serve Him alone we give Him our best, the first fruits of our labor!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Empty yourself and offer sacrifices to the Lord in preparation for lent.
2. Always call on the name of the Lord and fill your heart with His word.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 2, 2007 After Healing Mass	YLSS Salubungan LSS Salubungan
March 10, 2007	Amazing Grace Ministry - Nursing Home Visit Contact: Eme/Imma Anyanwu Cell #973-342-9933
April 13-15, 2007	Life in the Spirit Seminar #28 St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway
April 20-22, 2007	YLSS #12 St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway
April 20-22, 2007	Aspirant’s Retreat - LSS 23
May 25-27, 2007	Marriage Encounter #29 St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
June 8-10, 2007	Singles Encounter #18

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR MY HUSBAND

Lord Jesus, bless and preserve my cherished husband whom you have given to me; let his life be long and blessed

comfortable and holy, successful and free
Let me ever be a blessing and comfort to him a sharer in all his sorrows

a consolation in all accidents and trials of life
make me forever lovable in his eyes
and forever dear to him; unite his heart to mine
in fondest love and holiness and mine to him
in all sweetness, charity and submission

Keep me from all ungentleness; make me humble and obedient

that we may delight in each other, according to your blessed Word

May both of us rejoice in you, having a portion in the love and service of God. Forever.

AMEN.

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending Feb. 16, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor **\$ 2,510.00**

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 10

Bulletin Edition

March 02, 2007

BLD - Newark Medical Mission

*“And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said:
‘Blessed are you who are poor,
for the kingdom of God is yours.’”* (Luke 6:20)

This is part of the Gospel reading for Feb. 11 (Sunday) as we started our journey to Lingayen which is the venue for the 2007 medical mission. Although the actual mission started on Monday (Feb. 12), for volunteers the mission started a day earlier with a stopover at the shrine of our Lady of Manaoag for our Sunday mass. Late in the afternoon, the volunteers visited the actual site to setup the pharmacy and the venue.

The mission went on as planned in the town of Lingayen for the medical consultations and in Dagupan City where surgical services were provided. During the four day mission, we cared for more than 5,000 patients including 62 major and over 100 minor surgical patients. For the first time, we did cleft lip (10) and cataract (42) operations. Our Lord provided us with volunteers with varied talents and everything we needed to care for them.

Like in previous missions, there are memories that will stay forever in our minds. We have seen so much poverty among those we cared for. We will always remember the thousands who waited patiently for hours so they could get the free medical treatment that they needed. We will not forget the last patient (a little boy whose fingers are conjoined) who was operated on for three hours to separate two of his fingers so he can have the capability to write when he goes to school someday.

As before, our mission day always started with Eucharistic celebrations (one for each venue). We also had vigils throughout the day. All of these are instruments as we witnessed to others the spiritual side of our mission.

Both local and provincial officials were united in their support for our mission as they welcomed us with open arms. Local medical professionals including student nurses provided us with much needed help.

Last Friday (Feb.16) on our way back to the city, we stopped by the GK Fr. Paul Lehman Village in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija where we provided medical services to over 200 of its residents.

(continue on page 3)

COUNSELS

“This is my chosen Son, listen to Him”

Word: Gn 15:5-12, 17-18; Ps 27:1, 7-9, 13-14;
Phil 3:17-4:1; Lk 9:28b-36

Theme: We are citizens of Heaven when we listen to and imitate Jesus, the Son

Order: *“This is my chosen Son, listen to Him.”* (Lk 9:35)

Reflection:

A living faith is the prerequisite for prayer. In the first reading, Abraham “put his faith in the Lord”. A trance fell upon Abraham and in prayer he experienced God, who sealed his faith with a covenant. The ancient covenant rite (two people making a covenant) prescribed that the sacrificial animals be divided into two halves and the contracting parties walk in between, stating that they are willing to become like the dismembered animals if they should fail to keep the covenant. In the tradition of the first reading, it is God who seals the covenant by passing between the pieces in the form of “a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch”. (fire symbolizes God’s presence)

It seem obvious that the sacred writer, inspired by God is trying to teach us that we should follow Abraham’s example of faith and conversing with God. By doing this, we will experience the Lord profoundly as our “light and salvation” (Responsorial Psalm)

In the second reading, St. Paul invites the Philippians to follow him as he follows Christ, evidenced in the Gospel reading, as a man of prayer. At the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest invites all of us to lift up our hearts. St. Paul does the same thing by inviting those who are “occupied with earthly things” to look up to heaven.

(continue on page 4)

God’s Promise for the Week

*“He will change our lowly body to conform
with His glorified body.”* (Phil 3:21)

Be Merciful Salvation

Our Heavenly Father gives us all things, natural and spiritual, temporal and eternal, gratuitously and out of pure goodness. Therefore what God gives us in our possessions and honor, is given out of pure mercy. He sees that we are captives of death; but He is merciful and gives us Life. He sees that we are poor, naked and exposed, hungry and thirsty; but He is merciful, and clothes, feeds and gives us drink, and satisfies us with all good things. Thus, whatever we have for the body or spirit, HE gives us out of mercy, and pours his blessings over us and into us. **“Be merciful, just as (also) your Father is merciful.” (Lk 6:36)** This command would have been easy if we are thoroughly grounded in the faith of Christ’s love. Every one that comes to Him for washing in His blood, and knows the greatness of the mercy and the love there is in Him, can say this, in truth and sincerity. Let us then aim to be merciful, even according to the mercy of our heavenly Father to us.

“But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back;...” (Lk 6:35) However, Christian mercy should not seek its own; but rather be round, and open its eyes and look at all alike, friend and foe, as our Heavenly Father does. And where there is no mercy, there is also no faith. For if our heart is in the state of faith, we know God has revealed Himself to us to be as good and merciful, without merit, and purely gratuitously. If we are of a giving and a forgiving spirit, we shall ourselves reap the benefit. Though full and exact returns are made in another world, not in this world, yet Providence does what should encourage us in doing good. **“...then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.” (Lk 6:35).** See to it that we make no distinction between friend and foe, the worthy and the unworthy; for we see that all who mentioned here, have merited from us something different than that we should love and do them good.

Therefore, to have Jesus Christ and His Word as our teacher, we become well- trained and equipped in following His commands. So as we face the world that we currently live in, let us all put our Christian faith and mercy to works, as we lead the blind, give to the poor, and not to be judgmental but instead speak words of grace to those who need it.

The parable about the rich man and Lazarus, the poor man, touches on salvation.

Salvation is offered equally and freely to all. In fact, Jesus already saved each one of us, because of the Father’s eternal love. It is how we respond to that unique and perfect gesture of love, that we will be measured by, in the next life. Being rich and famous does not condemn us. But, if we let riches and fame be our god, instead of using them for God’s glory and service, then we are guilty and deserving of judgement. That may convict us to eternal suffering. Like the rich man. Abraham, himself, was a wealthy man, and he was in paradise, with Lazarus, the poor man. Then again, if we don’t believe in Jesus and His teachings, salvation is not reassured for us. We can only find ourselves in heaven if we have passed the test of love - spending wisely, and sharing all the benefits God has given us, solely for His purposes. This parable sounds similar to Jesus’ other gospels, as in Matthew 25, 31-45. and Luke 19, 1-10.

The goal of salvation is our perfect union with God. The means to salvation is charity. Salvation is attaining heaven, which is perfect happiness. Only Jesus can do this. That was His mission on earth- our salvation. He spent His life ministering to the needy, healing the sick, performing miracles out of love and compassion, and offering His life for us, which is *perfect* charity. His complete obedience to the Father facilitated His work of salvation.

Our thoughts, words, actions and omissions will either earn us eternal reward or punishment in the next life. God wants us all to live with Him forever. That is why He sent His only begotten Son, who showed us the way to the Father, through His life, death and resurrection. Jesus, our Savior, left us all we ever need to be enriched with the divine life while we are in this valley of tears. He is our hope He even gave us an advocate to help us do greater things than what He, himself did. What happened to Jesus after His death will also happen to us, as long as we do as God commands. There are two great commandments we have to follow, as Jesus did: To love God with all our hearts, with all our mind, with all our soul and with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Reading Romans 8, 9 will surely help us follow. Jesus.

Let us take every opportunity (praise God, we have them all, in our community) that God wills for us in our daily lives: To love and serve Him, and one another, in His name, that we may be found worthy of heaven, the only perfect place where salvation ends, and eternal joy begins. In Jesus’ name, AMEN.

Make the Covenant News a part of your covenant life.

Father Paul Speaks

Holy Season of Lent

The primary purpose for this holy season of Lent is a preparation for the most important feast of Easter. Historically it was a very strict and serious time for two categories of the Christian faithful: for public sinners who had returned to the Church and for the catechumens. Public sinners were “excommunicated”, not allowed to receive Holy Communion or even to be in “communion” with the faithful. He or she was covered with ashes as a sign of guilt and was made to stand at the entrance of the Church begging for prayers. I am sure that in our present easy going style of forgiveness very few would opt for this kind of reconciliation. The ashes we now wear are a public admission that we are sinners in need of forgiveness. Finally on Holy Thursday in Holy Week absolution was granted by the bishop or priest, and the penitent was allowed back into Church and admitted once again to Holy Communion. Secondly Lent was also a time of final preparation for the catechumens preparing for the sacrament of Baptism on Holy Saturday evening. We still call the liturgy of the Word, the Mass of the catechumens, because the catechumens were dismissed before the Eucharist.

Even though most of us are baptized, Lent is the time to renew our Christian life through prayer and penance. This renewal gets us ready to profess once again our Baptismal vows on Easter Sunday. Even though these two purposes should be uppermost in our minds, Lent can also be a time of “revelation”. I remind us of the recollection day we had on January 13th. Did you forget? It was the day when I challenged us to go into our minds and hearts to see what kind of “spirit” may be influencing us even subconsciously. We look for signs of negativity, spiritual laziness, apathy towards holy things, loss of attraction to prayer, heaviness of soul, cynicism, spiritual sadness etc. It is important to add an examination of conscience to our daily prayer routine. Oftentimes these spiritual attacks “piggy back” on the back of real practical issues that come easily into our lives. They may be areas we are called to deal with, but the subtle spiritual attack can ride into our minds and hearts along with the practicalities of daily living. Ask the Holy Spirit each day to reveal those attacks. Make a daily examination of conscience. We will become aware of them only if we ask the Lord to tell us. Introspection is not enough. Look in with the Holy Spirit to help you discover not only sin, but any demonic attack that may be affecting you? As we said on Ash Wednesday: Repent and believe the Good News.

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; cblmont@hotmail.com

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every *second Saturday* of the month. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@oponline.net)

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruz@gmail.com), LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

DCS - Special Announcements

Tapes of Fr. Paul's talks on Jan 13th Community Recollection date is now available through Aileen O'Hara of St. Antoninus. Price: 3 tapes for \$10. Please e-mail her at shamrock2go@yahoo.com

TEACHINGS

Mar 03	St. Mary's 1-6pm	
	Shepherds Training Part 1	LSS 23 & 24
	Christian Maturity Program I Part 2	LSS 26
	Encounter with Jesus	LSS 27
Mar 16	After worship	
	New Creation Realities	Singles
	Teachings	John 6, Youth Mark 10
Mar 17	St. Mary's 8am-5pm	
and 18	Teachers Development Program	Covenanted
	Newark Districts/DIP's	Disciples
Mar 23	After worship	
	Intercessory Formation Teaching	LSS 24
	Service Formation Teaching	LSS 25
Mar 30	After worship	
	Motivational Gifts Inventory	LSS 25
Apr 20	After worship	
	Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare	Singles
	Teachings	John 6, Youth Mark 10
Apr 27	After worship	
	New Creation Realities	Solo Parents
	Intercessory Formation Teaching	LSS 24
	Service Formation Teaching	LSS 25

Medical Mission (cont. from page 1)

We also donated extra medicines for their future use.

As in the words of one of the celebrants of the mass, this is our Lord's mission and we are just His instruments to carry it on. And so the volunteers offered themselves as willing instruments of His love to others as they are inspired 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.”**

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

Then God will change “our lowly body” to conform with the glorified body of Christ as we see indicated in the Lord Jesus’ transfiguration on the mountain.

In the Gospel, Luke brings out an important lesson on prayer. Conversing with God in prayer changes us; it widens our vision, and with God’s grace it often makes us experience the transcendent. It makes us feel that there must be something more than we can observe simply with our senses.

Jesus is a man of prayer. Luke compares Him with Moses and Elijah, who often converse with God in prayer. He wants his disciple to do likewise. Prayer is something we must learn and do regularly. Only by listening can we hear God’s voice in us. “Listen to Him” (Luke 9:35)

The Gospel reading is also one of Jesus’ many mountain experiences:

- Before choosing the 12 apostles, Jesus went up the mountain and spent all night in prayer.
- After the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus went up the mountain and spent the night in prayer.
- Jesus spoke of his charter for the kingdom in the Sermon of the Mount.
- At the Mount of Olives, Jesus prayed His heart out to the Father, hours before His death.

We need mountaintop experiences. That takes some preparation, time and effort. We need to be in a place where things look different- and things always look different from a mountain. We need to be in a place where we experience the closeness of God.

From the Church’s perspective, Easter is the great mountain of the whole year, and we work hard to make sure that those days of the Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are unlike any other days. For instance, the Easter Vigil is a time when we stay up half the night (as we do on some special occasions) to experience the darkness and new fire. It is a mountaintop experience, and we do have to resist the temptation to flatten it out for convenience.

DIRECTION:

- ◆ Practice “Lectio Divina” in your prayer life.
- ◆ As disciples of Christ, stand firm in the Lord, as we go through trials, difficulties and sufferings

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR MY WIFE

Lord Jesus, bless and preserve my cherished wife
whom you have given to me;
let her life be long and blessed
comfortable and holy, successful and free.
Help me to be the husband
that you want me to be for her.
Let me be a blessing and comfort to her
a sharer in all her sorrows
a strength in her moments of helplessness
a consolation in all accidents and trials of life.
Keep me from all ungentleness
infidelity, ill temper and hasty judgment.
Guard me from words and actions
that may hurt, ignore or take her for granted.
Let me treat her with honor and respect
tenderness and compassion
that we may delight in each other
according to your blessed Word.
I place her in your care, Lord
knowing that your love for her
is greater than my own.
Keep us close to each other in this life and guide us
to our true and heavenly home.
AMEN.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Mar 02** YLSS Salubungan, LSS Salubungan
Mar 10 Amazing Grace Ministry - Nursing Home Visit
Contact: Eme/Imma Anyanwu, Cell: 973-342-9933
Apr 13-15 Life in the Spirit Seminar #28
St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
Apr 20-22 YLSS #12 Sat 7:30am-8pm; Sun 7:30am-3pm
St Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
Apr 20-22 Aspirant’s Retreat - LSS 23
May 25-27 Marriage Encounter #29
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
Jun 08-10 Singles Encounter #18
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Week Ending Feb. 23, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fasting for Poor **\$3,184**
Thank you for your continued generosity.
All good giving and every perfect gift
is from above.



PRAYER A LIFE-AND-DEATH MATTER, SAYS POPE

VATICAN CITY, MARCH 4, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Prayer is “a question of life or death,” as our relationship of love with God depends on it, says Benedict XVI.

The Holy Father explained that “prayer is not something accessory, it is not ‘optional,’ but rather a question of life or death.”

“Only one who prays, that is, who entrusts himself to God with filial love, can enter into eternal life, which is God himself,” added the Pontiff, who on Saturday finished a weeklong spiritual retreat.

Benedict XVI spoke of the moment when Jesus went up the mountain to pray together with Peter, James and John: “For the three apostles, to go up the mountain meant to be involved in Jesus’ prayer, who often withdrew to pray, especially at dawn or after sundown, and sometimes during the whole night.

“However, on that occasion alone, on the mountain, he wished to manifest to his friends the interior light that invaded him when he prayed ... his countenance was altered and his raiment became dazzling, reflecting the splendor of the divine person of the Incarnate Word.”

He continued: “What is more, Christ enters this mission more profoundly, adhering with all his being to the will of the Father, and he shows us that true prayer consists precisely in uniting our will to the Father’s.

“Therefore, for a Christian to pray is not to evade reality and the responsibilities it entails, but to assume them to the end, trusting in the faithful and inexhaustible love of the Lord.”

Benedict XVI concluded by inviting believers during Lent to pray to Mary, “teacher of the spiritual life, to teach us to pray as her Son did so that our life is transformed by the light of his presence.”

Make the
COVENANT NEWS
 a part of your covenant life.

COUNSELS

“Heavenly Citizens and Repentant Sinners”

WORD: Ex 3:1-8a,13-15; Ps 103:1-4,6-8,11; 1Cor 10:1-6,10-12; Lk 13:1-9

THEME: We are citizens of heaven when we lead others to repentance. (Witnessing)

ORDER: Repent or you will perish.

REFLECTION: Imagine the grace that God has given us, that we are now citizens of heaven! Consider how undeserving we are of our heavenly identity: we are sinners forgiven by our kind and merciful God through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We are like Moses who had come up the Lord’s mountain to the very presence of God in the burning bush, who called out to him “Moses! Moses!” Imagine Moses’ reaction. His sandals were soiled like his heart by his flight from Egypt where he had committed murder. He had escaped the Pharaoh’s justice, but there on Mt. Horeb, there was no escaping God’s. In fear for his life, Moses hid his face from God. In his first encounter with God, Moses thought that he would receive God’s wrath. Instead, he was introduced to God’s love and mercy.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul...He pardons all my iniquities...He redeems my life from destruction and crowns me with kindness and compassion...Merciful and gracious is the Lord!”

On God’s holy mountain, sin met grace. The God-fleeing man became “God-sent”: the man YAHWEH sent to free His people Israel from their slavery in Egypt. But was Moses repentant? The Hebrew word for repentance is *shub*, which

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God’s Promise for the Week

“He pardons all your iniquities; he heals all your ills” (Psalm 103:3)

BEARING FRUIT



"I am like a verdant cypress tree"-- Because of me you bear fruit" (Hosea 14:9).

The very essence of Hosea's prophecy has much to do with God's love and fidelity for His people. It is that oath, that sacrament, that covenant, that He insatiably offers without exhaustion. By virtue of His covenant, God made Himself a debtor to man; it is His promise that *'will not return void'*, just as the rain would water the earth and fulfill His will for which He sent it (Isaiah 55:11). The will of the father, however, is not one driven to make us happy, but rather to make us holy - to be faithful, not successful. It is for the edification of our soul; the promise that we would bear fruit if we fix our gaze on the race ahead-the race towards salvation.

Hosea sees the infidelity of his wife, Gomer, as a symbol, a parallelism of the relationship between God and Israel. Initially, Hosea divorces his wife as punishment, but subsequently took her back after having forgiven her crimes of concupiscence. The same was true of God's consistency towards His covenant with Israel; He sees past the sins of idolatry, oppression of the poor and the defenseless, and injustice, and in the end forgives the Israelites after having disciplined them. Hosea prophesies and rebukes Israel of its prevarication, but equally highlights hope and reconciliation, renewal and restoration-God's oath that we would bear much fruit if we remain in Him. Just as Hosea's love for Gomer was greater than her infidelity, so is God's unconditional love (agape) for us that knows no bound. It is God's deliberate effort, undeserving as we are, to enable us to claim that virtue of divine sonship through the spirit of adoption.

The question then becomes, how do we bear fruit? The answer lies in those who are ardently faithful to the Word of God. In Christ Jesus alone do we see the culmination of this promise. In the fourth Gospel of John, the disciple that Jesus loved, it reads; *"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5). It is that dependence on God's sovereignty and providence that we live and bear fruit. Things may seem impossible for us men, but with God in us, all things are possible. In God, the difference between possible and the impossible is that the impossible takes a little more time and perseverance to do. As in Phil 4:13, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Through our humility and weakness, God's strength and power exudes, and the Word is made perfect. *"Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations"* (Mt 28:19).

PATHWAY TO HEAVEN



"And when Jesus saw that (he) answered with understanding, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God'. And no one dared to ask him any more questions" (Mark 12:34).

To most of us, the kingdom of God means Heaven. In the Holy Bible it is described as the blue firmament region of the clouds that pass along the sky. Many associate it as the dwelling place of God; an abode of the angels. In Ephesians 4:8 it says Christ *"ascended on high and took prisoners captive; he gave gifts to men."* Thus heaven is that term that designates both the happiness and abode of the just in the next life.

Heaven exists not within the earth but according to the scripture. It presupposes a condition of perfect happiness. God will bestow happiness on all who depart the earthly life free from original sin and personal mortal sin, consequently in the state of justice and Friendship with God.

Every man was created for eternal happiness. We are born for higher things, for the possession of God. The noblest occupation of the human mind is to know and love God. God implanted in the heart of man a love for virtue and love of happiness that is perfect and eternal, we are made for love and friendship, for holiness. We are supposed to become like God in a human fashion, embodying His goodness, reliability, truthfulness, love, purity, justice, beauty in our human lives. If we desire beauty, we should seek God; face in God's direction. He is beautiful and the source of beauty. God wants us to be holy in every aspect of our thoughts, speech, actions, works and love. We are destined for happiness that is perfect & eternal that will be ours unless we forfeit by sin. *"Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God"* (2 Cor. 7:1). We need God's purification and the fire of His love to touch our lives to free us from the bondage of sin.

Being holy is the only way we can fulfill the destiny God has created for us. In the beginning He created us to be holy like Him. The pure of heart will see God, that is those who love God above all else, putting Him in the center of our lives. The foundation for our personal holiness must be vibrant, life changing relationship with God Himself. We are sent out to others with a particular mission to bear witness to God and His holiness. In the end, He intends us to be with Him in His holy presence forever.

TEACHING BY WITNESSING

Shortly after the sermon at the mount, Jesus gave a teaching about the law. He specifically spoke about the permanence of the law that was handed down by the prophets and coming to fulfillment in Him. All that God sets out to accomplish will remain until it is accomplished. Jesus brings the ultimate will of God to fruition, reconciling the world to Himself so that we may know the Father and partake of the blessing and life in His Kingdom. However, for us to become future citizens of heaven, there is still the process of living righteous lives on earth and having a loving relationship with the Father.

“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)

Jesus clearly directs us to obey the law and teaches others to do so. As Christians, we understand that God’s law demands of us a selfless behavior that can make obeying difficult, even painful. However, as followers of Christ, we do not see God’s rule as a duty to be avoided when possible, but as the very source of real life. God’s purposes are always for our good, for our abundant life. God is completely and always for us. To live under His rule is to recognize the good and gracious nature and purposes of His will starting with Jesus and ending with us.

When we were called to this community and became followers of Christ, we became active workers in His vineyard. Our community has a structure in order to best utilize the resources and gifts available to us. There are defined roles such as teachers, disciplers, shepherds, ministry and apostolate heads from whom we expect to receive guidance and encouragement. However, as members of this community, we all perform these functions to various degrees in relation to one another.

In all these, the quiet, yet powerful teacher of all is by our witnessing. The life of a disciple speaks volumes of the work of God in him. It is therefore in quiet service, in holy and righteous speech, the unfailing perseverance to do what is right despite challenging circumstances, the dying to self — all these including servanthood, compassion, charity and unity identifies those whom Jesus called to be His disciples.

Let us not be the cause of sin for our brethren when we do things that may cause them to judge us. Let us temper our speech, be gentle in our actions, humble in our service, and sincere in our encouragement.

“...put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and

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). Send to rguiao@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com); LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

special ANNOUNCEMENT

FROM THE DCS

Tapes of Fr. Paul’s talks on Jan 13th Community Recollection date is now available through Aileen O’Hara of St. Antoninus. Price: 3 tapes for \$10. Please e-mail her at shamrock2go@yahoo.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- March 10, 2007** **Amazing Grace Ministry**
- Nursing Home Visit
Contact: Eme/Imma Anyanwu
Cell #973-342-9933
- DLC Meeting, St. Mary;s Library**
2:00 - 6:00 pm
- April 13-15, 2007** **Life in the Spirit Seminar #28**
St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway
- April 20-22, 2007** **YLSS #12**
St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway
- April 20-22, 2007** **Aspirant’s Retreat - LSS 23**
- May 25-27, 2007** **Marriage Encounter #29**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
- June 8-10, 2007** **Singles Encounter #18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center,
Garrison, NY Contact: Glenn
Canlas (Invazian21@yahoo.com)

admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” (Col 3:14-16)

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

means “to turn about” or “to retrace one’s steps”. Moses indeed was repentant, by “turning about” to return to Egypt, to become a new person, radically different from his former ways, in obedience to the Lord’s command.

Like Moses, we too had our life-changing encounter with God, resulting in our repentance and conversion. For most, that encounter occurred in the ME or the LSS, when we made a total turnaround in our lives. We are here in this community because it is here that we found and continue to find God. It is here that we had a foretaste of heaven, our “tomorrow” experienced today. But this is still not “fully tomorrow”, for we still have to complete our life’s journey to God.

“Whoever thinks he is standing secure should take care not to fall.” Our conversion is not a one-time life-changing event that occurred in the distant past, and that as citizens of heaven, we are now holy and spotless saints. We remain sinners in constant need of God’s forgiveness, in a continual process of conversion and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. It is in repented sin that we encounter grace that results in our continual conversion. “At the moment that the sinner receives forgiveness and is caught up by God and restored in grace, at that moment- wonder of wonders- sin has become the place where God enters into contact with a human being. One even may go further and say that there is no other way to encounter God and to learn to know him than by way of repentance” – Andre Louf.

Our life’s journey is therefore the time of grace given us to meet, to experience, to know and to grow in God’s love and mercy. Our time in community is a grace given us to prepare today for the fullness of tomorrow. We are a community of heavenly citizens who remain constant sinners needing God for the grace of unremitting repentance and conversion. This is true regardless of our length of service, stage of formation and assigned function or position in the community. To refuse to acknowledge this truth is to declare that we do not need Jesus, and that we can do it alone in our journey of life to God.

If we acknowledge that we are sinners undergoing continual conversion, or that we are saints who continually repent for our sins, then there will be no one who will judge, no one who will condemn anyone in this community. For then, we will realize that we all need Jesus, our Savior, to safeguard our heavenly inheritance. There will be understanding and forgiveness, healing and reconciliation, correction and affirmation, up-building and unity. Then, we will know the love and patience of the Gardener in the gospel parable, and through our own witnessing of repentant lives, help others turn about their lives toward the gracious mercy of God.

DIRECTION:

1. Let us recognize our brokenness as individuals and as a community.
2. Let us be patient with one another and rely on God’s mercy to purify us and restore us to wholeness.

TEACHINGS

Mar. 16, 2007 (after worship)	New Creation Realities – Singles Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth
Mar. 17-18, 2007 8am-5pm	Teachers Development Program – Newark Clusters/DIP’s
Mar. 23, 2007 (after worship)	Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24 Service Formation Teaching - LSS 25
Mar. 30, 2007 (after worship)	Motivational Gifts Inventory – LSS 25
Apr. 20, 2007 (after worship)	Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare - Singles Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth
Apr. 27, 2007 (after worship)	Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24 Service Formation Teaching - LSS 25 New Creation Realities - Solo Parents

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR MY FRIENDS

Lord, help me be a friend to all who need me.
Show me how to share your love.
Teach me to see you in others.
Let me see that more important than money
and personal achievements are the friends
I make and keep, the friends I'll come to love
and cherish and always remember.
Lord, bless my friends (*Mention their names.*)
Lead them closer to you just as you are doing to me.
Deliver them whenever they are in darkness
and draw them into the light of your love.
Cast out their cares, anxieties, worries and concerns.
Sustain them with your peace and love and
grant them your constant guidance
throughout their lives.
In Jesus' name I pray.
AMEN.

*May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon
those who are celebrating their birthdays and
wedding anniversaries this week.*

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending March 2, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor **\$ 4,039.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.



Convert Amid Life's Uncertainties, Urges Pope

Says It's the Only Appropriate Response



VATICAN CITY, MARCH 11, 2007 (Zenit.org).

Conversion is the best tool for facing the uncertainties of life with realism, says Benedict XVI. The Holy Father made this comment today in his address to those

gathered in St. Peter's Square to recite the Angelus.

The Pope commented on the Gospel passage of today's liturgy in which Jesus commented on two current events of that time: a squelched uprising in Galilee and a fallen tower in Jerusalem. "According to the mentality of the time," said the Pontiff, "the people tended to think that the misfortune fell on the victims because of their grave fault." Speaking from the window of his study, the Holy Father said that instead of blaming the victims, Christ led listeners toward the need for their own conversion. "He does not present it in moralistic, but rather in realistic terms, as the only appropriate response to events that put human certainties in crisis," said Benedict XVI.

The Pope continued: "In the face of certain misfortunes ... it is no good to blame the victims. What is truly wise, rather, consists in allowing oneself to be questioned by the precariousness of existence and to adopt an attitude of responsibility: to do penance and improve our lives. Christ invites us to respond to evil first of all through a serious examination of conscience and with the commitment to purify our lives." "In fact," he said, "people and societies that live without questioning themselves have ruin as their only final end." However, the Pontiff added: "Conversion, on the contrary, despite the fact it does not preserve us from problems and adversities, enables us to address them in a different way." Above all, it helps to prevent evil, and to neutralize some of its threats. And, in any case, it enables us to overcome evil with good, though not always at the level of events — which at times are

(☞ Page 4)

COUNSELS

Am I the Prodigal Son or the Self-Righteous Brother?

WORD: Jos 5:9a, 10:12; Psalm 34: 2-7; 2 Cor 5:17-21; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

THEME: We are citizens of heaven when we reconcile with the Father.

ORDER: "Be reconciled with God and with one another"

REFLECTION:

The parable of the Prodigal Son is considered one of the greatest parables, if not the greatest parable, that Jesus Christ told. It is one of the greatest parables because it is a very strong story of the incomparable love and mercy of our God the Father. He is not interested in our past but only in our present relationship with Him. He judges neither by what we have done or not done earlier nor how we will behave in the future but by our relationship with Him here and now. He is ready to forgive and welcome us back again and again and again.

It is also our story, the story of mankind as all of us can relate to: the younger son who was attracted by the sinful pleasures, self-centered indulgences and extravagances of the world but returned and was forgiven; and the older son who was obedient but self-righteous, proud, resentful and predisposed to jealousy, finding fault, grumbling and complaining. At one time or another, we can be either one of the two brothers or both in our lives. And yet, if we (☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week



"In my misfortune I called, the Lord heard and saved me from all distress."

(Psalm 34:7)



Sin No More

Sin is a transgression against the almighty God. Committing sin is rejecting God. When we sin, we lose God's grace. According to Scott Hahn, "Venial sins mark spiritual illness, weaken our will, as mortal sins mean spiritual death."

Our God is awesomely faithful, abounds in love and mercy. He brings us back to Him again and again. He lifts us up each time we fall. He calls us to repentance. He calls us to confession. In Numbers 5:5-7, the Lord said to Moses, "***Tell the Israelites: If a man (or woman) commits a fault against his fellow man and wrongs him, thus breaking faith with the Lord, he shall confess the wrong he has done, restore his ill-rotten goods in full, and in addition, give one fifth of their value to the one he has wronged.***" For a relationship to be healed, confession is necessary.

Sin, great or small, must be brought to confession. "Then I declared my sin to you; my guilt I did not hide. I said, 'I confess my faults to the Lord, and you took away the guilt of my sin'." (Psalm 32:5). We must not refuse to accept God's forgiveness. "Anyone who deliberately refuses to accept His mercy by repenting rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss." (CCC, n.1984).

According to Scott Hahn, "To dread confession is only natural but nothing that's "only natural" can get us to heaven." Confession was instituted by Christ Himself. During His appearance to the disciples, He said to them, "***Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, so I send you***" And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and he said to them: "***Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive, are forgiven them; and whose sins you retain are retained.***" (Jn.20:21-23). In these words, Christ, evidently, gave the apostles and their successors the power to forgive and retain sins. They can only do this when sins are confessed to them; therefore, Christ, when instituting the forgiveness of sins, instituted and connected with it the acknowledgment, that is, the confession of sins.

This lenten season, we must receive the Sacrament of Penance as often as we can and try our best not to commit sin.

"Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." (Jn 5:14).



Standing in the Gap

We 'stand in the gap' when we act as 'mediator' in a dispute between two parties, and when we act as 'intercessor', that is, pleading on another person's behalf.

As a mediator and as an intercessor, a person must be righteous and trustworthy. For the one who may go up the mountain of the Lord and can stand in His Holy Place is the one who has clean hands and a pure heart. Ps. 24:3-4 In James 5:16, it says, "***The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.***" God said to Eliphaz who did not act honorably before Him, "***...Go to my servant Job, and offer up a holocaust for yourselves; and let my servant Job pray for you, for his prayer I will accept....***" Job 42:8

Moreover, to be a good intercessor, one must bear another's burdens, and so he will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 As in the martyrdom of Stephen, when he was being stoned, he fell to his knees and cried out in a loud voice, "***Lord, do not hold this sin against them.***" Acts 7:60

There are many instances in the bible where God instructs men to stand in the gap and intercede for one another. In the Old Testament, Moses acted as a mediator and an intercessor between God and the Israelites. When God was angry and had threatened to inflict punishment on His people, Moses implored the Lord so God relented.

When we commit sin, we create a gap between us and God. This is when Jesus stands in the gap for us. He is the Sole Mediator between God and man. "***Therefore, he is always able to save those who approach God through Him, since he lives forever to make intercession for them.***" Hebrews 7:25 Mary, however, is our great intercessor in heaven. She throws herself at the feet of her divine Son, and says to him, "My Son, a little more time for this sinner; perhaps he will amend, perhaps he will act differently than he formerly did."

In BLD, when we have our Life in the Spirit Seminar, we are given a shepherd who acts as our mediator and intercessor. Our shepherd is chosen to be the righteous person who would intercede on our behalf.

The Holy Spirit is constantly looking for someone who is "open in spirit to God" and willing to fulfill the law of Christ. To fulfill the law of Christ, we should always mediate or intercede for our brothers & sisters, especially those who have fallen away from the faith.

St. Patrick of Ireland: one of the world's most popular saints

Along with St. Nicholas and St. Valentine, the secular world shares our love of these saints. This is also a day when everyone's Irish. There are many legends and stories of St. Patrick, but this is his story.

Patrick was born around 385 in Scotland, probably Kilpatrick. His parents were Calpurnius and Conchessa, who were Romans living in Britian in charge of the colonies. As a boy of fourteen or so, he was captured during a raiding party and taken to Ireland as a slave to herd and tend sheep. Ireland at this time was a land of Druids and pagans. He learned the language and practices of the people who held him.

During his captivity, he turned to God in prayer. He wrote, "The love of God and his fear grew in me more and more, as did the faith, and my soul was rosed, so that, in a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers and in the night, nearly the same. I prayed in the woods and on the mountain, even before dawn. I felt no hurt from the snow or ice or rain."

Patrick's captivity lasted until he was twenty, when he escaped after having a dream from God in which he was told to leave Ireland by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britian, where he reunited with his family. He had another dream in which the people of Ireland were calling out to him "We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more."

He began his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained by St. Germanus, the Bishop of Auxerre, whom he had studied under for years. Later, Patrick was ordained a bishop, and was sent to take the Gospel to Ireland. He arrived in Ireland March 25, 433, at Slane. One legend says that he met a chieftain of one of the tribes, who tried to kill Patrick. Patrick converted Dichu (the chieftain) after he was unable to move his arm until he became friendly to Patrick.

Patrick began preaching the Gospel throughout Ireland, converting many. He and his disciples preached and converted thousands and began building churches all over the country. Kings, their families, and entire kingdoms converted to Christianity when hearing Patrick's message. Patrick by now had many disciples, among them Beningnus, Auxilius, Iserninus, and Fiaac, (all later canonized as well). Patrick preached and converted all of Ireland for 40 years.

He worked many miracles and wrote of his love for God in Confessions. After years of living in poverty, traveling and enduring much suffering, he died March 17, 461 at Saul, Downpatrick, Ireland. (catholic.org)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTERCESSORY

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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

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MARK 10

Mark 10 will be visiting the Holy Face Monastery in Clifton, NJ on March 17th, Saturday at 10:30am. Parents are requested to accompany their children. For more details, please see any of the Mark 10 core members.

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

FROM THE DCS

Tapes of Fr. Paul's talks on Jan 13th Community Recollection date is now available through Aileen O'Hara of St. Antoninus. Price: 3 tapes for \$10. Please e-mail her @ shamrock2go@yahoo.com

TEACHINGS

March 16, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Teachings - John 6, Mark 10, Youth
New Creation Realities - Singles

March 17 & 18, 2007 (Sat. & Sun. 8am-5pm)

Teachers Development Program -
Newark Clusters/DIP's
St. Mary's School Connell Hall

March 23, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24
Service Formation Teaching - LSS 25

March 30, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Motivational Gifts Inventory - LSS 25

April 20, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Teachings - John 6, Mark 10, Youth
Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare - Singles

Counsels (from page 1)

looked more closely, we would find that there is finality in the younger son's life. Through his repentance, his father welcomed him back and forgave him. However, the life of the older son was left hanging as there was no acknowledgement of his sins and asking for forgiveness on his part. This makes this parable very interesting because it strikes very close to our present day weaknesses. What is more amazing is, if you will notice, the story is incomplete. This is because we are still living out the ending.

Most of us are still struggling to overcome the negative forces in our lives, such as self-righteousness, pride, jealousy, being judgmental, and making comparisons. Some are not aware but a great many are in denial and will not even acknowledge they have these failings. They would rather think they are right and continue on than undergo correction. Sometimes, they would choose to move out of the community rather than confront their own weaknesses. A good example is our desire to serve the Lord. In some cases, those who choose to do so are there to create their own identity. In retrospect, they are more in love with themselves than God. They are using the church or community to create their own self image under the guise of service to God, when in fact; it is a service of self. Because of the shaky spiritual foundation of their service, they are inclined to be bitter, jealous and complaining later on. We see here a similarity to the older son who obeyed only for the sake of obeying and perhaps piling up points and not for the love of his father.

There will only be finality to this story and to our life story if we can only see ourselves the way God sees us. We must come to terms that what we see as just or fair in the world is not to be imposed on God because His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. Then and only then, we will be able to realize how magnanimous God's love for us is. We will be able to surrender, change, and be humble and sincere in our service to the Lord and to our brothers and sisters. We will be able to experience God's forgiveness when we learn to forgive others and be reconciled to those who have offended us.

DIRECTIONS:

- * Humble yourself and ask for forgiveness from those you have hurt.
- * In all circumstances, remove anger and jealousy in your heart.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 24, 2007

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament - ME 24 Newark, NJ

Contact: Audie & Vulet Chong (732) 356-9056

April 13-15, 2007

Life in the Spirit Seminar # 28

St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway NJ

April 20-22, 2007

Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am - 8:00 pm)

Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am - 3:00 pm)

Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar # 12

St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

April 20-22, 2007

Aspirant's Retreat - LSS # 23

May 25-27, 2007

Marriage Encounter #29

St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA

Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details

June 8-10, 2007

Singles Encounter#18 Graymoor Spiritual Life

Center, Garrison, NY Contact: Glenn Canlas

(invazian21@yahoo.com)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending March 9, 2007

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor** **\$ 3,980.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Convert (from page 1)

independent of our will — certainly always at the spiritual level." "In short," said the Holy Father, "conversion overcomes evil at its root, which is sin, though it cannot always avoid its consequences."

Benedict XVI encouraged all Christians to "rediscover the grandeur, I would even say the beauty, of conversion." The Pope said: "To do penance and correct our conduct is not simply moralism, but rather the most effective way to improve both ourselves as well as society. *"It is better to light a match than to curse the darkness."*



Teachers Development Program

Neither snow, nor sleet, nor rain, prevented 63 covenanted disciples from Trenton, Rockland, Washington DC, and Newark, including 4 from the Singles Ministry, from yielding to our Lords call to attend the Teachers Development Program administered by the Teaching Ministry of BLD Newark. The seminar was held at St. Mary's School, Rahway, NJ on March 17-18, 2007.

It was truly a Spirit filled weekend as future teachers of the community, listened attentively, participated, and learned the important ingredients needed to effectively teach God's Words. Jesus was evidently present to everybody, as witnessed through the smiles, patience, humility, cooperation, and servant like attitude presented by everyone.

All the invited speakers clearly and effectively got their messages across to all the participants. Everybody was reminded that they were only willing instruments being use by our Lord to spread the Good News to others and that Jesus Christ our master teacher must always be the model of all.

The program culminated with a Mass presided by, Fr. Chris Panlilio, who challenged all the attendees as well as everybody present, to be truthful, stay focus, and be living witnesses to what they teach and preach to others.

Overall the program was a huge victory for the Lord.

"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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (Mt. 28: 19-20)



Visit our website at:
www.BLDNewark.com



COUNSELS

God is our Destiny

WORD: Isaiah 43:16-21, Ps 126:1-6,
Phil 3:8-14; John 8:1-11

ORDER: *"Go, and from now on, sin no more."*
(Jn8:11c)

REFLECTION: As we approach the end of Lent, we cannot help but become more focused on the impending pain and sorrow all Christians must experience in Christ during the season. Lent is a season of repentance. A season of true spiritual cleansing if we ever want to partake of Christ's victory on Easter morning. At this conjecture in the Church year, the readings begin to put in perspective our lives before and after our encounter with Christ — as we journey on with Him and our ultimate vocation after His death on the cross.

The message of this Sunday's readings vividly shows us that all we possessed, our achievements and experiences before encountering Christ is nothing compared to the upward calling in Him.

The first reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah describes our past — the things of long ago we are not to consider as our lives then were as barren as a desert, a wasteland. In Psalm 126, before our Lord rescued us, we were captives of Zion sowing in tears and going forth weeping. In the Letter to the Philippians, St. Paul proclaims that he has accepted the loss of all things and consider them so much rubbish.

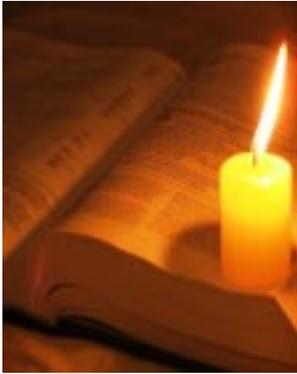
What changes our destiny from suffering and pain, to laughter and rejoicing? It is the price of upward calling in Jesus Christ — to be forgiven and not condemned. To come into the inheritance our Father has set aside for us at the

> page 4

PROMISE OF THE WEEK

"Those who sow in tears will reap with cries of joy"
(Ps 126:5)

Abide in My Word



An essential element of Christian discipleship is to remain faithful to God's words. It means to obey His teachings and to endure, to be steadfast and unchanging amidst certain difficulties, trials and challenges. Although Jesus' Words were spoken to people He encountered two thousand years ago, they remain "living and effective" (Hebrews 4:12), relevant and applicable to our present lives.

John 1:1 presents Jesus as the Eternal Word of God, who "*became a human being and lived among us*". For believers and followers of Our Lord Jesus, He is the promised Messiah, Master and Savior and that through faith in Him, we may have eternal life. This gift of life reveals the infinite love of God who wants to re-create in us His divine image and likeness. As we allow God's Words to touch us through the Scriptures, we encounter Jesus inviting us to turn to Him so that we can receive His life. This is the Gospel of Truth and Transformation: from flesh to Spirit, from darkness to Light and from death to Life.

Like the days of old till the present time, many have opposed and refused to believe the truth. They failed to respond to the reality of Jesus as the Son of the Living God and is "the Way, the Truth and the Life".

My hope and prayers for these unbelievers is that Our Lord in His Mercy will provide them with the gift of faith so that their hearts will be converted to His everlasting love and they will come to know the "*grace and truth*" that only Our Lord Jesus can give. (John 1:14)

Our freedom from sin is a free gift from God. There is no cost on our part at all! The Good News is that Jesus paid the price necessary to set us free. This is the heart of the Gospel, the core reason for our Lenten observances. Jesus Christ died for our sins. And in His dying, He suffered physical, mental and spiritual torment so that we could be set free.

We only need to ask God for freedom from those things that continue to plague us — burdens, worries, fears, doubts and guilt. Our God is loving, kind, gracious and merciful. He only wants the best for us, and longs for us to come to Him with open and contrite hearts. He delights in revealing himself to us, to heal and restore our lives.

Compassionate Jesus, you said, "*Come ... and be refreshed*". I bring you now all our needs, worries, doubts and fears for myself as well as for all my brothers and sisters in the community. Enfold us all in your love and set us free!

WITNESSING:

Let Us Go Beyond the Miracles

There have been so many miracles in our lives, both big and small. If we look around us, if we pause for a moment, we will see the many miracles of God before us. These include the food on our table, the air we breathe, the raindrops, the flowers, life itself, and many more. In our community, we also have the miracle of finding Jesus in our marriage during our ME weekend, the miracle of having a New Life during the LSS, the witnessing during reunions, our teachings, our praise and worship, and our growing community.

After many years in this community perhaps it is time to focus our eyes beyond these 'miracles'. This Lenten season is the time to focus more on the maker of the miracle, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. From John 10:31-38, when Jesus asks..., "*I have done nothing wrong, so why are you seeking to kill me? For something good I've done?*" The Jews answer: "We're not stoning you for something you did, but for what you said. They were more concerned on the fact that Jesus said He was God than that He did important works. The people around him believed in the miracles, and they probably believed he was an intelligent, good man. They didn't dispute that here. They were angered by Jesus' claims to be God. And they did not believe that He comes from God.

Unlike those who do not believe, we should go beyond the miracles and proclaim that Jesus is God, and He is one with the Father. We should not be looking for just miracles but the message beyond. Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8), is challenging us today, as he challenged the people around him 2000 years ago, to believe, to go beyond, to be transformed. And to recognize him as their Lord and Savior.

We have to learn more about Jesus, by continuing with our study of the Word, attending the teachings of the community, and completing our CDFP. For our covenanted disciples, we should not be complacent in learning and go beyond our CDFP. All of us should continue to learn more about our Master. Jesus is asking us to be one with him and the Father in all our undertakings. We should be constant in our daily prayers, and in the reception of the Sacraments. We should put into practice what we have learned and be disciplined in our speech and actions.

As we know more about Jesus, we can focus more on being like him. We should emulate and follow his examples. We should be good witnesses at home, at work, and in our community.

APOLOGETICS : FASTING AND ABSTINENCE (PART 2 OF 2)

Q. Is it a sin to allow any Friday of the year to pass without an act of penance? Are the fast and abstinence rules for Lent binding under the sin under the pain of sin? What other foods could we abstain from?

A. The key to determining whether serious sin is involved in these matters is whether the fasting and abstinence are prescribed or only recommended and whether an individual “substantially” observes these laws. Thus, a person can fail to abstain from meat on a Friday of Lent without committing a serious sin, but that person would sin gravely if he or she totally disregarded the Church’s norms during the entire penitential season, assuming of course that the person fully understood the serious nature of the laws on abstinence.

While the Lenten regulations are prescribed and “bind gravely” all Catholics, the Friday abstinence from meat is only “especially recommended.” Therefore, no serious sin is involved in failing to abstain from meat on Fridays throughout the year, or in neglecting to substitute works of charity and exercises of piety for abstinence.

It should be emphasized, however, that even though Friday abstinence is no longer required by law, the U.S. Bishops said in their 1983 statement *The Challenge of Peace* that Catholics should continue to observe this custom “out of love for Christ crucified,” as a reminder that “we must preserve a saving and necessary difference from the spirit of the world,” and as “an outward sign of the spiritual values that we cherish.”

As for other foods that we could abstain from, it could be any food that we particularly like. It’s no sacrifice for a person who is a vegetarian to abstain from meat on Friday, so that person should stay away from a favorite food of another kind that day. But people who do enjoy meat should try to abstain every Friday of the year. And if it is not possible, then they should perform some work of charity (any corporal work of mercy) or engage in some exercise of piety (attend Mass, pray before the Blessed Sacrament, make the Stations of the Cross, say the rosary, or read the Bible).

(Source: **CATHOLIC REPLIES** by James J. Drumme)

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 rguiaio@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MARK 10: Rescheduled Visit to Holy Face Monastery (1697 Rt 3 East, Clifton, NJ 07013) on March 31, 2007 at 10:30am. Contact: Reuben & Cherry Vibar.

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

TEACHING MINISTRY



Mar 23 - (After worship)

Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24

Service Formation Teaching - LSS 25

Mar 30 - (After worship)

Motivational Gifts Inventory – LSS 25

Apr 20 - (After worship)

Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare – Singles

Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Apr 27 - (After worship)

Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24

Service Formation Teaching - LSS25

New Creation Realities - Solo Parents

May 05 - (1 pm-6 pm) St. Mary’s

Advanced Intercession and Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS24 & 25

Encounter with Jesus – LSS27

May 11 - (After Worship)

Growth in Prayer – Solo Parents

Counsels from page 1

cost of His Son's blood. We are to seek the sweet forgiveness of our Savior that His destiny on the cross will procure for us a destiny with God the Father.

In this Sunday's readings, Jesus models for us a compassionate heart. Although the situation with the Scribes and Pharisees was political in nature, a trap that placed Jesus in a serious dilemma, He saw with His spirit and spoke with the wisdom that only comes from above. As He entrusted Himself to the Father, a situation that could have potentially dangerous repercussions passed as a breeze and His overwhelming goodness prevailed.

He dealt with the situation in a most compassionate and sensitive manner. He acknowledged the sinfulness of the woman, spared her from a painful death, granted her forgiveness and commanded her to sin no more. Amazingly, He did not cause the Scribes and Pharisees to sin further in this incident!

Jesus has promised us the guidance and strength of this same Spirit in the conduct of our lives. The spiritual perception, the ability to discern and speak with wisdom, to behave righteously and remain charitable under the most difficult circumstances, are gifts He has already given to us. It is a matter of us, dying to self, and claiming God's power over our fallen nature that will enable us to put on a Christ-like spirit. *"It is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in hope that I may possess it, since I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ Jesus."* (Phil 3:12)

Therefore, as we acknowledge and repent of our sins daily, let us also extend the same compassion that we have received from Him to others. Jesus is able to pardon sins because He paid the penalty for our sins. He does not ask us to bear a single thorn in our heads or lash of a whip, all He asks of us is to grant forgiveness to others, and be merciful and compassionate in our thoughts, words and actions.

Is Jesus able to look in our souls and know that we have not condemned anyone? Are we like the Pharisees dragging the sacred name of a brethren through the crowds and with our actions proclaim, "this is a sinful man, judge him!" Are we like Jesus, or are we like the Pharisees?

Lord God, you have granted us divine forgiveness, grant us a portion of Your forgiving spirit so that we may experience deep and lasting change. Enable us to overcome our weaknesses and grant us righteousness. Lord, when come face to face with You we long to hear You say, *"Neither do I condemn you."* (Jn 8:11b)

DIRECTIONS :

1. He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone.
2. Be reconciled with one another.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Mar 24 **Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament, Newark - ME24 Please contact - Audie & Vulet Chong (732) 356-9056
- Apr 13-15 **Life in the Spirit Seminar #28**
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
ME Rockland Contact Persons: Mon/Bingle Chan (973-887-9499)
- Apr 20-22 **Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar#12**
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
Sat, Apr 21 (7:30am - 8:00pm)
Sun, Apr 22 (7:30am- 3:00pm)
Aspirant's Retreat - LSS 23
- Apr 24 **Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament, Newark - ME14 Please contact - Eme&Imma Anyanwu(973)763-6889
- May 4 - 6 **ME Charlotte, NC** Contact Persons: Henry/Aida Koryan (973-709-1387)
- May 25-27 **Marriage Encounter #29** - St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
- June 8-10 **Singles Encounter#18** Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact: Glenn (invazian21@yahoo.com)

MOMENT OF PRAYER PRAYER FOR MY BIRTHDAY

Dear Lord,
I thank you for giving me another year of life. I thank you for all the people who remembered me today. For all the achievements and all the friends you have given to me during the past years. I thank you for all the experiences, the successes and happy memories, for times of failure which reminded me of my own weaknesses and of my need for you, for times of joy when the sun was shining for times of sorrow which drove me to you. Forgive me, Lord, for the hours I have wasted for the chances I failed to take, for the opportunities I missed in the past year. Forgive me that I did not use my talents and abilities to the fullest because I was lazy and wanted things the easy way or I did not completely trust in your support. Help me in the days which lie ahead to make this coming year better than last year and closer to you, my Lord.
AMEN.



Pope Says Sin Is True Enemy

ROME, MARCH 26, 2007 (Zenit.org)

Hell consists in closing oneself off from the love of God and sin is the true enemy of the human person, Benedict XVI says.

The Pope made that comment on Sunday when celebrating Mass at the Parish of St. Felicity and Martyred Sons in the northern sector of the Diocese of Rome.

“If it is true that God is justice, then we should not forget that he is above all love; if he hates sin it is because he has an infinite love for all human beings,” the Holy Father explained.

The Pontiff reflected on the Gospel account of the day’s liturgy. It dealt with the adulterous woman who was to be stoned to death, but who was saved and forgiven by Jesus. Benedict XVI stated: “Jesus does not start a theological debate about the law of Moses; he is not interested in winning an academic dispute on an interpretation of the Mosaic laws. His objective is to save a soul and reveal that salvation can be found only in the love of God.

“Jesus came to tell us that he wants us all in heaven and that hell, of which so little is said in our time, exists and is eternal for those who close their hearts to his love. Therefore even in this episode, we understand that our true enemy is our attachment to sin, which can lead us to failing our existence.”

Recalling that Jesus sent the adulterous woman away with the words, “go and sin no more,” the Pope explained, “Only God’s forgiveness and his love, received with an open and sincere heart, give us the strength to resist evil and to sin no more, to let us be touched by God’s love which becomes our strength.”

Benedict XVI concluded, “Jesus’ attitude thus becomes a model to be followed by all communities, called to make love and forgiveness the pulsating heart of their lives.”

COUNSELS

Enduring Our Passion and Death

WORD: Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11; Lk 22:14 – 23:56

ORDER: Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test.

THEME: We endure our own passion and death to attain resurrection when we submit to the Father’s will.

REFLECTION:

The Gospel reading begins with Jesus preparing his disciples for his passion and death – The sealing of the New Covenant. He writes his autobiography, but unlike humans who use paper and pen, Jesus en-fleshes it in the body, soul and spirit of his disciples and through them to all mankind.

After Jesus was arrested and during his passion, we read that he was moved from court to court to face various accusations. Herod and his soldiers treated him contemptuously and mocked him, clothing him in resplendent garb. The people had him carry a heavy wooden cross. And finally while on the cross, a criminal mocked and jeered at him saying, “*Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.*” (Lk. 23:39b).

Reading the passion narrative, we may be awed by the actions and behavior of Jesus who, knowing fully well of the suffering he was to undergo, triumphantly rode into Jerusalem to face his destiny. As Disciples of Christ, we are called especially this Lenten season to emulate Jesus in enduring our passion and death.

We may suffer injustices, sometimes, at the hands of people we are intimate with. Whatever is the cause of our passion or to what degree we are to bear our cross, Jesus offers us a clear direction to follow.

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

“Amen I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Lk 23:43)

The Judas in Me

Months ago, I was requested to contribute an article for the Covenant News. I cringed at the request because I find writing tedious and the topic was petrifying - 'The Judas in Me'. I agreed to do it trusting the Holy Spirit will guide me.

I found it difficult to deal with the subject. I prayed about it but I was not making any progress. The thought of comparing myself to Judas was scary. He was a thief and the betrayer of our Lord. I never thought of myself that way. I wished that the topic was, 'The Peter in Me'. In spite of his faults, Peter ended up with the keys to heaven and it would have been easier to think of the great things about me.

As the deadline drew near and nothing accomplished, I continued to pray. Then it dawned on me that it was my pride that was the problem. You see, I am a recovering 'pride-aholic'. I am too proud to compare myself to Judas. This realization led me to examine my conscience. Have I been considerate to the feelings of my wife and children? Have I been entertaining unclean thoughts? Have I been given to worries and anxieties? Guilty!

The fact is I commit sins daily. Is not this the same as betraying the Lord? As I thought more, I realized that my pride was causing me to conceal the real Judas in me. I was embarrassed to admit that like Judas, I fell into despair and hopelessness. As a teenager, the constant pressure of school and family led me to depression. I felt all alone and helpless. I wanted to end my misery! I thought, will I go to hell? Will God understand and forgive me? Looking back, I realize that it was only through God's grace that I was able to survive that dark moment in my life. The inner voice I heard was God. He was there all along, suffering with me and extending His hand to rescue me.

Like Judas, I was desperate and did not trust God, but unlike him, I responded to that inner voice. God is merciful. I am certain God reached out and offered the same helping hand to Judas but he decided not to take it. I will forever be grateful to God for rescuing me in my distress.



Forfeiting God's Blessings

"And he asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter said to him in reply, 'You are the Messiah.'" (Mk 8:29) Peter was a brave follower of Jesus who was always willing to stand up for Him. In fact, Peter stood up for Him when He was arrested. In Jn 18:10, it identifies Peter as the one who pulled out his sword and cut-off the ear of the high priest's servant. How did Peter go from a brave follower in one instant to a complete and utter coward a few hours later when he denied Jesus (Jn 18:15-18).

Let us examine Peter's immature faith more closely. As a disciple of Jesus, Peter knew that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. (Mt 16:16-17) He understood that Jesus knew everything and could do anything (Jn 16:30). Still, there was a great hole in Peter's faith, which only Jesus could fill. Peter lacked the revelation of the enormity of his own sin. Peter knew he was a sinner (Lk 5:4-11). Long before Crucifixion, Peter realized that he desperately needed Jesus, that his life was meaningless apart from serving Him (Jn 6:68). What Peter did not realize was that his defective nature made it impossible for him to truly serve Jesus. He considered himself a reformed sinner, because he had left his former life to follow Jesus. But notwithstanding his change of life, Peter remained a congenital sinner. The cancerous sin living within him was the same as Cain's, the same as Adam's, the same that was responsible for the corruption of the entire world.

Peter's denial of Jesus, even three times was absolutely a forfeiture of God's blessings. Judas's betrayal was just as grave as Peter's denial of Jesus. But what made him regain God's blessings was he did not take matter of punishing himself for his sin.. He repented and was restored. Judas on the other hand knew that he had betrayed an innocent man, but he betrayed himself by taking matters into his hand, which he knew, he could have been saved.

Let us also examine ourselves. We have been like Peter or still are, immature in faith and very fragile, although we knew Jesus and have been in His presence during Holy Eucharist or Friday worships, Community activities and even in our own families. Yet we are still unwilling to suffer for that faith and shun suffering at all costs. Let us always remember that Jesus's death and resurrection is not for Him, but for the redemption and forgiveness of our sins, so that the blessings that our Father have given to all shall not be forfeited.

Easter Triduum

What we actually celebrate in the Paschal Triduum is mystery, not the history of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. We celebrate the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ which is the culmination of the entire liturgical year. The liturgies do not take us back to the upper room or the path to Calvary. The ultimate purpose of our celebration is the tomb at Easter's dawning. We celebrate, not what once happened to Jesus, but what is now happening among us as a people called to conversion, gathered in faith and gifted with the Spirit of holiness. We celebrate God's taking possession of our hearts at its deepest core, recreating in us a new human community broken like bread, for the world's life..... a community rich in compassion, steadfast in hope, and fearless in the search for justice and peace.

Holy Thursday: The mass of Chrism is properly concelebrated by the Bishop with his clergy as a sign of unity and communion. They will renew their priestly vows. The three Holy Oils are blessed by the Bishop; the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of the Catechumens, and the Chrism Oil.

At the Holy Thursday evening mass, before the Feast of Passover, Jesus celebrates the Last Supper wherein He gives us His Body and Blood. The Washing of the Feet is done from the cross-section of the local community. We are encouraged to adore the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Good Friday: The paschal fast is observed to honor the suffering and death of Jesus and to prepare ourselves deeply into His resurrection. The celebration of the Lord's Passion takes place at 3:00 pm as well as the Veneration of the Cross.

Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil: The Vigil Mass is celebrated in four parts; Blessing of the Light, Liturgies of the Word, Baptism, and Eucharist. Christian Initiation is extended to those who have prepared under the "Rite for Christian Initiation for Adults" program or the RCIA. The priest is given the faculty by the local Bishop to confirm. RCIA candidates are baptized, confirmed and receive the Eucharist for the first time.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the
Week Ending March 23, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor \$4,373.00
Thank you for your continued generosity.

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

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug 11 Sat.

Venue – TBA, Shotgun start, Contact Carlito/Arlene Claricia, cclaricia@yahoo.com

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

Mark 10: CANCELLED – Visit to Holy Face Monastery (1697 Rt 3 East, Clifton, NJ 07013) on March 31, 2007 Contact: Reuben & Cherry Vibar

March 30- No Worship. Children will join their parents.

April 6 - Good Friday, no worship.

Mission: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

TEACHING MINISTRY

Mar 30: After worship

Motivational Gifts Inventory – LSS 25

Mar 31: 1-6pm St. Mary's

Christian Maturity Program I Part 1 – Aspirants

Christian Maturity Program I Part 2 – Aspirants

Apr 20: After worship

Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare – Singles
Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Apr 27: After worship

Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24

Service Formation Teaching - LSS25

New Creation Realities - Solo Parents

May 5: 1-6pm St. Mary's

Advanced Intercession and Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS24 & 25

Encounter with Jesus – LSS27

May 11: After Worship

Growth in Prayer – Solo Parents

May 18: After Worship

Growth in Prayer – Singles

Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth

May 19: 1-6pm St. Mary's

Shepherd's Training Part 2 – LSS23 & 24

Christian Maturity Program II Part 1 – LSS26

Growth in Prayer/New Creation Realities – LSS28

May 25: After Worship

Intercessory Formation

Service Formation

Introduction to Intercession – Solo Parents

Obedience to the Father's will is the key. Am I called to go to mission; to teach; to evangelize? What is the Lord's will for me as an individual? As a people or a nation, what is the Lord calling us to do?

To discern, we are directed to God's word through our daily readings and reflections. We are not only to read scriptures and other holy books but also to actively meditate on them individually and collectively participate in our weekly Living Word Group or Word Sharing Circle. While the word of God gives wisdom, knowledge, and enlightenment of the soul, reconciliation and the Eucharist help us recognize and feel his presence in and around us at all times and in all circumstances. His suffering and death on the cross, for us sinners, is the greatest reconciling act one could undertake. Jesus' words in Luke 22:19-20, reveal his ever presence within us.

Discerning the Father's will for us is one thing but submitting to this will is another. *"Christ Jesus Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he 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 2:5b-8).

In order for us to remain steadfast and focused on the Father's will, Jesus intercedes for us. *"I have prayed that your own faith may not fail."* (Lk 22:32a) Likewise, he encourages us to pray. *"Pray that you may not undergo the test."* (Lk. 22:40b) *"Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test."* (Lk 22:46) Prayer, therefore, will not only sustain and increase our faith, it may also shield us from negative forces. The gospel tells us that when Jesus prayed fervently in the Garden of Gethsemane sweats of blood fell on the ground and an angel appeared from heaven to strengthen him. As disciples of Christ, we are to pray unceasingly. As our individual, conjugal and communitarian prayers increase and our partaking of the sacraments become regular, we will feel Jesus' presence more and more.

Self-pity will no longer be in our hearts or minds. We shall face our trials and carry our crosses with courage and determination knowing that our Lord Jesus is always with us. Our hope will be on the assurance that when our journey on earth is over we, too, may be remembered by our Heavenly Father. Like our Lord Jesus we, too, shall be exalted and taken to our Heavenly home.

DIRECTION:

1. Strive to know the will of the Lord through daily readings and reflections of His word.
2. Empty yourselves and be renewed through the regular reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Apr 13-15: Life in the Spirit Seminar #28**
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
ME-Rockland Contact Mon/Bingle Chan
(973)887-9499
- Apr 20-22: Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #12**
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
Sat, Apr 21 (7:30am-8:00pm)
Sun, Apr 22 (7:30am-3:00pm)
- Apr 20-22: Aspirant's Retreat – LSS23**
- Apr 24: Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament,
ME14-Newark Contact Eme & Imma
Anyanwu (973)763-6889
- May 4-6: ME Charlotte, NC** Contact Henry/Aida
Koryan (973)709-1387
- May 25-27: Marriage Encounter #29**, St. Francis
Retreat House, Easton, PA. Visit
www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
- May 26: Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament,
ME 12 & 17-Newark Contact Oliver/
Flory Santos (201)653-9268
- Jun 8-10: Singles Encounter #18** Graymoor
Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact: Glenn Canlas
(invazian21@yahoo.com)

PRAYER ON MY WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Dear Lord,
I thank you for giving us another year of life together.
I thank you for the love which has grown and for the bond which have become close.
I thank you for the happiness we have known together;
for all the experiences of sunshine and of shadow
through which we have come to today.
I ask your forgiveness
for any disloyalty on my part;
for times I was difficult to live with;
for any selfishness and inconsiderateness;
for any lack of sympathy and understanding;
for un-gentleness, ill-temper and hasty judgments;
for taking my spouse's feelings for granted;
and for anything which may have spoiled
our relationship with each other.
Keep us, Lord, close to each other, united in love for you,
for each other and for the family that you have given to us.
Protect us from all dangers, bless our endeavors and keep
always in our family the spirit of love, peace and happiness.
Amen



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NITAREK

Volume 13 Issue 14

Bulletin Edition

April 13, 2007



Resurrection Gives Hope, Says Pope Highlights World's Afflictions In Message For Easter

VATICAN CITY, APRIL 8,
2007(Zenit.org) - The resurrection of

Christ gives hope to a world afflicted by natural disasters, disease and violence, said Benedict XVI in his Easter message.

After celebrating Easter Mass today, and before imparting the blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city of Rome and the world), the Pope read a message in which he said that “Natural calamities and human tragedies that cause innumerable victims and enormous material destruction are not lacking. Through the wounds of the Risen Christ we can see the evils which afflict humanity with the eyes of hope,” the Pontiff said from the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica to the crowds gathered in the square below on a sunny morning.

Catastrophe

“I am thinking of the scourge of hunger, of incurable diseases, of terrorism and kidnapping of people, of the thousand faces of violence which some people attempt to justify in the name of religion, of contempt for life, of the violation of human rights and the exploitation of persons. In the Middle East, besides some signs of hope in the dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian authority, nothing positive comes from Iraq, torn apart by continual slaughter as the civil population flees.”

Christian Exodus

The Holy Father added: “I cannot forget the difficulties faced daily by the Christian communities and the exodus of Christians from that blessed land which is the cradle of our faith. I affectionately renew to these populations the expression of my spiritual closeness. By His rising, the Lord has not taken away suffering and evil from the world, but vanquished them at their roots by the superabundance of His grace. He has countered the arrogance of evil with the supremacy of His love.”

Benedict XVI wished the world a happy Easter in 62 languages. In English, the Pope said: “May the grace and joy of the Risen Christ be with you all.”

COUNSELS

Peace Be With You

WORD: Acts 5:12-16; Psalm 118; Book of Rev. 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31

THEME: We endure our passion and death to attain resurrection when we believe that the risen Christ is our Lord and Savior.

ORDER: Do not be unbelieving, but believe.

REFLECTION:

“Peace be with you!” This salutation of peace can be found in almost any liturgical service and appears to be the purposeful intention of the Church. After the death of their Lord, the apostles were gripped with “fear of the Jews.” We could just imagine their jubilation when Jesus “The Prince of Peace” showed up amongst them replacing their anxiety with peace. This offering of peace reverberates from many hundreds of years ago up to now in Christian communities such as ours. As we grow, we can expect differences of ideas and opinions, which could lead to misunderstanding and result in strained and broken relationships.

Even in the early church, St. Paul chastised his quarrelling followers as he wrote, “*Shame on you! Surely there is at least one among you wise enough in your fellowship who can settle a dispute between one believer to another.*” (1 Cor 6:5). Jesus demands unity if not necessarily uniformity. We can all work together for a common goal without necessarily seeing eye to eye on every issue.

Unfortunately, however, when conflict persists, we tend to distance ourselves from God. Our faith becomes shaken if we do not get affirmation of our own desires. We lose focus on the greater good as we refuse to look past the people adverse to us. *(continued on page4)*

God's Promise for the Week

*Believe that Jesus is Christ the Son of God
and that through this belief you may
have life in His name.*

MAKE COVENANT NEWS A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE.

Burning Desire



One of the gospel readings this week talks about the journey of two disciples to Emmaus and their encounter with Jesus. Reading Luke's entire account (Lk 24:13-35), gives us a fairly good idea of how discouraged the two disciples were feeling because of the events of the previous days.

Three days ago they were so sure that Jesus "*would be the one to redeem Israel*" (Lk 24:21)

and now He is gone. They have lost all hope, their faith, once so strong, now replaced with so much doubt, to the point that even when "*Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, they failed to recognize him*". (Lk 24:15b-16)

Only after they saw Him "*break the bread and give it to them were their eyes opened and they recognized him*" (Lk 24:30-31a). In this season of Easter it is probably fitting that we also examine and reflect on our own "walk to Emmaus".

More often than not our own "walk" is quite similar to that of the two disciples. How many times have we been filled with doubt, has our faith wavered, have we lost hope, and consequently become afraid because we felt that our Lord has abandoned us. And even when He is right there with us, we fail to recognize Him because we are so focused on ourselves. Doesn't this become especially true during those times when we are faced with extremely difficult situations? But it shouldn't have to be this way.

Let us not forget that Jesus is and will always be walking with us, to restore our faith, to give us hope, and to rekindle that burning desire in our hearts. We need to be like the two disciples who, through the Scriptures, have opened themselves to the Word of God. And just as they were able to recognize Jesus ONLY after they saw Him break the bread, we too should fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist (the breaking of the Bread) and partake of His Body & Blood as often as we can.

Only through the Eucharist will we be able to truly recognize our Lord Jesus in all His glory. And only through the Eucharist will we be able to nourish that burning desire for our Lord Jesus. We are truly blessed, that in the celebration of the Mass, Jesus is right there with us. It is as if we were also there with Him and the two disciples on that fateful day on the road to Emmaus.

Lord Jesus, as we go on our own "journey", may that burning desire that we feel for You never diminish and may we always recognize Your presence in the celebration of the Eucharist. Amen.

Divine Mercy

The message of The Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us — all of us. And, he wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy.

The Divine Mercy message is one we can call to mind simply by remembering ABC:

A - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

B - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

C - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

This message and devotion to Jesus as The Divine Mercy is based on the writings of Saint Faustina Kowalska, an uneducated Polish nun who, in obedience to her spiritual director, wrote a diary of about 600 pages recording the revelations she received about God's mercy. Even before her death in 1938, the devotion to The Divine Mercy had begun to spread.

The message and devotional practices proposed in the Diary of Saint Faustina and other publications of the Marianists of the Immaculate Conception are completely in accordance with the teachings of Church and are firmly rooted in the Gospel message of our Merciful Savior. Properly understood and implemented, they will help us grow as genuine followers of Christ.

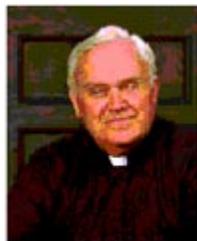
Spend time to learn more about the mercy of God, learn to trust in Jesus, and live your life as merciful to others, as Christ is merciful to you. Through St. Faustina, the merciful Savior has given the aching world new channels for the outpouring of His grace. These new channels include the Image of The Divine Mercy, the Feast of Mercy (Divine Mercy Sunday), the Chaplet, the Novena to The Divine Mercy, and prayer at 3 O'clock in the afternoon, the Hour of Great Mercy.

Although these means of receiving God's mercy are new in form, they all proclaim the timeless message of God's merciful love. They also draw us back to the great Sacrament of Mercy, the Holy Eucharist, where the living Lord, who suffered and died on the Cross and whose Heart was pierced with a lance, pours forth his mercy on all mankind, and grants pardon to all who draw near and honor Him.

(Source: Marian.org)



Fr. Paul Speaks



There are so many books, reflections, meditations articles and so much written on the glories and meaning of Easter, that I find it difficult to focus on one facet of the mystery that might minister to our BLD community. I thought a possible answer could be in the area of freedom. Easter assures us that we do not have to be locked into the ordinariness and even the “blahness” of everyday living. We can be free to live in the higher realms “where we are hidden with Christ in God.” After all, St. Paul says, you have already died, are buried with Jesus, and NOW risen!

You don't have to be stuck in your pettiness and imperfections. You can live differently. One area I see the Easter victory of Jesus in a most obvious way in BLD, is the way in which so many of our members respond to emergency situations. How often when tragedy strikes, many, not just a few, respond in love and service with calls, visits, offers, money, and of course food, to the person or family in dire straights. This has been a deep source of edification to me. There is an almost instinctive call to service to help our hurting brother or sister. I find this personally very encouraging, and I attribute this to the work of the Spirit in the hearts of so many. There is an instinct to share and serve. May I also share a challenge? Many of us Filipinos are very sensitive. This is basically a plus quality that serves when our brother or sister is going through some physical or emotional trauma. We “feel” with them. The minus side of this quality is the hurt that we allow to fester inside of us when we have been offended, or seemingly offended, by a remark or what could be interpreted as an offensive posture by one of our brothers or sisters. I see that forgiveness is easier said than done. When I observe the hurt that may have come from a careless remark or an off-handed statement I marvel at the lengths that such trivialities can hurt a relationship that has existed for many years. St. John of the Cross in talking about holiness says we can be held back by a thin thread, much like a small bird caught in a thread, as well as by a large rope that seems weightier.

The freedom of Easter is that we let go. We may be hurt by a careless remark. Why hold onto the burden of hurt when Jesus has taken upon himself not only the very serious crimes of humanity but even our petty failures and imperfections? Give the hurt to Jesus and live in freedom!

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending
March 30, 2007**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the
Poor \$4,450.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Ministry Announcements

Intercessory

Prayer request 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@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

Singles

Archdiocesan Outreach Service - every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) and LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

Mission

Nursing Home Visit - every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact: Ency and Baby Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370.

CANCELLED-April 14 Nursing Home Visit

Teachings

April 20 After Worship	Intro to Intercession & Spiritual Warfare - Singles Teachings - Mark10, John 6, Youth
April 27 After Worship	Intercessory Formation - LSS 24 Service Formation - LSS 25 New Creation Realities - Solo Parents
May 5 1-6 pm St. Mary's	Advanced Intercession and Orientation to Spiritual Warfare - LSS 24 & 25 Encounter with Jesus - LSS 27
May 11 After Worship	Growth In Prayer - Solo Parents
May 18 After Worship	Growth In Prayer - Singles Teachings - Mark10, John6, Youth
May 19 1-6 pm St. Mary's	Shepherd's Training Part 2 - Christian Maturity Program II Part 1 - LSS 26 Growth In Prayer & New Creation Realities - LSS 28
May 25 After Worship	Intercessory Formation Service Formation Intercession - Solo Parents
June 2 1-6 pm St. Mary's	Healing and Deliverance - LSS 24 & 25 Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS 27

Counsels from page 1

We fail to heed St. Paul's words, "Do your task as done for the Lord and not for men." (Col 3:23). We become the doubting Thomas, who insists "unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail mark and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." (Jn 20:28). Thomas, anemic in his faith, has to see affirmative signs in order to believe. In John's gospel, we are called upon to not be unbelieving but believe. "Oh you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matt 14:31).

Just as the disciples hiding in that room, once we truly recognize Jesus for who He is, the things that cause us to lack peace in our lives simply fall away. If we too believe, then we are compelled to seek peace with one another as well. "If you enter a place of worship and about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, go immediately to this friend and make things right. Then come back and work things out with God" (Matt 5:23-24).

If things are not right between brethren, we may have to examine our own insensitivity to the needs of others or our role in contributing to the miscommunication, rather than focusing upon the failings of those around us. "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." (Jn 8:7). Only when we overcome our feeling of indifference towards those we feel have wronged us, can we begin to humbly admit our mistakes. As we seek forgiveness and reconciliation, we begin to see the face of Christ in the other person and witness that we value each relationship.

In John's gospel, when Jesus appeared in the midst of His apostles, His first words to them were, "Peace be with you!" After He revealed Himself to them, this same greeting was repeated, "Peace be with you!"

As His disciples recognized Jesus as the risen Christ, the Son of God, all fear was gone. Christ becomes not only their refuge and source of strength but sends them forth with the power of the Holy Spirit. When the disciples believed, many healings, signs and wonders were manifest. Great numbers also believed and were added to the early church. When we believe and Christ becomes our peace, we too become witnesses to Jesus' presence within us so that others may also believe and receive eternal life in His name.

DIRECTIONS:

- Witness to the enduring presence of Jesus in ourselves and in others.
- Be at peace with one another.



Community Calendar

- Apr 13-15** Life in the Spirit Seminar #28
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
and
ME#4 Rockland
Marian Shrine Retreat Center, Stony Point, NY
Contact persons: Mon/Bingle Chan (973-887-9499)
- Apr 20-22** Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #12
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
- Apr 20-22** Aspirant's Retreat – LSS 23
- Apr 24** Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark - ME 14. Contact Erme & Imma Anyanwu (973)763-6889
- May 4-6** ME#1, Charlotte, NC Contact persons: Henry/Aida Koryan (973-709-1387)
- May 12** Youth Ministry Nursing Home Visit
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic
- May 25-27** Marriage Encounter #29
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
- May 26** Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament,
Newark - ME 12 & 17
Contact Oliver/Flory Santos (201)653-9268
- June 8-10** Singles Encounter #18 Graymoor Spiritual Life
Center, Garrison, NY Contact: Glenn Canlas
(invazian21@yahoo.com)
- June 15-17** ME Albany, NY, Contact persons: Nick/Island
Raagas (909-346-1878)
- June 29-July 1**
SPE#9
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood, NJ
Contact persons: Nestor/Letty de Guzman
(973-748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com)

HEALING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, go back into my memory as I sleep. Every hurt that has ever been done to me, heal that hurt. Every hurt that I have ever caused another person, heal that hurt. All the relationships that have been damaged in my whole life that I am not aware of, heal those relationships. But, O Lord, if there is anything that I need to do, If I need to go to a person because he or she is still suffering from my hand, bring to my awareness that person. I choose to forgive, and I ask to be forgiven. Remove whatever bitterness may be in my heart, Lord, and fill the empty spaces with your love. Amen.



Spirit-filled LSS #28 Weekend

In His great love and mercy, the Holy Spirit showed His mighty power and abundant grace to 75 BLD members who received Jesus as their Lord and Savior during the LSS #28 last weekend at St. Mary's Church. The Giver of gifts generously released an overflow of grace as He touched the hearts of all participants and empowered them with many charismatic gifts, including tongues and prophecy. .

The LSS graduates were then commissioned to go out and bear fruit as salt of the earth endowed with the light of faith.

Over 200 of the Lord's workers served on Saturday and Sunday. Fr Paul Lehman as the Spiritual Director. He was supported by the LSS Coordinators Dodee/Susan Aglibut, Shepherd Coordinators Efren/Yollie Cruz, Action Coordinators Ver/Diana Nacion and Piety Coordinators Paby/Pauline Ibarrola. The sharers included Joey/Linda Viola, Paul Lazaro – God's Love; Tony/Linda Avisado, Emmie Manulat – New Life; Nestor/Becbec Laxina – Healing and Reconciliation; Lito/Gigi Vibar – Exhortation; Caesar/Vicky Rasalan – Growth; and, Joe/Beth Baluyot, Eve Alcruz – Transformation. Flock Coordinators, Shepherds, Co-Shepherds, Sponsoring Class and Auxies were also present. The ME and SE Sponsoring Class Shepherds were Bong/Merle Encarnacion and Emil/Baby Canlas respectively.

In observance of Divine Mercy Sunday, a presentation was made focusing on the ABCs of Mercy, Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, Praises of Divine Mercy and the singing of the Divine Mercy Chaplet by the Praise Ministry. In the Diary of St. Faustina, Jesus said to her, "I am Love and Mercy itself."

Praise and thanks be to God for a blessed and fruitful LSS weekend!

Make Covenant News A Part Of Your Covenant Life!

COUNSELS

As Disciples of Christ, Care Always for Each Other

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

ORDER: *"Feed my lambs...
tend my sheep... feed my sheep"*

REFLECTION: In In the forty days between His Resurrection and Ascension, the Lord made three appearances to His disciples. In this week's Gospel, Jesus makes His third appearance and, as always, the event and its telling are fraught with messages and meaning.

In the first scene which recalls the start of Peter's ministry in Luke 5, Jesus tells the seven apostles where to cast their nets after a whole night of fruitless, or rather fishless, effort. Sure enough, when they did as He said, they hauled in a full load of large fish, 153 in all. The clearest message here is if we follow and trust the Lord's word, whether in community work or in our personal lives, we'll never go wrong. As for the unique #153, it is said that this is the total number of known species of fish in the whole world and thus prefiguring that Christ's ministry, to be fishers of men, would cover the whole of humanity and not just the Gentiles or Jews.

In the next scene, Jesus endorses once more the importance of fellowship in the disciples' life (as He did in the Last Supper and in the feeding of the five thousand) by greeting the apostles with a prepared breakfast of fish and bread as they reached the shore. We are reminded that having a meal is always an occasion for shared intimacy and that fellowship is not just for eating but an opportunity for meaningful

(page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something."

(John 21:6)

One Community, One Heart, One Mind

“Now, the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.” Acts 4:32ff

The word community defines people with one thing or more in common among them. The first Christians believed in Jesus Christ, and as such were a community of believers. They contributed their talents and goods for the whole community, by giving their possessions at the apostles’ disposal.

We are followers of Jesus in this one community, an association of the faithful in the Archdiocese of Newark. We belong to the same Roman Catholic faith. We profess the Apostles’ Creed and believe in all Catholic doctrines. We honor Mary, the virgin mother of God. We acknowledge the Pope as the visible Vicar of Christ, Peter’s successor, and His Bishops...We observe official catholic liturgy. We submit to the ecclesial authority of the Archdiocesan Bishop. We commit ourselves to the pastoral authority of our Spiritual Director, the Council of Servant Leaders and their representatives. Our foundation is Jesus. As the Blessed Trinity is One and Undivided, so are we united as one Church.

We share in the community’s vision and mission. Our vision is that we are a communion of families and persons called together as one people, through a moment of encounter and a process of renewal, to a personal relationship of faith, hope and love with God, while proclaiming His kingdom through WORD, WORSHIP, PRAYER and SERVICE.

As a community, we share our time, talents and treasure- in accord with the principle of Christian stewardship. Our financial support in the form of tithes and love offerings are concrete ways of supporting our community’s ministries and missions. Our community not only helps those outside the community, but also helps those members who need financial assistance.

The Gawad Kalinga and the Medical Mission are two of our major missions to break the yoke of poverty. We also serve through nursing home visitations and soup kitchens. Our pastoral and evangelization programs are held year round and have produced rich harvests by the grace of God. These are some of the ways we live up to our community foundation verse: ***“But as for the seed that fell on rich soil, they are the ones who, when they have heard the WORD, embrace it with a generous and good heart and bear fruit through perseverance.”***

As members of Christ’s body- the Church, we are expected to be of one heart and one mind in seeking and doing God’s will. Our unity as a community finds its strength and endurance from the love of our faithful God who binds us together in Christ.

“Boldness in the Spirit”

Can you imagine yourself thinking and acting just as Peter and John did? With God, everything is possible. Just as Jesus used these two apostles to heal and convert a lame man, He wants to work through you to reveal His love and life to others. He has placed you in circumstances where you can witness to others who Jesus is and what He has done to save you. You have the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, empowering you to speak of God’s love with confidence. He will give you the courage and boldness you need. All you have to do is imitate Peter: with one hand, take hold of God’s grace, and with the other, reach out to others with faith and confidence.

The apostles and many of the early disciples had seen the risen Lord. They had been filled with the Holy Spirit and worked miracles in His name. How could they not join together with boldness in the Spirit and experience a deep unity? The Lord’s impact on their lives was so powerful that it completely changed their relationship with one another. They were now ready to lay down their lives for each other and for Christ.

To some, this level of commitment may seem unrealistic. If this is so, we may be trying to live the Christian life on our own. And while we do have friendship with other believers, most of us are not as closely bonded to them as these apostles were to one another. But we are part of the body of Christ, and therefore are meant to be connected.

Without that connection, we will be missing the strength and inspiration we can derive from others, and they are missing God’s grace that is channeled through us. Fellowship is not merely something we are obligated to partake in, it is something we need. God’s Word applies to us as well: ***“Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another”*** Heb 10:24-25

We can be confident that God will provide for us. God has given us great treasures in our brothers and sisters. So why not get to know them a little better? Whether it’s going out for coffee with someone we’ve met at Mass or committing to a Bible study, we should allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to share our lives with others.

If you are not experiencing the transformation coming from being “born again”, examine your life to uncover whatever remains that needs to be brought to God’s forgiveness through Confession. God wants to forgive you so you can fully enjoy His kingdom!

Faith & Works

**The Bible says we're saved by faith alone.
Works do not need to go along with that faith.**

The Catholic Church teaches us we are saved by both faith and works, or rather, an active faith in Jesus Christ of which works are a necessary part. The belief of salvation by "faith alone" is unbiblical. "Faith alone" appears only once in Scripture, James 2:24-26, "*You see man is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead.*" So the bible clearly says we are not saved by faith alone. Our faith must be active and fruitful, and therefore, must include works. Faith must produce good in ourselves and in our neighbors or it is dead. God's grace gives us both our faith and the ability to work our Christian vocation.

Some Protestants mistake Paul's declaration that we are not saved by "**works of the law**" in Romans 3:28-31 as meaning good works are not a necessary part of our faith. But works of the law were required rituals of Jewish laws; external observances that were often done without sincere love for God. They became just another thing one had to do to meet the requirement. (We can still fall into this trap by "ritualistically" attending Mass without sincere attempt to draw closer to God.) Good works-such as prayer, penance, acts of charity, etc.- must be part of our faith. As Galatians 5:6 says, "*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love.*"

Those who live sinful lives without any attempt to reform them will receive condemnation. Those who persevere in their faith and good works will merit heaven. What we do during this life has eternal consequences.

Ultimately, we are saved by God's grace. Our good works do not "earn" us a place in heaven. Heaven is God's free gift to us if we die in a state of grace, a state of friendship with God. Ephesians 2:8-10 notes, "***For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.***"

God's gift of grace to us is a result of our faith, and to maintain our active faith we must have good works. Our faith must be a lived faith that is not only professed, but preached by our actions.

Source: Basic Apologetics.

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 rguiaio@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLE's: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jrcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

TEACHINGS:

Apr 20 • After worship

- Intro to Intercession/Spiritual Warfare –
- Singles Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Apr 27 • After worship

- Intercessory Formation Teaching LSS 24
- Service Formation Teaching LSS25
- New Creation Realities - Solo Parents

May 5 • 1-6pm • St. Mary's

- Advanced Intercession and Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS24 & 25
- Encounter with Jesus – LSS27

May 11 • After Worship

- Growth in Prayer (Prayer Module) – Solo Parents

May 18 • After Worship

- Growth in Prayer – Singles
- Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth

May 19 1-6pm • St. Mary's

- Shepherd's Training Part 2 – LSS23 & 24
- Christian Maturity Program II Part 1 – LSS26
- Growth in Prayer/New Creation Realities – LSS28

May 25 • After Worship

- Intercessory Formation
- Service Formation
- Introduction to Intercession – Solo Parents

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending April 13, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for the Poor \$3,764.00

"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above."

Counselors (continued from Page 1...)

discussions and forging and renewing of friendships. By having the meal ready for his disciples even before they ask for it, Jesus also models the role of the leader as a servant just as He did when He washed their feet the night before He died.

The focus of the Gospel shifts from fish to sheep in the last subsection when Jesus asks Peter three times if Peter loves Him and to each of Peter's reply, Jesus commands him: "**Feed my lambs... tend my sheep... feed my sheep.**" It is often said that Jesus' three-fold question parallels Peter's three denials of Jesus after the Roman soldiers arrested Jesus. By reaffirming his love for the Lord, Peter vindicates himself and restores his relationship with Jesus. The Lord in turn reconfirms Peter's commission as an apostle and his primacy among His disciples.

But Jesus also wants to take Peter to another level: from a missionary or a fisherman to a pastor or a shepherd. His questioning seems to sift Peter to the core, testing whether his love for Jesus can give him the courage and fortitude to shepherd His flock.

As with Peter so it is with us: our capacity to shepherd flows from our love for the Lord and our first flock from the Lord after our own families are our brothers and sisters in the community. This sentiment is likewise expressed in one of the pastoral care principles in the BLD Policies (in progress): care for God's people is the way Christ urges us to express our response of love to Him and that pastoral care is a collective responsibility – one that is best lived out and fulfilled in Community.

In the course of our Community life, some of the suggested ways to administer pastoral care, corresponding to Christ invocations to Peter are:

1. "**Feed My Lambs**" – Correction, Witnessing, Counseling and Teaching
2. "**Tend My Sheep**" – Discernment, Intercession, Spiritual Warfare and Discipline
3. "**Feed My Sheep**" - Discipline, Stewardship, Ministry and Mission

On the individual, personal level, caring for one another is encouraged in the Community and is put up as one of our Community norms. As behavioral patterns that characterize the spirituality we advocate as a Community, the norms on Caring are:

- Attend first to one another.
- Greet each other with a smile.
- Make others feel welcome at BLD Community functions.
- Mutually support and encourage one another to live the Community norms.
- Give and receive forgiveness freely.
- When able, help those in need. When in need, humbly seek help; and when help is given, humbly receive.

(Cont'd) 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Apr 21-22, • **Youth LSS#12** - St. Mary's, Rahway
Saturday, Apr 21 (7:30 am-8:00 pm)
Sunday, Apr 22 (7:30 am-3:00 pm)

Apr 20-22 • **Aspirant's Retreat – LSS 23**
Ramada Inn

Apr 24 • **Soup Kitchen** Blessed Sacrament
Newark - ME 14
Contact: Eme & Imma Anyanwu
(973)763-6889

May 4-6 • **ME#1, Charlotte, NC**
Contact: Henry/Aida Koryan
(973-709-1387)

May 12 • **Youth Ministry Nursing Home Visit**
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic

May 25-27 • **Marriage Encounter #29**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com
for forms & details

May 26 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament**
Newark - ME 12 & 17
Contact: Oliver/Flory Santos (201)653-9268

June 8-10 • **Singles Encounter#18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center,
Garrison, NY
Contact: Glenn Canlas
(invazian21@yahoo.com)

June 15-17 • **ME Albany, NY**
Contact persons:
- Nick/Island Raagas (909-346-1878)

June 29-30, July 1 • **SPE#9**
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood, NJ
Contact: Nestor/Letty de Guzman
(973-748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com)

July 6-8 • **YE#14**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contact persons:
- Mario/Cecil Salonga
(mcsalonga@optonline.net)
- Alan/Tess Cam
(atetscam23@hotmail.com)
- Faith Ikalina (f4yech4n@gmail.com)

August 11 • **BLD Newark Golf Outing**
Venue - To Be Determined
Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia
(cclaricia@yahoo.com)

As disciples of Christ, caring for one another is a constant act of grace, renewing and renewable, arising from the goodness within all of us and made fruitful by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And as tending and feeding imply, the aim of caring is growth – the growth of Christ within each and everyone of us.



Aspirants Retreat

17 committed disciples from the BLD-Newark community has once again yielded to God's invitation and attended the Aspirants Retreat through the sponsorship of the BLD-Newark Teaching Ministry. The retreat was held at the Ramada Hotel in North Plainfield, NJ from April 20th through 22nd.

Fr. Paul Lehman, BLD Spiritual Director, welcomed, gave the introduction, said Mass, and anointed all the aspirants on Friday evening. Msgr. Paul Schetlick took over on Saturday and Sunday as the retreat Spiritual Director. Almost everybody was in unison in expressing that they felt the presence of the Holy Spirit throughout the entire weekend as evident through the very powerful but simple, practical, and applicable teachings given by Msgr. Schetlick, then followed by the inspiring stories shared by the BLD covenanted disciples based on the struggles, frustrations and victories they experienced and continued to overcome as they try to stay focused in serving the Lord wholeheartedly through our brothers and sisters.

The majority of the time was spent by the aspirants communing, reflecting and listening to God's words and instructions on how He wanted them to continue their journey towards serving Him.

The weekend went on smoothly and by the testimonies given by the aspirants during the plenary session that Sunday, it was very clear that all of them have in one way or another heard and felt the Lord in their hearts asking and reassuring them again and again: "Do You love me?" "Be not afraid.", "Harden not your heart.", "Come follow Me".

Lastly, here are God's Words delivered to everybody through the prophecies proclaimed during the Saturday and Sunday morning worships: "I have called you by name you are mine come follow Me.", "Take me in your hearts with complete trust and confidence, for I am your Lord and Master. Your faith in me will unburden your burdens.", "I have released you from your burdens, you are now free to serve me."

COUNSELS

Witnessing as Christ to Others

WORD: Acts 13:14, 43-52; Ps 100:1-3, 5; Rev 7:9,14b-17; Jn 10:27-30

ORDER: "Be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth." (Acts 13b:47)

THEME: We endure our own passion and death to attain resurrection when we submit to the Father's will.

REFLECTION:

The Gospel reading gives us a promise that no sheep of Christ will perish, no sheep will be lost through His care, for He knows each one by name. We paint different pictures of what a good shepherd is. Some see Jesus carrying a lamb upon His shoulders, others with His sheep following him closely, with a lamb cuddled in His arm. And another one is that of the Good Shepherd standing by, armed with a staff, a sling and stone, ready to charge into his flock to rescue any sheep in danger.

Brothers and sisters, what do these images tell us about God's care for us? Shepherding was one of the oldest calling in Israel. The Israelites traveled from place to place and it is not an easy task to look after the sheep that are exposed in the open country. It requires a great deal of attention, skill and courage. A shepherd literally puts his life on the line defending his sheep, to ward off any attackers. The sheep and the shepherd's life is intimately bound together, that even when mixed with other flock, the sheep could recognize the voice of their own shepherd and would come immediately when called by name.

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"I have made you a light to the Gentiles that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth."

(Acts: 13:47)

The Bread of Life

According to John 6 and Youth Ministry Members

“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 6:35) Our Savior, Jesus Christ has told us that He is the Bread of Life. We should realize that we do not need anything else in our lives, for He is there. He can and will teach us everything we need to know, just by being with Him, and following Him. For He will open our eyes and ears, and show us the path that we should take. We should always trust Him. *“Whoever believes in me will never thirst.”* All of us should follow the ways of the Lord. During our times of need, we should never think that God isn't there. Never question the Lord. For He will not do anything that is meant to hurt us. He knows us and wants the best for His children. Believe in Him, trust Him, and have faith in Him. If we call out to Jesus, He will answer us. We should always have faith in our Lord.

“Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.” (Jn 6:27a) This verse may not look very long but it tells us a very powerful message. This scripture is saying that we shouldn't live a life that's empty and without God, because a life like that will just end when we die. If we live a life with God in it, we will live forever. There is such a thing as eternal life but only God can give it to us.

We usually search the internet or books for answers, but from what it looks like, these sources can deceive us. Only one book can leave us with the true feeling of fulfillment in knowledge and spirit, and that is the Bible. The Word of God and the Holy Eucharist, which we believe is the true Flesh and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ with prayer can bring us into an intimate relationship with our Lord. Concentrate not on the worldly things, but what we can do to become closer to reaching true happiness. Achieve this by following the Word of God and letting Him guide us in the right direction. We, as human beings, cannot live on bread alone, because it lacks the proper nutrients and proteins we need to grow and be healthy. We work to make money in order to provide food, shelter and clothing these things are all necessities, yet we must know and realize the fact that we should be working towards our one true necessity which is to meet our Lord God face to face one day in paradise. That work is achieved through sacrifice, service to his people, and in prayer.

SINNING IN PRIDE

“Tend the flock of God in your midst, (overseeing) not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock.” (1 Pt 5:2-3)

“So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” (1 Pt 5:6)

This is a two-way exhortation - which should be perceived as a strong message to everyone, who responded to God's call and for all to deal with one another in the community with humility and obedience.

Prior to belonging to a community, the degree of humility was negligible to most people. One can come from the school of thought that to succeed in life, one must be worthy. Pride can become as big as the outdoor thus weakening one's faith and mainly focusing on one's self.

· As one gets imbedded in the BLD community through the years, pride has been equated as a manifestation of both insecurities and weaknesses. By the grace of God, the door of one's heart opens and like a clay, it was molded by the Potter, our God Almighty. Thus, decreasing oneself by putting the Lord at the center stage of our lives.

· It is in witnessing the good deeds and hearts of the members in the community that one can instill the meaning of true humility to others. Their faithfulness and service to the Lord can be felt and seen. Their obedience, humility and pureness in heart lend spirit to the community.

· However, if someone puts too much pride in his service and seeks merit, one can easily lose its focus and fail to acknowledge the fruits and good labor of their fellow servant. And similarly, because of this, pride tends to disassociate oneself from their ministry and slowly distance themselves from the community.

“Likewise, you younger members, be subject to the presbyters. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but bestows favor on the humble.’” (1 Pt 5:5)

As a community of believers, we are bound together by strong faith and love of our Almighty God and Jesus Christ. All members in the community, should work together as one heart and mind in pursuing God's work. Both young and old should lead by examples and welcome fraternal corrections with love.

Sin in pride no more by loving God above all.

Mark 10 Ministry

The Mark 10 Ministry is about innocent smiles and carefree laughter, borne out of knowing that there is a God that loves them and parents that care about them. When children laugh, they forget about holding grudges, or words uttered in anger, they let go of painful moments at home or school.

We at Mark 10 recite the Rosary every Friday and we have worship every Friday night just like the adults. We have prayer leaders, readers of the Word, and short stories about our favorite Saints. We memorize Bible verses and we earn Mark 10 money. We redeem that Mark 10 money every quarter for religious books, video, toys and others. We have teachings every 3rd Friday after worship. We have God-centered activities every 2nd Friday.

Our mission, with the help of their parents, is to:

- 1) Affirm and uplift the children and help them know that they are God's gift to their family and the community.
- 2) Help the children develop a personal relationship with our Lord.
- 3) Help them utilize their talent in service to others and raise them as prayer warriors for family, community and Church in response to God's call.
- 4) Assist the children to know, understand, value and live our Roman Catholic faith.
- 5) Help the children lead a Christian life and be witnesses to their family, school, parish, and community.

The Mark 10 together with the John 6 ministry also sponsors one of the Healing Masses of the community. Whereby the children serves as Praise, Readers, Altar Servers, Intercessors, Ushers.

There is also the Annual Summer Picnic/Field Trip an outdoor activity, where the children are given the opportunity to be with their BLD friends, to spend quality time with their parents and at the same time give the children the chance to see the beauty of God's creation in nature.

There is also the Mark 10 Parade of Saints in November, this in lieu of the secular Halloween celebration, the program teaches the children that the Feast of Saints and All Souls Day is a celebration of the works of Saints. The children get to dress like their favorite Saint. They have to study and learn about their lives, teaching them the ways of Christian living and at the same time providing them good role models to look up to.

During December, they give a Christmas presentation for the BLD community as well as in other Mission fields, like the nursing homes, as their service to our Lord to bring happiness to those who are lonely.

"Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Mk 10:14)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the
Week Ending April 20, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$3,215 .00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

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

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

Mission: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug 11 Sat.
Riverview CC Easton, PA, Shotgun start @ 1:30 pm
Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia - (cclaricia@yahoo.com)
Ed/Grace Badiola - (badio1925@comcast.net)

TEACHING MINISTRY

Apr 27: After worship

Intercessory Formation Teaching - LSS 24

Service Formation Teaching - LSS25

New Creation Realities - Solo Parents

May 5: 1-6pm St. Mary's

**Advanced Intercession and Orientation to
Spiritual Warfare – LSS24 & 25**

Encounter with Jesus – LSS27

May 11: After Worship

Growth in Prayer – Solo Parents

May 18: After Worship

Growth in Prayer – Singles

Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth

May 19: 1-6pm St. Mary's

Shepherd's Training Part 2 – LSS23 & 24

Christian Maturity Program II Part 1 – LSS26

Growth in Prayer/New Creation Realities – LSS28

May 25: After Worship

Intercessory Formation

Service Formation

Introduction to Intercession – Solo Parents

June 2: 1-6pm St. Mary's

Healing & Deliverance - LSS24 & 25

Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS27

June 8: After Worship

Growth in Prayer (Praise/Worship)-Solo Parents

June 15: After Worship

Growth in Prayer (Praise/Worship) -Singles

Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Counsels from page 1

We are called to witness as Christ to others. But first we need to be able to hear our Shepherd's voice day by day, and obey Him through his Word. As discerned by our DCS, we are directed to know our Shepherd's voice through faithful readings of the Scriptures, participating in our Living Word Group, attending teachings and faithfully coming to our Friday worships.

Our challenge today is to recognize and follow the voice of Jesus. Do we come to Friday worships to hear the Shepherd's voice or do we come to make our voices be heard? In our busy daily lives, we hear different competing noises trying to get our attention. When faced with conflicting obligations, we do not know where to turn. Instead of complaining and worrying, we should take this opportunity to listen to the Shepherd's voice.

We should ask ourselves, are we spiritually listening? Do we take time to listen to the voice of Jesus in our prayer? Do we attend Sunday Mass faithfully and listen to the homily as God speaks to us. Do we listen to other people as Jesus, instrument of His love and concern for us and others? In Lord Jesus, we see unceasing love and concern for our well being. He is ever ready to give us help, strength, guidance, protection and refuge in good and in bad times. We should put our trust and need in Him at all times, so we shall never perish. *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand."* (Jn 10:28)

How do we die to ourselves in order to witness for Christ? Does resentment and jealousy stop us in our tracks in doing God's work? When affirmation and recognition does not come after a rewarding work, we should not feel disappointed. Likewise, if our plans do not go right, do we shy from taking on another responsibility? When we undergo rejection, do we face the truth, refuse to listen or accept it with humility. Let us be a true witness of Christ to others. Rejoice and continue to do God's work no matter who is in the spotlight. We have to be true to ourselves, no matter how we feel. When God's Spirit points out what change is needed in our lives, we must listen to Him and obey Him like a sheep to his shepherd.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Know the Shepherd's voice through faithful readings of the Scriptures.
2. Be good witness of the Lord to every one.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Apr 28:** **Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament,NWK ME14-Contact Eme & Imma Anyanwu (973)763-6889
- May 4-6:** **ME Charlotte, NC** Contact Henry/Aida Koryan (973)709-1387
- May 12:** Youth Ministry Nursing Home Visit Hamilton Plaza, Passaic NJ
- May 25-27:** **Marriage Encounter #29**, St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA.Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
- May 26:** **Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament,NWK ME 12 & 17 Contact Oliver/Flory Santos (201)653-9268
- Jun 8-10:** **Singles Encounter #18** Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY Contact:GlennCanlas (invazian21@yahoo.com)
- Jun 15-17:** **ME Albany, NY** Contact Nick/Island Raagas (909)346-1878
- Jun 29-30,** **SPE#9** La Casa del Prade,
- Jul 1** Maplewood NJ Contact persons: Nestor/Letty de Guzman (973-748-4066) or NesLet4139@yahoo.com)
- Jun 23:** **Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament, NWK ME15 & 21-Contact Enci/Baby Alberto (973)584-0370

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER BEFORE WORK

Father, may everything we do begin with your inspiration

and continue with your saving help.

Let our work always find its origin in you and through you reach completion.

Lord, pour out on us the spirit of understanding, truth and peace.

Help us to strive with all our hearts to know what is pleasing to you

and when we know your will make us determined to do it.

God, our Father, work is your gift to us, a call to reach new heights

by using our talents for the good of all.

Guide us as we work and teach us to live in the spirit that has made us

your sons and daughters, in the love that has made us brothers and sisters.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. AMEN.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 17

Bulletin Edition

May 04, 2007

Christ Still Calls “Fishers of Men”



VATICAN CITY, APRIL 29, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Christ continues to seek “fishers of men” to work with him to announce the Good News, Benedict XVI said on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

The Holy Father said this today before reciting the Regina Caeli with those gathered in St. Peter’s Square, and after ordaining 22 deacons to the priesthood in St. Peter’s Basilica.

The Pope asked those present “to remember in your prayers those whom the Lord continues to call by name — as he did one day with the apostles on the shores of the Sea of Galilee — that they may become ‘fishers of men.’”

The Pontiff also asked the faithful to “pray for the gift of perseverance for all priests,” for candidates to the priesthood, their instructors, and for families so “that they continue to allow the ‘seed’ of the call to the ministerial priesthood to mature and blossom.”

The theme for this year’s World Day of Prayer for Vocations is “Vocation at the Service of the Church as Communion.”

Benedict XVI said that even though “all the baptized are called to contribute to the work of salvation ... there are, however, some vocations that are especially dedicated to the service of communion.”

The Pontiff said that the “one who is primarily responsible for Catholic communion is the Pope,” who is aided by the bishops and priests.

“But consecrated persons and all the faithful are also at the service of communion,” the Holy Father added.

“The Eucharist,” said Benedict XVI, “is at the heart of the Church as communion: From this greatest sacrament the various vocations draw the spiritual strength to continually build up the one ecclesial body in charity.

Make the Covenant News a part of your covenant life.

COUNSELS

“Persevere with God’s Love”

Word: Acts 14:21-27; Ps 145:8-9, 10-11, 12-13; Rev 21:1-5a; Jn 13:31-33a, 34-35

Theme: We love with Christ’s unconditional love when we persevere in Faith despite hardships

Order: “As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.” (Jn 13:34)

Reflection:

“It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:22)

Life is full of struggles, be it on our own or within a community. In many cases, it will be something personal. Sometimes, it begins as a misunderstanding that turns into a struggle without a conclusion; we go in circles until it gets bigger, becoming like a whirlpool that everybody gets pulled into. St. Paul warns us to be on the lookout for something else, when these tribulations (physical things) are going on; misunderstandings and miscommunication can easily be distracting and we forget where the real enemy is, and where we are most susceptible for attack: spiritually.

While we are distracted with a problem, the real enemy would sneak up on us, get a foothold and throw us to the ground spiritually. What we wrestle against are not the things in the physical world but rather spiritual forces that constantly create false ideas and misconceptions, by twisting and distorting man’s understanding, always playing greed and self-interest against us, thus creating new problems. These spiritual forces are the ones to watch out for. When we encounter a misunderstanding, anger and frustration creates an opening for a spiritual attack. Because this struggle is against hidden spiritual forces, we have to use our spiritual *(continue on page 4)*

God’s Promise for the Week

“God Himself will always be with them as their God.” (Rev 21:3b)

The Greatest Gift of All Gate of Salvation

“I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world.” (Jn 12:47b)

This verse from Wednesday’s gospel is arguably one of the most powerful verses in the Bible. As it should be as this sums up exactly what our Lord Jesus is all about. It defines the sole purpose of why He came into this world, the reason why He became man and died for us.

On a personal level, as I reflect on this verse, it gives me a profound sense of comfort as well as gratitude. Our Lord Jesus didn’t need to do this. But because of His great love for me, He humbled Himself and died on the cross so that I may be saved and have eternal life. He did this for me, someone who is weak, self-centered, unfaithful, proud, and worldly, in other words someone who is a sinner.

It also fills me with a great sense of humility because I know that Salvation was given to me not because I did anything to earn it. And I know that I definitely didn’t do anything to deserve it either.

It is essentially a gift, but its not just any gift, it is a GIFT borne out of His great love.

I know that most, if not all of us feel the same way. And as we continue to grow spiritually and become closer to our Lord, we begin to have a true appreciation of this Gift and consequently have an overwhelming sense of joy & gratitude. This appreciation, gratitude and joy should manifest itself in everything that we do as a celebration of our Lord’s love.

It is no coincidence that the Holy Mass is called the Celebration of the Eucharist, even though it is a commemoration of our Lord’s passion & death (Lk 22:19-20). That is because it was through this act of love that we received the GIFT.

But our Lord also calls us to celebrate His love in the ordinary things that we do, in how we live our daily lives and in how we love one another. How we relate to our husbands or our wives, how we raise our children or even how we go about doing our jobs, if done with love, are all ways we can celebrate His love. When we attend Friday worship or when we work wholeheartedly for our assigned ministries, these are all ways we can show our deep appreciation for the GIFT.

It is only when we come to a full realization of the true price the Giver paid for that GIFT can we start to do things, no matter how ordinary, as a celebration of His love.

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

“I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.” (Jn 10:9)



Jesus is the Good Shepherd who was sent by the Father from heaven to redeem man. In order to be saved, man must believe and be baptized. He needs to follow the precepts of the Lord. He needs to enliven his faith with good works. Although the Jewish people were the chosen ones and

first to be converted, Christianity spread outside of Palestine through the disciples during the period of persecution and the dispersion. Today, there are Christians all over the world. Jesus is the Good Shepherd of all nations. He was sent to us by Almighty Father to redeem the world from sin and open the gates of heaven for everyone. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who laid down his life to save His sheep. And Jesus did this in humble obedience to His Father’s will and utmost love for each one of us. What a comforting thought it is, ‘Jesus died to save me.’ How very precious we are! We have all been redeemed at a great price as St. Paul says. How should we return this love? How do we show our gratitude?

Like a sheep who knows the voice of its shepherd, we follow Jesus’ word and teachings. Grace allows man to be close to God. With a pure heart and humility, the man who lives the commandments and who lives the word of God is like a sheep in green pastures. He grows into spiritual maturity as he cooperates with grace. Man reaches the heights of spiritual perfection as he becomes more like Christ.

But to follow Jesus may not always be easy. Many will follow the easier way but, as disciples, we go through the narrow gate. God gave us the Ten Commandments to obey; love God above all things and love thy neighbor as you love yourself. We must obey these commandments throughout our lives. After the Ascension, God left to the nascent church, St. Peter. After St. Peter and through the centuries, we have our popes who guide the church. We have our bishops, the shepherds of our diocese, always looking out for the salvation of men. We have the sacrament of Reconciliation or Penance for the absolution of our sins and to receive God’s grace. Jesus Christ is with us during each celebration of the Holy Eucharist. He remains waiting for us in the Tabernacle. We are never without God. What a loving Shepherd we have!



Father Paul Speaks

Allow me to bring up a delicate subject that may seem to affect only our teens and singles. However it actually affects our total BLD stance as a counter-culture Catholic charismatic community. Being counter-culture does not mean that we isolate ourselves from the practicalities of life in the "world". It would deny the challenge of the community to be evangelistic. Remember how we commission the graduates of the LSS weekends to be a leaven, and spread the good news whether "convenient or inconvenient". The point I want to make in this column is the position I think we should take regarding civil marriages by Catholic couples in or out of community, and in general, preparation for Sacramental marriages. As you know a civil marriage between Catholic couples is not recognized as valid in the Catholic Church. People get confused on this, and think a couple can get civilly married now (for whatever reason) and get Sacramentally married sometime in the future. The reality is that the couples are no more married after the civil marriage than they were before the civil marriage. If they are living together as man and wife after a civil marriage they are not to receive Holy Communion.

Catholics in civil marriages are co-habiting. Co-habiting couples have an 80% failure rate when they do decide to marry in the Church. What is the loving and pastoral approach that we, and especially parents, should take when a single girl gets pregnant? Often when this happens, the parents panic and in a desire to save face, rush the young couple into a civil marriage. NOTHING COULD BE MORE DISASTROUS. Not only are they putting the couple into an occasion of sin, but they are taking the chance of ruining three lives. We have to be loving, supportive and non-condemnatory, but at the same time prayerfully discerning. Do not make a second mistake as a solution to a previous mistake. Most of the singles have heard me say time and time again: "I do not like long engagements." I find it difficult to believe that a normal couple in love and "going steady" for long period of time, can stay chaste. I am talking about good young people who WANT to be chaste. It is a matter of human nature, not good intentions. Let's all, young and not so young, take a stance of discouraging romantic situations and steady dating between couples when marriage is realistically many years ahead. The world does not believe this. "Try it out", as they say. I believe and have seen many good couples, struggling to be chaste during their single days, who are now enjoying the joys of happy married life. Are you with me on this?

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Week Ending Apr. 27, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, **\$3,986**
Mission & Fasting for Poor

Thank you for your continued generosity.

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@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every *third Saturday* of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com), LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every *second Saturday* of the month. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@oponline.net)

ISAIAH 58

BLD Newark Golf Outing, Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA - Aug. 11 @ 1:30pm, Contact persons: Carlito/Arlene Claricia cclaricia@yahoo.com, Ed/Grace Badiola badio1925@comcast.com

PASTORAL

Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar, Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ - Jun 30-Jul 1, 7:30am-7:00pm

Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1 Stay in is highly recommended! Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

TEACHINGS

May 05	St. Mary's 1-6pm Advanced Intercession and Orientation to Spiritual Warfare Encounter with Jesus	LSS 24 & 25 LSS 27
May 11	After worship Growth in Prayer (Prayer Module)	Solo Parents
May 18	After worship Growth in Prayer Teaching	Singles Mark 10, John 6, Youth
May 19	St. Mary's 1-6pm Shepherd's Training Part 2 Christian Maturity Program II Part1 Growth in Prayer & New Creation Realities	LSS 23 & 24 LSS 26 LSS 28
May 25	After worship Introduction to Intercession Intercessory Formation Teaching Service Formation Teaching	Solo Parents LSS 24 LSS 25
Jun 02	St. Mary's 1-6pm Healing & Deliverance Gifts & Fruits of the Holy Spirit	LSS 24 & 25 LSS 27
Jun 08	After worship Growth in Prayer (Praise & Worship)	Solo Parents
Jun 15	After worship Growth in Prayer (Praise & Worship) Teaching	Singles Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

armor to protect us: truth, righteousness, gospel, salvation, faith and prayer. According to Pope Paul II, "One who chooses to follow Christ, avoids being wrapped up in himself and does not evaluate things according to self interest. He looks on life in terms of gift and gratuitousness, not in terms of conquest and possession. Life in its fullness is only lived in self-giving, and that is the fruit of the grace of Christ: an existence that is free and in communion with God and neighbor."

The only conversions to our faith that count in God's kingdom are those confirmed by a life of discipleship. Jesus sowed the Word widely, but not all His hearers pursued discipleship. What was true of the crowds that followed Jesus then is also true of the crowds who claim to be disciples today. Many in our community who rediscovered Jesus, including past members, raised their hands in evangelic worship or even attended church regularly, but later ebbed in faith. God is less interested in how fast we run at the start of the race than in whether we truly finish it. Some will fall no matter how plainly we preach the truth, but we definitely set people for failure when we fail to instruct new believers that suffering comes with following Christ (Acts 14:22; 1Thess 3:3-4)

"If anyone wishes to come after me", he said, "he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Lk 9:23). "But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved" (Mt 24:13)

The Apostles proclaimed that Jesus must hold first place in our lives. Some embrace the Gospel, but gradually other interests – wealth, security, family, trials and the like – take it out of first place. To be a true disciple, Jesus' kingdom demands us to believe in the reality of the Gospel, even to stake our lives on it.

"And these are the ones sown on rocky ground who, when they hear the word, receive it at once with joy. But they have no root; they last only for a time. Then when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. (Mk 4:16-17)

We certainly have some struggles in our community. We endure hardships as a test. God uses stress to build character. Perseverance under hardship demonstrates the power of the Spirit within us.

As Jesus makes clear, it isn't just enduring hardships that we must do. Many will endure hardship but will fall away because of difficulty. We must endure until the end. We may get knocked down from time to time, but we get up and go at it again. That's what the devil will do to us. If we beat him down, he just backs up and looks for another opportunity. We must be ready at all times to do the same. We must endeavor to persevere against back and forth struggle in our community.

"I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (Jn 13: 34-35).

Jesus walks ahead of His followers and asks each one to do as He Himself has done. In Mt 20:28, He reminds us that He did not come to be served, but to serve.

(continue) 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- May 04-06 ME #1, Charlotte, NC**
Contacts: Henry & Aida Koryan (973) 709-1387
- May 12 Youth Ministry Nursing Home Visit**
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic
Amazing Grace Ministry Nursing Home Visit
Contacts: Eme/Imma Anyanwu (973) 342-9933
- May 25-27 Marriage Encounter #29**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms & details
- May 26 Soup Kitchen @ Blessed Sacrament, Newark ME 12 & 17**
Contacts: Oliver/Flory Santos (201) 653-9268
- Jun 08-10 Singles Encounter #18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact: Glenn Canlas invazian21@yahoo.com
- Jun 15-17 ME Albany, NY**
Contacts: Nick & Island Raagas (909) 346-1878
- Jun 25 Bo Sanchez Talk @ St. Mary's**
Monday, 7pm - Free Admission
Contacts: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055
- Jun 29- Jul 01 Solo Parents Encounter #9**
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood NJ
Contacts: Nestor & Letty de Guzman (973) 748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com
- Jul 06-08 Youth Encounter #14**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contacts: Faith Ikalina f4yeck4n@gmail.com
Mario/Cecil Salonga mcalonga@optonline.com
Alan/Tess Cam atetscam23@hotmail.com

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR MEETINGS

Dear Lord, we offer this gathering to you
and ask you to bless it with your wisdom and grace.
We thank you for this opportunity to be together to grow
in your love and service of you and of each other.
We ask you to enlighten our minds to know what is true
and just and strengthen our wills to carry out faithfully
what we come to see as our duty.
May all our thoughts, words and actions be directed
to making your name and your love better known
among men for their sanctification and their happiness
here and in eternity. AMEN.

So, whoever wants to be like Him must be the servant of everyone. He accepts denial and rejection by His people; therefore He can ask us to accept denial and opposition from wherever it comes.

Direction:

- ◆ Strengthen reconciliation and fraternal correction processes in the Community. (Mt 18:15-17; 21-35)
- ◆ Encourage and strengthen each others' spirit to persevere in the faith.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 18

Bulletin Edition

May 11, 2007

ME 1 BLD Charlotte

"Let all your works give you thanks O Lord, and let your faithful ones bless you." (Psalm 145)

May 4-6, 2007 was a blessed weekend for our brethren who joined ME 1 held at St Francis Springs Prayer Center, Stoneville, Diocese of Charlotte, N.C. Our graduates are a mix of five couples and seven solo parents: Tony & Vangie Baludio*, Cora Castillo, Jim & Shirley Cheeseborough, Arnold Cortez*, Mae Cruz, Ces & Ava Gordola (Head Coordinator), Frank & Ruth Javier, Tessie Llamas, Boots Oliveira, Dee Strickland*, Gigi Villanueva, Jolly & Anna Zarate (*Coordinator).

God's love was manifested through our Pastoral team for the weekend composed of : Spiritual Director: Fr. Eustace Edomobi, presentors: Richard & Lee De la Fuente, Nestor & Becbec Laxina; DIP Shepherds and ME#1 Class Shepherd, BLD Charlotte.- Henry/Aida Koryan.

Sponsoring Couples: Bert & Lith Golamco (co-shepherds); Mike & Chato Sison were also joined by auxies from BLD Trenton and Newark .

"Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him." (John 14:21)

Archdiocese of Newark Young Adult Conference

"Not to us, LORD, not to us but to your name give glory because of your faithfulness and love" (Psalms 115:1)

BLD Singles Praise Ministry and other members joined other young adults of various organizations at the Young Adult Conference organized by the Archdiocese of Newark. This was held last Saturday May 5, at the St. Laurence Catholic Church, Laurence Harbor, NJ.

Several workshops were held on topics such as: The Social Teachings of the Catholic Church, Defending your faith; Discernment, Rekindling the light in the church today, just to name a few. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Reconciliation and Eucharistic celebration ended the activities of the day, followed by fellowship.

It was indeed a Spirit and fun filled day that most of our singles enjoyed and appreciated being one in spirit, mind and heart with other young adults in their desire to know more about their faith, practicing and defending it.

COUNSELS

SIMPLICITY IN COMMUNITY POLICIES

WORD: Acts 15:1-2,22-29; Ps 67:2-3, 5-6, 8; Rev 21:10-14, 22-23; John 14:23-29

ORDER: Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

THEME: We love with Christ's unconditional love when we allow the Holy Spirit to renew burdensome community policies.

REFLECTION: In today's First Reading we get a glimpse of our newly born Church and learn that right from the beginning there were matters of controversy and dissension that had to be addressed. There was a huge dispute among Jewish and Gentile Christians about whether it was necessary, to keep all of the Mosaic law regarding circumcision, regarding all of the dietary laws, etc., in order to be a faithful Christian. Recognizing the authority of the Jerusalem church, Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem and brought this delicate matter of theology for consultation. And here is what they said in their authoritative letter to the Church of Antioch: *"It is the decision of the Holy Spirit, and of us not to place on you any burden beyond these necessities..."* (Act 15:28-29). The Holy Spirit guided them in their discernment in that first Church Council.

Jesus did not give the apostles a manual that would tell them what to do in every circumstance. Instead He gave them, by His Words, and by His actions and example, what they have to do, and promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to help them remember His teachings and lead them into all truth.

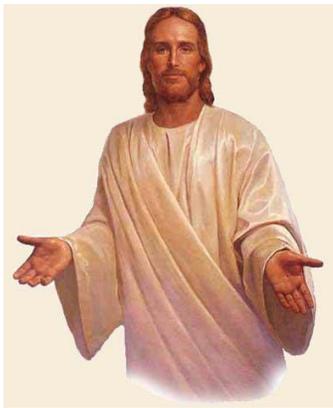
"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you." (John 14:26).

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God's Promise for the Week

"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you" (John 14:26)

GOD IS KING OF ALL THE EARTH



Not a few Christians have asked these questions : Who will be saved? Does a person need to be a baptized Roman Catholic to go to heaven? What happens to the rest of mankind who are not of the faith? What about people in the remotest parts of the world where they have not heard of Christ? What happens to

those who lived centuries before Jesus was born?

I have asked the same questions since childhood and have sought answers from Church experts. I will not profess to be an expert on the subject but I can share with you my reflections. The bible passage that states, *“Unless you are circumcised according to the Mosaic practice, you cannot be saved”* (Acts 15:1), does this imply that only those who followed the law will be saved? As I reflect on the responses of the early church leaders, Sts Peter and Paul, I realized that God is King of all the earth. God is good and wants all to be saved. God placed in all our hearts the laws of nature that if we follow makes us just and righteous persons.

We know of ancient civilizations. We even call some of them ‘pagans’ -those who believed in various forms of gods and deities. Some considered the sun, moon, and stars sources of power and worshipped them. St. Paul when he was in Greece saw an altar inscribed, *“To an Unknown God”*. Most men, from the very beginning, knew in their hearts, that a Higher Being exists. Currently, in the debate about the beginning of time, even some scientists who do not believe in creation has mentioned the origins of the universe as coming from Intelligent Design.

History is full of ordinary and extraordinary stories of man’s kindness to other men; of self sacrifices; of men’s instinct and will to protect their children and their communities and to clothe, feed, and teach the young the basics of survival. We have seen and read stories of the so-called, ‘pagans’, whereby gentleness, love, and forbearance abound. The dead were given much respect in different burial ceremonies. Many leaders were wise since they practiced benevolence in ruling their subordinates in the community.

So, as I continue my reflection and ask the question, *“Who will be saved?”*, I am certain that the good Lord in His omnipotence does what is right. I do not want to second guess Him. There are men who live just lives, regardless of the time they are born in. The Lord has given us the grace so we can do good. He will certainly reward those who listen and follow.

VINE AND BRANCHES



In Jn 15:5, Jesus speaks of Himself as being the *“...the vine and you are the branches.”* Our total dependence to the branch is necessary and absolute in bearing much fruit. Today, the common sentiment expressed by many, goes like this; *“Jesus yes, the Church no”*. For many there is a real separation between following Jesus and

belonging to the Church. The reason for such division is the Church being too big, formal and impersonal. There seems to be little warmth, love and fellowship. All we do is sit, stand or kneel and offer an occasional response. We find it too hard to associate our faith and love of Jesus with the institutional Church. By contrast we find ourselves attracted to the person of Jesus - His message of love, His ministry of healing and forgiveness, and His closeness to the Father. All these strike deep chords within our hearts. We want to belong to a Community in which we are loved and accepted. For many, the structure is a stumbling block for a growing spirituality.

Our Gospel reading offers us a beautiful and powerful image of the Church as a Community of faith and communion with Jesus. Rather than separating the Church from Jesus, the image associates individual community members with the person of Jesus. Jesus says, *“I am the vine and you are the branches”*. The image of the vine extends deep into Old Testament imagery and theology. The vine was understood to be the chosen people of God. God loves and nurtures the vine and wants it to bear much fruit. This is only possible when the Community lives in an intimate relationship with Jesus. Jesus dwells in the hearts of the disciples, providing them with the grace necessary to bring forth the works of the Spirit. Apart from Jesus there can be no lasting growth.

The image of the vine and the branches encourages us to foster fellowship within the Community of faith. The first epistle of John tells us that there are two commandments - belief in Jesus as God’s Son and the need to love one another as He loved us. The Spirit-filled Community of faith is one, which allows us to know Jesus better and to love one another as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. When we truly come to know Jesus and love one another, the works of the Spirit become evident.

“Jesus, yes, the Church no” may be a common sentiment; however, it need not be so. The Church is called to be the historical, concrete reminder of the unbounded love of God for all people and creation. All of us are called to help make the Church, more a Community where the Spirit abides and Jesus is known and loved.

A HEART LIKE JESUS



“And they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him, who sent Me” (John 15:21).

These words remind us of one powerful verse, *“For God so loved the world, that He sent His only Son, that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). This proves that God, the Father is the origin of everything, and that Jesus was completely attuned to the Father’s will and plan, for our salvation. He was the perfect solution to our dilemma, reconciling us with the Father, making the Israelites, the chosen people. Jesus never failed to communicate with the Father. His heart, mind, and spirit were always focused on His mission, through prayer.

As part of the Father’s plan, Jesus formed the church, composed mostly of fishermen, whose lives were completely changed shortly after meeting Jesus. He became their MASTER, TEACHER and LORD. Only a heart like Jesus’ knew what was coming to them, while the Father was molding each of them to be fruitful, at the appointed time. They were challenged with severe trials, as Peter denied Jesus, and Judas betrayed Jesus. But again, this was part of the Father’s plan. He was preparing Jesus’ disciples for His death that similarly will lead them to their end (Romans 8:17). Jesus showed them to pray more (John 17:9).

Can anyone fathom Jesus’ and Mary’s hearts, at Calvary? Do three hours, three years, or a lifetime of thirty three years really matter? The answer to the question – only God’s will and plan matters.

God reigns in our church in glory, splendor and majesty. Notable though is that it took the church a lot of persecutions, martyrdom and trials over the centuries to flourish as the one, true Church, thanks to the Holy Spirit.

Being a good Christian is critical in our lives because the world looks up to us, as “different”, like Jesus. As Catholics, more is expected of us. It is like examining our conscience, in a more serious angle, because we have a covenant, a vow, a mission to keep, with our loving God, our creator, savior and comforter. Knowing Jesus is knowing the Father. As Jesus said, He and the Father are one that if we *“Remain in me and I will remain in you”* (John 15:4).

As Jesus’ disciples, we are sent forth to proclaim the good news and like the apostles, we will meet challenges, conflicts, and even persecutions, to the point of death. If we remain steadfast in our faith, honest and ever trustful in God, persevering and not grow weary, we will endure and overcome all, because of God’s abiding love, just like what happened to all the saints, who constantly sought the Father’s will in all their undertakings., facing each day with prayer, thanksgiving and rejoicing. Let us then put on God’s armor (Ephesians 6:10-18) to accomplish our mission, for only a heart like Jesus will darkness turn to light, sadness into joy, and death into eternal life. Such is the Father’s will, for us all. AMEN.

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). Send to rguiiao@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every 3rd Saturday of the month. *Contact:* Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com); LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. *Contact:* Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

ISIAH 58

BLD Newark Golf Outing - August 11, 2007 (Saturday)
Riverview CC, Easton, PA Shotgun start @ 1:30 PM
Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia (cclaricia@yahoo.com)
Ed/Grace (badio1925@comcast.net)

PASTORAL

ADVANCE PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR

June 30 - July 1, 2007 7:30 am to 7:00 pm

Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ

Pre-requisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1

Stay in is highly recommended!!!!

Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

TEACHINGS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 11, 2007
(after worship) | Growth in Prayer (Prayer Module)
- Solo Parents |
| May 18, 2007
(after worship) | Growth in Prayer - Singles
Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth |
| May 19, 2007
1 - 6 pm
St. Mary’s | Shepherd’s Training Part 2-LSS23 & 24
Christian Maturity Program II
Part 1 - LSS26
Growth in Prayer / New Creation
Realities - LSS28 |
| May 25, 2007
(after worship) | Intercessory Formation
Service Formation
Intro. to Intercession - Solo Parents |
| June 2, 2007
1 - 6 pm
St. Mary’s | Healing & Deliverance - LSS24 & 25
Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- LSS27 |
| June 8, 2007
(after worship) | Growth in Prayer (Praise & Worship
Module) - Solo Parents |
| June 15, 2007
(after worship) | Growth in Prayer (Praise & Worship
Module) - Solo Parents
Teachings - Mark 10, John 6, Youth |

Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

The Spirit serves as our advocate and our comforter, our source of visions and our source of living knowledge. The Spirit is a Spirit of power and of truth given by God in the name of Christ to all who believe in Him and seek to follow Him.

Poured out on the apostles, this same Holy Spirit enlivens and guides our community. Differences of ideas is not a departure from the norms, but sometimes a sign of growth - a time to rely not on human wisdom, but the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Guidelines and policies in our ministries and apostolate, should not burden others beyond what is necessary. When we get bogged down in details and laws, customs and traditions, we tend to lose our focus on our mission and vision. When dealing with a problematic community issue, we should not assert our personal perceptions but seek God's will for our community. Let us then place all our concerns and willing obedience into those who have been anointed to lead our community and honor their authority. It is important for us to trust that the Holy Spirit will preserve our beloved community in any circumstances, as we have been in the past 15 years.

"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. Whoever does not love me does not keep my WORDS; yet the WORD you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me." (John 14: 23-24).

Jesus has promised to us that if we love Him both He and the Father will make their home with us. It is in the Word, where we can find the true examples of sacrifice, of service, and of selflessness; where we can find practical advice for daily living. It is in the Word where we can find the source of hope, courage and fortitude especially during times of darkness and oppression

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid." (John 14:27).

Jesus does not give as the world gives. His peace is a peace that lasts, a peace that triumphs, a peace that heals, and it can only come to us from God.

Let us examine our community policies and guidelines in all levels, - ministry, apostolate, districts and global. Does it bring out the peace and order that can only come from the promises of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is the working of the Holy Spirit evident in our structures of norms and practices?

DIRECTION:

1. Be guided by the Word of the Lord in all your decisions.
2. Simplify your life to focus on the Lord

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending May 4, 2007

*Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fast for Poor* \$ 2,873.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- May 12** **Youth Ministry Nursing Home Visit**
Hamilton Plaza, Passaic
- May 12** **Amazing Grace Ministry - Nursing Home Visit**
Contact: Eme/Imma Anyanwu, Cell # 973-342-9933
- May 25-27** **Marriage Encounter #29**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com for forms and details
- May 26** **Soup Kitchen @ Blessed Sacrament, Newark - ME 12 & 17** *Contacts: Oliver/Flory Santos - Tel. (201) 653-9268*
- June 8-10** **Singles Encounter #18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact: Glenn Canlas (invazian21@yahoo.com)
- June 15-17** **ME Albany, NY**
Contacts: Nick/Island Raagas (908) 688-8614
- June 23** **Soup Kitchen @ Blessed Sacrament, Newark - ME 15 & 21** *Contacts: Enci/Baby Alberto - Tel. (973) 584-0370*
- June 25** **Bo Sanchez Talk @ St. Mary's**
Monday, 7 pm - FREE Admission
Contacts: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055
- June 29-30 & July 1** **Solo Parents Encounter #9**
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood, NJ
Contacts: Nestor/Letty de Guzman (973) 748-4066 (NesLet4139@yahoo.com)
- June 29 - July 1** **Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar**
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
Refer to Ministry Announcement for details.
- July 6 - 8** **Youth Encounter #14**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contacts: Faith Ikalina (f4yech4n@gmail.com), Mario/Cecil Salonga (mcsalonga@optonline.net), Alan/Tess Cam (atetscam23@hotmail.com)
- August 11** **BLD Newark Golf Outing**
Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA - 1:30pm
Contacts: Carlito/Arlene Claricia, Ed/Grace Badiola

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER BEFORE TRAVELING

Dear Lord, once, you let the children of Israel walk through the sea with dry feet.
You also showed the Wise Men the way to your crib by the guidance of a star.
We beg you: grant us a good trip and a peaceful day.
Let us have your holy angel as escort to arrive at the end of our journey in safety.
Lord, speak to us as we prepare ourselves for the start of this trip.
Along the way, be our consolation.
In the heat of the noonday sun, be our shade.
In stormy weather, protect us.
When we are weary, be our companion.
In time of danger, be our protection.
On slippery path, be our sturdy staff.
In shipwreck, be our saving harbor.
Be our guide that we reach the end of our journey and finally return to our home with misfortune.
AMEN.



Pope: Violence and Vulgarity are “Unacceptable”

(Comments on World Communications Day)

VATICAN CITY, MAY 20, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI defines programs with content that is violent, antisocial or degrading of human sexuality as “unacceptable.”

The Pope’s statement provoked applause from the tens of thousands gathered in St. Peter’s Square today to pray the Regina Caeli on the 41st World Communications Day.

The Holy Father pointed out that theme for the media day is “Children and the Media: A Challenge for Education.”

The Pontiff said: “The educational challenges of today are often linked to the influence of the mass media, which competes with school, the Church and even the family.

“In this context an adequate formation in the right use of media is essential: Parents, teachers, and the ecclesial community are called to collaborate to educate children and young people to be selective and to develop a critical attitude, cultivating a taste for what is aesthetically and morally valid.”

“But the media too must make its contribution to this educational task,” Benedict XVI said, by “promoting the dignity of the human person, marriage and the family, and the accomplishments and aims of civilization.”

The Pope said: “Programs that inculcate violence and antisocial behavior or that vulgarize human sexuality are unacceptable, and much more so when they are directed at the young.

“Thus I renew the appeal to the leaders of the media industry and workers in social communications that they safeguard the common good, respect the truth and protect the dignity of the human person and the family.”

COUNSELS

PENTECOST SUNDAY THE BIRTHDAY OF THE CHURCH

WORD: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1, 24, 29-31, 34; Rom 8:8-17; Jn 14:15-16, 23b-26

ORDER: Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test.

THEME: We love with Christ’s unconditional love when we overcome fear and our slavery to sin through the power of the Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION:

Pentecost is the fulfillment of the promise of our Lord Jesus, after He asked the disciples to wait for this day: John 16:7-8 “*But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes he will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation...*”

Our world needs the Holy Spirit, because as St. Paul puts it: “*The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*” (2Cor 4:4). We need the Holy Spirit to remind us that our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave us the light of the gospel, redeemed us.

The reading from Acts 2 is reminding our community how the Holy Spirit transforms lives. Somehow, we were similar to those disciples of Jesus before the Pentecost: fishermen, tax collectors, people from different walks of life, all busy in their own avocation when called into one moment of encounter, and now united as one community. This was our life before our own

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

“For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

Glorifying the Father

“I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to do” (Jn 17:4)

St. John spent a lot of time giving details of the Lord’s final teachings during the Last Supper. Beginning with chapter 13 when Jesus washed the feet of His apostles and instructing them on how they should exercise their leadership by being the servant of all. At the end of the meal, Jesus addressed the Father with His priestly prayer. It was in preparation to being the final atonement and sacrifice for humankind’s offenses against their Creator. This was our Savior’s last will and testament prior to going in to the garden of Gethsemane, His final plea for the Father’s mercy and grace to those whom He will leave behind. He asked the Eternal Father not to take them out of the world but to protect them from the evil one. He prayed not only for those present but for all who would believe through their word, so that all believers may become one just as Jesus and the Father are one.

Our Lord never took credit for anything that He did – every word, action and teaching always directed His disciples and listeners to the One who sent Him. His primary goal is to make His Father known to everyone, to give Him all the glory He rightfully deserves and to be an obedient witness even to death on the cross to accomplish the mission that was given to Him. The humility and obedience of Jesus our Savior is so difficult to follow. His entire life was spent giving credit and giving “glory” to the Father from the time He stayed in the temple telling Mother Mary that He was doing his Father’s business.

In our flawed human nature, giving credit to anyone is a big stumbling block, especially when we had something to do with its success. If someone took the credit for the work we have done in our office, we make sure that everybody knows that it is our work. Even in our community, we call them “oppressions” when someone accepts credit for the accomplishment that we had a hand in attaining. Every encounter or seminar that we have served in, there is always a conflict or hurt that someone has done to someone. Sometimes we wonder why disciples could not give of themselves completely without offending or seeking retribution. Left to ourselves we cannot get away from this flaw, but in His goodness the good Lord allows us to forget ourselves, forget our conflicts and recognize that everything comes from Him. It is the time when we all together lift up our hands and sing – To God be the glory!!!

Consecrated In Truth

Chapter 17 of the Gospel of John is devoted entirely in the prayer of Jesus. The most important part of His redemptive mission is about to begin. Just as He did to start His public ministry, here, Jesus immerses Himself in prayer. In John 17:17-18 Jesus prays that they will be always in the truth. He sends them into the world to act for Him in persona Christi. Since Jesus is the truth (Jn 14:6), they must also always teach the truth, so that the Holy Catholic Church may be, as St. Paul says in 1 Timothy 3:15, “the pillar and ground of truth.”

Jesus prays for the disciples’ consecration. The word “consecration,” is used here in its normal sense of being dedicated, sanctified, or set apart. The sphere in which the disciples are to be set apart is in the truth. In Jn 3:21 the idea of “practicing” the truth was introduced: “Whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.”

Jesus compares the mission upon which he is sending the disciples to his own mission into the world, upon which he was sent by the Father. As the Father sent Jesus into the world (Jn 3:17), so Jesus is sending the disciples into the world to continue his mission after his departure. The nature of this prayer for the disciples as a consecratory prayer is now emerging: Jesus is setting them apart for the work he has called them to do. They are, in a sense, being commissioned. In what sense does Jesus refer to his own sanctification here? It is something he does on behalf of the disciples and this suggests a reference to his impending death on the cross. Jesus is “setting himself apart” to do the will of the Father.

In John 17:19 Jesus prays for the consecration of the Apostles. In Jewish tradition, consecration means a setting apart for the purpose of offering. St. Paul also supports this interpretation in Romans 12:1. As we see, all of the remaining Apostles dedicated their lives to the teaching and preaching of the Gospel, and met with martyrdom. In John 17:20 Jesus prays not only for His Holy Apostles and their successors, the Pope, bishops and holy priests of the Catholic Church, but now He prays for all the Faithful who believe in the teachings of his holy Catholic Church, given by the Apostles and their successors. As a community of the Faithful, have we lived the truth, have we come to the light to see our works as truly consecrated in Jesus, who is the Way, Truth and the Life? Are we as disciples of Jesus, in a sense, being “commissioned” too?

APOLOGETICS

**Q. Why do we confess our sins to a priest?
Why not confess them directly to God?**

A. There are several reasons. First, because that is what Jesus wants us to do. On Easter Sunday night, our Lord told the Apostles, His first priests: *“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive men’s sins, they are forgiven them; If you hold them bound, they are held bound”* (John 20:22-23). Since “hold them bound” means not to forgive them, the Apostles, and their successors, could not know what sins to forgive or not to forgive unless they were first told the sins by the penitent. Second, telling our sins to a priest teaches us humility, something we would not learn if we confessed our sins privately to God. Third, we receive graces from the sacrament of Penance. Fourth, by absolving us of our sins, the priest, who is representing Christ, gives us the assurance that our sins have been forgiven. And fifth, the priest can give us some sound advice on how to avoid sin in the future, while the person praying private receives no helpful instructions or necessary counsel.

In his 1984 statement on *Reconciliation and Penance*, Pope John Paul II urged Catholics to confess their sins often to a priest, saying that it would be “foolish ... to disregard the means of grace and salvation which the Lord has provided and...to claim to receive forgiveness while doing without the sacrament which was instituted by Christ precisely for forgiveness”.

Source: Catholic Replies by James J. Drummey

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending
May 18, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$ 3,907.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

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

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

MISSION: NJCCR Pentecost Vigil Celebration
Contact: Sal /Marie Russo (973-338-1050).

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11 Sat. Riverview CC Easton, PA Shotgun start at 1:30 pm
Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia – cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola – badio1925@comcast.net

PASTORAL: ADVANCE PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR - JUN 30-JUL 1 7:30 am to 7:00 pm
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1
Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

FROM THE DCS:

National Conference of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Meadowlands, NJ. June 22- 24: BLD Youth and Singles will be serving as praise for the Youth track on Saturday.

TEACHING MINISTRY

- MAY 25 (Fri)** Intercessory Formation
Service Formation
Intro to Intercession – Solo Parents
- JUN 2 (Sat)** Healing & Deliverance - LSS 24/25
Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS27
- JUN 8 (Fri)** GIP/Praise & Worship - Solo Parents
- JUN 15 (Fri)** GIP/Praise & Worship - Singles
Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth
- JUN 16 (Sat)** CMP II (Part 2) - LSS26
Basic Bible Study - LSS28
- JUN 22 (Fri)** Intercessory Formation
Service Formation
Basic Bible Study – Solo Parents

*Note: Friday teachings - after worship
Saturday teachings @ St. Marys fr. 1-6 pm*

Counsels *from page 1*

Encounters, the LSS, and the teachings. Many of us were lost, blinded, lacking in faith, and not fully understanding God's plan. By the power of the Holy Spirit, most of us are now living our New Life, better Christians, better spouses, and better parents. We continue to witness miracles happening before our eyes – not because of our own doings but because of the Holy Spirit.

One of the messages of the Pentecost is communication. God gave the disciples the gift of tongues so that they are able to speak the native languages of the surrounding regions. The purpose is to communicate the wonders of God in the native tongues, in understandable languages (Acts 2:11). God's intention here is clear – the disciples were given a mission to spread the Gospel to all peoples, to the ends of the earth. Therefore, the Gospel needs to be communicated to everyone, especially to those people near us, to our friends, people we work with; to everyone we come in contact with.

The mission of communicating the Gospel should start where we are. Not someday, not when we retire, but today, now. We are all commissioned after our LSS, to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt5:13). We are empowered to be the agents of peace, love, and reconciliation. God makes this possible by the power of the Holy Spirit, the same spirit that empowers Paul in 1 Cor 2:4-5 : *“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.”*

Pentecost should also remind us of our Growth talk during the LSS. We oftentimes forget our spiritual maintenance so that although we are busy in our ministry work, we find ourselves ineffective and running out of vigor. Only when we remain attached as branches to the true vine, the source and wellspring of our new life in Christ, can we bear the good fruit of the Spirit. We should examine how we maintain our New Life in the Spirit with Sacraments, Word, Witnessing, and our Prayer life. Are we faithful in our covenant pledge of daily personal, conjugal, and family prayer?

We should remember that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). The light of Christ must shine. It should never be allowed to go out! *“Do not put out the Spirit's fire.”*- 1 (Thes 5:19).

DIRECTION:

Commit to our covenant pledge of personal, conjugal and family prayer.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- JUN 8-10** **Singles Encounter #18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center,
Garrison, NY Contact: Glenn
Canlas: invazian21@yahoo.com
- JUN 15-17** **ME Albany, NY,**
Contact persons: Nick/Island
Raagas (908) 688-8614)
- JUN 23** **Soup Kitchen @ Blessed**
Sacrament, Newark
ME 15 & 21, Contact Enci/Baby
Alberto (973) 584-0370
- JUN 25** **Bo Sanchez Talk @ St. Mary's**
Monday, 7 pm – FREE
Admission
Contacts: Frank/Malou Venadas
(973) 562-0055
- JUN 30** **Mark 10 Field Trip - Land of**
Make Believe
Contact: Reuben/Cherry Vibar
908-206-8737;
benjesus@verizon.net
- JUN 29-30,**
JUL 1 **Solo Parents Encounter #9**
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood,
NJ, Contact persons: Nestor/Letty
de Guzman (973-748-4066 or
NesLet4139@yahoo.com)
- JUN 29-JUL 1** **Advance Prayer Counseling**
Seminar, Ramada Limited, South
Plainfield, NJ, (Refer to Ministry
Announcement for details)
- JUL 13 -15** **Family Encounter #14**
Malvern Retreat House, Malvern,
PA, Visit www.bldnewark.com
- AUG 11** **BLD Newark Golf Outing,**
Riverview Country Club, Easton,
PA, 1:30 pm; Contact persons:
Carlito/Arlene Claricia
(cclaricia@yahoo.com); Ed/
Grace Badiola
badio1925@comcast.com

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR CHOOSING GOD'S WILL

Dear Father, you are the creative origin of all I am and of all I am called to be.

With the talents and opportunities I have, how may I serve you best?

Please guide my mind and heart, open me to the needs of my country and of the world and help me choose wisely and practically for your honor and glory and for the good of all whose lives I touch.
AMEN.



BLD Newark ME # 29

Held at St Francis Retreat House in Easton, PA

Twelve couples and a priest received the grace of attending the spirit-filled weekend that culminated on Pentecost Sunday. The pastoral team through whom the Lord's message of love and salvation was shared were Fr Pete Literal, Spiritual Director, Boyie and Stella Huelgas and Lito and Gigi Vibar, the couple presenters. One couple remarked that they know the Lord had called them to be present for the weekend as a long-planned cruise was cancelled. Another couple was thankful after knowing that the Lord Jesus is in the midst of their marriage.

Fr Pete Literal exhorted everybody present that since it is Pentecost Sunday, he has invoked the Holy Spirit to freely flow into the hearts of the candidates. Indeed the anxieties of sponsoring class ME # 28 were all offered up to the Lord and activities went by smoothly. ME # 25 and 26 were on site to serve as auxiliaries during the weekend. Praise and Liturgical Ministries have also been on site to render their valued services to the class. Ceazar and Vicky Rasalan are the anointed shepherds of the class.

Congratulations to the following new BLD ME#29 graduates: Jun and Grace Arceo, Aide, Jr. and Wildina Enjambre, Onyemachi and Victoria Ezebuiroh, Fr. Roberto Lamirez, Jose Renato and Clarita Monje, Paul and Vivian Montalban, Enrico and Geronita Rios Pedregosa, Aurelio and Violeta Salon, John and Jocelyn Talavera, Venerando and Fe Taraya, Victoriano and Aurora Tiu, Mario and Milagros Union, Ireneo and Violeta Vito.

COUNSELS

FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

WORD: Prv.8:22-31; Ps.8:4-9; Rom.5:1-5; Jn.16:12-15

ORDER: “..Boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope...” (Rom 5:3-4)

THEME: We glorify the Holy Trinity when the Holy Spirit, sent from the Father and the Son, guides us.

REFLECTION:

On Trinity Sunday this year, once again we as Christians are called to celebrate and affirm our faith in the Mystery of the Holy Trinity. We were baptized: “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”. Each time we make the sign of the cross, we invoke the Trinity and proclaim the truth about the nature of our God—there is only one God but Three Persons. Our finite human wisdom cannot fathom the depths of this Mystery. But it is not a remote mystery that has no relevance to our daily lives. Far from it, it is a living reality as we interact with the most “intimate” persons in our lives. St. John says: “they make their dwelling in us” (Jn 14:23).

Today's Gospel says “when He comes, the Spirit of truth, He will guide you to all truth. (John 16:13). Before his Passover, Jesus revealed the “Paraclete” will be with His disciples to teach and guide them “to all truth” (Jn 14:17, 26; 16:13). It is through the gift and working of the Holy Spirit,

Continued on page 4



Visit our website at
www.bldnewark.com



Promise of the Week

“Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom 5:5)

Servant Leadership

“But many who are first will be last, and the last, first.” (Mk 10:31)

These revolutionary words contain wisdom for all generations of leaders- wisdom so radical, that the world does not see-and so many of us miss the mark.

Jesus establishes and practices Kingdom Leadership and asks His disciples to follow His example. Jesus underscores that Kingdom Leadership is not in status, but in servanthood. Leadership is not about hierarchy, but about love and service. In God’s kingdom, greatness is not by being first, but in ministering, in serving, and empowering.

During the eve of Lord’s Passion, Jesus exemplifies servant leadership in washing his disciple’s feet- a most menial task even for slaves at that time. The One who is First lovingly and humbly serves as the Last. Jesus commands His disciples: *“If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, so you must also wash one another’s feet”* (Jn 13:14).

Servant leadership rejects all we know of earthly leadership. It runs contrary to the world, which would chafe at a servant leader’s impulse to “wash feet.” Being last is a position of ridicule; of contempt; and of shame. Being the least is the last place an earthly leader will want to find himself. Yet in God’s Kingdom, the last shall be first, and the least is the greatest.

Servant leadership goes beyond human charisma and skills because Jesus Himself makes servant leaders. Servant leaders rely on the Lord for strength and guidance. Through the Holy Spirit, the servant leader’s gifts are anointed and amplified—allowing a willing and loving acceptance of being last, for the sake of Jesus Christ and the Gospel.

The servant leader recognizes that his ministry requires service that is both Christ-centered and other-centered. It is Christ-centered because the ministry draws from his love relationship with the Lord. It is other-centered because the Lord demands that the servant leader’s love for Him be expressed by caring for others. God’s spiritual gifts to the servant leader are to be used in the exercise of this ministry. It is in this that the servant leader grows in maturity and fruitfulness.

In Mark 10:42, the Lord cautioned His disciples against lording it over and making their authority felt. He said, “it shall not be so among you”. Rather, “whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be the first among you will be the slave of all.” The servant leader must serve as Jesus served. Only thus can he share in the Lord’s glory & greatness.

What will Jesus find in our community? Surely Christ will ask, “Who here serves?” rather than “Who here leads?”

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In those days Mary set out and made haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit exclaimed in a loud voice, *“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why is it that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”* (Lk 1:39-43)

The Visitation is a subtle reminder of revelation, surrender, faith and thanksgiving with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Here is Mary, the Virgin mother of Jesus, conceived by Holy Spirit who hastily sets off to meet her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of his servant. It’s not easy to fathom what the collision of joys was like at this blessed meeting.

Mary and Elizabeth were made mothers by two miracles came together as they met with joy and mysteriousness. The Visitation is also an account of transition that marks a major advance in revealing the Messiah and for the first time in the Gospel of Luke receiving the title, ‘my Lord.’

The blessedness and the holiness of baby Jesus in her womb is reflected in Mary the Mother. There is not a more beautiful title for Mary than the “Mother of my Lord” where motherhood first received in faith. Mary is most of all a believer, a woman who has given a total yes to God’s word. It is in faith that Elizabeth extols: *“Blest is she who trusted that the Lord’s word to her would be fulfilled.”* (Lk 1:45).

John the Baptist, even before the birth of the Messiah, pointed his coming and leapt for joy in the womb of his mother as the Holy Spirit revealed to him the presence of a the King to be born.

“...My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior.” (Lk 1:46-47) Mary extends her personal act of thanksgiving as she gives praise for the intervention of God, her Savior in her stupendous motherhood;

Do we recognize the indwelling presence of the Lord Jesus in our lives? Do we know the joy of a life given over to God in faith and trust? The Holy Spirit is God’s gift to us to enable us to know and experience the indwelling presence of God and the power of his kingdom. The Holy Spirit is the way in which God reigns in each of us.

Let us turn to the intercession of Mary, to see with the grace of the Holy Spirit that we too become sensitive to recognizing the Messiah, our Lord in others and in ourselves.

FR. PAUL SPEAKS

PENTECOST 2007

With the feast of Pentecost, the fifty days of the Easter season come to an end. Yet during the whole year each Sunday, the Lord's Day, is a commemoration of the Resurrection, and a weekly reminder of this most foundational belief. What is the connection between Easter and the Holy Spirit who came in a dramatic way on Pentecost?

The Holy Spirit is the gift of the risen and ascended Lord. If we can ask questions about Pentecost how about the Ascension? The Ascension is more than the disappearance of Jesus from this earth. It was the entrance of his sacred and glorified humanity into the loving embrace of the Father. The Ascension was more than a return to a place (if we can think of heaven as a place). It was the Son's return to a relationship with the father, now including his sacred humanity. In that sacred humanity Jesus now sends the Holy Spirit over the face of the earth to gather all mankind into the loving embrace that he shares with the Father.

The Baptism of the Spirit that we open up to on the LSS weekends, is the gift of the risen Lord. To live under the constant direction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit is normal Christianity. Unfortunately it is true to say that many of our Christian people are leading if not abnormal Christian lives, at least leading incomplete Christian lives. When we surrender to the Spirit we are surrendering to a Person, the third person of God. When God loves us, He sends us this Person, the very bond that connects the Father and the Son in an incomprehensible embrace of love. That is why we say so often that the grace of an LSS weekend is letting go and yielding to this personal embrace of love. These thoughts may seem very abstract and unrealistic for us who live in what is called the real world. Yet what we have been writing and talking in the recent past regarding forgiveness and the ever practical issue of sexual purity.

There are other temptations that can attack the Christian life, but these two seem to require more attention, since opportunities for failure seem to be so present. Last month, I referred to the challenging problem of civil marriage, and the preparation necessary for receiving the Sacrament of marriage. Sexual purity is not only for the non-married, but for all of us who live out our lives in the very practical world of deep relationships.

To live in the spirit of forgiveness and sexual purity requires a constant devotion the Spirit of truth who cleanses us of our self-centeredness. "Come, Holy Spirit, cleanse us and kindle in us the fire of your love."

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending May 25, 2007
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$ 3,281.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

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 rguiaio@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

MISSION: NJCCR Pentecost Vigil Celebration
Contact: Sal /Marie Russo (973-338-1050).

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11 Sat. Riverview CC Easton, PA Shotgun start at 1:30 pm
Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia – cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola – badio1925@comcast.net

PASTORAL: ADVANCE PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR - JUN 30-JUL 1 7:30 am to 7:00 pm
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1
Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

FROM THE DCS:

National Conference of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Meadowlands, NJ. June 22- 24: BLD Youth and Singles will be serving as praise for the Youth track on Saturday. Contact persons: Alan & Tess Cam, English Track for adults, Contact: Sal & Marie Russo 973-338-1050 or Angel & Aida Calilap 973-284-1853

TEACHING MINISTRY

- JUN 2 (Sat) Healing & Deliverance - LSS 24/25
Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS27**
- JUN 8 (Fri) GIP/ Praise & Worship - Solo Parents**
- JUN 15 (Fri) GIP/ Praise & Worship - Singles Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth**
- JUN 16 (Sat) CMP II (Part 2) - LSS26
Basic Bible Study - LSS28**
- JUN 22 (Fri) Intercessory Formation
Service Formation
Basic Bible Study – Solo Parents**

Note: Friday teachings - after worship

Saturday teachings @ St. Marys fr. 1-6 pm

that we come to understand that God is a Trinity of Divine Persons.

In St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. St. Paul tells us how God's love has been made known to us in the Person of the Son, Jesus Christ. God's love is made tangible, understandable and easier to follow and imitate. Lord Jesus revealed the God the Father is love! God is love because from eternity He has in His bosom a son, the Word Incarnate, the one He loves with an infinite love, that is, with the Holy Spirit. Every love is a relationship: one who loves, one who is loved, and the love that unites them., St. John affirms that "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." (In CCC par. 221). Our Triune God is really a communion of love. The purpose, for which God created us, is for us to share in the eternal exchange or communion of love.

Through the Holy Spirit, that guides us to the whole truth we are able to experience God's love in a personal and intimate way. We discover that we have a real relationship with a God whom we know and love because of all that He does for us in different capacities—as a loving parent, as a saving son, and as a unifying, enlightening, strengthening Holy Spirit. In all these, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are acting in unison revealing the glory of God and inviting us into the communion of love with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We know that we are not worthy of all these graces, but it is given to us because God's love for us knows no bounds. We honor our Triune God today in a humble and thankful attitude for drawing us into the communion of love that dwells in us and makes us their living temple. All that our Lord asks of us is to transform ourselves into the likeness of our Triune God as "we boast in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope."

DIRECTION:

Be more open to share your struggles in your Word Sharing and encourage others in your circle to pray over you.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- JUN 8-10** **Singles Encounter #18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center,
Garrison, NY Contact: Glenn
Canlas: invazian21@yahoo.com
- JUN 15-17** **ME Albany, NY,**
Contact persons: Nick/Island
Raagas (908) 688-8614
- JUN 23** **Soup Kitchen-Blessed Sacrament**
Newark : ME 15 & 21, Contact
Enci/Baby Alberto (973) 584-0370
- JUN 25** **Bo Sanchez Talk @ St. Mary's**
Monday, 7 pm – FREE Admission
Contacts: Frank/Malou Venadas
(973) 562-0055
- JUN 30** **Mark 10 Field Trip -**
Land of Make Believe
Contact: Reuben/Cherry Vibar
908-206-8737; benjesus@verizon.net
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JUL 1 **Solo Parents Encounter #9**
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de Guzman (973-748-4066 or
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Announcement for details)
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Malvern Retreat House, Malvern,
PA, Visit www.bldnewark.com
- JUL 28** **Soup Kitchen @ Blessed**
Sacrament, Newark : ME 20, Contact
Mosty/Ling Garcia (908) 964-6584 or
Mel/Remy Hernandez (908) 281-5565
- AUG 11** **BLD Newark Golf Outing,**
Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA
(Refer to Ministry Annoucement for
details)

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

God our Father, by the promise you made in the life, death and resurrection of Christ your Son, you bring together in your Spirit, from all nations, a people to be your own.

Keep the church faithful to its mission.

May it be a leaven in the world, renewing us in Christ and transforming us into your family.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.



Pope Canonizes 4 Saints

Benedict XVI canonized three priests and one woman religious, and urged the faithful to make their lives, like the saints did, "a song of praise" to the Trinity.

The persistent rain that fell this morning in Rome did not discourage the tens of thousands who filled St. Peter's Square for the canonization of Father George Preca, Father Szymon of Lipnica, Father Charles of St. Andrew and Mother Marie-Eugénie of Jesus.

Benedict XVI said in his homily that the glory of God "is reflected in the life of the saints."

The Pope urged the faithful to turn their gaze "toward the 'opened heavens' to enter with the eyes of faith into the depths of the mystery of God, one in substance and three in persons: Father and Son and Holy Spirit."

The Holy Father said that "God's wisdom is manifest in the cosmos, in variety and beauty in its elements but its masterpieces are the saints."

Citing Scripture, the Pontiff said: "Wisdom is an aura of the might of God and a pure effusion of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing that is sullied enters into her."

Benedict XVI said that in a similar way God's love is poured into the hearts of the saints -- "that is, the baptized" -- through the Holy Spirit. He said that "it is through Christ that the gift of the Spirit passes."

"Through Christ," he continued, "the Spirit of God comes to us as principle of new, 'holy' life. The Spirit puts the love of God in the heart of believers in the concrete form it had in the man Jesus of Nazareth."

"In the same perspective, of God's wisdom incarnate in Christ and communicated by the Holy Spirit, the Gospel suggested to us that God the Father continues to manifest his plan of love through the saints."

Excerpt from Zenit.org, June 3, 2007

COUNSELS

Corpus Christi

WORD: Gn 14:18-20 Ps 110:1-4

ORDER: 1 Cor 11:23-26 Lk 9:11b-17

*"Eat this bread, drink this cup...
do this in memory of me"*

REFLECTION: This coming Sunday we celebrate the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is also known as "Corpus Christi" Sunday.

In her wisdom, the Church consistently reminds the faithful of the importance and sanctity of the Holy Eucharist that, at times, due to the secularism and materialism in our modern world, may have dulled our memory of our Savior's unfathomable love and sacrifice to bring us back to the kingdom. Due to its regular availability, reception of the Eucharist has become, for some, a ritual or something we have to do as part of the Mass. The feeding of the five thousand in this Sunday's gospel was a pre-figuration of the Eucharist.

There must be something very special about this multiplication of the bread because it was the only miracle mentioned in the gospel accounts by all the sacred writers. After the crowd was fed in John 6, Jesus said that he is the living bread that comes from heaven and unless they eat his flesh and drink his blood, they will have no life in them. The Jews could not accept Jesus' statement

☞ (page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

1 Cor 11:26

Power of Prayer

“At that very time, the prayer of these two suppliants was heard in the glorious presence of Almighty God.”
Tobit 3:16

This Old Testament book reminds us of God's ever-loving presence and providential care for us, especially during our distressing moments, as we pray and beg for His help with open hearts, fixing our minds on His power, for only He can do something about our dilemma.

Whether we pray - as an individual, couple, family or community - our prayers rise up to God's throne. There is power in our prayer when they are offered in Jesus' name, with the intercession of our Blessed Mother and all the saints in heaven.

We have confidence that our petition will be granted because the Lord's promises are trustworthy. In John 15:16, He said: *“Whatever you ask the Father in My name will be granted”*. In Matthew 7:7, He promised, *“Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened to you”*. In Luke 1:37, He assured us, *“With God, nothing is impossible”*

“The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, able to pierce between the soul and the spirit, joints from marrow, able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12-13). God's many promises in the bible speak to us of His love. Let us know them by heart that we may be able to offer them back in prayer.

Faith, hope and love are God's gifts to us. When we pray in faith, with hope, with love, there is power in our prayer! Recall the woman suffering from hemorrhage who touched Jesus' robe. Jesus' words to her were, *“Woman, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”* Or the centurion who said to Jesus, *“Master, just say the words and my son will be healed”* That same hour, his son got up well.

Prayer is lifting our hearts to God, in complete submission to His will and power, acknowledging Him as our creator, savior and sanctifier. Prayer connects and unites us to God. Just imagine how beneficial are the mass and rosary for our needy brethren. Praying the Our Father pleases our heavenly Father, because His Son taught us that prayer!

I remember the time when I prayed only whenever I needed something from God. Now, my life is a life of prayer. In the renewal, I learned to pray the ACTS as well as Scripture. I discovered God's graciousness, mercy and healing love. Let us pray for world peace, invoking the intercession of our Blessed Mother and of the saints, and the protection of God's angels', in Jesus name, Amen

Love and Joy of the Father Tobit 11:12-14

How could one seriously reflect on the Love that comes from the Father? The Love that God Is and Ever will Be. The Original Love which brings forth the different facets of life. The Love that never ceases, constantly flows, and knows no bounds.

God loved us before we loved him. God is a Lover. The prophet Hosea openly revealed his secret to Israel by announcing that an entire nation needed to revise its understanding of its God. Prior to Hosea the relationship of God with Israel was something like this: *“I am Your God”* and *“you are my people.”* After Hosea, the relationship of God came to be known as: *“I am your Lover and I want you, Israel, for myself.”* There are passages that God even will allure His creature to come back and reform this sacred and saving love relationship. Many times, though, it is only after man's limited realization that one begins to genuinely attend, regard, and worship the Creator, our Abba Father.

Was it not this Sacred Love that had driven the woman “sinner” to barge in a meeting of Jesus with the religious and pious leaders of her time? She could not wait for a more suitable time to display her love for her Lord God. Her frank acceptance of her sinful state and urgent desire to be forgiven by Him awed and fascinated our Lord. Yes, her lavish way of attending Him brought Him joy.

The Joy of the Father comes about when Love is seen in action. Mother Theresa told us of various ways which Sacred Love is converted into action, *“Do ordinary things with extraordinary love: little things like caring for the sick and the homeless, the lonely and the unwanted, washing and cleaning for them.”* And, *“You must give what will cost you something.”*

Therefore, beware of one's impurity, powerlessness, hard-headedness, and lack of understanding. For it is only through God's Love that we will receive the favor of acquiring clarity of mind, boldness, endurance, and strength. Let our worthless selves be vessels of God's will in doing small duties and functions, in praying from our hearts, and doing little deeds of self-sacrifice. Let our Mighty God be joyful in finding these otherwise powerless creatures allowing themselves to do good acts by obeying His commandments - to love Him with everything one has, and to love one's neighbor as oneself.

Consequently, this Sacred Love inspires our worship. As when Tobit's sight was miraculously restored after his son tenderly removed the cataracts from his eyes, one should exclaim, *“Blessed be God, and praised be his great name, and blessed be all his holy angels. May his holy name be praised throughout the ages.”*

Apologetics: **The Holy Eucharist**

Q. How can we be sure that Jesus is really present in the Holy Eucharist?

A. Around the year 700 AD., a priest in Italy who had begun to doubt the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist held up the Host during Mass one day and saw it change into flesh, while the liquid in the chalice became clots of blood.

This treasure was guarded by monks until 1970 when Church authorities gave a team of scientists permission to study the substances. After taking samples and putting them through a variety of tests, the scientific team concluded that the flesh was really human flesh and the clots were human blood. The team found no trace of any preservative, yet the flesh and blood were just as fresh then as they were 13 centuries earlier.

Very few of us will ever have the privilege of witnessing such a miracle. Most of us accept the Real Presence of Christ on faith, i.e., we believe it because Jesus, the Son of God, revealed it to us. At the Last Supper, when our Lord said the first Mass and gave us the Holy Eucharist, He took bread and said, "***This is my body.***" He did not say, "This represents my body," but rather, "***This is my body.***"

Our Lord also took a cup of wine and said. "***This is my blood.***" He did not say, "This is a symbol of my blood." but rather, "***This is my blood.***" And for nearly 2,000 years the Catholic Church has faithfully taught that Jesus is really and truly present, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Eucharist.

Further evidence of this marvelous truth can be found in chapter 6 of John's Gospel. "***If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you,***" Jesus said. "***He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood real drink.***"

That Jesus' listeners took Him literally is indicated by the fact that many of His disciples found His words disturbing and "would not remain in his company any longer." Our Lord did not call them back and say, "Wait a minute, you misunderstood me: that wasn't what I meant." He let them go.

When Jesus asked the Apostles if they were going to leave Him, too, St. Peter answered for the Twelve:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe; we are convinced that you are God's holy one" (John 6:67-69).

Source: Catholic Replies by James J. Drummey

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

SINGLE's: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jrcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

ISAIAH 58: BLD Golf Outing - Sat. August 11 Riverview CC - Easton, PA 1:30 shotgun start Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia - cclaricia@yahoo.com • Ed/Grace Badiola - badio1925@comcast.net

MARK 10: Field Trip to Land of Make Believe June 30 - Contact Reuben/Cherry Vibar - benjesus@verizon.net (908) 206-8737

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

PASTORAL: Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar June 30 & July 31, 2007 • 7:30am to 7:00pm • Ramada Limited - So. Plainfield, NJ Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1 • Stay in is highly recommended! Contact: Libby Gutierrez; Romy/Leni Chan; Tino/Aida Garcia; Boy/Des Parker; Ver/Baby Nacion; Jun/Fely Escobar; Ed/Nanie Delos Reyes

From the DCS: June 22-23-24 • 40th Anniversary Conference of the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal • Sheraton Meadowlands, NJ. BLD Youth & Singles will be serving as praise for the Youth Track on Saturday • Contact: Sal/Marie Russo (973) 338-1050 or Angel/Aida Calilap (973) 284-1853

TEACHING: Growth in Prayer (Praise & Worship module) June 8-Solo Parents • June 15-Singles after the worship. Teachings for Mark 10, John 6 and the Youth - Friday June 15 after the worship.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending June 1, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for the Poor \$4,141.00

"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above."

Counselors *(continued from Page 1...)*

because many knew him as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. Moreover, they found it shockingly detestable because Mosaic Law tells them that those who drink blood will be cut off from their community. How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Seeing their predicament, Jesus ups the ante when he said, *“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day”*. They could not understand and accept what He was saying.

Chapter 6, Verse 66 is referred to as the saddest verse in the bible. It reads, “as a result of this his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him”. Nowadays, when a public official’s popularity poll plummets because of a wrong statement he made, he usually backs off or gets his public relations people to repackage his platform. However, this is not so with our Lord Jesus. He did not say, “Hey guys it is only a symbol, not my real body and blood”. Jesus did not call them back. Instead, he went to his “hand-picked” apostles. Seeing that they, too, looked confused, he asked, “Do you also want to leave?”

This teaching on the Body and Blood is not negotiable. Jesus was willing to start all over again. Belief in this teaching paves the way for the establishment of a new and everlasting covenant that will culminate on the cross at Calvary. Then Peter said, “Lord to whom shall we go – you have the words of eternal life”. Perhaps, Peter had his doubts – but his faith was greater. Like Peter, you and I are in the same predicament. Our physical senses tell us that it is a piece of bread and a cup of wine, but like Peter we are asked to believe a mystery. It is something that could only be seen by the eyes of faith and a heart filled with trust in the Lord. When we see that light on the tabernacle, we know that Jesus is there. We believe not because we understand, but because we trust the authority of the One who said it – the same One who said “Let there be light and there was light” – who is the Creator of all that is seen and unseen.

Many martyrs and saints have given up their lives in defense of their faith in the Body and Blood of Christ. Even today, in some countries, Christians are being threatened to convert or face death, yet they persevere. Let us be grateful that we have not been tested like them. We hope that when we receive Holy Communion this Sunday we will realize how blessed we are to be part of a continuous line that is more than two thousand years old – the Church - “Body of Christ” or “Corpus Christi”.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- June 8 • **Solo Parents Teaching-Growth in Prayer**
Praise & Worship Module
- June 8-10 • **Singles Encounter#18**
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center,
Garrison, NY • Contact: Glenn Canlas
(invazian21@yahoo.com)
- June 15 • **Singles Teaching-Growth in Prayer**
Praise & Worship Module • after worship
- June 15 • **Mark 10, John 6 & Youth Teachings**
after worship
- June 16 • **Christian Maturity Program -**
Part 2 - LSS 26
• **Basic Bible Study LSS 28 •**
St. Mary's 1-6pm
- June 22 • **Intercessory & Service Formation -**
• **Basic Bible Seminar - Solo Parents**
after worship
- June 23 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament,**
Newark,NJ - ME 15 & ME 21
Contact: Ency/Baby Alberto (973) 584-0370
- June 25 (Monday) • **Bo Sanchez Talk**
@ St. Mary's Church 7pm -
Free Admission • Contact: Frank/Malou
Venadas (973) 562-0055
- June 30 • **Mark 10 Field Trip**
Land of Make Believe
Please refer to Ministry announcement
- June 29-30, July 1 • **Solo Parents Encounter #9**
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood, NJ
Contact: Nestor/Letty de Guzman
973-748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com)
- June 29-30, July 1 • **Advance Prayer Counseling**
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
Please refer to Ministry announcement
- July 6-8 • **Youth Encounter #14**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contact: Mario/Cecil Salonga (mcsalonga@opton-
line.net) • Alan/Tess Cam (atetscam23@hotmail.
com)•Faith Ikalina (f4yech4n@gmail.com)
- July 13-15 • **Family Encounter #14**
Malvern Retreat House - Malvern, PA
Contact persons: Fil/Hum Flores
Visit www.bldnewark.com
- July 28 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament,**
Newark, NJ - ME 20
Contact: Mosty/Ling Garcia (908) 964-6584
or Mel/Remy Hernandez (908) 281-5565
- August 11 • **BLD Newark Golf Outing**



AWESOME SE # 18

“ Then God said: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground. God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them”. (Genesis 1:27)

God’s powerful message of love, healing and forgiveness truly touched the hearts and minds & spirit of 41 candidates of SE # 18 through the Spiritual director, Fr. Paul Lehman, the facilitators, Pauline Montemayor, Cheryl Guinto, Ditto Fernando, Eric Cruz and Glen Canlas, Deacon Bong and Ruby David and their humble sponsoring class SE17 & all auxies.

We welcome Augustine O. Agha, Melisa Aro*, Bryan Atienza*, Manolito G. (Manny) Ausan, Carlo Badiola, Michael S. Bautista, Henry Z. (Henry) Bolante, Jr., Doriana Carlucci, Maria Cristina P. (Tina) Casino, Armand Alfred M. Castro, Ronald R. (Ryan) Cortez*, Steven G. (Steve) De Chavez, Sareen P. De Villa*, Mark DeLeon, Millan G. Diaz, Ryan Dris*, Jordan Ferraro, Christopher H. (Chris) Francisco, Enrico Paulo R. Gutierrez, Mel Isidro, Jose Iniyo Jalandoni*, Brancker F. (Brakes) John, Chau Le, Hyacinthe Luna, Chito Luna, Dennis Mangrobang, Rian Marcos, Marilen Martinez, Kevin McQuade, Kyle Jason Mendoza, Catherine Mercado*, Adela Nogueira, Ralph L. Obrera, Maria Pajo, Sanjay Pradhanang, Isaac Punzalan*, Jeffrey (Jeff) Punzalan, Luz Rodriguez, Apryl Joy Sarabia, Jillianne M. Veracruz*, Walter Wade.(* Coordinators) Class shepherds Vic and Becky Napenas.

“We know that all things work for good for those who love God , who are called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

 Visit our website at www.bldnewark.com 

COUNSELS

**ORDINARY DAYS,
EXTRAORDINARY GRACE**

WORD: 2 Sm 12:7-10, 13; Ps 32:1-2, 5, 7, 11; Gal 2:16,19-21; Lk 7:36-8:3

ORDER: *Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.* (Ps 32:11)

THEME: We glorify the Holy Trinity when we accept the Father’s forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

REFLECTION: We have just finished a long stretch of Sundays in the liturgical calendar, of the Lenten and Easter seasons followed by special feast days like Pentecost and last week’s Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. But next Sunday our liturgy is called simply “Eleventh Sunday of Ordinary Time.” O where is Advent and Christmastime? Are we then consigned to a period of ordinariness with no impetus to seek to grow in holiness?

The term *Ordinary* does not mean common or plain, but is derived from the term *ordinal* or “numbered.” The weeks and Sundays of ordinary time are numbered, except several that are named for the feast they commemorate, such as next Sunday’s Solemnity of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist.

Without the inspiration of special seasons or feasts, how do we persevere in our faith and in spiritual growth? One way we may do so is to focus on the very events of our ordinary lives. Although we have just dissociated “common or plain” with Ordinary Time, yet let us reflect on our personal day-to-day lives. Our readings guide

 page 4

Promise of the Week

“The Lord on His part, has forgiven your sin, you shall not die.” (2 Sam 12:13)

GOD Loves You

“ But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

Children when asked who God is will respond instantaneously, God is love and he is everywhere. Absolutely right for God is someone who will always be with us. He is in everyone's heart. Gods' love is eternal, exalted far above our limited abilities to love. He says: *“I have loved you with an everlasting love so I am in constant of my affection for you.”*

Jesus loves us so much that he is determined to do anything to save us and empower us to live life to the fullest. What a great promise from the Lord God Almighty! But how is he going to accomplish such promise?

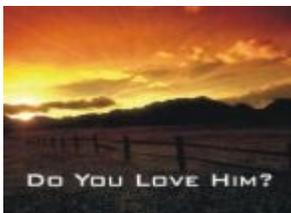
This divine love of God is personal and intimate- capable of touching every level of our being. Getting to know God is a delight and a pleasure. Deepening our faith through daily receiving of the Eucharist and prayers, attending seminars and teachings, working faithfully in our assigned ministries and being completely involved in our BLD community will enable us to grow spiritually. After all our main purpose of living is to know, love and serve our Lord God and Savior.

Life is a journey and we are all travelers here on earth. Our path will not always be smooth. Somewhere along the way the road could be rugged and rough, we will be climbing hills, even mountains. What we could only be sure of taking with us is the word of God which reveals His love for all of us. His word is the light of the world and the lamp upon our feet.

Even though we are constantly offending the Lord, He always forgives us. He patiently waits for us to realize our sinfulness and reconcile with him. He is the forgiving God.

As we surrender ourselves to Jesus, we ask Him to warm our hearts with His divine love so that we may begin to experience a new joy and passion both for the Lord and life itself. Now we will find ourselves spending more time with Jesus in prayer and we will begin to understand the words in the Gospel. In other words, our hearts starts to burn with the same fire of love that is in Jesus' heart. In appreciation of God's greatest love which surpasses all things, let us

then share that love to others. It is in the commandment to love our neighbor as thyself, so let God's infinite love in you overflow.



Let Your Light Shine

Mt. 5-16 – *“Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father”.*

The story of the “acts of the apostles” is surely one tough act to follow. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they performed miracles and healed the sick in the name of our Lord Jesus. Anyone can see the light of God in them anywhere they go.

Saying “Yes” in a heart beat without reservation was the mentality the apostles have in their hearts when asked by Jesus Christ to come and follow HIM. Likewise, the same attitude one must have towards community work, when being assigned to do a task that does not necessarily need to be convenient and should be embraced with loving heart.

In this world that we live in, where hate and violence are becoming a normal way of life – it is hard for just anyone to let their light shine before others. It is by joining the charismatic renewal where one strengthens their faith in God and to put it into practice. Through different encounters, attending our community worships, teachings, seminars, retreats, doing outreaches, soup kitchens, and nursing home visitations, the presence of Jesus feels so alive in our hearts and HIS light shines through our good deeds. Learning God's ways is filling that void in our lives because every time we respond to HIS calling with a big “YES”, we are humbled with meekness of our hearts. God will always be there to guide and protect all His merely poor workers in HIS vineyard, as it is through all these service to our brethren that we glorify HIM. It is not how small or great of a task one has achieved but what is important is the willingness and being able to put that love on any work for everything that we do is for HIM alone and HE will take it from there.

Along the way of doing God's works, meeting a lot of wonderful people in the community is a truly a blessing by itself. God's light will always shine upon HIS children to remain connected in HIM as we now continue to spread HIS light in this world that we live in through all our apostolic and charity works.

Praise and glory and honor to you Lord Jesus – the source of all good things. Amen!

The Sacred Heart of Jesus



The Sacred Heart is a religious devotion to Jesus' sacred physical heart. The Sacred Heart is often depicted in a Christian art as a flaming stylized heart, pierced by the lance-wound, surrounded by a crown of thorns, and bleeding. Sometimes the image is superimposed over Jesus' body with his wounded hands pointing at the heart. The wounds and crown of thorns allude to the manner of Jesus' death, while the fire represents love. The heart of Jesus, like all else belongs to His person – worthy of adoration. The worship paid to the Heart of Jesus is directed to the love for which this Heart is the living and expressive symbol.

St. Marguerite Marie Alacoque (July 22, 1647-October 17, 1690) was a French Catholic nun and mystic, who originated the Catholic devotion of the Sacred Heart. She had a vision in which Christ revealed to her His heart burning with divine love, and bidding to establish on the Friday following the feast of Corpus Christi, a feast in honor of His Sacred Heart. The devotion was propagated under a movement Paray-le-Monial. St. Marguerite's vision was critically examined prior to her beautification.

The devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus does not need justification as it is the Person of Jesus that it is directed. The object of the devotion is that the Person of Jesus is inseparable from His Divinity, the living apparition of the goodness of God and of His paternal love. Jesus is infinitely loving and amiable- He is the object of Christian religion. . It characterizes the reciprocation of love. Its aim is to love Jesus who has loved us, to return love for love. It assumes a character of reparation and the importance of the acts of atonement, the Communion of reparation, and compassion for Jesus suffering. We can make Jesus live in us, thus by living by it to love God, in union with Jesus, with all his heart, all his soul, all his strength.

“And He [Christ] showed me that it was His great desire of being loved by men and of withdrawing them from the path of ruin that made Him form the design of manifesting His Heart to men, with all the treasures of love, of mercy, of grace, of sanctification and salvation which it contains, in order that those who desire to render Him and procure Him all the honor and love possible, might themselves be abundantly enriched with those divine treasures of which His heart is the source.” — *from Revelations of Our Lord to St. Mary Margaret Alacoque*

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

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11 Sat. Riverview CC Easton, PA Shotgun start at 1:30 pm Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia – cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola – badio1925@comcast.net

MARK 10: Field Trip to Land of Make Believe, June 30 Contact: Rueben/Cherry Vibar 908-206-8737; benjesus@verizon.net

YOUTH: Application for YE#14 has reached maximum capacity. Contact persons: Mario/Cecil Salonga (516-561-6854) Alan/Tess Cam (201-233-6991) Faith Ikalina: f4yech4n@gmail.com

PASTORAL:

ADVANCE PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR

June 30, 2007 7:30am to 7:00pm

July 1, 2007 7:30am to 7:00pm

Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ

Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1 Stay in is highly recommended!!!! Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

TEACHINGS:

June 15 (Fri) : Growth in Prayer (Praise & Worship Module) – Singles Teachings – Mark 10, John 6, Youth

June 16 (Sat): Christian Maturity Program II Part 2 – LSS 26 Basic Bible Study – LSS 28

July 7 (Sat): Apologetics LSS21, 22 & 23

July 13 (Fri): Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents

FROM THE DCS:

June 22-24 : 40th Anniversary Conference of the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Sheraton Meadowlands, NJ. BLD Youth and Singles will be serving as praise for the Youth track on Saturday Contact persons: Alan & Tess Cam, English Track for adults, Contact: Sal & Marie Russo 973-338-1050 or Angel & Aida Calilap 973-284-1853

LORD'S PROVISIONS:

Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending June 8, 2007 Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor

 **\$3,577.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Counsels from page 1

us in on one reality that is common to every Christian disciple: **the reality of sin and our need for God's forgiveness.**

We are presented with big-time sinners in the readings, one famous (David the king of Israel) and one simply called *a sinful woman in the city*. Let us see if we can relate to them. Both were convinced, or as we say in community, *convicted* of their sinfulness. *"I have sinned against the Lord,"* says David. The woman's sorrow and repentance was unspoken but was expressed by her actions. We do not hear of any excuses. Having realized whom they have really offended by their sins, both were single-minded in the direction and object of their repentance. It is God whom we ultimately reject when we give in to our pride, passions and worldly desires. *"Against you alone have I sinned; I have done such evil in your sight."* (Ps 51:6)

Sin afflicts us all, from the highest and most powerful king to the most common and lowliest among us. All of us struggle daily with temptation and do battle against the world, the flesh and the devil. And when we fall, succumb or give in, the fault is all ours. *"I know my offense; my sin is always before me."* (v5) We may not have a prophet like Nathan who confronted King David with the ugliness and enormity of his offense. But we have in each of us a conscience that tells us when we have done wrong.

Living with unrepented sin means living with a heavy burden. Carrying the guilt of a sinful life leads us to denial, to distorted rationalization of our thoughts and actions, to clouded judgment and eventually to spiritual blindness. We no longer live in the Spirit and thus lose the wisdom, direction and desire by which to live righteously. Consider Simon the Pharisee in our Gospel scene. With values turned upside down, he looks down on the weeping, repentant woman and sees only her sin and ill repute. Mercy has no room in his self-righteous heart, and he's even indignant at the Master for his compassion on the sinner. His own sin of pride paralyzed his soul.

We have read of old contrition and repentance rituals of wearing sackcloth, ashes on the person, long fasts and other physical mortifications. We no longer follow such ascetic practices, for we can approach the Lord Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. While

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- June 23** Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark -ME 21 Contact Ency/Baby Alberto (973)584-0370
- June 25** Bo Sanchez Talk @ St. Mary's Church 7pm – FREE Admission Contacts: Frank/Malou Venadas (973)562-0055 For more of Bro. Bo visit www.preacherinbluejeans.com
- June 30** Mark 10 Field Trip - Land of MakeBelieve Refer to Ministry Announcement for details.
- June 29-July 1** Solo Parents Encounter #9 La Casa del Prade, Maplewood, NJ Contact persons: Nestor/Letty de Guzman (973)748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com
- June 29-July 1** Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ Refer to Ministry Announcement for details
- July 6-8** YE#14 St. Francis Retreat House, Easton,PA Refer to Ministry Announcement for details
- July 13 -15** Family Encounter #14 Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA Visit www.bldnewark.com Contact Persons: Fil/Hum Flores (201)501-0485
- July 28** Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark ME 20 Contact: Mosty & Ling Garcia 908-964-6584 or Mel & Remy Hernandez 908-281-5565

cont'd from left column

we are required to go to Confession once a year, Holy Mother Church urges us to go often — whenever we commit mortal sin or once a month or more frequently especially during Lent. The BLD disciple knows that our covenant pledge to regularly receive the Sacrament helps us “bear witness to the power of God’s grace in our lives.” It leads us to the gladness and exultation of the just and truly upright heart (see our Order).

The humility of the sinful woman is an example to us. A good, thorough examination of conscience leads us to contrition, to confess all our sins without holding back, and disposes us to make amends and receive absolution. In the confessional, we shall hear Jesus’ words to the woman, *“Your faith has saved you, go in peace.”*

We are back in Ordinary Time. But the extraordinary grace of the Sacraments is with us.

DIRECTIONS

- Reconcile regularly with God through the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Eucharist.
- Refrain from judging and being self-righteous.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 24

Bulletin Edition

June 22, 2007

Religious Discrimination a Wound, Says Prelate Urges Protection of Muslims, Jews and Christians

BUCAREST, Romania, JUNE 20, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Discrimination against religions is an "open wound" in society, a Holy See representative said at the opening session of a conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Bishop Brian Farrell, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, told the 56-state organization that the meeting of religions and cultures is a topic of "prime importance" in today's world, "and one that is certainly not just the business of theology."

"Thus the question of the interaction of cultures, and peace and respect for religions, has today become a political and security consideration of utmost importance," he said in his June 7 intervention. "Ultimately it is a question of how we relate to one another peacefully and how we contribute to the education and advancement of the human race.

"Anti-Semitism is a tragic violation of human dignity and the Shoah is a crime that has tainted the history of the human race.

"Discrimination against Muslims too is a grave offense to their human dignity and to the exercise of their right to freedom of religion."

The 63-year-old bishop said that Benedict XVI has often spoken out against "both phenomena, as well as persistent episodes of intolerance and discrimination directed against Christians."

The Holy See representative encouraged the organization to "avoid placing these three 'open wounds' in a sort of hierarchy: Each of them 'hurts' men and women, degrades their human dignity and, therefore, must be 'cured' with solicitude."

Bishop Farrell told the organization members that its work would only be effective if carried out with the same determination in each of the three areas of discrimination.

"In fact," he said, "if the organization and its participating states are not committed to adopting all those measures necessary to guarantee Christians the full exercise and enjoyment of their right to religious freedom, then, paradoxically, they will be discriminated against in their very fight against" *(continue on page 3)* 

**Make the Covenant News
a part of your covenant life.**

COUNSELS

“Who is John the Baptist”

Word: Is 49:1-6; Ps 139:1b-3; 13-15;
Acts 13:22-26; Lk 1:57-66, 80

Theme: We glorify the Holy Trinity when we proclaim the Good News of Salvation through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Order: “Go before the Lord to prepare His way.”

Reflection:

The birth of John was announced in a most striking manner. Zachary and Elizabeth, as we learn from St. Luke, “were God-fearing couple. They had no son, for Elizabeth was barren, “*Long they had prayed their union be blessed with a child. One day when Zachary was praying, an angel of the Lord appeared, standing on the right side of the altar. Zachary seeing him, was troubled, and felt fear. But the angel said to him: Fear not, Zachary, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son, and you will call him John. He will convert many children of Israel to the Lord their God.*” The Gospel suggests that John was born about six months before Christ. Of John’s early life, St. Luke tells us, “the child grew, and was strengthened in spirit in the desert until the day of his presence to Israel”.

John the Baptist was blessed with the insight, which allowed men to follow God’s plan for mankind. He is one of those figures in history whom God used as he stood apart from other men. He was a model of selflessness and humility as he pointed away from himself to Jesus who was greater than he was.

Jesus could have introduced Himself and said “I am the Messiah”. But John, the Baptist came into the picture. Was there a real need for him to be *(continue on page 4)* 

God’s Promise for the Week

**“I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”
(Is 49:6)**

St. Aloysius Gonzaga



“What will it be worth for eternity?” This was the motto of St. Aloysius, patron of Catholic youth and whose feast day we celebrate on June 21.

Born on March 15, 1568 from a noble family in Italy, and being the eldest son, Aloysius was expected to carry the family name. His father assumed that he would become a soldier as the

family was constantly involved in frequent minor wars in the area. God had other plans however.

When he was 8 years old, he was sent to Florence with his younger brother to receive further education. While there, he fell ill with kidney disease which was to trouble him all his life. While ill, he took the opportunity to read about the saints and to spend much of his time in prayer. After reading about the Jesuit missionaries in India, he felt strongly that he wanted to become a missionary himself.

When he was 14, his family was called to Spain to assist the empress of Austria. It was here that Aloysius informed his family about his desire to enter the Jesuit society. His mother was agreeable but his father and other family members worked hard to persuade him to change his mind. When they realized that there was no way to make him give up his plan of becoming a Jesuit, they tried to persuade him to become a secular priest and to arrange for a bishop's position for him. If he became a Jesuit he would have to renounce any right of income from their properties or a noble status in society. His family was afraid of this but their attempt to persuade him failed. Aloysius was not interested in higher office.

In November 1585, Aloysius gave up all his rights of inheritance. He went to Rome, and because of his noble birth, he gained an audience with Pope Sixtus V. That same month he was accepted into the Jesuit Roman novitiate.

His health continued to cause problems. In addition to kidney disease he also suffered from a skin disease, chronic headaches and insomnia. Two years after his entrance to the society, he took the three religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. In March of 1588, he received his lower ordination and started studying theology to prepare for his priesthood.

In 1591 a plague broke out in Rome. The Jesuits opened a hospital and Aloysius volunteered to work there. It was during his services that he himself was infected. Nearing death, he had a vision and told his confessor, Cardinal Bellarmine, also a Jesuit, that he would die on the octave of Corpus Christi. On that day, which fell on June 21, he seemed very well in the morning but insisted that he would die before the day was over. The Cardinal gave him the last sacraments and just before midnight he went back to his Creator.

(continue)

Treasures In Heaven



I am certain that you, as most people, take great pains to make assurances your family is well cared for. Not only do we care for our immediate family, we are in touch with relatives to check on their needs too. We seek employment benefits or purchase our own insurance policies to assure ourselves that should illness or tragedy befall, that we are in good hands.

We do many things to ensure that we are “OK”.

There is nothing wrong with the above. In fact, it would be irresponsible to neglect them. At times though, we may go overboard in the oversight of earthly things and forget Divine Providence. We may be so caught up in the attractions of the world and put God aside.

In the Sermon in the Mount, Jesus, beautifully but simply taught the people and teach us even now what we ought to do to live a righteous life. He said, “*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.*” Mt 6: 19-21

What a wonderful reminder from our Lord's own lips! God takes care of us. We have to cooperate with Him and learn to listen to His prompts. We should not heed the call of the world and forget there is God. We cannot compromise our values in order to get up in the professional ladder or be popular. We cannot accumulate much wealth for ourselves while ignoring the needs of the Church and our brothers who suffer social injustices. We cannot watch the 6 o'clock news and hear of the crises in other parts of the world and not lend a hand in the solution of world problems. It is not enough Junior goes to the best school; be involved with the man who dies of hunger and strife in Sudan, he is our brother too.

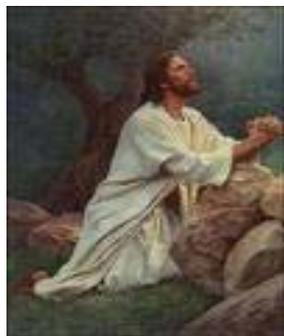
Jesus teaches us to do good, show kindness, and perform good works. Pray always and turn your work day into a continuous relationship with God. These may not seem overly grand but in God's eyes, these are the treasures He speaks of. They are yours to keep and what counts as we aspire to be counted as His saints.

Jesus reminds us in Mt 6: 24-34 of Divine Providence and what our priorities should be. It takes much faith to believe and follow His teachings. We pray to the Holy Spirit for greater faith, hope, and love to grow in each of us every day.

St. Aloysius Gonzaga (continued)

“*He who wishes to love God does not truly love Him if he has not an ardent and constant desire to suffer for His sake*” - St. Aloysius.

Anatomy of the Perfect Prayer



Very appropriately, the Lord's Prayer has been regarded as the perfect prayer. What our Lord Jesus taught us in Matthew 6:7-15, was more than a prayer. This prayer He personally authored, was an expression in His own words of what He felt in His heart, a summary of the great ideals for which He lived and

died. Let us then reflect on these "great ideals" He wants us to ask our Father while praying to Him.

"Our Father" He said, is how we should address the Heavenly Father. Not just his or mine but ours, because God is our Father and we are all His children praying to "Our Father."

"Hallowed be Thy name." Praising His Holy Name, in expression of gratitude for the countless blessings we receive, is the best way to start a prayer.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" Perhaps this could be the most important petition we should always utter in every prayer. At His agony in the Garden, He uttered "but not what I will but what you will" (Mk 14:36) Loving God with all our hearts above all things and loving our neighbors as we love ourselves are all He "wills" from us. Loving and praising God here on earth as He is in heaven, is the full meaning of life.

"Give us this day our daily bread". Here Jesus was telling us how to ask for things from our Father. Surely the bread he was speaking here are our material and spiritual needs. What is striking here is that Jesus is telling us to ask for them "for this day" as though we would not need them tomorrow or as though tomorrow would not count. And that's just exactly what Jesus wants us to do: live our life in the present, not in the past, not in the future. Most of our worries and tensions are about yesterday and tomorrow as we always forget to live in today.

"Forgive us our trespasses." A prayer cannot be complete if asking our Father for forgiveness is not there. Sins, big or small, deeply hurt our God. However, Jesus wants to remind us here that there is an important string attached for this gift of mercy to be granted: that we also forgive others that "trespass against us."

We are closing our reflections on the Lord's prayer with our opening one. "Our" Father, not mine or yours. Jesus chose this word because that's exactly what God is always to us: Our Father. That is also what this whole world should be to us: Our world, not mine or yours or theirs. If this happened, how peaceful the world and our community will then be.

Pledge of Love
As of June 15 - \$2,215

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 rguiiao@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every *third Saturday* of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com), LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every *second Saturday* of the month. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@oponline.net)

PASTORAL

Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar, Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ - Jun 30-Jul 1, 7:30am-7:00pm

Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1 Stay in is highly recommended! Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

TEACHINGS

June 22	After worship	
	Intercessory Formation	LSS 24
	Service Formation	LSS 25
	Intro to Intercession	Solo Parents
June 29	After worship	
	Prayer Intercessory Orientation	LSS 25
	Teaching	Singles
July 7	St. Mary's 1-6pm	
	Apologetics	LSS 21, 22 & 23
July 13	After worship	
	Basic Bible Seminar	Solo Parents
July 20	After worship	
	Basic Bible Seminar	Singles
	Teaching	Mark 10, John 6, Youth
July 21	St. Mary's 1-6pm	
	Understanding Corporate Worship	LSS 26
	& Prayer Leadership	
	Encounter with Jesus	LSS 28
July 27	After worship	
	Intercessory Formation	LSS 25
	Service Formation	LSS 26
	Basic Bible Seminar	Solo Parents

Religious Discrimination... (cont. from page 1)
 discrimination!"

It would be a mistake, the Vatican official continued, "to judge the patrimony of faith of the three monotheistic religions with a relativistic mentality, viewing them with the precarious and ever-changing parameters of political equilibrium, instead of connecting them to the timeless measuring rod of truth and the centrality of human dignity."

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

a guide?

God put John the Baptist into the picture because of man's hazy vision of the truth. We are so wrapped up within our very own self, our ideas, beliefs and perceptions that we fail to see the truth of our salvation. We become so blind to acknowledge sin in our lives that we do not ever care to be forgiven. John the Baptist was more than a prophet, he had courage and was vocal to challenge people and teach them what they really needed to be saved, how much they needed to repent. John even showed them how to find "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14: 6), the one who could bring them salvation. If John spoke with conviction and without fear out of his passion that everyone receives God's message, what should be our plan of action in bringing the **Good News**?

As we celebrate the birth of John, Christ wants us to realize that we too have a role in God's Church. John, the Baptizer was the forerunner of Christ and he paved the way for Jesus' coming. His persecutors did not demand that he should deny Jesus, but only that he keep silent about the truth. John died for Christ, as Christ is the Truth.

Let us address everyone with the same favor and dedication. Let us not discriminate some who we feel are not worth our time and effort but embrace all of Christ's people with the same concern that John had. Jesus does not want us to be weak and lame in our actions. Christ has given to us with same conviction and power as John had.

Let us then ask the Holy Spirit to work with in us and give us the strength and the power to endure the difficulties of life and be Christ's **sounding gong** in bringing HIS WORDS and call all men to repentance, so that we may truly be the bearer of TRUTH, which is JESUS at all times. Let us make our lives to be a prayer in itself, every moment of our lives here on earth, to duplicate the life of John the Baptist who responded to Christ's call. It is only through prayer and true love offering that we will **all** be able to set aside our individual shortcomings and be able to bring others to CHRIST. To live our life to the fullest is to be a *loving and forgiving* human being, within this state of heart that can lift each other up to Christ.

Let us pray to Christ that we all be given **one** heart, **one** wisdom and **one** spirit whether our communities are in distant lands or nearby, moving in **one** collaborative motion as a single community under Christ. Let us work to provide our community with harmony, unison and courage, not to be cold and indifferent, but to stand by what is right in CHRIST's eyes.

One thing is certain, if we open our hearts to Jesus and His call is to serve HIS people, He will make us a light to the nations so His Salvation may reach all boundaries of the earth!

Direction:

- √ Become strong in the Lord's Spirit to spread the Good News!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jun 22-24 40th Anniversary Conference of the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal**
Sheraton Meadowlands, NJ.
On Saturday at the Youth track, BLD Youth and Singles will be serving as praise.
Youth track contact: Alan & Tess Cam
Adult track contact: Sal & Marie Russo (973) 338-1050 or Angel & Aida Calilap (973) 284-1853
- Jun 23 Soup Kitchen @ Blessed Sacrament, Newark**
ME 15 & 21
Contact: Enci/Baby Alberto (973) 584-0370
- Jun 25 Bo Sanchez Talk @ St. Mary's**
Monday, 7pm - Free Admission
Contacts: Frank/Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055
For more info visit www.preacherinbluejeans.com
- Jun 29- Jul 01 Solo Parents Encounter #9**
La Casa del Prade, Maplewood NJ
Contacts: Nestor/Letty de Guzman
(973) 748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com
- Jun 30 Mark 10 - Land of Make Believe field trip**
Contacts: Reuben/Cherry Vibar (908) 206-8737 or benjesus@verizon.net
- Jul 06-08 Youth Encounter #14**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contacts: Faith Ikalina f4yeck4n@gmail.com
Mario/Cecil Salonga (516) 561-6854
mcalonga@optonline.com
Alan/Tess Cam (201) 233-6991
atetscam23@hotmail.com
- Jul 13-15 Family Encounter #14**
Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA
Contacts: Fil/Hum Flores (201) 501-0485
- Jul 28 Soup Kitchen @ Blessed Sacrament, Newark**
ME 20
Contacts: Mosty/Ling Garcia (908) 964-6584 or
Mel/Remy Hernandez (908) 281-5565
- Aug 11 1:30pm BLD Newark Golf Outing**
Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA
Contacts:
Carlito/Arlene Claricia cclaricia@yahoo.com
Ed/Grace Badiola badio1925@comcast.com
Jun/Luchi Schroth schroth@rcn.com
Jun/Camille Viernes qviernes@msn.com

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Week Ending June 15, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for Poor **\$4,070**
Thank you for your continued generosity.



"BLESSINGS"

"Blessed are the people the Lord has chosen to be his own"

It was such an uplifting Monday evening for some BLD members and other guests who had the opportunity to listen to Bo Sanchez at St. Mary's. Singles Ministry members led Praise and short Worship.

Once again, we were reminded that God's desire is to bless us with many good things in life but we block this in some ways.

The four ways we block God's blessings are :

- 1) We don't ask for a blessing
- 2) We think we don't deserve to ask or we feel unworthy
- 3) We don't know what to ask for
- 4) We think that God won't bless us.

God's blessings are abundant, He has planted desires in our hearts. We should dream and have a vision that God wants us to live, love and serve so that 'we will have joy' – It is God's joy to bless us everyday.

"Find your delight in the LORD who will give you your heart's desire. Commit your way to the LORD; trust that God will act" (Psalms 37:4-5)

"Pour Out Your Spirit Anew"

In its 40th Anniversary, the Conference of the National Catholic Charismatic Renewal was held at the Meadowlands Expo Center and other nearby hotels in Secaucus, New Jersey from June 22-24, 2007. The theme for this year's anniversary "Pour Out Your Spirit Anew." This year's participants were grouped as follows; English, Spanish, Haitian, Korean, Filipino, Community and Youth Track.

The opening night was held at the Meadowlands Expo Center from 7:30PM until 10:30PM. Our Mission Stewards Joe & Beth Baluyot gave the opening talk on transformation.

There were several famous speakers, namely, Bishop Sam Jacobs, Pablo Bayona, Msgr. Joseph Malagrecia, Walter Matthews & Nancy Kellar for the English track, while for the Filipino track there were Fr. Bill Halbing, Bob Canton & Bo Sanchez.

About 60 members of BLD Youth attended the Youth Track, and were privileged to provide Praise during the Eucharistic celebration.

COUNSELS

BURN YOUR BOAT, FOLLOW ME

WORD: Kgs 19: 16b,19-21; Ps 16 ; 1-2,5, 17-11; Gal 5: 1, 13-18; Lk 9 ; 51-62

ORDER: Live by the Spirit

THEME: We commit firmly to Christ when we detach ourselves from worldly desires

REFLECTION:

Cortez with 600 men sailed from Cuba to Mexico in the early 1500. His decision to conquer the Aztec nation will not change. According to legend, to remove any notion by his men of retreat, he ordered the boats to be burned. They either have to win or die. Motivational speakers use this story to infuse a spirit of commitment and dedication regardless of their chosen field of endeavor. Others use the term burn your bridge instead.

In the first reading, Elisha made a prompt decision to answer God's call through the prophet Elijah to become his successor. Elisha burned his boat by killing the oxen, his means of livelihood, using the plow to cook them to feed his people. Elisha's decisive response and action is a prime example of total commitment, dedication and detachment from his former way of life. He cannot start over at what he left behind.

Luke reminds us 15 times that Jesus resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem. Resolutely means there is no way for Jesus to turn back. He already told his disciples twice about his Passion and Death (Lk 9: 22; 9: 44-45) He knew that Isaiah's "Suffering Servant of the Lord" oracle referred to him. (Is 52: 13- 53:12) Jesus did go to Jerusalem for his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

The Gospel continues to say that Jesus speaks about a vocation,

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"You will show me the path of life, fullness of joys in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever." (Ps 16: 11)

The Narrow Gate

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many “, How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few.” (Matt 7:13-14)

In no circumstance that Jesus says whether those who will share in eternal life are many or few. But he has said many times that very few would be chosen from among those who are called. These individuals are those who persevere and strive for perfect freedom. Unfortunately, many still choose the road that lead to perdition, a smoothly paved road, a life they strayed from leading a life that would let them experience the riches of the gospel, they wasted the gifts of God that were entrusted to them, yet they will not be deprived of God’s mercy, not all will be lost. Some will regain their senses and avail of the sacrament of reconciliation and pay reparation by bringing their gifts to fruition. The narrow gate seem unappealing to many, yet people who chose the narrow gate will find out that it is the shortest distance to the Father’s House.

Some may experience conversion in a radical sense when they renounce the world to dedicate themselves exclusively to the service of the Gospel. Believing in the Gospel, does not only suggest going to church on Sundays, attending Bible studies and teachings, nor helping out in the community or to our local parish activity but what is more important is the selfless attitude that one must have when doing all these things, the willingness to share the fruit of God’s love and to sacrifice our whole being for HIS sake.

All ministry/parish work should never be a burden to anyone and should always be balanced with our personal life. Our imperfections shouldn’t limit our capacity to serve the Lord for we are all given different gifts by HIM to share with everyone. Never feel unworthy because of limited talent but be more mindful on how one can overcome his/her limitation by putting its talent in good use.

The desire of passing through the wide gate maybe tempting because one might think it is physically taxing to devote one’s time on both spiritual and temporal activities at the same time.

On the other hand, we have to realize that the narrow gate is the passageway to discipleship in Christ which is a total abandonment of our wants, likes and human desires. As a result, we suffer but it is a redemptive suffering that opens the gate of the heavenly kingdom.

Bearing Good Fruit

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.” (John 15:1-2)

Christ is the vine and our lifeline while the Father is the gardener who cultivates our souls and cares for us to make us fruitful. As followers of Christ, we are the branches. The fruitful branches are the faithful believers who by their living union with Christ produce much good fruit. But those who turn away from following Christ and become unproductive will be separated from the vine.

“. . . I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit..” (John 15:16) As Christ’s disciples, we are called to bear good fruits. How do we bear good fruits? *“Remain in me, as I remain in you.” (John:15:4)* If we abide in Him who is good, we will surely produce good fruits. As the Lord says in Matthew 7:17, *“Just so, every good tree bears good fruit, and a rotten tree bears bad fruit.”* When we know that God loves us, we begin to love others. And, this is fruit bearing.

“. . . faith...if it does not have (good) works is dead.” (James 2:17) If we only appear to have faith without putting it to good work in our life, we would be just like the fig tree in Matthew 21:18-22 that withered and died. Genuine faith means bearing good fruits for God’ Kingdom by serving others out of love for God and not love for self. It also means being in ministry to live and share Christ’s Gospel to others, not because we are suppose to but because, deep in our hearts, we want to.

As followers of Christ, we draw our Spiritual nourishment from Him who is the vine that produces the good fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. (Gal 5:22) And, as disciples, we are known and recognized by these God’s qualities in us. Adopting these God-given virtues and sharing them to others is bearing good fruit.

In Matthew 7:15-16, the Lord warns us, *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but underneath are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them.”* Christ is referring to those who preach false reforms and doctrines that are not of God but inflict harm on souls, promote hatred and cause division.

In conclusion, as disciples, we are called by God to bear good fruits for God’s Kingdom. We bear good fruits by abiding in Christ, remaining in His love and sharing that love to others through our good example and good deeds.

Feast of Saints Peter and Paul

These two great saints of the catholic church are the two great pillars of the church Jesus founded, who on this day, were rewarded for their exemplary life and zeal. Crucifixion, (upside down)for Peter, followed by the beheading of Paul in Rome, year 67 A.D., through the vengeful sentence imposed by Nero.

St. Peter was appointed by Jesus to be the head of the apostles, and the supreme guide of His church(Matthew 16, 18, John 21, 15-17). His former name was SIMON, which Jesus changed to Peter, or Cephas, meaning Rock, to signify his rank among the twelve, and the outstanding trait of his character. He was born in Bethsaida on the sea of Galilee. He was a fisherman and lived at Capernaum. Peter, his brothers John and Andrew, were the first disciples of Jesus(John 1, 40-50). After the miraculous draught of fish on the sea of Galilee, Peter received his definitive call and left wife, family and occupation to take his place as leader of the Twelve.

After the Ascension, Peter always took the leading role, exercising the office of chief shepherd that Christ entrusted to him. He delivered the first sermon on Pentecost and received the first gentiles into the church(Acts 10:1).

According to tradition, he was the first Bishop of Antioch, and of Rome. He is the author of two letters, the first Christian encyclicals. Symbols: Two large keys, pastoral staff, fish, crowing cock, upside down cross.

St.Paul is called the thirteenth apostle and passionately preached the gospel. Under no other name can anyone be saved than through Jesus Christ(Act 4:12). I live no longer I, but Christ in me(Gal.2:20). He was a skilled tentmaker called Saul, who later became the great Christian persecutor, and who consequently converted on his way to Damascus, in 34 A.D.

He was born in Tarsus, Silicia, a roman province, of Jewish parents from Benjamin's tribe, and a learned Pharisee under Gamaliel. He spent three years in the Arabian desert, after his conversion and baptism under his new name-PAUL, preparing for his future mission, where he was granted special revelations, and saw Christ in person. Went back to Damascus to preach Christ. Met Peter in Jerusalem, stayed in Tarsus for the next four years, after which he and Barnabas worked at Antioch for a year, before returning to famine-stricken Jerusalem, in 44 A.D.

He is called the apostle of the gentiles and the nations, because he formed many churches from Asia minor to Europe- Cyprus, Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonia, Athens, Philippi, and Berea. Shipwrecked in Malta, imprisoned in Caesarea and Rome for two years each, and finally in Rome, where his final hours were spent. He wrote fourteen epistles, or pastoral love letters. Symbols-book and sword, three fountains, armor of God.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending
June 22, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$4,243.00

Thank you for your continued generosity

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

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month.Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11 Sat. Riverview CC Easton, PA Shotgun start at 1:30 pm Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia – cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola – badio1925@comcast.net; Jun/Luchi Schroth – schroth@rcn.com; Jun/Camille Viernes – qviernes@msn.com

YOUTH: Application for YE#14 has reached maximum capacity. Contact persons: Mario/Cecil Salonga (516-561-6854) Alan/Tess Cam (201-233-6991) Faith Ikalina (f4yech4n@gmail.com)

PASTORAL: ADVANCE PRAYER COUNSELING SEMINAR

June 30, 2007 7:30am to 7:00pm

July 1, 2007 7:30am to 7:00pm

Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ

Prerequisite: Completion of Prayer Counseling Seminar 1 Stay in is highly recommended!!!!

Please contact: Libby Gutierrez, Romy/Leni Chan, Tino/Aida Garcia, Boy/Des Parker, Ver/Baby Nacion, Jun/Fely Escobar, Ed/Nanie de los Reyes

TEACHING MINISTRY

July 7 (Sat) Apologetics LSS21, 22 & 23

July 13 (Fri) Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents

July 20 (Fri) Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles - (Basic Bible Seminar)

July 21 (Sat) Understanding Corporate Worship/ Prayer Leadership – LSS26

Encounter with Jesus – LSS28

July 27 (Fri) Intercessory Formation – LSS25

Service Formation – LSS 26

Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents

Counsels *from page 1*

a call and the cost of discipleship. He gives 3 examples of how would-be followers of Jesus respond to the call to follow him. A man, eagerly offering commitment, steps forward because he felt called to follow Jesus. Jesus points out that his followers must be willing to give up everything including leaving our comfort zones and security. The second wants to follow Jesus but wanted to bury his father first. Jesus' response of "Let the dead bury their dead" could be interpreted as either those spiritually dead who don't live according to the Gospel should bury their dead or more likely, the father of the would-be follower to Christ is old but a long way of dying. One must answer the call wholeheartedly without delay. The third example shows that following Jesus involves sacrifices including those circumstances that seemed very reasonable such as obligation to families. Love of family is a priority of Jesus but in this example, He is telling us to "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be given to you besides." (Mt6: 33).

Two men from our community together with 22 others "burned their boats or bridges" so to speak when they decided to answer the call to follow Jesus as ordained deacons of the Diocese of Metuchen. The sacrament of Holy Orders conferred an indelible spiritual character on these men. They cannot go back to what they were before, that is being a layman, because the character imprinted by ordination is forever. (Baptism and Confirmation also confers indelible mark on our characters, CCC 1581-1583)

For you and me, we also must take a symbolic journey to Jerusalem, though not a geographic location, to follow Jesus through death to life. Our life is a journey, a transforming reality for us. Our commitment to Christ must be total. Following Jesus is never easy yet it is worthwhile because the reward for a committed follower of Jesus is eternal life, "abounding joy in his presence, the delights at his right hand forever" (Ps 16-11b-c).

But how do we reconcile the conflicting responsibilities? St. Paul exhorts us to live a life in the Spirit. He suggests that these competing dilemmas could be resolved by exercising our freedom as children of God through love. Making decisions based on genuine love of God and neighbor enables us to prioritize our responsibilities. Christ is our ultimate commitment and God promised that all things will work for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. (Rom 8: 28)

We can trust on that promise. Give everything and receive a hundredfold.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

JUN 30

Mark 10 Field Trip - Land of Make Believe, refer to Ministry Announcement for details.

JUN 29-JUL 1

Solo Parents Encounter #9, La Casa del Prade, Maplewood, NJ, Contact persons: Nestor/Letty de Guzman (973)748-4066 or NesLet4139@yahoo.com)

JUN 29-JUL 1

Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ, refer to Ministry Announcement for details

JUL 6- 8

YE#14 St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA, refer to Ministry Announcement for details

JUL 13-15

Family Encounter #14, Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, Visit www.bldnewark.com Contact Persons: Fil/Hum Flores (201)501-0485

JUL 13-15

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark ME 20 Contact: Mosty & Ling Garcia 908-964-6584 or Mel & Remy Hernandez 908-281-5565

July 28

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark ME 20, Contact: Mosty & Ling Garcia 908-964-6584 or Mel & Remy Hernandez 908-281-5565

August 11

BLD Newark Golf Outing, Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA, Refer to Ministry Announcement for details

August 25

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark – Singles, Contact: Cris & Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821

MOMENT OF PRAYER

Prayer For Our Country

Lord, this is the land of my birth, the land I love. I am part of it and part of its people. You made this land and gave it to us. Rule among your people, so that we may never misuse this gift through selfishness and greed. Rule through our leaders and guide them in ways of justice and peace. Make us realize that we are called to spread the Good News not only among our own people but also throughout the whole world. So let us grow in faith, in hope, in love to become your faithful witnesses. AMEN.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 26

Bulletin Edition

July 7, 2007

29 Solo Parents Answered God's Call

La Casa Del Padre in Maplewood, NJ was the venue for a glorious and spirited Solo Parent Encounter #9 held on June 29-July 1, 2007. Msgr. Schetelick who served as the spiritual director, gave a series of scriptural and practical teachings that had an impact on the lives of the candidates. He enjoined them to persevere and to laugh when life gets tough. He reminds them that the road from a broken spirit to a cheerful heart takes a lot of hard work. "Do not be afraid to give your junk to the greatest recycler, named Jesus", he bids them. Tita Valonzo, Auring Bandilla, Mennen Castillo, Eve Alcruz, Niki Tolentino & Mont Gatchalian shared their own life's experiences to witness to God's love mercy and healing.

There were some light moments when the candidates had to act upon a Bible story from props provided by the Ministry and when Msgr. Schetelick had to lie down on the floor to read the song lyrics projected at the conference room ceiling.

(continue on page 3, col 2) 

Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar

God's abounding mercy and boundless love overflowed during the Advance Prayer Counseling Seminar held on June 30 and July 1 at the Ramada Inn. The dynamic 2 day seminar was skillfully conducted by Counselors Noel and Letty Trillana, Lith Golamco, Aimee Pena and Lee dela Fuente, who by their unique teaching abilities and sincere efforts draw the 84 attendees (DC-5, NC-1, Phoenix-1, Rockville-8, Trenton-4 and the rest from Newark) to focus and meditate on the topics.

As any BLD function, day 1 started with praise and worship led by Romy and Leni Chan of the Pastoral Ministry. The review of the four basic laws of Elijah followed. These laws are the foundation by which relationship is governed. Informative and enriching talks on How We See God,

(continue on page 4, col 2) 

COUNSELS

Persistence

WORD: Is 66:10-14c; Ps 66: 1-7, 16, 20; Gal 6:14-18; Lk 10:1-12, 17-20

ORDER: *Let the peace of Christ control your hearts. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.* (Col 3:15a, 16a)

THEME: We commit firmly to Christ when we evangelize in spite of hardships and obstacles.

REFLECTION: *'Go on your way; behold I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way'* (Lk 10:3-4). These were the Lord's instructions to the seventy-two disciples whom he sent out to the towns and villages as early evangelizers of the church. In today's environment these instructions could be translated into "carry no cash or credit cards, no luggage and take no car, just walk and no socializing along the way". Our reaction now may not be like that of the early disciples who were not discouraged, but who rather persisted. They came back to Jesus waving their list of accomplishments and they started to gloat. *'Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name'* (Lk 10:17). The disciples may have expected a pat on the back from the Lord for a job well done. Instead, the Lord told them *'do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven'* (Lk 10:20).

What would the reaction be of players and even of the fans if after winning the championship and clamoring for a ticker tape parade the team owner says, "your reward will be the knowledge that you are the champions." There would

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God's Promise for the Week

"Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (Lk 10:20)



Believing Without Seeing

In refusing to believe what was said about Jesus by those who had met him, to refuse to believe without the possibility of placing his fingers in the holes in Christ's body, Thomas was of course taking a risk. To believe or not to believe, both are

risks and require faith.

In the dictionary, the word "*faith*" has several translations such as:

- (1) Belief and trust in and loyalty to God
- (2) Belief in the traditional doctrines of a religion
- (3) Firm belief in something for which there is no proof
- (4) Complete trust

The resurrection of Jesus was equally a surprise to His disciples as they have not expected Him to return. Instead of being prepared and ready for Jesus' return, they were caught off their guard and they had let everything go. Even worse, when Thomas got the tip off that Jesus had risen and was alive, still he refused to believe. Like Thomas we may be caught off guard for the knock on the door. We may be unprepared to consider the existence of that which we cannot see or touch. Yet we know in our hearts that there is so much more to life than can be seen with the naked eye.

Without faith we are restricted in what we can see, it is only with the vision of faith that all things are revealed. Faith does not offer proof but rather it removes the veils that prevent us from seeing deeper truths unavailable to physical vision. Jesus praises those who see with faith and called them blessed.

"Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." (John 20:29). The requirement for faith is a willingness to trust and one must become childlike to retain a child's gift of wonder. If we are prepared to take that risk and open ourselves to the possibility of being surprised by God, then that faith will expand our vision. Faith can open our lives and allow Gods miracles to come true.

Are we prepared to be surprised by God? And those of us who have accepted the presence of the risen Christ, then do we still have the capacity to believe in miracles for ourselves and others? There is the possibility that the risen Christ might turn up unexpectedly, asking to see how well we are tending to that which has been entrusted to us.

Do we need to have a 20/20 perfect vision to see Christ in order for us to believe? Certainly not, this has already been verified from the Gospel of John **20:20** that Jesus' resurrected when He showed to His disciples His hands that bore the nail marks and His side inflicted by the lance. And so with faith, we should be able to see Jesus in every person we meet because Jesus loves us all.



Saint Maria Goretti

July 6th marks the feast day of the youngest canonized Roman Catholic saint, St. Maria Goretti . Maria Goretti died a martyr at the age of eleven, making a choice based on her faith. She is the patron saint of modern youth,

young women, purity, and victims of rape.

Maria Theresa Goretti was born in Corinaldo, Italy on October 16, 1890, the daughter of humble sharecroppers, Luigi Goretti & Assunta Carlini. Maria was baptized on October 17, 1890, and confirmed by the Bishop of Senigallia on October 4, 1896. In 1899, the Goretti family moved to the town of Ferriere, Italy in search of work. Desperate for work, her father struck a deal with a Signor Serenelli, and their two families lived together in a building owned by Count Mazzolini.

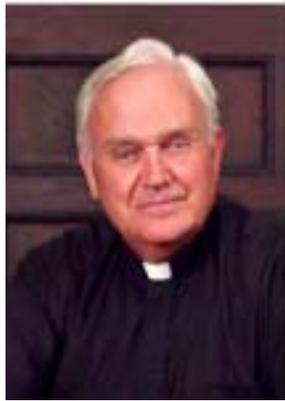
Her father died of malaria and her mother struggled to feed her children. "Marietta", as she was called, was a very pious and sweet-tempered girl, who helped as much as she could in caring for her siblings. Maria blossomed to become a very pretty girl, who looked more mature than her age. Soon her teenaged neighbor, Alessandro Serenelli, became sexually obsessed with her. He propositioned her several times, and every time, she would not yield her purity.

On July 5, 1902, the two were left alone with Maria's toddler sister, Theresa. Alessandro attacked and tried to rape her, but she remained unyielding, crying out, "No! It is a sin! God does not want it!" Angrily, Alessandro stabbed her fourteen times. The doctors were unable to save Maria. While suffering for twenty hours, she forgave and prayed for her assailant before she died. Her last earthly gaze was upon a picture of the Blessed Mother on July 6, 1920.

Years later, while in jail, Alessandro saw Maria in a dream, offering him fourteen lilies as a symbol of forgiveness for the fourteen wounds inflicted upon her. When he awoke, Alessandro became deeply repentant and converted. After his release from prison, he begged for forgiveness, and was forgiven by Maria's mother saying, "If my daughter can forgive him, who am I to withhold forgiveness?"

Maria was canonized by Pope Pius XII on June 24, 1950. Both Assunta & Alessandro attended the canonization together. St. Maria Goretti's life is a testament of God's triumph over sin, manifested in a simple, ordinary, young girl's life. It is a reminder to all young girls that purity is worth dying for.

***Make the Covenant News
a part of your covenant life.***



Fr. Paul Speaks

In the State of Grace

Most of you are aware that I was ordained in 1954, eight years before the opening of the second Vatican council. For most of you reading this, the second Vatican

council is already ancient history. Age gives us a different perspective not only on social realities, but on spiritual and supernatural realities as well.

What was happening to the Church and the world during those challenging years? There was a sense of revolution in the air. Things were changing rapidly. A very unpopular Vietnam war was in the news. Things that were deemed untouchable became questioned. The decrees and the documents of the Council were often interpreted as part of the radical change that was not only affecting society, but the Church as well.

As we look back now, many of us (including myself) ran ahead of the Holy Spirit. Providentially two years after the close of the Council in 1967, the charismatic renewal with the grace of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit came into the Catholic Church. It was an answer to the prayer of Pope John the 23rd who called the Council into existence. He prayed that a new Pentecost come into the Church. We just celebrated the 40th anniversary of the charismatic renewal, an answer to the Pope's prayer. One of the challenges of change and updating is to make previous certitudes and realities more real for people WITHOUT destroying the underlying truth. This is especially important when we talk about Christian revelation and moral teachings that did not change in 1965. We need the direction of the Holy Spirit to keep us on the path of truth. One of the realities that I came across in reading recently was the phrase, "the state of grace". I have not seen this phrase written down for many years. As I was reflecting, I realized that this truth has practical consequences. We must die in "the state of grace" to go to heaven. What this means is nothing more than dying in the friendship of God, in loving relationship with Him without mortal sin. What is more important than this, eternal salvation! Is our life now deepening that friendship with God? What motivates us to do what we do, spiritual or secular? In the "old" days perhaps the "state of grace" was defined in a very mechanical way, much like a ticket to heaven. I call attention to the third teaching on the LSS weekend. It teaches about "new life". This new life IS the state of grace, that participation in the very life of God, a dynamic, not static change that takes place in the core of our souls. Are you ready to move into eternity, confident that you are "in the state of grace"?

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). Send to rguia@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com); LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

ISIAH 58

BLD Newark Golf Outing - August 11, 2007 (Saturday)
Riverview CC, Easton, PA Shotgun start @ 1:30 PM
Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia (cclaricia@yahoo.com)
Ed/Grace (badio1925@comcast.net); Jun/Luchi Schroth (schroth@rcn.com); Jun/Camille Viernes (qviernes@msn.com)

TEACHINGS

- July 7 (Sat) Apologetics LSS 21, 22 & 23
- July 13 (Fri) Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents
- July 20 (Fri) Mark 10, John 6, Youth
Singles (Basic Bible Seminar)
- July 21 (Sat) Understanding Corporate Worship/
Prayer Leadership – LSS 26
Encounter with Jesus – LSS 28
- July 27 (Fri) Intercessory Formation – LSS 25
Service Formation – LSS 26
Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents

Note: *Friday teachings – after worship*
Saturday teachings @ St. Mary's from 1-6pm

29 Solo Parents... (cont. from page 1)

Vic and Dee Lim are class shepherds of SPE 9 graduates as follows: Teresita Furman, Melita Cocjin, Tomasa Ferando, Triffy Floro, Peter Caffrey*, Aurora DeCastro, Lorraine Marks, Reynalda Manahan, Genalyn Villanueva*, Elizabeth Francis, Aida Gamolo, Ellen Celis*, Rowena Sia, Melissa Ann Pestano, Evelyn Love, David Severt, Beth Padua, Marcelita Bermudez, Perpetua Paclarin*, Ursula Tyscka, Eleanor Elomina, Esperanza Maclang*, Margarita Soto, Lucia Bascones, Maria Rodriguez, Ignatius Igkenegbe, Clemencia Crisologo, Liberacion Gutierrez*, and Ricardo Cruz. (*Coordinators)

The weekend ended with the Eucharistic celebration held at St. Joseph Church, Maplewood, NJ. The graduates praised and thanked God for giving them another chance to know and love Him, by spending this weekend of an encounter with Him.

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

be a mass defection by the players to the other teams and the fans would drive the team owner out of town.

The early Christians were called to undertake the Herculean task of spreading the unpopular message of the Lord that many a time resulted in their martyrdom. Their task was made more difficult by the fact that *'the harvest is abundant but the laborers are few'* (Lk 10:2). The Lord sent out seventy-two of his disciples to the towns and villages that were teeming with thousands of people. With only a handful of them and without the modern technology of emails, cell phones, television or radio to advertise and spread the word of God, it must have been an arduous task to undertake. Yet they persisted and were able to accomplish the work. Now Christianity is found in all the corners of the world.

The challenges faced by the early Christians are the same challenges that we, as followers of Christ, face today. We get ridiculed or, at the very least, frowned upon by friends and family for our dedication to the work of Christ. You have worships on Fridays, teachings on Saturdays, Mass on Sundays and more meetings during the week! You must have no life.

'Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life' (Jn 6:47). The call to us, especially in community, even becomes harder. We are faced with the difficult challenge of trying to live our lives in the renewed state that the Lord calls us to and we have to live it in the imperfect environment of community life. This is where we can learn from the examples of the early disciples and the instructions that the Lord gave them. First, focus on the task at hand. Go out and evangelize without the excess baggage that will just weigh you down. Second, say *'peace to this household'* (Lk 10:5). Peace must first prevail in our community for us to effectively evangelize. And lastly, let the peace of God control our hearts *'if a peaceful person lives there'* (Lk 10:6). But all these do not happen overnight. That is why the overriding theme of this counsel is persistence. In the course of our walk with Christ through our community life, various difficulties will come our way, such as the lack of workers for the harvest. If we allow ourselves to become disillusioned and fall by the wayside, we become part of the harvest instead of being the workers. We are, thus, called to persist despite all obstacles. By consistent dedication to prayer and living a life of service, nothing can stop us in our walk with Christ. *'From now on, let no one make troubles for me for I bear the marks of Jesus on my body'* (Gal 6:17).

DIRECTION:

Be faithful in your daily prayer commitment and your ministry work as a disciple of the community.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- July 6 - 8 Youth Encounter #14**
St. Francis Retreat House, Easton, PA
Contacts: Faith Ikalina (*f4yech4n@gmail.com*),
Mario/Cecil Salonga (*mcsalonga@optonline.net*),
Alan/Tess Cam (*atetscam23@hotmail.com*)
- July 13 -15 Family Encounter #14**
Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA
Visit www.bldnewark.com
Contact Persons: Fil/Hum Flores (201)501-0485
- July 28 Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament, Newark
ME 20, Contact: Mosty & Ling Garcia (908) 964-6584 or Mel & Remy Hernandez (908) 281-5565
- August 11 BLD Newark Golf Outing**
Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA - 1:30pm
(Refer to Ministry Announcement for details)
- August 18 Community Day**
- August 25 Soup Kitchen** at Blessed Sacrament, Newark -
Singles
Contact: Cris & Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821

Advance Prayer... (cont. from page 1)

Generational Sin, Depression, Parental Inversion and Substitute Mate, Healing Life's Common Sexual Experiences and Healing Victims of Sexual Abuse became the highlights of the day. Attendees were assigned groupings for the session where each one had the opportunity to be a Counselor, Counselee and Prayer Warrior. Q's & A's on the topics added flavor to the afternoon teachings. The day ended with a Eucharistic Celebration by Fr. Robert Lamoirez, with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:00pm.

Day 2 resumed with praise and worship led by Boy and Des Parker, followed by talks on Slumbering and Captive Spirit/Feeding and Caring of Spirit, Spiritual Rebellion and Dyslexia, Emotional Abuse and Inner Healing and Deliverance. After lunch, the small groups continued on with their practicum, followed by Q's & A's, and highlighted by a heartbreaking Counselor/Counselee demo session. The day wrapped up with a Eucharistic Celebration officiated by the same priest.

As in 1 Timothy 1:14, *'Indeed, the grace of our Lord has been abundant, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus'*.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending June 29, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, \$ 3,211.00
Mission & Fast for Poor

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Collection from June 25 Bo Sanchez talk
\$1,694.42 cash to Bo Sanchez Ministries
\$1,580 checks to BLD- GK Fund



FE14 Families Heed God's Call

"But as for the seed that fell on rich soil, they are the ones who, when they have heard the word, embrace it with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance." Luke 8:15

Last weekend was a joyous one, marking Christ's victory in the lives of twenty families, as they heeded God's call, becoming our community's new FE 14 family. The Spirit-filled Family Encounter weekend was directed by Father Larry Tan, SDB, who is also the author of the Family Encounter manual. The love of Christ was made manifest through the humble service of the FE 13 sponsoring families along with their class shepherds. Parents and children alike worked hand in hand as they witnessed Christ's humility and servanthood to others.

The FE 14 families experienced a roller coaster of emotions as they listened to the inspiring stories of the family sharers, the Raagas & Calilap families. Through the various exercises, they were all reminded by Fr. Larry to be "HOT" (honest, open & trusting) with each other. Tears of sadness were eventually replaced by tears of joy as the weekend's miracles unfolded.

Let us all congratulate and give a warm welcome to the Alba , Alburo , Booc , Canlas*, Castillo , Clemente*, Garcia*, Gongob, Guiang, Laput, Lopez, Marcial, Mayo, Montecillo, Reyes*, Santos, Sarabia, Soquite, Umahon, and Ymbong** families. God's newest harvest will be tended by class shepherds Manny & Nette Manguiat. May God's love shine through them! To God be the glory!



COUNSELS

Compassion & Mercy

WORD: Gn 18:1-10a Ps 15:2-5
Col 1:24-28 Lk 10:38-42

ORDER:

"Live in the presence of the Lord"
Psalm 15:1a

REFLECTION: *"Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving?"* Luke 10:40. In our Gospel reading, Martha cries out these words to our Lord as she serves Him, while her sister Mary sat at the Lord's feet listening to Him speak. The Lord responded, *"Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken from her"* Luke 10:42. Clearly, Martha's anxiety kept her from the *"better part"* of knowing Jesus, though she was busy serving Him.

The lives of Jesus' followers are filled with to-do lists such as cleaning the house, laundry, preparing meals, looking after the children or aging parents, work and community service. We tend to do many things in the service of God and our neighbor, whether it is at home or in the community, that sometimes it leaves us empty. But Jesus wants us to find Him in the midst of our daily activities. Our Lord said in the Gospel, *"there is need of only one thing"* and that one thing, is in the context of the Psalm ... *"live in the presence of the Lord."*

Martha and Mary both wanted to please the Lord. In fact, both do please Him. ☞ (page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"One who does these things shall never be disturbed."

Psalm 15:5

Singles Ministry Continues to Grow

The Singles Ministry has again experienced an amazing growth as our Singles Encounter #18 yielded an abundant harvest of 41 new graduates! Welcome, Class of SE#18! Indeed, the Singles Ministry continuously grows through its sponsorship of two encounter weekends a year. The SE is open to singles 20 years old and over. Today the Singles Ministry does not only consist of younger members but mature singles as well. For God calls His children regardless of age who needs spiritual guidance in their walk and to know Jesus in a very intimate way.

As we follow Jesus, we become increasingly under the Spirit's control. All of us, though, continue to struggle with our old nature-- but lasting change happens on God's timetable, not ours. God says in 2 Cor 12: 9, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.*" The Singles meet three Fridays a month with two full worships and one Friday dedicated to worship and teaching.

About three years ago, we formed a BLD Women's Group to offer a helping hand to those who are unable to open up to their circles during the LWG and WSC. We meet for WSC once a month, during which we strip away our masks and share our inner most feelings, in trust and without fear of being judged. We pray the rosary, read and reflect on God's Word, renew our minds and apply His directions to our life. The men have their own group as well. Many singles have a devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, spending quiet time before the Lord to listen and to talk to Him.

Most recently, four Singles finished the Teachers Development Program. We give praise, honor and thanks to the Lord, for these Singles are now eligible to teach in our ministry. The Singles Ministry is so blessed to have many spiritual men and women whose lives are dedicated to the worship, love and service of our God Almighty. At the recent Advance Prayer Counseling seminar, nine of us learned new shepherding skills that will help us become better pastoral agents of the community. The Singles are also mission-engaged, as we regularly make nursing home visitations to minister to the needs of resident patients and the elderly. We also support the Archdiocese of Newark Council for the Youth and Young Adults in their various outreach activities and conferences. May Jesus be praised as the Singles continue to share His love to everyone within and outside our community.

Worthy of You

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Whoever receives you receives me and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me." (Mt 10:37-40)

The dictionary defines worthy as deserving. But how does one become deserving of God's love?

We have a God who gave us everything we need and more. He gave us His words through the 10 Commandments to use as our guide in life. He sent His Son to show us in flesh and blood how to love and live with one another. Yet, we constantly turn away from Him.

We let sin in every form – envy, pride, hatred, greed, selfishness, self-righteousness, ambition – to rule our life. We refuse to acknowledge His right to rule over us. We only turn back to Him when our earthly passions fail us. But that our God does not keep a list of our mistakes and does not even remember any of our sins is amazing!

The Gospel and Jesus Christ Himself teach us that our God, like the good shepherd, suffers greatly at the loss of even one of us and tries to do everything in His power to win us back. He does the same thing daily for those who strayed from Him through sin. He guides us back to the way of salvation and claim us His own. His love and mercy is unconditional and constant. In His great compassion, He gave us our Blessed Mother as our intercessor and willed His only Son to die on the cross as the ultimate way to salvation and redemption. Who could be worthy of such love? By human merit, no one! By the grace of God in Christ Jesus, we are! "*For in God our hearts rejoice; in Your Holy Name we trust. May your kindness, Lord, be upon us; we have put our hope in you.*" (Ps 33:21-22)

PRAYER FOR PEACE IN THE FAMILY

Lord, thank you for blessing my home
with the gift of life and love

Remove all animosities or discord –
irritants that blow up to intolerable quarrels
Prevent me from hurling the first ugly word
that will take time to mend.

Bless each one of us with character
to live our lives not in careless abandon
but with a collective purpose
to make each other happy.

Help us to see You in
every member of our household

Be an anchor to all our trials

The goal of all our triumphs

Stay with us now and all the days of our lives.

AMEN.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

According to the most ancient Carmelite chronicles, the Order has its origins with the disciples of the prophets Elias and Eliseus. They lived in caves on Mount Carmel. They honored the Queen of Heaven as the Virgin who is to give birth to the Savior. When the reality replaced the symbol, the pious ascetics of Carmel were converted to the Christian Faith. In the 12th century, many pilgrims from Europe who had followed the Crusaders came to join the solitaries. A rule was established and the Order began to spread to Europe.

Amid the many persecutions raised against the Order of Mount Carmel, newly arrived in Europe, Saint Simon Stock, General of the Order, turned with filial confidence to the Blessed Mother of God. As he knelt in prayer on July 16, 1251, in the White Friars' convent at Cambridge, She appeared before him and presented him with the well-known brown scapular, a loose sleeveless garment destined for the Order of Carmel, reaching from the shoulders to the knees. It was given as an assurance, for all who die wearing it, of Her heavenly protection from eternal death. An extraordinary promise indeed, but one requiring a life of prayer and sacrifice.

Devotion to the blessed habit spread quickly throughout the Christian world. Pope after pope enriched it with indulgences, and innumerable miracles put their seal upon its efficacy. The first of them was worked at Winchester on a man dying in despair, who when the scapular was laid upon him by Saint Simon Stock at once asked for the Sacraments.

In the year 1636, a certain gentleman, a member of a cavalry regiment, was mortally wounded at the battle of Tehin, a bullet having lodged near his heart. He was then in a state of grievous sin, but he had time to make his confession. Afterwards a surgeon probed his wound, and the bullet was found to have driven his scapular into his heart. When it had been withdrawn he soon expired, making profound acts of gratitude to the Blessed Virgin who had prolonged his life miraculously, thereby preserving him from the irremediable death of his soul.

At Lourdes in 1858, the Virgin chose to make Her last apparition on July 16th, feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the day the Church commemorates Her apparition to Saint Simon Stock. And at Fatima on October 13, 1917, it is as Our Lady of Mount Carmel that Mary appeared when She said farewell to the three children. Throughout the ages, the Queen of Carmel has always kept a faithful watch over the destinies of Her cherished children on earth.

Source: Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints, by Msgr. Paul Guérin (Bloud et Barral: Paris, 1882), Vol. 8.

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

SINGLE's: **Archdiocesan Outreach Service** every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

ISAIAH 58: BLD Golf Outing - Sat. August 11 Riverview CC - Easton, PA • 1:30 shotgun start Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia - cclaricia@yahoo.com • Ed/Grace Badiola - badio1925@comcast.net • Jun/Luchi Schroth - schroth@rcn.com

John 6: Six Flags-Great Adventure Outing - Saturday, July 21, 2007. 9AM assembly & 9PM arrival at St. Mary's Church Rahway - **Requesting volunteers for transportation & chaperones**, please contact Boyet/Zita Cruz (ztcruz80@yahoo.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

ME25: PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila) Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices. Proceeds of sale will benefit the **"Pledge of Love" & "GK Fundraisers"**. Please contact any ME25 for advance orders.

TEACHING:

July 20, Friday • Mark10, John 6, Youth teachings

- Singles - Basic Bible study- after worship •

July 21, Saturday • Understanding Corporate Worship / Prayer Leadership LSS26

- Encounter with Jesus - LSS28

July 27, Friday - Intercessory Formation - LSS25

- Service Formation - LSS26
- Basic Bible Study - Solo Parents

All Friday teachings after worship & Saturday Teachings @ St. Mary's from 1-6pm

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending July 13, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for the Poor \$3,239.00

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.

Counselors (continued from Page 1...)

The difference between them is that Martha takes the way of service through her hospitality. Mary on the other hand, takes the path of relationship – being with the Lord, listening and taking His words into her heart. One involves doing; the other involves being. But we need to see that Jesus is not asking us to choose between being Martha or Mary. To be fully a disciple of Jesus, we need to be both. In order to be a good Martha, we must first be a good Mary.

Abraham in our first reading is like Martha, a gracious host. He was immediately moved to welcome the three strangers, give them rest and offer them a feast. When we treat people with compassion and generosity, we find that we are taking care of God as well. *"I tell you, anything you did for one of my brothers, you did for me."* (Matthew 25: 40). Generous giving brings us God's blessings. Abraham was blessed with a son because of his compassion and charitable deeds. In our daily work, Jesus wants us to tune our ears to those who need help and attention, always in the look out for the needs of others. Abraham did. Unfortunately, so many of us are too busy – that we run right by many people who are crying, at least inside. Our service needs a center, or it becomes anxious, driven, not free. Service has to be centered and founded on listening to the Lord and listening to one another.

There is much to be done for the Lord and for God's people. Our community needs us in our mission field-in feeding the homeless, visiting the sick and elderly in the nursing home or supporting our medical mission and Gawad Kalinga projects. Having compassion and mercy to those in need is very much a part of what we, as followers of Christ, should be all about. That need may be physical, financial or emotional. It may surface through an e-mail, a letter, a call, or just by the Holy Spirit laying someone on our heart, someone who needs a hug, a prayer or some praise or an encouragement. Those who follow Jesus can't be too busy that they just shrug it off to keep running our marathon. Otherwise, we will miss the divine assignments around us. The one necessary thing however is first, our union with God...our living in His presence.

We cannot reduce our spiritual life to prayer. If we do, prayer becomes our speech to God, a list of our needs, wants and desires. And we may not

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- July 21 • **John 6 Outing** - Six Flags Great Adventure Park, Jackson, NJ - 9AM departure from St. Mary's & 9pm arrival
- July 28 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark, NJ - ME 20**
Contact: Mosty/Ling Garcia (908) 964-6584 or Mel/Remy Hernandez (908) 281-5565
- August 11 • **BLD Newark Golf Outing**
Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA
(See ministry announcement for more info)
- August 18 • **Community Day** - Johnson's Park, Piscataway, NJ
- August 25 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark - Singles** - Please contact Chris/Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821
- October 6 & 7 • **Life in the Spirit Seminar #29** - St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
- October 20 • **"A Night of Praise & Worship with Don Moen"** • The Ritz Theatre in Elizabeth - doors open at 6:30pm and Worship starts at 8pm

A NIGHT of PRAISE & WORSHIP with DON MOEN

LIVE AT THE Ritz THEATRE

Saturday October 20 2007

Doors open at 6:30 pm
Worship starts at 8 pm

TICKET PRICES:
\$35
\$55
\$75

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE GAWAD KALINGA PROGRAM

FOR TICKETS: WWW.WORSHIPINJERSEY.COM

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PARKING BEHIND THEATRE • PARKING DECK OPENS AT 6 PM
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hear His voice, His call or His word. On the other hand, we cannot simply go about serving our Lord without prayer because we might not hear His voice either. So, we need to prepare our hearts with prayer, but have open hearts to hear the Lord.

DIRECTION:

- 1) Go out of your way to help someone in need this week.
- 2) See Christ in everyone you meet.



BENEDICT XVI PLEADS FOR END OF WAR

Says Earth Could Resemble a Paradise

LORENZAGO DI CADORE, Italy, JULY 22, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI made a plea for a rejection of the arms race and the attempt to solve problems with war, which he called a “useless bloodbath.”

The Pope urged an end to war today at the midday Angelus address in Piazza Calvi in Lorenzago di Cadore, where he is on vacation. “From this place of peace here in the north of Italy, where one feels even more vitally how unacceptable the ‘useless bloodbaths’ are, I renew the call to follow with tenacity the way of law, to firmly renounce the arms race, to reject in general the temptation to face new situations with old systems,” he said.

The Holy Father recalled that 90 years ago on Aug. 1, 1917, the Pontiff from whom he took his name, Benedict XV, published his celebrated “Nota Alle Potenze Belligeranti” (Note to the Warring Powers), asking that an end be put to the First World War. “As that huge conflict raged, the Pope had the courage to affirm that it was a ‘useless bloodbath,’” Benedict XVI affirmed. He continued: “This expression of his left a mark on history. It was a justified remark given the concrete situation in that summer of 1917, especially on the front here in this part of northern Italy. But those words, ‘useless bloodbath,’ have a larger, prophetic application to other conflicts that have destroyed countless human lives.”

Constructing peace: The Holy Father added, “Benedict XV’s ‘Nota’ did not limit itself to condemning war; it indicated, at a juridical level, the ways to construct an equitable and durable peace.” Concretely, he said, the Pontiff of the First World War proposed: “the moral force of law, balanced and regulated disarmament,

► page 4 pls.

COUNSELS

INTERCESSION

WORD: Gn 18:20-32; Ps 138:1-3, 6-8; Col 2:12-14; Lk 11:1-13

ORDER: “Ask and you will receive” (Lk 11:9a)

THEME: We commit firmly to Christ when we persevere in praying for others.

REFLECTION: When Jesus was asked by his disciples how they ought to pray, He wanted to teach everyone the perfect and complete prayer that would please His father in heaven. He taught the Our Father, our Lord’s own prayer. In the Lord’s Prayer, we see the right position or attitude to take when praying: there is humility, respect, and the acknowledgement of our need and failures. This is called our “right standing” with God. Abraham was bold and persistent in pleading for the people of Sodom & Gomorrah, because he had been faithful and had given up everything to follow and obey God. In James 5:16 it is written “*the prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.*” When we live that kind of righteousness, and when we persevere in our daily prayers to overcome tiredness, distractions, dryness, lack of time and when we do these in every moment of danger, of joy, of need, how could God, our loving Father refuse?

Jesus commands us “Ask! Seek! Knock!” (ASK – a new acronym of faith)

Ask: Grab the opportunity to be right beside Him, during moments of grace, holy hours, worship services or Eucharistic celebrations. ► page 4

Promise of the Week

“And I tell you, ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you”. Lk11:9

NURTURED WEALTH

“He said to them in reply, ‘Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted.’ Matthew 13:11.

Knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God granted to us translates to our Christian faith. It is our faith in God as our “Father” and Jesus Christ as the “Son of God” that gives us salvation, and allows us to expose our heart and soul to His kingdom. Our faith in Him is our wealth. The more we reflect on His words, the more we are enlightened. The more enlightened we are, the stronger our faith, and the wealthier we become in God’s eyes. Our spiritual faith is the only wealth we need to lead our lives, and the only fortune we could muster that would mean more to God than anything else. It is our faith that makes us more compassionate, understanding, peaceful and loving to others. It is this faith that makes us see Jesus in others.

In this parable, Jesus also warns us that the spiritual wealth we have acquired could be easily taken away. Those who do not nurture their faith are more liable to be distracted easily, lose direction in their lives and could lose their faith altogether. This is why He said, *“To anyone who has, more will be given, and he will grow rich, from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” Mt 13:12 .*

Our Lord Jesus spoke in parables because we are compelled to look deep in our hearts, to reflect and look closely, if we indeed practice our faith through how we have lived in the past and the present. He wants us to meditate and absorb the full meaning of His words, which we now know as the Words of Life. He wants us to nurture our faith by relating His teachings to our lives. Christ’s parables enable us to enrich our faith in Him. *“This is why I speak in parables, because ‘they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.’” Mt 13:13.*

This is our calling, “To nurture our faith and grow in spirit with our Lord, leaving our fate in His hands and letting Him have absolute influence in our lives”. Let us keep our hearts open and be more responsive to His calling so we may see clearly and hear loudly. May we continue to allow our Lord’s words to lead us into complete enlightenment and let our devotion in Him become stronger for our faith is the key to the golden gates of Heaven.

FAITH IS NECESSARY

“He that believeth and is baptized”, said Christ, “shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16); and St. Paul sums up this solemn declaration by saying: “Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6).

The absolute necessity of faith is evident from the following considerations: God is our beginning and our end and has supreme dominion over us, we owe Him, consequently, due service which we express by the term religion. Now true religion is the true worship of the true God. But it is not for man to fashion a worship according to his own ideals; none but God can declare to us in what true worship consists, and this declaration constitutes the body of revealed truths, whether natural or supernatural.

To these, if we would attain the end for which we came into the world, we are bound to give the assent of faith. It is clear, moreover, that no one can profess indifference in a matter of such vital importance. During the Reformation period no such indifference was professed by those who quitted the fold; for them it was not a question of faith or unfaith, so much as of the medium by which the true faith was to be known and put into practice.

The attitude of many outside the Church is now one of absolute indifference, faith is regarded as an emotion, as a peculiarly subjective disposition which is regulated by no known psychological laws. Thus Taine speaks of faith as *“une source vive qui s’est formée au plus profond de l’âme, sous la poussée et la chaleur des instincts immanents”* — “a living fountain which has come into existence in the lowest depths of the soul under the impulse and the warmth of the immanent instincts”. Indifferentism in all its phases was condemned by Pius IX in the Syllabus Quanta cura: in Prop. XV, “Any man is free to embrace and profess whatever form of religion his reason approves of”; XVI, “Men can find the way of salvation and can attain to eternal salvation in any form of religious worship”; XVII “We can at least have good hopes of the eternal salvation of all those who have never been in the true Church of Christ.” (Source: New Advent.org)

St James the Apostle

For James there was no indication that this was the day that his life would change. As James sat mending his nets in the boat with his brother John and his father Zebedee, he must have watched in wonder as his partner Simon brought in nets loaded with fish he had caught at the command of Jesus.

As he watched Jesus walk toward him by stopping by their boat, called James and his brother John to do just what Simon and Andrew had done. Without argument or discussion, James and John left their boat and even their father behind, and followed Jesus.

The first thing James saw after he followed Jesus was his teaching with authority in the synagogue and the cure of Simon's mother-in-law. He was chosen by Jesus to be one of the twelve apostles, given the mission to proclaim the good news, and authority to heal and cast out demons. To be named one of the twelve James must have had faith and commitment.

But even among the apostles he held a special place. When Jesus raised Jairus' daughter when all thought her dead, he only allowed James, John, and Peter to come with him. Even more important when he went up to the mountain to pray, he wanted James, John, and Peter to go with him. And it was there on the mountain they were privileged to witness what no one else had seen — Jesus transfigured in his glory, speaking to Moses and Elijah, as the voice of God spoke from a cloud.

And with Simon Peter, James and John were the only ones of the apostles that Jesus gave a special name: Sons of Thunder. To be singled out in these ways, James must have been a close and respected friend of Jesus.

James and John did show further lack of understanding of their friend and Lord when he was turned away by Samaritans. They wanted to use their newfound authority as apostles not to heal but to bring fire down on the town. Jesus did reprimand them for their unforgiving, vengeful view of their power.

But despite all these misunderstandings, it was still James, Peter, and John that Jesus chose to join him in prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane for his final prayer before his arrest

Acts 12:1 tells us that James was one of the first martyrs of the Church. King Herod Agrippa I killed him with a sword in an early persecution of the Church. There is a story that the man who arrested James became a convert after hearing James speak at his trial and was executed with him.

James is called James the Greater and the patron saint of hat makers, rheumatoid sufferers, and laborers.

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 or cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) or LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing Home Visit scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11 (Saturday)Riverview CC Easton, PA, Shotgun start at 1:30 pm Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia – cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola – badio1925@comcast.net; Jun/Luchi Schroth – schroth@rcn.com; Jun/Camille Viernes – qviernes@msn.com

TEACHING: July 27 (Fri)- Intercessory Formation – LSS25, Service Formation – LSS 26, Basic Bible Seminar – Solo Parents
August - NO TEACHINGS SCHEDULED

Note: Friday teachings – after worship
Saturday teachings @ St. Mary's from 1-6pm

PLEDGE OF LOVE UPDATE

As of July 20, 2007
\$7,665.00

SPECIAL ANOUCNEMENT IMPORTANT PARKING REGULATIONS:

The Police and Fire Departments have notified the St. Mary's Church to inform everyone using the church's properties to follow the parking guidelines and signs posted in the premise.

Practical Guidelines:

- For parking areas between the Auditorium and the Annex Building, using only designated parking areas. PARK ONLY ON ONE SIDE where there is no "NO PARKING" sign. Parking on both sides create problems with FIRE TRUCK or POLICE CARS to pass thru in emergency situations.

- For parking areas between the St. Mary's School and the Church, using only the designated parking areas. These parking areas are for cars with DISABLED PARKING PERMITS ONLY.

Thank you for your cooperation

Counsels from page 1

Seek: Look for Him in time of confusion, difficulties or bewilderment. Read the bible for direction, enlightenment or comfort. Know what His will is for us through honest and sincere spiritual discernment. Go to a spiritual director, read religious books, study our faith and its traditions.

Knock: Persevere when asking for miracles, praying for hopeless cases, for hardened hearts, for release from bondage and captivity. Fast for specific periods, causes and persons. Make devotions and ask for help from the saints in heaven!

Pray, and in doing so, expect God to answer them. God wants to answer our prayers because He wants us to know and be comforted with the knowledge that the blessings comes from Him alone, not because of coincidence, fate, karma, cosmic divergence, luck, not even because of our own hard work and abilities.

When we are touched by the Holy Spirit, and profess that Jesus is our Lord & Saviour, our prayers cease to be half-hearted recitation of words, memorized from childhood. They become thanksgiving, intercession, praise and worship. They become a mature commitment to trust and love God with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul and all our strength. *“The Holy Spirit intercedes for us ... and intercedes for the saints according to the will of God”* Romans 8:26-27. From the time the eyes of our hearts were opened to the truth that God loves us, and that He sent his only son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins, we started to realize that there is nothing that will separate us from the love of God. This is the blessed assurance of the Holy Spirit. This is why when we live by the Spirit, prayer, intercession and service becomes our daily companion, our way of life.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit enable us to know the inner life of Jesus, His thoughts, desires, and intentions. He empowers us to become prayer warriors able to hold back the assault of the evil one against our loved ones, our families, and our church. But let us not be deceived, the evil one would very much want us to stop praying for each other, he wants to silence us by making us focus and dwell on our limitations, our differences, our hurts and our pains. But we know that there is someone in heaven interceding for us. Yes, it is Jesus the beloved son, 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Jul 28 **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament,**
Newark ME 20 Contact: Mosty &
Ling Garcia 908-964-6584 or Mel &
Remy Hernandez 908-281-5565
- Aug 11 **BLD Newark Golf Outing,**
Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA
(Refer to Ministry Announcement for details)
- Aug 18 (8:30am-6:00pm)**Community Day**
Johnson’s Park, Piscataway
- Aug 25 **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament,**
Newark – Singles Contact: Cris &
Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821
- Oct 6-7 **LSS#29** St. Mary’s auditorium, Rahway

LORD’S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending July 20, 2007
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor
\$3,675.00

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Benedict.....from page 1

arbitration in disputes, freedom on the seas, the reciprocal remission of war debts, the restitution of occupied territories, fair negotiations to resolve problems.”

“The Holy See’s proposal was oriented toward the future of Europe and of the world, according to a project that was Christian in inspiration but able to be shared by all because it was founded on the law of nations,” Benedict XVI observed. “If men lived in peace with God and with each other, the earth would truly resemble a ‘paradise.’

“Unfortunately, sin ruined this divine project, generating divisions and bringing death into the world. This is why men cede to the temptations of the evil one and make war against each other. The result is that in this stupendous ‘garden’ that is the world, there open up circles of hell.”

ME25 :

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila)

Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices Proceeds of sale will benefit the “Pledge of Love” and “GK Fundraisers” Contact any ME25 member for advance orders

counsels.. cont’d..

the Lamb, sacrificed for our sins. He is the one “able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since He lives to make intercession for them”. (Hebrews 7:25) Yes it is Jesus, our great High Priest, Redeemer and Lord.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pray always for the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
2. Be specific and persistent in your prayers.



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

Allow me to use this opportunity to address again the elements of the January recollection day that preceded the discernment and discussion of the medical missions at the end of January of this year. We were reminded then to try to be conscious of our inner spiritual states. What can seem like a “natural” upsetment or disturbance, can often contain elements of a spiritual attack. We used the terms “consolation” and “desolation” of which we should be aware. What goes on inside of us is often very mysterious and confusing. St. Ignatius warns us not only to be aware, but to understand or analyze these inner movements. Sometimes the spiritual negativity or even a concealed demonic attack on our faith, hope or charity, can “piggy back” on the top of a normal and “unspiritual” upsetment. We all have down moments, but they could be just a bad mood or even some tragedy which can strike us unawares. If through our openness and prayer to the Holy Spirit we find we are being attacked by some demonic or negative influence, we take authority and reject the attack.

On the other hand if we are discerning a decision which we hope will be in God’s good plans, we look for what is called an “inner spiritual affectivity”, or very simply, spiritual consolation. When we have done everything we can to discern God’s Will in our lives, there still can be that uncertain feeling that perhaps we have not done enough, or we just might be selfishly (even unconsciously) interpreting the feelings in our favor, and really doing our will rather than God’s ! How can we really be sure? This is a question for each one of us personally, and a question that the whole community must ask itself especially through its leadership. Without being simplistic the answer is quite simple, even if quite challenging.

The certitude arises not from the conclusion to the discernment process, but from the confidence we have in the never failing guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our desire to do God’s will should never be tentative, but certain. If this be our attitude, a “holy” openness to any thing that is willed by God, and a holy indifference to all else, we can be absolutely sure that we are doing God’s Will. Let me finish with a quote from St. Ignatius himself: “The Lord is so kind and generous that he never denies his good Spirit to any one who petitions him in humility; rather he gives extravagantly, not holding back from any one. In no way, then, would he who is kindness itself desert us; rather he would be with us more generously than we asked or imagined.”

COUNSELS

ONLY GOD IS OUR REAL TREASURE

WORD: Eccl 1:2, 2: 21-23; Ps 90:3-6; 12-14, 17; Col 3: 1-5, 9-11; Lk 12: 13-21

ORDER: “Put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry.” (Col 3: 5)

THEME: Christ is our all in all, when we strive for the things that matter to God.

REFLECTION:

In our human frailty, we have a tremendous inclination and capacity to seek the things of the world. Despite the teachings we have received and reflections we have done on God’s Word, we still measure success in terms of material wealth. We become attached to worldly goods as our primary goal in life, knowingly or unknowingly. We may pursue ambitions that are not practical and detrimental to our well being and those of our loved ones and others who depend on us. We may make decisions at work that will improve our position only and have a damaging effect on our subordinates and peers. We may use our improved position in life to advance only our own interests, regardless of the dire needs of those around us. Similar to the rich man in the gospel according to Luke, if we see ourselves in a secure position because of our resources and base our stability and happiness on our possessions, our lives will be totally empty and unfulfilled.

If we make material prosperity the end all of our existence, our joy in life will be temporary and we still find ourselves always restless and wanting for more of what the world can offer. Neither happiness nor authentic human life itself are founded on worldly goods.

The man’s heart was not the only precious treasure – God himself. The man was storing up riches for his own

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

“When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with Him in glory” (Col. 3:4)

Counsels from page 1

selfish interest, unwilling to share the abundance that the Lord had graciously gifted him with. In the rich man's life, there is no reference to God, much less to other people. He sees no need to share his goods with others less fortunate than himself. Although the rich man had overlooked the Lord, the Good Shepherd, the Lord still admonished him about being a fool in the way he was leading his life. The Lord gave him the correct perspective about the fleeting nature of worldly fortunes and that these will all be left behind when the man is finally called on judgment day.

In community, we should also ask ourselves "Where is our heart?" Have we focused our hearts on our Lord and our service to Him? Do our actions show forth putting the ultimate calling of the community to bring Christ closer to others ahead of our personal desires and comfort zones? Have we answered to the needs of the marginalized? How much time and wealth have we contributed to our apostolic work? We have instituted controls over the use of the community funds, controls that are expected of prudent managers. However, have we asked ourselves if the controls have made us lose the focal point of the purpose we have been blessed with such funds to help us in our community work and not to necessarily make a profit from these? *"Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions."* (Lk 12:15)

DIRECTION:

1. Be steadfast in following Jesus and always think of what is above, not what is earthly.
2. Surrender and submit to God everything that concerns your life; pray and trust in His ways.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending
July 27, 2007**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$4,187.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE 2007:

**All subscriptions to our 15th Anniversary Journal are
due on/or before August 17, 2007, camera-ready with
payments.**

PLEDGE OF LOVE UPDATE

**Donations as of July 27, 2007
\$8,385.00**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AUG 11: BLD Newark Golf Outing, Riverview Country Club, Easton, PA. (Refer to Ministry Announcement for details)

AUG 11: Amazing Grace Ministry - Nursing Home Visit, Contact: Eme/Imma Anyanwu cell #973-342-9933

AUG 18 (8:30am - 6:00pm)

Community Day, Johnson's Park, Piscataway

AUG 25: Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark – Singles, Contact: Cris & Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821

SEP8: BLD Annual Dinner Dance - Gran Centurions, Clark, NJ, 07066, Contact: Mol & JC Barredo (ME22) <gardenia902@hotmail.com, molbarredo@hotmail.com>

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 rguiaio@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES:

Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION:

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

ISAIAH 58:

BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11, Saturday Riverview CC Easton, PA. Shotgun start at 1:30 pm Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia – cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola – badio1925@comcast.net; Jun/Luchi Schroth – schroth@rcn.com; Jun/Camille Viernes – qviernes@msn.com

ME25:

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila). Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices. Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK Fundraisers" Contact any ME25 member for advance orders

TEACHING MINISTRY

AUGUST

No Teachings Scheduled



BLD NEWS

NEW COVENANTED DISCIPLES

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” (Eph3: 17-19)

During the Eucharistic Celebration on Friday, Aug 3, 2007 at St. Mary’s Church, Rahway, the following disciples who completed the discipling requirements sealed their covenant: Dan & Nelda Dwyer, Ed Fabe, Evelyn Francisco, Mosty Garcia, Joey & Lheena Jose, Gil & Lucille Jose, Fidel & Leggie Lim, Paul Magahis, Reggie & Fil Malabanan, Mon & Leonie Mariazeta, Carlos & Fe Masisado, Vic & Becky Napenas, Joe & Adelle Orosa, Joe & Bambi Pascoguin, Ray & Tess Salmo, Paul Versoza. As newly covenanted members, the community exhorts you to grow and multiply in good works, to spread the Word of Jesus, and to nurture the love of each other in Community. Congratulations!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SHEPHERDS & COORDINATORS

We rejoice and pray for our newly assigned Coordinators for Service Ministry- Ding and Emma De Borja; DIP Shepherd of Pennsylvania – Boyie and Stella Huelgas; Outreach Shepherd of Rockland, Manny and Judy San Luis-replacing Mon and Bingle Chan who are now Mission Stewards; YE Class Shepherds Richard and Lee De La Fuente, Co-class Shepherds- Kenneth Reyes & Julie De Vera; Class Advisers for Amazing Grace Prayer Group (AGPG) Ency and Babie Alberto.

BLD YOUTH PRAISE AT ST. MARK’S

The BLD youth praise sang at the first 5:00 pm Sunday mass of St. Mark’s Church this Sunday, Aug. 5. St. Mark’s is the “sister” church of St. Mary’s and is right around the corner from St. Mary’s. This was made upon the invitation of Fr. Robert Lamirez as St. Mark’s church is trying to set up their own youth ministry. The officiating priest was their pastor, Fr. Bill Morris. Eighteen BLD youth showed up and the feedback from the parishioners were very positive and enthusiastic. The BLD singles praise will sing at the 5 pm mass on Aug. 12 and 19 and the youth praise will be singing again on Aug. 26th.

COUNSELS

Stewardship, An Expression of Faith and Discipleship

WORD: Wisdom 18:6-9; Psalm 33: 1, 12, 18-22; Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Luke 12: 32-48

ORDER: Be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of man will come

THEME: Christ is our all in all when we are trustworthy stewards of the Father.

REFLECTION:

The 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time focuses on the central theme: Christ is our all in all, when we are trustworthy stewards of the Father. It conveys the message that Stewardship is faith expressed through obedience, an expression of discipleship. Disciples are expected to make a conscious, firm decision carried out in action through diligent stewardship - to be followers of Jesus Christ no matter what the cost is. Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be. They know themselves to be the recipients and caretakers of God’s many gifts.

Jesus gives us the Parable of the Vigilant and Faithful Servants in this Sunday’s Gospel from Luke. He reminds us that however important other matters might be, God the Father and His loving presence should be our treasure, and there our hearts should be. Jesus then proceeds to give us a lesson on Faith saying that it is not enough to believe, we must also, through obedience, RESPOND as demonstrated by Abraham and accounted for in Hebrews 11.

Abraham believed in who God was and he believed in what God promised. His faith was anchored by obedience. Abraham left his home and went to another land, obeying without question. Abraham was even willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac. And like Abraham, we too could be asked to give

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

“... the eyes of the Lord are upon those who fear him, upon those who hope for his kindness.” (Psalm 33:18)

Counsels from page 1

up our comforts to obey God. Today, many become frustrated and defeated because their needs, wants, expectations, and demands are not immediately met despite their faith in the promises of Jesus Christ. Many become impatient and want to quit. We need to take courage and draw from the examples of our heroes of faith mentioned in the scriptures, many of them like Abraham, lived and died without seeing the fruit of their faith on earth and yet they continued to believe. We can in faith trust God with our most prized possessions. We may not receive what we want now but by responding in faith, God will do what he says, when the time is appropriate.

The Order given to our community is to be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of man will come. It tells us that we are accountable and responsible to God for the way we use the resources given to us. We are expected to steward or manage these for God who owns and who has given them for this purpose.

There must be awareness that, for all the good things that we may have in this life, they are but the gifts of a good Master. Jesus speaks of the need for the good servant to be ready always to attend to the needs of that Master. In the meantime, there is a world of daily tasks, responsibilities, professional commitments and simple enjoyments of life to see to. We have been made stewards of these things, and we are expected to exercise our stewardship responsibly. These good things which are at our disposal are not ours to dominate and to make our own. They were given to us so that we might love and serve a Good God, as good servants. To us a great deal has been given, and from us a great deal will be demanded.

No other reward could possibly equal the joy that comes from knowing that God Almighty is pleased with us and what we have done with our life. To sense God's affirmation and pleasure in the present life and to know that He has eternal rewards waiting in the next life is to experience a prize of immeasurable value. No earthly treasure can compare with it.

We as disciples of Jesus Christ must share our time, talent and treasure giving them in service, love, justice and compassion to build up the Church providing for future generations, sharing in the life, worship and responsible stewardship of the larger Church and our community and of its mission.

DIRECTION:

1. Be ready to serve the community in whatever capacity you can.
2. With faith and obedience, trust that the Lord will equip you for whatever task He gives you.

PLEDGE OF LOVE UPDATE

Donations as of August 3, 2007

\$8,585.00

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AUG 18 (8:30am - 6:00pm)

Community Day, Johnson's Park, Piscataway

AUG 25: Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark – Singles, Contact: Cris & Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821

SEP 8: BLD Annual Dinner Dance - Gran Centurions, Clark, NJ, 07066, Contact: Mol & JC Barredo (ME22) <gardenia902@hotmail.com, molbarredo@hotmail.com>

OCT 6-7: LSS#29 St. Mary's auditorium, Rahway

OCT 19-21: John 6 Crossing#8 at Ramada Limited, So. Plainfield, NJ. Contact Boyet & Zita Cruz 908-265-7124/7465

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

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

ISAIAH 58: BLD Newark Golf Outing – Aug. 11, SAT, Riverview CC Easton, PA. Shotgun start at 1:30 pm, Contact: Carlito/Arlene Claricia-cclaricia@yahoo.com; Ed/Grace Badiola-badio1925@comcast.net; Jun/Luchi Schroth-schroth@rcn.com; Jun/Camille Viernes – qviernes@msn.com

A Night of Praise & Worship with Don Moen

Ritz Theatre, 1148 E. Jersey Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07201
Saturday, October 20, 2007

**For tickets visit www.worshipinjersey.com
Proceeds to Benefit the Gawad Kalinga Program**

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE 2007:

All subscriptions to our 15th Anniversary Journal are due on/ or before August 17, 2007, Camera-ready with payments.

Pls. make checks payable to BLD Newark - Journal.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending Aug 3, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor

\$3,285.00

Thank you for your continued generosity



BLD NEWS

BLD-NEWARK GOLF OUTING 2007 A BIG SUCCESS

The Lord has truly blessed our community, as the sun broke through the gloomy, dark clouds early Saturday morning, bringing rise to a splendid day. The BLD-Newark 15th Anniversary Golf Outing was held this past weekend, on August 11, 2007. The venue for this year's charity event was at the beautiful Riverview Country Club in Easton, Pennsylvania. Many of the players came from the area's three most prestigious Filipino golf associations: SWAG ("Samahan ng mga Walang Asenso sa Golf"), SP ("Samahang Pilipino") and ERGA (Early Riser Golf Association). The tournaments within a tournament were brilliantly organized by Dr. Kelly Concepcion of ME 13, Ed Badiola of ME24, and Jun Viernes of ME26.

There was much fun and camaraderie amongst the players, as they played to benefit BLD community's various ministry works, most notably the Medical Mission, which through the years, has grown in the number of people served and the breadth of services offered to the poorest of the poor in the Philippines.

The outing was ably served by the energetic ME23 class, lead by their beloved shepherds Becbec and Nestor Laxina. These humble volunteers generously gave their time and talent to ensure that the golfers were well-provided for, and that the outing logistics were accomplished flawlessly.

The hand of the Lord was apparent as the day ended with an enjoyable Prime Rib dinner with prizes galore. How faithful is the Lord as he made true His promise in Mt 17: 20, "Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Visit our website at
www.bldnewark.com

COUNSELS

DYING TO OUR OLD WAY OF LIVING

WORD: Jer 38:4-6, 8-10; Ps 40:2-4, 18;
Heb12: 1-4; Lk 12:49-53

ORDER: "Rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith." (Heb 12:1-2a)

THEME: Christ is our all in all, when we rid ourselves of earthly burdens and sin.

REFLECTION:

Like Jeremiah we are, at times, confronted with either speaking the truth or speaking about what people would like to hear. For speaking the truth, Jeremiah was thrown into the cistern. King Zedekiah did not have the nerve to stand up for the truth. We have here a king who is indecisive and was intimidated by the people. He is a leader who would not lead.

We, too, experience this kind of behavior and tend to wash our hands and go along with the majority rather than seek the truth. We hear God speaking to us, but choose to ignore his prompting because God's position is not popular in the world we live in.

Jesus said in Luke 12:51, "Do you think that I have come to establish peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division." This is a very bold proclamation! A declaration of war! Jesus is drawing a battle line between good and evil. Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" and therefore, nothing should come in between him and us. There is no compromise! God has given us the free will to pick which side we choose. "I have come to set the earth on fire and how I wish it were already blazing! There is baptism with which I must be baptized, and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished!" (Lk 12:50). Jesus is showing us his battle plan to prepare ourselves for this battle. We, too, have to undergo this baptism of fire, which is our purification. Just as

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

"He drew me out of the pit of destruction...he made firm my steps." (Psalm 40:3)

Counsels from page 1

fire refines silver, suffering and persecution purify us, Christians. "You tested us, O God, tried us as silver tried by fire." (Ps 66:10). "See, I have refined you like silver, tested you in the furnace of affliction." (Is 48:10). God allows us to suffer for a purpose - to strengthen us.

In Hebrews 12:4, Paul said, "In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood." By the blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we have been made whole. Because of his love for us God made his only Son as the sacrificial lamb to redeem us from our sins. But how hard really do we resist sin? Do we go to confession often? Do we thoroughly examine our conscience before going to confession? "If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing." (1 Jn 1:9). By sinning we betray God. Therefore, it is necessary for us to come to the cross in repentance of our sins and, through our faith in Jesus, find forgiveness and salvation. "Thus they will have to confess that they and their fathers were guilty of having rebelled against me and of having defied me." (Lev 26:40). "Son of man, you live in the midst of a rebellious house; they have eyes to see but do not see, and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house." (Ez 12:2).

By nature, we humans are weak. The concupiscence of the flesh and the ardor of worldly desires can imprison us and make us Spiritually dead. Like Jeremiah we, too, could be stuck in the mud.

Original sin created a great chasm between God and man. God's beckoning and message of his unconditional love seem to be all the more ignored because of the distraction from material things. We have to refocus our attention to God so that we may hear his message.

Man has desperately tried on his own searching for happiness. Yet, worries and fear have become the source of stress for many. Likewise, man has yet to find the cure for the plague of worry - the number one cause of heart trouble. Worry could also lead to nervous breakdown and mental disorder. "Therefore, ... let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us, and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith." (Heb 12:1-2a) Let us die to our old way of living and renew our mind to that of the mind of Christ. Let us experience his unconditional love and replace worry with peace, and fear with courage. "Can anyone of you by worrying add a single moment to your life span?" (Mt 6:27) Therefore, "Cast your care upon the Lord, who will give you support. God will never allow the righteous to stumble." (Ps 55:23).

DIRECTION:

- 1) Keep your covenant pledge by going to confession regularly.
- 2) Spend more quiet time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.
- 3) Maintain reverence in Church - fixed your eyes upon Jesus.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending,
August 10, 2007
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$3,297.00
Thank you for your continued generosity**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AUG 18 - BLD Community Day at Johnson's Park
Piscataway, NJ (fr 8:30 am to 6:00 pm)

AUG 25 - Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark NJ
Singles, Contact: Cris & Ampy Escobinas (973) 338-1821

SEP 08 - BLD Annual Dinner Dance - Gran Centurions
440 Madison Hill Rd Clark, NJ 07066 / Donation: \$45
Contact: Mol & JC Barredo (ME22)

OCT 06 LSS #29 St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway NJ
-07

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 WORD@bldnewark.com

SINGLES:

Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) / LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION:

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@optonline.net) or call 973-584-0370

SPECIAL ANNOUCEMENTS

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila)

Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices.
Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK Fundraisers"
Contact any **ME25** member for advance orders

Archdiocese of Newark Catholic Charismatic Renewal "Mary, The First Charismatic" 1-day Retreat

Where: Our Lady of Liberia Church West New York, NJ
When: September 8 fr 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
Contact Sal & Marie Russo (973) 338-1050

Night of Praise and Worship with Don Moen

Ritz Theatre 1148 E. Jersey Ave, Elizabeth, NJ
Oct. 20 at 8:00 pm visit: www.worshipinjersey.com

TEACHING MINISTRY

AUGUST No Teachings Scheduled
SEPTEMBER To be determined

PLEDGE OF LOVE UPDATE

Donations as of August 10, 2007
\$9,485.00



BLD-Newark 15th Annual Community Day

“This is the day of the Lord’s victory; let us be happy, let us celebrate”.(Ps 118:24)

In the spirit of harmony and one accord, BLD-Newark, celebrated its 15th Annual Community Day at Johnson’s Park in Piscataway, NJ, last Saturday, August 18, 2007. After the initial preparations (setting up road directional signs, blessing and setting up of the place), the day was started with morning prayers, after which, food tent and grilling stations were set up. The Eucharistic Celebration started at 11:30 AM, officiated by Fr. Abano, con-celebrated by Fr. Robert and Fr. Paul Lehman. Fr. Ed extolled our community on our witnessing on unity and service to others. Sumptuous meals were served, coupled with grilled hotdogs, hamburgers and corn on the cob.

The ministries’ program participation were so entertaining and amazing, seeing the various talents in singing, dancing and acting as demonstrated by the Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles, Adult (various ME classes), Solo Parents and the Golden Year ministries and apostolates. Sports and games for all ages were lots of fun.

Some forty door-prize winners went home extra happy, including Fr. Lehman, who won the grand prize (Congratulations!). Thank you door-prize donors, it made our celebration more exciting and interesting (may we have more for next year’s Community Day). Kudos to the organizing committee members, who did the excellent jobs running events of the day. It is right to give glory and thanks to our Lord, not only for the spring-like perfect weather, but also for the experience of perfect unity and fellowship with one another as one big family.

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in harmony”.(Ps 133:1)

Pledge of Love

As of August 17, 2007 is \$9,915.50

The Lord's Provision

Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending August 17, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the Poor \$ 4,081.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

COUNSELS

The Lord's Discipline

WORD: Is 66:18-21; Ps 117:1,2;

Heb 12:5-7, 11-13; Lk 13:22-30

THEME: Christ is our all in all when we accept the discipline of the Lord.

ORDER: “Do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reproved by Him.” (Heb 12:5)

REFLECTION:

The first reading, from the Book of Isaiah, paints a vision of glorious Jerusalem, which is a haven, not only for the Jewish people, but for people of all nations. With the long exile in Babylon over, Jerusalem was restored. It thus brings a message of hope and encouragement to many downtrodden people and shows God’s tremendous love, power and glory as well.

The second reading, from the Letter to the Hebrews, recalls the anguish of every parent who wants to teach a child. The author compares God with a parent and exhorts us about the need for discipline. God uses adversity to teach us and offers the necessary discipline, out of love for us. It is a loving correction, despite the pain and repulsion we may feel. It encourages many of us who have experienced rejection and persecution to hold fast to our faith and trust in God.

The Gospel of Luke demands wholehearted devotion from each of us, to follow the path that Jesus walked, accompanying Him on His journey to suffering and death. Discipleship, which comes from a Latin word meaning “to learn”, requires focus on what lies ahead and a willingness to endure trials, for the sake of the good news.

(continued on next page)

God's Promise for the Week

“All discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” (Heb 12:11)

Counsels from page 1

Jesus uses the image of a house, with God as the owner, to make His point. The door is not wide for all to enter, but narrow, and only the most faithful and noble may pass. Once the door is closed, there is no way to force it open. It will not be enough to have known Jesus or heard His message; the follower of Jesus must demonstrate total commitment to Him. Our lives, as His followers who are totally committed to Him must be built according to His word.

Many people may know something about God, but just listening to Jesus' words or admiring His miracles are not enough to know Him. We must acknowledge our sins, turn away from them, accept His forgiveness, and trust in Him that He will save us. Our circumstances may become difficult, and despair may take hold of our being, but God will bless us with His strength through His Spirit.

When we are faithful to a life of prayer, even if we are threatened by the storm of oppression, God will comfort us with His love, and no adversity shall overcome us. When sin overwhelms our entire being, and darkness fills our hearts, He will show us the light, to enable us to go through life. All gloom will vanish, and God will bring us His peace and joy. Being with God, and rooted in His love and mercy, will allow us to remain faithful to Him. When our eyes are clouded, and our vision becomes hazy from sweat, blood and tears, that come from suffering, He will give us His vision that transcends the present trials, and allows us to see the beauty of tomorrow in His Kingdom.

We are blessed to be in a religious community, where we are given opportunities to be purified, giving us better chances to enter the narrow gate of God's heavenly Kingdom. We may experience trials. We may grow tired and weary. We, however, find encouragement from each other, amidst internal fatigue, conflicts, oppressions and frustrations. In our community, we are always reminded that many "great" people on earth (in God's eyes) are virtually ignored by the rest of the world. What matters to God is not a person's earthly popularity, status, wealth, heritage, or power, but his or her commitment to Christ. Hence some who are first will be last, and some who are last will be first. How do your values match those of the Bible?

Put God in first place, and we will join people all over the world who will take their places at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. Be a good disciple. The way of discipleship is to walk in Christ's footsteps, prepared to face the disciplines that make learning possible.

DIRECTION:

- Serve with joy even in the midst of trials and difficulties.

Community Calendar

- Aug 25 Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark**
Singles Ministry. Contact: Cris and Ampy Escobinas (973)338-1821
- Aug 25 FE 14 Grand Reunion**
St. Mary's Auditorium from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Sep 8 BLD 15th Foundation Anniversary Dinner Dance**
7pm to 12pm at Gran Centurion, 440 Madison Hill Rd, Clark, NJ. Attire: Filipiniana - Proceeds support BLD projects including the **Philippine Medical Mission**
Donation: \$45
- Sep 29 Festival of Faith 2007**
10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, 89 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ
Admission is free
- Oct 6 -7 LSS#29**
St. Mary's auditorium, Rahway NJ

Ministry Announcements

Intercessory

Prayer request 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 Word@bldnewark.com

Singles

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact: Eric Cruz (jrcruzer@gmail.com) and LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

Mission

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact: Ency and Baby Alberto (engeng@optonline.net)

Teaching

Aug 25 Shepherd Refresher Training from 1-6 PM at St. Mary's, Rahway NJ.

Special Announcements

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila)

Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices

Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK Fundraisers"

Contact any **ME25** member for advance orders

Night of Praise and Worship with Don Moen – OCT 20

Ritz Theatre 1148 E. Jersey Ave, Elizabeth, NJ

Door opens at 6 pm / Worship starts at 8 pm

\$ 35/\$55/\$75 www.worshipinjersey.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 35

Bulletin Edition

September 7, 2007

Holy Father Worried About Planet's Future : Urges Re-creating an Alliance Between Man and Earth

LORETO, Italy, SEPT. 2, 2007 (Zenit.org).- The world is in urgent need of Catholics working to protect the environment, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope said this today at the end of his homily for the closing Mass of his encounter with young people in Loreto.

Following Christ, the Holy Father affirmed, brings with it "the continual effort to make one's own contribution to building a more just and solidary society, where all can enjoy the goods of the earth."

"I know that many of you dedicate yourselves with generosity to bear witness to your own faith in various social ambits, volunteering, working to promote the common good, peace and justice in every community," he said. "One of the areas in which work appears to be urgent is without a doubt that of protecting creation.

"To the new generations the future of the planet is entrusted, in which there are evident signs of a development that has not always known how to safeguard the delicate equilibriums of nature.

"Before it is too late, it is necessary to make courageous decisions that reflect knowing how to re-create a strong alliance between man and the earth.

"A decisive 'yes' to the protection of creation is necessary and a firm commitment to reverse those tendencies that run the risk of bringing about situations of unstoppable degradation."

Benedict XVI applauded an initiative from the Church in Italy to promote sensitivity to the issue of protecting creation. Sept. 1 has been established as a national day for promoting awareness of these matters.

"This year," the Holy Father observed, "attention is focused above all on water, a most precious good that, if it is not shared in a fair and peaceful way, will unfortunately become a cause for significant tensions and bitter conflicts."

COUNSELS

Live Giving Your Full Trust to the LORD

WORD: Wis 9:13-18b, Ps 90:3-6, 12-17, Phlm 9:10, 12-17, Lk 14:25-33

ORDER: Carry your own cross and come after me. (Lk 14:27)

THEME: We lift the poor when we share our resources with them.

REFLECTION:

Our spirit is immortal and will outlive our earthly bodies. The first reading tells us that we cannot find God's will through human reasoning or by misleading philosophies. We need to seek the Holy Spirit to grant us the wisdom to live our lives in the right path and to learn what is pleasing to God. We should rely on God and submit everything to Him because without Him we can do nothing.

'I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me'. (Phil 4:13)

Paul's letter to his friend, Philemon, teaches us that our relationship as Christian brothers and sisters must be full of forgiveness and acceptance. Onesimus is a run-away slave of Philemon who met Paul in Rome, and later turned to Christ. In his letter, Paul appealed to Philemon to go beyond forgiveness and also overcome their master-slave relationship and instead, regard each other as new brothers in Christ. Paul had the authority to demand Philemon but chose to appeal to his friend in Christian love. As a new believer, Paul's action has strengthened and encouraged Onesimus' faith. Paul provided a good example on how to deal with

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God's Promise for the Week

'The gracious care of our God be ours, prosper the work of our hands.' (Ps 90:17)

Discipleship Without Fear

“Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching men.” (Luke 5:10B)

Jesus spoke these words to James and John, apostles to-be who would later pay the ultimate price because they chose to follow Him. But why did our Lord feel the need to assure these men not to be afraid?

In Mark 10:17-22, we can read about the rich man who seems, on the surface to be a relatively spiritual person, someone who by his own account has observed all the commandments. And yet when challenged by our Lord to detach himself from all his possessions and become His disciple, he could not summon the courage to do so. Becoming fully aware of what our Lord was asking of him, he felt the same fear and anxiety that most of us have felt many times when we are faced with the same challenge from Jesus.

But why would becoming His disciple fill anyone with fear and anxiety? Because the cost of discipleship means giving up everything that stands in the way of our imitation of Christ, giving up the earthly pleasures and comfort of this world and letting Him control our lives and decisions. True discipleship is not just following the commandments nor is it just going to mass on Sundays. It definitely requires a lot more than lip service. As St. James tells us, *‘faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead’* (James 2:17). Yes, to be a true disciple we will need to put our faith into “ACTION”. This means we need to be good witnesses in how we live our lives. We have to be like Jesus whether it is in raising our families, working in our assigned ministries or going about doing the ordinary things that we do. We need to realize and accept that true discipleship will cost us everything that we value in this materialistic world. Our Lord knew this, which is why throughout the gospel we see Him constantly remind His apostles to *‘not be afraid’*.

So, how will we overcome this fear? The same way the apostles did by taking the words of our Lord to heart. We need to trust in His promise that He will be with us always and will never give us any task or problem that we cannot overcome. In the end, we need to accept that there is no other choice. In John 6:67-68, Peter said, *‘Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life’*. Yes, to whom shall we go?



Nativity Of Our Blessed Virgin Mary

The Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been celebrated in the Church at least since the 8th Century. The birth of Mary was also miraculous. She was conceived without sin as a special grace because God had selected her to become the mother of His Son (the feast of her Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8). The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, though generally believed throughout the Church for many centuries, was formally declared by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

Mary was born to Joachim and Anna who were also beyond the years of child-bearing, but prayed and fasted that God would grant their desire for a child. Mary’s parentage is not written in the Scripture and only appeared in the apocryphal ‘Gospel of James’, a book dating from the 2nd century AD.

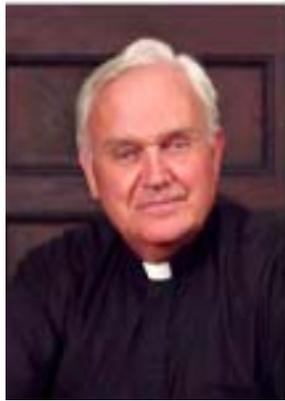
According to one tradition, the house in which Mary was born in Nazareth is the same one in which the Annunciation took place. By another tradition, the Annunciation site is beneath the Crusader church of Saint Anna in Jerusalem, under a 3rd Century oratory known as the “Gate of Mary”.

The birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary announced joy and the approaching salvation of a lost world. Mary was brought into the world not like other children of Adam, infected with the contagion of sin, but pure, holy, beautiful, and glorious, adorned with all the most precious graces fitting for the One predestined to be the Mother of the Saviour. Never did she have the slightest inclination towards anything other than the absolute and immediate will of God. She transcended the highest seraphim in purity, humility, charity, and the richest ornaments of grace. God had created her in the original grace, and for the purpose of Redemption.

The nations celebrate often blaringly the birthdays of the great ones of this earth, but very few even among Christians, rejoice in that of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ. We often forget to pay homage and give praise and thanksgiving to our Mother as our Mediator to God.

Truly, the Blessed Mother is our ultimate intercessor. She, the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, is all beautiful and is the one, Jesus was pleased to obey while on earth. Her love, care, and tenderness for Him, the title and qualities which she bears, the charity and graces with which she is adorned, and the crown of glory with which she is honored, incline Him to readily receive her recommendations and petitions.

NO FEAR



Fr. Paul Speaks

Saying YES to the CALL TO SERVE

In my recent discussion with the Newark DCS, as well as in my visits to other BLD districts throughout the country, I observe that the leadership is often faced with the difficulty of enlisting community members for shepherding, ministry assignments, etc. This leads them to become over occupied with enlisting those willing to serve. Their job seems to become one of filling slots. However, their real job is to discern God's will for themselves and for the community. They are called to prayerfully seek a direction from the Lord. The real challenge is for them to become listeners to the Lord, so that their decisions will be, as much as human frailty will allow, the will of God. I am not equating their decisions with infallibility. But if they have done everything humanly possible to prayerfully discern, then there is a presumption that their decisions are of the Lord. The tricky thing in all of this is that the person being tagged for a job must also discern God's will for his or her life. It is quite possible that the person being asked will reply negatively, because of circumstances perhaps unknown to the leadership. Thus God's will, could be a refusal.

The point I am making is that all of us should have a "yes" attitude, a willingness to serve. I know that some refuse because they feel incapable of fulfilling the assignment. I have seen this in many instances when a person who is assigned to be a shepherd feels spiritually unequipped to accept the responsibility. I often tell the person that this personal distrust could be the very attitude that will open the person to deeper trust in the Lord who will equip him or her beyond his or her capacity to do the job. Volunteering for a position could be an indication of a yes attitude. It could possibly be an indicator of overconfidence. But even here we humbly take the chance and let our "gifts shine before men." We often underrate ourselves. There are hidden talents and gifts that come to the surface when the person is put in a position of responsibility. There is also an "anointing" that comes with acceptance. This anointing is not automatic. It is an act of faith that God will supplement and enhance the gifts that are already there.

My encouragement is to adopt the attitude of Mary who when approached by the angel uttered: *'Be it done to me according to your word'* (Luke 1:38). Everyone reading these words has been challenged in many ways in his or her

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Sept 8** **15th Foundation Anniversary Dinner-Dance**
Gran Centurion, 440 Madison Hill Rd, Clark, NJ
Attire: Filipiniana - 7pm to 12mn
Donation: \$45 (Proceeds support BLD projects including the Philippine Medical Mission)
- Sept 22** **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark**
11am – 1pm (Amazing Grace CCPM)
Contact persons: Mon & Sandy Campomanes
- Sept 29** **Festival of Faith 2007**
10:00 am to 7:00 pm,
Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart,
89 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ
ADMISSION IS FREE
- Oct 6&7** **LSS#29**
Contact: LSA Ministry
St. Mary's auditorium, Rahway
- Oct 19-21** **John 6 Crossing #8**
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ.
Application forms can be found at the website: BLDNEWARK.com /John6

TEACHINGS

- Sept 7 (Fri)** Basics of Prayer – ME29
St. Mary's classroom, Rahway
 - Sept 15 (Sat)** Shepherds' Training I - LSS1 to LSS 25
Advanced Intercession & Spiritual Warfare
- LSS1 to LSS 26
Christian Maturity Program I (CMPI) Part 1
- LSS1 to LSS 27
Encounter With Jesus Part 2 (Mark/Matthew)
- LSS1 to LSS 28
 - Sept 21 (Fri)** Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles & Solo Parents Teaching – St. Mary's @ Rahway
 - Sept 28 (Fri)** Service Ministry, Intercessory Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE 8) & Golden Years
- Note: Friday teachings – after worship or healing mass
Saturday teachings @ St. Mary's from 1-6pm*

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life. These challenges stretch and mature us, and equip us to serve. Serving the community can be another way of saying yes to the Lord.

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

conflicts among Christian friends, as well as lifting up a poor slave and regarding him as an equal.

The theme is not just an act of charity to the poor but true love of sharing something that we have of ourselves to the least of our brothers.

The gospel reading encourages us to take on the actual attitude of the poor. We have to free ourselves from any attachments to neither family nor possession. Absolute dedication requires putting the Lord ahead of everything. In this way, our focus is on Him alone and that we learn to trust our lives entirely to Him. We allow Him to lead us with His guiding hands and focus our mind to what He tells us through our prayers. Renouncing our attachment to the earth makes us poor and therefore, we become reliant in the generosity of the Lord in all that we do. *'Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose hope is the LORD. He is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretches out its roots to the stream: It fears not the heat when it comes, its leaves stay green; in the year of drought it shows no distress, but still bears fruit'* (Jer 17:7-8).

Jesus compares our commitment to the one who wishes to construct a tower, where you need to carefully calculate the cost to build; otherwise, you may find yourself unable to finish due to lack of resources. Similarly, we need to calculate the cost of commitment to Jesus. It is not a trouble-free life; we go out of our comfort zones to give our time, talent and treasures to serve God. Even as we serve Him, we are subjected to ridicule, criticism, hatred and persecution.

In our service in community, being a disciple of Christ may require physical, emotional and financial stress. Sometimes, we may feel that it is really a burden to work for the Lord and be prisoners of the gospel. This should not be our attitude, but instead, we should take on the desire to really work for God and be aware that the good we do for Him is done voluntarily. The cost of discipleship is one of selfless giving in whatever responsibility we take on. There is no difference in what we do or who we are in community, because it is the same service to God. We must realize that we are not really slaves, but we are one, willing to do everything to continue spreading the gospel.

Lord, you are our strength and our shield. Make us grow deeper in you. Teach us to be better witnesses to others about Your unselfish love. Help us to be true Christian servants. May we always love and serve You.

DIRECTION:

- Do good not by force but voluntarily. Renounce worldly attachments.

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). Send to WORD@BLDNewark.com

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every 3rd Saturday of the month.

Contact: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com);
LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed.

Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto
Email: engeng@optonline.net

LITURGY

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ME25

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila)
Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices.
Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK Fundraisers".

Contact any ME25 member for orders

BLD Charlotte, NC.

LSS#1, Nov. 14-18. Salubungan, Sept 14.
Shepherds & Auxies needed
Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387
Email: hajbk@aol.com.
Housing Accommodation will be arranged.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Night of Praise and Worship with Don Moen

October 20, 2007

Ritz Theatre 1148 E. Jersey Ave., Elizabeth, NJ

Door opens at 6pm. Worship starts at 8pm

Tickets at \$35/\$55/\$75 www.worshipinjersey.com

For more details, please contact: Sam Olaso

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending August 31, 2007

*Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fast for Poor* \$ 4,079.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 13 Issue 36

Bulletin Edition

Sept. 14, 2007



BLD's 15th Anniversary Celebration

On Saturday, September 8, 2007, the annual BLD dinner dance was held at The Gran Centurions in Clark, New Jersey. This year's dance was especially eventful since we were celebrating the 15th Anniversary of our "community of God."

ME 22 was designated 2007's host. Plans have been ongoing for several months. The annual dance is one of the BLD's fundraisers, which also includes the Pledge of Love and the Golf Outing. This year, a Commemorative Journal was also published.

We were blessed to have our spiritual leaders attend. Rene and Sally Castaneda, DSL, gave the *Welcome Remarks*. Roger and Irma Santiago, one of the founders of BLD-Newark, gave the audience a glimpse of what it was like in the beginnings of BLD. Richard dela Fuente of ME 1 delivered the *Invocation*.

The night was most enjoyable. There was a sumptuous buffet dinner and beautiful music. There was dancing and fellowship. The members of ME 22 were busy with raffles that included a 50/50, an Auction, and the Premium Raffle. There were many prizes to vie for. All prizes had been donated by BLD members.

The day after, we appreciated that the hard work put into planning bore fruitful results. We plant, we water, but God provides the growth. It was an opportune time to reflect on the graces that God placed in our way to serve Him. It is good to heed the call when Christ is passing by. We are awed by the support we received from Him. In this article, we share with the reader the gratefulness we feel in our hearts to the Lord and to the people He placed within our reach, who stepped forward to help us in this year's endeavor.

"It is He whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of His power working within me." (Col. 1: 28-29)

COUNSELS

Everyone Counts!

Word: Ex 32:7-11, 13-14; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 17, 19
1 Tim 1:12-17; Lk 15:1-32

Theme: We lift up the poor when we bring the Good News to them.

Order: *"Go after the lost one."* (Lk 15:4b)

Reflection:

In this Sunday's Gospel, we are presented with parables that offer images of how God sees us and how broad and deep His mercy really is. Let's look at the example of the shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine sheep to go after the one missing sheep. Conventional, worldly wisdom would tell us that it would be foolish to go after one sheep and leave the other ninety-nine abandoned and open to attack from wolves and other dangers. Worldly wisdom would tell us not to risk losing more sheep by looking for the missing one. After all, losses are bound to happen in the competitive world of shepherding and we should just accept the loss as part of the business risk.

This worldly wisdom stands in almost complete opposition to divine wisdom. Our Lord, as the Good Shepherd, is not just dealing with commodities – He is dealing with us – the very persons He died to redeem. In the divine wisdom of the Good Shepherd, EVERYONE COUNTS. The Good Shepherd is pleased with the sheep that stay in the fold, but He never hesitates to go after the lost sheep because LOSING ONE IS LOSING ONE TOO MANY.

We, all, have heard about the story of the prodigal son who basically says, "You are dead, Father, so give me my share of the inheritance." Yes, to demand one's share while one's father was still alive was tantamount to saying, "I want you out of my way. I want to do my own thing" (continue on page 4) 

God's Promise for the Week

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

(1 Tim 1:15)

The Exaltation of the Cross



“For God so loved the world he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him may not perish, but have eternal life.” (Jn 3:16)

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, we honor the Holy Cross by which Christ redeemed the world.

The veneration of the Cross of Christ originated in the Fourth Century, the beginning of the discovery of the cross by St. Helen, mother of Constantine, while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Christians “exalt” the Cross of Christ as the instrument of our salvation. Adoration of the cross is adoration of Jesus Christ; who suffered and died for our redemption from sin and death. The Cross represents Jesus’ obedience even unto death; it symbolizes the passion, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of Christ, ALL IN ONE IMAGE.

The Cross is the mediator between God and men. Christ is the “source of eternal salvation”. He teaches us that His holy passion in the Word of the Cross merited justification for us. The Cross is the universal symbol of the Christian faith because of what it represents.

When Moses lifted up the bronze serpent over the people, it was a foreshadowing of Jesus’ salvation: Jesus lifted upon the Cross. We are invited to follow in these footsteps. As God has sent His only son as expiation for our sins, we are sent to live through the Cross. Our salvation lies within the privilege of having God’s love revealed and shown to us.

On the Cross, human misery and divine mercy meet. The adoration of the unlimited mercy is for man because the Cross is the only way for man to open himself up to mystery. By means of the Cross of Christ, the evil one has been defeated, death has been overcome, life has been given to us, and hope has restored.

We identify with Christ on the Cross and become co-redeemers by sharing the Cross. As Christians we must follow Christ in His journey. We must take up our cross and become obedient until death; even if it means death on the Cross. The Sign of the Cross performed before and after prayers, helps fix our minds and hearts to God. The Sign of the Cross represents strength and protection through times of temptation.

As a community, we should rejoice God’s immeasurable gift of His obedience and His sacrifice. Let us look at the Cross frequently and realize that when we make the Sign of the Cross, we give our entire selves to God.

“He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me, he who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake shall find it.” (Mt 10:38, 39)

Social Justice



Social justice refers to the concept of a just society, where “justice” refers to more than just the administration of laws. It is based on the idea of a society which gives individuals and groups fair treatment and a just share of the benefits of society. Different proponents of

social justice have developed different interpretations of what constitutes *fair treatment* and a *just share*.

Social justice is both a philosophical problem and an important issue in politics and economics such as binary economics. Although everyone wishes to live in a just society, different political ideologies have different conceptions of what a ‘just society’ actually is. The term “social justice” tends to be used by those ideologues who believe that present day society is highly unjust. Both right and left-wing ideologues, though, tend to agree on the importance of rule of law, human rights, and some form of a welfare safety net.

Catholic social teaching comprises those aspects of Catholic doctrine which relate to matters dealing with the collective aspect of humanity. A distinctive feature of Catholic social teaching is its concern for the poorest members of society. Two of the seven key areas of Catholic social teaching are pertinent to social justice. First is the life and dignity of the human person which the foundational principle of all Catholic social teaching, i.e., the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. Human life must be valued infinitely above material possessions. Second is preferential option for the poor and vulnerable. The Catholic Church teaches that through words, prayers and deeds one must show solidarity with, and compassion for, the poor. When instituting public policy the “preferential option for the poor” should always be kept at the forefront. The moral test of any society is “how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation. People are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.”

Even before it was propounded in the Catholic social teachings, social justice appeared regularly in the history of the Catholic Church. Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* (“God is Love”) of 2006 teaches that social justice is the central concern of politics, and not of the church, which has *charity* as its central social concern. The laity has the specific responsibility of pursuing social justice in civil society. The church’s active role in social justice should be to inform the debate, using reason and natural law, and also by providing moral and spiritual formation for those involved in politics.

Suffering for Christ's Glory

"Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of His body, which is the church." (Col 1:24)



St. Paul's letter to the Colossians is a powerful testament to the all-encompassing lordship of Jesus. Although he was in prison, he writes of the transforming power of the Good News that God is reconciling the whole world to Himself in Jesus. Colossians has a great deal to teach us about redemption, suffering, fruitfulness and the transformed Christian life—all of which have implications for Christian stewardship.

St. Paul notes that vicarious suffering does not end with Jesus' death on the cross. He is not 'paying for sins' with his suffering, but he is just showing us that we must continually lay down our lives for the sake of Christ Jesus. Christ's suffering, apart from ours did not provide bread and education for the Africa's poor. It did not provide leadership training for the South America's churches, nor did it provide fathers for the fatherless of this world. Our own suffering and self-sacrifice, modeled after the infinitely greater sacrifice of Jesus, must meet these needs. In the context of St. Paul's ministry, his self-sacrifice has resulted in God's glory, the salvation and maturity of the believers. Therefore, he can rejoice in his own suffering and boast of his claims. And in today's world, whatever we sacrifice for the kingdom of God, we can always rejoice in the 'pain' of what we've sacrificed because it is only in Christ that such "pain" becomes a "gain."

St. Paul is applying this truth to himself. Jesus Christ worked and strived in all kinds of ways to communicate His message of salvation, and then He accomplished our redemption by dying on the Cross. The Apostle is mindful of the Master's teaching, and so he follows in His footsteps and continues the task of bringing Christ's teachings to all of us.

Pope John Paul says that faith, in the fact that we are sharing in sufferings of Christ, gives a person, "the certainty of spiritual dimension of the work in bringing salvation to our brothers and sisters, and likewise, is also carrying out an irreplaceable service to mankind". In the Body of Christ, which is ceaselessly born of the Cross of our Lord Jesus, it is precisely in this suffering, more than anything else, that clears the way for the grace which transforms our human soul. Suffering, more than anything else, makes present in the history of humanity the force of our own redemption.

I think at the very least that we can say that St. Paul sees Christian suffering as a reflection of, or an extension of Jesus Christ's own suffering, since we are all *His body*. When we suffer in a given context, then, something spiritual happens to the point of benefiting those around us. In other words, as Christ wrought salvation for us through his own suffering on the Cross, so in a similar way, yet to a lesser degree, do we bring spiritual good into a situation when we suffer. Maybe this is one reason why the Church experiences growth in areas of the world where Christians are persecuted.

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 or cblmont@hotmail.com.

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service every *third Saturday* of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com), LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com).

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every *second Saturday* of the month. *Volunteers are needed*. Please contact Ency & Babie Alberto (engeng@oponline.net) (973) 584-0370.

LITURGY

Act now: Subscription for 2008 Magnificat! Direct your order through your Coordinator/Shepherd. Take advantage of the bulk rate of \$15.00/yr. Make check payable to "BLD Newark".

MEDICAL MISSION

Infanta, Quezon - Feb. 18-22, 2008 - *Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed*. Please contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340

BLD Charlotte, NC

LSS #1 on Nov. 14-18. Salubungan, Sep. 14. *Shepherds & Auxies needed*. Please contact: Henry & Aida Koryan (973) 626-6059 or (973) 709-1387, email (hajbk@aol.com). Housing accommodation will be arranged.

ME25

PPK (Piso-Pisong Kandila) Sale! Scented candles for sale at give-away prices. Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK" fundraisers. Contact any ME25 member for orders.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Miracles" (An Inspirational Concert) Admission \$20

Oct. 4th, 7:30pm-10:00 @ Our Lady of Victories Main Church, 2217 Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City, NJ. Featuring Bo Sanchez & K5 (Kerygma 5 Preachers/Singers). Contact: Frank & Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055 (fvenadas@hotmail.com).

Night of Praise and Worship with Don Moen

Oct. 20th @ the Ritz Theatre, 1148 E. Jersey Ave., Elizabeth, NJ. Doors open at 6pm, *worship starts at 8pm*. Tickets \$35, \$55 or \$75. For more details, please contact Sam Olaso or visit www.worshipinjersey.com.

Traveling Catholics

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Counsels *(cont. from page 1)*

with everything that is mine.”

Only when he finds himself lower than a pig does the son awaken and realize a need to come and ask forgiveness. Something in his very gut says, “I am wrong. I need forgiveness. I need to know I am loved, even if my status with my father cannot be regained.” So, he comes home and finds his father waiting for him.

The older brother, on the other hand, is self-righteous in believing that he has never strayed like his younger brother. He sees himself as having never sinned like his brother had. He seems to have followed the rules and to have done all of the necessary actions, but without loving the one for whom he is doing them. He cannot see that he was loved all along. And he cannot let himself love someone who has sinned in a manner different from his own way of sinning.

The story of the brothers and the loving nature of God should hit close to home for every one of us. We are likely both brothers at different times. But which way is worse? The elder brother’s way seems to say I love God and I love the Church because I do everything right. The younger brother says I don’t need God or family, but after a time of wandering he comes to recognize that he has left love behind and needs it badly.

As long as either can be prodigal, either can meet, shamelessly, that ever-giving father who comes running to meet us and welcome us home, showering us with love. The example of the father is there for us to mature into as the way we treat one another.

These images of a shepherd seeking his one lost sheep, the woman searching for her one lost coin, and the father welcoming back the promiscuous son are all meant to challenge us out of our righteousness, our unwillingness to accept a God whose mercy and hospitality extends to all.

The Gospel explains just how much God desires to save all, how God truly finds that EVERYONE COUNTS, that no one is expendable - not one lost sheep, not one lost part of a married woman’s identity, not the son who wandered off to the wilderness to find his way, not the son who lost his way in the wilderness in his own bitterness while being loved at home.

For us, then, this Sunday becomes a day of self-reflection. If we have been or are now in sin, God’s mercy is seeking us, searching for our deepest soul, with a love that is burning beyond imagining, ready to receive and welcome no less than Jesus welcomed sinners in his time.

Directions:

1. Shepherd each other and be open to shepherding.
2. Proclaim the Good News by inviting others to the encounter weekends.
3. Make amends & be reconciled with each other & with God.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Sep 22 Soup Kitchen @ Blessed Sacrament, Newark**
11am-1pm Amazing Grace CCPM
Contact: Mon & Sandy Campomanes
- Sep 29 Festival of Faith 2007 - Free Admission**
10am-7pm Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart
89 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ
- Oct 05-07 LSS #29 @ St. Mary’s auditorium, Rahway**
Contact: LSA Ministry
- Oct 12-14 Aspirants Retreat**
Emmaus House, Perth Amboy, NJ
- Oct 19-21 John 6 Crossing #8**
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ
Application forms can be found at the website:
www.bldnewark.com/John6

TEACHINGS

- Sep 15 St. Mary’s 1-6pm**
Shepherds’ Training LSS 1-LSS 25
Advanced Intercession & LSS 1-LSS 26
Spiritual Warfare
Christian Maturity Program I LSS 1-LSS 27
(CMPI) Part 1
Encounter With Jesus Part 2 LSS 1-LSS 28
Mark/Matthew
- Sep 21 After worship**
Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles &
Solo Parents Teachings
- Sep 28 After worship**
Service Ministry, Intercessory Min-
istry, Solo Parents (up to SPE 8) &
Golden Years

Pledge of Love
As of Sep. 7 - \$11,122.68

May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

Covenant News is also available on our website at
www.bldnewark.com.

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Week Ending Sep. 7, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fasting for Poor **\$4,199**
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NEWS

Vatican Aide Offers Three Back-to-School Tips. Also Gives Advice to Teachers and Administrators

VATICAN CITY, SEPT. 17, 2007 (Zenit.org).- The prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education offered students some advice as the new school year gets under way. Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski told Vatican Radio that students should try to grow in true wisdom, develop an ever-increasing critical sense and know how to discern good from evil. Cardinal Grocholewski also added the importance of increasing the sense of responsibility for actions and knowing how to use what is learned in school. The 67-year-old prelate said it is not enough to gain technical knowledge. "To live wisely involves sacrifice, enunciation, domination of our desires, of our instincts," he said. "But only living wisely makes a person mature and doers of the true good, of true progress. "Contact with the Lord, with Christ, helps a great deal in the formation of wisdom, therefore teaching religion is important." "It is important that your faith grows," the cardinal added, "and never forget your prayer," because "your greatest friend is Christ." Cardinal Grocholewski exhorted students to live in contact with God, saying, "It is he who truly loves you and who will help you to become mature persons, who know how to contribute to the true good and that of others.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending
September 14, 2007
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor
\$3,837.00
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COUNSELS

Christian Stewardship

WORD: Am 8:4-7; Ps 113:1-2, 4-8; 1Tim 2:1-8; Lk 16:1-13

ORDER: Pray, lifting up holy hands, without anger or resentment. (1Tim2:8)

THEME: We lift up the poor when we restore their dignity

REFLECTION:

This Sunday's Gospel on the parable of the dishonest steward is considered one of the most difficult in the Bible for the mixed messages it seems to send.

Here is a master who's about to fire his steward for mismanaging his property and has asked for a final accounting from him. The shrewd steward then called each of his master's debtors and made them write promissory notes way below what they actually owed. This way they'll owe him something and take care of him in his forced retirement. The master however for some mysterious reason commended the dishonest steward for acting prudently.

This verse 8 is where many readers throughout the ages have been stumped. It couldn't be that the Lord is condoning a dishonest act. What many have come to conclude is that the master is not praising the steward for his dishonesty but for his practical wisdom in preparing for his life after his employment with the master.

This makes some sense in the light of the succeeding verse where Jesus observes that the materially inclined "children of this world" are more shrewd in dealing with this world than the "children of the light", His followers. The obvious lesson is that His people, us, working for our

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"He raises up the lowly from the dust; from the dunghill he lifts up the poor to seat them with princes, with the princes of his own people." (Psalm 113:7)

Why Was Jesus a Carpenter?

In my early years as a young boy, I often wondered why I was born to a poor family when my classmates in grade school were sons and daughters of engineers, dentists, lawyers, doctors, etc. When asked what my father did for a living, I was too shy to say he was a carpenter. Once they knew, they understood why I wore faded t-shirt and could be barefooted if something went wrong with my “pair of bakya”. Only when I came to BLD 16 years ago that I realized my father had the most noble of occupations and that I should have been more proud of him because Jesus, my Lord and Savior, was a carpenter Himself. I was convicted that I might have dishonored my father in a way so I went to confession for it. In one prayer meeting we led, I even publicly asked for forgiveness from my deceased father and from God.

Despite being a humble carpenter, my father, together with my determined mother, helped send me to college. He was a well sought craftsman in our town because of his creativity in house designs, his simplicity and integrity. He always wanted his clients to be satisfied with what he had built for them even if he exceeded his labor estimates. He never overcharged his clients even if his friends teased him about remaining poor because of his honesty. These were the same friends who learned expert carpentry from him, and made it their livelihood for life, through my father’s rigid and precise mentoring.

Humble, simple, a man of integrity, a master carpenter, great teacher! No, I am not describing my father anymore; I am describing our dear Lord Jesus. But I know that Father God chose St. Joseph, the surrogate father of Jesus on earth so that Jesus might learn a noble vocation that was very much akin to what His mission on earth was – building His Church through His disciples. God also chose who our parents would be depending on what God wanted us to do on earth to fulfill our mission. To each one of us, He gave gifts through our chosen parents, so that each one of us will have a role to add up to the building being constructed.

That is why God’s gifts are varied, but each gift is crucial because it will be a building block that will form part of the structure that makes up His Building, His Church. True indeed was the word of St. Thomas Aquinas that “grace builds on nature.” And it is this “nature” that God intentionally caused in us so we may do His will. One is a teacher, the other preacher, another one an evangelist, a pastor and still another, a prophet. Because each has something different to contribute, a building rises. If all people are doctors or dentists, how can the house be completed? Our community is the same. Each one of us helps build the structure through which we will grow in maturity towards someday being with God. The cornerstone of our building is Christ.

Yes, we did not choose our parents. And if God chose our parents, who are we to wonder why we were born to a family, whether it is a poor one, or a rich one? Who can judge what God chooses for us? Lord, I thank you that You chose my parents. I know I have to love them because you chose the best for me so that I may give glory to you! I terribly miss my earthly father now who prepared me well to meet You, my Heavenly Father. I love you, My Carpenter.

Church - Pillar of Truth

In I Timothy 3:15, St. Paul speaks of “the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth”; and this description would be something worse than mere exaggeration if it had been intended to apply to a fallible Church; it would be a false and misleading description. That St. Paul, however, meant it to be taken for sober and literal truth is abundantly proved by what he insists upon so strongly elsewhere, namely, the strictly Divine authority of the Gospel which he and the other Apostles preached, and which it was the mission of their successors to go on preaching without change or corruption to the end of time. “When you had received of us”, he writes to the Thessalonians, “in receiving the word of God from hearing us, you received not a human word, but (as it truly is) the word of God, which is now at work in you who believed” (1 Thessalonians 2:13). The Gospel, he tells the Corinthians, is intended to bring “into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Indeed, so fixed is the doctrine that has been taught that the Galatians (1:8) are warned to vigorously denounce any one, even an angel from heaven, who should preach to them a Gospel other than that which St. Paul had preached. Nor was this attitude — which is intelligible only on the supposition that the Apostolic College was infallible — peculiar to St. Paul. The other Apostles and apostolic writers were equally strong in anathematizing those who preached another Christianity than that which the Apostles had preached (cf. 2 Peter 2:1 sqq.; 1 John 4:1 sqq.; 2 John 7 sqq.; Jude 4); and St. Paul makes it clear that it was not to any personal or private views of his own that he claimed to make every understanding captive, but to the Gospel which Christ had delivered to the Apostolic body. When his own authority as an Apostle was challenged, his defense was that he had seen the risen Savior and received his mission directly from Him, and that his Gospel was in complete agreement with that of the other Apostles (see, v.g., Galatians 2:2-9).

What does this mean for us? Well if the Church is the source of all truth and we as a people are the Church, then we must be aware of what the Church declares to be true and be willing and able to some degree to defend those truths. Not all of us are theologians, but we can certainly learn enough to be able to defend basic truths, especially on subjects as abortion and stem-cell research, which are often in the news. As Christians it is our responsibility to defend our faith.

Saint Matthew

St. Matthew, one of the twelve Apostles, is the author of the first Gospel. This has been the constant tradition of the Church and is confirmed by the Gospel itself. He was the son of Alpheus and was called to be an Apostle while sitting in the tax collectors place at Capernaum. Before his conversion he was a publican, i.e., a tax collector by profession. He is to be identified with the "Levi" of Mark and Luke. Perhaps this was his original name, and he received a new name from Jesus when he became a disciple. (It has also been suggested that he was simply a member of the tribe of Levi.) The name "Matthew" means "gift of the LORD."

His apostolic activity was at first restricted to the communities of Palestine. Nothing definite is known about his later life. There is a tradition that points to Ethiopia as his field of labor; other traditions mention of Parthia and Persia. It is uncertain whether he died a natural death or received the crown of martyrdom.

St. Matthew's Gospel was written to fill a sorely-felt want for his fellow countrymen, both believers and unbelievers. For the former, it served as a token of his regard and as an encouragement in the trial to come, especially the danger of falling back to Judaism; for the latter, it was designed to convince them that the Messiah had come in the person of Jesus, our Lord, in Whom all the promises of the Messianic Kingdom embracing all people had been fulfilled in a spiritual rather than in a carnal way: "My Kingdom is not of this world." His Gospel, then, answered the question put by the disciples of St. John the Baptist, "Are You He Who is to come, or shall we look for another?"

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO LIVE ALONE

Dear Lord, I pray that you will always stay by my side and guide me in all my daily activities. Grant me good health to carry on my daily work. Keep my mind, my thoughts and actions pure. Let me be kind and generous to people around me who are in need. Protect me, Lord, from fire, from flood, from thieves, from malicious gossip, from fear and evil ones. Heal me in times of sickness or accidents. Lift up my heart when I feel low or lonely or desperate. Dear Lord, I live alone but I have no fear, because I feel your continued presence in me. You are my strength, my fortress and my defender from all evil. Help me to always put all my trust and confidence in your great love for me. AMEN.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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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

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Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

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MEDICAL MISSION:

Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

BLD CHARLOTTE, NC:

LSS#1, Nov. 14-18. Salubungan, Sept 14. Shepherds & Auxies needed Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387 Email hajbk@aol.com. Housing Accommodation will be arranged.

TEACHING MINISTRY

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sep 21 (Fri) | Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles & Solo Parents Teaching – St. Mary's |
| Sep 28 (Fri) | Service Ministry, Intercessory Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE 8) & Golden Years |
| Oct 20 (Sat) | Shepherds Training Part 2 – LSS25
Christian Maturity Program I (CMPI) Part 2 – LSS27 |
| Oct 26 (Fri) | Golden Years, Intercessory Ministry, Service Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE8) Introduction to Intercession – LSS29 |

Counsels from page 1

spiritual future, should show the same ingenuity, readiness and determination as worldly people working for their future, but of course not in the ways that are fraudulent.

We provide for our spiritual future by outgrowing evil and growing in goodness, by being trustworthy as stated in the reading in both great and small things, by living by His words and commandments, and by being good stewards of our True Master's resources: our lives and everything in it which are all really just on loan to us.

We are reminded of this stewardship in the verse: "If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another, who will give you what is yours?" How can the Lord give us our eternal life with Him, our true wealth, when we can't take care of our borrowed lives, of the riches He has given us here on earth, of the people he entrusted to us: our family and friends, and the people in the periphery of our lives whom He uses to talk with us?

Our theme for this week is linked to the Gospel in this respect in that we, as God's stewards, should treat God's people, especially the poor, with dignity. Almsgiving is a start but it's not all or the only thing we should do. We in the community with our Community Mission of breaking the yoke of poverty indeed do a lot to reach out and care for the poor: our parish soup kitchens, our yearly medical missions to the Philippines and lately, our embracing as our own the goals of Gawad Kalinga of building homes for the poor of the Philippines.

But beyond all these worthy efforts to address the poor's material conditions, we shouldn't lose sight of their spiritual needs, of bringing them back to God which is the overarching will of the Lord. As the Gospel reminds us too, let's strive to enrich their spiritual lives, and our own, with the same purposiveness that "children of this world" pursue the treasures of this earthly life.

After all, isn't this earthly existence only meant to qualify us for the vastly richer eternal life with God? And if we have a choice, as put to us in the last line in the Gospel, on whom to serve: God or mammon? The answer is easily and always clear: It is the Lord. At all times and alone: It is the Lord. As we have affirmed in our renewal and validate in our daily life in the community: It is the Lord and only the Lord Jesus we serve.

DIRECTION:

Offer supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings for everyone that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEP 22

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark 11am – 1pm, Amazing Grace CCPM, Contact persons: Mon & Sandy Campomanes

SEP 29 **ADMISSION IS FREE**

Festival of Faith 2007, 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, 89 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ, Contact persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco

OCT 6-7

LSS#29 Contact: LSA Ministry, St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway

OCT 12-14

Aspirant's Retreat - LSS23-24 Emmaus House, Perth Amboy, NJ

OCT 19-21

John 6 Crossing #8, Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ, Application forms can be found at the website: BLDNEWARK.com/John6

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Oct 4 (Thu) 7:30-10:00pm "Miracles" (An Inspirational Concert) Featuring Bo Sanchez & K5 (Kerygma 5 Preachers/Singers) – Our Lady of Victories Main Church, 2217 Kennedy Blvd. Jersey City, NJ Admission \$20.00 Contact: Frank & Malou Venadas (973)562-0055/
fvenadas@hotmail.com

Oct 20 (Sat) Night of Praise and Worship with Don Moen - Ritz Theatre, 1148 E. Jersey Ave., Elizabeth, NJ Worship starts at 8pm \$35/\$55/\$75, For more details, please contact: Sam Olaso, www.worshipinjersey.com

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NEWS

CHRIST MAKES CHURCH RICH WITH POVERTY SAYS POPE, REFLECTS ON PARABLE OF DISHONEST STEWARD

VELLETRI, Italy, SEPT. 23, 2007, (Zenit.org).- Christ makes his followers rich with his poverty, Benedict XVI said in two reflections on the parable of the dishonest steward. The Pope made a brief pastoral visit today to the suburbicarian Diocese of Velletri-Segni, the titular see to which he was appointed as cardinal from 1993 through his election as Pope, to present to the town of Velletri a bronze column celebrating his pontificate.

The column, with scenes of his life engraved on it, was placed in the plaza of the Cathedral of San Clement, where the Holy Father celebrated Mass.

During the homily the Pontiff said that the lesson of the dishonest steward in the Gospel of Luke illustrates that "no servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

The Holy Father continued: "Mammon is the original Phoenician term that evokes economic security and success in business; we could say that in wealth is found the idol in which one sacrifices everything to reach personal success. "Therefore a fundamental decision is necessary -- the choice between the logic of profit as the ultimate criteria of our action and the logic of sharing and solidarity.

"The logic of profit, if it prevails, increases not only the disproportion between poor and rich, but also the devastating exploitation of the planet.

"When, on the other hand, the logic of sharing and solidarity prevails, it is possible to correct the course of action and orient it toward proportional development, for the common good of all."

A decision: Benedict XVI added, "In the end it is a decision between egoism and love, between justice and dishonesty, and a final choice between God and Satan." true good and that of others.

COUNSELS

Give Love, Give Justice

WORD: Am 6:1a, 4-7; Ps 146:7-10; 1 Tim 6:11-16; Lk 16:19-31

ORDER: "Keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ..." 1 Tim 6:14

THEME: "We lift up the poor when we seek justice for them."

REFLECTION:

The Lord's Word for September is "The Kingdom of God is for those who lift up the poor". Our Word themes in the previous four weeks have focused on how we can "lift up the poor", namely:

- When we help build homes for them
- When share our resources with them
- When we bring the Good News to them
- When we restore their dignity

Our Word theme tonight completes and sums up the previous: "We lift up the poor when we seek justice for them." Our gospel reading- the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, provides rich lessons for those who seek Kingdom life on earth and the hereafter. In the parable, the rich man did not lift a finger to lift up the poor man Lazarus. He was the very picture of complacency that the Lord decried in the first reading from Amos. The purple garments and fine linen he wore signified his regal and imperial standing. His table fare was sumptuous - rich and magnificent banquets reminiscent of kings. The parable made no mention of work. His was definitely a life of comfort and opulence. The rich man had everything of this world, but nothing of God. But he did not

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

*"Blessed is he who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry."
(Psalm 146:6-7)*

Light on a Lamp Stand

“No one who lights a lamp conceals it with a vessel or sets it under a bed; rather, he places it on a lamp stand so that those who enter may see the light.

Luke 8:17

Jesus is the light of the world. It is by no coincidence that “LSS”, the Life in the Spirit Seminar is right around the corner. I believe that Luke’s message is linked to “the responsibility of those who hear”. Jesus likens Himself to a man who has lit a lamp, not to be put under a vessel or under a bed, but on a lamp stand for all to see the light.

We should not put the lamp “under a bed”, which refers to the bed being a symbol of rest, comfort, sloth, and indulgence and how these which can hinder our light from shining! We must get outside of our comfort zone and spread the word of God.

However, we should be careful on how we “hear” or spread the word of God. If we practice what we preach then God will give us more blessings. If we are faithful in sharing the truth with others, then God will reveal new and deeper truths to us. On the other hand, if we are not faithful then He will deprive us from the truth we possess.

During this time of preparation for the LSS we should especially remain vigilant and make sure our thoughts, words, and actions are of the Lord. We all should take a step back and reflect on oneself. How can you look at the splinter in your brother’s eye and not notice the stick in your own eye? If we take the time to focus on one self and focus on how we can better ourselves for the Lord, we can allow the Holy Spirit to slowly light that burning, powerful, sensational fire within ourselves.

I truly believe each and every one of us is destined for greatness! It is up to us with His gift of free will to choose and accept God’s abundant blessings. I truly believe if one exalts oneself he will be humbled and if one humbles oneself he will be exalted! Now let’s take this opportunity to accept God’s wonderful plan for all of us. Sooner or later, that small fire that is lit in our hearts will have the desire to become two, then three, then before you know it there will be an amazing power of grace in this world. God is inviting us to show people that Jesus is truly the light of the world!

St. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael

The great Archangels – Michael, Gabriel and Raphael are mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures and how they assist in the salvation of souls and peace in the world. They have played a vital role as powerful protectors and defenders of God’s people and as messengers of light, love and hope. Also, the choir of angels sings His praises and surrounds His heavenly throne.

Then war broke out in heaven, Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back but they did not prevail and there was no longer a place for them in heaven. Thus, St. Michael and the faithful angels won a glorious victory against the followers of Lucifer who opposed God with his cry of rebellion, “I will be like the Most High!” (Is 14:14) God transformed them into hideous demons and cast them into the abyss of eternal torment. St. Michael prostrated himself before the throne of God, with an act of profound adoration to the Almighty raised his own cry of love and loyalty, “Quis ut Deus” – “Who is like unto God?” With his zeal and fidelity, Archangel Michael receives the highest honor as Prince of Heavenly Hosts.

St. Paul tells us that our battle is not against flesh and blood but against the principalities and power, against the rulers of darkness . . . (Eph 6:12). We invoke the aid of St. Michael, “to cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls”. Let us then oppose the tempter with the same energetic words “Who is like unto God?”

The Gospel of Luke tells us about the Archangel Gabriel as the message-bearer, who announces the birth of John the Baptist to his father, Zechariah and the birth of our Lord Jesus to the Blessed Virgin. “Hail favored one, the Lord is with you! Do not be afraid, Mary for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him, Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.” (Lk 1:28-30)

In the Book of Tobit, God hears the prayers of Tobit and Sarah and send the angel Raphael to aid them. “Behold, I will send my angel who shall go before thee”. (Ex 23:20) Archangel Raphael was sent to heal them, to remove the cataracts from Tobit’s eyes and to drive the wicked demon, Asmodeus from Sarah so she could marry Tobit’s son Tobiah. Hence, St. Raphael is known as a healer and companion.

The Church celebrates the Feast Day of Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael on September 29. Their works and assistance greatly reflects God’s providential care.

Do Catholics Worship Statues?

The Religious Uses of Images

During a plague of serpents sent to punish the Israelites during the exodus, God told Moses to "make [a statue of] a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and every one who is bitten, when he sees it shall live. So Moses made a bronze serpent, and set it on a pole; and if a serpent bit any man, he would look at the bronze serpent and live" (Num. 21:8-9).

One had to look at the bronze statue of the serpent to be healed, which shows that statues could be used ritually, not merely as religious decorations.

Catholics use statues, paintings, and other artistic devices to recall the person or thing depicted. Just as it helps to remember one's mother by looking at her photograph, so it helps to recall the example of the saints by looking at pictures of them. Catholics also use statues as teaching tools. In the early Church they were especially useful for the instruction of the illiterate. Many Protestants have pictures of Jesus and other Bible pictures in Sunday school for teaching children. Catholics also use statues to commemorate certain people and events, much as Protestant churches have three-dimensional nativity scenes at Christmas.

If one measured Protestants by the same rule, then by using these "graven" images, they would be practicing the "idolatry" of which they accuse Catholics. But there's no idolatry going on in these situations. God forbids the worship of images as gods, but he doesn't ban the making of images. If he had, religious movies, videos, photographs, paintings, and all similar things would be banned. But, as the case of the bronze serpent shows, God does not even forbid the ritual use of religious images.

It is when people begin to adore a statue as a god that the Lord becomes angry. Thus when people did start to worship the bronze serpent as a snake-god (whom they named "Nehushtan"), the righteous king Hezekiah had it destroyed (2 Kgs. 18:4).

What About Bowing?

Sometimes anti-Catholics cite Deuteronomy 5:9, where God said concerning idols, "You shall not bow down to them." Since many Catholics sometimes bow or kneel in front of statues of Jesus and the saints, anti-Catholics confuse the legitimate veneration of a sacred image with the sin of idolatry.

Though bowing can be used as a posture in worship, not all bowing is worship. In Japan, people show respect by bowing in greeting (the equivalent of the Western handshake). Similarly, a person can kneel before a king without worshipping him as a god. In the same way, a Catholic who may kneel in front of a statue while praying isn't worshipping the statue or even praying to it, any more than the Protestant who kneels with a Bible in his hands when praying is worshipping the Bible or praying to it.

Source : www.catholic.com

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LSS#1, Nov. 14-18. Salubungan, Sept 14. Shepherds & Auxies needed Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387 Email hajbk@aol.com. Housing Accommodation will be arranged.

BLD ALBANY, NY

ME# 10 Weekend October 12 -14, 2007. If you know of any couples that reside in the Albany, NY area that might be interested to join the ME weekend, please have them contact Nick & Island directly (908) 688-8614.

ME25

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila). Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices. Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK Fundraisers". Contact any ME25 member for orders

JOHN 6

CROSSING Sponsoring Class & Auxies MANDATORY meetings on September 29 & October 13 1:00 pm -6:00 pm Library, St. Mary's library

TEACHING MINISTRY

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sep 28 (Fri) | Service Ministry, Intercessory Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE 8) & Golden Years |
| Oct 20 (Sat) | Shepherds Training Part 2-LSS25 Christian Maturity Program I (CMPI) Part 2 - LSS27 |
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Counsels from page 1

welcome Lazarus into his home, who lay just outside his door. He did not share his resources Lazarus - not one tiny bit from his riches, not even the scraps of food that fell from his table. He did not witness to Lazarus the good news of God's covenantal love with Israel. He did not accord Lazarus the dignity that befits a fellow child of God.

On the other hand, Lazarus had nothing of this world, but everything of God (Latin name Eleazar means "God is my help"). He was so poor and diseased that he was unable to fend for himself, so he had to beg. He was hungry and would have eaten scraps falling from the rich man's table. Apparently without family and friends, he was ignored, avoided and abandoned, approached only by dogs which licked his sores. Though suffering, he was uncomplaining. Lazarus possessed all that really mattered: he had God.

Earthly wealth and suffering, like everything in this world, are passing. Jesus, "the King of kings and Lord of lords...alone has immortality" Inevitably, the rich man and Lazarus died and met God's divine justice. Lazarus, because of his reliance on God, was carried by angels to the eternal comfort of the bosom of Abraham. The rich man, because of his selfishness, was consigned to the eternal torment of the netherworld. There, he discovered that his and Lazarus' earthly states had been reversed. Lazarus was comforted; the rich man was tormented. He was now the beggar. Yet his old self-absorption and low regard for Lazarus remained. He begged Father Abraham to send Lazarus to cool his tongue with water from the tip of his finger. His tears did him no good, as there was no way the great chasm between heaven and hell can be bridged after death.

The rich man made his final appeal to warn his five brothers - who represented a society which did nothing to alleviate the plight of the poor - that they may repent of their selfishness. Father Abraham's response speaks to us too. Repentance must flow out of love of God and obedience to His commandments. St. Paul reinforces and simplifies the command, "...keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim 6:14). The commandment to keep is kingdom love.

In summary, our value before God does not lie in our wealth, looks or stature, but in our heart of love, a love that lifts up all persons, most specially the poor. Jesus is the model of lifting up the poor: "for your sake, He became poor though He was rich, so that by His poverty you might become rich" (2 Tm 8:9).

Less for self, more for others, enough for all!

DIRECTION:

Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience and gentleness

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEP 29: Festival of Faith 2007, 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart, 89 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ , **ADMISSION IS FREE**

Contact persons: Casey/Malyn Tanseco

OCT 6-7: LSS#29 Contact: LSA Ministry, St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway

OCT 12-14: Aspirant's Retreat - LSS23-24 Emmaus House, Perth Amboy, NJ

OCT 19-21: John 6 Crossing #8, Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ, Application forms can be found at the website: BLDNEWARK.com/John6

OCT 27: Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament - Youth Ministry Frank & Malou Venadas (973)562-0055/Alan & Tess Cam

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Oct 4 (Thu) 7:30-10pm "Miracles" (An Inspirational Concert) Featuring Bo Sanchez & K5 (Kerygma 5 Preachers/Singers) - Our Lady of Victories Main Church, 2217 Kennedy Blvd. Jersey City, NJ Admission \$20.00 Contact: Frank & Malou Venadas at (973) 562-0055 / fvenadas@hotmail.com

Oct 14 (Sun) 1pm-6pm Rosary of God the Father / Baptism of the Holy Spirit / Healing / Eucharistic Celebration - St. Antoninus Church, 337 S. Orange Ave., Newark, NJ

Oct 20 (Sat) 8:00pm A Night of Praise & Worship with Don Moen at the Ritz Theatre 1148 E. Jersey Ave., Elizabeth, NJ Tickets are \$35 / \$55 / \$75 For more details, contact: Sam Olaso or visit www.worshipinjersey.com

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

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BLD serves at the Festival of Faith

A perfect autumnal morning ushered in the start of Archdiocese of Newark's Festival of Faith last Saturday. The festival venues- Basilica of the Sacred Heart and the nearby Archdiocesan Center and Baringer School- were quickly teeming with volunteer workers wearing shirts that bore the official orange color and design.

Workers included members of BLD Newark and other Catholic organizations, including a large presence of our Latin American brethren. Our Hospitality Greeters composed of members from different ministries, including Praise Ministry, was led by our Mission Apostolate. They stood in strategic corners, ever ready with a smile and offer for directional assistance. Service Ministry provided coffee and goodies for early registrants and workers. Technical Ministry provided reliable sound system for the inspiring Speakers and performers for the multi-cultural entertainments. Our Youth and Single Ministries inspired the crowd with live praise music, while our Solo Parents Ministry introduced the audience to our culture with a Filipino dance. Intercessory Ministry led volunteers in vigils for protection and prayed over all who came for all kinds of healing. FLA video-recorded the talks for the Archdiocese. The exhibits included a BLD Booth that was cheerfully and largely manned by ME# 26 and 28, evangelizing and promoting the good works of BLD. Evangelization Services Ministry was tasked to coordinate the various supports required from our community by the Archdiocesan Evangelization Commission.

Our community served as one body in Christ through His Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. All who came lived up to the theme's call to "Celebrate Catholic Identity".

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Matthew 16:18

COUNSELS

Christian Servanthood ... with prayers

WORD: Hb 1:2-3, 2:2-4; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9;
2Tim 1:6-8, 13-14; Lk 17:5-10

ORDER:

"Bear your share of hardship for the Gospel with the strength that comes from God." 2 Tim 1:14

REFLECTION:

The readings for today exemplify the true meaning of servanthood. It is a call for us as individuals and as a community to be willing to offer ourselves to serve Him with humility and love.

Service through our mission work requires more than just the performance of whatever task that each of us is assigned to do. As it is said, our Lord knows what is in our hearts. The joy that we get from serving Him depends on how much we give of our heart to what we do as his disciples. As from the words of Mother Theresa:

"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."

When we serve or help the poor, both spiritually and physically through our mission work; when we bring joy to the elderly and the infirm; when we feed the hungry; when we help cure the sick; we should not seek recognition or any reward from anyone. Greater rewards await us when we join Him in His heavenly kingdom, for everything we do is recorded in the book of life.

☞ (page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"...the just one, because of his faith, shall live."

Habakkuk 2:4b

The Heart of a Child

“Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt. 18:4)

Ever since I joined BLD I learned more about praying, obedience, humility, serving, being compassionate. Mark 10 was my first ministry and I thought this was because I had a young son in that age group and partly to help out ‘babysitting’ while the ‘grown-ups’ attend their worship. At first, it was challenging to see how well we could teach them to make the Sign of the Cross, reverence, reciting the Rosary, understanding the basic message of the Gospel. Most importantly we saw to it that they were not fighting, playing or being inattentive during prayer time, consoling, making them comfortable. Letting them know who Jesus is.

But as time passed, slowly I began to see what God was telling me! Here I am, a parent, should know everything about Catechism, leading others, teaching and yet there is more to know about being like a child... humble, obedient, absorbing everything, excited, happy, eager to do new things, make friends, laugh, cry, speak the basic feelings, being spontaneous. But I’m an adult now; I have to act, think and act like one!

Why did Jesus say that the one who is humble like a child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Because he reminds us that in our grown up bodies, our heart should be like that of a child. One that is expecting the newness of things and life itself, happy with basic & simple things, wanting to share, not analyzing but merely doing things out of humility and obedience, with joy and peace to hold, and most of all being to able see a child’s heart in another.

Does this mean that we should be able to receive another as a child? To be able to see that even amongst the adults we should see the child in that person? Why not!

When we receive in Jesus’ name, the broken hearted, rejected, abandoned & unlovable; forgiving the one who is most difficult to forgive, offering new hope to the desolate, comforting, asking for forgiveness with all humility- we receive Jesus. We make our heart His sanctuary.

Like a child, be open to love, faith and Trust. When we get forgiven or have forgiven, let go of the pain. Take off the mask, live like a child of the living God. Return to the heart of a child- one that relies on the love of our Father. A defiled heart cannot enter heaven; it must change through Jesus to the heart of a child.

“And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me”. (Mt. 18:5)

Set your Heart upon Jesus

“No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”
Luke 9:62

Hard words in an even harsher context, spoken as Jesus was preparing to go up to Jerusalem for the last time. He set His face like flint as He set upon the road to His death, knowing full well what He was about to endure. At this point in His earthly walk, all the stories, the parables, all the teaching, all the fraternizing and fellowship, all the talk takes second place... to the walk.

The spectrum of His ministry is converging on the focus of the cross and the price that must be paid for those He came to save. There is no time for distractions. The die has been cast, the teaching is done, the miracles to prove He is Who He says He is are accomplished. There remains the deed, the death He must submit Himself to. Time is running out. He Who is timeless, while willingly captured in time is about to explode the order of things and open once again the doors to eternal life to those who choose to follow Him.

At what great cost to the Leader- death of the God-Man at the hands of His created. Little wonder He had little patience at this point for those setting conditions for their following Him. It cost Him everything. Should it cost us any less? Setting out hearts on Jesus is giving Him everything, in season and out of season, whether it is convenient or not, whether we feel like it or not. It is the most radical decision of our lives & especially in these days, totally counter-cultural.

Yes, we live in the world and have to function in it **but we are not of it**. Once we decide to follow Him, we are no longer just residents on planet earth. We are pilgrims passing through. Even the most dramatic earthly calls will not keep us from that divine appointment.

We are heaven-focused and the way to get there is through the path in life we are trodding. Only the way we live out our lives is changed dramatically. Once we set out in this path, there is no turning back... if we *“set out hearts like flint”* on our destination, heaven.

Every path is as individual as the soul that trod it. We cannot ‘trade places’. Once we really get to know Him & realize that He is with us on this journey, the destination overshadows our trials & we go on, only now, we are detached as our hearts are no longer obsessed with what we are going through but are at rest in HIM.

Fr. Pauls speaks on CFC Developments

The main reason for my sharing is to update you all on the unfortunate division in our sister community, Couples for Christ. It is a very complicated and politically charged combination of events, and I am not sure I have all the details. Discussions have been going on mostly within the seven-man CFC international council in the Philippines since February.

The final result has been the withdrawal of the original founder, Frank Padilla, from CFC. With the reluctant consent of the five bishops who comprise the spiritual direction of CFC, Frank and his followers are permitted to found another CFC with the added initials FL (family life). Why did this happen?

Frank gives two reasons: first, in his view CFC has lost its original vision of world wide evangelization and family life, and concentrated too much on Gawad Kalinga, a movement to build homes for the poor in the Philippines; secondly, because of some irregularities in some of the GK villages themselves.

In response to these charges, Joe Tale, the present leader of the international council, denies that CFC has lost its vision. Admitting two instances that I will share, Joe Tale assures us that these GK irregularities are being addressed. As I understand it, in one instance the Mormon sect contributed a water supply to one of the GK villages. People were concerned because of the aggressive stand the Mormons take toward the Catholic Church, especially in the Philippines. Another instance is the financial contribution to GK by a company that allegedly manufactures condoms.

The position of the council is that they are aware of these difficulties, which are considered relatively small, and are dealing with them under the direction of the bishops. I have personally discussed this with Frank Padilla whom I have known for the 25 years of CFC existence. I still consider him my friend even though I disagree with his withdrawal. My position is that you can accomplish more by staying in than by leaving. Stay and fight. In addition there has been a tremendous disturbance and confusion in this country among the ranks of CFC. The members must now take sides.

Where does this leave our decision to continue to support GK? I discussed this very point with Frank. **He would NOT want us in any way to discontinue support of GK.** His problem is not with GK directly, nor has there been money problems, but with what he considers to be an overemphasis by CFC on GK. Thus this is a CFC problem, not a BLD issue. He still encourages our support for GK. He feels, however, that it should continue as a separate entity, apart from CFC. The international council on the other hand feels GK still is a legitimate mission of CFC.

I hope I have added some insight to this unfortunate division. May we continue to pray for the eventual reunification of both parties. Please feel free to call me if you need more facts about the events that led to this separation.

Ministry Announcements

JOHN 6: Now accepting applications for Crossing #8 Retreat (for 12-14 years old)

- Application are on the BLD website

Crossing Sponsoring Class & Auxies

- **Mandatory Meeting - Saturday Oct 13**

St. Mary's Library, 1:00-6:00

contact Boyet/Zita Cruz (ztcruz80@yahoo.com)

LITURGY: Act Now! - Subscription for 2008

Magnificat • Direct your order through your coordinator/Shepherd. Take advantage of bul rate of \$15/year. Please make checks payable to: BLD Newark

MEDICAL MISSION: February 18-22 -

Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Please contact:

Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340

MISSION: Nursing Home Visit - scheduled

every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact: Ency & Babie Alberto

(973) 584-0370 (engeng@optonline.net)

SINGLE'S: Archdiocesan Outreach Service

every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com)

LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.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

ME25: PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila) Scented

Candles for sale at give-away prices. Proceeds of sale will benefit the

"Pledge of Love" & "GK Fundraisers".

Please contact any ME25 for advance orders.

BLD ALBANY: Marriage Encounter #10

Oct 12-14 • If you know of any couples that reside in the Albny, NY area that might be interested to join the ME weekend, please have them contact Nick & Island Raagas directly at (908) 688-8614

BLD CHARLOTTE, NC: LSS #1

Nov 14-18 • Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059 or (973)709-1387 email: hajbk@aol.com Housing accommodation will be arranged.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending September 28, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for the Poor \$3,952.00

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.

Counselors (continued from Page 1...)

First and foremost, we should always thank and praise the Lord for calling us to be part of His ministry. We therefore owe everything to him for the new life that he has offered us and for the opportunity to serve Him by sharing His love with others. In doing so, it is incumbent upon us to be good witnesses of His love and thus become worthy of His calling.

True mission work involves helping or caring for others who have no means of repaying us back. We should not expect even an expression of gratitude from them. Rather, we are the ones who should thank them for they were sent to us by the Lord as a means to glorify Him, as a way to thank Him for the blessings we continually get from Him.

When conducting our mission, we are forewarned that other principalities will try to prevent us to achieve what the Lord has set for us to do. At times, we would feel helpless and may even feel abandoned. There will be spiritual warfare in every step of the way. We will encounter difficulties and challenges. There may even be disagreement among us, in our community, in our family, and even between couples. All these will not happen if we always put the Lord in front of us: to clear our way, to shine His light on all that we do, to hold us up when we weaken, to comfort us when we're tired and to reconcile us when we fail to consider each other with love.

In the first reading, we are asked to write down the vision clearly. This is a call for us to stay focused in doing God's work. The Lord will be with us at the right time and all the time and will see us through all difficulties until the fulfillment of our mission objectives. It is a call for us to be patient and to persevere in faith.

Let us always remember that in our struggles while working in His vineyard, we are blessed by His anointing through the presence of the Holy Spirit who is always with us. All we have to do is to stir His presence in us through persistent prayers.

Through service and prayers, we can see and feel the Lord's loving presence as He provides us with the strength and the zeal to do His will. We should always be guided by His word. Through His word, His will becomes our will, and our accomplishments all serve to glorify Him and magnify His Name.

DIRECTION:

When encountering difficulties in serving in Community, pray persistently; have faith that our Lord will help see us through.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Oct 6-7 • **LSS #29** - St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
Contact : LSA Ministry

October 12-14 • **Aspirant's Retrat - LSS 23-24**
Emmas House. Perth Amboy, NJ

October 12-14 • **Albany - ME10**
Contact: Nick & Island Raagas

October 13 • **DLC Meeting - 1:00-5:00 PM**
St. Mary's Library, Rahway, NJ

October 19 & 20 • **John 6 Crossing #8**
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ

October 20 • **"A Night of Praise & Worship with Don Moen"** • The Ritz Theatre in Elizabeth - doors open at 6:30pm and Worship starts at 8pm

October 27 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament**
Youth Ministry - Contact: Frank & Malou Venadas (973)562-0055 or Alan & Tess Cam

November 2-4 • **Marriage Encounter #30**
Don Bosco Marian Shrine
West Haverstaw, New York

Schedule of TEACHINGS

Oct 19 - Friday

- **Youth & Singles Teachings**
- **Christian Parenting 1** - Solo Parents (up to SPE 9)

Oct 20 - Saturday

- **Shepherds Training Part 2** - LSS25
- **Christian Maturity Program I - Part2**
C MPI - LSS 27

Oct 26 - Friday

- **Golden Years & Intercessory**
- Ministry Teachings
- **Christian Servanthood**
- Service Ministry
- Solo Parents (up to SPE8)
- **Introduction to intercession**
- LSS 29

Nov 2 - Saturday

- **Apologetics** - LSS 23-24
- **Healing & Deliverance** - LSS26
- **Christian Maturity Program II** - LSS 27
- **Encounter with Jesus** - LSS 28
- **Christian Parenting** - LSS 29

NOTE: Friday teachings - after worship
Saturday teachings - 1-6pm St. Mary's



LSS # 29

New Branches of the True Vine

In Acts 1: 8 , Our Lord Jesus Christ promised his disciples; *“But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

So it was last weekend of October 6th and 7th that Our Lord Jesus Christ once again fulfilled His promise to send the Holy Spirit to baptize our 80 LSS # 29 candidates from ME# 29, Solo Parents, Singles, Golden years, Non-Encountered and Amazing Grace Charismatic Prayer Group.. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit was truly present on the Pastoral team led by our Spiritual Director- Fr. Paul Lehman, sharers, the LSA ministry, the sponsoring classes of ME # 28, SE # 17 and SPE # 9, Praise Ministry, Liturgical Ministry and auxies.

The sharers were: Gerry & Dimples Canlas, Leslie Calilap, DV & Jackie DelValle, Gerry & Gigi Cabunag, Lito & Gigi Vibar, Mon & Bingle Chan, George & Cathy Del Fierro, Long Cruzada and Frank & Sally Belarmino. Their life testimonies and teachings revealed God’s infinite mercy, unconditional love, forgiveness and healing.

The spirit filled workers of God’s vineyard have once again fulfilled our Lord’s ministry of evangelization. The attendees witnessed the uplifting power and infinite goodness of Our Lord, and felt renewed with a desire to live as we were created in the image and likeness of God, so that others may see HIM as the loving Father in heaven.

“ I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes ³ so that it bears more fruit. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.” (John 15::1,2,5)

COUNSELS

Faithful Thanksgiving: Key to Healing

WORD: 2Kgs 5:14-17; Ps 98:1-4;
2Tim 2:8-13; Lk 17:11-19

ORDER: Give thanks to God.

THEME: We lead a life of active faith when we thank the Father at all times.

REFLECTION: In our gospel story, we read that as Jesus continued his journey to Jerusalem, he traveled through Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten lepers met Him, stood at a distance, then raised their voices asking Jesus to “have pity on them”. When Jesus saw them, he told them to go and show themselves to the priests. On their way to the priests, only one of the lepers, a Samaritan, after realizing that he had been healed, returned, glorified God in a loud voice. We read further that he fell at Jesus’ feet and thanked Him, while the other nine, though they were also healed, did not. This prompted Jesus to ask: *“Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?”* (Lk 17:17-18)

This familiar story can be summarized in a sentence: Jesus heals ten lepers and only one comes back to say, “Thank You.”

As Christians, we can identify with the various characters in the gospel. Some of us can identify with the disciples who were with Jesus, when they merely listened. Like them, we sometimes find ourselves playing the role of mediator hearing various emotions as they are aired. Many times, all that is needed is a listening ear and an understanding heart.

Many Christians utilize their gifts of time, talent and

>>> page 4

Promise of the Week

“... Your faith has saved you.” (Lk 17:19)

Perseverance in Prayer

“Do not throw away your confidence; it will have great recompense. You need endurance to do the will of God and receive what he has promised.”

(Heb 10: 35-36)

Perseverance is the virtue that helps us to maintain a course of action, purpose or belief. It allows us to stay on the right track in spite of difficulties and setbacks.

A classic example of perseverance in prayer and its reward is about St. Monica and her son, St. Augustine. Augustine spent many years of his life in wicked living and in false belief. He had a mistress who bore him an illegitimate child. He was a member of a false religion, the Manichaens and he frequently attacked the teachings of the Christian faith. Though he had one of the most intelligent minds of this time and though he had been brought up as a Christian, his sins of impurity and his pride darkened his mind so much that he could not see or understand the Divine truth anymore.

But one day Augustine was converted. He was baptized, became a priest, a bishop, became one of the greatest theologians of the Catholic church and now revered as a great saint. How could this happen? How can a great sinner turn into a great saint? The answer is prayer, perseverance in prayer. It took St. Monica more than 25 years of prayer for the conversion of her son, and the reward is very great indeed.

“Do not be troubled if you do not immediately receive from God what you ask of Him; for He desires to do something even greater for you, while you cling to Him in prayer.” (CCC 2737).

Persevering in prayer is persevering in love; and prayer too is a universal remedy.

“Late have I loved you, o beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside and it was there that I searched for you. In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things, which you created. You were with me, but I was not with you. Created things kept me from you, yet if they had not been in you they would have not been at all. You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me. I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.” (Confessions of St. Augustine)

A touching prayer from a repentant sinner, the reward and consolation of a prayerful mother.

Vigilance



St. Luke's gospel passages, 11:24-26, on first reading, are not easy to comprehend. My reflection on Jesus' warning reminds me that we must be ever vigilant. An old acquaintance used to say that our struggles will continue until we breathe our last.

Some readings even warn us that the greatest struggle may come at the end of our lifetimes. Other reminders mention the devil prowling like a thief in the night and disguised in sheep's clothing. Other gospels similar to vigilance are the 10 virgins, the landlord who went to a faraway country and left his estate to servants, and many more.

Each day we awake with much intention to do good. The decision to follow Christ may be dramatic as may happen after a retreat or an encounter or an LSS. During these moments we may feel the spiritual high. We make great resolutions to change for the better and to turn a new leaf, all of which is good. But the devil that does not rest and will not be idle. He will surely tempt the person who is doing his best to be Christ-like. He can double his efforts so the renewed person falls back in his old ways. The person may fall into the temptation and end worse than before.

This is what Jesus warns us in St. Luke's gospel. He warns us on the importance of vigilance. How can we do it? A 10-year old boy from India who I met a few years ago told me, “Without God, I am a zero and with God, I am a hero!” What wise words from a young person. Vigilance means daily struggles in conquering small vices and at times, great temptations. We need to be vigilant in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These practices strengthen the spirit. God is within us when we attend Mass, receive the sacraments and do good works. We cannot let the devil defeat our resolutions for a life centered in Christ. God will never abandon us if we remain vigilant.

“Purgatory Not in Scripture”

Some Fundamentalists charge, as though it actually proved something, “The word purgatory is nowhere found in Scripture.” This is true, and yet it does not disprove the existence of purgatory or the fact that belief in it has always been part of Church teachings. The words Trinity and Incarnation aren’t in Scripture either, yet those doctrines are clearly taught in it. Likewise, Scripture teaches that purgatory exists, even if it doesn’t use that word and even if 1Peter 3:19 refers to a place other than purgatory.

Christ refers to the sinner who “*will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come*” (Mt 12:32), suggesting that one can be freed after death, of the consequences of one’s sins. Similarly, Paul tells us that, when we are judged, each man’s work will be tried. And what happens if a righteous man’s work fails the test? “*One will suffer loss; the person will be saved, but only as through fire.*” (1Cor 3:15) Now this loss, this penalty, can’t refer to consignment to hell, since no one is saved there; and heaven can’t be meant, since there is no suffering (“fire”) there. The Catholic doctrine of purgatory alone explains this passage.

Then, of course, there is the Bible’s approval of prayers for the dead: “*In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the dead to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin*” (2Mc 12:43b-46). Prayers are not needed by those in heaven, and no one can help those in hell. That means some people must be in a third condition, at least temporarily. This verse so clearly illustrates the existence of purgatory that, at the time of the Reformation, Protestants had to cut the books of the Maccabees out of their Bibles in order to avoid accepting the doctrine.

Prayers for the dead and the consequent doctrine of purgatory have been part of the true religion since before the time of Christ. Not only can we show it was practiced by the Jews of the time of the Maccabees, but it has even been retained by Orthodox Jews

> > to pg 4, pls

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOHN 6 - **Now accepting applications for Crossing #8 (retreat for 12-14 years old). Applications are on the BLD website (www.bldnewark.com) **Crossing sponsoring class & auxie MANDATORY meeting** on Saturday, October 13, St. Mary’s Library, 1:00-6:00 pm Contact persons: Boyet/ ZitaCruz (ztcruz80@yahoo.com or 908-688-4396)

LITURGY - Act Now: Subscription for 2008 Magnificat! Direct your order through your Coordinator/Shepherd. Take advantage of the bulk rate of \$15.00/yr. Make checks payable to “BLD Newark”.

MEDICAL MISSION- Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

MISSION- Nursing Home Visit scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. Contact – Ency/Babie Alberto (973)584-0370

SINGLES- Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) or LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

WORD - Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to rguiao@yahoo.com or cblmont@hotmail.com

ME25- PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila)-Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices. Proceeds of sale will benefit the “Pledge of Love” and “GK Fundraisers”. Contact any ME25 member for advanced orders

BLD Charlotte, NC. LSS#1, Nov. 17-18. Salubungan, Sept 14. Shepherds & Auxies needed Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387 Email hajbk@aol.com. Housing Accommodation will be arranged.

TEACHINGS

Sept 28 Fri - Service Ministry, Intercessory Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE 8) & Golden Years

Oct 19 Fri - Youth & Singles - Teachings Christian Parenting I - Solo Parents (up to SPE9)

Oct 20 Sat - Shepherds Training Part 2 – LSS25 Christian Maturity Program I (CMPI) Part 2 – LSS27

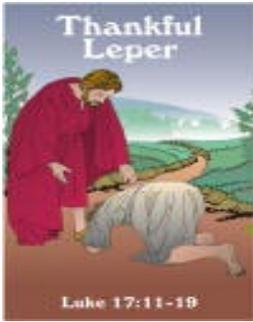
Oct 26 Fri -Golden Years & Intercessory Ministry Teachings Christian Servanthood - Service Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE8) introduction to Intercession – LSS29

Nov 2 Sat - Apologetics – LSS23-24Healing & Deliverance – LSS26 Christian Maturity Program II – LSS27 Encounter with Jesus – LSS28 Christian Parenting I – LSS29

Nov 16 Fri- Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles Christian Parenting II – Solo Parents (up to SPE9)

Nov 17 Sat - Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet

Counsels from page 1



treasure in their families, communities, parishes or in public, but are oftentimes not recognized and acknowledged. Like Jesus in this story, they may begin to wonder if anyone cared. Some may even be frustrated and discouraged.

Some can identify with the lepers. We may become spiritually blind and fail to see the little miracles in our lives. Some biblical scholars refer to this as a story about ingratitude and about obsession with the gift, with our unanticipated good fortune, that we are forgetful of the Giver. We may be overwhelmed with our good fortune and so utterly absorbed in it, even obsessed with it, that we forget not only the Giver, but our genuine poverty apart from it. We fail to see the Giver of the gift.

The Giver is God. The gift is from God. And the gift becomes God. The problem is that the gift is a gift. It is not God. It is not ours. It is His! St. Paul tells us: *"Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal."* (2 Tim. 2:8-9a)

Our ingratitude is common... It is our obsession, our susceptibility to utter self-absorption, which is striking. Our capacity for happiness apart from God is only revealed when we are given something and our unhappiness apart from God when we are deprived of it. Unfortunately, many of us are blind to both. St. Paul tells us: *"If we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."* (2Tim 2:11-13)

As disciples we are called to be like the Samaritan, who after realizing that his wish had been granted, recognized the source of his healing and returned by praising God and giving thanks to Jesus. Like Naaman, we could thank God through the people who are His voice, His hands and His feet and by being grateful to those who helped us in our walk with the Lord. Like St. Paul, we are taught to give thanks to God even during hard times and harsh conditions.

Fervent thanksgiving prevents us from ever denying God, and keeps us strong in the faith that saves us and allows Jesus to work through us. Like the Samaritan who was commanded by Jesus to *"Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."* (Lk 17:19), may we too be deemed worthy and sent into noble mission work.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct12-14 Aspirant's Retreat - LSS23-24
Emmaus House, Perth Amboy, NJ
- Oct 12-14 ME#10 BLD-Albany Contact: Nick/Island
Raagas (908) 688-8614
- Oct 13 DLC Meeting St. Mary's Auditorium,
1:00-5:00 pm
- Oct 19-21 John 6 Crossing #8 Ramada Limited,
South Plainfield, NJ
- Oct 20 "A Night of Praise & Worship with Don
Moen" The Ritz Theatre in Elizabeth,
doors open at 6:30 pm & worship
starts at 8:00
- Oct 27 Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament -
Youth Ministry Frank & Malou Venadas
(973)562-0055/Alan & Tess Cam
- Nov 2-4 ME# 30, Don Bosco Marian Shrine,
West Haverstraw, NY

**MAKE COVENANT NEWS
A PART OF YOUR COVENANT LIFE.**

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Oct 14 (Sunday)

Rosary of God the Father/Baptism of the Holy Spirit/
Healing/Eucharistic Celebration – St. Antoninus
Church, 337 S. Orange Ave. Newark, NJ (1pm – 6pm)

from page 3..purgatory

today, who recite a prayer known as the Mourner's Kaddish for eleven months after the death of a loved one so that the loved one may be purified. It was not the Catholic Church that added the doctrine of purgatory. Rather, any change in the original teaching has taken place in the Protestant churches, which rejected a doctrine that had always been believed by Jews and Christians. **Source : www.catholic.com**

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report for the Week
ending October 5, 2007**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast
for the Poor \$ 3,971.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

DIRECTION:

- * Bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen.
- * Persevere.
- * Remain faithful.



Aspirants' Retreat October 2007

"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27

Nineteen committed disciples of BLD Newark heard the Lord's call to follow Him in the Aspirants' Retreat held the weekend of October 12-14, 2007.

Within the hallowed halls of Emmaus Retreat House in Perth Amboy, NJ, Fr. Paul Lehman, the retreat master for the weekend, called upon the candidates to discern their response to the Lord's call to be His disciples. Their attendance in the Aspirants' retreat marked a major milestone in their discipleship as they took the first step towards a deeper commitment as followers of Jesus.

The Teaching Ministry together with the invaluable collaboration of their respective Class Shepherds and Ministry Coordinators/ Formation Core have provided the candidates the necessary formation teachings and workshops. Now, they will continue their learning and undergo a discipling process under the Discipling Ministry's guidance for the next 6 months.

As part of the movements of the retreat, Fr. Paul delivered teachings on various aspects of Christian discipleship. Five Covenanted Disciples shared their faith experiences in their discipleship as they bore witness to the truth and to the glory that is possible with God's love.

Please join the Teaching Ministry in praying for the enlightenment of the candidates as they discern God's will and plan for their discipleship.

Let us welcome our new "disciples":

Trudy Aboyme, Ray & Fely Africa, Ed & Grace Badiola, Carlito & Arlene Claricia, Peter & Mary Rose Cruz, Flo Fudalan, Lolita Garcia, Larry Larobis, Earl Manguiat, Art & Josie Punla, Hermie & Douglas Tenchavez, and Ed & Edna Unay.

Correction to last week's issue:
LSS 29 was sponsored by ME 28 not ME 27.

COUNSELS



Active Faith

WORD: Ex 17:8-13; Ps 12:1-8; 2
Tim 3:14-4:2; Lk 18:1-8

THEME: We lead a life of active faith when we persist in prayer and are faithful to the Word of God.

ORDER: "Pray always without becoming weary." Luke 18:1b

REFLECTION:

This Sunday's reading provides a concrete example of an active faith. With the numerous miracles Moses received from God, we could surmise that he did not expect that it would take that long to win the battle of achieving freedom for his people. However, Moses knew God's ways and he was very persistent.

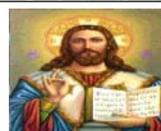
Jesus' parable of the poor widow seeking justice against her enemies by being persistent against an unwilling judge also depicts the same lesson. God is just and answers our prayers in accordance to our needs.

But, as humans, we often question God's authority and we feel that our prayers and pleas for God's help fall on deaf ears. Based on both stories from the old and new testaments, God's faithfulness is timeless. He never faltered in answering His people's needs.

Persistent prayer is faithfulness to God, therefore, we must understand that our prayers are always answered. It is our human weakness that hinders God in responding to our prayers without delay. We need to increase this awareness that we contribute to the delay on God's part to respond.

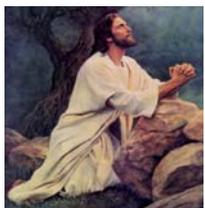
(☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week



"The Lord will guard your coming and your going both now and forever."

(Psalm 121:8)



Obedience of Faith

Like Saint Paul, all of us are called by God to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel, which He promised previously through His prophets in the holy scriptures: the gospel about His Son, descended from David according to the flesh but established as Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness through His Son's resurrection from the dead. (Romans 1: 1-4) Through Jesus, we have received the grace of apostleship, that is, to bring about the **obedience of faith**, for the sake of His name, to every generation. (Romans 1:5) ***"For in it is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith, as it is written, "The one who is righteous by faith will live."*** (Romans 1:17)

Indeed, faith is the heritage of the whole church. As Christ's disciples, we are called to preach the gospel to the wise and ignorant. It is, therefore, our privilege and responsibility to preserve the memory of Christ's words and actions and convey them to all generations. Our calling may not be as apparent as that of Saint Paul but as a once 'Hatched, Hitched and Dispatched Catholic', we heard, listened and followed the Word of the Lord, **"Come and See"**. Amazingly, out of curiosity, our faith was renewed. We have been motivated to attend community's teachings, retreats, and seminars because of our eagerness to know Jesus and understand His will and unfathomable love for us.

"Love me" is all we hear from Him and we answer this call by serving the people in our community, in soup kitchens, and in our parishes. Additionally, we express this love when we intercede for other people, privately or publicly. Through these unselfish deeds, we are able to show the face of Christ and share His love with others.

We know that with God's grace, we will be able to make Christ known to others. We will be able to sacrifice our own needs, do missionary work, and go outside of our comfort zone and fearlessly spread the Good News. Likewise, we will be able to profess our faith in Christ genuinely by celebrating the Christian mysteries in the Liturgy, praying incessantly, and embracing the Christian way of life joyfully and lovingly.

Undeniably, it is very difficult to fulfill the obedience of faith for it involves giving up of oneself for God's sake. However, through God's grace of apostleship and with His strength, we will be able to bear our share of hardship for the gospel and become true witnesses to His everlasting love. ***"For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power, love, and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for his sake; but bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God"***. 2 Timothy 1:7-8

Covenant News is also available on our website at bldnewark.com



Saint Luke

Luke, the writer of the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, has been identified with St. Paul's "Luke, the beloved physician". (Colossians 4:14) It is believed that Luke was born a Greek and a Gentile. According to the early Church historian Eusebius, Luke was born at Antioch in Syria.

Luke's unique perspective on Jesus can be seen in the six miracles and eighteen parables not found in the other gospels. Luke's is the gospel of the poor and of social justice. He is the one who tells the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man who ignored him. Luke is the one who uses "Blessed are the poor" instead of "Blessed are the poor in spirit" in the beatitudes.

Luke's gospel shows special sensitivity to evangelizing Gentiles. It is only in his gospel that we hear the parable of the Good Samaritan, that we hear Jesus praising the faith of Gentiles, such as the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian (Lk.4:25-27), and that we hear the story of the one grateful leper who is a Samaritan. (Lk.17:11-19)

Only in Luke's gospel do we hear Mary's Magnificat where she proclaims that God "has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty". (Luke 1:52-53) It is only in Luke's gospel that we hear the story of the Annunciation, Mary's visit to Elizabeth, including the Magnificat, the Presentation, and the story of Jesus' disappearance in Jerusalem. It is Luke that we have to thank for the Scriptural parts of the Hail Mary: "Hail Mary full of grace" spoken at the Annunciation and "Blessed are you and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus" spoken by her cousin Elizabeth.

Forgiveness and God's mercy to sinners is also of first importance to Luke as it is only in Luke's gospel that tells about the story of the Prodigal Son welcomed back by the overjoyed father, the forgiven woman disrupting the feast by washing Jesus' feet with her tears. Throughout Luke's gospel, Jesus takes the side of the sinner who wants to return to God's mercy.

The reports of Luke's life after Paul's death are conflicting. Some early writers claim he was martyred, others say he lived a long life. Some say he preached in Greece, others in Gaul. The earliest tradition we have says that he died at 84 after settling in Greece to write his Gospel.

He is often shown with an ox or a calf because these are the symbols of sacrifice — the sacrifice Jesus made for all the world.

Luke is the patron of physicians and surgeons.

Source: www.catholic.org

Traveling Catholics: For nationwide listing of Catholic Churches and Mass times, go to www.masstimes.org

Golden Years Ministry

"Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord, your God, has commanded you, that you may have long life and prosperity in the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you." (Dt 5:16)

Perhaps, this is the most significant of God's commandment because it is the only one in the series that includes a reward for its observance. Appropriately, it is also the guiding order of this ministry.

Our elderly people are precious to God and to all of us for they are our roots and the sources of our precious heritage; and most of all, they are the very core of our families. Hence, we need to honor, respect and take care of them.

On February 1, 2002, eight elders of the Newark BLD community, who were inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, conceived a ministry to minister to our growing elderly population, who has unique problems and special needs. The Golden Years Ministry (GYM) was officially launched on June 14, 2002 at the community's Eucharistic celebration, which was held in St. Leo's Church. This ministry is the first of its kind in the whole worldwide BLD community.

The ministry's vision, charism, mission, and objectives are as follows:

Vision: We are the elderly of the community united together with one heart and one mind, called by God to a life of encounter and renewal to a richer and deeper relationship with God and with one another in Faith, Love, and Hope.

Charism: We will be witnesses to the Word and followers of Christ so that all may have healing, wholeness, richness of the present life, and hope of eternal salvation and life everlasting.

Mission: Our mission is to minister to the temporal, emotional and spiritual needs of the elderly.

Objectives:

- To nourish their spiritual lives through deeper Prayer Life, Teachings, Word Sharing, Retreats, Pilgrimages, etc.;
- To improve their earthly lives and well-being by helping them cope with old age, prepare them for the next life, and provide them with spiritual and psychological support;
- To help deepen their personal relationship with God and with others;
- To encourage and assist them to participate more fully in the active life of the community; and
- To promote love, respect and dignity for the elderly.

The ministry is coordinated and shepherded by a covenanted couple under the direct guidance of the Pastoral Steward and the District Council of Stewards. Membership is open to anyone age 65 and above.

At present, there are 32 active members who, during the past two years, have served and enriched the life of our community by serving as intercessors, prayer warriors, prayer leaders, and missionaries.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LITURGY

Act Now: **Subscription for 2008 Magnificat!**
Direct your order through your Coordinator/Shepherd.
Take advantage of the bulk rate of \$15.00/yr.
Make checks payable to "BLD Newark".

MEDICAL MISSION

Feb. 18-22, 2008 - Infanta, Quezon
Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed.
Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

MISSION

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed.
To volunteer, contact: Ency & Babie Alberto (973)584-0370

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service

Every 3rd Saturday of the month.
Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com) or
LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).
Email to rguiao@yahoo.com or cblmont@hotmail.com

ME 25

PPK Sale (Piso-Pisong Kandila), November 2, 2007
Scented Candles for sale at give-away prices.
Proceeds of sale will benefit the "Pledge of Love" and "GK Fundraisers".
Contact any ME 25 member for advanced orders

BLD CHARLOTTE, NC

LSS#1, Nov. 17-18
Shepherds & Auxies needed
Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387
Email: hajbk@aol.com.
Housing accommodation will be arranged.

TEACHINGS

October 20, 2007 (Saturday, 1 pm - 6 pm)

Shepherds Training Part 2 – LSS25
Christian Maturity Program I (CMPI) Part 2 – LSS27

October 26 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Golden Years & Intercessory Ministry Teachings
Christian Servanthood - Service Ministry, Solo Parents
(up to SPE8)
Introduction to Intercession – LSS29

November 3, 2007 (Saturday, 1 pm- 6 pm)

Apologetics – LSS23-24
Healing & Deliverance – LSS26
Christian Maturity Program II – LSS27
Encounter with Jesus – LSS28
Christian Parenting I – LSS29

Counsels (from page 1)

There are numerous reasons why God may not answer our prayers but the most significant and likely hindrances are the following:

1. Selfish Motives

It is part of our human nature that we naturally regard our own interests ahead of others. And sadly, we often prioritize our own interests ahead of God's. James similarly exhorts "***You ask but do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.***" (James 4:3) So the first hindrance is our motives. To serve God is seek His will, therefore, we must ask for things that are consistent with the character and nature of God. Unless we are confident that we have aligned our desires with that of God, we may very well wait.

2. Turning Away From Scripture

To be active in faith is to apply what God wants in our lives. Not spending time immersing ourselves in Scripture and not obeying what we have learned, is another detriment. We must not ignore the life-giving Words of the Bible. Solomon goes so far as to suggest that prayers made from such a hardened heart are an abomination to God. "***When one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.***" (Proverbs 28:9)

3. Unforgiving Hearts

We can never over emphasize on forgiveness. We have heard the scripture so many times not to look at the speck in our brother's eye (Matthew 7:4), and yet we still believe that our brethren is wrong. We are so slow to forgive our fellow man for the smallest of transgression. We have not even shed blood for the hurt that we received! God cannot honor this attitude. In Mark 11:25, Jesus says, "***When you stand to pray, forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance, so that your heavenly Father may in turn forgive you your transgressions.***"

4. Family Discord

It is God's will that families live together in peace and harmony. It is, of course, impossible to live in perfect peace, but God demands close relationships and that we seek harmony in our family relationships. It is foremost the responsibility of the father, as the head of the household, to ensure that there is no discord within the family. The apostle Peter, a married man himself, exhorted husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way, being sensitive to their needs, "***Likewise, you husbands should live with your wives in understanding, showing honor to the weaker female sex, since we are joint heirs of the gift of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.***" (1 Peter 3:7)

The relationship between a husband and a wife is to reflect that of Christ to His church. It is to be a relationship of absolute love, adoration and sacrifice. If Christ gave His life for the church, how can a husband do any less for his wife? This is, of course, impossible when the relationship is strained or broken.

Father God, it is Your desire that we persist in our petitions. Please help us to know ourselves, our desires, our motives. Help us always to seek Your heart that You may find faith in our lives when Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, returns, Amen.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

October 19-21, 2007

John 6 Crossing #8
Ramada Limited, South Plainfield, NJ

October 20, 2007

"A Night of Praise & Worship with Don Moen"
The Ritz Theatre in Elizabeth, doors open at 6:30 pm & worship starts at 8:00

October 27, 2007

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament
Youth Ministry
Frank & Malou Venadas (973)562-0055/Alan & Tess Cam

November 2-4, 2007

ME#30
Don Bosco Marian Shrine, West Haverstraw, NY

November 10, 2007

Disciples' Assembly: 1-5pm
St. Mary's School Library
For all committed and covenanted disciples.

November 24, 2007

Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament – ME19
Nick & Lita Centeno (973) 857-9315

November 30 - December 2, 2007

Singles Encounter #19
Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact: Cathy Mercado (732)910-7745, Vic/
Becky Napenas (201)320-7644
(classicedance@hotmail.com)

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending October 12, 2007

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor** **\$ 3,945.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

DIRECTIONS:

- * Proclaim the Word, be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient.
- * Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed.



God's Love and Peace to All!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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October 26, 2007

A Child Will Lead The Way

John 6:9 states, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish'. In the miracle of the bread and the fish that Jesus performed to feed 5000 people, it was a child who answered God's call to bring about a miracle. Similarly, it will be a child who will lead the way and show to his parents/elders the true meaning of being dependent on the Lord.

Over the week-end, twenty-nine boys and girls, between the ages of 12 and 14 attended the John6 Crossing Retreat No. 8 held last 19-21 October 2007 at Ramada Limited in South Plainfield, NJ. They are as follows: David Alba, Rodel Camposagrado, Jonathan Ciocon, Jessica Cornejo, Crizia Enjambre, Abigail Fabe, Aaron Guiang, Raul Gutierrez, Christian Ikalina, Sean Louise Laput, Kevin Brandon Larobis, Noami Lopez, Sarah Marcial, Conrad Joseph Nisay, Michael Ompod, Onachi Onyegbule, Elana Pascoguin, Gerard Rangel, Bret Reyes, Rebieann Reyes, Ryan Jude Sambilay, Alexander Severt, Jaelen Sinlao, Christine Sun, Ken Taraya, Nicko Tolentino, Meldrick Von Umahon, Nono Uwakwe, and James Ymbong. This special group of children will be led nearer to Jesus by their shepherds, Jordan del Fierro and Jaimie Ciocon.

(continue on page 4, col 2) 

2000 Join A Night of Praise & Worship With Don Moen

Over 2,000 Christian worshipers sang and danced in unison before the Lord in a spirited praise and worship led by Don Moen at the packed Ritz Theater in Elizabeth, New Jersey last Saturday night, 20 October 2007.

Fr. Bill Halbing set hearts aflame for worship with a fiery preaching of the Word. With joyful tears and glad cries, the worshipers joined Don Moen and his team in offering exuberant worship to God from start to finish. And when the last song was announced, they convinced Don Moen to sing four more praise songs.

During the intermission, Dylan Wilk appealed to the noble in every worshiper to help liberate the poor from poverty and bring a new morning of hope to the Philippines through Gawad Kalinga.

The worship was attended by both Catholics and Protestants, including the clergy. Roughly half of the assembly was non-BLD. BLD worshipers came from Newark, Long Island,

(continue on page 2, col 1) 

COUNSELS

God Hears The Prayers Of His People

WORD: Sir 35: 12-14, 16-18; Ps 34: 2-3, 17-19, 23; 2 Tim: 4: 6-8, 16-18; Lk 18: 9-14

ORDER: Humble yourselves.

THEME: We lead a life of active faith when we acknowledge that we are sinners in need of God's mercy.

REFLECTION:

'The one who serves willingly is heard; his petition reaches the heavens. The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds; it does not rest till it reaches its goal, nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds...' (Sir 35: 16-18a) The readings for this Sunday, the 30th in Ordinary Time, touches specifically on four types of spiritual disposition that procure heaven's blessings. In the first reading, Jesus the son of Sirach, identifies the prayers of the "one who serves willingly" and those who are "lowly" as piercing the clouds. The readings indicate that God is especially inclined to the prayers of those who are oppressed, the weak and the needy, but God's mercy goes beyond the loving defense of His most defenseless children. It is the posture of total dependence on His mercy that find favor with the Lord. It is the acknowledgment that He is the source of all that is good, and His people can call on Him, trusting that He loves them and will provide for them.

We may feel that living in the United States, with opportunities readily available and material goods in abundance that we do not fall under any of the special categories described in the readings. However, our circumstances are actually more deceptive since spiritual, emotional, and psychological deficiencies can be masked and hidden from the world. It is a challenge to acknowledge our spiritual poverty despite our

(continue on page 4, col 1) 

God's Promise for the Week

'The Lord redeems the lives of his servants; no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him'. (Ps 34:23)

Be Rich In What Matters To God

‘Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God’ (Luke 12:21).

So what riches or prosperity matter to God? As God’s creatures, conceived in love and abundant blessings, we should strive to be rich in ways that matter to Him. The most devout group, the holy religious orders, need not ponder or search endlessly to reach this goal. Their perseverance is steadfast, fired ardently with their holy vows to practice and live the life of Jesus, rich in love, generosity and unselfish devotion, to share and spread the message of God .

But what about the ordinary, lay Christians who are burdened with the travails and struggles of daily living? These are people who live in this very material world, where one’s success is measured with the attainment of material possessions. These are the families struggling to raise kids at the same time striving to be financially secure and see through their children’s education and leave some for retirement. These are the most unfortunate who seem to be always on the downside no matter what ways and means they strive for, always with fruitless results. Should the most fortunate share some of their possessions? *‘Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me’ (Luke 12:13).*

‘Take care to guard against all greed, for though one maybe rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions’ (Luke 12:15). Should this verse soothe and pacify the needy or the financially strapped? Should the act of sharing one’s material possessions with the unfortunate absolve the rich? Should the learned and the holy religious be high and mighty in their bully pulpits, as the authorities on what is godly and holy? Far from all these.

The true acts of love, compassion, sympathy, giving comfort and shelter and then seeing it to total fruition are the riches that are pleasing and that matter to God. Truly observing His commandments, to love God above all things and to love our neighbors as we loved ourselves, are the ultimate state of being rich that cannot be surpassed. One can be the poorest of the poor yet one has reserved time and effort to glorify God in his own words and deeds; on the other hand one can be materially rich yet humble and willing to share in ways that is most pleasing to God and in turn becomes most gratifying. The holy orders, who vowed to lay their lives to spread and propagate God’s gospel, are the constant catalyst and pillars of all things religious. These and the sacrifices and services of various lay Christian groups as BLD are the riches that the Almighty God clamored from His people - people whom He created to His likeness. And moreover, He sent His only begotten, beloved Son who made the utmost, ultimate sacrifice so we may share eternal life with Him, to enjoy and bask in His love and glory in life everlasting!



Christ Divides And Purifies

Some scripture passages are difficult to understand and these verses in Luke 12:49-53 bring forth some very interesting aspects in the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. *‘Do you think I have come to bring peace on earth? No I tell you, but rather division’ (Luke 12:51).* He talked

about a household being divided, father against son, mother against daughter, and even division among in-laws. Is he not the Prince of Peace? Why is bringing division? Based on our own experiences it is true that there are divisions within families brought about by several human factors that resulted in failed relationships.

As with any scripture passage, oftentimes the literal sense of the statement is only the tip of the iceberg. Biblical scholars employ 4 methods in their analysis – 1. literal- what took place, 2. allegorical – hidden theological meaning, 3. anagogical – the heavenly sense and 4. moral – significance for the individual’s behavior. For this article we are not going to delve into bible study, but to give the reader some points to ponder.

Our Heavenly Father’s love for us was shown when he sent His beloved Son to redeem us and to give us a chance to enter His kingdom, to do this Jesus had to suffer and die for us. It was a gesture that does not make sense, our human intellect can not comprehend this kind of sacrifice because God’s ways are not our ways and His thoughts are far above our thoughts. Jesus also mentioned that anyone who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. So he has given us a clear direction – put Him first in everything, be always on His side.

Division does occur in families, corporations, organizations and painfully true also in religious communities like BLD. Everyone involved in conflict believes in his/her heart that he/she is right and stands firm on his/her position. This gap widens as personal pride and biases come into the picture. Groups and cliques band together to espouse their own agenda. Accusations and counter accusations become the normal topic of conversations. But in His goodness the Lord for 15 years has blessed our community and enables us to rise above our conflicts and put Him and His Word in its rightful place. Although these divisions are difficult and painful, the Lord allows them to happen so that we, as a community can grow in spiritual maturity. Like gold and silver we are continually placed in a crucible of fire so we can be purified to reflect His image and likeness. May we continue to be guided by His Word and His Spirit!!!

Don Moen... (cont. from page 1)

Trenton, Rockland, Washington DC, Albany and St. Catherine’s, Canada.

The Holy Spirit touched worshipers’ hearts in many ways. A Uruguayan worshiper living in Queens said: ‘I thought I knew how to pray, but tonight I realized I did not know how to praise. Thanks to this worship, I learned to praise God with my voice, body and spirit. And I want to donate a GK village!’. A diocesan representative exclaimed, ‘Awesome!’. A worshiper from Pelham, New York and another from Piscataway said, ‘I want to be part of your next worship project’. BLD brethren simply said, ‘Thank you!’ God is good! All the time!

DCS Transparency

(Excerpts from 'Transparency: The clear path to leadership credibility' by K Walker and B Pagano)

'You will know the truth and the truth will set you free' (John 8:32).

Jesus, our Lord, the master teacher, sent His messages across to His disciples and all who listened to Him very clearly. In contemporary language, His disciples would have called Jesus "frank" He always told the truth, because He is the truth. Jesus said *'I am the way, the truth and the life'* (John 14:16).

As disciples of the Master, we are also expected to follow the footsteps of our teacher. This is more evident for those (of us) entrusted with authority in our community. Leadership is often associated with the words: 'credibility', 'witnessing', 'leading by example'. We have to realize that there are certain behaviors that form the framework that build one's credibility, that ultimately lead to good witnessing or leading by example.

Transparency implies openness, communication, and accountability. It is a metaphorical extension of the meaning used in the physical sciences: a 'transparent' object is one that can be seen through.

Jesus used parables to teach and tell many of His stories. He was being transparent to His listeners while using these figures of speech, which He used heavily. *'Knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom are being given to you but to the rest, they are made known through parables.'* (Lk 8:10) *"I have told you these in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but I will tell you clearly about the Father"* (Jn. 16:25). Even the apostles understood later what Jesus was doing: *'Now You are speaking plainly and not in any figure of speech'* (Jn. 16:29).

In this article, we will be zeroing on transparency in leadership. Good leaders practice 'transparency' – thus, through openness, using good communication, they build trust. This results in better relationships or collaborations between peers and their members. Leaders need to be in tune with their organization or congregation, for transparency to be effective.

There are nine behaviors that offer practical guidelines to being transparent:

1. Being overwhelmingly honest – when not all relevant data are available, the principle of honesty requires them to say so: 'I can't tell you that right now but this is what I can say....' Overwhelming honesty should be delivered with respect and concern for others.
2. Gathering intelligence – asking others their opinion on issues convey respect, show humility and give the message that people are valued.
3. Being composed – effective leadership requires composure – Good witnesses includes being composed; urges leaders to reveal their true opinions or emotions, it does not allow for leaders to just 'let it all hang out'.
4. Letting your guard down – transparency to build credibility requires demonstrating sincerity, even revealing personal information to peers and colleagues.
5. Keeping your promises – matching leader's words and actions builds on 'good witnessing', and thus, places a high value on commitments.
6. Properly handling mistakes – confessing mistakes signals a sense of strength, courage, accountability and humility. Mistakes can be also be an opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to honesty.
7. Delivering bad news well – difficult – yet, doing it well is essential. On the contrary, not delivering these at all can potentially leave people feeling betrayed or angry. These are instances when truth

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Oct 27** **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark - Youth Ministry.** Contact persons: Frank & Malou Venadas (973) 562-0055; Alan & Tess Cam
- Nov 2-4** **ME #30** Don Bosco Marian Shrine West Haverstraw, NY
- Nov 24** **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament, Newark - Solo Parent Ministry**
Contact persons: Nick & Lita Centeno
- Nov 30,** **SPE #19** Graymoor Spiritual Center,
Dec 1-2 Garrison, NY
Contact persons: Cathy Mercado (732) 910-7745; Vic & Becky Napenas (201) 320-7644, classdance@hotmail.com

TEACHINGS

- Oct 26 (Fri)** Golden Years & Intercessory Ministries
Christian Servanthood - Service Ministry & Solo Parents (up to SPE#8)
- Nov 3 (Sat)** Apologetics - LSS 23-24
Healing & Deliverance - LSS 26
Christian Maturity Program II - LSS 27
Encounter With Jesus - LSS 28
- Nov 16 (Fri)** Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles
Christian Parenting II - Solo Parents (up to SPE#9)
- Nov 17 (Sat)** Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet
- Nov 23 (Fri)** Golden Years & Intercessory Ministries
Christian Servanthood - Service Ministry & Solo Parents (up to SPE#8)
- Nov 30 (Fri)** Intro to Commitment - LSS 28
Intro to Word - ME30

Note: *Friday teachings – after worship or healing mass*
Saturday teachings @ St. Mary's from 1-6pm

is delayed and relationships suffer.

8. Avoiding destructive comments – language that divides or is destructive can undermine everything behind leadership transparency, which seeks to improve relationships, increase trust and build reputation.
 9. Showing others you care – there should be a genuine feeling that one cares for the other. The need to understand, empathize and to recognize is essential in all relationships.
- Our community is about relationships and as we see it, these hinge on personal connections made through trust, reliability, caring and appreciation. Once the foundation is well-built and later maintained, our elders or leaders can deliver the rest of what they were called to offer – their God-given gifts and talents – and community flourishes. Communities should seek to be more transparent, expect that there might be initial discomfort in doing so. People may find it awkward working towards complete and unconditional trust, collaboration and synergy.

The apostles asked and begged Jesus, *'How long are You going to keep us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us plainly'* (Jn 10:24). The Lord may already be telling us plainly in our community: *'For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God'* (Mk 10:27).

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

material prosperity. It is a grace from God for us to see the need to be dependent on Him despite what we feel we've achieved or can accomplish professionally, financially, and socially. The Lord loves us regardless of our circumstances and He outlines for us the prayer that will welcome His presence in our lives. God in His mercy will not let us forget that what is material is temporal and what is spiritual is everlasting.

In the Gospel, St. Luke states in verse 14b, that *"the one who humbles himself will be exalted."* More than any other single way, the grace of humility is worked into our lives through the discipline of service. Humility as we all know is a virtue that is never gained by seeking it. Nothing disciplines the inordinate desires of the flesh like service, and nothing transforms the desires of the flesh like serving in hiddenness. Joyous hidden and willing service to others is an acted prayer of thanksgiving. (Richard Foster) The readings join together the discipline and the virtue that will enable us to lay claim on our spiritual inheritance; service and humility will temper our voices and our prayers into an offering that the Lord will hear from heaven.

Psalms 34: 2-3 states, *'I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall ever be in my mouth'*. Worship must have priority in our lives. Worshipping God for His goodness, faithfulness, justice, and mercy is our primary spiritual responsibility. His gracious actions are imbedded in all our personal stories. We praise Him for who He is and thank Him for what He has done. We should live with the conscious awareness of His presence, of His guidance and promptings, listen to His voice so that we know that in everything we do, even in the most difficult moments, we can find comfort in Him. We need to make a habit of whispering to Him words of praise and adoration, honor and thanksgiving.

In St. Paul's letter to Timothy, St. Paul is able to boldly assert, *'I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day...'* (2 Tim 4:7b-8a). We are exhorted to keep faith through trials and difficulties, through challenges and setbacks. If we draw our strength from the Lord, we will be able to remain faithful to His will — to live the Gospel, to persevere in our discipleship formation, to obey His commandments, and to choose to enter through the narrow gate. The Lord will not fail us, He redeems us, He will not delay, and He will rescue us from the lion's mouth.

When all is said and done, did I do my best to live for truth, did I live my life for you? When all is said and done, my treasures will mean nothing. Only what I've done for love's reward, will stand the test of time. (*When All Is Said and Done*).

DIRECTION:

- Serve God willingly. Refrain from judging others.

Traveling Catholics – For nationwide listing of catholic churches & mass times, go to www.masstimes.org

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LITURGY

Act Now: Subscription for the 2008 Magnificat! Direct your order through your Ministry Head. Take advantage of the bulk rate of \$15.00/yr. Make checks payable to "BLD Newark".

MEDICAL MISSION

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Send to WORD@BLDNewark.com

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Contact any ME25 member for advanced orders

BLD Charlotte, NC.

LSS#1, Nov. 17-18. Salubungan, Sept 14.

Shepherds & Auxies needed

Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387

hajbk@aol.com. Housing Accommodation will be arranged.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending October 19, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor \$ 3,862.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

A Child... (cont. from page 1)

The week-end was filled with games, talks and sharing, letter writing and art works, tears, laughter, and noise that centered on Jesus being everybody's friend. The retreat was conducted by members of the BLD Youth led by Joreen Baquilod, Steve Chan, Marvin Venadas and Cherrie Francisco, the retreat moderators. The pre-teenagers heard the joys and pains of growing up as shared by the other members of BLD Youth, their way of showing that the pain is not solely theirs but shared by everyone and it is living their lives with Jesus as their friend that will make the pain a joy to remember. Everybody, including the adults and the young moderators were asked to think and act like a child.

Truly, the JC8 graduates will be 'praying for us'.



NEWS

Pope to Pharmacists:

Don't Anesthetize Consciences

Warns Against Drugs That Violate Human Dignity

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 29, 2007 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI told a group of pharmacists that they must avoid anaesthetizing consciences, and emphasized that drugs should be used to help human beings, not to take the life of unborn children or the elderly.

The Pope affirmed this today when he received in audience a group of participants attending the 25th international congress of Catholic pharmacists, under way in Rome. The Holy Father's brief remarks included a reflection on the developments in pharmaceuticals and medicines and the possibilities they offer. He asked the pharmacists to consider the "ever broader functions they are called to undertake, especially as intermediaries between doctor and patient."

He recalled their role in educating patients "in the correct use of medications" and in informing them of "the ethical implications of the use of particular drugs."

True role "In this context," the Pontiff said, "we cannot anesthetize consciences as regards, for example, the effect of certain molecules that have the goal of preventing the implantation of the embryo or shortening a person's life. Pharmacists must seek to raise people's awareness so that all human beings are protected from conception to natural death, and so that medicines truly play a therapeutic role."

Turning his attention to therapeutic experiments, Benedict XVI recalled that individual persons may not be treated as objects. Such experiments "must be carried out following protocols that respect fundamental ethical norms," he said, emphasizing that "all attempts at cure or experimentation must be undertaken while bearing

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Today, Salvation Has Come To This House

WORD: Wis 11:22-26,12:2, Ps 145 2
Thes 1:11-12,2:2, Lk19: 1-10

ORDER: You rebuke offenders little by little

THEME: "Christ is Lord and King of our lives when we repent of our sins and make amends of our lives."

REFLECTION:

This Sunday's readings depicted Zacchaeus as a perfect example of how God's infinite wisdom, mercy and grace work in our lives, for His glory and for our salvation. "You are merciful to all. for You can do all things and You overlook people's sins, so that they may repent" (Wis.11:23). God looks at our hearts, and not our physical attributes, past history, or other peoples' perceptions (1Sam.16:7).He loves us, as we truly are. Jesus came to call sinners so He chose to fellowship with Zacchaeus, who was despised and hated as a tax collector by his people, who may have extorted money to get wealthy. In the presence of the Lord Zacchaeus was led to repent and restore. His confession and resolve to repay four times over, and give half of his wealth to the poor, earned him God's forgiveness. The meeting with Jesus led to him to follow the Lord and later he became a bishop of Caesarea.

As disciples of Christ in this community, we are expected to be of one mind and one heart, but because of our human nature, we may offend others, knowingly or unknowingly., while working in the vineyard. Like Zacchaeus, we find ourselves distracted and cannot see beyond the crowd because we are more focused on our own needs and self. Sometimes we do not want to let go of the bitterness and hurts because

Continued on page 4

PROMISE OF THE WEEK

"The Son of Man has come to seek out and to save what was lost"

(Luke 19:10)

Saints Show the Way

As we celebrate the feast of “All saints Day” it would truly be a great blessing to be able to reflect on the role of saints in our pursuit of deepening our relationship with God. An article from the October 2007 issue of “Homiletic and pastoral review” issue written by Rawley Myers below could help us set the tone of our reflection.

G.K. Chesterton said, “A saint is a sane person in an insane world.” The saints were dedicated to truth; they clashed with those who tried to change the message of Christ. The saints, humble in soul, were empty vessels for God to fill up with his love, and this love was so great that it overflowed constantly into helping others.

In the ever-shifting events of life, the saints’ stand fixed as examples of how to live. Unfortunately, many now ignore them. People dislike them because they show us up to be mediocre Christians at best, which proud people find hard to take. It lessens their self-esteem. But if we have common sense we will listen to the saints. The saints stand between heaven and earth, beckoning us on.

In bygone days the saints were important. People listened to St. Augustine as if he were an angel of God. When people looked into the face of St. Francis of Assisi, it made them happy. The saints tell us that to try to find happiness in this world is as unreachable as the horizon. To know the saints is to be in contact with spiritual vitality. Chesterton said that once you meet a saint you can never forget him. The saints, in doing Christ work, lived life to the fullest. And though life was stormy all around them, within they had peace of soul. Hilaire Belloc said, “The saints had simplicity of heart. When we read them we are not listening to some proud human. God speaks to us through them.

It is so strange that the thing Catholics complain about most of all these days is being confused. The saints are our tried and true guides. They take us to Christ. Yet most Catholics disregard the saints. It is as if someone complains of a headache, and you say, “There is a bottle of aspirin on the table beside you.” But they do not make the effort to take what will cure their headache. How much sense does that make? In our society the common sense of the saints is drowned out by the babble of television that creates mental deadwood.” Mother Cabrini who founded 140 houses of mercy had this to say, “Why do the saints do so much and we do so little? Because they prayed and we talk. They cast their cares on the Lord; they handed their frail hopes into His powerful arms” Lastly, Saint Augustine said, “O God, I have no hope at all but you.”

The Faithful Departed

The commemoration of all the faithful departed is celebrated by the church on November 2, and this is called All Souls Day. This day was instituted in order that those who have no special suffrages offered for them, may be helped by this general memorial that started in the year 998 A.D. by St. and Abbott Odilo, from Cluny, Italy where masses for the dead were said, the day after All Saints Day. Lists of departed souls are placed on the altar, as the priest offers mass in their honor, on this particular day.

In the Greek rite, their commemoration of the dead is on the eve of Pentecost, while the Armenians celebrate it during Easter. The catechism teaches that every spiritual soul is created immediately by God, that it is immortal, will not perish when it separates from the body at death, and it will be reunited with the body, at the Resurrection. All who die in God’s grace and friendship but still imperfectly purified, due to unatoned forgiven sins, or incomplete satisfaction for their sins, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation. But after death, they undergo purification necessary to obtain the beatific vision, which is found only in heaven. This place is called Purgatory, where there is a cleansing fire. It is a temporary place for the dead (the church suffering) as they progress to heaven, where they become saints, (the church triumphant). We, the living, (the church militant) are reminded how the children at Fatima were shown purgatory and hell by the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the sorrow that gripped Jacinta, when the Blessed Mother told her, that her 14 year old girlfriend was in purgatory till the end of the world, and lastly, Jesus’ parable about the rich man and the poor man, Lazarus, is to be taken seriously by us.

Let us make contrition and atonement for our sins while we can, as we can no longer do these, once we die. This is why prayer is offered to the souls almost immediately after death, and the most valuable and infinite of all these is the Holy mass, or the Holy Eucharist, followed by the rosary and novena prayers, or litanies of prayers in their behalf, as from Judas Macabees, who made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin. (Mac.2:12, 39-45) The church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance. (patience and resignation to our adversities and difficulties)

Souls never forget to thank us, especially when they reach heaven. Let us invoke their assistance in our earthly difficulties, and let us be generous to them, in their time of need.

Lord, we pray for our beloved departed, especially those belonging to this community. In Jesus name, with mama Mary’s intercession, may they finally enjoy eternal bliss in Your kingdom, AMEN.

FR. PAUL SPEAKS

Meditate on the BLD Community Vision

I take this opportunity to ask you all to reserve December 8th, the feast of the Immaculate Conception for our community retreat. The details and schedule are still in the making. However, there is so much going on and involvement for many of our members, we felt we should all calm down and give a day to some inner spiritual reflection. I would like to go back to the mission and vision of our BLD community, and reflect on them on Dec. 8th. Perhaps some may think that we have moved beyond our humble beginnings, and have evolved a new vision. I am of the opinion that we should be periodically examining the flow of the weekends, the presumptions we make, reevaluating the goals etc. We should not change for the sake of change. In other words if something is working, don't fix it. However, within the openness to change and reevaluation, there should be a substratum of a spirituality that gave the community its purpose and strength. in the very beginning of its existence. The vision and mission of the community are reflected in the final draft of the statutes, July 30, 2006, as well as the preamble to the covenants that our committed disciples and covenanted disciples take during their public commitments.

I repeat the vision as outlined in article 2 of the statutes. "We are a communion of individuals, couples, and families called together as one people through a moment of encounter (ME, SPE, SE, YE, FE) and the process of renewal (the LSS weekends) to a relationship of faith, hope and love of God. We are reconciled with the Father by our saving faith in Jesus Christ, our renewing trust in the Holy Spirit, and our uniting compassion with one another. We are blessed with personal gifts-spiritual and natural, innate or acquired- which we yield to the Word and Spirit. We give freely of ourselves -love and serve one another as we seek and proclaim God's Kingdom."

The Mission in the next article refers to the encounter programs and the discipleship formation programs, the building of the communities of disciples of Jesus Christ. May I take this opportunity to encourage us to reflect on our own encounter and LSS weekends. Remember the excitement and emotion we felt. Admittedly we cannot hold on to past experiences, but we can renew the effects, deeper than the emotions, which motivated us to commit ourselves to community life. The emphasis in all of this is the commitment to deepening our relationship with Jesus and his church. BLD should make us better and holier Catholics. Begin now to meditate on the vision. In the meantime reserve Dec. 8th for our time together.

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TEACHING MINISTRY

Nov 3 Sat	Apologetics – LSS23-24 Healing & Deliverance – LSS26 Christian Maturity Program II – LSS27 Encounter with Jesus – LSS28 Christian Parenting I – LSS29
Nov 16 Fri	Mark 10, John 6, Youth, Singles Christian Parenting II – Solo Parents (up to SPE9)
Nov 17 Sat	Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet
Nov 23 Fri	Golden Years Ministry, Intercessory Ministry Christian Servanthood – Service Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE8)
Nov 30 Fri	Intro to Commitment – LSS 28 Intro to the Word – ME 30
Note:	Friday teachings – after worship Saturday teachings 1-6pm at St. Mary's

Counsels *from page 1*

we want to get revenge. Like Zaccheaus, we have to climb up or rise above our human limits in order to see what God has planned for us. Forgiveness could be easy or difficult but we are all commanded to forgive. As we are blessed with sound teachings, with leadership from our elders, we can learn how to deal with these feelings and emotions that might cause broken relationships that can affect our family or work. Sometimes these conflicts lead us to sin. When we realize we have offended someone, we should ask forgiveness as soon as we can, and we must not go to bed and let the sun set without reconciling (Ephesians 4:26). This is true repentance, like Zacchaeus' brings forth godly sorrow that make us see our imperfections and brings about our salvation., while worldly sorrow brings death.(2Cor.7:9-10) Our sins always wound the heart of God., and it is to comfort His heart that our restitution should go beyond the normal standards of obedience doing far more than is required. This results in increased blessings and wisdom.

The rule of unconditional love, acceptance and forgiveness on the part of the offended party must always be practiced, otherwise we cannot give glory to God, in our work.(Col. 3:13; Matt.18, 21-35; 2 Cor.5-10).

Restitution helps heal the wound, restores love and trust, and enables forgiveness. God's love changes each one of us, in His own way, and time, as long as we seek Him, with all our heart.(Jer.29:13). He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.(1 John1:9).Forgiveness is surrendering to Jesus our right to hold a judgment against someone, to be paid back for sins against us, and instead, letting God be the Judge and Jury.

DIRECTION:

- 1 Show to your brothers and sisters in community the same infinite love and unconditional mercy Christ has for you.*
- 2. Help build the faith of Community by using the gifts and blessings that God has given us. Go out and put your faith into action.*
- 3. Be humble, come down and make amends.*

MOMENT OF PRAYER FAMILY PRAYER

God made us a family.
We need one another.
We love one another.
We forgive one another.
We work together.
We play together.
We worship together.
Together we use God's word.
Together we grow in Christ.
Together we love all people.
Together we serve our God.
Together we hope for heaven.
These are our hopes and ideals.
Help us to attain them,
O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Nov 2-4: ME#30, Don Bosco Marian Shrine, West Haverstraw, NY

Nov. 10: Disciples Assembly 1-5pm St. Mary's – All committed & covenanted are enjoined to attend.

Nov 24: Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament – SPM Nick & Lita Centeno (973) 857-9315

Nov 30, Dec 1-2: SE#19 Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, NY Cathy Mercado (732) 910-7745 and Vic/Becky Napenas (201) 320-7644, classicdance@hotmail.com

Pope to Pharmacist *from page 1*

in mind the well-being of the person concerned, and not only the pursuit of scientific progress.”

“The quest for the good of humanity cannot proceed at the expense of the well-being of the people being treated,” the Pope affirmed. Right to object-The Holy Father also made a firm defense of conscientious objection. He said the federation of pharmacists “is called to face the question of conscientious objection, which is a right that must be recognized for people exercising this profession, so as to enable them not to collaborate directly or indirectly in supplying products that have clearly immoral purposes such as, for example, abortion or euthanasia.”

The Pontiff further affirmed that pharmaceutical organizations should practice “solidarity in the therapeutic field so as to enable people of all social classes and all countries, especially the poorest, to have access to vital medicines and assistance.”

“The biomedical sciences are at the service of man,” he concluded. “Were it otherwise they would be cold and inhuman. All scientific knowledge in the field of health care [...] is at the service of sick human beings, considered in their entirety, who must have an active role in their cure and whose autonomy must be respected.”

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending
October 26, 2007
Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the
Poor \$3,617.00
Thank you for your continued generosity**

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Visit our website at www.bldnewark.com**



BLD Community Welcomes ME#30

*“The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in love.
The LORD is good to all,
compassionate to every creature.
All your works give you thanks, O LORD
and your faithful bless you.
They speak of the glory of your reign
and tell of your great works”* Ps. 145:8-11

With grateful and open hearts, BLD community welcomes ME #30 graduates and their families. The encounter was held at the Don Bosco Retreat House, West Haverstraw, NY last weekend..

The Pastoral Team was composed of Spiritual Directors -Fr. Paul Lehman and Fr. Eustace Edomobi. The couple sharers were Casey & Malyn Tanseco, and Jesse & Elaine De Leon from BLD Washington DC.

ME #30 graduates are: *Acero, Teddy/Sharon; *Agapito, Elmer/Weng; Bustos, Jaime/Ana; D’Souza, John/Michelle; Fabros, Jon/Claire; Labang, Roy/Esther; Lopez, Mon/Zita; Loreto, Cy/Mavil; Mendoza, Gerry/Ellen; Mercado, Frank/Tess; *Montemayor, Cookie/Tess; Munsod, Rey/Del; *Pangilinan, Ron/Dina; Panlilio, Fr. Chris; Rama Choy/Connie; *Sta. Ana, Danny/Me-anne; Vermieri, Jo/Joyce; Villamil, Archie/Sally. (*Coordinators).

We pray that the ME #30 class will be like trees planted near stream of water, that they will yield their fruit in season. Their leaves never wither and whatever they do will prosper. With gratitude to the sponsoring class ME #29, shepherds, auxies, friends & families for their prayers and for unselfishly giving their time, talent and treasure to make this weekend another victory for the Lord.

To God be the Glory for the things He had wonderfully and powerfully done for us!

COUNSELS

Promise of Life After Death - Resurrection

WORD: 2 Mac 7: 1-2, 9-14 • Ps 17: 1,5-6, 8, 15
2 Thes 2: 16-3:5 • Luke 20: 27-38

ORDER: *"Direct your hearts to the love of God
and to the endurance of Christ."*

REFLECTION: The Theme taken from this Sunday’s Gospel is: **Christ is King of our lives when we believe in the resurrection of the dead.** The Sadducees, who believed that life ceases to exist after our bodies die, put a perplexing question before Christ who preached about our resurrection after death. They used a trick question about a widow whose seven husbands died before her: who among them will be her “official” spouse if all were to come back to life? This question was designed to put Jesus in a corner, to draw Him into a discussion with the aim of discrediting Him and what He stands for--Life, Death and Resurrection.

Jesus explained to the Sadducees that after death, when we are all resurrected, our existence will be much more different from how we understand life here on earth. Knowing that the Sadducees are believers of the Mosaic Law, Jesus stopped their further questioning about the truth of the Resurrection by citing God’s response to Moses in the burning

☞ (page 4)

God's Promise for the Week

"...but those who are deemed worthy to attain the coming of age and to the resurrection of the dead...are like angels; they are the children of God." Luke 20: 35-36

One Body in Christ

“So we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another” Rom. 12:5

In the dictionary, the word “body” can refer to a group of individuals organized for a purpose, such as a legislative body. It can also refer to the organized substance of a living being such as the human body. Or it can also be something that embodies and gives concrete reality to a thing.

St. Paul writes that “we”, referring to the Church, are One Body in Christ composed of different individuals with different gifts to offer. He further writes that to build up this One Body we are called to exercise the gifts given to us, *“if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness”*. (Rm 12:6b-8)

What St. Paul wrote applies to us not only as members of the Church but also as members of the BLD community. Just as in the larger Church, BLD has many parts or ministries that each of us, according to our gifts, is called to serve.

By using our gifts in ministry, we participate in building up our community. When we build up our community we build up the Church as One Body in Christ. But as we serve, St. Paul also cautions us that, *“we should not think of ourselves more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned”* (Rm 12:3).

We must remember that in God’s eyes, no gift is greater than the other. Therefore, everyone must exercise their gifts with humility. We must not think that we have nothing to offer so as to refrain from participating in building up the Church. We don’t want to be like the useless servant who buried the talent entrusted to him because he was afraid of his master’s wrath. We must heed St. Paul’s call to exercise our gifts according to the grace given to us.

Our BLD community, whose purpose is to build up the Church, is part of the one body in Christ. Since a “body” can also refer to the organized substance of a living being, by participating fully in building up our community, the Church becomes alive in our lives because the Church as One Body in Christ embodies and gives concrete reality to our Christian Faith.

Love is the Fulfillment of the Law

The words of St. Paul in Romans 13:8-10 trouble us who are comfortable with the lure of plastic money. We are a debtor nation and many of us have enormous personal debts. Various forms of plastic money promise to open doors, relieve our boring lifestyles and master the possibilities. To be in possession of the credit card is to be okay and legitimate. We mortgage tomorrow for present pleasures and distractions. St. Paul in his writings to the Romans indicates that life has its debts to pay. However, the debts of which St. Paul speaks are different than those that come once in a month in the mail. For Paul, we are to “owe no debt to anyone except the debt that binds us to love one another. He who loves the neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

Through our baptism into Christ we are under the obligation to love as He loved. As a member of the community of faith which proclaims Jesus as Lord, we must show the kind of love which gives public witness that we are his disciples. Such love fulfills and perfects all the requirements of the law. If one truly loves in imitation of Jesus, the law has been totally carried out since “love never does any wrong to the neighbor, hence is the fulfillment of the Law.

The debt of love is never easy. It is just the opposite of the debt that comes with plastic money. The debt of love never promises that we can enjoy life now and pay later. The debt of love reminds us that we reap what we sow. We are called to pay debts of love today so that daily we may grow into the full measure of Christ.

What we do today forms the foundation for what we will do and become tomorrow. To love as Christ loved means that at all times we must speak the truth even when it causes momentary discomfort. True love demands that we speak out and stand up for what we believe is true and good. We are no friend if we silently watch our friend sink deeper into alcohol, drugs or destructive relationships. We are not a good parent if we seek peace at any price and so don’t “nag” our children about their grades, dates or friends. We are not responsible pastors if we fail to challenge our congregation to love and forgive. And we are not a good spouse if we fail to bring out the best and expect the best from the other. Jesus came not to abolish the law, but to fulfill the law through His unconditional love, by dying on the cross.

Dedication of Lateran Basilica

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1Cor 3: 16)

St John Lateran is the oldest and ranks the first among the four great patriarchal basilicas of Rome. (The other three are: St. Peter's, St. Paul Without-the-Walls, and St. Mary Major.) St. John Lateran is the cathedral of Rome and the Pope's cathedral. Originally called "Church of the Holy Savior", it served as the official residence of the popes during the middle ages until 1308.

The basilica's history goes back to the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome. It is located in Monte Celio in Rome, once occupied by the palace of the Laterani family, hence the designation "Lateran". The palace was given as a dowry to Constantine when he married his second wife, Fausta. Constantine bequeathed it to Pope St. Miltiades around the year 311 to serve as the papal home. On November 9, 324 the basilica was consecrated by Pope St. Sylvester, dedicating it to Christ our Savior. A baptistery adjoining the church was named after St. John the Baptist. Consequently, the church became known as St. John the Baptist and in later years was renamed after St. John the Evangelist. Many important historic events have taken place at this basilica, including five Ecumenical Councils and many diocesan synods. The Lateran Pacts was signed here between the Holy See and the government of Italy, establishing the state of Vatican City in 1929.

November 9th marks the Feast of the Dedication of Lateran Basilica, a tradition celebrated since the 12th century. The basilica is referred to as "The Mother and Mistress of all Churches of Rome and the World". This feast is celebrated as a sign of unity with the whole Church and its love for the See of Peter. As Pope John Paul II eloquently expressed in his homily on November 9, 2003: "Every place set aside for divine worship is a sign of that spiritual temple, which is the Church, made up of living stones: of the faithful united in one faith, of the participation in the Sacraments, and of the bond of charity." The greatness of the Lateran Basilica therefore is held manifest in the faith of its faithful. As we celebrate the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica, we are mindful of the reading from Ezekiel, "I saw water flowing out from beneath the temple ..." (Ez 47:1) and ponder: do we, His living temples, let the mighty flow of His water of salvation through us to others? Do we refresh others with the Spirit that is within us?

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Housing accommodation will be arranged.

Schedule of TEACHINGS

- Nov 16 - Friday
- **Mark 10, John 6, Youth Teachings**
 - **BBS - Word of God - Singles**
 - **Christian Parenting II - Solo Parents** (up to SPE 9)
- Nov 17- Saturday
- **Agony in the Garden / Washing of the Feet** • LSS 25 & LSS 26
- Nov 23 - Friday
- **Golden Years & Intercessory** - Ministry Teachings
 - **Christian Servanthood** - Service Ministry - Solo Parents (up to SPE8)
- Nov 30- Saturday
- **Intro to Commitment** • LSS 28
 - **Intro to the WORD** • ME 30
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Saturday teachings - 1-6pm St. Mary's

Counsels *(continued from Page 1...)*

bush. While God confirmed that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were dead, God further explained to Moses saying "I Am the God" of these three patriarchs. By speaking in the present tense "I Am" (Ex 3:1-8), God affirmed that physically, they were dead, but at that very moment these three great and faithful servants were with God, presumably in God's dwelling place which we all know as heaven.

Today our belief in the resurrection and our faith in Christ as The Way, The Truth and The Life are tested constantly. We struggle with similar questions posed by the Sadducees. Our limited capacity to understand and answer difficult questions about our most basic moral values that distinguish us as children of God and followers of Christ, make us vulnerable to being separated from our God and, therefore, risk losing the reward of salvation and eternal life. Science, politics, our personal comfort and those who seek to destroy our faith raise before us "trick" questions everyday. We struggle with questions on Abortion, Stem Cell Research, Divorce, Same Sex Marriage, Environment, Sexual Relations, Euthanasia, and Family Values.

Even our most important God-given gift, "Free Will," that describes our form of society and government (Democracy), is used against God to remove Him from everything--our schools, our laws and our public places--to wipe out God from our consciousness, and thus our belief in the Resurrection and our eternal salvation. A Rabbi speaking before a Christian Advocacy group gathered in Washington, D.C. declared that for every good answer we have to support our Faith and Christian values, the Sadducees of our time can come up with three or more reasons why we should instead believe them. He said we can never win an argument with them, and that our best response to their challenge is to simply say that "it is written in the Bible." Christ put a stop to the questioning Sadducees when He pointed out to them, as written, God's response to Moses about the whereabouts of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, after they died.

In the First Reading from the Macabees, the promise of eternal life gave the seven brothers and their mother the strength to bravely prefer torture and death by the Syrian king Antiochus IV over embracing the Hellenic culture and belief that celebrates worldly values and worship of many other gods. They refused to renounce their true faith and belief in the one true God whose commandments are the KEY to eternal life and salvation. Continued . . . 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Nov. 10 • **Mark 10 Visit of Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home** - 56 Hamilton Avenue Passaic NJ • 9-11am • RSVP Contact: Reuben or Cherry Vibar or Mark 10 Core Members
- Nov. 10 • **Disciple's Assembly**- 1:00 - 5:30pm
St. Mary's Auditorium
- Nov. 24 • **Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament**
ME 19 - Contact: Nick & Lita Centeno
(973) 857-9315 or niklit@comcast.net
- Nov. 30 - Dec 1 • **Singles Encounter #19**
Graymoor Spiritual Center - Garrison, NY
Contact: Cathy Mercado (732) 910-7745
Vic & Becky Napenas (201) 320-7644 or
classdance@hotmail.com
- December 8 • **Community Recollection for all BLD members** - 8:30 - 5:00pm
St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahwat, NJ
Speakers: Fr. Paul Lehman & Msgr. Schetelick

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report

for the Week Ending November 2, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fasting for the Poor \$3,126.00

All good giving and every perfect gift is from above.

 In all probability, our personal faith will never be tested in this manner. But if our faith were ever tested, how far can we go before we give it up? How often do we give up Christ's Truth in exchange for our physical and material comfort? How often do we deny Christ when we are confronted by laws of society that judge us if we do not conform to its values and norms of individualistic and selfish lifestyle? We must stand steadfast to the promise of resurrection, always remembering that life here on earth is but a moment...beyond death, life is eternal. This is Christ's Promise: "...But those who are deemed worthy to attain the coming of age and to resurrection of the dead ...are like angels; they are the children of God" (Lk 20:35-36).

DIRECTION:

1. Encourage one another to good deeds and words.
2. Reconcile with the Lord and with your brothers and sisters.
3. Always put Christ in the center of your marriage and your family.



Disciples' Assembly

November 10, 2007- Disciples' Assembly was attended by committed and covenanted disciples. The afternoon began with worship and some members gave their reflections from which were summarized as - Order: 1) Be trustworthy; 2) You cannot serve two masters – mammon or God. 3) We are all co-workers for Christ with one purpose. Directions: a) Be open to one another; b) Practice dying to self; c) always remember you are trustworthy; d) Let everything that reside in our hearts be sincere.

Each Steward explained the ECSL Global Direction for the BLD Community and where we are on the following:

1) **Strengthen Pastoral Care-** Ensure that present members know our Community values, norms and culture as an integral part of God's calling. Enhance Word Sharing Circle (WSC). Observe LIPJASS at all times.

2) **Upbuild capabilities and capacities of all districts.** Ensure growth of DIPs to become full fledged and eventually full term districts. That is to ensure nurturing & fulfillment of God given gifts of all members as intercessors, shepherds, prayer leaders, teachers & witnesses. To develop formation circle, development commitment and spiritual maturity of potential servant leaders.

3) **Embark on poverty alleviation-** The DSL encouraged BLD's involvement in social action for poverty alleviation. A critical component of our community mission is to reach out to the greater church in coordination with local parishes. BLD-GK will continue in its support of the poverty stricken families in the Philippines. BLD Medical Mission will serve impoverished communities in the Philippines.

Other Announcement to note:

There will be an Inter-District Conference in Manila by early 2008. The last conference was held in 2004.

A financial report was given by the treasury. We are encouraged to continue exercising good stewardship of the community funds for Encounters, LSS, Medical Mission, etc bearing in mind that our true purpose is to use the funds to bring more to God >>>to page 4 pls.

COUNSELS

By your perseverance you will secure your lives Luke 21:19

WORD: Mal 3:19-20; Ps 98:5-9; 2Thes 3:7-12; Lk 21: 5-19

ORDER: Persevere in the name of the Lord.

THEME: Christ is King of our lives when we are ready to face persecution and endure sufferings for Him.

REFLECTION: In this Sunday's Gospel, our Lord Jesus admonishes us, "All that you see here—the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down." (Lk 21:6) He is reminding us that nothing in this world is eternal and the day will come when things as they are will come to an end. In the First Reading, the Prophet Malachi also warns us of this catastrophic event, "For lo, the day is coming, blazing like an oven, when all the proud and all the evildoers will be stubble." (Mal 3:19) Our Lord further cautions us that, "There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky." (Lk 21:11) These end-of-the-world scenarios are frightening.

If we see our temporal life as all-important, we will be terrified of losing it but if we see it as an earthly journey to a promised eternal life through Christ, then we will not live in fear. The questions to ask ourselves are: when the end comes, are we prepared to face final judgment at the Lord's Second Coming? What are we doing in our present lives to live and share Christ to others? As followers of Christ, we must persevere to live in holiness everyday just like it is the last day of our life on earth.

>>> page 4

Promise of the Week

"You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives." Luke 21:17-19

“To Live is to Die”

Asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, Jesus answered, “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, ‘Lo, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.” [Lk 17 : 20–21]

The Pharisees clearly showed they didn’t understand what this kingdom meant; despite Jesus’ perceivable preaching and healing ministry; they still couldn’t see that in their midst! How could they miss these signs?

The foregoing Scripture passages, made me contemplate life before joining community. Like the Pharisees, I missed to see God’s kingdom for I was not open to the Holy Spirit’s movement and I failed to recognize and understand all the ‘good things’ in life as my heart chose not to accept Jesus.

Community life taught me about the kingdom of God – it is dynamic, powerful, and truly noticeable if I focus on it. I also learned that if I truly accept Christ, I must give Him first priority over everything. God moved me mightily, revealing His love, rescuing me from sin, and transforming my hard heart. God acts like lightning flashing from one end of the sky to another and you can’t miss it.

Scripture reveals that Jesus taught his disciples what it means to follow Him and allowed His life to penetrate their hearts. His teachings centered not only on His approaching death, but also upon the promise that He would come again at the end of time to establish His kingdom. Jesus’ word of life : “*Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it.*” [Lk 17 : 33] convicted me to pursue Christian Discipleship Formation Program in community.

The challenge, “on this expression of the ambivalence of life and its contrasting destiny and the total commitment to Christ Jesus through self-renunciation and acceptance of the cross of suffering, even to the sacrifice of life itself,” together with the inspiration, “life seen as mere self-centered earthly existence and lived in denial of Christ ends in destruction, but when lived in loyalty to Christ, despite earthly death arrives at fullness of life - the ultimate gift from God which consists in living in complete communion with God.” brings me peace in my discipleship struggles.

Lord Jesus, I look for Your movement in Your Church and in my heart. Move powerfully to transform my life radically. Let go of anything that binds me to the world so that I can freely live for you each day. Let me be a shining witness to Your kingdom. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of faith.

A Pure Heart

I once heard that living a good Christian life is the hardest thing to do on this earth. For me, living a good Christian life means maintaining a pure heart—a heart filled with love for God and for others; willing to serve Him at all times; is obedient to the Word of God and proclaims it with conviction; a heart that surrenders to God’s will. I think we can all agree that it is difficult to maintain a pure heart. But God helps us with this through Wisdom 1:6 where it states, “For wisdom is a kindly spirit, yet she acquits not the blasphemer of his guilty lips; because God is the witness of his inmost self and the sure observer of his heart and the listener to his tongue.” This tells me that God does not let us get away with our sinfulness. He knows our hearts very well, and He reminds us to return to Him when we sin. And when we do, we are able to obtain a pure heart.

A pure heart is sensitive to the Lord’s commands and to the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, when a person with a pure heart sins, the person is deeply affected by guilt. From my experience, when I hurt God or others, I feel uneasy with myself. Something is unresolved. And until I get this settled, my heart is filled with immense guilt and anxiety. “Yet she acquits not the blasphemer of his guilty lips.”

I can not hide this feeling from God. I can not make the shame disappear. He sees right through me, down to the very core of my heart and soul. “Because God is the witness of his inmost self and the sure observer of his heart and the listener to his tongue.”

In order for me to rid myself of the guilt and anxiety, I have to ask for forgiveness from the person I hurt and from God. I am moved by the Holy Spirit to pray and go to confession. This is the only way I am set free from my sins. After confession, I feel peace, joy, and closeness to Jesus again. I feel cleansed and truly forgiven.

A priest once told me that feeling guilty for ones’ sins is a blessing. I can understand this. I feel that guilt is placed within me by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to warn me that there is something blocking me from receiving the fullness of Jesus. It makes me pray even harder and moves me to make reparations for my sins. By the grace and mercy of the Lord, He forgives me. And because of His forgiveness, He allows me to have a pure heart so I can magnify Jesus in my life.

Apologetics

The New Testament mentions three categories of Church leaders: bishops, presbyters, and deacons. So how can the Catholic Church justify its office of “priest”? The New Testament writers seem to understand “bishop” and “presbyter” to be synonymous terms for the same office (Acts 20:17-38).

The English word “priest” is derived from the Greek word *presbuteros*, which is commonly rendered into Bible English as “elder” or “presbyter.” The ministry of Catholic priests is that of the presbyters mentioned in the New Testament (Acts 15:6, 23). The Bible says little about the duties of presbyters, but it does reveal they functioned in a priestly capacity. They were ordained by the laying on of hands (1 Tim. 4:14, 5:22), they preached and taught the flock (1 Tim. 5:17), and they administered the sacraments (Jas. 5:13-15). These are the essential functions of the priestly office, so wherever the various forms of *presbuteros* appear—except, of course, in instances which pertain to the Jewish elders (Matt. 21:23, Acts 4:23)—the word may rightly be translated as “priest” instead of “elder” or “presbyter.”

Episcopos arises from two words, *epi* (over) and *skopeo* (to see), and it means literally “an overseer”—we translate it “bishop.” The King James Version renders the office of overseer, *episkopen*, as “bishopric” (Acts 1:20). The role of the *episkopos* is not clearly defined in the New Testament, but by the beginning of the second century it had obtained a fixed meaning. There is early evidence of this refinement in ecclesiastical nomenclature in the writings of Ignatius of Antioch (d. A.D. 107), who wrote at length of the authority of bishops as distinct from presbyters and deacons (Epistle to the *Magnesians* 6:1, 13:1-2; Epistle to the *Trallians* 2:1-3; Epistle to the *Smyrnaeans* 8:1-2).

The New Testament tendency to use *episcopos* and *presbuteros* interchangeably is similar to the contemporary Protestant use of the term “minister” to denote various offices, both ordained and unordained (senior minister, music minister, youth minister). Similarly, the term *diakonos* is rendered both

>>nextcolumn

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nov 24 | Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament – ME19 Nick & Lita Centeno (973) 857-9315 |
| Nov 30, Dec 1-2 | SE#19 Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, NY Cathy Mercado (732) 910-7745 & Vic/Becky Napenas (201) 320-7644, classicedance@hotmail.com |
| Dec 8 | Community Recollection for all BLD members St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Speakers: Fr. Paul Lehman and Msgr. Paul Schetelick |

as “deacon” and as “minister” in the Bible, yet in Protestant churches the office of deacon is clearly distinguished from and subordinate to the office of minister.

In Acts 20_17-38 the same men are called *presbyteroi* (v. 17) and *episcopoi* (v. 28). *Presbyteroi* is used in a technical sense to identify their office of ordained leadership. *Episcopoi* is used in a non-technical sense to describe the type of ministry they exercised. This is how the Revised Standard Version renders the verses: “And from Miletus he [Paul] . . . called for the elders [presbyteroi] of the church. And when they came to him, he said to them . . . ‘Take heed to yourselves and all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians [episcopoi], to feed the church of the Lord.’”

In other passages it’s clear that although men called *presbyteroi* ruled over individual congregations (parishes), the apostles ordained certain men, giving them authority over multiple congregations (dioceses), each with its own presbyters. These were endowed with the power to ordain additional presbyters as need to shepherd the flock and carry on the work of the gospel. Titus and Timothy were two of those early *episcopoi* and clearly were above the office of *presbuteros*. They had the authority to select, ordain, and govern other presbyters, as is evidenced by Paul’s instructions: “*This is why I left you in Crete . . . that you might appoint elders in every town as I directed you*” (Titus 1:5; cf. 1 Tim. 5:17-22).

Source: 1993 Catholic Answers

Counsels from page 1

Jesus describes the end of the world in apocalyptic terms that are so familiar to us such as “the Holocaust,” “the Terrorism of 9/11 or “the Typhoon Katrina.” As individuals, it could be death for us if we constantly live in sin and ignore to follow the path of Christ. It could also be the end for our community if we do not persevere in our love for God and for one another, and let dissension and disunity rule over us. It could be the end of the world if we let evil dominate us and allow injustices, terrorism, abortion, hatred, and other sins to prevail, neglect to help the poor and the disadvantaged, and not defend what is good, just and righteous.

And, it could be the end of our Faith if we do not persevere to uphold the values of Christ, to live His Gospel and to spread the Good News of salvation to all peoples.

Like the early Christians, we also live in a world where many people do not know Christ. Our Lord foretells that we will face all kinds of persecution, “they will seize and persecute you because of my name.” (Lk 21:12) The Lord further warns us, “*You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death.*” (Lk 21:16) Today, our persecution comes mostly from the jeers and mockery of friends, relatives, and employers who are unable to understand why we have changed our former way of life, why we have forsaken the attractions of the world—honor, prestige and wealth, and why we are more forgiving and generous in sharing our resources with the less fortunate. Inevitably, persecution comes to “*all who want to live religiously in Christ Jesus.*” (2 Tim 3:12) Just as Jesus was persecuted and had suffered, we, too, as His followers, will face the same fate. We must not fear for the Lord promises, “*I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute.*” (Lk 21:15) “*But not a hair on your head will be destroyed.*” (Lk 21:18) Only when we are ready to face persecution and endure sufferings for Him, will Christ be the king of our lives.

As Catholic Christians, our work is difficult and overwhelming against a world that is full of evil and sin. As St. Paul testifies in the Second Reading, “*in toil and drudgery, night and day we worked.*” (2 Thes 3:8) But, we will prevail when we persevere to work religiously in Christ and for Christ because God is at our side with His promise, “*By your perseverance you will secure your lives.*” (Lk 21:19)

DIRECTION:

1. Present yourselves as good witnesses of Christ.
2. Conduct yourselves in an orderly manner and work quietly.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDICAL MISSION- Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

SINGLES- Archdiocesan Outreach Service. Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact persons: Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com) or LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

WORD - Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to rguiao@yahoo.com or cblmont@hotmail.com

BLD Charlotte, NC. LSS#1, Nov. 17-18. Contact Aida Koryan (973)626-6059; (973)709-1387 Email: hajbk@aol.com.

TEACHINGS

Nov 16** Mark 10, John 6, Youth

Basic Bible eminar– Word of God - Singles
Christian Parenting II-Solo Parents (up to SPE9)

Nov 17 Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet LSS 25, LSS 26

Nov 23** Golden Years Ministry, Intercessory Ministry
Christian Servanthood – Service Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE8)

Nov 30 Intro to Commitment – LSS 28
Intro to the Word – ME 30

Note: **Friday teachings – after worship

>from page 1 disciples.

and to serve Him wholeheartedly.

The community is being apprised of the venue situation of St. Mary’s and St. Marks. Responding to the call of Christian Stewardship, BLD community assigned representatives to meet and discuss with the Parish Priest and the Archdiocese of Newark regarding BLD’s assistance to the churches to remain open for worship & other uses; avail the nearby residents a venue for Masses and other functions. The community will be updated on this matter. “*As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*” (1Ptr. 4:10-11)

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

*Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending
November 9, 2007*

*Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the
Poor \$ 3,482.00*

Thank you for your continued generosity.



BLD NEWS

Agony in the Garden Retreat

Alleluia to the Lamb and Glory to our God! Last Saturday, November 17, 2007 was another spirit-filled retreat for the Agony in the Garden and Washing of the Feet, held right here at St. Mary's, Rahway. Sponsoring was a collaborative effort by three Ministries, Teaching, Service and Intercessory. The Retreat Master, Deacon Bong David, imparted the call to be intercessors, just like our Lord Jesus Christ. He also emphasized the importance of the submission to the Father's will as the beginning of wisdom.

The participants were taught to be obedient, humble and free; to be true servants of the Lord. Together with the sharers, they gave a powerful witnessing of their personal experience giving the majestic purpose of life from whom all participants were deeply moved. The retreat was attended by: Earl Manguiat, Carol Manguiat, Florence Fudalan, Margaret Aliparo from the Singles Ministry; Johnny Salgado from SPE 5 Long Island; Dhemie/Divine Alba, Ray/Susie Atienza, Marc/Emma Belmonte, Rollie/Nila Castillo, Romy/Lyn Castillo, Ramie/Emmy Espina, Arnold/Cely Ocaya, Pete/Precy Pajela, Don/Irene Rodriguez, Riel/Gina Sabale, Nes/Cecille Vasquez, and Al Rosales of ME 25; Rey/Benny Garcia, Jun/Camille Viernes, Marivic del Rosario of ME26. The retreat culminated with the celebration of the Eucharist by Fr. Kim from Jersey City.

BLD Charlotte holds its 1st LSS

BLD Charlotte's LSS #1 last Nov. 17-18, 2007, at Our Lady of Mercy School, Winston Salem, NC was a tremendous victory for the Lord with 32 graduates, empowered with the gifts of the Spirit. The overflow of God's grace made manifest in our graduates namely: Tony Baludio, Vangie Baludio, Jay Capistrano, Joe Carter, Cora Castillo, Shirley Cheseborough, Arnold Cortez, Mae Cruz, Edna Day, Maureen De Lyon, Ray Decena, Chat Decena, Vermont Dy, Cesar Gordola, Ava Gordola, Frank Javier, Ruth Javier, Jennie Libunao, Tessie Llamas, Boots Oliveira, Robert Panlaqui, Fritzy Panlaqui, Tess Pettiford, Gary Stacy, Richelle Stacy, Denise Steele, Dee Strickland, Martin Syquia, Joanne Syquia, Jordan Tucay, Lourdes Tucay and Gigi Villanueva. .

Continued on page 3

COUNSELS

Today You Will Be With Me in Paradise

WORD: 2Sam 5: 1-3, Ps 122:1-5, Col. 1:12-20; Lk. 23:35-43

ORDER: Shepherd my people. (2Sm 5:2b)

THEME: Christ is the King of our lives when we profess His triumph on the cross.

REFLECTION:

From the history books and movies, we learn of kings that are usually figures of great wealth and power. Most of them are honored because of their political and military accomplishments. They lived in castles and palaces; wore extravagant robes and crowns decked with jewels; hosted lavish banquets and entertained the world's rich and famous. But in our gospel today, we encounter a very different King in the person of Christ. St Paul's Letter to the Colossians further explain Christ's kingship in different titles (Col 1:-14-17):- "*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; all things have been created through him and for him. He is the head of the body, the church; the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.*" All of these titles, stress the divinity of Christ; affirming that he is true God. Yet, St. Paul, at the same time, stresses the reality that: it was precisely in Christ's true humanity, in His death on the Cross, which affirms His divinity, that accomplishes our redemption and forgiveness, our reconciliation and peace with God, with one another and with the world

The great paradox of Christ's death on the cross is that, from history and from only a human point of view, the Cross epitomizes failure, dishonor, tragedy, madness, weakness, and defeat. Yet with eyes of faith, the Cross

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Lk 23:43)

USING GOD'S GIFTS

Do I have the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Am I using God's gift for the glory of God?

As Christians we need to know the giver of the gifts and upon knowing the Giver we learn to love Him and eventually develop the desire to serve Him. It is by serving God that we find the true meaning of life.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit were given to us during our baptism and were re-affirmed during our confirmation. These are the gifts that edify ourselves so we can be vessels of the other gifts to benefit others, the Church. In Jn 3:5 Jesus explained to Nicodemus that in order for one to enter the Kingdom of heaven he must be born of water and spirit. It is in the baptism in the spirit that the sevenfold-gifts are rekindled and as we accept Jesus as our lord and savior, more gifts are given to equip us with the full armor of God.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are entrusted to be good stewards of the gifts bestowed upon us. In the parable of the Ten Gold Coins [Lk 19:11-27], it has clearly been explained that we need to use the gifts we received. In Lk 19:26 the writ says, "*I tell you, to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.*" God appoints us with different gifts for a reason and we must use these gifts wisely for His purpose.

Often times during our walk with the Lord we forget to put the word LOVE into action. To make this theological virtue dynamic, we ought to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Our unselfishness, giving oneself to others, magnifies the proper use of these gifts. We need to understand that we do not need to be in any ministry to realize if we are indeed using God's gift. Every minute of our life is an opportunity to use His gifts. I challenge each and everyone of you to see Jesus in all aspects of our lives and bring out the fruitfulness of these gifts. Just like the mustard seed, as sinful as we are, as nothing as we are, God poured the water of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and when received with meekness and repentant heart, our being swells with joy and produces the magnificence of God's plan.

In summary, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not ours to keep and secure on our shelves of pride and greed but to use it with one purpose in mind, and that is to give glory to God. Am I serving God by being good steward of His gifts?

Traveling Catholics
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GOD'S AUTHORITY

But turning and looking at his disciples, Jesus rebuked Peter, saying, "*Get behind me, Satan! For you are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts!*" – Mk 8:33

Jesus rebuked Peter because Peter suggested that Jesus should not "go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised." - Mt 16:21. The devil wanted to frustrate God's plan through Peter's resistance, hence Jesus' response. Jesus rebuked Peter because of His devotion to His earthly mission, which He undertook in obedience to the Father's will and His love for us.

Jesus' authority stems not only from being God as in Matthew 28:18, "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*", but more so because He is Love, infinite and divine. If somebody can somehow love as deeply, as unconditionally and as faithfully as Jesus could, that person would have power and authority. Mother Theresa was a simple nun who was able to form a worldwide community because she loved much. She was with Love. Governments exercise authority over its citizens because they serve the common good. "*For no authority exists except by God's permission. The existing authorities have been established by God*" - Romans 13:1.

Also, because "the Lord of all shows no partiality, nor does He fear greatness, because He himself made the great as well as the small, and He provides for all alike; for those in power a rigorous scrutiny impends." - Wisdom 6:8. There is accountability for those in authority. And there is no one who can do the work of God better than God Himself.

"By calling God "Father," the language of faith indicates...that God is the first origin of everything and transcendent authority; and that He is at the same time goodness and loving care for all his children." – CCC 239. God's authority flows from His love for His children. He is our Creator; He is the Source of all life; He is Love.

In our community "authority is legitimately exercised only when it is used to implement the statutes and policies and guidelines of the BLD Covenant Community, and the decisions of the governing body of the BLD Covenant Community. – Article 4.1 BLD Statutes. No member possesses authority in his or her personal capacity. When the governing body is one there is authority. When there is unity among its members, there is Love.

BLD is a community devoted to God's mission, obedient to the Father's will. It is a community of God-lovers and lovers of His flock. God's authority rests on those who are thinking God's thoughts and not human thoughts.

The Meaning of Thanksgiving

For many of us, thanksgiving immediately brings to mind thoughts of the feastive holiday that we are about to celebrate. Yet as Catholics it is good to take national holidays, like Thanksgiving, as an opportunity to meditate on the spiritual meaning of whatever is being honored and/or celebrated by our nation. On that note, let seek to understand more fully the real meaning and manifestation of “thanksgiving.”

FAITH IN ONE GOD - To truly live our faith in God we must live our lives in a spirit of thanksgiving. The Catechism goes on to say:

222 Believing in God, the only One, and loving him with all our being has enormous consequences for our whole life.

224 It means living in thanksgiving: if God is the only One, everything we are and have comes from him: “What have you that you did not receive?” “What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me?” - Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition, pg. 60

2062Moral existence is a response to the Lord’s loving initiative. It is the acknowledgement and homage given to God and a worship of thanksgiving. It is cooperation with the plan God pursues in history. - CCC, Second Edition, pg. 501

Our “moral existence” is a response to the Lord’s loving initiative - the Grace and the complete gift of Himself. So we exist to literally “know, love, and serve” God and we most perfectly do this through “acknowledging God, giving Him homage through a worship of thanksgiving, by the continual living of our lives in “cooperation with the plan God pursues in history.

The Catholic “worship of thanksgiving” is manifested most perfectly in the celebration of the Eucharist. The very word, “Eucharist” means “an action of thanksgiving” by giving us His Son’s Body and Blood, in the Eucharist, that we might become one with God. The Catechism goes on to reaffirm this:

1360 The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all “thanksgiving.” - CCC, Second Edition, pg. 343 >>next column

**MAKE COVENANT NEWS
A PART OF YOUR
COVENANT LIFE**

BLD Charlotte *from page 1*

The glorious LSS weekend was the evident workings of a community of faith empowered by the Spirit and love of Christ among members from BLD Newark, Washington and Trenton working together as one. There was a brimful of support and unselfish dedication from everyone to serve the Lord. Truly, God’s plan cannot be let down. Fr. Paul Lehman headed the Pastoral Team, assisted by the following sharers: Norma Lacsamana - God’s Love, Long Cruzada and Bert & Lith Golamco - New Life, Rene & Sally Castaneda - Healing & Reconciliation, Ramon Chan - Growth, and George & Cathy Del Fiero - Transformation. Praise be to God for a blessed and fruitful LSS weekend!

Thanksgiving *(cont.)*

The Catechism, in Part Four - Christian Prayer, says the following:

2637 Thanksgiving characterizes the prayer of the Church which, in celebrating the Eucharist, reveals and becomes more fully what she is. Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory. The thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head.

2638 As in the prayer of petition, every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving. The letters of St. Paul often begin and end with thanksgiving, and the Lord Jesus is always present in it: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”; “Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” - CCC, Second Edition, pg. 634

So we are to first understand thanksgiving in terms of the Eucharist, but we also must take that gift of thanksgiving that we receive in the Eucharist into the world in order to make “every event and need...an offering of thanksgiving.”

In going to Mass (*not only during Thanksgiving holiday*), we will more perfectly manifest our thankfulness to God and receive Him who is our greatest gift

MOMENT OF PRAYER

Prayer for the Thanksgiving

Father all-powerful, your gifts of love are countless and your goodness infinite. On Thanksgiving Day we come before you with gratitude for your kindness: open our hearts to concern for our fellow men and women, so that we may share your gifts in loving service.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Counsels from page 1

epitomizes victory, honor, good news, strength, and power.

On this Christ the King Sunday, we see how radically different Christ is from all other kings. Instead of worldly power and wealth; castles and palaces; jewels and golden crowns; we meet Christ the King, who is humble, despised, and rejected by mankind; weak and powerless; suffering and dying on the Cross. Yet on the point of death, He prayed for His enemies who crucified Him: "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing". And at the last moment, He rewards a repentant criminal saying: "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." Lk 23:43

This is Christ the King Sunday; we see that our King is different than all of the rest. Unlike the others, he went to the cross in order to reconcile all enemies to God. It is in this act of reconciling enemies; of praying for their forgiveness that God changes peoples' hearts, minds and lives. In loving and in forgiving the enemy, the enemy is radically changed and, in time, also able to love and forgive. It is precisely in being loved and forgiven by Christ that we too are able to love and forgive others, even those who are hard to love, even our enemies. It is in this great love for humanity that Christ has given us an example of mercy even to the point of death. Jesus gave as an example to emulate in His unconditional love and acceptance of a criminal even in the final end, pleading for mercy, asking Jesus to remember him, to be with Him in Paradise.

Let us therefore celebrate Christ as our King every Sunday and in all opportunity avail of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist, the signs of our King's presence among us. We, like that thief on the cross are with Christ in paradise as we eat and drink His body and blood. Let us also emulate our King, who is our Good Shepherd, always giving His flock good examples. Let us continue to submit ourselves to one another, and to the shepherds appointed to us. Let us encourage forgiveness in our community. Let us be agents of peace and reconciliation, asking for forgiveness no matter what, and forgiving those who hurt us, and always praying for each other, even our enemies. Like the Shepherd King, let us be good witnesses. When we love one another, Christ is with us, and where Christ is, it will be Paradise.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Reach out to those under your pastoral care.
2. Be a good witness by reconciling and making peace by the blood of the cross.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Reports for the Week Ending Nov. 16, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission & Fast for Poor

\$ 4,254.00

Thank you for your continued generosity

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Nov 24 Soup Kitchen at Blessed Sacrament – ME19 Nick & Lita Centeno (973) 857-9315
- Nov 30, Dec 1-2 SE#19 Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, NY Cathy Mercado (732) 910-7745 & Vic/Becky Napenas (201) 320-7644, classicdance@hotmail.com
- Dec 8 Community Recollection for all BLD members St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Speakers: Fr. Paul Lehman and Msgr. Paul Schetelick

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 WORD@BLDNewark.com

SINGLES: Archdiocesan Outreach Service Every 3rd Saturday of the month. Contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION: Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month. Volunteers are needed. To volunteer, contact:

MEDICAL MISSION- Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

TEACHINGS

- Nov 23* Golden Years Ministry, Intercessory Ministry Christian Servanthood – Service Ministry, Solo Parents (up to SPE8)
- Nov 30* Intro to Commitment – LSS 28
Intro to the Word – ME 30
- Dec No teachings

*Note: *Friday teachings – after worship*

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dec 11 Tuesday - Archdiocesan Advent Gathering hosted by the Archdiocese of Newark at the Youth and Young Adult Retreat Center, 499 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, NJ (CYO). 11:30 to 3:30 pm. Free. Lunch will be provided. Day will begin with Eucharistic Celebration by Most Rev. Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V. Please RSVP to Liliana Soto-Cabrera (sotolili@rcan.org)



REPLACE FEAR WITH TRUST IN GOD, SAYS POPE

Notes Christ Is Alpha and Omega of History

VATICAN CITY, NOV. 18, 2007 (Zenit.org), Benedict XVI urged the faithful to live without fear for the future, and to persevere in faith when faced with hardships and difficulties. The Pope said this before leading the praying of the midday Angelus in St. Peter's Square.

Reflecting on the Gospel of St. Luke, the Holy Father said that Jesus invited his disciples to face difficulties, misunderstandings and even persecutions with trust, persevering in faith in him.

"History must follow its course," said the Pontiff, "which also brings human dramas and natural calamities with it." A plan of salvation that Christ has already carried out in his incarnation, death, and resurrection develops in history. The Church continues to proclaim and realize this mystery through preaching, the celebration of the sacraments, and the witness of charity.

"Let us welcome Christ's invitation," he said, "to face daily events trusting in his providential love. Let us not be afraid of the future, even when it appears bleak to us, for the God of Jesus Christ, who took up history to open it up to transcendent fulfillment, is its alpha and omega, the beginning and the end." He guarantees that in every little but genuine act of love, the meaning of the whole universe is contained; and those who do not hesitate to lose their lives for him will find them again in fullness.

Benedict XVI then turned his attention to consecrated persons, and especially those living in cloistered communities, who he said "have placed their life without reserve at the service of the kingdom of God invite us with singular effectiveness to keep this perspective alive."

Recalling that the Church will remember its cloistered members in a special way on Wednesday, the memorial of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the temple, the Pope said, "We owe much to these persons who live by what providence procures for them through the generosity of the faithful."

COUNSELS



He is Our Hope

WORD: Is 2:1-5; Ps 122:1-9;
Rom 13:11-14; Mt 24:37-44

THEME: Christ is in us when we walk in His light.

ORDER: "Stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come."
(Mt 24:42)

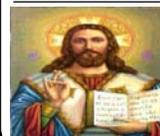
REFLECTION:

This Sunday marks the start of a new year in the church's calendar. Advent, which means, "the Coming" is the season of anticipation. For us, Christians, this means making preparations for God's coming. God's word for this month of anticipation is "Advent assures us that Christ dwells in us."

The Advent message for us is not only to remain awake, to be vigilant, to be prepared, and to turn away from darkness but also, to look forward to and walk in the light, to be hopeful of our salvation, and to expect our Savior's arrival.

During the Life in the Spirit Seminar last month here in BLD Newark and a couple of weeks ago in Rockland NY and Charlotte NC, many of us were first-hand witnesses to God's love as well as recipients of God's blessings and saving grace. Most appropriately this week, as we move to a "New year", we are, again, reminded of our Savior's coming. Perhaps, a simple analogy would be akin to preparing oneself for the LSS weekend. Lambs were "encouraged" to avail of the sacrament of reconciliation in order to come clean during the weekend and to allow the Holy Spirit (☞ Page 4)

God's Promise for the Week



"Come, let us climb the Lord's mountain...that he may instruct us in his ways and we may walk in his paths." (Is 2:3)



A Generous Giver

In ancient Israel, one was called a generous giver when he gave four times over his regular tithes. (Regular tithing was a tenth of one's income. Today, most parishes require either a tenth or a fifth of one's income). Luke 21:1-4 touches on generous giving from the heart. The widow in the gospel dropped her last two coins (the lowest in value) into the treasury where contributions to the temple's decorations were collected. Jesus was touched by this widow's offering because she gave from her limited budget, which shows her self-denial and sacrificial giving, while others gave from their abundance. (2 Cor 8:13-14) The widow had contributed more meaningfully because she gave from what little she had.

God gives us countless blessings. He is the source of our temporal needs. What we give to our church and our community is nothing compared to God's Divine favors. When we give, God sees our hearts and reads our intentions; and He looks at the proportion, not the portion of what we give. God's generosity is never outdone (Jn 3:16) as our Triune God reenacts the world's highest form of self-denial and sacrificial giving, which is Jesus' crucifixion and death, in the holy sacrifice of the mass where bread is broken and shared by many (2 Cor 8:9). Truly, Jesus' giving is a living sacrifice! What we have been given most by God's generosity, whether time, talent or treasure, should be what we offer back to God as our humble contribution to our parish and community. These generous acts allow us to emulate Christ's life here on earth and a manifestation of our love for Christ and His people.

God calls us to be contributing members of the faith community and the human family, even to the point of sacrifice. We are called to stewardship, which means giving of our time, talent and treasure, to support the church's mission to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and to support organizations that contribute to the positive welfare of all people in need.

Gawad Kalinga is a very worthy cause that this community supports, in collaboration with Couples for Christ. Supporting seminarians financially to become priests in the Philippines is also born out of sacrificial giving. Pennies collected regularly from Church Women United of America keeps displaced families warm with blankets and daily bread to eat. In third world countries, a boy giving up his snacks money just to send boxes of food and clothes to tsunami victims and soldiers at war; and so many more acts of giving are all opportunities to give our last two coins, like the poor widow did, in Jesus name, for God's glory!



Testify in Truth

"There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known." (Lk 12:2)

How would one testify to God's love without realizing that the masks he wears conceal the real person?

I was raised by my maternal grandmother from 6 months to 10 years old. I grew up without seeing or knowing my mother. My parents were separated and they both remarried. My father has 6 children of his own and my mother has 5 children of her own. One day, my father fetched me so I can live with him and his family. I did stay with them, however, after a while, I moved back and lived with my grandmother.

To succeed in life, I studied hard and pursued my college education. I became a teacher and a basketball coach. Soon, I met the lady of my dreams and got married. We were blessed with 3 children.

Luke 21:19 says, *"By your perseverance you will secure your lives."* Our immigration to the U.S. was a test of humility, patience and perseverance. Despite our difficulties, I persevered with His grace. At first, I was out of work. I humbly admit that being poor left me with nothing but hope in the Lord. It made me realize how important it is to work hard, to be honest, and to be contented with what I have. Yet, God is really a loving God for in time of need, he did not abandon us. He blessed us with wonderful people, who offered their decent apartment to us to live in and enabled us to purchase our first home even though they did not know us. Shortly, He blessed me with a job where I earned enough to live comfortably.

God's goodness is overpowering in my life. He is constantly reminding me of His presence in my life. He even used my accident from falling off the ladder to remind me that I should keep holy the Sabbath day by going to church and spending quality time with my family.

Joining the BLD community became a channel for me to testify to the **Truth**. After going to teachings, LSS, and retreats, I was able to deal with my 'identity'. In one of the retreats, I was asked to contemplate on God's word and at random, I picked a rolled paper with this sentence on it: *Jesus met His mother for the first time*. I was overwhelmed thinking how can I share my story about my mother whom I never met. A lot of questions went on my mind. Is this how our Lord God opened my heart to start the process of forgiveness & reconciliation with my mother? Am I to testify to God's love and forgiveness and rise above my hurts?

During our visit in the Philippines, I met my 85 year old mother for the first time, after 62 years. There was true joy in our reunion. I can truly say that to testify in **Truth** is to let the light of God shine by allowing His grace to flow freely in us so we can seek and receive forgiveness, obtain healing and mercy, and grow into a mature faith in Him. I thank the Lord for the gift of Life and for allowing me to reunite with my mother with love and forgiveness!



St. Andrew

St. Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter. They were both fishermen, sons of Jonas, a fisherman native of Bethsaida.

They had afterwards a house at Capernaum where Jesus lodged when He preached in that city.

Andrew was known for his piety and his good inclinations. He began as a disciple of St John the Baptist. He was with John the Baptist when he pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Andrew by the purity of his desire understood that Jesus was greater. At once, he left John to follow the Divine Master. Jesus, knowing that Andrew was walking behind him, turned back and asked, "What are you looking for?" When Andrew answered that he would like to know where Jesus lived, our Lord replied, "Come and See". It took him only a short time in His presence and Andrew realized that Jesus was truly the Messiah. From then, he chose to follow Jesus. Andrew was, thus, the *first disciple of Christ*.

Andrew discovered an infinite treasure! Without delay he brought his brother Simon (St. Peter) to Jesus Christ that he might also know Him. (Jn 1:41) And Jesus received him, too, as His disciple. At first, the two brothers continued their fishing trade and family affairs, but later, were called to a closer companionship, and they left all things to follow Jesus. (Lk 5:11; Mt 4:19-20; Mk 1:17-18) He promised to make them fishers of men, and this time left their nets for good.

In the gospels, he is referred to as being present on some important occasions as one of the disciples more closely attached to Jesus. (Mk 13:3; Jn 6:8,12-22) Among the apostles, Andrew expressed a stronger faith as he introduced a boy who had five barley loaves and two small fishes, which indeed had satisfied the multitude of five thousand people. (Jn 6:8-9) This shows the great credit St. Andrew had with Christ; on which account saints call him the Introdutor to Christ because he brought St. Peter to Him.

It is believed that after the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, St Andrew went to the Eastern lands preaching the Word of God. He went to Asia Minor, along the Black Sea. On his journeys he endured sufferings and torments from pagans, but remaining unharmed, continued to preach and through his prayers the Lord worked miracles.

St. Andrew is said to have been martyred by crucifixion at Patras on a cross commonly known as "St. Andrew's cross", at his own request, as he deemed himself unworthy to be crucified on the same type of cross on which Christ was crucified. He is said to have been put to death not nailed but tied. He lived two days in that state of suffering, still preaching to the people who gathered around their beloved apostle. St. Andrew is honored as chief patron of Russia and Scotland.

Churches keep **November 30** as his feast.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Deadline for the Christmas Gift Solicitation for the Poor & the Homeless - December 14, 2007

Please give your gifts to any Mission Ministry member

JOHN 6

Crossing #8 Reunion

December 8, 2007 From 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm

St. Mary's School Library, Rahway, NJ

Contact Persons: Boyet & Zita Cruz

(jcruz1457@yahoo.com, ztcruz80@yahoo.com)

MEDICAL MISSION

Feb. 18-22, 2008 - Infanta, Quezon

Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed.

Contact Persons: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service

January 12, 2008 (Saturday)

Contact Persons: Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com)

LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.).

Email to word@bldnewark.com

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Archdiocesan Advent Gathering-December 11, 2007

Hosted by the Archdiocese of Newark

Youth and Young Adult Retreat Center

499 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, NJ (CYO)

From 11:30 am to 3:30 pm

Free. Lunch will be provided.

Day will begin with Eucharistic Celebration by Most Rev.

Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V.

Please RSVP to Liliana Soto-Cabrera (sotolili@rcan.org)

TEACHINGS

November 30, 2007 (Friday, after worship)

Intro to Commitment - LSS 28

Intro to Word - ME 30

December 2007 - NO TEACHINGS



St. Andrew's Prayer

O Glorious St Andrew, you were the first to recognize and follow the Lamb of God. With your friend St. John, you remained with Jesus for that first day, for your entire life, and now throughout eternity. As you led your brother St. Peter to Christ and many others after Him, draw us also to Him. Teach us to lead others to Christ solely out of love for Him and dedication in His service. Help us to learn the lesson of the cross and to carry our crosses without complaint so that they may carry us to Jesus. Amen.

Counsels (from page 1)

to fill our souls with His presence. We ought to be “prepared” 365 days of the year!

We all live in the shadow and pretext of ‘eternity’. People live as though there is no tomorrow, no end to all things – life on earth, lust, love of material things, lying, lasciviousness.... “Let me enjoy my life in this earth to the fullest.” In reality, we should live as though it does not matter when the Lord will come – always ‘ready’, always worthy and clean. We should live each day ready to meet our maker face-to-face.

To prepare for the day of the Lord, St. Matthew’s relates three stories:

1. **Noah and the flood**

Jesus compares the separation of the good from the evil on the Day of Judgment at the end of the age with what took place in the days of Noah, when God saw that the inhabitants of the world had been filled with evil, with corruption and violence (Gn 6:5,11-13). During Noah’s time, God swept away in the great flood all those who chose the way of evil rather than good. God intended to start over again with a people who would choose to do good by obeying him.

2. **One taken and one left behind**

How should we live in light of Jesus’ promise to return again on the Day of Judgment? In this story, Jesus gives striking images to illustrate the urgency of the need for personal preparation and readiness to meet the Judge when he comes. One such image is where one is suddenly taken away without a moment’s notice, the other is left to fend for himself, another is the separation of two people working together. You could probably just imagine the shock on the face of both people! The event is so unexpected and fast that neither had any opportunity to hide, escape, or ask for help!

3. **The thief in the night**

Jesus’ story of the thief in the night brings home the necessity for constant watchfulness! While no thief would announce his intention or the time when he would strike, lack of vigilance would invite disaster for those who are unprepared! “The day of the Lord will come like a thief.” It is the same message to all, regardless of age. As we all can see, living without being watchful invites disaster. The spirit that leads to disaster is the spirit that says “There is still plenty of time.” One of the most dangerous days in a man’s life is when he learns that there is a word like “tomorrow”. There are things that must not be put off, for no man knows if for him, tomorrow will come at all.

The Lord’s message to us is not only of vigilance – but of HOPE. 

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

November 30 - December 2, 2007

Singles Encounter #19

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center, Garrison, NY
Contact Persons: Cathy Mercado (732)910-7745
Vic/Becky Napenas (201)320-7644
(classdance@hotmail.com)

December 8, 2007

Community Recollection for all BLD members
St. Mary’s Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
8:00 am to 4:00 pm
Speakers: Fr. Paul Lehman
Msgr. Paul Schetelick

THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report for the Week
Ending November 23, 2007**

**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission
& Fast for Poor** **\$ 3,453.00**

Thank you for your continued generosity.

“For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.” (2 Cor 5:1)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.”

(1 Pt 1:3-4)

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Rom 15:13)

DIRECTIONS:

- * Reconcile with God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, that you can be nourished by His Body and Blood in the Eucharist.
- * Wait and listen to God, persevere trust in prayer.
- * Seek and live by the word of God that you may have peace within you and with one another.



God's Love and Peace to All!



SINGLES MINISTRY WELCOMES SE 19

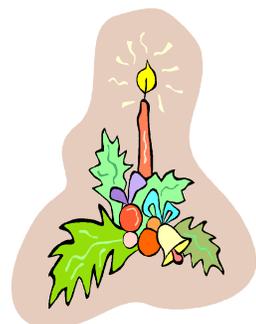
The Singles Ministry roused the Spirit of Advent with the glorious victory of the Singles Encounter #19. Many said “YES!” to our Lord Jesus Christ by participating and serving over the weekend. What better way to awaken our spirits in the name of Jesus, our Savior, than to follow Him and offer up the hearts of 51 candidates! By the end of the weekend, all candidates, pastoral team, ministry heads, sponsoring class, and auxies were able to truly experience the armor of light through the power of God. Not even the snow that occurred early Sunday morning could stop the singles from serving our God over the weekend.

Many thanks to our pastoral team headed by Fr. Paul Lehman, Trisha Arias, Rodnelle Calim, Ditto Fernando and Mhyllanie Guinto, the sponsoring class, auxies and the Singles Ministry’s Praise.

We are blessed to have our new SE19 - Alexis Abrenica, Geoffrey Acosta, Hannah Alaouie, Denise Aliparo, Antoinette Anderson, Emma Anonuevo, Christel Arribe, Amor Ausan, John Pio Balingit, Darleen Calotes, Edna Campo, John Cancio*, Cyrus Candelario, Carl Caparros, Charisma Chavez, William Clancy, Vanessa Cruz, Ria De Lara, Christopher Delacruz, Emanuel De Vera, Rashed Espejon*, Sheilla Espina*, Gretel Espina, Roberto Estor, Edermis Fermin, Nicole Grabowski, Stephanie Ikalina*, Andrew Jaico*, Jane Kim, Bernadette Laroza, Minerva Layug, Ma. Soraya Manuel, Kristian Michael Marcial, Christian Masisado, Riza Obrera*, Jennifer Ompod, David Pavick, Elizabeth Perez, Michael Pineda*, Jhoanne Rama, Lisa

Ramirez, Erwin Razon*, Ansel Reyes, Rio Rivera, Francis Samonte, Eduardo Solis*, Grace Sta Maria, Danny Tabao*, Lisa Tacbad, Francis Talambiras-Cruz*, Bryant Yap and Class Shepherds Dodong and Loring Demegillo. Welcome to the community.

*Coordinators



COUNSELS

SORROW FOR SIN

WORD: Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Rm 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

ORDER: Christ is in us when we manifest the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

THEME: “Produce good fruits as evidence of your repentance.” Mt 3:8

REFLECTION:

In those days John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea saying “Repent, for the



kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Mt 3:1-2). What was prophesied by Isaiah 400 years ago about “A voice crying out in the desert, preparing the way of the Lord” was fulfilled. His message was stunning. The long-awaited Messiah was about to come! Excitement filled the air of the whole Judea. In the minds of many of them this meant liberation from the Romans, from their high taxes, from their oppressions, resulting to a great increase in wealth and glory, and most importantly, a new powerful leadership on their side was at hand. The word passed like wildfire. Thousands from all over Judea have come to see John. But when John appeared, to their astonishment, he stopped them in their tracks. Their idea of religion, a new religion was so wrong. They thought religion was simply a matter of going through outward rituals to placate God and in exchange they would get material riches and honors.

(continue on page 4, col 1)

GOD’S PROMISE FOR THE WEEK

“The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord.” (Is 11:2)

GOD REVEALS TO THE CHILDLIKE



Countless occasions come to mind when I asked God to reveal Himself to me. Initially, it was hard to see or hear God. I knew that He was real, but my heart was senseless. Looking back at my life, notably my formative years, I realized that God revealed Himself to me. Knowing my brokenness, justifying my actions and being defensive

about any situation without looking for the root cause of my actions was not attitude. I have to understand my brokenness and wait for God to reveal himself. I questioned myself - did I acknowledge what my inner child truly felt? Have I faithfully uprooted the sources of hurt early on in my life, brought them to the cross and made reparation as a child?

“...although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike” (Lk 10:21). A childlike disposition of heart and mind, makes way for God to reveal Himself to us. He unveils Himself to the helpless, the weak and those dependent on Him, showing to us that it is only through God can we do things right. He humbles us so that we can see His glory. Children are very accepting, making them easy to teach. Thus we are called to mirror this temperament. I realized that my helplessness and dependence on my earthly father justifies my need for a Savior. I trusted my earthly father for everything I needed, validating that I require ministering. If the Gospel is proclaimed to children, then no one is left out. It's not about intellectual persuasion any more than of works of power or prestige; Jesus is opening the door to all. God the Father reveals Himself only in the Son, through the Holy Spirit. Thus to know God is through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. We are commanded to preach to all - the unbelievers, the weary and thirsty, those who labor and that are heavily laden. Honestly knowing God brings results by opening up the hearts of those whom He has chosen to reveal Himself. Jesus reveals Himself when we come to know Him with our own eyes and ears of faith. It is a matter of God's grace to open the hearts of people to receive Jesus. When I realized what my inner child was still going through, I sought the Lord's guidance as I surrendered my helplessness and dependence. “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see” (Lk 10:23).

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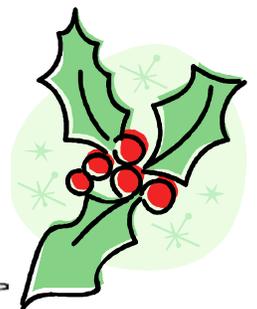
THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



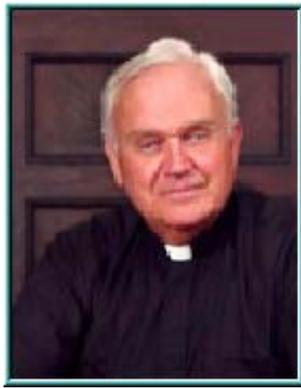
From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for his only-begotten Son, a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, he would be born into this world. Above all creatures did God so loved her that truly in her was the Father well pleased with singular delight. Therefore, far above all the angels and all the saints so wondrously did God endow her with the abundance of all heavenly gifts poured from the treasury of his divinity that this mother, ever absolutely free of all stain of sin, all fair and perfect, would possess that fullness of holy innocence and sanctity than which, under God, one cannot even imagine anything greater, and which, outside of God, no mind can succeed in comprehending fully.

There is little scriptural basis for this doctrine because scripture does not speak explicitly about Mary's conception, and theological opposition to the doctrine might be found in the claim, in Romans 5, that all humans have shared in original sin. Nevertheless, the doctrine was important in the East, as theologians such as John of Damascus made it central to the idea of Mary as Theotokos, or God-bearer. Devotion to Mary spread to the West and the Immaculate Conception was increasingly debated in the later Middle Ages. Some theologians, notably Aquinas, opposed it on the grounds that through natural (human) conception, original sin is transmitted, and therefore Mary cannot be exempt from the law of original sin, but the Council of Basle (1439) declared it in accordance with the Catholic faith, reason, and scripture.

There are two passages in Scripture which point us to this truth. We look first at Genesis 3.15, in which we see the parallel between Mary and Eve of which the early church fathers already spoke: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” The Jews saw this passage as referring to the struggle between Christ and Satan, and so the



(continue on next page, col 2) 



Fr. Paul Speaks

COME, LORD JESUS

Come, Lord Jesus! This should be in our mouth and on our lips during this holy season of Advent. BUT, is He not here already? Did He not come two thousand years ago? Is He not here with us in the Eucharist? Does He not speak to us when we listen to His word in Scripture? Does He not dwell in the souls of those who love Him? Did He not promise He would be with the Church until the end of time? Of course.

I am thinking at the moment of the event in Jesus' ministry when He was approached by the centurion requesting a cure for his servant. The centurion made a tremendous act of faith saying: *"I am not worthy to have you enter my house... Say only the word and my servant will be healed"* (Luke 7:6-7). Even though we, like the centurion, recognize our unworthiness, I suggest we say instead: "Lord, I am not worthy to have come to me, but come anyway." We become holy by His coming, not by His absence. We may be tempted to think that we make ourselves worthy first so as to prove our welcoming attitude. When the Lord sees that we are worthy, then He will come. This thinking is very erroneous. Making oneself holy is impossible. Holiness is a gift. The natural (our human efforts) cannot produce the supernatural (holiness). When we cry "Come, Lord Jesus" we are making an act of faith in God's unconditional love for us. We hope that our sins and imperfections will not drive Jesus away. This does not mean passivity or unrepentance. It requires an effort on our part to be open and really mean "Come, Lord Jesus." When we pray this way it does not mean that we have to convince the Lord that He should come. Like the centurion we admit our unworthiness and inability to save ourselves. This is precisely the attitude that will draw the Lord to come and have mercy on us.

There is a beautiful passage in the last book of the bible that pictures the Lord knocking on the door of our hearts. He promises that if anyone should open to his knocking, he

will come in and eat with us. This picture has been drawn depicting Jesus knocking on a door that has no door knob. The reason is that we have to open from the inside. That is where our effort is needed. When we say, "Come, Lord Jesus" we are expressing an invitation, as well as a



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Dec 08** **Community Recollection for all BLD members.** St. Mary's Auditorium, Rahway
8:30 am to 5:00 pm
Speakers: Fr. Paul Lehman & Msgr. Paul Schetelick
- Dec 08** **Visitation & Gift Giving**
Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ
10:00 - 11:30am
- Dec 09** **ME30 Reunion** – St. Marys Auditorium
1:00 - 6:00 pm with Mass at 1:30 pm
- Dec 09** **Soup Kitchen at Missionaries of Charity**
Jay Street, Newark
Benru & Elsa Etcubanas (908)687-1945;
Norie & Miriam Abes (973)633-9133

TEACHINGS

NO SCHEDULED TEACHING FOR DECEMBER

God Reveals . . . (cont. from page 2)

Now, in communing with my heavenly Father through prayer, service and the Sacraments, He reveals Himself to me. Similar to my earthly father, our heavenly Father could touch the heart of my inner child. Let us ask the Lord to reveal to us those areas that prevent us from being childlike and to touch the eyes and ears of our hearts so that He can fully reveal Himself to us.

The Feast . . . (cont. from page 2)

Church see in "the woman" a prophetic foreshadowing of the Virgin Mary (Vatican II, Lumen gentium, # 55).

The Roman Catholic Church continued to cultivate the doctrine, not least through its various religious orders. In 1476 Sixtus IV approved the feast with its own Mass and Office, and in 1708 Clement XI extended it to the Universal Church and made it a feast day of obligation (December 8). In 1854, Pius IX declared that the doctrine 'has been revealed by God and is therefore to be believed by all the faithful'.

Traveling Catholics

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recognition of our need. Welcome that guest who is constantly knocking. Let Jesus in. "Come, Lord Jesus, come."

Counsels (cont. from page 1)

His message was stern, uncompromising, loud and clear: Repent! Turn around and go back! They must confess their sins and be baptized. John preached to them that true religion is a matter of the heart, of love, not of outward actions. He knew that to teach them to love God and be with God, the first step for them to do was to be sincerely sorry for their sins, and then to confess their sins. He taught them that the right road to God is a road of repentance that sorrow for sin is just another form of love. Today, our Church, our Community requires the exact same requirement St. John demanded from the first Christians: repentance through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Amazingly, 2,000 years have passed since that scene, the birth of Christianity, and the world has not changed much. The message of John the Baptist is still the message we ought to hear to this very day: repentance and change of behavior are essential for everyone who would share in the salvation of the Messiah. Unfortunately the misconceptions of many people 2,000 years ago on what ways change was needed are still here today. Many of us think change should be effected on ways we deem appropriate and not what God wants – our will not His will.

The Church that Christ has built has gone through a lot of challenges and dark times but remains as the longest living institution in this world. From the Great Schism that separated us from our Orthodox brethren in 1054 to the Protestant Reformation in the middle of the fifteenth century, the attacks on the Catholic Church has been on-going but we were promised that the gates of hell will not prevail against it. The Holy Spirit guides and guards her through the modern crises of contraception, abortion, euthanasia, same sex marriage and embryonic stem cell research. The Holy Spirit speaks through our Pope and his Magisterium in imparting to the faithful the fullness of the truth.

John's message was simple but uncompromising: repent, turn away from sin and take on a new way of life according to God's holy will or be cut down like a dead tree. What magnificent strength of character John showed us Is 11:5 "*Justice shall be the band around his waist, and faithfulness a belt upon his hips.*" Character is life based on principles not on moods or feelings. It is hard to live by what is right when the people around are doing what is wrong.

Our community inevitably will face more similar challenges. We just have to be strong like John the Baptist and pray like Paul said in Rm 15:4-6 "*May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

Deadline for the Christmas Gift Solicitation for the Poor and the Homeless - December 14, 2007. Please give your gifts to any Mission Ministry member.

Nursing home visit is scheduled every 2nd Saturday of the month - Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home Passaic, NJ - Volunteers are needed.

Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732) 591-1340

JOHN 6

Crossing #8 Reunion - December 8, 2007

From 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm, St; Mary's Library.

Contact persons: Boyet & Zita Cruz

(jcruz1457@yahoo.com, ztcruz80Yahoo.com)

MEDICAL MISSION

Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon.

Medical & non-medical volunteers needed.

Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

SINGLES

Archdiocesan Outreach Service on January 12, 2008 (Saturday). Details to follow.

Contact: Eric Cruz (jcruz@gmail.com);

LeeAnn Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max).

Send to word@bldnewark.com



May the blessing and favor of the Lord be upon those who are celebrating their birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week Ending November 30, 2007

*Tithes, Love Offering,
Mission & Fast for Poor* \$ 3,795.00

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Directions:

1. Think in harmony with one another in keeping with Christ Jesus. (Rm 15:5)
2. Welcome one another as Christ welcomed you. (Rm 15:7)



NEWS

Mary Inspires Believers to Fight Evil, Says Cardinal; Papal Envoy Opens Jubilee Year In Lourdes

LOURDES, France, DEC. 11, 2007 (Zenit.org).- The papal envoy sent to open the jubilee year of the Marian apparitions in Lourdes said that Mary inspires an attitude of "permanent battle" for good against the forces of evil.

Cardinal Ivan Dias, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Evangelization of People, opened the jubilee celebrations in France on Saturday, feast of the Immaculate Conception, the title with which Mary introduced herself when she appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.

The cardinal said that the struggle between the forces of good and evil "began at the beginning of human history, and will continue until the end."

Cardinal Dias said that today "this battle is even bloodier than in Bernadette's time."

"The world finds itself terribly deceived in the spiral of relativism that desires to create a society without God, a relativism that erodes the permanent and unchangeable values of the Gospel; and of religious indifference that remains unconcerned before the higher good of things relating to God and the Church," he added.

But, he said "a mother has bent down from heaven, concerned for her sons who live in sin, far from Christ."

Continued on page 4

PEACE IS LEARNED AT HOME, SAYS BENEDICT XVI

Dedicates World Day Message to Family

VATICAN CITY, DEC. 11, 2007 (Zenit.org).- By looking to the family as the prototype of every social order, humanity can learn how to achieve peace, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope affirmed this in his Dec. 8 message released today for the World Day of Peace, to be celebrated Jan. 1, 2008.

The Holy Father dedicated his message to the theme "The Human Family, a Community of Peace," and drew from the example of the family founded on a marriage between a man and a woman as a model for establishing peace among all peoples.

"The family is the foundation of society for this reason too: because it enables its members in decisive ways to

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Be Strong, Fear Not Your God comes to save you

WORD: Is 35:1-6a,10; Ps 146:6-10; Jm 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

ORDER: "Do not complain brothers and sisters about one another that you may not be judged" (Jm 5:9)

THEME: Christ is in us when we patiently endure the difficulties in life.

REFLECTION:

"Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee." (Is 35:10)

Brethren, let us celebrate the Third Sunday of Advent with joyful and persevering anticipation that Jesus will come to bring hope and salvation to everyone who believes and obey God's commandments. As we wait for His coming, let us be reminded of the promise in Jm 5:8 - "You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand". St. James followed up in Jm 5:9 "Do not complain brothers and sisters about one another that you may not be judged".

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah gives us a glimpse of God's mercy, kindness, faithfulness, healing grace and majesty to his people. As children of God, we are convinced that He is always present in us through the Holy Spirit who moves us to love and serve one another with humility. We testify that Christ is in us when we patiently endure the difficulties in life. With Christ in us, we gain courage instead of fear. With Christ in us, we discover

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand." (Jm 5:8)

True Healing

Physical ailments are part of our earthly life. Sooner or later, all of us will have some kind of illness or affliction in our lifetime. In Lk 5:18-20, ...some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set him in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, "As for you, your sins are forgiven." Jesus "saw their faith" and immediately worked his miracle, healing first the man's soul and then his body. Yes, he healed the man's soul first and then his body. While physical ailments could sometimes be unbearable, the deepest wounds are our sins. It is our sins that destroy the life of grace in our spiritual soul and make us worthy of hell's eternal fire. It is our sins that make us suffer most even in this life – torturing us with guilt feelings, with complexes and anxieties. Yes, forgiveness of our sins, the healing of our souls is the true healing, for it is meant for eternal salvation.

How can we have faith like the crippled man? Faith is a gift – one for which we must pray. It is our first step toward God. From the position of faith, we can come to experience the joy of knowing Christ and receiving all the blessings he wants us to have. As our faith increases, we will come to understand more about the nature of God and his work in our lives. But to develop this deeper understanding and knowledge of God, we must first believe.

We were all like that crippled man when we were "sponsored" into some kind of encounter with our Lord Jesus – marriage, single-parent, family or single encounter. And like that crippled man, sins have crippled us and our relationships far more than any physical ailment can. And like that crippled man, we all experienced that true healing of our souls in the presence of Jesus and the power of his forgiveness.

Jesus "saw the faith" in the crippled man. Would Jesus continue to see the faith in us in our present and future encounters with him? Or would we be blocking God's power in our lives and in the lives of our loved ones because of our weaknesses and lack of faith? Let us ask our Lord to increase our faith. Jesus can remove our doubts and fears and fill us with a faith that will open our hearts for his mercy, his healing and his love.

Traveling Catholics

For nationwide listing of Catholic Churches & mass times, go to www.masstimes.org

The Lost Sheep

The natural reaction is to share the good news of finding a lost sheep with your friends, family and neighbors. We, who experience good news, want to share it with our closest family and friends so they can celebrate with us e.g. the birth of a baby, the finding of a new job, or the purchase of a new home. There is something about good news that it needs to be shared with our closest friends and family.

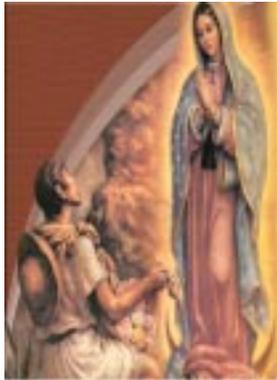
People in Jesus' crowd would have known the experience of a shepherd finding a lost sheep, and how much joy that brought to everyone. When the lost sheep is found, there is great joy.

Here is a new direction with an unexpected twist of the story. The pivotal point of the problem is that the Pharisees and scribes did not know that they themselves were lost. Even though they were in synagogue every week; even though they tithed and were financially generous to their synagogue; even though they followed the devotional rituals of their religion; the Pharisees were still lost. The Pharisees were the hypocrites, the "white washed tombs," who looked good on the outside but inside of their hearts, they were filled with jealousy and love of money. The Pharisees could fool people around them, but they could not fool Jesus or God. Jesus uses this parable as another invitation for the Pharisees (who are symbolic of self righteous people) to repent and change their (our) ways.

The "lost" in this parable are not those outside the synagogue but those inside the synagogue. The parable does not focus as much on a person who wandered away from the church and is considered a "lost soul" but on a religiously self righteous person who is still within the religious community but who doesn't know that he/she is lost. The "lost" are not the "outsiders" but the "insiders." When a religiously self righteous person repents, there is great joy in heaven. The people "inside" the synagogue or church need to repent, be cleansed of the impurities in their lives, so they can "make contact" with the power and light of God and Jesus.

We are in community to praise and worship God and to know Him more, but we are also accountable for our own actions and be reconciled with one another. We all have to be sensitive to those who may need pastoral care in our community, in the parish and to our families as well. Only then that we can be an effective instrument ready to follow the foot steps of the "True Shepherd" who has great joy in every lost sheep that is found (inside/outside) with all humility, understanding, faith and love.

Our Lady of Guadalupe



The Aztecs, a non-Christian people, had an elaborate, coherent, symbolic system for making sense of their lives. Human sacrifice offerings to their God and cannibalization were common. The serpent was the symbol of their religion. These practices were abolished by the Spaniards on their conquest of Mexico in 1521.

In spite of this, Spain had little success in converting the native Indians to Christianity. Then in December of 1531 a miracle began to happen in the town of Tepeyac, a hill northwest of what is now known as Mexico City. Here, the Virgin Mary, the handmaid “who glorified of the Lord” (Lk 1: 46, rephrased) revealed herself to a poor Indian named Juan Diego as a beautiful radiant Aztec lady identifying herself as the Ever-Virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the True God. Speaking to Juan in his native language she made a request “I wish that a temple be erected here quickly, so I may therein exhibit and give all my love, compassion, help and protection, because I am your merciful mother, to you, and all the inhabitants of this land and all the rest who love me, invoke and confide in me...” This wish was submitted to the local bishop. When the bishop hesitated and requested a sign from her, the mother of God humbly obeyed sending Juan to the top of the hill in mid-December to gather an assortment of roses. Mary appeared in her glorified body and physically rearranged the roses in Juan’s tilma. Not only did she grace him with a sign, but left an image of herself upon a piece of poor maguey cloth. This cloth, which is still intact 476 years later, was left as a sign for the New World to witness and see her mercy, love and compassion, crushing the serpent once again. This is why the apparition is so special! That was not all. Messages hidden in the eyes of Our Lady’s image were later discovered through the availability of modern technology. In the center of the Blessed Virgin’s eye is a family including various children and a baby carried in a woman’s back depicting the 16th century, an important message for us, to unify our family in prayer and in faith.

The Guadalupe event meant the beginning of evangelization among the Aztecs of Mexico with a vitality of all expectations. Christ’s message through His Mother, took up the central elements of the indigenous culture, purified them and gave them the definitive sense of salvation. In professing our Faith in God who makes no distinction of race and culture, we discover the profound truth of our humanity, in which ALL are called to be the children of God as revealed by Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patron of America and protector of the unborn.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LITURGY

Act Now: Subscription for 2008 Magnificat! Direct your order through your Coordinator/Shepherd. Take advantage of the bulk rate of \$15.00/yr. Make checks payable to “BLD Newark”.

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to WORD@bldnewark.com

SINGLES

There will be an Archdiocesan Outreach Service on January 12, 2008 (Sat). Details to follow. Please contact Eric Cruz (jcrucer@gmail.com) and Lee Ann Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Deadline for the Christmas Gift Solicitation for the Poor & the Homeless - December 14, 2007. Please give your gifts to any Mission Ministry member.

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Sat. of the month, Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ – Volunteers needed contact Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

MEDICAL MISSION

Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Dec. 15: Soup Kitchen at Missionaries of Charity, Jay Street, Newark Benru & Elsa Etcubanas (908)687-1945; Norie & Miriam Abes (973)633-9133

TEACHING MINISTRY

DECEMBER 2007 - NO TEACHINGS

MOMENT OF PRAYER

A PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

**Our Lady of Guadalupe,
Mystical Rose,
make intercession for holy Church,
protect the sovereign Pontiff,
help all those who invoke you in their necessities,
and since you are the ever Virgin Mary
and Mother of the true God,
obtain for us from your most holy Son
the grace of keeping our faith,
of sweet hope in the midst of the bitterness of life
of burning charity, and the precious gift
of final perseverance.
Amen.**

Counsels *from page 1*

strength in our weaknesses. With Christ in us, our hearts are always filled with love and thanksgiving amidst hardship and pain. Most of all, with Christ in us, we are drawn to the Father in prayer and become sensitive to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. So, therefore brothers and sisters, with Christ in us, nothing can harm us. The Lord God keeps faith forever. He secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry and sets captives free. Ps 146:6-7

In the gospel of Matthew, John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" In as much as we proclaim Christ's presence, there are times that we do not acknowledge His existence. As a result, we doubt in His capacity to heal, mercy to forgive, power to conquer death and boundless love to comfort the poor. We fail to see with eyes of faith when we let sickness rule over us instead of trusting in Christ's healing grace. We overlooked Christ's divine mercy when we let our sins overcome us rather than accepting His forgiveness. We let sorrow take away our joy when someone's death makes us lose sight of the purpose of the cross. We neglect to endure and persevere in life when we are too focused in our comfort and forgetting that in His divine plan testing and trials are sent so we can learn to be better followers of the Master. We disregard the love of Christ when we complain and judge one another.

Forgive us dear Lord for doubting you and not acknowledging your presence in our lives. Jesus, Son of the Living God, thank you for coming to save us. Continue to encourage us to persevere in our trials. Strengthen our feeble hands to pray. Give us the grace to be steadfast in our faith, as we live in service to you and your people through this community. Nourish us with your Body and Blood through the Holy Eucharist. Remind us to be faithful to our LWG and WSC and to revive the practice of LIPJASS as a sign of love to one another and as a reverence to you. Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. *Wait and listen to God, persevere and trust in prayer.*
2. *Seek and live by the word of God that you may have peace within you and with one another.*

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending

December 7, 2007

Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the

Poor \$ 3,773.00

Thank you for your continued generosity

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Mary Inspires *from page 1*

The cardinal said Mary enters into world history, which marks "the hostilities between her and the devil, as described in Genesis and Revelation."

"The Virgin is weaving a network of her spiritual sons and daughters in order to launch a strong offensive against the deadly forces and to prepare for the final victory of her divine son Jesus Christ," stressed Cardinal Dias.

The weapons are "conversion of heart, a great devotion to the holy Eucharist, daily recitation of the rosary, constant prayer without hypocrisy, and accepting sufferings for the salvation of the world," he affirmed. "The final victory will be God's."

L'Osservatore Romano noted that for a moment during the celebrations, "around 4:15 p.m. [...] thanks to an international radio connection, everyone prayed to Mary together with the Pope."

Peace *from page 1*

experience peace," the Pontiff said. "It follows that the human community cannot do without the service provided by the family. Where can young people gradually learn to savor the genuine 'taste' of peace better than in the original 'nest' which nature prepares for them?"

"The language of the family is a language of peace; we must always draw from it, lest we lose the 'vocabulary' of peace. In the inflation of its speech, society cannot cease to refer to that 'grammar' which all children learn from the looks and the actions of their mothers and fathers, even before they learn from their words."

Threats

Benedict XVI contended that the family, model of peace, must be protected as the subject of specific rights.

He said: "The denial or even the restriction of the rights of the family, by obscuring the truth about man, threatens the very foundations of peace."

"Consequently, whoever, even unknowingly, circumvents the institution of the family undermines peace in the entire community, national and international, since he weakens what is in effect the primary agency of peace. This point merits special reflection: Everything that serves to weaken the family based on the marriage of a man and a woman, everything that directly or indirectly stands in the way of its openness to the responsible acceptance of a new life, everything that obstructs its right to be primarily responsible for the education of its children, constitutes an objective obstacle on the road to peace."

The family founded on marriage is a model for the human family as a whole, the Pope contended.

"The social community, if it is to live in peace, is also called to draw inspiration from the values on which the family community is based," he said. "This is as true for local communities as it is for national communities; it is also true for the international community itself, for the human family which dwells in that common house which is the earth."

"The family community, in order to prosper, needs the generous consent of all its members. This realization also needs to become a shared conviction on the part of all those called to form the common human family."

"We do not live alongside one another purely by chance; all of us are progressing along a common path as men and women, and thus as brothers and sisters. Consequently, it is essential that we should all be committed to living our lives in an attitude of responsibility before God, acknowledging him as the deepest source of our own existence and that of others. "By going back to this supreme principle we are able to perceive the unconditional worth of each human being, and thus to lay the premises for building a humanity at peace. Without this transcendent foundation society is a mere aggregation of neighbors, not a community of brothers and sisters called to form one great family."



NEWS

World Awaits Hope and Peace Says Custos Writes Christmas Message From Holy Land

JERUSALEM, DEC. 18, 2007 (Zenit.org).- The world will be looking toward Bethlehem this Christmas, longing for the hope and peace that stirs "the very depths of the soul," says the Custos of the Holy Land.

Franciscan Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa said this in a statement for Christmas published Monday. "We, who have the grace of living in the Holy Land," he said, "once again, like every year, we are celebrating Christmas with our hearts touched by a grace that continues to surprise us. It is as though this celebration wants to challenge our inner great age, so that once again the limpid courage of childhood, when we believed that all good is possible, is reborn in us."

The Custos continued: "The urgency for peace suffocates our hearts, despite the bitterness of the news, and turns us into beggars for peace. Looking at the grotto of Bethlehem, we are forced to hope in a better world. The need to love, which has its roots in the depth of the soul, before the poverty of Bethlehem, makes us quiver with new hope. "The discouragement and disappointments that make our hearts heavy, like an oppressive millstone, seem to dissolve. We cannot refuse hope, before the mystery of a God who was born a child, in a shepherds' grotto."

"At Christmas," said Father Pizzaballa, "even the person most cruelly hurt by life rediscovers that God continues to live amongst us. Wars and violence are not the last word to set a seal on history. History and despair do not suppress the need for love that continues to tenaciously inhabit the human spirit. The light of God still shines in the silence of Bethlehem and illuminates the paths of men.

"Experiences of disappointment and social failure can wither the horizons of the soul, but if we look at the star of Bethlehem, life lights up once again. We

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Rejoice in Obedience to Emmanuel!

WORD: Is 7:10-14/ Ps 24:1-6/ Rm 1:1-7/ Mt 1:18-24

ORDER: "Do not be afraid". Mt 1:20b

THEME: Christ is in us when we practice obedient faith.

Community Value Focus: Faith

REFLECTION:

The thematic flow of the readings for this Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Advent, centers on how the coming of Jesus Christ was prophesied by Isaiah and how the prophecy was carried out through the Spirit of holiness and the obedience arising out of faith, which in this week's Gospel is the faith of St. Joseph. The prophecy as announced by Isaiah to King Ahaz says: "*The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel.*" Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:23. Emmanuel literally means "God is with us".

The Lord prodded King Ahaz to ask for a sign that would prove God's firm will to save the royal house of David which was currently under siege from two rival kings. But Ahaz replied: "*I will not ask! I will not tempt the LORD!*" However, this seemingly faithful reply was insincere, for Ahaz preferred to depend upon his own might as king rather than upon God's power. Piqued by his remark, Isaiah, said: "*Listen, O house of David! Is it not enough for you to weary men, must you also weary my God?*" (v13).

The sign proposed by Isaiah had to deal with the

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God, his savior." (Ps. 24:5)

The Annunciation to the Virgin Mary

The message of the Annunciation was one for which the Israelites have waited throughout their history. Yet it came not to Annas or Herod or some learned Pharisee or high-placed Sadducee, but to a simple peasant girl who was destined to become the most celebrated woman in history. But the story of the Annunciation is not about Mary. Like all of Scripture, it is about our Lord Jesus. And as we reflect on Gabriel's words we will realize that they reveal Christ to us.

They reveal **HIS HUMANITY**. "*Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son*". Although the conception of our Lord was a true miracle, the birth itself was perfectly natural. Once Jesus was born He was just as dependent on His mother and as weak and helpless as we are, except in sin.

They reveal **HIS IDENTITY**. "*And you shall name him Jesus*". Jesus was Jeshua, the same name as Joshua which means savior, redeemer or hero. It would drive a sword through Mary's heart when she realized this child would be the last step on the journey that led the human race from the Tree of Knowledge to the Tree of Life by way of the Tree of Calvary.

They reveal **HIS MAJESTY**. "*He will be great*". But our Lord would redefine greatness forever, "let the greatest among you be the servant of all". If greatness lies in servanthood, then our Lord would be the greatest of all.

They reveal **HIS PERPETUITY**. "*He will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.*" If people gave their lives for mortal kings, how much more should we spend them for this King?

They reveal **HIS DIVINITY**. "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.*" Just like at the dedication of the Tabernacle in Exodus 40:34 where the Cloud had overshadowed the Tent of Meeting, the implication of Gabriel's words was that for the next nine months, Mary's womb would be the Holy of Holies. The Glory that had departed from the Temple would reside there.

Reflecting on the entire message of the Annunciation, we have to ask ourselves, if this were to happen to us, how would we respond? What if it was our womb? What if it was our fiancé? Would our family believe our story about an angel during a time when there is no greater stigma than that of unwed motherhood? If this news was going to change our life forever in ways we don't yet understand, will we be as willing as Mary to say: "*Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to Your word.*"

Source: The Sermons of Dr. Donald T. Williams

The Trial of Saint Joseph

The annunciation of the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, has just taken place. The Angel Gabriel told Mary that she was to be a mother, she who was the wife of Joseph who had taken the vow of virginity. Later, when Joseph learned about her pregnancy, his first reaction was just one of shock and numbness. How could it be? She was so good, so pure! Days went on. The insistent temptation to explode in anger kept torturing his mind.

The great trial of Saint Joseph was on. The shock of such an unthinkable thought would make him stop quickly and blame himself unmercifully for doubting her. And yet after the blame, the doubt would creep back in again like a migraine headache. He could not work, sleep or eat. What was hurting the most was her continued silence. Whatever was the explanation about the child, he was being left in the dark. However wonderful Mary had been she was treating him like a stranger – as though he had no right to know. The temptation to denounce her was unbearable.

But Joseph was no ordinary man. Even before his betrothal to Mary he was a man of humility, of unselfishness, of righteousness. In his own strength of character he was not about to lose in this great trial. In his unique way, he anticipated St. Paul's words that, through Christ, "we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name" (Romans 1:5). Joseph knelt in prayer for strength and in sheer exhaustion finally fell into deep sleep. God was not to deny him of his reward. During that night he was awakened by an angel of God. "... do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her." (Mt. 1:20) The news was stunning! The relief it brought him was unbelievable. "Thank God" he heard himself while sobbing. She was as pure as an angel!

Joseph clearly demonstrated that "obedience of faith" in God and undying trust in Mary. How beautiful was the soul of Joseph at this moment of victory.

And yet the magnificence of his soul would not have been unless the pain and the torturous doubt had come first. Our Father in heaven is a Divine Sculptor. He works on the stubborn stone of our soul. He hammers patiently with hammer and chisel. Now, we know why. It is to change the rough, shapeless block of soul into the beautiful image of His Son. How else can we be formed in patience and trust except under the relentless chisel of suffering? Forming saints is His great work; the trial of suffering is His tool.

APOLOGETICS

The Flesh and Blood of Jesus

When I read John 6 it seems obvious to me that Jesus was speaking of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood" in a purely symbolic way. You are wrong. Jesus said, "I solemnly assure you that 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 up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (John 6:53-55).

John 6 is the classic Eucharistic passage which, along with Jesus' words of consecration at the Last Supper (Matt 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:19-20), Catholics point to demonstrate the Eucharist in Scripture. There are several facts which demonstrate that Jesus was speaking literally, not figuratively, in John 6.

First, his hearers understood him to be speaking literally. They asked themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (v. 52). After Jesus explained himself further, they still understood him to be speaking literally, and some of his disciples said, "This is a hard saying. Who can accept it?" (v. 60). Jesus replied, "Does this shock you?" (v. 61), and he allowed those who couldn't accept his teaching to leave him. He didn't call them back and tell them they had misunderstood him (which was his custom to do when his listeners didn't grasp his true meaning [e.g. Matt. 13:36-43, Matt. 16:5-12, Mark 8:14-21]). By the way, John 6 is the only example in the Bible of disciples abandoning the Lord over a doctrinal issue.

Second, we know that Jesus was speaking literally, not figuratively, because to the Jews of his day "eating someone's flesh and drinking his blood" was the idiomatic phrase synonymous with persecution, violence, betrayal, and murder. This is clear from such passages as Micah 3:3, Psalm 27:2, Isaiah 9:20, and Isaiah 49:26. That's why, if Jesus had been speaking figuratively, his words would have made no sense at all. He would have been saying, "I solemnly assure you that unless you persecute and betray me you have no life within you. He who does violence to me has eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day." That makes no sense at all, but that's exactly what he would have been saying if his words were symbolic. The third way we can know that Jesus was speaking literally is that the apostles believed and taught that he spoke literally (see 1 Cor. 10:16, 11:29). The same is true of the Christians of the first, second, third, and fourth centuries. Their writings show them to have understood and taught that Jesus' words in John 6 were not symbolic.

Source : <http://www.newadvent.org>

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LITURGY

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WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to rguiaio@yahoo.com; cblmont@hotmail.com

SINGLES

There will be an Archdiocesan Outreach Service on January 12, 2008 (Sat). Details to follow. Please contact Eric Cruz (jcruzer@gmail.com) and Lee Ann Aguila (laguila@gmail.com)

MISSION

Nursing Home Visit every 2nd Sat. of the month, Hamilton Plaza Nursing Home, Passaic, NJ – Volunteers needed contact Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

MEDICAL MISSION

Feb. 18-22 - Infanta, Quezon - Medical & Non-medical volunteers needed. Contact: Nong & Tricia Bustos (732)591-1340

One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village where He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty.

He never wrote a book, He never held an office, He never went to college, He never visited a big city. He never traveled more than two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He did none of the things usually associated with greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.

He was only thirty three.

His friends ran away, one of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While dying, His executioners gambled for His clothing, the only property He had on earth. When He was dead He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone and today Jesus Christ is the central figure of the human race and the Leader of mankind's progress

All the armies that have ever marched, all the navies that have ever sailed, all the parliaments that have ever sat, all the kings that have ever reigned put together have not affected the life of mankind on earth as powerfully as that one solitary life

***Merry Christmas to All from the
Word Ministry!***

Counsels from page 1

fulfillment of God's earlier promise to David 2 Sam 7:12-16 in the coming from his lineage of Immanuel as the ideal king. The Church has always followed St. Matthew in seeing the transcendent fulfillment of this verse in Christ and his Virgin Mother in the integral sense intended by divine Wisdom.

Indeed God's word always accomplishes the purpose for which it is sent Is. 55:11. As foretold, the Savior would come and the given sign fulfilled for it was God who said so. But The Savior was not just for Jerusalem but for all mankind. He is not a warrior of force and violence but of love! He came not to help win wars but to give us life and live that life abundantly and to everlasting! Jn 10:10.

King Ahaz' dependence on his own powers was abominable to God. How like Ahaz' attitude could ours be sometimes. We readily count on our own powers when things are going according to our wishes. In these times, we can forget that God is the highest authority and things happen, whether it's in our favor or not, only because He allows it. The sad thing is, we only realize that we have displeased God when we have fallen out of His grace, when things fail in spite of our best efforts and intentions.

The good news is instead of becoming like King Ahaz, the good models we can follow in the readings this week are St. Paul and St. Joseph, both prime practitioners of the obedience of faith and trust in the Lord. Like St. Paul, we were given the grace of apostleship when we assented to be followers of Christ. And this grace was given to us to evangelize, to bring about an obedience of faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's an obedience we're asked to manifest first before we can transmit to others.

St. Joseph's call for obedience was even more fragile for it was based merely on a dream. But it was a dream that resonated with a righteousness that arose from the faith of his fathers. It was a dream that had the force of the specificity of fate that can only come from his God. Still and all, it was a dream the compliance to which can only come from an obedience of faith. Not many men today, if at all, will risk shame and loss of face on the basis of one night's dream. That's why we honor St. Joseph and his humility in the face of the unknown.

St. Joseph's faith, like St. Paul's after his conversion, is the result of a lifetime of living righteously. Like them, we were called to be holy and, as we're exhorted in the Psalms, to desire not what is vain, to sin not with our hearts or hands Only as we keep ourselves clean and sinless can we invite Emmanuel, the King of Glory, into our hearts. If God is with us, there's every reason to rejoice in obedience to His name. Merry Christmas!

DIRECTION:

Be obedient in faith for the sake of His name.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Dec 21 BLD Nativity Mass
Dec 25 The Nativity of our Lord
Jan 01 New Year's Day

TEACHING MINISTRY

December 2007 No Teachings

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

**Weekly Collection Report for the Week ending
December 14, 2007**
**Tithes, Love Offering, Mission and Fast for the
Poor \$ 3,001.00**
Thank you for your continued generosity

News from page 1

understand, with the simple and concrete wisdom of the faith, that God also performs the miracle of joy and fraternity in us. With tremulous wonder, we turn our eyes to Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and we are enraptured by their joyous serenity. They are poor, but they have had the courage to believe."

"This Christmas," concluded the Custos, "we want to pray so that we can also be capable of welcoming Jesus, like them, believing that the Love of God can change our lives. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world (John 1:9), and, at last inebriated by a hope that is never disappointing, we can witness it."

MOMENT OF PRAYER

Christmas Prayer

*God of love, Father of all, the darkness
that covered the earth has given way to the
bright dawn of your Word made flesh.
Make us a people of this light. Make us
faithful to your Word, that we may bring
your life to the waiting world. Grant this
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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NEWS

Pope's Urbi et Orbi Message

Offers Christmas Prayer for Suffering of World

Benedict XVI is asking who is ready to receive the peace that Christ offers with his coming to the world.

The Pope asked this question today from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica during his traditional Christmas address. Before giving his blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city of Rome and the world) he offered a Christmas greeting in 63 languages, including, this year, Guarani, the language of an indigenous South American people.

"In the silence of that night in Bethlehem, Jesus was born and lovingly welcomed," the Holy Father proclaimed. "And now, on this Christmas Day, when the joyful news of his saving birth continues to resound, who is ready to open the doors of his heart to the holy child? Men and women of this modern age, Christ comes also to us bringing his light, he comes also to us granting peace!

"But who is watching, in the night of doubt and uncertainty, with a vigilant, praying heart? Who is waiting for the dawn of the new day, keeping alight the flame of faith? Who has time to listen to his word and to become enfolded and entranced by his love? Yes! His message of peace is for everyone; he comes to offer himself to all people as sure hope for salvation."

Darkness

The Pontiff expressed his wish that the light of Christ, "which comes to enlighten every human being," would "shine forth and bring consolation to those who live in the darkness of poverty, injustice and war; to those who are still denied their legitimate aspirations for a more secure existence, for health, education, stable employment, for fuller participation in civil and political responsibilities, free from oppression and protected from conditions that offend against human dignity."

He continued: "It is the most vulnerable members of society — women, children, the elderly — who are so often the victims of brutal armed conflicts, terrorism and violence of every kind, which inflict such

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

WORD: Sr 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128: 1-5; Col 3:12-21
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

ORDER: "...whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Col 3:17)

THEME: Christ is in us when He reigns in our home and family

REFLECTION:

[UNITY]

Pope Benedict XVI said, "Anything that threatens the traditional family threatens peace, because the family "is the first and indispensable teacher of peace".

The family is the fundamental building block of society and today that building block is under attack by forces against heaven. Husband, wife and the potential for children, these constitute our proper understanding of the family. No person has a right to have a child- this is a "gift" that God entrusts to the parents. When that "gift" is used outside of the context of marriage and the family, we abuse the gift of our sexuality. Society today is unfortunately experiencing great division and sharp conflicts regarding the family, which cast dark shadows on its future.

The main purpose of the Feast of the Holy Family is to present the Holy Family as the model for all Christian families. Our family life becomes sanctified when we live the life of the Church within our homes. The home is called the "domestic church" or the "church in miniature." St. John urged all Christians to make each home a "family church," and in doing so, we sanctify the family unit.

Just how does one live out the Church in the family? The best way is by making Christ the center of family and individual life. Ways to do this include: reading scripture regularly, praying, attending Mass weekly, imitating the actions of the Holy Family, and so forth, all

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"Blessed is everyone who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways! For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork; happy shall you be, and favored." (Ps 128: 1-2)

Good Will



During the Christmas season, we are all busy preparing for the coming of our Lord and Savior, who is the everlasting light of the world. First, we decorate and light up our homes, then we put our time buying Christmas presents for our loved ones and lastly, we plan where we will hold our Christmas and New Year's Day. Most of the time, we forget that the real meaning of Christmas, is JESUS as "the reason for the season". Jesus was born to bring LOVE for all mankind and to die for our eternal salvation. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He was laid in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes in a stable barn. When warned by an angel in his dream to save his family from Herod's evil plan, Joseph fled to Egypt with Mary and the baby Jesus.

We see more and more poverty and problems around us. If we just step away from our hectic schedule for a few minutes a day to reflect, we might be able to hear from an angel on what we can do to help our poor and needy brothers and sisters in the community. They can also be lonely and poor in spirit especially at this time of the year. Christmas reminds us that Jesus was born with nothing, and it was in His self-emptying that He was able to save the humanity by dying for us on the cross.

As Christians, we should learn from Jesus' good will, by helping our brothers and sisters in need. **"Love one another, as I have loved you, so you must love one another"** (Jn 13:34). We have been blessed so much with time, talent and treasure that part of it could be shared to others. It is meaningful when we do share our love of God by giving people our time, our presence - which we don't normally do everyday. **"Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for him is a waste of time or effort"** (1 Cor. 15:58). Let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide us and give us the strength this Christmas season, to help one or two brothers in the community in a way that will magnify the LOVE of Jesus for us. Merry Christmas!

Lord Jesus, thank You for showing us how blessed we are to live in this earth. By Your choosing to be born in poverty, may we learn from Your meekness and humility. And may You be our light this Christmas season, Amen.

Traveling Catholics

For nationwide listing
of Catholic Churches & mass times,
go to: www.masstimes.org

The Birth of JESUS



In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Lk 2:1-7)

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." (Lk 2:8-12)

And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Lk 2:13-14)

God's messengers tell us that this "Word of the Lord" is for all the people. The Church is a community of disciples called to remember this Word and to live by this Word until Christ's second coming. We are entrusted to be agents of reconciliation and healing in the world. As individuals we cannot do it alone; but as a body with global communion, we can with God working through us do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. To claim Jesus as Lord gives us not special privileges but a vocation to serve God by practicing neighborly love.

The Church is entrusted with proclaiming the Word in every generation. God comes into the world as a child to experience the world not as Creator but as creature. So let love cast out fear, choose faith over fear and put our trust in the One whose birth we celebrate every Christmas day.

So do not fear the signs around us. We have eyes to see and ears to hear. Let us honor the Prince of Peace by being instruments of that peace on earth. Let us proclaim the Good News of great joy for all the people: our Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. Merry Christmas!

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR MESSAGE

We link our celebration of Christmas with the coming New Year. There will be a new year as often as Christ becomes "enfleshed" in the life of any human being. By the power of the Resurrection, it has become possible for Jesus Christ to become "enfleshed" and be born in the life of those who not only retell the story of Christ, but also make the story of Christ their own story.

This is the meaning of Christ's instruction "Love one another as I have loved you... Just as the Father is in me and I am in the Father, so I will be in you and you will be in me, if you have love for one another."

There is no human life that cannot change for the better, if Christ's story continues to be re-told. The Good News of Jesus in the words of Pope Benedict XVI in "Spe Salvi," is not only "informative" but also "performative," i.e. transformative and life changing. How has Christ changed our life?

+ ANGEL N. LAGDAMEO
Archbishop of Jaro
BLD Spiritual Director
December 16, 2007

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the BLD Community,

'All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.'

It is indeed a joyous time to celebrate the season of love and life as we commemorate the birth of Jesus, our Emmanuel. For us who have seen the marvelous light of Christ in our own community encounters and spiritual renewal, there can only be gratefulness in our hearts because God's plan of salvation is being realized in our lives as we walk steadily in our daily spiritual renewal.

The message of God's love in allowing His Son to be born in humble humanity, despite His glorious divinity, is always a reminder for us to know and understand what our Father wants us to do for each other as His children. As members of BLD Covenant Community, we are constantly made aware of Christ's commandment to love one another. During this Advent season, we shall put aside all our differences, personal conflicts and misunderstandings and then take this commandment to heart everyday of our lives.

Let us then rejoice and prepare our hearts to celebrate this Christmas feast with love and thanksgiving. Let the goodness of Christmas inspire us to be loving, forgiving and caring, as we start a new year. As freely as we have received our Father's love, let us wholeheartedly give freely His love to one another.

A blessed Christmas to one and all!

The Executive Council of Servant Leaders
Dan and Ludy Andres
Presiding Servant Leader
December 17, 2007

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORD

Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord with the community thru an article (450 words max.). Email to WORD@bldnewark.com

SINGLES

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TEACHING MINISTRY

- 1/04/2008 (Fri) **ME30 - Basics of Prayer**
- 1/05/2008 (Sat) **LSS28 - Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit**
LSS#29 & # 30 - Christian Parenting 1
- 1/18/2008 (Fri) **Mark 10 / John 6 / Youth - Teaching**
Singles - Basic Bible Seminar
- 1/19/2008 (Sat) **LSS#1 to #24 - Coaches Development**
LSS#29 - New Creation Realities & Growth in Prayer
- 1/25/2008 (Fri) **Golden Years - Teaching**
Intercessory Track class - Intercessory Formation Teaching
Service Track Class - Service Formation Teaching
Singles - Theology of the Body

NOTE: *Friday teachings - after worship*
Saturday teachings - 1 pm to 6 pm at St. Marys

MOMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

O God of new beginnings and wonderful surprises, thank you for the gift of a new year. May it be a time of grace for me, a time to grow in faith and love, a time to renew my commitment to following Your Son, Jesus. May it be a year of blessing for me, a time to cherish my family and friends, a time to renew my efforts at work, a time to embrace my faith more fully. Walk with me, please, in every day and every hour of this new year, that the light of Christ might shine through me, in spite of my weaknesses and failings. Above all, may I remember this year that I am a pilgrim on the sacred path to You. Amen!

Counsels from page 1

done together. In addition to cultivating positive actions, the Church understands that there are actions and behaviors contrary to God's Divine plan for the family which should be avoided. These include abortion, contraception, gay marriage, fetal stem-cell research, divorce, spousal abuse, child abuse, and co-habitation.

The Catholic marriage must be open to children. Anything artificial that prevents this is wrong. Also, poverty, lack of health care, and other social justice concerns must be addressed by faithful Christians because of the negative effect these conditions have on the family unit. St. Paul gives us some advice on family life in Colossians 3:12-21: ***“Put on... compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, and whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children.”***

To put on love is a call to live in the truth of who we are as human beings - recognizing what is right and wrong about the way we act. God has given us a moral code to follow and we ignore it to our own detriment and suffering. God wants us to be holy people. This means that we have to order our lives in such a way that we always respect the rights of others. The way in which we do this can change so long as the fundamental respect for the rights of others is not compromised.

Scripture tells us that Joseph is as obedient as Mary in all that God asks of him. Here is a man and a woman who entrust their lives to the word of God. We should draw strength from their example. When we are seemingly in the dark as to what is going on, yet we sense the Spirit guiding us to act in a certain way, let us trust that God knows what HE is doing!

The Holy Family feast is a time to remember the family unit and pray for our human and spiritual families. We reflect on the value and sanctity of the family, and to evaluate our own family life. What ways may it be improved? What would Jesus, Mary, and Joseph do? What are we doing to promote the family within our own cultures, neighborhoods, and communities?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Put on heartfelt compassion, kindness humility, gentleness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another.
2. Put on love.
3. Let the peace of Christ control your hearts and the peace into which you were also called in one body.

Pope's Message from page 1

terrible sufferings on entire populations.

“At the same time, ethnic, religious and political tensions, instability, rivalry, disagreements, and all forms of injustice and discrimination are destroying the internal fabric of many countries and embittering international relations. Throughout the world the number of migrants, refugees and evacuees is also increasing because of frequent natural disasters, often caused by alarming environmental upheavals.”

Strife-torn lands

Benedict XVI specifically mentioned particular zones of conflict, saying his “thoughts turn especially to those places where the grim sound of arms continues to reverberate.”

He mentioned “the tortured regions of Darfur, Somalia, the north of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia; to the whole of the Middle East — especially Iraq, Lebanon and the Holy Land; to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, to the Balkans and to many other crisis situations that unfortunately are frequently forgotten.”

“May the Child Jesus,” he prayed, “bring relief to those who are suffering and may he bestow upon political leaders the wisdom and courage to seek and find humane, just and lasting solutions. To the thirst for meaning and value so characteristic of today's world, to the search for prosperity and peace that marks the lives of all mankind, to the hopes of the poor: Christ — true God and true Man — responds with his nativity.”

“Neither individuals nor nations should be afraid to recognize and welcome him: With him ‘a shining light’ brightens the horizon of humanity; in him ‘a holy day’ dawns that knows no sunset. May this Christmas truly be for all people a day of joy, hope and peace!”

Benedict XVI urged “brothers and sisters from every continent” to “allow the light of this day to spread everywhere: May it enter our hearts, may it brighten and warm our homes, may it bring serenity and hope to our cities, and may it give peace to the world.” (from Zenit.org)

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