



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 1

Bulletin Edition

January 4, 2013

WELCOME 2013!

New Year Message from the DCS

As we just bid goodbye to 2012, we reminisce the blessings we received the year that left us. We find new calling to serve as a result of our latest emergence. We welcome additions from our encounters as new members came in with great enthusiasm. We also welcome new committed and covenanted members ready and willing to immerse in ministries. We joyfully celebrate the BLD 20th anniversary *Ablaze* and the Inter-District conference with Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, gracing both occasions. We thank the dedications of those who joined us for a successful fundraising event to support our efforts in building faith based communities and our poverty alleviation programs.

We find joy as we continue serving in our medical mission, *Gawad Kalinga projects*, nursing homes visitations, soup kitchen, and uphold and protect the dignity of life through the *March for Life* in Washington DC.

Sadly, 2012 is also marred by adversities and struggles. The hurricane *Sandy* brought about havoc and devastations to our state of New Jersey. Internally, we also struggled with acute parking needs, occasional venue displacements and lack of heat due to constructions and repairs on DMC premises.

Overall, with firm determination, we continue to declare that God is still and always with us even when we are in the midst of all these tragedies and challenges, as our needs were met with the resiliency and patience of our members through the grace of His wisdom & strength.

As we welcome the year 2013, let us have a renewed hope for a brighter and more vibrant community of faith, each one to exude a humble repentant heart and with deep gratitude, thank our Lord for all the blessings received and with great anticipation for new blessings this new year.

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS BEARERS OF LIGHT

THEME: We are the light of the New Evangelization when we know, serve, and follow Jesus.

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

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

REFLECTION (Excerpt from ECSL's Reflection):

As we step into the New Year, let us remind ourselves that we are getting into the thick of preparations to make the Year of Faith more meaningful for all Catholics.



Just as what our Community Word for January 2013 says: "We, as disciples who serve our Lord Jesus Christ through the Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community, are to clothe ourselves with the character of Mary and be the light of the New Evangelization".

But what is the New Evangelization all about? Because of the word "new", there are some who assume that the practice of our Catholic faith was being restructured and/or that a new format is being introduced. In a way, yes, there are changes especially in our liturgical celebration with the adoption of the new Roman Missal. But the New Evangelization is not about starting again but entering into a long-term transmission of the Gospel with the courage and boldness of St. Paul who said: *Continuation, page 3*

Promise of the Week

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

THE PROMISE



“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”

(John 3:16)

When our first parents ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that must have been a sad, sad day for our Lord God and Father. Adam and Eve, God’s most precious and masterpiece of His creation, have turned against Him. By virtue of their sin, they have lost their birthright, condemning them and their descendants to eternal damnation. But our God is a God of infinite mercy and goodness that He sent His Redeemer Son as ransom for our sins, wiped clean by His crucifixion and death on the Cross. And this is the promise that God made; eternal life. (1 John 2:25)

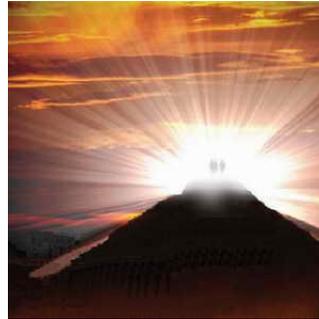
Do you desire eternal life, a life in perfect communion with our Lord Jesus? Do you long for a life in paradise, no morning commute, no deadlines to meet, no more wrestling with this thing called ‘life on earth’? It’s a no brainer! Strange as it seems, our actions oftentimes point to the opposite. Haven’t you noticed the two voices in perpetual conflict within us? The first voice is God, the second, the antichrist. I have always pictured the antichrist as one very powerful person, deceptively good on the outside but oozing with pure evil in the inside. The mere mention of his name evokes fear and panic, a person to be avoided at all costs. How naive I was! The antichrist is the voice telling me to cheat, to lie, to steal, to badmouth my brother or sister, to be proud and unyielding, to be uncaring and unforgiving. It is also the voice telling me to skip Friday worship, whispering that one missed worship is perfectly okay and nothing to fret about.

St. John exhorts us to be steadfast in our faith (1 John 2:24), to treasure the Word of God the same way the Blessed Virgin Mary treasured and pondered in her heart the angel Gabriel’s annunciation greetings (Lk 2:19). St. John further calls it the anointing (1 John 2:27). As we are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, we live and breathe the Word of God in our daily lives.

Eternal life – God always keeps His promise. Come, let us do our share, and listen only to the voice of God.

Walking in the Light

In this world, humans have become impatient and selfish. Some have decided that since we’re in such a bad economy with a disturbed society, it just seems like we’re stuck in the darkness with no light in sight. People go to church less because they don’t believe they can find peace and strength in the Lord. Some abandoned their faith because they see others, who are living in the dark, being contented with darkness in their lives, lives that are filled with confusion, uncertainty, and cares. However, they fail to realize that we, as children of God, can bring God’s light to other people’s darkened lives, and can be the light that helps prepare the way for Jesus’ second coming.



Chapter 1 in the Gospel of John depicts John the Baptist as the messenger to spread God’s light among the Gentiles in preparation for Christ’s coming. He is a simple man whom we consider one unique individual. He was said to eat locusts, wear only loincloths, and live in the desert. His uniqueness also led him to attract curious people to try to get to know him more. This allowed him to show his crowd that the light of Christ is something that frees oneself from darkness; that his mission is to help pave the way of Christ’s coming.

Today, we can be just like John the Baptist. In our community, we are given teachings to learn how Christ taught His disciples how to share God’s love. We see parents teaching their children and we see our own Youth teaching each other on how to be examples to others in spreading the light of Christ.

For the Youth today, society is sometimes critical of their efforts. They would get teased for practicing their faith and some would even get discouraged. But as they embrace their love for God, just as John the Baptist did, and share it with others, they find the courage to go on with their mission. Being mocked would result in hurt feelings, but God’s love will always shine on us and help us bear much fruits. These fruits help us nourish those who are spiritually weak and be the light in people’s hearts in this world filled with darkness.

In the end, to proceed in our spiritual journey, we must continue to nourish ourselves also with Christ’s light, just as John the Baptist has done.



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS (from page 1)

“Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16)

To change the character of our Christian society amidst the challenges that we face from the growing influence of the post-modern world, our Church is calling us to something new in the way we live our faith experience in a renewed way and to proclaim the Gospel that is “new in its ardor, in its methods, in its expressions” (John Paul II).

Pope Benedict XVI, in fact, said that the New Evangelization is directed “principally at those who, though baptized, have drifted away from the Church and live without reference to the Christian life...to help these people encounter the Lord, who alone fills our existence with deep meaning and peace; and to favor the rediscovery of the faith, that source of grace which brings joy and hope to personal, family and social life”. The Pope said the Church needs a new “missionary dynamic” of lay people and must pay “particular attention to (baptized) people who do not live according to the requirements of the baptism”. Clerics too must also apply “new methods, a new language that suits different cultures” in their bid for a “new evangelism”. It has become urgent to make Christ known again “where the fire of God” has become mere “embers that need to be rekindled so it can again be a lively flame that gives light and warmth to the entire house”, he added.

The bishops, who attended the Synodal Assembly last year, agreed that structural changes were not needed as “believers can bring about change through their faith, a well-structured faith”. It is in the transmission of the Gospel that we, as disciples of Christ, are being called to become the light of the New Evangelization. **“What the world is in particular need of today is the credible witness of people enlightened in mind and heart by the word of the Lord, and capable of opening the hearts and minds of many to the desire for God and for true life, life without end.”** (PortaFidei,15)

The Readings for January 2013 gives us an idea of what our roles are in relation to this new thrust of the Church for us to help proclaim the Gospel of Christ not only the “unchurched”, but most especially, to baptized Catholics who have drifted away from their faith.

POPE'S JANUARY PRAYER INTENTION

“That in this Year of Faith, Christians may deepen their knowledge of the mystery of Christ and witness joyfully to the gift of faith in him.”

Epiphany, that mysterious Greek word, is here with its picture of those mysterious Magi! This event is closely associated with Christmas, yet the event probably took place about two years after the birth of Jesus.



Those mysterious kings or princes from the East have been the subject of much speculation. But the historical event is not the focus of the feast. The reality the Church wants to bring to our imagination and to our minds is “Revelation.” The whole Christmas message focuses on the Incarnation, the making visible of previously invisible realities. Christmas tells us that God is and always has been in the world and part of our lives even though we were not able to see it.

Epiphany takes us a step beyond Christmas, and tells us that God is present even in inanimate nature. A star pointed to Jesus so that the Magi could find him. We have the created world to realize that even visible things can tell us something. St. Thomas Aquinas’ proofs for the existence of God are concerned with visible reality. The uncaused Cause, the intelligent working of non-intelligent things, the realization that if ever there was nothing there would now be something, – all these prove to the thinking mind that there is reality we call God.

However, we need God to tell us more. What is God like? Can we connect with him? Can we even be intimate with Him? Can we even love this transcendent Creator? Fortunately, the Christian revelation gives us answers. But they are answers to an open and faith filled mind expecting truth to confirm the reality of what is being told us. Our mind is made for truth, and when truth is revealed, we know that we have contacted reality. There is an inner confirmation that is given by God when we go in search of truth. That is why truth is not something we DO. It is something we open up to. Jesus is the one who in himself is visible flesh along with the invisible reality of the Son of God. That is why the Magi saw the star and believed. That is why we hear the story of Christmas, and believe. That is why we see and hear and touch. We are made to go beyond the senses. The Magi saw the star and believed in Someone they could not see. When they followed in faith they found and saw God made man.

We pray that 2013 will be year of deepening faith, a deeper realization of things we already know, but have not fully grasped, a year to let go and let GOD.

THE JIGSAW PUZZLE

- A life analogy



Life is really like a jigsaw puzzle
With many, many pieces
We go through it
Trying to figure out
How to make it all fit.

Most of us start with small pieces in the corners.
Then slowly build ourselves up
The corners transform into edges
Edges into sides
Then after a while,
We work on the hole that's in the middle.



But in life's jigsaw puzzle,
There are really many small
And many BIG pieces.



Big ones - neighbors and friends
Bigger ones - Spouses and family
And Biggest of all
Is Christ in its middle.

Don't live life
By first marking out its limiting corners.
This New Year,
Restart with Him in your heart
Then fit in life's many pieces
And let your heart grow outward
Beyond any and all boundaries.



OUR NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

Lord God Almighty, may You always reveal Your mighty presence as we continue to make our journey through life. Set our hearts ablaze in the love of God. We pray that this fire dwell upon us Christ's disciples as we are led by the Holy Spirit to carry out our mission of spreading God's love and serving Him through this community.

With Jesus, we undertake this journey knowing that He is with us and His Spirit will always direct our paths. May we never cease to be in awe of all Your kind and generous works in our lives as we welcome the New Year with great love and service for You. Amen.

For Mass & Adoration schedule within the U.S.A.
www.masstimes.org or call 410-676-6000

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,041	165,264
Typhoon Pablo	***	2938
Christmas Offering	247	993

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com.

Thank you for your continued support!

TEACHING CALENDAR

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Jan 19* - Basic Bible Seminar - LSS 1-39
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-38
CMP 2 (Part 1) - LSS 1-37
Jan 25 - Basics of Prayer - ME 40
Teaching - Golden Years
Service Formation - ME 38/SPE
Time: Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH LSS

March 1-3 • Divine Mercy Church/Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
Contacts: Youth Tricord (yics@bldnewark.com)

2013 Medical Mission

Feb 18-21 • La Trinidad, Benquet, Philippines



May the light of Christ shine on all involved in this extraordinary task, and that they all come together for the sole purpose Christ is bringing them there. May God be praised! AMEN



Mass Wedding or "Operation I do"

For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church and those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Deadline for submission of names: Feb. 1, 2013

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
908-463-0449/bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com



January 25, 2013, Washington D.C.

Departure Place & Time:

1st Pick-up @ 5:30 am -

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Nutley, NJ

2nd Pick-up @ 6:30 am -

Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Ray/Tess Salmo:

parish@bldnewark.com



Jan 11	Management
Jan 18	Evangelization
Jan 25	Formation
Feb 01	Management

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

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Volume 19 Issue 2

Bulletin Edition

January 11, 2013

NEWS

Youth Shepherds meet LSS Lambs

“Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, Carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.” (Isaiah 40:11)



On the evening of Friday, January 4, 2013, the BLD Youth held a special event for its ministry. Preparations for the next Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar or YLSS began with the *Salubungan*, the introduction of lambs and their shepherds. It was held in St. Mary’s Church, Rahway NJ before the entire community, before moving to

the classroom for the LSS orientation of the candidates by the District Youth Council, namely Sean Olaso, Kipsy Quevada, James Ymbong, Monica San Agustin, and Nicko Tolentino.

James and Nicko also explained to the 46 shepherds and co-shepherds how to prepare and minister to the needs of the 30 candidates. The DYC was greatly helped by the presence of Youth Ministry Coordinators: Elaine and Lito Fernando, Mavil and Cy Loreto, and Weng and Charlie Larobis.

It turned out to be a fruitful and fulfilling night. Everyone enjoyed the whole event and is excited for what is to come in the next weeks.



Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

COUNSELS

Baptism, Gateway to Life in the Spirit

THEME: We are the light of the New Evangelization when we help open the eyes of the blind and those who live in darkness.

WORD : Is 42:1-4,6,7/Ps 29:1-4, 9,10
Acts 10:34-38/Lk 3:15,16,21,22

ORDER: 1. Show no partiality.
2. Be a light to the nations.

REFLECTION:

The term *epiphany* means “to reveal or to manifest” the coming of the Lord to men. Most Christian traditions consider the Baptism of the Lord as one of the Epiphanies, when Jesus was revealed to be the Savior and the Son of God. When Jesus voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of St. John, intended for sinners, He did so in order to “fulfill all righteousness”. Jesus’ gesture is a manifestation of his self-emptying. The Spirit, who had hovered over the waters of the first creation, descended then on the Christ as a prelude of the new creation, and the Father revealed Jesus as his “beloved Son”. (CCC1224)

Baptism is very important. It is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis ianua*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: “Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word.” (CCC1213) *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“Whoever fears Him and acts uprightly is acceptable to Him.” (Acts 10:35)

WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US

Justice Shall Flower



I remember during my high school and college days, my classmates would ask me the question “Who was your first love?” Of course I would think of a person from the past. Now that I am older, I remember that same question and think deeply of it. Other than that person from the past, or my parents, siblings and friends, who really was my first love? I found out my answer in three words while listening to a talk on CD: “Loved into Existence”.

I was loved into existence! God first loved us, and because of that love we were born into existence. You see, God does not need any of us. He is God, He has everything already, and He will exist and continue to exist even without us. 1 John 4:16 says, **“God is love.”** This love that is so pure and holy wants to give itself in totality, so very much like a man and a woman consummating their marriage by giving up oneself to the other. This kind of love produces life. That is how we came to be! And since we are formed out of love, love begets love. It is in our very nature to love. Consider a newborn, a toddler, a teenager and adult. At each stage of life, we are seeking to love and be loved.

So you and I are not just random thoughts from God, Who all of a sudden created us because He was bored or was wanting for amusement. No! God in His wonderfully ordered ways thought of us, and loved us even before we were born. So even if we are suffering right now and have diseases, imperfections and disabilities it does not necessarily mean that God is punishing us. We have to remember that God created man into a state of perfection, wanting for nothing. It was sin entering the world that brought us corruption. It was not by God's design that this happened, but by our own free will. We messed up in the first place, so why then are we blaming God for all the bad things that are happening to us?

Despite all that, God continues to love us. He gave His only begotten Son that we might have life, even if we don't deserve it. Our only response to such LOVE can be nothing but to give ourselves totally to the Lord, that we too may be capable of generating life-giving love.

Now, do you know who your first love is?

May God be praised, now and forever!

The Psalm for Tuesday, January 8 proclaims that **“Justice shall flower.”** At first I thought that this meant that justice shall prevail; but it is more than that.

I've been a fan of the 16th president of the United States for a long time now, and recently saw the movie “Lincoln” (it is highly recommended - for history buffs, as well as those who are simply just movie fans). The film, I thought, appropriately captured the greatness of the man.

But more than just about him, it highlighted the struggles it took to pass this nation's 13th Amendment, constitutionally guaranteeing equality for everyone under the law. Given the whims and winds of change that often influence judicial court decisions, let alone, public opinion; Lincoln wanted Congress to pass the amendment. He needed it to pass, to enshrine and cement it in the US Constitution, the supreme law of the land. You and I in this country, really the whole world, are beneficiaries of what happened in the midst of that bloody American civil war a century-and-a-half ago.

Justice entails the application of the law and ultimately, I do believe that God's justice shall prevail. He plants His seeds of justice in this world He created, using men and women, enlightened men such as President Lincoln and the 119 representatives who said, “Aye” and “Yea” that fateful day in January 1865.

The amendment needed a two-thirds majority to pass – it barely did, with 68% of the vote. But can you see how it was men back then, and as you will see in the movie, essentially simple men, who planted the seeds of equality for all under the law, even for ages to come? It has blossomed into equality for us too in this day and age.

Yet it has not been easy. The forces that would corrupt and deny justice continue to challenge it from flowering. Let us all recognize that we each have a role to play and must work for True Justice, and continue, with God's blessing, to plant and nurture the seeds for love to grow - until that day when it is His Justice that shall indeed prevail.

“Justice and justice alone shall be your aim, that you may have life and may possess the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you.” (Deuteronomy 16:20)

THE SPIRIT WHOM HE GAVE US

Two weeks ago, we celebrated the birth of Christ. The Messiah was born in our midst. Jesus walked among us, preached love and forgiveness, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers and made the blind to see. He fulfilled the prophecy and many knew and came to realize that He is the chosen one, the Son of God. But His life was brutally and violently taken away from His family, friends and followers He called “disciples”. The Man they knew who will save the world is no longer with them.

“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” (Jn 14:18)



In Baptism, we become a new creation, an adopted child of God and we are given a part in God's divine nature. We become co-heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven. We receive the Spirit of the Lord as well as the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We read in CCC1229 that the essential elements to becoming a Christian include “proclamation of the Word, acceptance of the Gospel entailing conversion, profession of faith, Baptism itself, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and admission to Eucharistic Communion”.

What is it like to for us to become a living temple of God's Holy Spirit? Consider the first disciples who received the “Word” like a seed that was planted in their hearts. As they acted on the Word, the seed within them grew. Given the gifts from the Holy Spirit, we too are empowered to boldly proclaim God's Word to all the nations, and to profess and defend our faith because we are co-heirs to the Kingdom of God. As we share our gifts, we will live our New Life replete with the fruitfulness of His Spirit - the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, generosity, charity, faithfulness, gentleness, modesty and self-control.

May God continue to give us the grace to hear and receive His Word. Through the gifts of His Spirit may we live His words and be fearless to do the will of the Father as Christ did. Baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit, we have Christ in us, ready to embrace our commission to go and share our faith with others and to be fishers of men.

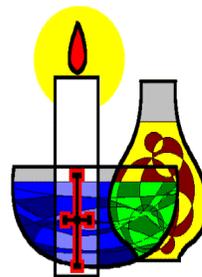
“We receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.” (1 Jn 3:22)

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

Our baptism was patterned upon the Baptism of Jesus, a manifestation to mankind of the following important signs:

- To be obedient to the Father and to fulfill all righteousness
- To endorse John's ministry of baptism
- To identify with those who were repenting
- To set an example for his followers
- To foreshadow his death, burial and resurrection
- To announce the beginning of his ministry on earth.

During this Year of Faith and call for New Evangelization, our celebration of the Baptism of Jesus is not only a reminder of our own baptism but also a call to ministry. Our theme is also asking us “to be the Light to help open the eyes of the blind and those who are in darkness”. The New Evangelization is a call to understand deeply the value of baptism, this most beautiful gift of God to us, wonderfully explained in our Catechism:



Baptism is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift. We call it gift, grace, anointing, enlightenment, garment of immortality, bath of rebirth, seal, and most precious gift. It is called *gift* because it is conferred on those who bring nothing of their own; *grace* since it is given even to the guilty; *Baptism* because sin is buried in the water; *anointing* for it is priestly and royal as are those who are anointed; *enlightenment* because it radiates light; *clothing* since it veils our shame; *bath* because it washes; and *seal* as it is our guard and the sign of God's Lordship. (CCC 1216)

The other important character in Sunday's Gospel is John the Baptist. From the beginning John devoted his life to preparing for the arrival of Jesus. He had focused all of his energy toward that moment of encounter with Jesus. He was set upon obedience. Yet the very first thing Jesus asked him to do, John resisted. He felt unqualified. John felt unworthy even to unfasten the shoes of Jesus, yet Jesus said John was the greatest of all prophets (Lk 7:28).

For all of us baptized members of the Catholic Church, and most especially for us who are members of this covenant community, are we hesitant like John the Baptist?

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (continued from page 3)

Do we feel unqualified to do what is being asked of us? Do we have any doubt that God is with us - present in our community, in our family, and in our mission? Did we forget that the Child that was born on Christmas is Emmanuel, God with us... the One who anoints the work in our ministry? Do we feel that the sanctifying grace that we received is not enough... forgetting His promise that *"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."* (2 Cor 12:9)

For this New Year, the Year of Faith proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI and in conjunction with the synod calling for the New Evangelization in our church, let us resolve to be the Light of the New Evangelization to help in opening the eyes of the blind and those who live in darkness. Let us grow deeper in our own faith, to have confidence in the Gospel and to be good witnesses in sharing the Gospel to others. Let us relive our own encounter with Jesus and be empowered by the grace of our own baptism.

DIRECTION:

Do good and be kind and humble in your ways.



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

	Jan 18	Evangelization
	Jan 25	Formation
	Feb 01	Management
	Feb 08	Mission

JOB POSTING

Certified Surgical Tech needed for Ambulatory Surgicenter
Must have Ophthalmology experience
IAHCSMM certification (CRCST) or equivalent preferred

If interested, contact Ruben/Luz Amarante

Isaiah58@bldnewark.com

Make the Covenant News part of your Covenant Life!

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

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Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway, NJ

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2013 WCDM Training for all Potential Sharers

Date/Time: March 16, 2013 - 1-5 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Classroom 208

Class Shepherds/Ministry Coordinators, please submit names of those who are under your pastoral care who can be potential sharer as soon as possible.

Deadline for submission: January 31, 2013



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 3

Bulletin Edition

January 18, 2013

A Year of Faith Q&A:

The Transmission of Divine Revelation

1. **How did the Apostolic Tradition begin and continue? (CCC 75-79)**
 - a. The Apostolic Tradition began with the preaching of the apostles and continues in the apostolic succession (bishops).
 - b. **The Gospel was handed on by the apostles both orally and in writing.** “Orally” (literally: by word of mouth) includes preaching, example and the establishment of institutions. “In writing” means through the composition of texts.
 - c. The apostles left bishops as their successors so that the Gospel might be preserved in its entirety by the Church until the Second Coming of Christ.
 - d. Tradition is all that the Church is and believes, handed on by the apostles and their successors, the bishops, until the end of time. Tradition comes from Latin *trādere* which means “to hand on”.

2. **What is the relationship between Tradition and Sacred Scripture? (CCC 80)**

“...there exists a close connection and communication between Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same Divine Wellspring, ...**For Sacred Scripture is the Word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, while Sacred Tradition takes the Word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the Light of the Spirit of Truth they may, in proclaiming it, preserve this Word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known.** Consequently, it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore, both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence.” (DV 9)

3. **To whom has the interpretation of the heritage of Faith been entrusted? (CCC 85)**

“Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God, committed to the Church...**But the task of** *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS

Always Invite Jesus

THEME: We are the light of the New Evangelization when we honor and obey Jesus.

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

ORDER: **Do whatever Jesus tells you.**

REFLECTION:



In Sunday’s Gospel, Jesus, his disciples and the Blessed Mother were invited to a wedding; it was at this occasion where the first sign (miracle) was done in the public ministry of our Savior. Weddings are truly a big event for all of us, even today, but during that time, the expectation was that the bride’s family would provide food and wine enough for five days of feasting and drinking. It would have

been a terrible breach of hospitality and damage to their reputation if they failed to provide for their guests.

The marital covenant dates back to the time of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:22-24) when the Lord said that the two of them became one flesh. This union between a man and a woman with their children became the family and the basic unit of society. In the last few decades, we have seen steady and alarming attacks - beginning with contraception, to abortion, euthanasia and anything that has to do with God and the teachings of His Church; naturally, the traditional family is at very center of these attacks.

The theme for the week, *We are the light of the New Evangelization when we honor and obey Jesus*, mirrors the order given to the servants by Mary, “**Do whatever He tells you.**” Every marriage encounter contains this reading to impart to each couple attending the importance of inviting Jesus to be at the center of *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“*No more shall you be called ‘Forsaken,’ nor your land called ‘Desolate,’ But you shall be called ‘My Delight is in her,’ and your land ‘Espoused.’*” (Is 62:4)

Through and True

We hear the Word of God, but do we apply it to our lives? In Exodus 20:1-17, God delivered His ten commandments and ***“as all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the blast of the shofar and the mountain smoking, they became afraid and trembled.”*** (Ex 20:18). When the Israelites heard the Word of God, fear was instilled in their hearts; however, the episode of the golden calf (Ex 32) shows how quickly they forgot God’s commandments.

Have we also forgotten? ***“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom”*** (Ps 111:10) but not the end. Are we allowing, prayerfully and persistently, the Word of God to intimately penetrate our hearts, even to the parts where we wish it would not go: our own version of the golden calf - like our own greediness when we choose those who will assure us that our pockets will be filled while ignoring the cry of the unborn being murdered, the mentally ill being neglected, and dysfunctional families becoming the new norm instead of being helped? We need to recognize that ***“Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart. No creature is concealed from him, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.”*** (Heb 4:12-13). The Word of God will see through us and reveal the truth about ourselves.

Let us not also forget that we have a loving and merciful God. He not only gave us the Law and the prophets but reached out again to us by sending His only Son, the Word made flesh, not to abolish the Law but to fulfill it (Mt 5:17). Jesus laid down His life for us on the cross. After His resurrection and ascension into heaven, He did not leave us as orphans. He sent us His Holy Spirit to teach us everything and remind us of all that He told us (Jn 14:26). If we are receptive to the Holy Spirit in the midst of our trials and difficulties, the Word of God will transform us into His image so that when we are judged we will hear the Father utter those wonderful words “welcome my sons and daughters!”



Be Made Clean

One of the more moving accounts of Jesus' miracles is that of cleansing a leper. There is much that can be gleaned from this miracle - in it we see the compassion and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only towards the leper himself, but for us as well. There are some similarities



between the leper's condition and cleansing, and that of our own condition and need for cleansing.

Leprosy was a term for several skin diseases, a progressively disfiguring disease. The leper likely suffered a pitiful existence not just from the physical ravages of the disease but from ritual uncleanness and exclusion from society imposed by the Law of Moses. The leper was truly a wretched man.

We can describe the leper's cry as earnest and desperate, reverent, humble and submissive, believing, specific, personal and brief. The leper gives us an instructive example, that God answers prayer.

The leper's cleansing was actuated by the Lord's compassion that accompanied the touch of His hand. It was accomplished as soon as the Lord spoke, ***“I do will it. Be made clean.”*** (Mk 1:41). Through a simple touch and with simple words, the leprosy was gone!

Similarly, what leprosy is to the body, so sin is to the soul! Sin progressively enslaves us and separates us from God, and from His people. It leads to eternal death. For as long as we remain guilty of sin, we are truly wretched!

Our cry for forgiveness of sin is first made in baptism. It is how we call upon the name of the Lord - an appeal for a good conscience. Only through the blood of Christ can we truly purify our conscience. For forgiveness of sin is then found through prayer. The gospel describes how we can make our appeal to Christ today! Our cleansing is actuated by God's love, accompanied by the blood of Jesus and accomplished when we are united with Jesus in baptism. Through a simple act of faith (immersion), our sins are washed away! True cleansing comes from the compassion and power of our Lord Jesus Christ. We need to have a humble faith to receive the benefits of such compassion and power - FORGIVENESS.

Should we ever see a leper, let us remember that without Christ our condition is much worse! The leper had heard of Jesus' power to heal, and so he came to Him.

Finally, the leper received his cleansing; have we sought out and accepted ours?

To Each Is Given

Epiphany is a season wherein we pray for the ability to see God revealed in the world. In the wise men's visit to the baby Jesus, we see God making Himself known, beginning with these 'non-Jew strangers'. Even early on, the followers of that infant who became the risen Christ were led by God's Spirit to aim outward.

Paradoxically, to aim outward, we need to look inward and behold how God is being revealed in us. He gives each of us gifts for the journey to enable us to move onward and outward. How is God equipping us for our calling?

God is being revealed, made manifest in the world around us, and one of the ways God is revealed is through us. He provides gifts and talents to each of us to do this. How is He equipping you? How are you being shaped by the hands of the potter for His purpose?



It may be that some of us are just at the beginning of that process. Others may be further along, already in the midst of clarifying, refining and being trained in using their God-given gifts. Regardless of where you are, I invite you to enter into a time of discernment.

The church in Corinth was a very gifted group of people. If anything, their problem was not so much discovering what each one's individual gifts were, but more of appreciating, being grateful for the abilities of everyone, and seeking to make use of everyone's God-given gifts. No one's gift is better than another's, wrote St. Paul, something they really needed to hear.

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; ...different forms of service but the same Lord; ...different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.” (1 Cor 12:4-7).

For us today, if there is any "looking down" upon one another happening among us, we likewise need God's help to "look up" - to appreciate, to be filled, not just with the wonder of what we are able to do with God, but also, with gratitude for what God is doing in all of us and in the world around us. When we direct our focus towards God, we can deal with our differences.

Each person is unique and is gifted in his or her own special way. This is not something we should fear. Instead, we should rejoice and be glad. The abilities that God provides each of us, the gifts that God bestows, are not disconnected from each other. Let us be bold and use God's gifts according to His plan.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

their relationship. Many marriages have failed because couples relied mainly on their human wisdom and human love to carry them through. With the Lord, their union becomes a divine institution capable of withstanding the ebb and flow of marital difficulties and challenges. For the Jews, wine brings life and joy to any relationship, and when we bring Jesus, the new wine, in ours, He will refresh, restore and enhance our relationship with our spouses and family.

Through the reading, we also became aware of the role of our Mother Mary as a powerful intercessor. She was not even asked by the wedding couple, but she took it upon herself to present the situation to Jesus. We, as Catholics, are often criticized that we give much attention and devotion to Mary, most do not understand that her relationship with Jesus goes beyond any human relationship. She was with her Son from conception to His death on the cross. Who would know our Savior and Redeemer more than she does?

This reading also points us to take a close look at what is happening to this sacred institution of marriage. Modern men, through court rulings, legislative action and popular vote, have nullified this union between a man and woman. As of January 2013, nine states plus the District of Columbia have legalized same-sex marriage. There are still 39 states that prohibit same-sex marriage in their statutes or their constitutions, but we all know that there are many forces, including our present executive in the White House, who was previously opposed, but is presently vocal in support for same-sex unions. Let us all pray that the Supreme Court will be guided by the Holy Spirit when they deliberate on this issue by June of 2013.

In the first reading the prophet Isaiah was replying to the people's complaints that the promised salvation was slow in coming. They became discouraged because they felt the Lord had neglected them. He said that before this could happen, they needed to acknowledge their sins and turn back to God. Perhaps this is what our world needs today.

Our community's disciples have many natural and spiritual gifts that we have used to bless others. Our efforts in evangelization and mission have borne much fruit. We must also support our prayers with action by participating actively in the advocacies being initiated by the Catholic Church and other denominations and groups for the culture of life. Isaiah exhorts the people to speak out and be silent no more.

Let us all unite and encourage others to stand up for our faith and the teachings of the Church, so we could obtain the Lord's promise. ***“No more shall you be called ‘Forsaken,’ nor your land called ‘Desolate,’ But you shall be called ‘My Delight is in her,’ and your land ‘Espoused.’”*** (Is 62:4)



- Directions
1. Announce the salvation of the Lord by using your spiritual gifts and witness the saving work of the Lord in your life.
 2. Be obedient to God's calling by serving faithfully in ministry work.

YEAR OF FAITH Q&A (from page 1)

authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church (Magisterium) whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the Word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed. It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls." (DV 10)

4. Where can I get more information?

- Dei Verbum "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation" (Second Vatican Council - 1965). Also available on line at <http://www.cin.org/v2revel.html> (Catholic Information Network)
- Catechism of the Catholic Church at [http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/Article 2: The Transmission of Divine Revelation \(74-100\)](http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/Article%20The%20Transmission%20of%20Divine%20Revelation%20(74-100))

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,937	5,741

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mass Wedding or "Operation I do"

For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Deadline for submission of names: Feb. 1, 2013

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza: [908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Jan 25	Formation
			Feb 1	Management
			Feb 8	Mission
			Feb 15	Pastoral

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Jan 19* - Basic Bible Seminar - LSS 1-39
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-38
CMP 2 (Part 1) - LSS 1-37
- Jan 25 - Basics of Prayer - ME 40
Teaching - Golden Years
Service Formation - ME 38/SPE
- Feb 02* - Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS 1-38
CMP 2 (Part 2) - LSS 1-37
- Time: Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH LSS #18

March 1-3 • Divine Mercy Church/Auditorium, Rahway, NJ
Contacts: Youth Ministry Coordinators (yms@bldnewark.com)

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 - Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway
March 1 - Salubungan

Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again).

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

2013 Medical Mission

Feb 18-21 • La Trinidad, Benquet, Philippines



May the light of Christ shine on all involved in this extraordinary task, and that they all come together for the sole purpose Christ is bringing them there. May God be praised! A.M.E.N



DLC PASTORAL HOUR

Tuesday, January 22, 2013
Starts at 8 pm
Divine Mercy Parish Library



January 25, 2013, Washington D.C.

Departure Place & Time:

1st Pick-up @ 5:30 am -

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Nutley, NJ

2nd Pick-up @ 6:30 am -

Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Ray/Tess Salmo:

parish@bldnewark.com

2013 WCDM Training for all Potential Sharers

Date/Time: March 16, 2013 - 1-5 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Classroom 208

Class Shepherds/Ministry Coordinators, please submit names of those who are under your pastoral care who can be potential sharers as soon as possible. Deadline for submission: January 31, 2013

Isaiah 58 Job Opportunity

Certified Surgical Tech for Ambulatory Surgicenter

Must have Ophthalmology experience ~ IAHCSSM certification (CRCST) or equivalent preferred. If interested, contact Ruben/Luz Amarante: Isaiah58@bldnewark.com

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 4

Bulletin Edition

January 25, 2013

Dacawi, R. (2013, January 6). *Baguio Midland Courier*.
Baguio City, Philippines.

US surgical mission set at BeGH from Feb 18-21

A group of medical volunteers from New Jersey, USA will add meaning to February as "Love Month" through a general surgery mission they will conduct at the Benguet General Hospital in LA Trinidad.

Led by couple Dr. Mostiolo and Long Garcia, the team will be doing surgery from Feb. 18 to 21 under the medical mission ministry of the Newark chapter of "Bukas Loob sa Diyos", a Catholic lay organization with branches in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Canada, and the US.

The Garcia couple confirmed the mission in a letter to Benguet Gov. Nestor Fongwan saying, the team will be composed of general surgeons, gynecologists, anesthesiologists, pediatricians, internists, family practitioners, dentists, support groups, and prayer warriors.

Staff members of provincial hospital led by OIC hospital chief Joseph Cabinta and Dr. Pac Camdas, chair of the committee on outreach and extension services, are finalizing hosting arrangements for the four-day mission requested by the governor.

"We plan to perform general surgical procedures, plastic and dental procedures, minor surgical operations, and general medical and pediatric consultations." Garcia wrote the governor.

"Our activities are founded on God's word and are in response to His call to love and serve the needy." Garcia said in his letter to Fongwan, copy furnished Bishop Carlito Cenzone of the Baguio Diocese. "It is based upon our belief that the medical mission is our Lord's mission and we are called by Him to share our God-given talents in caring for the sick and the poor."

The target beneficiaries are indigent patients who have to undergo pre-screening before the start of the mission.

In an e-mail posted on the BLD Newark website, the Garcia couple called on volunteers to join the mission and for the lay community to donate medicines, medical supplies, and equipment.

Bulk of the mission members will depart from the US evening of Feb. 13 and leave Manila for La Trinidad morning of Feb. 17.

COUNSELS

Living God's Word

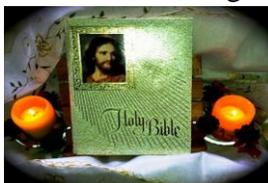
THEME: We are the light of the New Evangelization when we accept and live out our covenant with God.

**WORD: Neh 8:2-6,8-10 / Ps 19:8-10,15
1 Cor 12:12-30 / Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21**

**ORDER: To bring glad tidings to the poor....
Proclaim liberty to the captives....
Let the oppressed go free.**

REFLECTION:

The readings on the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time are about listening, accepting, and living out the Word of God. When we carefully listen to His Word, God reveals Himself more and more to us and enables us to live out our covenant with Him.



In the first Reading, the Israelites listened and lived out the Word of God when they returned from exile. They accepted and followed God's command to rebuild their community and rededicate themselves to Him and His Word. "**Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength.**" (Neh 8:10), words of encouragement to the exiles as Ezra reads plainly the book of the law of God to them. Together with Nehemiah, both instructed the people "**Do not be sad, and do not weep...go, eat rich foods and drink sweet drinks, and allot to those who had nothing prepared, for today is holy to our Lord.**" (Neh 8:9-10). They were told to rejoice in the particular love that is reflected in the law of the Lord, love that is perfect, love that is refreshing, trustworthy and giving wisdom to the simple, the law that led their lives of loving God.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul; the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple." (Ps 19:8)

GOD IS MY STRENGTH

The joy of the Lord is my strength, goes one of my favorite worship songs. He gives me living waters and I thirst no more.

It has been several years since I sealed my covenant with the Lord after completing a certain stage of my ongoing formation in BLD. Life has never been quite the same since. My fear of commitment and critical attitude on imperfections in community have gradually dissipated as I found myself falling more and more in love with the Lord. My faith just grew stronger with every adversity that came my way.



St. Paul counsels, ***“Bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.”*** (2 Tim 1:8)

Among the tensions I immediately encountered in my New Life was the evident rise of contradictions as I struggled between the old and new ways. The Lord clearly asked for much more than what I was willing or even able to give. Or so it felt to me. My plate was full, my days were filled, how could I possibly go to weekly worship, reunions and teachings? I had to “make nice” with my family, neighbors, co-workers and maintain demanding relationships. How can I attend to ministry work, evangelization and serving others?

But it's not my game. It's the Lord's. ***“God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial he will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it.”*** (1 Cor 10:13) Friday worship quickly turned from being a chore to a refreshing, vital link with the Divine and the Eternal. Praising God and reflecting on His Word recharged me like nothing else. Sound teachings and the example of mature disciples started to correct my wrong ways and ignorance. Serving others brought humility and, surprisingly, joy, in the light of Christ's example. Even the conflicts at home and at work became occasions to grow in and patience and endurance.

Here's another reassurance: ***“I am content with weaknesses... for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”*** (2 Cor 12:10) In Christ, I have boldness. For I believe that ***“I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me.”*** (Phil 4:13)

Blessed are You, Lord, my Pillar and my Rock of strength, now and forever!

A Promise of New Life



“Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins.” (Mark 2:22)

“I just want a chance to start over.” How many times have we uttered these words? But like the rich man in the gospel, who wants to inherit eternal life but walks away sad because he is unwilling to really change his life, we sometimes say we want to change but are unwilling to make the change. But that is exactly our call from Jesus, to repent and change.

For once we truly meet Jesus, once we ask for and accept that relationship, our lives must and will change. We cannot accept the call of discipleship and remain bogged down in old destructive ways, trudging through life without meaning or hope. With Jesus comes the promise of new life as well as the responsibility of facing our weaknesses, sins, and addictions in light of a new day. (Steve Givens, Living Faith)

I came across this reflection in the January issue of Living Faith. The second paragraph echoed my New Life experience. Before I joined BLD, I'd say I was ok when it came to my faith. I went to Sunday Mass regularly, always tried to do the right thing and all that was expected of me as a husband, a father, a son, and as the older brother to my siblings. I thought that is all that it entails to be a follower of Christ.

After the ME weekend, I became more involved with BLD, my life started changing, one little step at a time. We became more active in our parish; we volunteered our time to various BLD ministries, evangelized by inviting our friends to join the ME to rediscover Christ as we did. We shared our experiences with others through shepherding and other activities. My marriage even became stronger because we now have Christ in our home.

What I did not expect after joining BLD was that as soon as you accept Jesus as your personal friend and Saviour, there will be a change, *“our lives must and will change”* as Steve Givens has pointed out.

Lord Jesus, as I continue to grow in my relationship with You, pour Your new wine into my changing life. Amen!

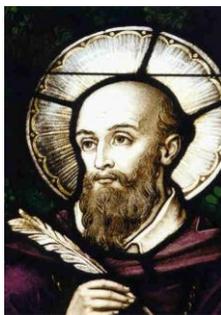


*When you look at the crucifix,
you understand how much Jesus loved you then.
When you look at the Sacred Host,
you understand how much Jesus loves you now.*

– Mother Teresa

St. Francis de Sales

St. Francis de Sales was born on August 21, 1567 in the Chateau de Sales in what is today known as Thorens-Glieres, Haute-Savoie, France. At the age of 17, Sales attended a theological discussion about predestination (all events are willed by God). This convinced the young Sales that he was damned to hell. He believed this for the next few years until January of 1587 when he said a prayer before a statue of Our Lady of Good Deliverance, and it was then that Sales decided to dedicate his life to God. He came to the conclusion that whatever God had in store for him was good, because God is love.



Sales studied in the University of Padua in Italy where he studied both law and theology. It was there that he made up his mind in becoming a priest and felt that Christ was calling him to a life of sacrifice for the Church. When Sales arrived back home, his father already had many things planned for his son, such as a position on the Senate of Chambéry. After some help from Claude de Granier, the Bishop of Geneva at the time, Sales was able to be ordained. In 1602, Bishop Granier died, and Sales was then consecrated as the new Bishop of Geneva. He worked closely with the Capuchin friars, who were very active in preaching the Catholic faith in the diocese. During his time as bishop, Sales was known as a great preacher, a friend to the poor, and a man of great understanding.

In December 1622, Sales was required to travel in the Duke of Savoy's entourage for the Duke's Christmas tour. When they arrived in Lyon, Sales chose to stay at the gardener's hut at the Visitandine monastery in that city. While staying there, Sales suffered from a stroke and died on December 28, 1622. Sales was beatified in 1661 by Pope Alexander VII, who canonized him four years later. In 1877, Pope Pius declared St. Francis de Sales a "Doctor of the Church".

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

Lord, I am Yours, and I must belong to no one but You.

My soul is Yours, and must live only by You.

My will is Yours, and must love only for You.

I must love You as my first cause, since I am from You.

I must love You as my end and rest, since I am for You.

I must love You more than my own being, since my being subsists by You.

I must love You more than myself, since I am all Yours and all in You. Amen.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

In the second reading, the Word of God comes to us through Paul who speaks to the Corinthians about the importance of order, relationships, and unity in their community. He uses the many parts of the body working together as one body, an analogy in encouraging them to work together for the good of their community. He reminded them that there are no insignificant members - those who are weaker by worldly standards might seem less important, but by Jesus' standards, all the more important. Their weakness makes them all the more necessary for their community.

In our community, there can be no choosing among members with regard to our relationships with other members "*for in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jew or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit*" (1 Cor 12:13). Can we fool ourselves into thinking that we are not in need of one another? Can our eye say to our hand, nor our head to our feet, "*I do not need you?*" (1 Cor 12:21) Each of us is connected to the other. "*You are Christ's body and individually parts of it.*" (1 Cor 12:27) We were all given gifts according to the needs of our community and each of us has an important role to play in proclaiming God's Word.

In the gospel, Jesus reads from the scroll at a Sabbath vigil a passage from the book of Isaiah, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.*" (Lk 4:18-19) His commentary that day was noticeably brief: "*Today, this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.*" (Lk 4:21)

A deafening silence fell over the congregation as everyone looked fixedly at Him in amazement. They were all filled with anticipation because the Messiah they hoped for finally arrived to intervene against injustices and foreign oppression. They were expecting instant solutions with a show of power. That is not the way Jesus saves. He saves through us. He did not come to put the things right in the world but instead, He came to put the things right in us, to put us right in our relationship with God and one another. Like the Nazarenes, we must not make the same mistake of sitting idle, waiting for some marvelous word or action to come.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

We have to extend the favor of God through our words and actions by using our time, treasure, talents and creativity to comfort the poor, release and recognize the dignity of captives, open the eyes of the blind, free the oppressed and all those who are in pain, struggling and often rejected. By using these God given gifts, their situations will be reversed. In our hearts, we have to become God's living Word and be Christ's eyes, ears, hand and feet as we bring good tidings and freedom to all who are disheartened and be generous to the least of our brethren, those who have nothing.

If we are to sustain and carry on Jesus' mission here, now, we have to pray together that God's spirit will be given to us and live out our covenant with God as we become the light of the New Evangelization and will be able to say: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon us; today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in us.*



DIRECTION: Allot portions to those who had nothing prepared.

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,991	8,732

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[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449)/ bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Feb 1	Management
			Feb 8	Mission
			Feb 15	Pastoral
			Feb 22	Evangelization

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Feb 02* - Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit - LSS 1-38
CMP 2 (Part 2) - LSS 1-37
- Feb 08 - LSS Orientation (Four Basic Truth 1) - ME/SPE/SE
- Feb 15 - LSS Orientation (Four Basic Truth 2) - ME/SPE/SE
- Feb 16* - Christian Parenting - ME 40/SPE 14
Siena Gift Inventory - LSS 34-37
- Feb 23* - Shepherds Refresher Course - LSS Shepherds
SM Teaching/BBS - Singles
SM Teaching/CMP 2 - Singles

Time: Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH LSS #18

March 1-3 • Divine Mercy Church/Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Youth Ministry Coordinators (yca@bldnewark.com)

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 - Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway

March 1 - Salubangan

Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again).

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

2013 Medical Mission

Feb 18-21 • La Trinidad, Benquet, Philippines



May the light of Christ shine on all involved in this extraordinary task, and that they all come together for the sole purpose Christ is bringing them there. May God be praised! AMEN

HOLY SPIRIT WORKSHOP IN REFLECTION WRITING

(Counsels and Reflection Writing Workshop)

For: Worship Leaders/CN Editors

Date: February 9, 2013

Time: 9:30 am - 7 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Connell Hall

Please RSVP on or before Monday, January 28th

Contacts: Fil/Hum Flores - word@bldnewark.com

2013 WCDM Training for all Potential Sharers

Date/Time: March 16, 2013 - 1-5 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Classroom 208

Class Shepherds/Ministry Coordinators, please submit names of those who are under your pastoral care who can be potential sharers as soon as possible.

Deadline for submission: January 31, 2013

Isaiah 58 Job Opportunity

Certified Surgical Tech for Ambulatory Surgicenter

Must have Ophthalmology experience IAHCMM

certification (CRCST) or equivalent preferred. If interested, contact Ruben/Luz Amarante: Isaiah58@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 05

Bulletin Edition

February 1, 2013

NEWS

March for Life 2013 **Youth and Singles lead BLD in MFL**

Reflecting a trend seen in the vast crowds that participated in this year's March for Life, more than 25 members of Youth and Singles (plus one member of J6!) led BLD Newark's participants, who braved the cold 22 degree weather, and marched for life in Washington DC last Friday, 25 January 2013.



This year, as in previous years, our marchers were joined by members of BLD Washington, including some of their very young, in strollers, undaunted by the falling snow.

This was the 40th annual march protesting the Supreme Court's 1973 decision that legalized abortion. It is estimated that since then, almost 55 million abortions have been performed in this country, roughly equal to the population of New York and California combined. Of note too is that a baby born 40 years ago would have already been eligible to run in the nation's past two presidential election, but never got the chance.

"Shine Jesus Shine" – with the trip underway, the Youth and Singles led a morning Praise and Worship on board the bus, joyfully singing this song. On the last hour of the trip back, they shared the impact that the day had on them and their outlook. The Hope of Life seemed stronger than ever, in the hundreds of thousands from across the country who were at the march, and in the Youth and Singles from our beloved BLD Newark Community.

Please pray for Life. As always, praise be to God! And "Shine Jesus Shine... set our hearts on fire!"

COUNSELS

Genuine Exercise of Spiritual Gifts

THEME: **We proclaim God's word when we witness to the love of Jesus.**

WORD: Jer 1:4,5,17-19/Ps 71:1-6,15-17
1 Cor 12:31-13:13 or 13:4-13/Lk 4:21-30

ORDER: "... *before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nation. I appointed you.*" (Jer 1:5)

REFLECTION:

Picture yourself sitting in the synagogue with people from Jesus' own hometown. And rather than uplift them, He singles out strangers from other towns – the widow of Zarephath in Sidon during Elijah's time, and the Syrian leper Naaman in Israel – as worthy recipients of God's grace because of their faith, while virtually accusing His own people of "lack of faith" in God. On hearing His words, everyone in the synagogue wanted to hurl Him off the cliff. How about you? How would you feel, or react in the same situation? Would you feel chagrined, aggrieved and/or insulted?

But before we take offence, let us examine ourselves and our community, because we may well be guilty of the same indifference as the people of Nazareth, who knew Jesus quite well but could not accept Him as a prophet.

Take Jeremiah as an example. In his youth, he was no different from any ordinary youth who dreamt of marrying, raising children and leading a peaceful life in his hometown. But God had other plans for him. God had chosen him to be a prophet. And like Jeremiah, God calls all of us to be prophets too, not just **hearers of His word, but bearers of His word as well** (James 1:22). In other words, we are to exercise our gift of prophesy without fear or letup. We are to see the world with the eyes of God. We cannot just keep quiet at the sight of injustice and abuse of power. As prophets, we are called to denounce oppressions, unmask

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"... for I am with you to deliver you."
(Jer 1:19)

MY PERSONAL “MARCH FOR LIFE”

“He will love and bless and multiply you, he will bless the fruit of your womb, and the produce of your soil...the issue of your herds and the young of your flocks, in the land in which he swore to your fathers he would give you.” Deuteronomy 7:13

What a beautiful promise! If the Lord asks me to bring life into this world, who am I to say NO to Him? He, Who gave me and all the people I love life itself!

Joining the March for life in Washington DC was truly a beautiful experience for me. In fact, it was an awakening moment. It made me realize my true purpose in life.

While marching with thousands of people, I reflected on my own struggles with pro-life issues and how the Lord changed my heart, which enabled me to put Him at the center of my married life. At the same time, this pro-activism made me realize my own selfishness and cowardice. I have not been standing up for my faith when it is inconvenient. This realization made me feel accountable and sad.



Then I began to ask myself these questions: If my purpose is to actively participate in the advocacies of the Catholic Church to end abortion and respect religious liberty, why am I not standing courageously? What should I do to help baffled pregnant women understand God's will and purpose of procreation? How can I help them accept their difficult circumstance and joyfully await God's promise of fulfilling their lives with love? I've known about abortion choice movement for so many years but I have not really done anything. I had wasted many opportunities to fulfill God's purpose.

However, it is never too late to do something. Now is the time to fight for life. Children are a gift from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). They are truly blessings not burdens. They are not only the future of this dying land, they are our present. The youngest soul our family was blessed with has been giving me and every member of my family so much joy since the day he was born. In fact, he has been instrumental in keeping our family together. As stated by Pope John Paul II, *“In the newborn child is realized the common good of the family.”*

Hold Unto His Hands

Psalm 37, verses 23-24 declares:

“Those whose steps are guided by the LORD, whose way God approves...”

As we meditate on God's revealed word, which like the boundless ocean has no limits, we acknowledge in faith that God calls us to our highest calling to follow Christ. Yes, we are called to be living signs of God's presence in the world, to be joyful and grateful witnesses to Jesus and His divine work of salvation. It is a true cause for celebration and gratitude when people we evangelize understand and accept that Jesus is the Divine Redeemer, who opened for them the way to God and that only a life of love is a meaningful life – a very important aspect in the life of Jesus.

may stumble...

Jesus, ever-knowing that the world is full of social and political turmoil and immense human suffering, often reminds us that, like him, we will face persecution, arrest, torture, and death as we struggle to walk in His path.

But they will never fall, for the LORD holds their hand...”

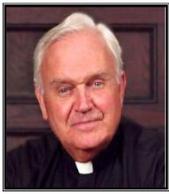
We must not be fearful over this skepticism and cynicism but rather, dwell on the eternal word, our food for eternal life while still clothed in mortal flesh, to make us feel alive in the face of death. God always makes it possible for us to deal with all oppressions as we heed His call. He supplements faith with “works” every day as well. Just as all Jesus' words and actions emerge from His communion with the Father, so our faith and “works” will emerge from our communion with Jesus and brethren in community. Jesus sets us together in Community – a dynamic, warm and radiant place of true happiness – where our love for one another manifested and tested for many years in spite of our diversity in temperaments and cultures. Also, it is a shelter of obedient response to the reality of our being united together and of our inner strength where we live through times of turmoil.

Truly, as God's children, we may fall at certain times, but with complete trust on our Great Catcher, we will not be cast down for He will always be there.

Prayer:

Almighty, Eternal God, keep us your children, born of water and the Spirit, always faithful to our calling. We desire to leave behind any sin or doubt in our lives and cling to you today. Amen

➔ How can I not share this victory of Christ in our family life with people that need to know the value of life? I pray that the Lord will give me the courage to cooperate with His grace, to stand up for what I truly believe in boldly and unreservedly, so others will also receive His beautiful and bountiful blessing of life.



Fr. Paul Speaks

Spiritual Spring Cleaning Time

COUNSELS (from page 1)

That great season of the Church's springtime is almost upon us, the holy season of Lent. It comes early this year. Easter is determined by the so called Paschal or spring moon, which is the first full moon after March 21st. The Sunday following this full moon is Easter, which this year falls on March 31st. It seems we are still in the midst of winter, but Ash Wednesday on February 13th is a reminder that springtime is near. This time is the official retreat time for the whole Church.

Springtime brings with it a sense of newness, revival. As the days get longer and warmer, we are reminded that eternity is an everlasting Spring. We know that some go "on retreat" for a short time each year to renew their relationship with the Lord. The whole Church is challenged during Lent to retreat, and search more seriously into their Christian life, especially their private daily time with the Lord. We are all very busy, and often the pace of life consumes us to such an extent that we barely give the Lord the recognition He deserves. Now is the time to step back and look at basic realities.

Some areas for reflection- Are you faithful to your BLD covenant, whether you are committed, covenanted or just an "ordinary" member?

Living the covenant is nothing more than an explicit living out of the Christian life. It is concrete way of looking at our Baptismal covenant. Lent is the time to examine the commitments we made, not only to BLD, but to the whole Church. The goal of Lent is to refresh and renew the vows of our Baptism. Recall that Easter Sunday calls on the church to renew the vows of our Baptism. We do this in an explicit and formal way during the Easter liturgy.

Historically, Lent was established for two categories of people - first for catechumens, those preparing for Baptism, and as a time of public penance for those who have sinned publicly. We all fit in these two categories. Even though we can be baptized only once, we can "do it again." Even though there is no public penance, every sin is a violation of our union with the Lord, and a hurt to all the members of the Body of Christ. There is no private sin. Repentance is an apology to the Church as well as reconciliation with the Lord.

Plan now during these few days before Ash Wednesday to devise a Lenten project. Keep it simple and doable. Whether it is more prayer time, or fasting or bring more faithful to God's Will in your life, this springtime of the Church will refresh and renew your spirits. Easter will be a real Resurrection.

corruption, and censure those who perpetrate violence and lead people astray. Easier said than done, you might think, and with good reason. But that is our calling and we should not fear because the Lord has promised in Jeremiah 1:19, "*They will fight against you but not prevail over you, for I am with you to deliver you.*"

We find the Corinthian community split by dissension and jealousies over their gifts and charisms. Paul reminds them that all charisms are gifts from the Spirit, and are given for the purpose of forming and uplifting the community. How are we using our own gifts and the fruit bestowed upon us through the Holy Spirit? Do we use our charisms to build up community so that the larger church benefits from it, or are we like the Corinthians eaten up by jealousy and competition over one another's spiritual gifts?

In the 2nd reading, St. Paul names love of God and neighbor as the underlying foundation and motivation behind the use of our spiritual gifts. Only through love are our charisms made more effective as we set out on mission. We are reminded too that love is not to be confused with selfish passion that seeks to serve one's own interest and pleasure. Jesus did not love mankind because man is good (on the contrary, many men are in fact thieves, murderers, adulterers); He made them good by loving them unconditionally. One can have many virtues or good qualities, and even accomplish many wonderful things, without possessing the kind of love Jesus has. St. Paul reminds us, in the end three gifts are left... "*faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love.*" (1 Corinthians 13:13)

The gospel is rather difficult to understand. How could the admiration of the people of Nazareth turn into sudden fury and hostility against Jesus, to the point they wanted to kill Him? Simple answer: their expectations and worldly mindset had betrayed them. First, they did not expect the Son of God to be among them. And, if they had known, they expected Jesus to perform the same wonders and miracles in their hometown. But Jesus did not; Jesus wanted them to understand that He did not come to solve all their problems at the flick of His finger. He wanted His town mates to believe and proclaim His gospel, exercise their prophetic gifts, and give their lives over to spreading of the gospel. Similarly, Jesus wants us to realize that the salvation of God is not a privilege reserved exclusively for members and disciples of Bukas Loob Sa Diyos (Open in Spirit to God) but for all peoples.

Isaiah 61:1-2 says - "*The Lord has anointed me to bring the good news... and to proclaim a year of favor from the Lord...*" Today, Jesus is asking for the kind of open-hearted love from us that He had hoped to find among the people of His time and place. We cannot love Jesus in an intellectual vacuum, or simply by repeating,

Continued on page 4

LORD'S PROVISION

PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,525	11,257

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mass Wedding or "Operation I do"

For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Deadline for submission of names: Feb. 1, 2013

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

	Date	Apostolate
	Feb 8	Mission
	Feb 15	Pastoral
	Feb 15	Evangelization
	Feb 22	Formation

COUNSELS *(continued from page3)*

"Lord, Lord" without internalizing and living out our faith. Our Catechism reminds us that we can even sin by being ungrateful, indifferent, or lukewarm toward God's love.

Prayer:

Lord, Jesus Christ, cause me to accomplish the mission you have called me to do and to exercise the spiritual gifts you have graciously given me in Your love. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

1. Do we practice our charisms despite the opposition we may sometimes encounter?
2. Do we get agitated or insulted when a brother's prophesy seeks to correct us or our community?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Continue to inspire others by your witnessing and living the word of God.
2. Strengthen your faith when you go to mission by reading and obeying the word of God diligently.
3. Take all the opportunity to evangelize and proclaim the word of God.

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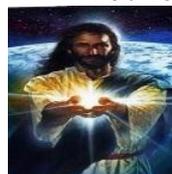
March 1 ~ Salubungan

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Feb 18-21 • La Trinidad. Benquet. Philippines



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WRITING (Counsels and Reflection Writing Workshop)

For: Worship Leaders/CN Editors

Date/Time: February 9, 2013 9:30 am - 7 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Connell Hall

Contacts: Fil/Hum Flores ~ word@bldnewark.com

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ mia@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco ~ caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

"It is not enough to discover Christ; you must bring Him to others." - Pope John Paul II





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 06

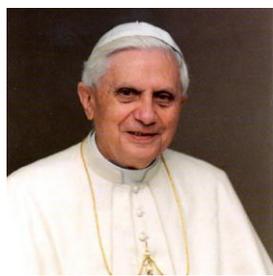
Bulletin Edition

February 8, 2013

NEWS

POPE BENEDICT'S LENTEN MESSAGE

Cardinal Robert Sarah Says Message Focuses on "Compelling Relationship between Faith and Charity"



VATICAN CITY, February 1, 2013 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)). The Holy Father's Lenten Message for 2013 was presented this morning in the Press Office of the Holy See. It is entitled: Believing in Charity Calls Forth Charity. Participating in the

press conference were Cardinal Robert Sarah, president of the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum", Msgr. Giampietro Dal Toso and Msgr. Segundo Tejado Munoz, secretary and undersecretary of that dicastery respectively, and Dr. Michael Thio, president general of the International Confederation-Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

"This year," Cardinal Sarah said, "the theme of the message focuses on the compelling relationship between faith and charity ... between believing in God, the God revealed by Jesus Christ, and the charity that is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that leads us to the horizon of a deeper openness to God and neighbor." Cardinal Sarah emphasized the Holy Father's message stating that there can be no true faith without action and that charity, which calls forth faith, can allow one to give witness.

"The center of this Lenten Message," the cardinal reiterated, "is certainly the indissoluble interrelation of faith and charity. We can never separate, let alone oppose, faith and charity. He said that just as faith and charity go together, so does Gospel and action go together.

Cardinal Sarah reiterated the Holy Father's message on the complementarity of faith and charity. "On the one hand, a life based solely on faith runs the risk of sinking into a banal sentimentality that reduces our relationship with God to mere consolation. On the other hand, a charity that kneels in adoration of God

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

GOD'S CALL

THEME: We proclaim God's word when we respond to His call to be fishers of men.

WORD: Isaiah 6: 1-2a, 3-8; Ps 138:1-5, 7, 8
1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5: 1-11

ORDER: "Put out into deep waters." (Lk 5: 4b)

REFLECTION:

Tonight, we meditate on three readings that describe God's call to three different men. They knew they were not worthy to be called by the Lord, but on hearing God's call all three men responded positively. They all said 'yes' to His call.

God called Isaiah, Paul and Peter. Different as each call and each called person was, the essential parts of the call are the same:

- (1) A call is God's undeserved grace. Whenever God calls, it is out of pure grace and not because of any special merit of the person called. Grace is the free gift of God. In our 2nd reading tonight, St Paul speaks of the cooperation with grace as believing the gospel and through it we are also being saved (1 Cor 15:2). And he adds: "*by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been ineffective.*" (1 Cor 15:10)

The called man objects. When God calls, man realizes his unworthiness. Isaiah realizes immediately he is "*a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips.*" (Is 6:5) Paul, looking back on his surprising call to proclaim the gospel, declares openly, "*...I am the least of the apostles; not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*" (1 Cor 15:9) Peter's humble reaction is the same: "*...Depart from me, Lord. For I am a sinful man.*" (Lk 5: 8)

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The Lord will complete what He had done for me..." (Ps 138:8)

THE FRUIT OF DISCIPLINE

“Endure your trials as “discipline”; God treats you as sons. For what “son” is there whom his father does not discipline?...we have had our earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them. Should we not (then) submit all the more to the Father of spirits and live? They disciplined us for a short time as seemed right to them, but he does so for our benefit, in order that we may share his holiness. At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.”
Hebrew 12:7-11

Why will God let people suffer hardship to achieve discipline? When I recall the hardships in my life – my spouse’s infidelity, my child’s rebellion, my stresses at work, and my friend’s betrayal- they also reminded me of the pain, humiliation, frustration, anger and desire for revenge that I felt in my heart.

I questioned our Heavenly Father, “Why me? Have I not been faithful through the years? Have I not diligently practiced my faith through daily prayers, communions, retreats, and by observing the holy days of obligations? Have I not been kind by giving alms to the needy and my time and talent to charitable causes? Do I not deserve Your love and graces? Why am I being punished and my spirit crushed?” How much more should I submit to the Father of my spirit and live! (Heb 12:9).

Despite the questioning, I did not lose faith but moved forward; I trusted God that in those moments of sorrow, He molded my spirit to remain steadfast. I surrendered my will to Him. I accepted my mistakes and admitted that I was not consistent in practicing my faith and showing my love for Him. I distanced myself from Him. My work became my priority. I became selfish and indulged in the comfort of material things.

After reconciling with God, I went back to my daily prayers. I gave up lunch as penance and attended daily mass. When the tears came down, I offered my pain at the foot of the cross. When I felt depressed, I prayed my Novenas to the Blessed Mother. When I was overcome by hatred, I meditated on the sorrowful mysteries and imagined how Jesus must have felt being rejected, abandoned, and nailed to the cross; yet he asked forgiveness on our behalf.

It took years before I realized that God was training me through my hardships so I could see my mistakes and improve myself. 

Come Away and Rest

“Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span?” (Matthew 6:27)

We all know that living our life in our own strength does not work! As we go through our daily lives, how do we keep up with all the demands of living? Are we carving out our own path, trying to control things beyond our control? Steering with our own will to make things happen? Does it seem like we could never catch up with all the work and things we do? It seems to me that there are just endless things to do, projects to finish, community issues to resolve, and temporal needs of the family, profession and community that need to be addressed. It is non-stop!

“The apostles gathered together with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” (Mark 6: 30-31a)

Called to have an abundant and fruitful life, in total dependence on God, Jesus invites us to come away by ourselves to a deserted place and rest a while. He is asking us to set ourselves apart from the issues of our daily life, be with Him, know Him more intimately, and let Him take full control of our lives. St. Paul shares that his overwhelming trials were given so that he may not trust in himself but in God who would deliver him. In the midst of our trials and difficulties, we realize that we, too, are given a chance to get closer to our God, to acknowledge Him as the true Giver of life, to trust that He will provide and meet all our needs,. He calls each one of us to have a fundamental child-like trust on His mercy and grace. What Jesus offers to each one of us is a life full of blessings every minute of the day.



“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.” (Philippians 4:6)

As we pray, listen and trust in the One Who gives us life, as we set aside time for God and rest in Him, we allow Him to grant us true peace that surpasses all understanding and joy that can only come from Him.

Through discipline, I can prepare myself mentally and morally for combat and shield myself from the works of evil...And I am hopeful that through God’s discipline, I can share in His holiness and attain peace.

DISCIPLING MINISTRY

The Discipling ministry welcomes the committed disciples who have completed the Aspirants' Retreat into another phase in their community life at BLD leading them to the sealing of their Covenant as Disciples. This phase, spread over a period of 6 months will require the disciple's commitment to attend a series of sessions with the Discipling Ministry. The ministry aims to:

- **Bring the disciple closer to maturity and to bear fruit in one's spiritual journey.** It is our goal to train an aspirant to be an effective soul winner, a dedicated, effective teacher of the Word and best of all, an effective "doer" of the Word.
- **Build and strengthen desired Christian behavioral patterns which Jesus has modeled to His disciples.** The disciples are encouraged to respond and share their thoughts on the topics related to personal, group and communitarian values and real life experiences in community during group meetings, plenary sessions and workshops scheduled every 4th Saturday of the month. These sessions offer an opportunity for the disciples to ask questions regarding their own walk with Christ, the Scripture, experience and attitude about their ministry and community as a whole.
- **Equip and encourage change of the disciples' perspectives on:**
 - a) Priorities from leadership to service and from secular to spiritual. The disciple is also encouraged to take up advocacy of Church and community causes that lead to a Christ centric life and focus on Spiritual leadership with Jesus as the model. Jesus fulfilled His ministry on earth in obedience to the Father's will. Thus good disciples are those who seek God's will and marshal their people to pursue God's plan.
 - b) Becoming a mentor, teacher and shepherd so that one will be better equipped for community life and enable one to disciple others.
- **Provide guidance in discernment leading the disciple to the sealing of Covenant.**

"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." (1 Peter 4:10-11)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

- (2) God calms down all fears and promises assistance. He even gives a sign that He is calling them. In a symbolic act of purification, a seraphim cleansed the lips of Isaiah and gave him the confidence to accept God's call. Paul encountered the Lord dramatically on the way to Damascus and fully accepted God's call after Ananias baptized him. Peter was impressed by a miracle in his own realm. After having caught nothing after a whole night of fishing, he caught so many fish because he believed and responded to Christ's words to *"put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch."* (Lk 5:4b) That showed Peter that he was standing in the presence of the Holy One.
 
- (3) The called person accepts. God's call has to be accepted, even if one has misgivings, objections and doubts about the call. Isaiah, called the choleric prophet, wholeheartedly accepts: *"Here I am,... send me."* (Is 6:8). Whatever Paul did, he did wholeheartedly. With all his strength he had persecuted the church. With the same zeal and total dedication, he now placed himself at the disposal of Christ and considered everything a loss in order to win Christ (Phil 3:8). Peter, upon accepting Christ's call, left everything and followed the Lord (Lk 5:11).

Today, the Lord 'gets into our boat' and calls each of us to ministry. Isaiah is called in order to be sent. Peter is called in order to gather others to Jesus. So it is with us. Our Lord calls us in the defining moments of our daily lives, whether we are waiting to pick up the kids from basketball practice, or checking our emails and text messages with our iphones, ipad, and tablets, working in the office or travelling on the road, with five talents or with three or with one. Just as important is our call to a life of personal holiness lived in union with God. We are called to be His instruments to bring the compassion and justice of God to a world that needs it desperately. It is natural for us to raise objections, and most of our reasons for declaring ourselves unworthy are probably valid. But, the Lord knows all about them and calls us anyway. He even overrides our fears and doubts and tells us "Do not be afraid."

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (continued from page 3)

Thus, with His words of assurance, let us have the faith and plunge right in, into deep water – into friendship with Him, into holiness. Let us respond to His call for us to be “fishers of men”, without getting tangled in the nets of our rationalizations and justifications. And as we follow the Lord, let us drop those nets altogether, leave them behind and pick up the net of love that the Lord provides.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be obedient to God’s call to discipleship.
2. Do not be afraid to answer the call to serve.

NEWS (continued from page 1)

without taking into account the source from which it springs and to which every good deed must be directed, is likely to be reduced to mere philanthropy, to mere ‘moral activism’,” the Cardinal said.

Concluding his remarks, Cardinal Sarah said that the Holy Father's message is timely not only because it falls during the Year of Faith, but also because the Holy Father's words come at a time in history when humanity “struggles to recognize itself and to find a path to the future. The Church can thus be the beacon of a renewed humanity and contribute to the coming of the ‘Civilization of Love’,” Cardinal Sarah said.

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,375	14,632

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

"The Gospel is not merely a communication of things that can be known - it is one that makes things happen and is life-changing. The dark door of time, of the future, has been thrown open. The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life." - Pope Benedict XVI

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Feb 15	Pastoral
			Feb 22	Evangelization
			Mar 1	Formation
			Mar 8	Management

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

Feb 15 - LSS Orientation (Four Basic Truth 2) – ME/SPE/SE

Feb 16* - Christian Parenting - ME 40/SPE 14

Siena Gift Inventory – LSS 34-37

Feb 23* - Shepherds Refresher Course – LSS Shepherds

SM Teaching/BBS – Singles

SM Teaching/CMP 2 - Singles

Time: Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

2013 Medical Mission

Feb 18-21 • La Trinidad, Benquet, Philippines



May the light of Christ shine on all involved in this extraordinary task, and that they all come together for the sole purpose Christ is bringing them there.

May God be praised! AMEN

YOUTH LSS # 18

March 1-3 • Divine Mercy Church/Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Youth Ministry Coordinators (yms@bldnewark.com)

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 ~ Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway

March 1 ~ Salubungan

Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again).

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

When: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ mela@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco ~ caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

"It is not enough to discover Christ; you must bring Him to others." – Pope John Paul II

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

 *Mass Wedding or "Operation I do"*

For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Deadline for submission of names: Feb. 1, 2013

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:

[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 7

Bulletin Edition

February 15, 2013

YEAR OF FAITH

COUNSELS

Article 1: I Believe (CCC 144-165)

Bring The Flock Back To The Fold!

A background

During the Year of Faith, Catholics are asked to study and reflect on the documents of Vatican II and the catechism so that they may deepen their knowledge of the faith. There is a “summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the One Savior of the world”.

How do we start?

We start by learning to obey. To obey (Lat. Ob-audire, to “hear” or “listen to”) in faith is to submit freely to the word of God. The models of our faith: Abraham is the model of obedience and became the “father of all who believe”, Mary is the ‘perfect embodiment of obedience’, while Jesus is the ‘pioneer and perfecter of our faith’.

What is faith?

“*Faith is the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen.*” (Hebrews 11:1) Abraham fulfilled this definition by his strong faith in God. Mary never wavered in her faith in the Lord and in the fulfillment of His word.

Then what? We believe and we know

We are all called to believe in the Blessed Trinity: in God the Almighty, in Jesus Christ, the only Son of God and in the Holy Spirit, who reveals that Jesus is Lord.

Characteristics of Faith

1. Faith is a grace. It is a gift of God, a supernatural virtue provided by Him.
2. Faith is a human act. While it is true that believing is possible with the help of the Holy Spirit, it is also is a human act, cooperating with divine grace.
3. Faith is certain. It is based on the Word of God who cannot lie.
4. Faith seeks understanding. It is essential for a believer to know the One whom he has put his faith and trust in; it is the Holy Spirit who perfects faith.

Continued on page 4

- THEME:** We proclaim God’s word when we worship Him and Him alone.
- WORD:** Dt 26:4-10; Ps 91:1, 2, 10-15; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13
- ORDER:** Confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord.

REFLECTION:

The readings for this First Sunday of Lent form a common thread highlighting God’s love for us through self-sacrifice, prayer, fasting, and offering of oneself for the sole purpose of saving others.

The First Reading shows a very good example of how God looks after His people. Through Moses, God freed the Israelites from slavery with terrifying power, with great signs and wonders, but also making sure they remained humble. The Psalm and the Second Reading emphasize God’s saving power and our duty to put God first in our lives through constant obedience, praise, and worship. In the Psalm, God delivers those who are in trouble, assuring us that He is always there for us, thus, we will never be put to shame. In the Second Reading, St. Paul assures us that God saves those who believe and confess with their hearts that Jesus is Lord, and those who worship Him and Him alone. Further, the Gospel speaks of God Himself. God humbled Himself and became man to show humanity His infinite love and mercy. Through Jesus Christ’s example of prayer, sacrifice, and fasting, we are all invited to share this intimacy with God our Father.

We are in the world and we need these spiritual tools to function. Jesus spent 40 days fasting in order to prepare for His ministry

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“*I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he acknowledges my name.*” (Psalm 91:14)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

RECTITUDE OF INTENTION

“...Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them...you will not have no recompense from your heavenly Father...When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you...when you pray ... fast, you must not be like the hypocrites...” (Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18)

Jesus reaffirms three traditional works of mercy honored by Jews (Tobit 12:8-10): almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. These three are the cardinal works of expressing our interior penance which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others, directing them to the “Father who sees in secret”, instead of the desire to “be seen by men”. CCC 1434, 1969

Jesus pointed to the heart of the matter: be careful not to make a show of your righteousness before people, of self-seeking glory, the preoccupation with looking good and seeking praise from others.

Dishonesty of intention is grave, sinful and ridiculous if happening in actions such as prayer, fasting or alms, as these are pious and charitable deeds, that per se, we carry out for the love of God.

How could we please God if we are trying to be seen in order to be praised by others instead of directly addressing our good deeds to God? A coherent testimony of our piety, if seen by others, is acceptable since the exercise of one's faith can be public, so long as it flows from proper intentions. (Matthew 5:16)

In community, if we are preoccupied by how others perceive our spirituality instead of focusing on Jesus, we only produce vanity in our lives. To shun performance-oriented desires, we must be evangelized deeply in the knowledge of God and absorb His Word in our hearts with authenticity. Otherwise if we are not *“on our guard while the promise of entering into his rest remains”*, (Hebrew 4:1) we will not enter into His rest. Sin separates us from God and community but only Jesus will bring us back to God and community.

It is not about us but about Jesus in our hearts. The Lord gives us His Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds that we may grow in His truth and in the knowledge of His great love for each of us. If we approach God's Word submissively, we are in a better position to learn what God wants to teach us through His Word.

Let us reflect on our inner purity, not just external compliance. Pleasing God must be through ways that stem from sincere motives. True piety is something more than feeling good or looking holy. True piety is loving devotion to God. It is an attitude of awe, reverence, worship and obedience. It is a gift and the working of the Holy Spirit that enables us to →

Hurricane Sandy Got Me Big Time

Isaiah 58:11-12a says *“Then the Lord will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails. The ancient ruins shall be rebuilt for your sake, and the foundations from ages past you shall raise up...”*

On October 28th at 8pm, we were in our dining room eating by candlelight--the power was out, the wind was blowing hard; Hurricane Sandy was upon us. Suddenly we heard a loud crash! Everything fell around us. I felt the ceiling hit my head, debris all over our body then... quiet. “Pa! Pa! Ma! Ma! Are you ok?” We heard our children shout through the pitch black. The huge tree fell right on top of us--miraculously, my flimsy wall unbelievably held up! Everybody was ok. A few more inches and we both would've been gone. “Thank you Lord, but what is this Lord?” A question that continuously came up as we started to gather ourselves in the coming days.

God in His infinite wisdom decided to answer all our prayers with one giant tree! Our old house needed a major makeover, you name it we needed it. And over the years, we'd collected countless junk we needed to get rid of. The tree ruined the furniture given to us and the bed frame I made. Prior to all of this, our house was about to go into foreclosure, but because I lost my job, it allowed me to modify my loan. As soon as I was able to fulfill my trial period, Sandy hit.

Our house will be renovated, bedroom and dining room sets replaced, all the junk has been disposed of and more... God answers prayers in so many different ways. We accept all things as they come, in difficult or fun times, everything is accepted because we know and we trust that God will always take care of His people. And, in our gratitude to Him, we will continue to persevere in God's vineyard, His Church, our BLD community.

“‘Repairer of the breach.’ They shall call you, ‘Restorer of ruined homesteads.’ —Then you shall delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will nourish you with the heritage of Jacob, your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” (Isaiah 58: 12b, 14)

devote our lives to God with a holy desire to please Him in all things (Isaiah 11:1-2). We must seek Him expectantly in prayer, with fasting, and in generous giving to those in need.

Shepherd's Voice

In Luke 5:4, Jesus, a carpenter, is telling Simon, a professional fisherman, "***Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.***"

Many married couples, solo parents, singles, youth, and others answered the call "come and see" our community through encounters and Life in the Spirit seminars. In Formation, they were nourished by community teachings, retreats, reunions and seminars leading to their covenanting. Some became leaders of the community, DCS, DLC, some come and go while others quietly work in different ministries and in their respective parishes.

The Bukas Loob sa Diyos is a wonderful training ground to know more about the Lord, to get closer to the Lord, to develop a relationship with the Lord, and to develop one's spirituality and have a spiritual direction in life.

There were years when we had a community of about 600 families. Attendance was always good. The church was filled to capacity during the First Friday Eucharistic Celebration and of course, contributions were in the 4,000 dollars range every Friday sometimes even more. There were times when we had at least 31 couples in each Marriage Encounter graduating class.

Those were the days, my dear brothers and sisters, now Marriage Encounters, and other Encounters except for the Solo Parents' Encounters are dwindling. Attendance is becoming less and less and of course, our contributions are also dwindling.

Now in Luke 5:4, the Lord Jesus is telling us "***Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.***" What are we to do? Are we like Simon in our answer; "***Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets?***" (Luke 5:5)

Simon was not really ready to understand and follow the instruction of Jesus who just temporarily borrowed his boat to preach on the shore of Tiberias. But we, on the other hand, have been through formation and most of us are already covenanted members of community. We already know Jesus and have a relationship with Him.

What do we understand by "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch?" To put it bluntly, Jesus wants us to go out there and spread the good news and bring our friends, relatives, co-workers and even our co-parishioners to join the community. This we can do by our action and by the use of words when needed. We cannot afford to stay in shallow water for it is only in the deep where the best catch is found. In other words, we cannot just evangelize ourselves. We need to go out.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

because He too was in the world. By fasting, Jesus is praying to the Father to gain the spiritual strength to remain steadfast in His mission. He is offering the first fruits of His labor to His Father.

Jesus is asking us to follow His example, to be faithful and be fruitful in offering and sharing our tithes and love offering with the community; to offer our love, our sacrifice, our prayer, our very self to God; and to attain what is really important in life. Also, Jesus wants us to be His hands and feet in bringing back His people, to show to those whom we come in contact with that we are His disciples, the joyful and redeemed people of God.

Evidently, it is God who does it all, but He wants us to participate with the same compassion, the same love, and the same desire as Jesus had. God does not need us because He is all powerful, but He cannot change and use us mightily unless we give Him permission to all aspects of our lives, unless we put away the old self of our former way of life, and be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and put on the new self, created in His image (Eph 4:22a, 23a).

We have been called to be transformed and to serve. One of BLD's primary goals since its conception is to bring back our nominal Catholic brethren who abandoned their faith or felt rejected by the Church and community, and this can be achieved through various encounters and seminars our community sponsors. This is part of the "New Evangelization" our Holy Father requested us to participate in.

It is a fact that the next biggest group of a religious congregation after Catholics is Ex-Catholics. Therefore, the field is ripe for the harvest. We are evangelizers; this is one of the main purposes of BLD, this is what God wants us to do for Him. If we look back, how many people were we able to bring to the community? If this is one of our main purposes, how far did we go in recruiting and bringing our brothers and sisters back into the fold of God's loving arms? I know of people who have brought in more than 7 couples. This should be the perfect number for us to follow or more.

God is trying to get our attention to the fact that we are not truly participating in "New Evangelization" unless we bring back the people of His flock. Let us now take action to bring our brethren back to the fold!

Dear Lord Jesus, You sacrificed Your life for us that we may be saved. You showed us that we must follow Your example and have called us to be transformed into Your likeness. Grant us the wisdom and grace to fulfill the vow we promised You, to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. To show others the glory of the Catholic Church, the true Church You have established on earth. **Continued on page 4**

COUNSELS (from page 3)

Mother Mary, hear our prayers and continually lead us to Your most Holy Son, Jesus Christ, Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be faithful in observing your Lenten offerings of fasting, abstinence, prayer and almsgiving.
2. Be faithful in offering your first fruits (time, talent and treasure).

I Believe (from page 1)

5. Faith and science have no conflict. They can never be in conflict, because it is the same God who reveals mysteries, provides faith and gives the light of reasoning to the human mind, for God cannot deny Himself.
6. Faith is freedom. Faith is an entirely free gift that God makes to man. Man's response by faith to God must be of free-will, not forced nor coerced.
7. Faith is necessary. Believing in Christ Jesus and in God is necessary for our salvation.
8. Perseverance in faith is needed. In order to achieve this, we must nourish it with God's word.
9. Faith is the beginning of eternal life. It is through faith that we have a foretaste of God's plan for us – to see Him face-to-face in His heavenly kingdom.

The order: "Jesus said 'Do not be afraid; just have faith.'" (Mark 5:36)

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	No worship	14,632

Financial details are available to all members through
treasury@bldnewark.com

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

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For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
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Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Feb 22	Evangelization
			Mar 1	Formation
			Mar 8	Management
			Mar 15	Mission

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Feb 16*** - Christian Parenting - ME 40/SPE 14
Siena Gift Inventory - LSS 34-37
- Feb 23*** - Shepherds Refresher Course - LSS Shepherds
SM Teaching/BBS - Singles
SM Teaching/CMP 2 - Singles
- Mar 15** - John 6 Teaching
Intercessory Formation - ME 37/SPE
- Mar 16*** - Encounter with Jesus (Luke & John) - LSS 1-39
Understanding Corporate Worship/Healing and Deliverance - LSS 1-37
- Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

2013 Medical Mission

Feb 18-21 • La Trinidad, Benquet, Philippines



May the light of Christ shine on all involved in this extraordinary task, and that they all come together for the sole purpose Christ is bringing them there. May God be praised! AMEN

YOUTH LSS # 18

March 1-3 • Divine Mercy Church/Auditorium, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Youth Ministry Coordinators (yms@bldnewark.com)

WORSHIP LEADER'S FORUM

For: Worship Leaders from Adults, Solo Parents and Singles Ministries & Praise Ministry Members.

When: March 9, 2013

Time: 1-5 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Library

Contacts: Caesar & Vicky Rasalan: crasalan@optonline.net

Attendance is mandatory!

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 ~ Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway

March 1 ~ Salubungan

Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again). **Contacts:**

Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

When: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ mia@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco ~ caseytanseco@hotmail.com

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"It is not enough to discover Christ; you must bring Him to others." – Pope John Paul II



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 8

Bulletin Edition

February 22, 2013

NEWS

Pope Benedict XVI: Pray for Me and Pray for the Next Pope Thousands Gather in St. Peter's Square to Express Love and Support to Pontiff

Vatican City, Feb. 18, 2013 (Zenit.org). Junno Arocho Esteves

On Sunday, Pope Benedict XVI greeted an estimated 100,000 pilgrims who gathered for the midday Angelus in St. Peter's Square. The 85-year-old Pontiff thanked the faithful for their continuing prayer and support. Recalling the start of Lent, which began with the traditional distribution of ashes, Pope Benedict reminded the faithful that the Holy Season is a time of conversion and preparation for Easter. "The Church, who is mother and teacher, calls all of her members to renew themselves spiritually, to reorient themselves toward God, renouncing pride and egoism to live in love", the Pope said.

"In this Year of Faith, Easter is a favorable time to rediscover faith in God as a basic criterion for our life and the life of the Church. This always means a struggle, a spiritual combat, because the evil spirit naturally opposes our sanctification and seeks to turn us away from the path to God. That is why each year, on the first Sunday of Lent, the Gospel narrative of Jesus' temptation in the desert is proclaimed."

Continuing his address on Sunday's Gospel, Pope Benedict stated that the temptations by the devil were necessary for Christ to "unmask and reject the false images of the Messiah that the tempter proposed to him". The Holy Father went on to say that the three temptations of Christ were also false images of man that are disguised as suitable, and "even good proposals".

"The nucleus of these temptations always consists in instrumentalizing God for our own interests, giving more importance to success or to material goods", the Holy Father said. "The tempter is clever: he does not direct us immediately toward evil but toward a false good; making us believe that power and things that satiate primary needs are what is most real." "In this manner", he continued, "God becomes secondary; he is reduced to a means, he becomes unreal, he no longer counts, he disappears. In the final

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

CHRIST, THE CENTER OF OUR LIFE

THEME: We proclaim God's word when we heed Him.

**WORD: Gn 15:5-12, 17,18/Ps 27:1,7-9, 13,14
Phil 3:17-4:1 or 3:20-4:1/Lk 9:28-36**

ORDER: This is my chosen Son. Listen to Him.

REFLECTION:

"*This is My Chosen Son, listen to Him!*" These were God's words that seemed to sternly remind and rebuke Peter about His reaction to the appearance of Jesus flanked by Moses and Elijah in this account of Christ's Transfiguration in Mt. Tabor.

The Gospel's narration of how Christ allowed Peter, James and John to have a glimpse of the glory of God and of heaven, and Peter's seemingly ill-conceived proposal to build a tent for these three very important and central figures in their lives, rather than soaking himself in the wondrously magnificent glory that was before him is similar to the story of Martha and Mary. Mary had the better part for staying beside Jesus, while Martha was too preoccupied with the temporal comfort of Jesus and His companions.

When a king, a leader of a nation or somebody very important in our lives suddenly shows up at our doorstep, we do not run to the kitchen or to the bedroom to prepare something for that person. We stay as close to him and spend as much time to savor his presence and listen to every word that comes out of his mouth. We freeze that moment in our memory and in our hearts, for it could be a fleeting and once-in-a-lifetime experience. The passion and death of Christ is impending. Christ foresees that many of His followers would soon give up and be scattered in fear or disillusionment because their expectations of a Messiah--a mighty king with legions of soldiers bringing untold wealth to liberate them both from their occupiers and temporal needs, and providing earthly joy and abundance--does not appear to be what they see in the character of Jesus.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body." (Philippians 3:21)

GOD'S WORD ACCOMPLISHES

“So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; It shall not return to me empty, but shall do what pleases me, achieving the end for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)

I always emphasize to my students that the Word of God is powerful and effective. Anything that comes from God's mouth bears fruit when heard by someone who listens through his or her heart and acts on it.

The story of our salvation is replete with proofs that the word of God does not return void. It started when God said to the stiff-necked Israelites: ***“I myself will pasture my sheep; The lost I will search out, the strays I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, and the sick I will heal; but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd them in judgment”*** (Ez. 34:15). He also said: ***“I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you so that you walk in my statutes, observe my ordinances and keep them. You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors; you will be my people and I will be your God.”*** (Ez. 36:26-28). In both of these, God the Father meant to send His own Son Jesus to shepherd us and for the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts. And they all came to pass.

Yet God needed a person or *per-sonare* to be the vessel through whom His Words will come to pass: the Virgin Mary. From her heart she heard God's word through Gabriel that she would be the Mother of God and she acted it: ***“Let it be done, Lord, according to Thy Word.”*** Her purity of heart, her humility, obedience and love of God saved us from condemnation, because Jesus, The Word, became flesh dwelt among us, died on the cross for our sins, resurrected and ascended to God the Father in heaven. As a sounding board of God's Word, Mary's only recorded direct speech in the bible in reference to Jesus' first miracle on earth was: ***“Do whatever He tells you.”*** (Jn. 2:5), and water turned to wine.

“Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.” (Heb. 4:12) Twenty years ago when we said YES that we would start the BLD community in Newark, we knew our unquestioning obedience was key to making it happen. We did not have funds to start with, but we listened to God through our leaders, and we prayed a lot. A miracle happened. BLD NJ grew in number and in its outreaches. Truly, God's Word never returns to Him empty.

A Contrite Heart

“My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit; a contrite humbled heart, O God, you will not scorn.” (Psalm 51:19)

For me, Lent is a season of reflection, introspection and spending more time with my God, who sacrificed His life for me to have life. Hence, these Lenten days, I wish to spend them prayerfully as I relive the last few days of Jesus Christ as a human being, culminating in His passion and death more than 2000 years ago.

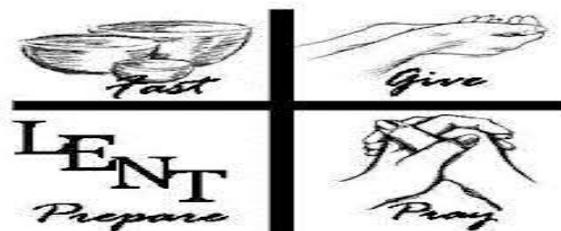
During one dinner conversation by the kids, I overheard them talking about what they were giving up for Lent. Looking into what each of the kids was sharing, I felt admiration at what was coming from the “mouth of babes”. The things that they were giving up for Lent were really hard, from their perspective. What I gathered from the conversation was that I should look at myself and compare the things that I am giving up for Lent. Is my sacrifice in the same league as what the kids are doing? Am I offering something to share in the pain that my Lord went through? Sadly, I realized that my “sacrifice” is not even close to that being offered by my kids.

In preparation for this season of Lent, I realize that I need to pray more, ask for the Lord's guidance to undergo spiritual cleansing starting off by going to confession and a sincere renewal, and have a good examination of conscience. With the Lord's help, I need to dig deep into things that could have offended Him and ask for forgiveness. Hopefully, with God's grace, I will not repeat the sin, but if I stumble and fall, I will be able to stand and atone for them again.

Quoting from the refrain of a song written by Manoling V Francisco, SJ;

***“In my heart I know my Savior lives;
I can hear Him calling tenderly my name
Over sin and death He has prevailed;
In His glory, in His new life we partake.”***

Dear Lord, lead me to be humble and with bended knees, I ask for Your forgiveness. Let me have a contrite heart and become a person that shows Jesus in me. Help me empty my heart so that You will reign and live within. I long to live my life here on earth spent with You that when the time comes when I am called, I will partake of the promised eternal life in Your kingdom. Amen.



I WILL LOVE YOU AS GOD ASKED ME TO DO

It has been 12 years now since I started to learn more about God through our beloved BLD community. The teachings provided stirred my interest in knowing Jesus and loving Him and consequently, learning to embrace servitude, all for His greater glory. Although the BLD community is not a place of perfection, its imperfections have taught me to become closer to God. Indeed, the failures and limitations of human encounters have given the Christian comprehension a spiritual dimension of life intertwined with the human flaws.

Life is all about relationships - relationship with God and relationship with our neighbors. One of the struggles I have, even up to now, is how to succumb to God's will when I experience relational problems. Oftentimes I neglect to recognize the presence and the role of the sanctifying grace in all areas of my life.

Leviticus 19:17 says, ***"You shall not hate any of your kindred in your heart. Reprove your neighbor openly so that you do not incur sin because of that person."*** This command gives us the opportunity to cling to holiness. As I commit to become a disciple of Christ, I realized that there is a necessity to imbibe the two greatest commandments summarized by our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 22:37-39), ***"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."***

The first step of obedience to these laws is humility. St. Teresa of Avila once said that true humility is recognition of our limitation and knowing that God can do all things for us. She also said that true humility neither disquiets nor troubles nor disturbs the soul but is accompanied by peace, joy and tranquility. I must say that when I labor with true love for Jesus Christ, I genuinely experience this inner peace, striving to understand and forgive my neighbor's shortcomings, and also ultimately embracing the responsibility to correct them gently. This gives me that sense of freedom from any negative emotions, resting in His loving comfort with inner peace and joy.

Heavenly Father, please grant me the courage to walk side by side with Your Son Jesus Christ and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit as I aim to grow each day in Your Image and Likeness. In times of joy, I will rejoice with You; and in times of trouble, I will persevere with You. Amen.



***"Look at His adorable face.
Look at His glazed and sunken eyes.
Look at His wounds.
Look Jesus in the Face.
There, you will see how He loves us."***
~ St. Therese of Lisieux

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

Although the twelve apostles are still Christ's most faithful followers, He knows that they too would be put to the test and they will be scattered.

The transfiguration on Mt. Tabor where Christ's body is transfigured into a glorious manifestation of indescribable glory, wrapped in a dazzling white light, is but a flash of what is yet to come, which is to see Him and be with Him in His eternal kingdom in heaven. Moses and Elijah, who appear by Christ's side, are two central figures of the Old Testament representing the Law and Prophets of their faith. Peter immediately proposes to Jesus that they build a tent for each one of them, but before he finishes his sentence, they are covered with a cloud, and God speaks: ***"This is My Chosen Son, listen to Him!"***

This Gospel reminds us that when Jesus the Son of God is present, our utmost focus should be exclusively centered on Him and Him alone. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, is ever present in our lives. We should always conduct our lives as an offering to God. The first Reading reminds us so, that as God made His covenant to Abram to make him father of all nations, God asked of him for an offering. In the 2nd Reading, Paul, likewise, reminds us that we are of Christ. We are citizens of heaven, and we should conduct ourselves as such. He tells us that we should focus on serving Christ and doing His will and not be easily distracted by other things. The Gospel clearly shows us that even as Peter, James and John are standing before a glorified Christ, Peter's attention to Jesus is distracted by the presence of Moses and Elijah, both significant figures to them, and is not totally comprehending that in their presence is the Messiah, the one that all of their people have been waiting for, accompanied by two of the Judaic figures that God sent ahead to prepare the way of Christ's coming. Their presence might be significant in the context of a reminder of what they stand for in relation to the promised kingdom, but they are inconsequential, at that point, in the presence of the Son of God.

In the presence of Christ, everything is insignificant. That is why God reminds the apostles once more, as He did at Jesus' baptism, that the only thing that really matters is the presence of Christ. This time His reminder is not to introduce who Christ is, but to bring them to their senses that before them is their Savior, their King, their Messiah, the Son of God...God Himself. The laws of Moses and Elijah's prophecies do not matter anymore, for before them in all His glory stands the Son of God, the embodiment of His Law and the promised Messiah.

This is how we should conduct ourselves as we live our lives. When the world's demands are pitted against the requirements to be a follower of Christ, everything becomes inconsequential. No human being can be more important than Christ. No human teaching is more important than Christ's teaching. No law is more important than the Law of God. ***Continued on page 4***

COUNSELS *(continued from page 3)*

The promise of a Messiah is no longer a promise because Christ, who is with us always, is the fulfillment of that promise.

Our community should stand together as a body committed only to the glory of Christ and not what each ministry perceives of its separate role in building the glory of God here on earth. By coming together, complementing, rather than competing with each other, we will be able to provide to ourselves and to all our brethren a heavenly happiness inspired by the glory of the presence of Christ in our lives. As we continue to build our community, and spread the Word of God, let us not be bogged down by human rules, laws, protocols and procedures, for in declaring Christ's presence, all it takes is to believe in it and to tell others about it with boldness and conviction and the simplicity of proclaiming it. As Catholics, our effort to bring the glory of heaven here on earth is not something that we have to do, but is an ever present gift from God, that is, always waiting for us in the Holy Eucharist. Unlike Peter, James and John, we do not have to climb Mt. Tabor to experience that glory.

In the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, transfiguration occurs at the very moment when the bread and wine is transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. The glory of God becomes visible to those present at Mass, and our heart, mind and spirit become united to acknowledge Christ's physical presence. For this reason, we should always bear in mind that it is not the altar that we should put our focus on, but rather, our whole being should be centered on who is present in the altar. Likewise, our community's goal should not end in how beautifully we have prepared the altar of our ministries and ourselves for Christ, but to steadfastly work hard to bring others to join us in having Christ in the center of their lives.

DIRECTIONS:

1. SPEND MORE TIME IN CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER.
2. BE IMITATORS OF CHRIST.

NEWS *(continued from page 1)*

analysis, faith is what is at stake in temptations because God is at stake. In the decisive moments of life and, in fact, in every moment of life, we are faced with a choice: do we want to follow the 'I' or God? Do we want to follow individual interest or rather the true Good, that which is really good?"

Recalling the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, Pope Benedict stated that temptations in the desert are the manifestation of Jesus' descent in our human condition, a descent that Jesus followed to the point of death. The Holy Father encouraged the faithful to not only be afraid to fight against the devil's temptation, but more importantly, to do it with Christ, "the Victor" and to turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary and "invoke her with filial confidence in the hour of trials".

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Feb 23*** - Shepherds Refresher Course – LSS Shepherds
SM Teaching/BBS – Singles
SM Teaching/CMP 2 – Singles
- Mar 15** - John 6 Teaching
Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE
- Mar 16*** - Encounter with Jesus (Luke & John) – LSS 1-39
Understanding Corporate Worship/Healing and Deliverance – LSS 1-37
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Service Formation – ME 38/SPE
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For: Worship Leaders from Adults, Solo Parents & Singles Ministries & Praise Ministry Members
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Time: 1-5 pm
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Attendance is mandatory!

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For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.
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Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church
Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza: [908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449)/bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

MARSHALING SCHEDULE

March 1, 2013 ~ FORMATION

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,976	17,608

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

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 9

Bulletin Edition

March 1, 2013

YEAR OF FAITH

COUNSELS

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH “We Believe”

LIVING LESSONS OF LENT

As we move through the initial pages of the Catholic Catechism, the very important element of faith is considered. Interestingly, section 166 and following, which deals with the person making an act of faith, begins with the title “**We Believe**”. We are aware that the new translation of the Nicene Creed we profess at Mass begins with “**I believe**”. Thus, there is the question as to whether I or we believe. Obviously, the answer is both.

Faith is a personal act as well as a communal act. Communal or Church faith depends upon the committed faith of the individual Christian. Faith is brought into existence through the action of the Holy Spirit. For example, a person hears a truth proclaimed in a homily or informally from another person who may be attempting to explain a Christian teaching or mystery. The receiving person hears, reflects, begins to apply; the Holy Spirit touches the mind and will of the listener, and voila, we have an act of faith.

The mystery of faith is that it is a free act of the will while at the same time, since it is supernatural, it is a gift given by the action of God directly touching the inner soul of the person. The creedal formulas are merely the external words that are formed to express the inner adherence of the soul to God. Thus, we have the Nicene-Constantinople creed put together by the assembly of bishops in 325, in theologically precise words, expressing the faith of the church as well as the individual’s adherence to the truth contained in the words. The more ancient creed is the Apostles’ Creed which we say at the beginning of the rosary, and which we are encouraged to say at Mass during this season of Lent.

There is an objective reality about the formulas of faith. The formulas express truth, which admittedly cannot be completely explained in human words. The teaching authority of the Church (the Magisterium) protects not only the formulas, but the interpretation of creeds, which form the remainder of the Catholic

Continued on page 4

WORD: Being a community of believers, we are raised with Christ as we reform our ways and bear fruit.

ORDER: “Go, and from now on, do not sin anymore.” (John 8:11)

REFLECTION (excerpt from ECSL’s monthly reflection):

Although the chance to renew our lives, re-examine our values and review the choices we make is always open to us, it is in the context of and within community that we, as believers, can take a fresh look at our vision, renew our commitment, and reform our ways, especially during the Lenten season. Our call from Christ is best seen through the lens of our Christian relationships and the examples we see among His other faithful followers.

As we turn to the Holy Spirit, new avenues open out to us. We receive the courage to start anew with the Lord, whose resurrection assures us, not only of an infinitely better future, but of the grace to pursue that future. Easter is a time to rediscover our personal relationship with the Risen Christ. It is a privilege no one can take away from us. Despite our failures, Lent assures us that in Jesus, we can claim victory in life. We can tap the power of Christ through fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

For the 3rd Sunday in Lent, the Gospel of Luke strips away the worldly trappings of power and wealth, poverty and suffering, and calls all people to repentance. The parable of the fig tree shows the extent of the Father’s patience and love, reminding us yet again that in God there are no hopeless cases or situations. God always waits for better responses from us. His invitation calls us into an even closer communion with our,

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

**“I have come down to rescue them...
and lead them ... into a good and spacious
land, a land flowing with milk and honey.”**

(Exodus 3:8)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

THE SERVANT IN ME



“But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of

Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20: 26-28)

Perhaps the most common way the world defines greatness is through accomplishments. In today’s connected world, it might mean the one who invents the latest and greatest gadgets and devices that let you connect to anyone, anywhere in the world and do as you wish without leaving your couch. It could mean athletes who accomplish world-record achievements that push the limits of the human body. It could mean scientists who continue to find ways to move the frontiers of human science. It could mean ordinary people who rise up, rescue and protect the helpless, the downtrodden and the poor. It could be the soldiers who are in the frontlines protecting us from the evils of terrorism and anarchy.

However, the people who truly become great are the ones who serve with humility. This is exactly what Jesus tells us. He says *“...whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant, whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.”* (Matthew 20:26b-27) Jesus, the greatest man to ever exist, says He didn’t come to be served; He came to serve.

Personally, I think serving is the essence of becoming a Christian, a follower of Jesus. When we decide to follow Jesus and seek to do His will, we become good witnesses; and people see Him, the true servant, in us. It is Jesus that helps us carry our burden, and gives us strength and power to carry forward and serve others without hesitation, without fear.

Jesus paid the ultimate price of serving: He gave His life *“...as a ransom for many.”* (Matthew 20:28b) He gave His life because He loved us. He gave His life to redeem us from our sin. He gave His life to free us from the wrath of God. *“Hence, now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”* (Romans 8:1).

Truly, this is the greatest example of true servanthood! Jesus is asking us to follow His example and embrace His humility. We need to always abide in His love so we will be a servant to those we encounter every moment of our lives. Only through Jesus will we see the Kingdom of Heaven. *“For there is one God. There is also one mediator between God and the human race, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself as ransom for all.”* (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

On Living a Moral Life



“There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered

with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores.” (Luke 16:19-21)

What would it take to live a moral life? I imagine we would need guidelines. Luke’s Gospel does not tell us much about the rich man at whose door Lazarus lay (cf Luke 16: 19-21). We know he was rich and spent a lot of money on fine clothing and good food; apart from that we do not know how else he spent each day. Luke also tells us little about Lazarus, a homeless man who did not have the means to take care of himself and who, we can imagine, went hungry a lot, as even the table scraps were something he aspired to. And yet we know that upon their demise, Lazarus goes to heaven and the rich man ends up tormented in the netherworld. You must wonder why Jesus told us this parable. Is being rich equivalent to not living a moral life?

There is a natural moral law that is written in the soul of every man ordaining him to do good. In order for this to happen, our human reason must be subject to a higher reason to which our spirit and our freedom must be submitted. The natural law is a participation in God’s wisdom. (CCC1978) This “divine and natural” law shows man the way to follow in order to practice goodness. It hinges upon the desire for God and submission to Him, who is the source and judge of all that is good, as well as the sense that the other is one’s equal. (CCC 1955)

Now, while all men enjoy equal dignity, not all men have equal talents. These differences belong to the plan of God, who wills that those endowed with particular talents share the benefits with those who need them. (CCC 1937.) This inequality should encourage us to practice generosity and charity. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ expressed a new law in the Beatitudes. It is a law of love. The Beatitudes shed light on the actions and characteristics of a Christian life. (CCC 1717) They also provide a clue as to why Lazarus and the rich man ended up in very different places.

The Beatitudes reveal the goal of human existence: to know, to love and to serve God. Beatitude makes us partakers of divine nature. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, but in God alone, the source of all good and of all love. (CCC 1723)



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS (from page 1)

What about this “new Evangelization”?

We probably have some idea about evangelization, but the addition of “new” makes us wonder what the difference between the “old” and the “new” evangelization is.

The popes and the US bishops remind us that the content of evangelization is not new. There is still the element of conversion, a change, a personal surrender to Jesus. All the members of God’s church are called to this ministry of bringing one another to personal conversion to Jesus. Pope Paul VI issued a very important encyclical “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*” in which he stated that the Church “exists in order to evangelize, that is to say in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection”.

What is new about the evangelization is the state or the culture of society in which the evangelization process is made. The prevailing mood of our society, both Christian and non-Christian, can be described as “secularist”. Secularism is more a mindset than a list of defects. It makes decisions based on personal needs and preferences rather than objective spiritual values. I make decisions on the basis of my feelings rather than objective right or wrong. This mindset does not necessarily deny the reality of spiritual principles. It just does not refer to them when making decisions. Spiritual values are restricted to what we do in Church or prayer time. But there is no connection made between the external reality and anything we do in formal worship. Even though body and soul are distinct, and world and Church are two different realities, we are meant as human beings to live a unified life. If we separate the two realities, we are not only dishonest but spiritually schizophrenic. Part of evangelization is to remake the connection between the internal and external.

This object of this proclamation refers first of all to those who have never really heard the Gospel, thus, the importance of teaching and apologetics. It secondarily applies to those who are already living what appears to be a good fervent Christian life. We are all learners; and there is always more to learn, even for the converted. Thirdly, it refers to those “who have lost a living sense of faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church”.

The equipment the evangelist needs is a deepening of the very process he or she is trying to share with others. Do we believe what we say? Do we practice what we preach? Are we deepening our relationship with the Lord through daily prayer and meditation? In a word, are we re-evangelizing ourselves as we attempt to evangelize others?

Creator; that like the fig tree we all may bear fruit and respond with love and praise to Him, and share our hopes and blessings with our brethren.

The Gospel for 4th Sunday of Lent is about the parable of the prodigal son. In the profligate younger son, it speaks of the importance of acknowledging our sinfulness. In the elder brother, we see the need for seeking to understand – not resent, those who have erred and now need our help. Through the forgiving father, the parable speaks to us of the value of bridge building – of reconciliation which brings about change in us, not in God.

If we seek forgiveness from God, we need to simply acknowledge, “I have sinned”. God’s unconditional love never falters, and we need never worry about sharing His gifts for fear they will run out. Listening to the poor and standing with them in their struggle to better their circumstances are good ways to please our all-loving God.

The words of Jesus in the gospel for the 5th Sunday of Lent strike directly to the human heart. We are urged to scrutinize our intentions when we judge others. Do we wish to right a wrong? Or are we driven by hatred and the desire for revenge? Conscious that we ourselves are sinners, we should be very wary about judging others. We should try to reconcile the demands of justice and mercy in our dealings with one another.

The woman caught in adultery in the gospel was guilty, ashamed and repentant. The challenge of the gospel is not for us to ignore sin or wrongdoing around us, but to come to repentance. In repenting, we are to focus, not on yesterday’s sins, but on today’s forgiveness and tomorrow’s hope.

Palm Sunday

The most striking part of Palm Sunday is the shift from the acclaim of the crowds on Jesus’ way to Jerusalem, to their call for His death later. The same people who welcomed Jesus with ‘Hosanna’, later turned against Him. We are not unlike those people. For us, the shift may be the difference between the faith we profess and the lives we lead.

We start the “holy week” by proclaiming the long gospel passage that speaks of the passion of Christ, His suffering, His pain, His death on Calvary. It is not the mournful mood that makes holy week meaningful. It is the relationship with God whom we allow to touch us with His gentle love and lasting peace. Jesus invites us to return to the heart of the Father.

Easter Sunday

To be Catholic and to be strong in faith is becoming more difficult and challenging. We are encouraged to

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS *(continued from page 3)*

proclaim the same statement that emboldened the early Christians to go and share the good news.

The power of the Risen Lord is within us, who listen to Him, receive Him in the sacraments and follow Him in our daily life of struggle, and alternating failure and success. Christ's resurrection teaches us that beyond darkness, there is light, beyond death, there is life, and beyond sin, there is forgiveness. Easter is a time for renewal. It is a time to recommit ourselves to Christ and His church and to revive that moment when the sacramental water of baptism washed over us and we became one with Jesus, making us part of His ongoing and glorious mission. Easter is a time to refresh our Catholic faith.

***** THIS WEEK'S COMMUNITY WORD AND THEME

THEME: We reform our ways and bear fruit when we please God with our actions.

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

ORDER: "Go, and from now on, do not sin anymore." (Jn 8:11)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Acknowledge your weakness, reconcile with the Lord by going to confession; go to mass and receive Holy Communion regularly.
2. Do the work of the Lord with humility, compassion, and love.

YEAR OF FAITH *(continued from page 1)*

Catechism. Scripture itself is guarded by the Church as a source of truth and faith, so that we may be able to be nourished by God's word whether it is written down in the Bible or proclaimed by the Church, the guardian of truth.

Faith is a way of knowing; and when we pray over and study our faith, we don't just become holier. We also become wiser.

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,865	20,473

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Mar 8	Management
			Mar 15	Mission
			Mar 22	Pastoral
			Mar 29	Evangelization

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For: Worship Leaders from Adults, Solo Parents & Singles Ministries & Praise Ministry Members

When: Saturday, March 9, 2013

Time: 9 am - 5 pm

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ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:30pm-9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick: p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church
(formerly St. Mary's Chapel)



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 10

Bulletin Edition

March 8, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

YOUTH MINISTRY ON FIRE!



The Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar #18 took place on March 1st through March 3rd held at the Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway, NJ. BLD Youth Newark was joined by BLD Youth Long Island. Forty two lambs (thirty from Newark and twelve from Long Island) experienced God's love and mercy in a profound way and received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Fr. Paul Lehman led the weekend with the assistance of Deacon Rudy Santos. It was beautiful to see the joint collaboration of Youth and Single's Praise Ministry for the first time in YLSS. The "kuya and ate" of Singles Ministry were present the whole weekend to help and guide their little brothers and sisters.

It was a great experience for all lambs, shepherds, youth, singles and adults. All those who served and prayed throughout the weekend worked together to ensure that the lambs would have a Spirit filled weekend, to experience the Holy Spirit in an amazing way.

Sharers from the Youth and Singles Ministry shared their stories of how they felt God's love, and helped lambs to open up their hearts to God. Through tear filled eyes, the lambs were able to come closer together and felt God's love, mercy, and forgiveness.

Serving in this YLSS was extremely fulfilling; a realization that every single one of the Youth is destined

Continued on page 3

PRODIGAL SON

THEME: We reform our ways and bear fruit when we welcome our lost brethren back to Christ.

WORD: Joshua 5: 9-12 / Psalm 34:2-7
2 Cor 5: 17-21 / Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

ORDER: Be reconciled to God.

REFLECTION:

The Gospel on the 4th Sunday of Lent narrates how the father welcomes back his lost son who has wronged him by asking for his inheritance even though the father was still alive. The son then went far away leaving his father and everyone in his family to



spend his money living extravagantly and sinfully. Our Lord wanted to show God's love and forgiveness toward the tax collectors and sinners who were trying to draw near to hear Jesus preach in contrast to the prideful attitude of the Pharisees who were the self-appointed leaders of religious thought in Palestine at that time. They flaunted their strict observance of the Mosaic Law and despised those who did not do so. In the parable they represented the older son who had stayed at home with his father who became resentful when the father readily forgave his wayward son and even gave a fatted calf to celebrate his return.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"When the poor one called out, the Lord heard, and from all his distress he saved him."

(Psalm 34:7)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

A Tale of Two Souls

He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. *“Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income. But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.’” (Luke 18:9-14)*

The first soul was convinced of his own righteousness. He had been deceived into believing that he was better than everyone else. To be conceited means to have the characteristic of false pride, having an exaggerated sense of self-importance, or having a high opinion of oneself or one's accomplishments. It is the same as being vain, arrogant, puffed up, narcissistic, egotistical, or bigheaded.

There is also evidence of false humility, as he even thanked God that he was not greedy, dishonest or adulterous. Making sure that God did not forget that he fasted twice a week, and paid tithes on his whole income. His preoccupation with self was evident. Unfortunately, we have all been under this preoccupation sometime or another. We can manifest these tendencies in many other ways, just by thinking that we dress better than another, or that we speak better English than the other person, or that our children are better behaved than theirs, or that we deserve a position more than another, etc. This is because our focus is on ourselves, unlike when we are focused on God.

The second soul exemplifies honesty, simplicity, and truthfulness. In front of God there is nothing that we can boast about that did not come from Him. And God prefers we become like little children when we come and pray to Him. Putting ourselves in His presence is humility. Acknowledging our sinfulness before Him is truthfulness and honesty. In James 4:6, it says: *“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”* In the end what matters most is our right relationship with our Lord God Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer.

WHAT STANDS TRUE TO GOD?



Three weeks ago, I was shocked to learn of the Pope's resignation. That morning, at a staff meeting at work, since I was the lone Catholic, the other three people in our work group turned to me and asked, “What gives?” All I could answer was that I thought it was an appointment for life.

Since then, the Church has been beset by the resurgence of scandals, both old and new, the sensational headlines of which are hard to ignore. How tempting is it to ask, “How can Christ let this happen to His Church?” Many probably share my sentiment. How I wish I knew the answer.

But, just as Christ uses us to be His hands and feet and hearts to get His work done and His message spread, evil too uses people's hands and feet to break down others and our very selves in the spirals of worldly deception that make people think that Christ and His Church do not matter. Where and what a person can get away with does.

In times like these, it is time for those of us who profess faith in Him and in His Catholic Church, to defend - not those who have done wrong - but to defend the Church by showing the world and those around us, through selfless actions, the life lessons we have learned from her teachings.

In this world, while good things happen, when bad things happen, Christ and the light of His Church's teachings are actually still there, and remain true. Just that for some reason, our God has made man capable of ignoring good...an ignorance that impacts all of us. But He has trusted that some of us, and maybe someday all of us, will realize and always choose it.

The Church is not just the Pope and the Cardinals. It is not just the headlines. It is more of the teachings that stand true to our God. It is more of the everyday people who live more holy lives because of her instructions. It is more of the everyday Hope in the Holy Eucharist.

Church leaders will come and go... members too will come and go. The question for both leaders and members is how to live the rest of our lives. To what end and to what purpose will we put our very selves - hands, feet, and hearts and efforts?

Many Times

There are many times when I know I can help my neighbor,
There are many times when I know I can reach out,
Times when I can forgive my debtor,
Times when I should believe, not doubt.

Dear Jesus, please forgive me for the many times
I know that I did not.
Please forgive me for the many times
You, I heard not.

But I chose to ignore Your call,
Chose only myself, only my needs.
Sometimes, seems how far I fall
Sometimes, my life selfishly proceeds.

Dear Jesus, please forgive me for the many times
I know that I did not.

Dear Jesus, please forgive me for the many times
You, I heard not.

So this Lent, I promise to try harder.
Starting today, I'll love You more than ever.
I'll seek You, try not to falter,
You, I will follow after.

And then, Dear Jesus, not just many times
In action and in prayer,
In the rest of my days, at all times,
"Yes Lord! Yes Lord!" ... I will always answer.

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.*

COUNSELS *(from page 1)*

This parable also shows us the change in the mind-set of the prodigal son when he left demanding to "give him his inheritance" and when he returned to his father saying, "make me one of your hired servants." It is the story of his conversion. It is also the story of our conversion.

First we demand from our God to "give us what we thought we need in this world" and we go forth and live our lives without acknowledging God as the source of our life, our goods and our freedom until some specific catalyst—a lost job, a broken or lost relationship, physical illness or death of a loved one, or spiritual hunger, brings us back to repentance and enables us to realize our ingratitude to our Father who is all kind, and all good. We then see our selfishness and our greediness toward our family, our neighbor and to our co-workers.

For most of us here, the message of consolation, hope and forgiveness in the first part of the parable is obvious. We have all been prodigal, ungrateful, selfish sons and daughters of our loving Father. Since we joined our BLD community where are we in our spiritual growth? Are we like the prodigal son who has come back to the Father, repented of our sins, and are now ready to be His servants— to sacrifice our worldly wealth and pride for the sake of spreading God's word of love and forgiveness? Or after years of serving and offering sacrifices during the encounters, reunions and ministry work to witness to the way of living God's commandments, have we become the unforgiving older son resentful and wary of the spiritual growth and recognition others have received? Do we have difficulty reaching out and welcoming returning members to our community with open arms? Let us look deep into ourselves and see who we are in this parable.

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) Ask forgiveness from those whom we have hurt and forgive those who have hurt us.
- 2) Be welcoming to returning members.
- 3) Reach out to our brethren whom we have not seen in the community for a while.
- 4) Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently especially during Lent.

YOUTH MINISTRY ON FIRE *(cont. from page 1)*

for great things according to God's plan for them. Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit and this life-changing experience of God's presence in our lives, we will see the miracles of God in each one around us. Thank You Lord for another successful YLSS!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

St. Andrew's Grand Reunion for LSS#1 & 2

Date: April 17, 2013, Wednesday
Venue: St Andrew's Andean Room (Cafeteria)
Time: To follow

MASS WEDDING or "OPERATION I do"

For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013
Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church
Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

BLD ALLENTOWN 2ND ANNUAL DINNER DANCE FUNDRAISING EVENT

Saturday, April 6th, 6 pm – 11 pm
 ST. ELIZABETH CATHOLIC CHURCH'S SOCIAL HALL
 618 FULLERTON AVENUE, WHITEHALL, PA 18052
*Let us support Allentown by buying tickets
 and showing solidarity with them
 through our presence at their dinner dance.*

SINGLES MINISTRY

Hamilton Nursing Home Visitation

56 Hamilton Ave., Passaic, NJ 07055
 March 9, 2013 ~ 8:00 am–12:00 pm

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 ~ 8:00 am–4:00 pm
 Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops
 Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
 Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013
Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA
Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ mla@bldnewark.com
 Casey/Malyn Tanseco ~ caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

"It is not enough to discover Christ, you must bring Him to others." – Pope John Paul II



KEEPING A HOLY LENT

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Mar 15	Mission
			Mar 22	Pastoral
			Mar 29	Evangelization
			April 5	Formation

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,065	23,538

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Mar 15 - John 6 Teaching
 Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE
Mar 16* - Encounter with Jesus (Luke & John) – LSS 1-39
 Understanding Corporate Worship/Healing and Deliverance – LSS 1-37
Mar 22 - Golden Years Teaching
 Service Formation – ME 38/SPE
April 6* - CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-38
 Intercession/Spiritual Warfare LSS 1-37
 Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP LEADERS' FORUM ON EXCELLENCE IN WORSHIP

For: Worship Leaders from Adults, Solo Parents & Singles Ministries & Praise Ministry Members
When: Tomorrow, March 9, 2013
Time: 9 am - 5 pm
Location: Divine Mercy Parish Connell Hall
Contacts: Caesar & Vicky Rasalan: crasalan@optonline.net
Attendance is mandatory!

YLSS 18 GRAND REUNION

When: Saturday, March 16, 2013
Time: 1 - 5 pm
Location: Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium
Contacts: YCS: ycs@bldnewark.com

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 - Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway
 Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again).
Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

Save the date!!!!

BLD COMMUNITY RETREAT Saturday, April 27, 2013

ANointing OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday of the Month, After Worship
Venue: Small room at the side of St. Mary's Church (formerly St. Mary's Chapel)

"Trust God at all times. Pour out your hearts before Him." (Ps 62:8-9)



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

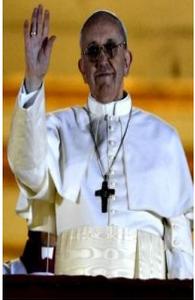
Volume 19 Issue 11

Bulletin Edition

March 15, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS



Habemus Papam: POPE FRANCIS I

Formerly Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina, he was elected on the conclave's fifth ballot as the 266th Roman Pontiff of the Catholic Church.

by CNA/EWTN NEWS 03/13/2013 - Reuters/Dylan Martinez

Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires has become the next Pope of the Catholic Church, taking the name Francis I.

Pope Francis greeted the crowds of faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square shortly after 8 pm local time, after spending time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in the Pauline Chapel.

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, now Pope Francis I, was archbishop of Buenos Aires. He is a Jesuit and is 76. He is the first Latin-American Pope and the first Jesuit Pope. In 2005, he received the second-most votes in the conclave that elected Pope Benedict XVI.

He entered the Society of Jesus in 1958 and obtained a licentiate in philosophy. He was ordained a priest in 1969 and taught as a theology professor. He was a provincial leader for the Society of Jesus and a seminary rector.

The College of Cardinals came to an agreement on the Holy Father's election the afternoon of March 13, after a total of four inconclusive votes earlier that day and the previous day.

Two-thirds of the cardinals present (in this case, 77 of 115) were necessary to elect a new pontiff.

LET US PRAY FOR OUR NEW POPE

As the world welcomes our new Pope, we hear reports that he is a man of deep conviction and remarkable simplicity. As Archbishop of Buenos Aires, he lived in a modest apartment, cooked his own meals, and took the bus to work. How wonderful! Now, faced with the challenges of leading the modern Church, Pope Francis will need our prayers that he may be able to guide his flock with wisdom and courage and that he may continue to depend completely on God's grace and love. May God richly bless Pope Francis.

FINDING JESUS IN THE LOWLY

THEME: We reform our ways and bear fruit when we do not condemn those who have gone astray.

WORD: Is 43:16-21 / Ps 126:1-6
Phil 3:8-14 / Jn 8:1-11

- ORDER:**
1. **Go, and from now on do not sin any more.**
 2. **Forget what lies behind, and strain forward to what lies ahead; pursue the prize of God's upward calling in Christ Jesus.**

REFLECTION:

In our gospel reading for this 5th Sunday of Lent, the focus of the story is not the adulterous woman but Jesus showing us how to renounce being judgmental. Christ has a gentle way of bringing sinners to repentance, and He provides us with opportunities for it.

My spouse and I were blessed to have been able to serve in the recent Medical Mission held in Benguet province, Philippines, last month. The Lord used that brief opportunity to teach me a few lessons.

Not being medical professionals, we were assigned first to the Surgical Vigil Room and then to the Eyeglasses Dispensing Unit. Although there were about ten of us serving and handing out reading glasses, the crowd of people patiently waiting their turn to receive eyeglasses started to grow larger by the minute. One particular young woman sat in front of me; and as she handed me her prescription, I noticed that the eyeglasses checkbox on her paper had already been marked. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

*"... I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink."
(Is 43:20)*

A GIFT OF LOVE AND HOPE

It has been over 7 years since the GK Cabiao Villages of Fr. Paul J Lehman and ustmedclass76 were completed. It is always heartwarming for us to visit the village and see the gradual changes that are happening there, especially among the residents of the village. This GK village is a pilot site for its continued support and improvement in the lives of the residents. Because of this distinction, a Cebu-based bank funded the new, fully-furnished Sibol school; and Wyeth Labs upgraded the Bayan Anihan farm cooperative of the village.

The St. Bernadette library and the books BLD sent thru Isaiah 58 are really getting good use. Maris Simbulan, one of our college scholars, told us what it meant to have a library in the village. She said that students make good use of it and attributes their success to the books and the library. Maris is graduating from Hotel and Restaurant Services and hopes to work in the industry. Liezel Rivera, our first scholar graduate, is now working in a call center, her best paying job since graduating a year ago. Because of them, more kids are aspiring to better lives and wish to continue their schooling. There are six girls graduating from high school this year. Their scholarship requests will be screened by the project directors. They have hope for a better future because our programs raised the ceiling for them. Not only can we hope with them but our continued support of the Scholarship of Hope, college scholarship program, and enrichment programs can make their dreams a reality.

Following the success of the Fr Paul Lehman Village, we are also supporting the rising GK site in Batangas City, a legacy village of the Arceo family. Once completed, BLD Lipa will be involved in the spiritual and secular needs of the residents. Many BLD Newark members have previously donated homes; and more recently, 5 homes were funded: 2 by Fr. Paul Lehman, another 2 by BLD Newark and 1 by the BLD-GK ministry in Manila. That makes a total of 15 homes in the site that can accommodate 40. A new home now costs \$3,300.00 or ₱132,000.00. The cost of one house seems prohibitive, but we hope donors can pool resources to build more homes.

Let us continue to give love and hope to our needy brethren in the Philippines as part of our poverty alleviation program. Next time you go home, please make a visit to our more than 16 BLD-GK sites and see the happiness and gratitude on the faces of our residents and the hope that fuels their ambitions.

Indeed, God fulfills His promise in Jeremiah 29:11 ***“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, ... plans to give you a future full of hope.”*** Thank you Lord for making us a channel of Your hope and love to others. May we purposefully fulfill our mission. Amen.

God's Forgiveness



Have you ever done something so bad that you wondered how God could forgive you?

Soon after God delivered his people from slavery, they did something very bad. Instead of worshiping the true, imageless God who had brought them out of Egypt, Israel asked for a god of their own making, and attributed their deliverance to a golden calf. The Israelites would have been accustomed to the Egyptian worship of bovine images; but by this point they already knew better, because God had forbidden making an image of Himself like anything on earth. Israel claimed that the calf was their god, who brought them up from Egypt. Angrily, God spoke to Moses of *Moses' people* whom *Moses* had brought up from Egypt. Moses in turn reminded God that these were *God's people* whom *God* had brought up from Egypt.

God declared to Moses, ***“I see how stiff-necked this people is.”*** (Ex 32:9), noting their obstinacy and threatening to destroy them. Moses offered a couple arguments to intercede for his people. One was for the honor of God's name among the Egyptians. We know that God cared what the Egyptians thought because he had sent judgments to show the Egyptians that he was God. Moses also reminded God of His own promises, how He had declared that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and had promised to deliver Israel and bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey.

Much earlier, when God first called Moses, He spoke of seeing the suffering of His people: ***“I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt.”*** (Ex 3:7) He announced that He had heard their cries and had come down to deliver them. Now Moses asked God to remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, to whom He had promised multiplied descendants and the land for them. He did not want God to reverse His earlier plan, and appealed to God's characteristic faithfulness. So the Lord changed His mind and did not destroy His people.

God spared His people because of His covenant faithfulness, because of His promises to His servants. And it is the same with us today. God spares us, forgives us, and looks on us with favor because of what Jesus Christ has done for us. God is still the God who is faithful to His covenant. He does not forget His mercy. And He has provided us that mercy at the greatest cost to Himself, for Jesus was even more than a faithful servant of God like Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. He was God's own Son, whom God gave on our behalf to save us.

SHEPHERD'S VOICE

Satisfaction is not enough, Strive for Joy.

You may want to ask what I mean by this.

We can get satisfaction from a good lunch, after a good night's sleep, or after finishing a difficult project. On the other hand, we can find joy in serving others, giving a gift to someone we love, or helping those who are in need. From the foregoing examples, we can see that both are derived from physical and emotional activities. However, in satisfaction there is a fulfillment of the body and the mind; while in joy, there is a fulfillment of the heart and spirit. The Holy Spirit makes the difference. It is the Holy Spirit that makes us joyful. Achieving satisfaction makes us stop because we are contented; while the Holy Spirit, in giving us joy, makes us want for more.

In our many activities during life here on earth, do we favor satisfaction over joy? Let me take this further so that we will clearly see the difference. When we do not forgive, we want to get revenge or retribution in order to be satisfied. However, when we have compassion and mercy, our hearts are joyful and at peace. When we give in to our pride and promote our self and our interests first before others, we may have satisfaction, but never joy.

God created this wonderful, beautiful and bountiful world for our satisfaction. However, our life must not end in just satisfaction, but with joy. We are created for eternal joy, and we must strive to attain that. The mistake we often make is substituting satisfaction for joy. Satisfaction can make us happy. However, happiness is fleeting. We can be happy now but can be sad after a few moments. Worldly desires and physical discomforts will bother us. Joy, on the other hand, is not subject to issues of earthly pain or problems because it comes from the Holy Spirit. We can be suffering and still be joyful.

So let us strive to have the joy of the Holy Spirit which is in fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. In celebrating the Mass and worship from the bottom of our hearts, we find fellowship with the Holy Trinity. The Apostle John wrote about it in 1 John 1:3-4, ***"What we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing this so that our joy may be complete."***

DIRECTIONS:

1. Do not be judgmental of others, but be forgiving.
2. Hate the sin but not the sinner.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

I brought it to her attention and asked her why her prescription indicated that she already had received her eyeglasses. She looked at me a bit puzzled and replied that she had not yet done so.

In my judgmental mind, and contrary to her denials, I concluded that she was no longer eligible for a pair of reading glasses. I was about to tell her to leave so the next person in line could be served; but somehow, at that moment, I felt convicted. My conscience made me realize that I was judging her and not trusting that her response to me was actually true. John 8 verse 7 says, ***"Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."*** Who was I to judge her when I myself am not without sin? How often do we do the same? We are so quick to judge and condemn others and act like the Pharisees in Jesus' time. We see someone who is different from us in the way they speak or act or think; and right away, we form judgments against them.

Another lesson I learned during our brief travels around towns in the Philippines came while I was reflecting on our Second Reading. St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 3, verses 13-14 says, ***"...forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus."*** Wherever we went, we could not help but notice the abject poverty of a majority of the population. However, one could also notice their simplicity of life, their industriousness and strength of character, their strong faith in God, and their inner peace and joy. Not only are they content with what they have, but they also are sharing the little that they have with others who have even less. They are not overly concerned about the events of the past but are always hopeful for the future. What important lessons can they teach us? For myself, I learned not to worry about the past and especially not to carry or dwell on past burdens or hurts. Instead, let us strain forward to what lies ahead. Let us strive to see the face of Jesus in each other. Let us forgive one another and never judge each other.

If only we can do these, we will bear much fruit. In the process of bearing fruit for the Lord, we will be transformed. In the process of being transformed, we will become good witnesses to others; and then we can truly contribute to the New Evangelization and to the Year of Faith that our Holy Mother Church is calling us to.



**We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You
because by Your Holy Cross
You have redeemed the world.**



LENTEN PRAYER

*Almighty and Everlasting God,
You have given the human race
Jesus Christ our Savior as a model of humility.
He fulfilled Your Will by becoming Man
And giving His life on the Cross.
Help us to bear witness to You
By following His example of suffering
And make us worthy to share in His Resurrection.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son.
Amen.*

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

TENEBRAE (SHADOW)

March 27, 2013 – Holy Wednesday
7:30-9:00 pm

St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ

**Come to an evening of reflection on Passion, Death, and
Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ with Hymnal and
Sacred Music and Homilies**

MASS WEDDING or "OPERATION I do"

For: Couples who are civilly married but not
sacramentally married in church / those who want to
be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

BLD ALLENTOWN 2ND ANNUAL

DINNER DANCE FUNDRAISING EVENT

Saturday, April 6th, 6 pm – 11 pm

ST. ELIZABETH CATHOLIC CHURCH'S SOCIAL HALL
618 FULLERTON AVENUE, WHITEHALL, PA 18052

*Let us support Allentown by buying tickets
and showing solidarity with them
through our presence at their dinner dance.*

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ mla@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco ~ caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

*"It is not enough to discover Christ, you must bring
Him to others." – Pope John Paul II*

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,267	26,805

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TEACHING CALENDAR

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Understanding Corporate Worship/Healing and
Deliverance – **LSS 1-37**

Mar 22 - Golden Years Teaching
Service Formation – **ME 38/SPE**

April 6* - CMP 1 Part 1 – **LSS 1-38**
Intercession/Spiritual Warfare **LSS 1-37**

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 ~ 8:00 am–4:00 pm

Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops
Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

For details, contact: Emil/Baby Canlas:

singles@bldnewark.com

YLSS 18 GRAND REUNION

When: Tomorrow, March 16, 2013

Time: 1 - 5 pm

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium

Contacts: YCS: ycs@bldnewark.com

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 - Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway

Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously
taken the LSS but would like to take it again).

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

Save the date!!!!

BLD COMMUNITY RETREAT

Saturday, April 27, 2013

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday of the Month, After Worship

Venue: Small room at the side of St. Mary's Church
(formerly St. Mary's Chapel)

March 22 – In-Charge of Marshaling

PASTORAL

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.”

During an Apologetics Conference in Steubenville, Ohio, I was struck by the word “**repropose**” which was mentioned by one of the speakers who was reflecting on Pope Benedict XVI’s homily on the New Evangelization (First Vespers on the Solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul). The Pope used the Italian word “**riproporre**” or “**repropose**” to describe the Pontifical Council’s primary work.

The Council is the agent of the New Evangelization whose work is to repropose “the perennial truth of Christ’s Gospel” to all peoples especially Christian communities that have Catholic roots but are so troubled by increased secularization of society that they have “lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church” (Redemptoris Missio). They have what the Pope called an “eclipse of the sense of God”. The speaker suggested that this also applies on a personal level to the audience and that we should be prepared, whenever we express our faith, to repropose our belief in Christ and his Gospel. We must do this in such a way that it may be heard by Catholics “who are convinced that they already know the faith but it holds no interest for them”.

As Catholics, we are all called to repropose our belief in Christ and His Gospel. Through our community, we have to invite our Catholic brothers and sisters who have become disinterested in the faith “to hear it [the Gospel] all over again, this time for the first time”. As part of the larger New Evangelization mission outreach and the community’s Year of Faith Initiative, in this CN installment, we take a close look at an important symbol of our faith: the profession of faith, the Creed; and we focus on the opening declaration: ***“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.”***

Very early in life, I was taught the Lord’s Prayer, the “Our Father,” and knew that God is sufficient and perfectly complete in the Family of Persons we call the Trinity: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Later, as I became an adult, I took our beliefs so much for granted that I could not even see how blessed I was, along with every other Catholic, to be able to call God Father or Abba (Papa). Belief in God the Father is so fundamental to our faith that I had never really appreciated what it means to be a son of God. In the same Apologetics conference, I learned that what has become common for us, to speak of God as our loving Father, is for other religions very offensive. Another speaker said, it is offensive to Muslims, blasphemous for them, to call God ‘Father’ because “Allah is Master, not father, and he has no sons.” The Muslims look at themselves “merely as a slave or private property or the personal possession of [Allah their] Creator”.

I thank God that He is Jesus’ Father, and I thank our Lord Jesus for sharing His sonship with us. Jesus desired that we should know *His* Father as *Our* Father so that we might become sons and daughters of God and brothers and sisters of Christ, co-heirs with Him when we receive the Holy Spirit, the spirit of adoption, in the sacrament of Baptism. ***“For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’”*** (Rm 8:15). ***“As proof that you are children, God has sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.”*** (Gal 4:6-7) We thank God for His fatherly love that we can be called children of God. ***“See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are.”*** (1 John 3:1a)

We profess that God the Father is ‘Almighty’, all powerful, omnipotent. God’s power says so much more about His Fatherhood. His fatherhood and power shed light on one another. God reveals His fatherly omnipotence by the way He takes care of our needs” (CCC no. 270). I reflect on my own fatherhood, which is an earthly fatherhood. As a father, I have the best intentions for my young boys; but unlike any earthly father, God has the ability to carry out every good intention. I know that He has taken care of me all throughout my lifetime, but most especially in the remission of my sins, “for he displays his power at its height by freely forgiving (my) sins” (CCC no.270).

Then we profess that God the Father is the “Creator of Heaven and Earth”. God, it is said, is perfectly complete in Himself, self-sufficient, not needing anyone or anything else, the Supreme Being. The Bible teaches that God is all love and goodness. And because of His superabundant love, He chose to create *ex nihilo*; He called everything into existence “out of nothing”. He created the angels, the universe and then us. The world was created for the glory of God, and He made human beings in His own image. He created us as both material and spiritual beings, so that we may participate, body and soul, in His Divine Life of truth and goodness, beauty and love, and in His glory. This was His loving plan of Creation. God gave man, a mere creature himself, dominion over the created world. We know about Adam’s sin. But despite the Fall, God allows us to participate in his Divine Life through Jesus Christ, the New Creation.

Through His Incarnation and His life, His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, He has shown us the Father (***“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”*** Jn 14:9) and given Himself to all mankind. Through the Church (Jesus’ Mystical Body) and the Sacraments, God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, gives us the opportunity to participate in the Divine Life of the Holy Trinity.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

COUNSELS

Worship Team explores dynamics of worship

A sunny and cool Saturday, March 9, proved to be a welcome relief from the previous days of rain and snow and a blessing from the Lord, according to the DCS and Word Ministry, organizers of the Worship Leaders Forum and Commentary Writing Workshop. A total of 97 Worship Leaders and Praise Members coming from the community's various ministries and apostolates and guest attendees from the BLD Allentown Outreach participated in the whole-day event, which was held at Connell Hall of the Divine Mercy Parish. This Forum and Workshop was designed to provide ways and means to enhance our Praise and Worship services. The event focused on the adherence to the Theme, Order, Directions and Promise, Commentary/Counsel writing, prayer content, choice of songs, the application of the Word of God to community affairs, and improvement of the dynamics and overall flow of the worship.

The day started with a spirit-filled praise and worship that was led by the Word Ministry. The Forum and Workshop was opened with a discourse on the importance of the Waiting on the Lord sessions (WOTL) between the Worship Leaders and the DCS in the development of worship materials. This was followed by a presentation on "In Pursuit of Excellence in Worship". The morning session was capped with a comprehensive teaching on Commentary and Counsels Writing that is aimed to improve the effectiveness and fruitfulness of worship leaders and homilists. Specific topics included Discerning the Word of God, Principles for Writing Commentary/Homily, and how these are applied in writing prayers. A lively and animated session on choosing the appropriate praise songs for the various worship prayer components solicited active participation from the attendees.

There was no better way to cap the spirit and fun-filled day of learning than glorifying the Lord through a Eucharistic celebration.

LIVING BY DYING

THEME: We reform our ways and bear fruit when we share in the suffering of Jesus Christ.

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

ORDER: Do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children.

REFLECTION:

Here's an easy question: Which do you think left the Apostles feeling good in the Gospel narrative – a) during their triumphant entry with the Lord into Jerusalem, or b) the day of His condemnation and execution at Calvary?

The Twelve, more than the other disciples of Jesus, followed the Lord while He taught, preached and healed people. They had given up their old lives and persevered in faith in their Master and learning from Him. What an exciting, giddy feeling they must have felt as they came to the great city with joyful acclaim! They felt secure in the future, with expectations of even greater things to come.

The times when Jesus predicted His passion and death couldn't have been farther from their mind. Even then, they couldn't comprehend what He was telling them, for they had visions of sharing instead in some coming grandeur. Peter even had the temerity to speak out against the Lord's prediction. At the Passover Meal, the apostles were still quarreling on who among them was the greatest. Clearly, they were deluded even while the moment of darkness was finally at hand. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"It is you who have stood by me in my trials, and I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father has conferred one on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom."

(Lk 22:28-30)

NO FEAR IN LOVE

With God as my sure defense, there's nothing I should fear. In times of trouble, He was always there to rescue me. In times of trial, He was with me every step of the way. In times of persecution, He protected me from my foes. Each time I needed His love and mercy, not a moment did I not feel it. Numerous times I have uttered these words, "*God, You are my Rock, my Stronghold, my Redeemer.*"

Yet, despite my close encounter of God's power in my life, I still find it difficult to always and completely trust in Him. Occasionally, I asked myself, why am I so afraid to let go and take risks? If "*...God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control.*" (2 Timothy 1:7), then why do I easily give in to my fears - fear of losing my job, my loved ones, my friendship, and my cherished material possessions; and fear of the future - what will become of me and my loved ones? Why do these fears overshadow my knowledge of God's infinite goodness and mercy?

It makes me wonder, do I really love Jesus? If I do and really believe in His perfect love, 'letting go' or 'taking risk' should not be a difficult thing to do. 1 John 4:18 says, "*There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love.*" Perhaps my love for Jesus is still superficial, and this could be the reason why I worry too much and get anxious easily. Reflecting on this verse deeply made me realize that the only way I can live freely and peacefully is to remain in God's love, for love bears *all things*, believes *all things*, hopes *all things*, and *endures all things* (1 Cor 13:7).

As I continue my earthly journey, I pray that the Lord will give me the grace to grow in love for Him and abide in His love every moment of my life, so I will no longer give in to my countless fears. Instead, I will firmly hold onto His promise in Isaiah 41:10, "*Fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed; I am your God. I will strengthen you, and help you, and uphold you with my right hand of justice.*"

As I cling to this beautiful promise, I can be like the psalmist who said with confidence, "*Even when I walk through a dark valley, I fear no harm for you are at my side...only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life.*" (Ps 23:4 & 6).

God never gets tired of forgiving!

*Excerpted from Pope Francis' homily
Vatican City, March 18, 2013 (Zenit.org)*

We can differentiate two groups of people. On one hand are those who come to listen to Jesus and before whom He takes a seat and teaches. These are the people who want to listen to Jesus' words with open hearts and in need of the Word of God. On the other hand, there are others who don't listen, who cannot listen due to hardness in their hearts. At times we can be like both these groups; on the one hand, we want to listen to Jesus, but on the other hand, we choose to be cruel to others by condemning them.

This is Jesus' strong message for us: **mercy**. He himself said: 'I did not come for the righteous' (Mark 2:17). The righteous can justify themselves. Jesus came for sinners. This is how the Pharisees described Him when they say...'*but that one keeps company with sinners!*' And He comes to us whenever we recognize and admit our sinfulness. But if we are like the Pharisee who before the altar prayed - '*Oh God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity - greedy, dishonest, adulterous, or even like this tax collector.*' - then we do not know the Lord's heart and we will never have the joy of feeling His mercy. It may be difficult to trust in God's mercy because it is an incomprehensible abyss. But we must do it!

The Pope explained that sometimes people say to priests:

"Oh, Father, if you knew my life you wouldn't say that."

"Why? What have you done?"

"Oh, I've done bad things."

"Good! Go to Jesus; He likes you to tell him these things. He forgets. He has the special ability to forget. He forgets them, kisses you, embraces you, and tells you only: 'Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.' He only gives you this counsel. A month later we are the same ... We return to the Lord. The Lord never tires of forgiving us, never! We are the ones who get tired of asking forgiveness. Let us ask for the grace to never tire of asking forgiveness, because He never tires of forgiving us. Let us ask for this grace."

This Holy Week, may we listen attentively to God's Word and meditate deeply on Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection, so we may realize how profound Jesus' never-ending forgiveness and mercy is for us, and by God's grace, seek His forgiveness and share without reserve this undeserved love with others.

"What really matters in life is that we are loved by Christ and that we love Him in return. In comparison to the love of Jesus, everything else is secondary. And, without the love of Jesus, everything is useless." John Paul II

ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF MARY

St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is also known as Joseph the betrothed. God entrusted Jesus to his care and his actions portray him as a man who truly lives by faith and not by sight. He was obedient to God's will and welcomed the plans that God had in store for him.

In the words of Pope John Paul II, he says, "*And yet, even without words, he shows the depth of his faith, his greatness. . . He is great in faith, not because he speaks his own words, but above all because he listens to the words of the Living God. He listens in silence. And his heart ceaselessly perseveres in the readiness to accept the Truth contained in the word of the Living God.*"

Before the angel appeared and told them about Jesus, St. Joseph was going to secretly divorce Mary to avoid exposing her to shame as she was found with child before they lived together. But when the angel told him the truth about the child who is conceived in her through the Holy Spirit, he obeyed and went on with fulfilling God's plan.



St. Joseph is a good role model for all fathers. The love St. Joseph had for Jesus was unconditional and he was a faithful husband to Mary. He put his family before himself and treated Jesus as if He was his own. He protected Jesus and was obedient to living the divine purpose of God's plan for him. As he was told by the Angel, he took Mary and the child Jesus to Egypt to protect Him from the bloody tyrant, Herod. We should also note the anxious search for Jesus when He strayed during the yearly pilgrimage to the Holy City. Our Lord during His public life, was referred to as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. The death of St. Joseph is not known. But, since he is the patron saint of a happy death, it is said that he died with Mary and Jesus near him.

To emulate St. Joseph, we should love our family unconditionally. We should live our faith the way St. Joseph did, by trusting in and humbly obeying God's plans for us. In everything we do, it should be for the Lord, and for His glory.

and accept them as the reality of a true disciple's vocation --- to follow Jesus wherever He leads us, in all the joys and sorrows throughout our lives.

DIRECTIONS:

- Die to self and be obedient.
- Live the passion, death and resurrection of Christ in your daily lives.
- Continue to proclaim God's glory in all our sufferings.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

How quickly things can change, how fickle human esteem and acclaim! In a matter of a few days, the perception of Jesus turned from charismatic healer, truthful preacher and beloved teacher into someone dangerous, despised and denounced both by the Jewish leaders and the crowd. And His disciples? Everyone abandoned Him, Peter denied knowing Him, Judas betrayed and sold Him. Their profession of faith and steadfastness were gone, giving way to cowardly fear.

We too are enthused by happy events as we follow Christ. Christmas and Easter always occasion a happy reunion with family and friends. We talk of spiritual "highs" in our community Encounters and LSS. Our spirits are buoyed with feelings of grace and holiness at a retreat, the comfort of a Sacrament, a powerful worship or homily. We thank the Lord for all these things, perhaps ready to declare with Peter his desire to stay atop the mountain with the Lord after witnessing the Transfiguration.

But then the dark, difficult days come, and it's a test on how ready we are to remain close to Jesus. Are we stricken with fear, or shrink from the prospect of the demands of doing greater work for Him? Do we measure and calculate the cost of being a Christian disciple: giving up restful days and comfortable habits, staying faithful in our tithing at the prospect of tighter finances, speaking out against what we know is wrong, shunning ridicule from those who are foolish and loud, consulting with popular opinion instead of with the Lord in making our decisions?

The Lord said, "*Remember the word I spoke to you, 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.*" (Jn 15:20) There's the paradox of an all-powerful Savior, pointing out how fearfully uncertain the future sometimes may seem when we follow Him: "*Foxes have dens and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.*" (Mt 8:20)

In Mt 10:38-39, Jesus made it even clearer: "*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.*"

Our Gospel for Palm Sunday may appear to be about two contrasting events: a triumphant entrance with palms into Jerusalem, and the humiliating exit with a cross to Calvary. But we are called to reconcile



OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

TENEBRAE (SHADOW)

March 27, 2013 – Holy Wednesday
7:30-9:00 pm

St. Mary's Church, Rahway, NJ

Come to an evening of reflection on Passion, Death, and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ with Hymnal and Sacred Music and Homilies

MASS WEDDING or "OPERATION I do"

For: Couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

BLD ALLENTOWN 2ND ANNUAL DINNER DANCE FUNDRAISING EVENT

Saturday, April 6th, 6 pm – 11 pm

ST. ELIZABETH CATHOLIC CHURCH'S SOCIAL HALL
618 FULLERTON AVENUE, WHITEHALL, PA 18052

*Let us support Allentown by buying tickets
and showing solidarity with them
through our presence at their dinner dance.*

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ m1a@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco ~ caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

*"It is not enough to discover Christ, you must bring
Him to others." – Pope John Paul II*

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe, 545 35th Street
Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29
7:30pm-9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick:

p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	4,216	31,021

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

April 6* - CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-38

Intercession/Spiritual Warfare LSS 1-37

Time: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Teachers' Development Program

April 20-21, 2013 ~ 7:30 am – 5 pm

Divine Mercy Parish

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 ~ 8:00 am–4:00 pm

Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops

Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Emil/Baby Canlas:

singles@bldnewark.com

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 - Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway
Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again).

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

BLD COMMUNITY RETREAT

Saturday, April 27, 2013

March 29 – Good Friday

NO WORSHIP

April 5 – In-Charge of Marshaling

EVANGELIZATION

DLC PLENARY MEETING

March 26 ~ 7:00–11:00 pm, DMP Library



May we all have a Blessed Holy Week!





COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS



Easter Sacraments Offer Huge Potential for Renewal, Pope Francis Says

Holy Father encourages the faithful to receive the grace of the risen Christ at his first 'Regina Coeli' gathering.

by ESTEFANIA AGUIRRE/CNA/EWTN NEWS04/01/2013

VATICAN CITY — The Pope told a crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square for the "Regina Coeli" that the grace from the sacraments received at Easter can renew relationships.

"The grace contained in Easter sacraments has a huge potential for renewal in personal life, family life and social relations," Pope Francis said April 1 to a packed St. Peter's Square.

He noted that *"everything passes through the human heart,"* and the sacraments allow people to *"receive the grace of the risen Christ,"* which gives them the freedom to change those faults that *"can hurt me and others."*

The Pope underscored that this *"allows the victory of Christ to remain in my life and broaden its beneficial action."*

"Without grace, we can do nothing; and with the grace of baptism and holy Communion, we can become an instrument of God's mercy," he said.

"Expressing in life the sacrament we have received here, dear brothers and sisters, is our daily work, but I would say it is also our daily joy," the Holy Father added.

Today's Mass liturgy recalls Peter the Apostle preaching on Jesus' resurrection to crowds in Jerusalem. He called on the power of the resurrection of Christ to reach everyone, the Pope recalled, *"especially those who suffer"* and those in *"all situations in need of confidence and hope."*

Christ has conquered evil *"fully and definitively,"* he said, but *"it is up to us to welcome this victory in our lives and in the realities of history and society."*

Chuckles were heard across St. Peter's Square after the Pope concluded the gathering by saying, *"Thank you all, and have a great lunch."*

COUNSELS

CHRISTIAN FAITH

THEME: We are disciples of the Risen Christ when we believe in Him who sends us.

WORD: Acts 5:12-16 / Ps 118:2-4,13-15,22-24
Rv 1:9-13,17-19 / Jn 20:19-31

ORDER: Do not be unbelieving but believe.

ECSL'S REFLECTION:

Are you going through darkness and storms in your life? Do you sometimes doubt His promises to you in His word? Our gospel today abounds with awe-inspiring themes: forgiveness, reparation, locked doors, struggle with fears, and the "doubting Thomas". What it teaches us is that our contact with the Risen Lord is through faith. Faith is not just belief in Jesus, but trust in Him as well. To be able to see Christ is to open our eyes to the thrilling, dynamic, invisible but real presence of the Risen Lord in us and in our lives.

When Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples for the first time after His resurrection, His first words to them were, *"Peace be with you."* It reflects His sensitivity to their fears and doubts. Peace was what the disciples most needed at that time and the Risen Lord gave them 'peace' as a gift. Having left their families and livelihood to follow the Lord, they now found themselves left high and dry, fearful of losing their very lives, their hopes and dreams shattered. They were afraid that, like their Master, they too would meet with a cruel fate. There was not only darkness in their lives but also storm in their hearts; their minds mired in confusion and agitation. It was at this point in their deepest, darkest moment and misery that Jesus came to comfort them. They needed peace. Christ gave them peace, not as the world offers it, but the peace that comes with His presence, a Christ-centered, lasting, deep and abiding peace. It means wholeness and prosperity in the widest sense, especially in the spiritual sense of a flourishing soul. Lasting, because it is not dependent on conditions and circumstances that sorrow, danger, or suffering can take away.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." (Jn 20:29)

FROM REJECT TO CORNERSTONE

“The stone, the builders rejected, has become the cornerstone.” (Psalm 118:22)

This is one of the more prominent prophecies of Jesus Christ in the book of Psalms. Jesus Himself quoted this passage when He said to the chief priests and Pharisees: ***“Did you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes?’”*** (Matthew 21:42)

The cornerstone is the foundation stone keeping the structure together and holding the building firmly secure. The builders who rejected Jesus were the political and religious leaders of the Jewish nation. But now Christ has become the cornerstone of the church, the principal stone of the whole house of God. It was God’s plan for Him to remain there forever as the foundation of all our hopes, the glory of all our joys, the uniting bond of all our fellowship. Just like in Jesus’ time, some political and religious leaders in this day and age have rejected the moral and religious authority of Christ. Even in the United States, many have rejected His teachings on morality and the origin of life. It is sad; but if we read on, Psalm 118:23-24 brings good news: ***“By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad.”*** The day of our Lord’s resurrection is a new day of God’s own making, the perpetual remembrance of our Redeemer’s fulfillment of the promises of God, and the beginning of Christ’s Church.

What is the core message to all who believe in Christ? Read 1 Peter 2:1-10: ***“Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, insincerity, envy, and all slander... Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it says in scripture: ‘Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame’... But you are ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises’ of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ‘Once you were ‘no people’ but now you are God’s people; you ‘had not received mercy’ but now you have received mercy.”***

May we be all good witnesses, so that others may believe, giving glory and honor to our Cornerstone, our Lord Jesus Christ.

SCHOLARSHIP OF HOPE

Before February 22, 2013, Gawad Kalinga (GK) was just a word to me. But on that day, Gawad Kalinga became a face and a calling. After serving with my brothers and sisters in Christ at the Medical Mission in La Trinidad, Benguet near Baguio, the rare opportunity came to visit the Father Paul J. Lehman Village (FPJLV) in Cabiao, Philippines, which is about a 2 hour trip (with traffic!) north of Manila.

Upon arriving, I was overjoyed and overwhelmed by the many smiling faces and waving hands of the community. Children and their parents who waited all day for our arrival lined the streets and even welcomed us with a short presentation and a few dance numbers! Their joy, despite living within minimal means, was visible; and the fruits of GK were alive and well.

We also met Maris Simbulan, who is a current scholar of the Scholarship of Hope. Maris is graduating this year with a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Services (HRS), all of which would not have been possible without the generosity of GK benefactors.

There’s an old proverb that says: “Give a man a fish, he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, he eats for a lifetime.” GK teaches men to fish. You see, not only is housing provided for each family, but classes are also provided for certain trades; and the community is taught to farm, complete with a garden at the end of the village. Pre-schooling is also provided for children up to age 6 by a local teacher and resident, Amy Pineda, before the children go on to grammar and high school. Her Sibol graduates who are now in elementary school are ranked in the top levels in their class.

I had the opportunity to talk with the family of Jefferson and Jovelyn Carpio. The mother stays at home and the dad is a painter. They have two beautiful children, Jilton (8) and Jelyn (2) who one day hope to go to college. This is exactly where the future of GK lies, in the children, and this is where we can give them an even greater future, a future full of hope.

Seeing the many children who greeted us literally brought tears to my eyes, and my only hope for them is that they can be given the same opportunities that I have been blessed with. How much “fish they catch” is dependent upon those who fund and run the program. It costs about \$600 to send a student to junior college for a year. That’s \$50 a month or approximately \$1.70 a day. That’s a cup of coffee for me!

The many smiling faces I met that day are what move me to participate in Gawad Kalinga’s Scholarship of Hope and college scholarship program. I pray that you, too, will take the time to learn more about this fruitful program and join me in fighting poverty.

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you...plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.” (Jer 29:11)



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

It was on the vigil of the Feast of Divine Mercy, April 2, 2005, that Pope John Paul II died. This year, 2013, the vigil of the feast is April 6th. John Paul was instrumental in propagating the feast, and assigning it to the second Sunday of Easter. The picture revealed to St. Faustina, shows us Christ with two rays flowing from His Sacred Heart, one white, the other red, symbols of His divine mercy. There is a scriptural basis for this picture and the devotion itself. John's gospel tells us that after Jesus died and the centurion pierced the side of Jesus, blood and water flowed from His wounded side. This was a sign, not only that Jesus had died, but that the flow of blood and water represents the very reason for the existence of the Church.

The white ray: water, a symbol of Baptism. In Baptism we are born again into the life of God. The source of this life is the heart of Jesus who draws life from the heart of the Trinity itself. We are washed clean due to the mercy of God, and brought into relationship with Him. Jesus funnels that sanctifying grace into the very center of our being. We are reminded of this reality as we recall the words of Jesus to Nicodemus at the very beginning of his ministry: ***"Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit."*** (Jn 3:5)

The red ray: blood, a symbol of the Eucharist. After being born again, we need food to nourish that new life, and that nourishment is the Body and Blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus poured out on the cross is given to us again every time we receive Holy Communion. That poured out blood effected our redemption, and it is available to us daily in order to deepen our relationship with Jesus. Redemption is not only a moment of transition from death to life, from sin to holiness. It continues as an ongoing process, urging and nurturing us to ever greater heights of holiness.

Truly the devotion to the divine mercy is foundational to our Christian faith. Without faith in that mercy, we cannot even see our way out of sin. Without hope in merciful forgiveness, we cannot have confidence that eternal salvation will be ours. Without a personal love for the merciful heart of Jesus, the Christian life is reduced to believing doctrine and following rules. With our hearts filled with the mercy of God, we experience even now the joys of forgiveness and already now enter into deep loving relationship with God. This grace has been poured out upon us through the mercy of Jesus, our King and brother.

The gospel reading is not primarily about Thomas and his doubts. It is foremost about us and our faith. The reaction of Thomas reveals a person more inclined by nature to doubt than to believe. In spite of what others have told him, Thomas refused to be swayed. But when Jesus appears to His disciples a second time, in the presence of Thomas, Thomas' doubts disappear. He not only recognizes the reality that Jesus is alive, but proclaims Him as his Lord and God. It is almost as if the depth of Thomas's doubt has become the measure of His faith.

There are modern 'Thomas'es' around us -- even within our own hearts - for we too are full of questions. This Thomas incident calls us to enter into a deeper relationship with the Risen Christ as we move beyond the pursuit of vision to the inward experience of His grace. ***"Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."*** (Jn 20:29)

We cannot help but feel personally addressed with all our doubts, questions and fears. Thus, Jesus speaks to those who do not believe, to those who strive to believe, and to those who are struggling in faith. For here Jesus is clearly referring to us, His disciples of two thousand years into the future. We were present in His mind's eye at that distant time. He could see us in anticipation; He already knew and loved us. And seeing our faith in Him -- our intelligent, critical, but eventually wholehearted and unreserved faith in Him, He called us blessed. And we are blessed indeed, if we realize what treasure we possess in our Christian faith. For by faith, Christ is present in our hearts. And that presence fills our lives with hope, peace and happiness.

Because this gospel was not written for the Apostles but for us, the promise of the Risen Jesus is that through faith, we too shall experience the same saving relationship with Him that His Apostles did. This Sunday is a chance for us to look beyond Easter, to embrace a more profound Easter faith, a deep trust in Jesus. Trust in the places where He always is - in our hearts, in His church, in His sacraments, in His presence in the BLD Community, in His community teachings and our word sharing circles.

Let us pray for those who honestly seek the Lord but fail to find Him, and that we too, may find the Lord in our personal quests and struggles. May He grant all of us His unconditional and absolute peace.

Where there is peace, there God is!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Do not be afraid but believe.
2. Be a witness for Christ so that others may believe.
3. In times of distress, know that God is with you.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Reflect on those times when your faith in God was shaken. Why do you think that you wavered in your



faith? How were you able to restore your belief that Jesus will fulfill the promises in your life?

2. Reflect on how your faith can be strengthened and sustained.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

MASS WEDDING or "OPERATION I do"

What: For couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:

[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449)/bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

BLD ALLENTOWN 2ND ANNUAL DINNER DANCE FUNDRAISING EVENT

Tomorrow, April 6th, 6 pm – 11 pm
ST. ELIZABETH CATHOLIC CHURCH'S SOCIAL HALL
618 FULLERTON AVENUE, WHITEHALL, PA 18052

*Let us support Allentown by buying tickets
and showing solidarity with them
through our presence at their dinner dance.*

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte - m1a@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco - caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

*"It is not enough to discover Christ, you must
bring Him to others." – Pope John Paul II*

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe, 545 35th Street
Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29 7:30pm-9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick:

p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

BLD COMMUNITY RETREAT

Saturday, April 27, 2013

**April 12 – In-Charge of Marshaling
FORMATION**

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,815	34,836

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

April 6* - CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-38

Intercession/Spiritual Warfare LSS 1-37

Time: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Teachers' Development Program

April 20-21, 2013 ~ 7:30 am – 5 pm

Divine Mercy Parish

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 - 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops

Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Emil/Baby Canlas:

singles@bldnewark.com

ADULT LSS # 40

April 13 & 14 - Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway
Also open for "Infilling Candidates" (those who have previously taken the LSS but would like to take it again).

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano lsa@bldnewark.com

DIVINE MERCY PARISH CELEBRATES "THE FEAST OF THE DIVINE MERCY"

Friday, April 5 @ 6 pm - St. Mark's Church

• 6:00 pm - Adoration (40 hours) starts –

Sunday, April 7 – St. Mary's Church

• 2:00 pm - Rosary & Confession

• 2:45 pm - Chaplet begins

• 3:00 pm - Mass begins

*2:30 pm- Procession from St. Mark's to bring the Divine Mercy and Blessed Sacrament to St. Mary's Church.

Contacts: Ray/Susie Atienza:

bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 15

Bulletin Edition

April 12, 2013

NEWS

POPE: Find the courage to accept God's Boundless Mercy

DAVID UEBBING/ AN EXCERPT/CNA/EWTN NEWS04/08/2013

ROME — Pope Francis took possession of his cathedral as bishop of Rome and spoke about how God's mercy and patience should challenge everyone to find the courage to accept his love.

"Dear brothers and sisters, let us be enveloped by the mercy of God; let us trust in his patience, which always gives us more time. Let us find the courage to return to his house, to dwell in his loving wounds, allowing ourselves to be loved by him and to encounter his mercy in the sacraments."

The Pope's installation in the cathedra (seat) in the Basilica of St. John Lateran April 7 signaled that he is now officially taking up his duties as the bishop of Rome.

When he arrived at the basilica, Pope Francis first participated in the renaming of a small section of the square outside of the church, which went from being St. John Lateran to Blessed John Paul II Square.

He then entered the basilica and greeted everyone as he walked down the aisles. He also individually greeted disabled people in what has become a trademark of his encounters with crowds.

Pope Francis focused on the theme of God's mercy, a fitting motif for the feast of Divine Mercy, which is celebrated on the Second Sunday of Easter.

"What a beautiful truth of faith this is for our lives: the mercy of God! God's love for us is so great, so deep; it is an unending love, one which always takes us by the hand and supports us, lifts us up and leads us on," he said.

Noting that the Gospel reading was about St. Thomas seeing Jesus after his resurrection and how, when he first heard the news of his rising from the dead, he did not believe it.

"And how does Jesus react? With patience: Jesus does not abandon Thomas in his stubborn unbelief; he gives him a week's time, he does not close the door. He waits."

"And Thomas acknowledges his own poverty, his little faith. 'My Lord and my God!' With this simple yet faith-filled invocation, he responds to Jesus' patience," the Pope observed.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

ARE WE FULLY FOR CHRIST?

THEME: We are disciples of the Risen Christ when we heed His words, feed and tend His sheep.

WORD: Acts 5:27-32,40-41 / Ps 30:2,4,5,6,11,12,13
Rv 5:11-14 / Jn 21:1-19

ORDER: 1. Feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep.
2. Follow me.

REFLECTION:

A Christian disciple is one who studies and learns from his teacher, Jesus Christ. More than that, a Christian disciple is one who is committed to Jesus Christ - one with Him in life, spirit and purpose.

In John's narrative about the Risen Lord's appearance to seven of His disciples by the shore of Lake Galilee, four dimensions of the Christian disciple's personal attachment to Christ are revealed: communion, transformation, mission and the cross.

Communion – Led by Peter, the disciples were together in the boat, symbolizing the unity of the Church and our unity as a community. Without Jesus, they spent a futile night without a catch. With Jesus, they hauled a great catch. This reminds us of Jesus' words in John 15:5, *"Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me, you can do nothing."* When the disciples arrived on shore, the Lord gathered them for a meal. This fellowship presages the Eucharist where the Lord shares His life with his disciples and unites them in relationships of communion - with God and with one another- through His love.

Transformation – Out of fear for his life, Peter denied Jesus three times. Jesus redeems Peter by asking him three times, *"Do you love me?"* Thrice affirming his love for the Lord, Peter found the way back to His life.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

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

ONE CHURCH, ONE MISSION, ONE LOVE

“The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common.” (Acts 4:32)

Since the Church began, it has been the tradition of the Christian community to share goods with anyone who was in need. Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical *“Deus Caritas Est”*, related the giving of goods by a believer and the Church’s important role in it, to each individual’s call to authentic discipleship. Blessed Pope John Paul II also said: *“As faithful disciples and imitators of Christ, you are urged to go against the current, choosing the evangelical option of serving the brethren above all, because you are impelled by the unceasing power of divine charity.”*

The driving force behind every authentic Christian disciple is Love - the Love of Jesus manifested through the Holy Spirit. True followers of Jesus are spurred on by the One Love Who loved us first. It is that One Love that ignites and sustains the fire for One Mission through our One Church. As members of different parishes, and also as members of the BLD Newark community, we may have different ideas but we are united in our faith and in our mission. We may be involved in various ministries and causes but we are all serving one God.

All of us who have been touched by the renewing power of the Holy Spirit have had a taste of this kind of unity - different people deeply united in Jesus, bearing with each other’s frailties in love, serving humbly and gratefully. As we surrender to the action of the Holy Spirit, the transforming love of God can heal selfishness, move us to share our gifts and resources despite differences, while seeking the glory of God more than our own self interests. Truly, this is a lifelong process of conversion but we must not lose hope.

The early Christians were united in heart and mind through their faith and hope in Jesus Christ and strengthened by their participation in the sacramental life of the Church. We, too, can remain “of one heart and mind” when we receive, worship, and adore our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. May we allow Him to transform our hearts and minds during this Year of Faith!

“So let us not be closed to the newness that God wants to bring into our lives! Are we often weary, disheartened and sad? Do we feel weighed down by our sins? Do we think that we won’t be able to cope? Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up: there are no situations which God cannot change, there is no sin which he cannot forgive if only we open ourselves to him.”

From Pope Francis’ Easter Homily

YEAR OF FAITH

I Believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord!

I ask myself, what comes to mind first upon hearing the Name *Jesus Christ*? I think of a Friend, Savior and God. Then I ask, what does Catholic doctrine have to say about the Name?

With the help of the Catechism (CCC 422-454), I am brought to great depths in my faith that I cannot reach by simply reciting the Creed, alone by myself with my Rosary or in communal prayer with fellow believers at Mass.

The Creed is the baptismal profession of my faith, the first of the four great traditional pillars on which the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) is built (alongside the Sacraments, the Ten Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer). It is my response to God revealing and giving Himself to me. The phrase, *“I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord”* presents Jesus’ principal titles, after which the Creed confesses the chief mysteries of His life: the Incarnation, Paschal mystery and Glorification.

Jesus is Christ. He is the *Anointed One* Whom the Father sent to inaugurate His kingdom, Whose divine mission Jesus accomplished. This eternal messianic consecration was revealed at the moment of His baptism by John when He was anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is Son of God. At His Baptism and Transfiguration, the Father revealed Jesus to be *His beloved Son*. When Peter confessed Jesus as *the Christ, the Son of the living God*, Jesus affirmed the revelation as coming from His Father Who is in heaven.

Jesus is Lord. He is *Adonai*, our Lord and Master, the King of all Kings. We give glory to the Father when we confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Our prayers have power when we make them in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus is truly our Lord and we proclaim this faithfully during our regular community worship service and in all ministry work. In one of his first homilies as Supreme Pontiff, Pope Francis affirmed this bedrock of our faith: *“Christ is the centre, the fundamental reference, the heart of the Church. Christ is present and leads His Church.”*

In this Year of Faith, it will serve us well to know and believe the Person of Jesus Who loves us so. He is our Beloved with Whom we can build a personal intimacy by allowing the Word made flesh into our hearts. Our faith in Jesus will pave the way as we embark on our journey to our true home!



God's Word and Community Teaching

During my pre-BLD days, going to church was more of an obligation. Perhaps I was just trying to fit into society. I often ask myself why I go to church when in fact, I find the homilies uninteresting. Understanding the life of Jesus seemed too complicated for me. My mind could hardly comprehend His life amidst my own which was so convoluted and filled with unwelcome worries.

My entry into the BLD community raised so many questions. I had many uncertainties as to where my membership would lead me. Was I going with the flow? Did I simply wish to be with a group just to satisfy a sense of belonging?

As I continued to attend class reunions and teachings, I realized that I was not alone in my struggles and challenges. It widened my outlook in life to a broader spectrum. I learned to value the meaning and beauty of creation and the gift of life. I slowly realized that I had embarked on a new journey.

One of the huge aspects of my journey is the community's Christian Development Formation Program. The teachings heralded the Word of God as "alive" and "living" within me. They paved the way for me to embrace salvation history - to know, to love and to serve Him with all my heart. God's Word touched me and guided me to understand the life of our Lord. God's Word has been the Light of my path in this long and arduous journey to grow old with the love of Christ in my heart.

Today, my faith is active and alive! It constantly invites me to sit on the lap of Jesus, to commune with Him and give Him my burdens. With God present in my life, I believe I will overcome every trial and tribulation.

Let us make every effort, not only to know the life of Jesus Christ but "to live it" and to pursue a sacramental life in whatever we think, say and do.

St. John the Baptist once said, "I must decrease so Jesus in me will increase." Let us ask our hearts "where am I now in this life's journey?" May God bless us all!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Read and reflect on the scriptures daily and obey the Word.
2. Care for one another.

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

"There is no fear in love." (1 Jn 4:18) The Lord's love transformed Peter and the disciples. When ordered by the high priest to stop teaching in Jesus' name, the disciples who scattered in fear during the Lord's passion courageously proclaimed, "**We must obey God rather than men.**" (Acts 5:29) Discipleship is a call to live in Christ. To live in Christ is to love fully. To love fully requires the transformation of our whole being into the likeness of Christ.

Mission – Jesus commanded Peter to feed and to tend His flock as the expression of his love for the Lord. Thus, Jesus gave Peter and the disciples this mission: just as Jesus loved us, we are to love those whom He loves, those whom He entrusted to us. The witness of our Christian life lived in the power of God's love is the most basic form of mission. God's love that has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit empowers us to witness Gospel charity to all people, particularly to the poor, the needy and those who suffer. This is the work of Christ, which we have been entrusted to continue and must not shrink from. As John Paul II said, mission is "*an issue of faith, an accurate indicator of our faith in Christ and His love for us.*"

Cross – Jesus prophesied to Peter, "**when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands...**" and be led to "**...where you do not want to go... signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God.**" Then, Jesus said, "**Follow me.**" (Jn 21:18-19) The Church Fathers Tertullian and Origen attested that Peter was martyred in Rome. The latter reported that Peter was crucified upside down. Embracing the Cross of Christ is a condition of discipleship. The Lord Himself said "**Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.**" (Mk 8:34) Sharing in the Cross of Christ is a grace of discipleship, for those who share in His death will likewise share in the glory of His resurrection.

Our community today is concerned about the state of our evangelical mission. Like Peter and the disciples who experienced a futile night of fishing, we are seeing smaller ME classes and lower member retention compared to the early years of the community. Like Peter and the disciples, let us look to the Lord who stands in the light of dawn to guide us to fruitfulness as fishers of men. Jesus is the whole meaning and the power of our communion and mission. He is fully for us; we should be fully for Him. Trust in His Spirit, who anoints those who love and obey Him. With Jesus, nothing is impossible.

To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor, glory and might, forever and ever. Amen.



NEWS (continued from page 1)

"He lets himself be enveloped by Divine Mercy; he sees it before his eyes, in the wounds of Christ's hands and feet and in his open side, and he discovers trust: He is a new man, no longer an unbeliever, but a believer."

"Brothers and sisters," Pope Francis urged, "let us never lose trust in the patience and mercy of God!"

He also pointed to the disciples on the road to Emmaus as a good example of "God's way of doing things."

God "is not impatient like us, who often want everything all at once, even in our dealings with other people," the Pope said after recalling how Jesus walked with the despairing disciples, patiently explained the Scriptures, and gave them the Eucharist.

"God is patient with us because he loves us, and those who love are able to understand, to hope, to inspire confidence; they do not give up; they do not burn bridges; they are able to forgive," he added.

Pope Francis stressed one final point in his homily: "God's patience has to call forth in us the courage to return to him, however many mistakes and sins there may be in our life."

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

MASS WEDDING or OPERATION "I Do"

What: For couples who are civilly married but not sacramentally married in church / those who want to be married in church.

When: April 20, 2013

Place: Divine Mercy Parish Church

Requirements & details: Contact Ray/Susie Atienza:
[908-463-0449](tel:908-463-0449) / bldassistedparish@bldnewark.com

CCRS & AFCCPC East Atlantic Region's 3rd Revival Conference - Catholic Charismatic Renewal

April 27 (Saturday) - 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Our Lady of Victories Parish, Fr. Swenson Hall (formerly OLV School), 240 Ege Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07304 (near corner of Westside Avenue)

Cost: Early registration - \$15.00 and walk-in - \$20.00 (includes breakfast, snacks & lunch)

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29 7:30pm - 9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick:

p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,952	37,788
Easter Envelopes	671	1,547

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Teachers' Development Program

April 20-21, 2013 ~ 7:30 am - 5 pm
Divine Mercy Parish

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 - 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops
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May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 - June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Danny/Me-Ann Sta Ana
Jutt Bustos

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte - mbl@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco - caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

"It is not enough to discover Christ, you must bring Him to others." - Pope John Paul II

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe, 545 35th Street
Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

	Date	Apostolate
	April 19	Management
	April 26	Mission
	May 3	Pastoral
	May 10	Evangelization

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Please visit the New BLD Newark Word Ministry website: <http://bldnewarkwordministry.weebly.com/>



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 16

Bulletin Edition

April 19, 2013

NEWS

A Triumphant LSS #40

"...and it filled the entire house in which they were."

Acts 2:2b



One cannot deny the presence of the Holy Spirit last Saturday afternoon at the baptism ceremony of LSS # 40.

Attended by more than 30 candidates, mostly from ME 40 and SE 29, LSS # 40 took place last weekend at the Divine Mercy Parish. Fr. Michael Fugee was the spiritual director and ME 39 and SE 28 provided additional support. The whole LSS # 40 team did a tremendous job in ensuring that all activities ran seamlessly and without any hitch. Songs were alternately provided by the Praise Ministry of both Singles and Adults.

It was a remarkable event and truly the Lord's awesome love and power were evident. The auditorium echoed with the voices of "angels" professing their allegiance to the Lord Almighty and singing out praises to Him. Many candidates lay on the floor, slain by the presence of the Holy Spirit even before the actual anointing took place. In the end, cries of joy and tears of endearment dominated the event.

Sunday was a day for soaking in the joy that everyone felt in the baptism. There were many powerful testimonies. One of the lambs said, *"...it was very memorable, it was glorifying...it changed me right now."* Others reported *"feeling extreme happiness"* or some *"unexplainable feeling."* Someone said she was looking for *"peace but found joy"* instead.

"My hands felt the warmth of the Holy Spirit coming down on me. I just let go and surrendered my feelings to the Holy Spirit and I felt renewed and just in peace. His presence and love filled not just my heart but the entire room."

"The whole shepherding session prepared me and my husband for the LSS. I was really overwhelmed when I received the gift of tongues. After this experience, all the songs I heard suddenly had a meaning for me."

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

FOLLOWING THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

THEME: We are disciples of the Risen Christ when we hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him.

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

ORDER: Hear my voice and follow me.

REFLECTION:

This coming Sunday is the Fourth Sunday of Easter and it is also Good Shepherd Sunday. All of the readings for this Sunday are united by that one thread - that Jesus is the Good Shepherd and many are the works accomplished when we hear His voice.

The theme of our worship tonight is: We are disciples of the Risen Christ when we hear the voice of the Good Shepherd and follow Him. In the first reading, Paul and Barnabas traveled from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia and boldly preached the Good News. In all their travels, they listened to the voice of the Spirit and followed Him. Thus the community grew quickly and by the next week, *"almost the whole city gathered to hear the Word of God."* (Acts 10:44) Guided by the Spirit, they spoke courageously to Jews and Gentiles alike following what the Lord has commanded them to do: *"I have made you a light to the Gentiles that You may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth."* (Acts 10:47) The disciples remained faithful to the voice of the Spirit who transformed them into fearless preachers of the Gospel *"filled with joy and the Holy Spirit"* even after they were driven out of their territory.

Many of us have been in our community for a good number of years. It is through this community that we have heard Jesus call us, to follow Him in love and humility.

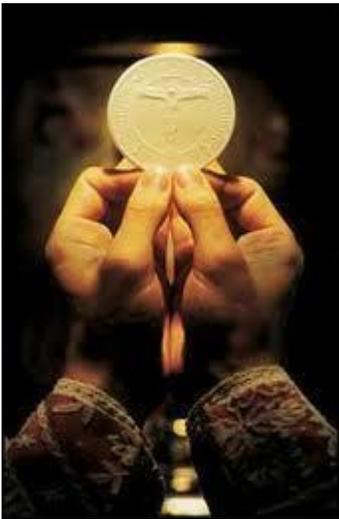
Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of My Hand." (Jn 10:28)

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

So Jesus said to them, *“Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from Heaven, My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.”* (John 6:32).



Jesus is telling us that He is the source of life, the bread of life, that only through Him we are given the gift of salvation. He has given us the bread of life to nurture and nourish our spiritual growth through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. It is the Eucharist that provides us the joy of our Lord's communion and embrace, a tangible manifestation of

God's loving presence through the Eucharist, the bread of life, the food for our soul. In this carnal world, we eat food for our temporal needs in order for our physical body to have the strength and energy to function in our earthly routine; but the Eucharist is what we need for our spiritual growth.

During the Holy Mass, the words uttered by the priest during consecration are words of creation and affirmation. It is the seal of God, our Heavenly Father, the God-head. He affirms the reality even though the words come from the lips of a priest. Divine Intervention is taking place because it is God who transforms the bread into flesh and the wine into precious blood. This is the sacrifice offered to God the Father as shown in Jesus' Paschal Mystery.

It is the same body and blood that is offered at different masses at different times, through the work of the Holy Spirit. *“For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and give life to the world.”*(John 6:33). That bread is given to us on the merit of His love, unlike the manna that came from above the clouds which was given to the Israelites to appease their hunger. When Jesus told the people to eat His flesh and drink His blood, He was talking in literal sense and was giving a command. It is the only way to be in communion with God, i.e. to partake of His flesh and drink His blood, for He is the truth and the only way to our Father in heaven. By obeying His command, we will be able to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him.

“I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” (John 6:35)

To Whom Shall We Go?

In this world we live in today, knowledge is so easily shared through modern technology. Nearly everything can be found through a simple internet search so that hardly anything in life seems to be a mystery anymore. Because of this, people today tend to use their logic to understand things. People strive to explain the unexplainable. And because of this, more and more people are lacking a thing we like to call *faith*.

By definition, faith is believing in something we cannot see or which we cannot prove. Before Pope Benedict XVI stepped down from the papacy, he declared this liturgical year to be the Year of Faith. Given where our world is at this time, it is important to reflect on the words of St. Peter, *“To whom shall we go?”* (John 6:68). Prior to this statement, Jesus had revealed the way to eternal life which was *“to feed on my flesh and drink my blood”* (John 6:54). Several of his followers walked away and left thinking this was too hard a concept to grasp. Many of us today would probably agree that if someone had told us to do the same, we would question that person for even suggesting it! So when Jesus approached his twelve apostles and asked, *“Do you want to leave?”* (John 6:67). St. Peter responded, *“To whom shall we go?”* It almost sounds like ‘What other choice do we have?’ But St. Peter continues saying, *“You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”* (John 6:68-69) Reading those words again with the faith shown by St. Peter it almost sounds like To whom shall we go? means To whom shall we go proclaim Your Word to? The people? The nations?

Likewise, it is truly our faith that will lead us to eternal life. When we receive the Eucharist at Mass, let us be reminded that what we are receiving is not merely bread and wine but that it is the true Body and Blood of our Lord. Believe that through this, we will receive eternal life. And believe that the Lord is continuing to send us out to reach out to all those who still do not believe.

“What does the poor man do at the rich man's door, the sick man in the presence of his physician, the thirsty man at a limpid stream? What they do, I do before the Eucharistic God. I pray. I adore. I love.”

-St. Francis of Assisi

Answering God's Call - Vocation Sunday

It is interesting to read in the Bible that those whom God called did not always immediately say yes, but sometimes hesitated a great deal before finally answering God's call.

When God called Moses, he objected many times to God's call. God said to Moses, "*I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt*" (Ex 3:11) and Moses replied, "*Who am I to go to Pharaoh...?*" God reassured him. It was quite a struggle for God to get Moses to answer his call. Another great person of the Old Testament who struggled with his vocation is the prophet Jeremiah. God said to him, "*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you came to birth I consecrated you; I appointed you as prophet to the nations.*" (Jer 1:5) But Jeremiah did not respond with faith. At first he responded with lack of faith like Moses. He said, "*Lord Yahweh, I do not know how to speak, I am only a child.*" (Jer 1:6) But after an internal struggle Jeremiah answered God's call.

There are other great characters in the Old Testament who did not hesitate like Moses and Jeremiah but who responded in faith immediately to God's call. God asked Abram [Abraham] to leave his country for a place God would show him where he would make him a great nation (Gen 12:1-3). There is no struggle with God, Abraham's faith enabled him to say yes to God immediately. The prophet Isaiah also said yes to God quickly. He saw a vision of God in the temple in Jerusalem and heard the voice of the Lord saying, "*Whom shall I send?*", and immediately he responded, "*Here I am, send me.*" (Isa 6:8)

All these four great people said yes to God, Moses and Jeremiah after a struggle, and Abram and Isaiah responded quickly in faith. From these characters in the Bible, and there are many more stories of vocation in the Bible, we see that it takes faith and courage to answer God's call. This reminds us on this Sunday, Vocation Sunday, to pray for those being called by the Lord that they will have the courage and generosity to answer God's call. Let us pray for those who are in seminary and religious houses at this time discerning if they have a vocation that the Lord will guide and bless them.

"And the One who sits on the throne will shelter them.

They will not hunger or thirst anymore... for the lamb on the center of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water and will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (Rev 7:15b-17)

DIRECTION:

- Avail of the pastoral programs of the community.

His love and mercy have deeply moved us as we felt the Spirit's gentle caress wipe away the heavy burden and anguish that we carry in our hearts. We have become aware of our own greed, our self-centeredness, our judgments of others and our need to be well-thought of by others. And as we slowly heal, the voice of God becomes louder, as our hearts of stone are transformed into hearts of flesh predisposed to listen, hear and feel God's voice. Inspired by the Spirit, we develop this passionate desire to let more people experience what we have gone through. We then start to feel what those early apostles and disciples felt. As they built communities, we also started bringing people into our community. As the community grew, we started to deal with diverse groups of people. With time, conflicts arise and people slowly store resentments, hurt feelings, and even anger that may lead to division. Paul and Barnabas went through the same situations but they continued to work in our Lord's vineyard. In our community, some leave when they get hurt but some continue to work even though they hurt.

The question is when we are actually hurting, do we really hear the voice of the Good Shepherd? When we nurture those negative feelings, are our hearts open to hear what the Lord would want us to hear? Perhaps there are times when we hear God's voice through our pain; our inner hurts however, can prevent us from acting on the voice of the Good Shepherd especially when it comes to working with or around those we do not like. We then start projecting our own inner hurts on them and see them under a negative light. Instead of confronting our own vulnerabilities, we choose to sweep them under the rug. We then insist on having and doing things our way. We fail to open ourselves to a process of dialogue, listening and working together.

Have we paid attention to the healing of the inner child in each one of us? Have we responded to Jesus' invitation to us to come to a quiet place to hear His voice? Have we availed ourselves of the programs and services of the community that would enable us to hear the Good Shepherd's voice more clearly and more effectively? Can we imagine what this community could do given the chance for each member to realize their potential?

The Gospel reading reassures us of the care and providence of the Father, Who has entrusted us to Christ. We are His sheep who hear His voice. He knows us and we follow Him. He will protect those faithful to Him, and He promises, "*I give them eternal life and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand.*" (Jn 10: 28)

The Book of Revelation affirms this as it states,



NEWS (continued from page 1)

"We saw before our eyes how He transformed, molded, melted and used each one of us to touch and minister to each other. God's healing grace worked on the candidates as well as those who served."

"At the baptism, God gave me His message for all: "Let no human, no group, no community, nothing else on earth be your God...be still and know that I am God...come follow me!"

How wonderful God truly is!

Congratulations LSS # 40 Graduates!

ME: Jun/Tess Galvez, Willy/Carol Lagrada, Dodge/Chelle Lizardo, Archie/Lelet Quevada, Jun/Juliet Songco, Hermie/Mila Tindoy, Michael/Carmen Weiner, Louie/Kless Hernandez, & Dick Lumaug

SE: Kate Miguel, Stevie Olaso, Nikki Velasco, Key Col, Geremiah Esguerra, Diango Samano, Robin Pintor, Pat McGrail, T-Rex Tartetecan, Diane Alburo, & Ryan Camposagrado

Infillers: Aldo/Meg Pangilinan, Malou Blankas & Rory Tiu

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,036	40,824

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

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CMP 1 (Part 2) – **LSS 1-38**
Shepherd's Training 1 & 2 - **LSS 1-37**

May 10 - Intro to Intercession – **ME 40**

SM Teaching/Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit – **Singles**

May 17 - John 6 Teaching – **John 6**

Intercessory Formation – **ME 37/SPE**

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 - 8:00 am–4:00 pm

*Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops
Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.*

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May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Danny/Me-Ann Sta Ana
Jutt Bustos

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte - mla@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco - caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Let us start inviting!

"It is not enough to discover Christ, you must bring Him to others." – Pope John Paul II

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe, 545 35th Street
Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277
Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

CCRS & AFCCPC East Atlantic Region's 3rd Revival Conference – Catholic Charismatic Renewal

April 27 (Saturday) - 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Our Lady of Victories Parish, Fr. Swenson Hall (formerly OLV School), 240 Ege Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07304 (near corner of Westside Avenue)

Cost: Early registration - \$15.00 and walk-in - \$20.00 (includes breakfast, snacks & lunch)

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29 7:30pm - 9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick:

p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church (formerly St. Mary's Chapel)

	Date	Apostolate
	April 26	Mission
	May 3	Pastoral
	May 10	Evangelization
	May 17	Management

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Please visit the New BLD Newark Word Ministry website: <http://bldnewarkwordministry.weebly.com/>



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 17

Bulletin Edition

April 26, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

3 beautiful couples say “I do”

“There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1)



The Operation “I Do” or so called “Mass Wedding” was held on April 20, 2013 at Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ at 5 pm. Three couples received the Sacrament of Matrimony after successful completion of the Catholic Church requirements. *(Continuation on page 4)*

32 disciples answer God’s Call

“As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

(1 Pt 4:10)



We praise and thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, for another Spirit-filled and awesome Teacher’s Development Program (TDP) weekend! This year’s TDP was held on Saturday, April 20 through Sunday, April 21, in Connell Hall of Divine Mercy Parish. *(Continuation page 4)*

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

THEME: We are disciples of the Risen Christ when we love one another as He has loved us.

WORD: Acts 14:21-27 / Ps 145:8-13
Rv 21:1-5 / Jn 13:31-35

ORDER: “As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.” Jn13:34

REFLECTION:

As the Spirit of the Lord enabled John to see a vision of heaven, he described for us the Holy City of God, the new Jerusalem, the kingdom with no temples for its temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb. Jesus revealed to us the kingdom from which He comes where there will be no death or mourning, wailing or pain. This is the kingdom of our Savior where He lives and reigns forever.

“Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and God will glorify Him at once.” (Jn 13:31-32) This gospel passage seems to be oddly placed. Jesus proclaims these words just as he was about to go through the most brutal events of His life. It is not a situation man would identify as glorifying; but indeed, the supreme sacrifice that Jesus was about to undertake is the greatest sacrifice man can offer for the exaltation of God. Jesus frames for us His definition of love – it is selfless, sacrificial, unconditional and forgiving. He expands the Old Testament command of love by telling us that the true test of discipleship is to love others in the same way that He has loved us.

We were all called to renewal and to covenant with the Lord. Renewal is discovering a new relationship with God, which can be expressed by an active prayer life, acts of charity, *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away.”

(Rev 21:4)

THE RULES OF MY LORD

“Clothe yourself with humility in dealings with one another,... humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God... Cast your worries upon Him because he cares for you. Be sober and vigilant... Steadfast in faith, knowing that your brothers and sisters throughout the world undergo the same sufferings.”
(1 Peter 5:5-9)

I consider myself a coward because I shy-away from confrontations only because I know the power of the spoken words can hurt more than a physical blow. Mindful of this, I now try to cool down before I speak about my thoughts and my hurts. I consider both actions to be correct in a way, though the non-confrontational approach limits me from doing fraternal correction for fear that I might hurt others. Bearing the hurts to avoid hurting others creates burden and despair for me and hinders my growth in Christ.

I was once an active member of the Community, accepting leadership positions in a Ministry. However, in the course of my work, in what I thought was an act of humility, I ended up hurting another person. Because of this I shied away from Community work and just chose to be *as quiet as a mouse*. I went back to doing *safe* tasks, away from dealing with others. I also see this at the work place where the hardest task of a supervisor is to be able to effectively deal with the staff. There are times when it feels easier just to be a one-man team than to manage a group of 5 or 10 people, or to learn how to treat each person differently and help them bring out the best in each one as a team. I now come to realize that the best way is to follow the actions and examples of “what would Jesus do?”

The words from St. Peter are very clear and easy to understand. However, is it easy to follow? It is in believing and by the grace of God that my worries and sufferings will be lifted. To be vigilant, I need to constantly ask Him to grant me the grace to remain an ever faithful friend. To be sober, I need to read the scriptures, and as I write, I post my notes in places where I can easily see them, like in the cubicle in my office. This is my way to remain steadfast in my faith. Attending Mass regularly gives me the opportunity to seek God’s forgiveness and to fill my hunger and thirst by hearing His words and by receiving the Holy Eucharist. My visits to the Blessed Sacrament afford me quiet moments to feel Jesus’ loving presence and warm embrace.

Dear Lord, it is only by Your grace I will be able to follow Your words. Let Your Holy Spirit guide me always in being able to discern what is it that You want me to do. Let Your Holy Angels protect me from the enemies around me that I may be able to resist sin and be steadfast in Your love. Use me as a vessel to bring more people into Your kingdom. In Jesus Name, I pray. Amen.

Am I HIS Sheep?

“I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me.” (John 10:14)

For us who have lived in cities most of our lives, it may be a little difficult to understand the significance of the shepherd and a flock of sheep. At the time of Jesus, raising sheep and cattle must have been a common occupation. The shepherds took the sheep to pasture and kept them safe from wolves. The shepherds knew their sheep by sight. However, as the flocks got bigger, they had to mark the sheep somehow in order to identify which shepherd they belong to.

I remember growing up on a farm where my father raised several head of cattle. The area where the cattle were penned was enclosed with a barbed wire fence. The cattle went through a single gate when being led to pasture and on their return at night. As a young boy, I also noticed that there were burn marks on the cows’ rumps. When I asked my father what the marks meant, he explained to me that the symbol was our family mark to show that the cow belonged to us. He explained further that if one of the cows gets lost, the finder would easily recognize the mark and return the animal to us.

Now that I am an adult, I sometimes recall the brands on the cattle. I can relate it to our lives as Christians. We are indeed sheep who belong to Jesus. We were *branded* as such when we were baptized. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit were invisible marks that were bestowed on us to identify us as belonging to Jesus. We did not even have to endure the pain of being branded as sheep do.

The question is: Are we really Jesus’ sheep? Do our neighbors know? Do we need a special brand on our foreheads to proclaim that we are Jesus’ sheep? Do we proclaim our attachment to the Good Shepherd?

Jesus says: *“I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.”* (Jn 10:9) Indeed, we know that the only way to salvation is through Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd. If we lead our lives in humble submission and dependence on His will, we will pass through the GATE, which is Jesus. Yes, we are Jesus’ sheep and will put our trust in Him. We are assured that He will be there for us if we get stuck in the bushes of life’s daily grind.

“I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep.” (Jn 10:11-15)

St. Mark the Evangelist



Mark is part of the synoptic gospels alongside Matthew and Luke. If the three gospel accounts were placed together in a parallel column, they would be seen to have similar contents. Mark's gospel was most likely written first, shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Tradition has it that he was a disciple and interpreter of Simon Peter, his primary source of information. His account was based primarily on Peter's preaching in Rome. His mother, Mary, likely to have owned a home in Jerusalem that was used for meetings and gatherings, may have provided the "upper room" where Jesus instituted the last supper. He was a cousin of Barnabas and joined St. Paul in his first missionary journey. Mark, for some unknown reason abandoned that mission that became a discord between Barnabas and Paul; he later re-emerged on the scene and was reconciled with St. Paul.

Mark is recognized as a historian, theologian, and a pastor in his own right. What was unique about his writing style was the characteristic of *realism*, so deceptively simple and vivid, like a child telling a story. He wrote with a sense of great urgency, using words like "immediately" over forty times. It was written in fast paced action and highlights the emotions of Jesus, compassion, anger, distress, and sorrow.

The opening verse of Mark serves as a title of the gospel, proclaiming Jesus Christ as The Son of God. His account centers on the Christology of Jesus. He urges his audience to "repent and believe" in the gospel (Mk 1:15), starting from the story of John the Baptist all the way to the resurrection. Mark's writing focuses on the mystery of JESUS and the journey HE walked.

Just as a movie director films to capture an audience's eyes to draw them in, Mark entices each reader by making them feel a part of the crowds with JESUS. In the gospel of Mark, he writes so that we are re-enacting these parables every time we read them. Every detail and each word vividly portrays the life of the disciples and their journey with JESUS. And just as the disciples lived in these stories, what they left for us now lives through us. The stories of fulfillment, salvation, and the power of faith resonate throughout the gospel. He stresses the knowledge of who JESUS is, and the awareness of the kingdom's coming. Like his message in the gospel, let us encounter Jesus in one another, repent and believe in the good news.

DIRECTIONS:

- Encourage and uplift your brothers and sisters in community.
- Let all your works give glory to God.

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

evangelizing, and serving the Church. All these are critical components of living a renewed Christian life. But that is not all. We are all also called to community for it is where the other half of our Christian renewal is achieved as in the crucible of fire. The community is where all our weaknesses and passions are exposed and where our brokenness is revealed so that the Lord may begin His healing, strengthening and empowering work in us.

We know God's will is perfect; therefore, BLD is the perfect community for us. It is not perfect in the sense that there is no disorder, but rather it is perfect in that in this environment, we will be made perfect in the eyes of God. The Lord is not looking at what we want; the Lord is looking at what we need in order to get us on the road to salvation. "*It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.*" (Acts 14:22) Unlike the early disciples where hardships meant persecution and death, God's work of sanctification in community is His gift to prepare us for eternal life with Him.

Let us embrace this gift of living and working in community, this gift of pain and joy, of fulfillment and sacrifice. What is it with the saints that enabled them to praise the Lord for all the trials in their lives, to rejoice at being brought low, to thank the Lord for humiliation and correction? What is it that impels us to seek validation, confirmation and approval, to be right and to prove others wrong? We can document, save and forward emails, gather evidence and solicit opinions to show that we are right as if doing so would make us smarter, more spiritual, possessing more wisdom and having more of the Holy Spirit in us.

In the end, all we need to know is Jesus was victorious in the circumstances. Was His commandment of love obeyed and observed? Did humility and obedience which He painfully modeled for us on the cross become evident in our actions? Truly, community (and family) is God's gift(s) to us. Without it (them) we will be left to pursue life in pride and self-righteousness.

As we go on this journey with our brethren, we will be faced with decisions to be right or to be humble, to be affirmed by man or to enjoy the fellowship of our Savior. This is the moment that God has given us. We do not know how many more opportunities we will be given to make it right with our brethren, to forgive unconditionally, to look others in the eye without rancor, to nurture and build each other up. As Jesus proclaimed, "*This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*" (Jn 13:35) Let this be the standard by which we can gauge how much we can claim we love Jesus.

I DO (continued from page 1)

The initial process began in January for these couples, who were living together without the matrimonial covenant, whereby a man and a woman blessed by God establish between themselves a partnership for life. *“And the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.”* (Mk 10:8-9)

The Mass was celebrated by Father Robert Lamirez in bilingual language (English and Spanish) and the Mass Choir was supported by BLD Praise Ministry. The Church was crowded with parishioners and BLD members, who came to support and be part of this very special event. The day was filled with joy, love and happiness as seen in the faces of the brides, the grooms and their family members. Immediately after the ceremony, a joyful reception took place in Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium.

Truly, the Love of Christ was felt by everyone, especially the families of the married couples. It was an amazing moment for each couple, a moment filled with love, faith and hope, desiring to grow together as one in Christ as they journey united as one with God.

Congratulations to Adrian and Merian Berberabi, Joaquin and Elizabeth Bourdier and Jorge and Narcisa Rodas! May the Lord bless them, keep them, and fill them with His grace always! **Thank you Lord!**

GOD'S CALL (continued from page 1)

32 of our brothers and sisters from BLD districts of Newark, Trenton, Camden, and Allentown completed this year's TDP. The candidates included BLD members from the Couples, Solo Parents, Singles, and Youth Ministries. We also had a great many of our Community Teachers who were in attendance to instruct, guide, support, and encourage this up-and-coming group of new Teachers. The dedication of our amazing Community Teachers was so evident, as they shared their wisdom and knowledge with the candidates. Above all, a great love for Jesus Christ was present among everyone who attended the TDP.

We continue to pray for all of our new Teachers, as they prepare to present their Mock Teachings, in the upcoming months, and as they strive to follow our Lord Jesus' command, *“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)

Congratulations to this year's TDP graduates!

	Date	Apostolate
	May 3	Pastoral
	May 10	Evangelization
	May 17	Formation
	May 24	Management

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(dstaana@yahoo.com)/Jutt Bustos (justin.bustos@gmail.com)

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Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte - m1a@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco - caseytanseco@hotmail.com

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Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

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BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 18

Bulletin Edition

May 3, 2013

NEWS

BLD members revive faith at conference



Almost three hundred people, about thirty of them youth, took time out from the sunshine and good weather last Saturday, April 27th, to attend the 3rd Revival Conference sponsored by the Newark Archdiocese CCRS and the Alliance of Filipino Catholic Charismatic Prayer Communities at Our Lady of Victories Parish in Jersey City. The Lord rewarded everyone though, showering those in both the Adult and Youth tracks with a truly great conference, filled with songs, music, great speakers, and new and renewed insights into our Faith.

The main conference featured talks on: How to Effectively Evangelize, Experiencing the Miraculous, Forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit. Many times during the day, many had tears of joy in their eyes from emotions while singing, but also from laughing so hard, as the first speaker (Mark Nimo, an immigrant from Ghana now based in Chicago), with a mixture of serious as well as humorous anecdotes and expressive body language, exhorted everyone to be Catholic witnesses and Ambassadors for Christ by the way we live... right on through to Fr. Bill Halbing's lively charismatic homily at the day's culminating Eucharistic celebration.

During his talk earlier in the day, Fr. Bill emphasized this point for us to ask the Lord for His assistance to get things done, "Lord, according to Your riches" – meaning that beyond His will, that we are to use our inheritance from Him, our gifts and strengths, as the best way to "show Jesus." In his homily, he enumerated seven points on how to make things happen, which included being bold, humble, and persistent; and how throughout, we must always "continue in faith."

About a dozen charismatic groups were represented, spearheaded by about fifty adults and youth from BLD.

COUNSELS

EMPOWERED

THEME: The Holy Spirit empowers us to share the peace of God.

WORD: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29 / Ps 67:2,3,5,6,8
Rv 21:10-14,22-23 / Jn 14:23-29

ORDER: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

REFLECTION:



For most of us, the high point of our journey in the BLD community is the moment of empowerment that takes place during our LSS 'baptism in the spirit'. In the LSS weekend, our lives are forever changed; and we are never the same persons again. The transformation process, being largely experiential, is difficult to explain and can only be derived from the working of the Holy Spirit. It is the same Spirit that empowered Christ's disciples after His Resurrection, more than 2,000 years ago.

Significant events in the life of the Church mark the month of May, with readings highlighting the Holy Spirit, including the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost Sunday, and Trinity Sunday. It begins with the gospel of the 6th Sunday of Easter: "*The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name...*" (Jn 14:26), a verse repeated on Pentecost Sunday. Then on the feast of the Ascension, the Scripture reads, "*I am sending the promise of my Father upon you...*" (Lk 24:49). And finally, on Trinity Sunday, the Gospel states, "*But when he comes, the Spirit of truth... He will not speak on his own but he will speak what he hears...*" (Jn 16:13). All these verses refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit Who empowers followers of Jesus

Continued page 3

Promise of the Week

"The Advocate, the holy Spirit...will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you." (Jn 14:26)

PERFECT JOY

I heard Mark Nimo, one of the speakers at an apologetics conference I was once at, tell about his conversion during a Catholic charismatic service he had attended over 20 years ago. He described how at their worship, he found the members to be on fire with the Spirit, bursting with indescribable joy, worshipping – as if they had “just had breakfast with Jesus.” He recounted Simon Peter’s exuberant joy when the apostle heard that Jesus was the man on the shore, and so jumped into the sea to be the first to meet Him (Jn 21:1-14)



How would it feel to really have breakfast with Jesus? Will an encounter with Him bring us perfect joy? In John 15:11, He said, ***“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.”***

When the Lord said, “this”, He was speaking about the love that the Father and He have for His disciples. ***“As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.”*** (Jn 15:9-10) God’s love is immeasurable and in His love we find the fullness of joy.

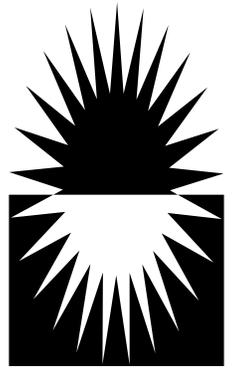
In Romans 5:5, St. Paul tells us we can find joy in the hope of the glory of God because God has poured out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. In response, we are to keep His commandments - to love others as He has loved us. How has He loved us? He laid down His life for us even to death on the cross. Furthermore by His resurrection He has given us this new hope that we cling to – our salvation. ***“Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of [your] faith, the salvation of your souls.”*** (1 Pt 1:8) So there we can have perfect joy if only we accept Jesus as our Savior and personal Redeemer.

How do we prove our love so that we may continue to attain perfect joy? St. Francis once taught Brother Leo that perfect joy is only in the cross. ***“If we endure all those evils and insults and blows with joy and patience, reflecting that we must accept and bear the sufferings of the Blessed Christ, patiently for love of Him, oh, Brother Leo, that is perfect joy! Above all the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit, which Christ gives to His friends, is that of conquering oneself and willingly enduring sufferings, insults, humiliations, and hardships for the love of Christ”*** (from the Fioretti - The Little Flowers of St. Francis).

We should follow after Jesus, deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow God’s will that we may live a life fully surrendered to God and immersed in His great love and in everlasting and perfect joy!

Holy Spirit - My Conviction

Life is full of opportunities! As a new day begins, we get a chance to know, love, and serve God more and more intensely. The desire to experience each day, through the eyes of God, just engulfs my whole being. Day by day new miracles are seen from the rising of the sun to the dawn of the next day.



However, still, there are times of despair, chaos, trouble, or illness, when I look for the Lord. Where is He? Is He still by my side? Is He giving me another chance to prove my love for Him, my full faith and trust in Him? Will He reveal His presence in my life? As I reflect on these questions, I search for His answers through His Word.

I will never forget the time when the Holy Spirit convicted me of the greatness of the glory of God. There was a very anxious lady who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer who had to undergo a radiological test to assess staging. Natural human tendency was to fear a worsening of her medical condition.

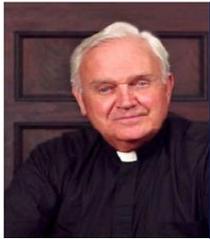
However, through God’s grace, and the power of prayer, the woman had a negative result! It was a miracle to see - because the lady and her husband allowed God to enter their lives again, as they asked for His healing, forgiveness, and grace; as they re-kindled a strong desire to learn more about Him.

And it all started with a simple group prayer. Invoking the Holy Spirit to fill each one of us with His peace, love, and joy, in the midst of the uncertainty about what lay ahead.

Yes, Lord, You are the Great Teacher, the Divine Physician, the Ultimate Healer! You heal all our wounds internally and externally. You give us the courage and strength to carry our crosses and remind us that You will never abandon us. You give us the boldness to proclaim Your name to those who are in need of Your love and mercy.

It is very comforting to know that ***“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.”*** (Jn 14:26) Let’s keep our focus solely on knowing and loving God. With St. Anselm, let us pray: ***“O God, let me know you and love you so that I may find my joy in you; and if I cannot do so fully in this life, let me at least make some progress every day.”***





FR. PAUL SPEAKS

We are taught that the Gift of Jesus' death and resurrection is the Holy Spirit, the personal love of the Father and the Son. His death and resurrection freed us from sin, and when we repent we are washed clean. But when we are empty of sin we could theoretically still be in a state of emptiness. There is a simultaneous action accomplished by the passion/ death/ resurrection of Jesus. We are not only emptied, but at the same time filled with a new, supernatural presence. This action of God is accomplished when we were baptized. It is also repeated each time we repent of serious sin, either sacramentally or by genuine sincere repentance; and is deepened and increased as well, each time we pray or connect with the reality of the hidden God. We become emptied of sin and at the same time filled with the very life of the Trinity. A question often asked is how do we know we are in the state of grace, filled with that new supernatural life?

It is a reality that we sometimes "feel" close to God, or that we "experience" His presence. Feelings are neither good nor bad. As we say in the ME, they tell us something about ourselves. But the bottom line reality is that we cannot really "feel" or "experience" God. The good feelings that sometime happen when we pray are not bad, but they are really the effect of God's presence, not really God Himself, Who is superior to all our concepts and feelings. In fact as we grow in God's love, these nice feelings go away. God knows that we can enjoy His presence, but His concern is not our pleasant feelings but a deep intimate faith relationship. He knows we can identify His presence with the way we feel. We may mistakenly conclude that we are holy when we feel good, and not so holy when we feel dry and distracted.

The reality of God's presence is experienced when we are in a contemplative state. That is why the gift of "lectio divina" is the end process when we open up to a presence of God, as an act of faith, even if we don't "feel" His presence. We consent to His presence even if we can't "prove" it. The use of the mind, imagination and will should result in a sense of presence which transcends the preceding actions of the mind and will.

It is the Holy Spirit, the gift of the risen Jesus, Who leads us into the very depths of God Himself. Ask the Spirit to help you to mentally calm down, and enter into the quiet sense of God's love. "Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people." 

COUNSELS (from page 1)

to do His work of evangelization.

The LSS leaves us aflame with the Holy Spirit, but the intensity of this fire over time may be somehow dimmed, if not doused, by our worldly cares. In order for the Spirit to dwell in us, we are to love Jesus and keep His word "*Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.*" (Jn 14:23) This is our Word for the month of May: *The Holy Spirit empowers all those who keep the word of God.* Our Order is an affirmation of the BLD Vision to be living witnesses for transformation in Christ: "*you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth.*" (Acts 1:8)

6th Sunday of Easter



Although growth in community such as teachings, mission work, service, Encounters/ LSS keep us engaged, trials and difficulties may still arise that could unsettle or confuse us. This week, Jesus promises the help of the Holy Spirit: "*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.*" (Jn 14:26) With the Holy Spirit, the disciples of Jesus were emboldened, no longer afraid, or troubled, because they received the gift of peace. "*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.*" (Jn 14:27) This is our theme for the 1st week of May: **The Holy Spirit empowers us to share the peace of God.**

The Solemnity of the Ascension

Ascension Sunday is a victory and a promise of hope to His disciples who witnessed His visible ascension, body and soul into heaven. We hold on to the same promise today, that although Jesus is no longer physically with us, we believe that we shall one day be reunited with Him at a prepared place for us. This is our promise for the week: "*This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.*" (Acts 1:11b) He directs us to preach the Gospel of repentance and reconciliation as our theme for the week: **The Holy Spirit empowers us to preach repentance and forgiveness.**

Pentecost Sunday



The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on Pentecost Sunday is a significant occasion considered as "the birthday of the Church," marked by charismatic communities worldwide. It is the same Spirit we receive when we were baptized as infants, and more dramatically during our LSS. The spiritual gifts bestowed upon us equip us to love and obey the Lord. This is our theme for the week: **The Holy Spirit empowers us to love Jesus thru others and keep His commandments.** And it comes with a promise: "*the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you.*" (Rom 8:11)

COUNSELS (from page 3)

Trinity Sunday

And finally, we come to the Solemnity of the Blessed Trinity, the biggest mystery of our faith. We believe that there is but one God, and in this one God there are three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The readings of Trinity Sunday speak of all three Divine Persons, the Father as the Origin of all creation, the Son as His Wisdom and His Light, and the Spirit, Who proceeds from Both.

For us this mystery will never be fully comprehensible, but in our faith, we believe. Our theme this week celebrates the Blessed Trinity, the three Persons in one God: **The Holy Spirit empowers us to glorify the Father and the Son.** And the promise is: *“Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.”* (Jn 16:15)

Prophecies and Directions

1. Harden not your hearts and know that I am with you.
2. I have given you the Holy Spirit. Let the HS speak through you in words of love, understanding and compassion, to your neighbors, your brothers and your sisters.
3. Nothing is beyond Me. Open yourself to My grace. Trust, trust and pray!
4. Do not be afraid, my child. My Advocate, the Holy Spirit will erase the fear in your heart with my love.



OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29 7:30pm - 9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick:

p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church
(formerly St. Mary's Chapel)

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

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,963	48,681

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- May 4*** - New Creation Realities & Growth in Prayer - LSS 1-40
CMP 1 (Part 2) – LSS 1-38
Shepherd's Training 1 & 2 - LSS 1-37
- May 10** - Intro to Intercession – ME 40
SM Teaching/Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit – Singles
- May 17** - John 6 Teaching – John 6
Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE
- Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 - 8:00 am–4:00 pm

Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops
Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Danny/Me-Ann Sta Ana

(dstaana@yahoo.com)/Jutt Bustos (justin.bustos@gmail.com)

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte - mla@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco - caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe, 545 35th Street
Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

FAMILY ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes- mbrill215@yahoo.com

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 19

Bulletin Edition

May 10, 2013

NEWS



Pope Francis: *“Do Not Be Content with A Mediocre Christian Life”*

Vatican City, May 06, 2013 (Zenit.org)

Thousands of pilgrims gathered at St. Peter's Square for the Day of Confraternities Mass presided by Pope Francis. Reflecting on Sunday's Gospel, the Holy Father referred to Jesus' last thoughts at the Last Supper as “a spiritual testament.”

He said, “...the Christian faith is completely centered on the relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit...Whoever loves the Lord Jesus welcomes him and his Father interiorly and thanks to the Holy Spirit, receives the Gospel in his or her heart and life... from which everything must go forth and to which everything must lead: loving God and being Christ's disciples by living the Gospel.”

Pope Francis encouraged the confraternities present to continue to draw from the “inexhaustible wellspring” that is Christ. “Down the centuries confraternities have been crucibles of holiness... for countless people who have lived, in utter simplicity, an intense relationship with the Lord,” the Pope said. “Advance with determination along the path of holiness; do not rest content with a mediocre Christian life, but let your affiliation serve as a stimulus, above all for you yourselves, to an ever greater love of Jesus Christ.”

Pope Francis spoke of how the early Church resolved difficulties “not from without but from within the Church,” the “ecclesial spirit” that should guide the confraternities in their popular piety. “Popular piety is a road which leads to what is essential, if it is lived in the Church in profound communion with your pastors,” the Pope said. “Be an active presence in the community, as living cells, as living stones.”

A third element that the Holy Father emphasized was to have a missionary spirit... *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS

BE MY WITNESSES

THEME: The Holy Spirit empowers us to preach repentance and forgiveness.

WORD: Acts 1:1-11; Ps 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9; Heb 9:24-28; 10:19-23; Lk 24:46-53

ORDER: “Be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

REFLECTION:

Ascension Day heralds the accomplishment of Christ's mission on earth and His return to heaven. The biblical account of the Ascension tells us that forty days after His resurrection, Jesus called His 11 apostles together on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem. Still unable to comprehend that Christ's messianic mission had been spiritual and not political, the disciples asked Jesus “Lord, are you going to restore the Kingdom of Israel?” They were frustrated with Roman oppression and had envisioned an overthrow of Rome. They hoped that Jesus would use that risen power to make things right the way they thought they should be. They were following their own agenda.

Many of us would sympathize with the disciples. How many times have we judged events or people solely on the basis of how good they made us feel, or how they satisfied a personal need? Jesus understood this human desire to make our agendas come true. He was gentle with His disciples. He patiently reminded them that the Father established the agendas “by His own authority” and that *their* job was to be Jesus' witnesses. The disciples were to keep alive the presence of Jesus. Jesus' transforming presence

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“This Jesus who has been taken up from you to heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.” Acts 1:11b

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

THE BIG PICTURE

Have you ever been in a situation where God is taking you out of your comfort zone to a place or a situation where you don't want to go? It may be a situation that requires trading your high paying job for a low paying job so you can spend time in prayer and with your family or a work place where you can be challenged all the time. It may also mean enduring that annoying co-worker or boss, or breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend. Whatever it may be, God may be leading you to see the "big picture".

You see when Jesus ascended into heaven (Luke 24:50), He could have done it in any other place, but



instead He led the disciples out of Jerusalem as far as Bethany. Perhaps He wanted them to see or experience something that they would not have been able to see or experience if they were in Jerusalem. Before Jesus entered Jerusalem prior to his Passion, He saw it from a distance and wept. He said,

"If this day you only knew what makes for peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes." (Luke 19:42) He saw something from far away. And this is where God may be telling us to step outside of our comfort zone and see the situation from a faraway place. It could be a church, chapel, outdoors, during a retreat, meditation, a conversation or a prayer with a friend. Whatever or wherever it might be, we need to detach ourselves from that current situation and see from afar. Maybe our current situation is not advancing our spiritual life.

I once learned that when God puts us in that kind of situation, He is lovingly (and unknown to us), trying to stretch our capacity to love and to know Him more. Sometimes, it may be so frustrating that it is taking way too long for Him to answer our prayers. But just when we think that our situation is hopeless, instead of complaining and grieving, why don't we praise God for allowing us to share in His cross and pray for the grace to endure and be patient? In the end, we all know that there is victory in the Cross. It is when we give God the permission to work in us, even when it is painful, that grace pours down like rain and will allow us to see the "Big Picture".

The Power of Jesus' Name!

Jesus promised his disciples, ***"Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you... ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."*** (John 16:23-24) This pledge demonstrates the power of Jesus' name, but we have to ask precisely what it means. If I invoke Jesus' name while praying to win the lottery, will God grant this? Or does this passage point to something else?

First, recall that John's Gospel intends to demonstrate the power of the name of Jesus by showing that Jesus, the Word, is the beloved Son of God, and that He is God (John 1:1,14). Just as God reveals Himself to be "I AM" (Exodus 3:14), Jesus reveals His unity with His Father by uttering "the name": "I AM" the bread of life (John 6:35), the light of the world (8:12), the Resurrection and the Life (11:25). And as the hour of Jesus' passion approaches, Jesus meets His opponents by stating "I AM," which drives them to the ground (18:5-6). It is clear from this that Jesus is God, and that He possesses the "name above every name" (Philippians 2:9).

What does God give us through Jesus' powerful name? Does He give riches, power, and glory? Not according to our understanding does Jesus give these things. He gives us the richness of God's merciful love (Ephesians 2:4-7). He gives us the power to become children of God (John 1:14). On the Cross He shows us true glory, God's glory. The humble and self-sacrificing glory of Christ's love, Pope Benedict observes, is hidden, yet it is the only thing that lasts and saves.¹

If we truly pray in Jesus' name, this is what we should expect: "Where Christ is named, idolatry is destroyed and the fraud of evil spirits is exposed; indeed, no such spirit can endure that Name, but takes to flight on sound of it... The Savior works mightily every day, drawing men to religion, persuading them to virtue, teaching them about immortality, quickening their thirst for heavenly things, revealing the knowledge of the Father, inspiring strength in the face of death, manifesting Himself to each, and displacing the irreligion of idols."²

His is not a name that *magically* grants us our whims. Rather, the name of Jesus only does great things: it saves (cf. Joel 3:5, Acts 4:12). Therefore, if we wish to honor Jesus' promise, we will ask in His name for the things that really matter so that our joy may be complete: religion and virtue, eternal life, heavenly things, knowledge of the Father, and true riches, true power, and true glory.

¹ Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*. Pp. 44

² St. Athanasius, *On The Incarnation*. Book V, § 30-31.

Solo Parents Ministry

THE CROSS WE BEAR

Imagine working alone fulltime to provide for your household, cooking alone for your children and then collapsing into your bed alone from exhaustion. Imagine trying to teach your children to honor Christian marriage without a spouse to serve as an example of a loving parent. This is the cross that solo parents carry every day. Many solo parents feel helpless because there is no one to help them in their struggle. Many carry guilt, feeling that they are responsible for their broken marriages. Many solo parents feel hopeless, that they are failures with no part to play in God's plan aside from a daily and endless cycle of suffering.

The Solo Parents Ministry (SPM) of BLD gives solo parents the faith and hope to endure the trials in this imperfect world. They comfort one another when they feel alone and helpless. ***"The LORD is close to the brokenhearted, saves those whose spirit is crushed."*** (Ps 34:19)

They feel the strength of the Holy Spirit within them and realize that they are part of the body of Christ. They serve others and comfort others even while they carry their own crosses. They realize that they have essential parts to play in God's loving plan. ***"The LORD of hosts has planned; who can thwart Him? His hand is stretched out; who can turn it back?"*** (Is 14:27)

As they comfort one another, they become open to receiving God's love. They remember that our heavenly Father created them, that our LORD Jesus Christ rescued them from the pit and the Holy Spirit has forgiven them and has promised eternal life with Him. The guilt they carry is lifted. ***"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."*** (Mt 11:28)

Solo parents help one another grow spiritually. Through prayer and the study of the Word, they surrender themselves to God's will. ***"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."*** (Prov 3:5-6)

Despite the cross that solo parents carry, they feel the love of their brothers and sisters in Christ as they gather together to worship, to study, or to serve. They never forget that the LORD has created them, redeemed them and continues to heal and sanctify them. ***"When you pass through waters, I will be with you; in the rivers you shall not drown. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, the flames shall not consume you."*** (Is 43:2)

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

would continue into the ministry of the Church and by extension, to us who must continue the work begun by the first disciples. He gave them a scripture lesson much in the same vein as He did with the Emmaus disciples. Jesus added words about their duty to evangelize. They were to go forth as missionaries of peace providing their listeners with their own experience of the virtues of forgiveness and loving others in the same manner as Jesus dealt with them. They would preach that forgiveness is the condition of repentance, which in turn, when expressed, obtains forgiveness. It is evident that Jesus' message for us involves a different vision, a different way of *being* and acting. In going back to heaven, He planted in us the Word that He received from the Almighty Father, the Word that makes us see things in another light, the light that enables us to evaluate ourselves and others with a standard of love communicated in the way we express repentance and forgiveness.

As Jesus departed, He still pointed to the fragility of the faith of the first disciples, although many bible accounts tell us that their fragile faith survived misunderstanding and martyrdom, and even led them into mission. Although unsaid, tonight's scripture readings clearly suggest that the Lord will never fail the disciples of *any* generation. He will empower us and all who attempt to testify for Jesus.

As the Ascension story continues to unfold, we are told that Jesus was taken up, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. As the disciples were watching Him ascend, they stood almost trance-like and bewildered, staring after the Lord into the sky. Partly because they were amazed and perplexed; but it could be that they didn't want to see Him go. Perhaps they were waiting to see if He would return soon. Suddenly, two men in white clothing, messengers from God, appeared beside them and addressed the disciples first with a question and then with a statement of promise. ***"This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven will come back in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven."*** (Acts 1:11) At that, the disciples walked back to Jerusalem to the upstairs room where they had been staying and held a prayer meeting.

There would be one more major step before they were ready to evangelize. Jesus would send them the Holy Spirit who would teach them the full meaning of the Gospel message and penetrate their whole being with graces to make them powerful witnesses to Christ everywhere.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (continued from page 3)

Thus, the full cycle of the Gospel is completed only to be started again countless times, even to our own day. As disciples, we are asked to witness to our faith by sharing it with one another, evangelizing and preaching forgiveness and repentance. The good news is that we are never alone. We have the power of the Holy Spirit to show us the way.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Repent and ask for forgiveness.
2. Reconcile and restore relationships.

NEWS (continued from page 1)

to keep alive the relationship between faith and the cultures in which they live in. *“When... you carry the crucifix in procession... you are pointing to the centrality of the Lord’s paschal mystery, his passion, death and resurrection... and you are reminding yourselves first, as well as the community, that we have to follow Christ along the concrete path of our daily lives so that he can transform us,”* the Pope said.

Concluding his homily, the Holy Father called on the members of the confraternities to always be witnesses to the mercy and love of Christ.

“In this way we will make our way towards the goal of our earthly pilgrimage, towards that extremely beautiful shrine, the heavenly Jerusalem. There, there is no longer any temple: God himself and the lamb are its temple; and the light of the sun and the moon give way to the glory of the Most High,” the Pope said.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar

May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wednesday Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29 7:30pm - 9:00pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

For RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick:

p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

	Date	Apostolate
	May 17	Formation
	May 24	Management
	May 31	Mission
	June 7	Pastoral

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,755	51,436

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

May 17 - John 6 Teaching – John 6

Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Teaching Workshop (Create Your Love Story)

For: SE 25-29

May 11, 2013 - 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Divine Mercy classrooms, (2) simultaneous workshops

Breakfast & lunch are provided. All are invited.

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, Open to all!

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Danny/Me-Ann Sta Ana

dstaana@yahoo.com/Jutt Bustos justin.bustos@gmail.com

CANCELED: 5/11/13 Coach Development Workshop

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte - m1a@bldnewark.com

Casey/Malyn Tanseco - caseytanseco@hotmail.com

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe

545 35th Street, Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973)865-8277

Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201)449-8965

FAMILY ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojoy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church (formerly St. Mary's Chapel)

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 20

Bulletin Edition

May 17, 2013

Pope Francis Canonizes Record-Breaking Number of Saints: 802

Reflects on Giving Witness to Faith in the Midst of Persecution
Junno Arocho Esteves /An Excerpt/Zenit News/05/13/13

Pope Francis presided over the first canonizations of his pontificate at a Mass in St. Peter's Square on Sunday. With 802 canonizations, he raised to the altars the largest number of saints to be simultaneously canonized in the history of the Church.

Those declared saints were Mother Laura Montoya, the first saint from Colombia, Mother María Guadalupe García Zavala of Mexico, and 800 martyrs of Otranto, who were killed during a 15th century Turkish invasion of Italy when they refused to convert to Islam.

Reflecting on the readings in light of the newly declared saints, Pope Francis commented on St. Stephen, spoken of in Acts of the Apostles as a man "full of the Holy Spirit."

"What does this mean?" the Holy Father asked. "It means that he was full of the Love of God, that his whole person, his whole life was animated by the Spirit of the Risen Christ, so much so that it led him to follow Christ in total fidelity, to the point of the gift of self."

Recalling the martyrs of Otranto and their witness in refusing to deny their faith, Pope Francis said that their willingness to remain steadfast in the face of certain death came precisely from faith, which "permits us to see beyond the limits of our human vision."

The Holy Father also prayed for those Christians suffering persecution and death for their faith in the world. "As we venerate the martyrs of Otranto, let us ask God to sustain the many Christians who, in our own time and in many parts of the world, now still suffer from violence, and to give them the courage of fidelity and to answer evil with good," the Pope said.

Drawing from the day's Gospel, the Holy Father reflected on Colombia's first saint, St. Maria Laura Montoya, whom he called "an instrument of evangelization" in her works as a teacher and as "a spiritual mother of the indigenous people."

"This first saint born in the beautiful country of Colombia teaches us to be generous with God, not to live our faith alone – as if it were possible to live the faith in *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS

Do We Live by the Spirit?

THEME: The Holy Spirit empowers us to love Jesus through others and keep His commandments.

WORD: Acts 2:1-11; Ps 104:1,24,31,34,29-30; Rom 8:8-17; Jn 14:15-16,23-26

ORDER: If you love Me, keep My word. (Jn 14:15)

REFLECTION:

This Sunday's feast rounds up the awesome mysteries that we have been observing since Holy Week - the Passion, the Death, the Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus. The events culminate in the empowerment of the disciples by the Holy Spirit to become bold missionaries, to make a change, and renew the face of the earth.

The first reading gives a graphic picture of Pentecost with the quivering tongues of fire and the multi-lingual discourses. Although fearful of reprisal from the religious authorities and discouraged at the recent loss of their Leader and Teacher, the timid and doubtful disciples and believers were suddenly transformed into brave men publicly proclaiming the messianic role of Jesus and the mighty acts of God, as only the "*Spirit enabled them to proclaim.*" (Acts 2: 4) Furthermore, the manifestation of the power of the Spirit did not work only through them who spoke in tongues, but also through those who heard them, each hearing in his own language.

The letter of St. Paul to the Romans tells us that those who are in the flesh cannot please God. He says that if we live according to the flesh, we will die; but if we exist by the Spirit, we will have to put to death the deeds of the flesh, and we will live. This is because those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, set their *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"The one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you." (Romans 8:11)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

HOW I WAS BAPTIZED

One of the best legacies our parents have bestowed upon us from the day we were born is the Sacrament of Baptism. Baptism is the first of the seven Sacraments, and considered “The door of the Church.” This is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation. The visible efficacy of the Sacrament of Baptism is manifested by our admission and recognition as a member of the Catholic Church, which gives us privilege to receive the remaining six sacraments, in particular the two other sacraments of initiation, which are Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. These three sacraments of initiation are the outward manifestations that identify us as Catholics. The latter, the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is not only a regular affirmation of our faithfulness for having been baptized as Catholics, but is also a Divine privilege bestowed upon us where we are allowed to have a deeper and special relationship with Christ after we have confessed our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Like most of us, my baptism was a Christening--being baptized as an infant. More than anything else, this was a decision made by my parents to ensure that I receive Divine protection and the assurance of entering heaven should I unexpectedly pass away in my early years before I reached the age of reason. I recognized and realized my sinfulness and the details of my sins only when I received my first Sacrament of Reconciliation in grade school. I now consider those sins as juvenile disobedience, relating it to my experience now as a father to my own children. I consider their own violations of my will or the will of God as innocent tantrums and part of growing pains. As I grew older into adulthood, the character of my sins as a direct violation of God’s will was more evident. I developed a way to justify my own omission and commission for my own convenience, reaching to a point where I considered everything I did a “God-given right” to do as I pleased, regardless of whether or not it violated the will of the One who gave me that right. My baptism became meaningless in light of what I stood for as a Catholic.

It was not until I was baptized in the Spirit, through the Life in the Spirit Seminar, that I suddenly felt I woke up from a deep slumber in my bed of lies and falsehood about who I was before God. That is when I became a new person. My Christening was an act of my parents, while my baptism in the Spirit was my own. Through this latter experience I now ↗

“Quo Vadis”

(Where are you going?)

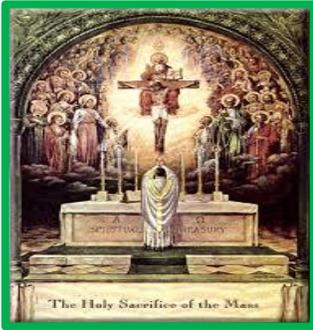
“Amen, amen I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hand and someone else will dress you and lead where you do not want to go.” (John 21:18)

When we were new in the community, I did a lot of reflection. I was always inspired to put my thoughts into writing. It really helped me to humble myself and work things out peacefully. I felt I was like a baby trying to learn things and trusting that everything will be alright. Each reunion with my ME family gave me a feeling of worthiness and acceptance. The CDFP teachings, conferences and retreats widened my perspective in life. And now, more than 5 years in the community, I still feel I need guidance. *Where am I going?* I was stunned when I received a note to write something about this. Was it God's way of telling me He needed me to go on a mission? Follow me? But why me? Is it not enough that I attend Friday worship, join the Medical Mission, and the *Rally for Life*? Am I not a true follower? What else does Jesus want of me? As I reflected, I did a lot of sorting out deep in my heart. I have a lot of pride. I constantly struggle with my weaknesses and the “pull of the world.” I have little faith that I *can* be a good worker and follower of Christ. I need to keep my feet on the ground to be humble and to always practice the teaching from the scriptures. This is a big challenge, for the world is evolving in a new pattern of do's and don'ts, totally different from what Jesus taught us. Many are confused. They believe it is their right to be happy. They follow their own desires and ignore Jesus’ teachings. I know that it will be hard to put into action what Jesus taught us, but I still believe that prayer can make a difference. If I can effect change by bringing one lost soul at a time to Him, I believe I will be going where He is going. **“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.” (Psalms 23:4)**

recognize what I stand for as a baptized Catholic. It is a constant struggle to faithfully live as one with the Holy Spirit, but with HIS guidance for the rest of my life, I know I will be given the grace to live as a **truly baptized** Catholic in my thoughts, in my words and in my deeds.

Shepherd's Voice

The Mass: Structure and Meaning (Part 1)



“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst.”

(Matthew 18:20)

To make us a new creation, Christ the Lord gave us the waters of rebirth and spread the table of His body and His word.

The Introductory Rite:

The Mass begins with the entrance song. The celebrant and other ministers enter in procession and reverence the altar with a bow and/or a kiss. The altar is a symbol of Christ at the heart of the assembly and so deserves this special reverence. All make the Sign of the Cross and the celebrant extends a greeting to the gathered people in words taken from Scripture.

Although the Mass begins with the entrance song, we, the congregation as part of the Mass, are expected to respect the presence of the Lord by our silence and the observance of all the instructions by the commentator.

The Penitential Act:

The Act of Penitence follows the greeting. At the very beginning of the Mass, the faithful recall their sins and place their trust in God's abiding mercy. The Act of Penitence includes the Kyrie Eleison, a Greek phrase meaning, “Lord, have mercy.” This litany recalls God's merciful actions throughout history. On Sundays, especially in the Season of Easter, in place of the customary Act of Penitence, from time to time the blessing and sprinkling of water to recall Baptism may take place. On Sundays and solemnities, the Gloria follows the Act of Penitence. The Gloria begins by echoing the song of the angels at the birth of Christ: “Glory to God in the highest!” In this ancient hymn, the gathered assembly joins the heavenly choirs in offering praise and adoration to the Father and Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

The Introductory Rites conclude with the Opening Prayer, also called the Collect. The celebrant invites the gathered assembly to pray and, after a brief silence, proclaims the prayer of the day. The Opening Prayer gives a context for the celebration. (Source: USCCB)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Consider others more important than yourself.
2. Love, encourage and affirm your brethren.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

set their minds on the things of the Spirit. We, as Christians, must allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit to be qualified as children of God and joint heirs with Christ. To inherit these titles, we must be ready to suffer with Christ so that we may also be glorified with Him. It is the Spirit of God that will empower us to change from a life of sin and death to a life of righteousness and eternal life. With this new life, the Spirit will continue to dwell within us.

In the Gospel, Jesus told His disciples, *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”* (John 14:15) *“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.”* (John 14:23) Therefore, if we profess to be followers of Christ, we are expected to obey God's commandments. After all, it is God who showed us the true meaning of love. It is He who loved us first. It is just fitting to love the source of all love. When we live in the Spirit, we come to understand the love God has for us and we respond with the same love. When we live in the Spirit, we learn to share with others the love that we received.

You and I are blessed that in addition to our baptismal vows, we have also been called and gifted for deeper renewal in Christ through this community. Each one of us has been given many opportunities to serve God and our neighbors through the various ministries. If then we are striving to be true followers of Jesus and if the Holy Spirit is alive in us, why do we still have doubts? Why do we drag our feet when the Lord, through our elders, asks us to do more, to serve more, to love more? We know for a fact that there will always be more things to do than servants to do them.

The more we allow God to dwell in us, the more empowered we become. The more we become empowered, the more we can love God and His people and keep His Word. The more we love God and our neighbor, the more we can proclaim to the whole world the Good News. In this way, we will never be burnt out because our hearts will be burning with desire for God. We can never be discouraged because the Advocate, our Teacher, will always be with us. We will become bold and not be afraid to go where the Lord wants to lead us.

May we all experience a continuous Pentecost, not only during this Sunday's celebration, but always and every day. May we continue to be a blessing to others as the Holy Spirit transforms us into agents of spiritual change in the world. May we constantly strive to live by the Spirit and remain steadfast followers of Jesus, always rejoicing in hope, and never lacking in love. May we always be a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led people in a Spirit-powered community.

Pope Francis Canonizes ... (from page 1)

an isolated way – but to communicate it, to convey the joy of the Gospel with words and the witness of life in every place in which we find ourselves,” Pope Francis said.

“Wherever we live let us let this light of the Gospel shine! She teaches us to see the face of Jesus reflected in the other, to overcome indifference and individualism, which corrode Christian communities and corrode our heart, and she teaches us to welcome all without prejudice, without discrimination, without reticence, with sincere love, giving them the best of ourselves and above all sharing with them what is most precious to us, which is not our works or our organizations.”

Recalling the life of St. Maria Guadalupe García Zavala, Pope Francis emphasized the testimony the Mexican-born saint gave by denying herself a comfortable life. “How much damage is done by a comfortable life,” the Pope said. “The ‘bourgeoisification’ of the heart paralyzes us.”

The Holy Father said that in giving up a comfortable life, Mother Lupita, as she is known in her native Mexico, taught the love of poverty, which in turn, allowed a greater love for the poor and the sick.

“The poor, the abandoned, the sick, the marginalized are the flesh of Christ. And Mother Lupita touched the flesh of Christ and taught us this way of acting: do not be ashamed, do not be afraid, do not be repulsed by ‘touching the flesh of Christ,’” Pope Francis said.

“This new Mexican saint,” the Holy Father continued, “invites us to love as Jesus did, and this means to not shut up in ourselves, in our own problems, our own ideas, our own interests, in this little world that does so much damage to us, but going out and caring for those who need attention, understanding, help, to bring them the warmth and nearness of God’s love, through delicate gestures of sincere affection and love.”

Concluding his homily, the Holy Father said that in witnessing the love of God through the lives of the new saints allows us to pose questions regarding our own personal Christian life, thus allowing us to reflect on how one manifests their faith to others and helping those in most need of love.

“Let us ask for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the new saints, that the Lord fill our lives with the joy of his love,” the Pope concluded.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar ~ May 31-June 2, 2013

Commitment Needed:

- To keep a journal for 4 consecutive Wednesdays in May
- To attend Wed. Prayer Meetings on May 8, 15, 22, 29 7:30- 9pm
- To be present for all Seminar sessions

RSVP, contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick: p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: **Every 3rd Friday, After Worship**

Venue: **Small Room at the side of St. Mary’s Church**
(formerly St. Mary’s Chapel)

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,129	54,565

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

May 25 - Golden Years Teaching – Golden Years
Service Formation – ME 38/SPE

June 1* - Basic Bible Study (BBS) –LSS 1-40
Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-39
Apologetics – LSS 1-37

June 21 - John 6 Teaching – John 6
Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES MINISTRY

Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet Retreat

May 18, 2013 ~ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Divine Mercy Parish, *Open to all!*

Singles Encounter # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Danny/Me-Ann Sta Ana

(dstaana@yahoo.com)/Jutt Bustos (justin.bustos@gmail.com)

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41

Date/Time: May 17-19, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Marc/Emma Belmonte ~ m1a@bldnewark.com

May the Lord fill all candidates with His Love and Mercy!

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe

545 35th Street, Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

FAMILY ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		May 24	Management
		May 31	Mission
		June 7	Pastoral
		June 14	Evangelization

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 21

Bulletin Edition

May 24, 2013

NEWS

Pure and Heavenly Joy! MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #41



'Tis the season of graduations and NBA playoffs - both culminations of years of hard work and struggles, at the cost of sweat and tears, and for the latter, perhaps even blood. The graduates and the victors whoop it up, pop champagne bottles, and party to celebrate such victories and accomplishments.

Continued on page 3

Washing of the Feet/ Agony in the Garden Retreat



On Saturday, May 18, 2013, 27 candidates answered the call to attend the Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat at Divine Mercy Parish. Our Spiritual Retreat Master, Deacon Serge Bernatchez, graciously led all the teachings full of love for the Lord.

The retreat was a reflection upon the last days before our Lord & Savior was led to the cross. The sharers who were living witnesses of God's grace were Baby Canlas, Nestor Vasquez, Maris Guzman, Camille Viernes, Clair Mariano, Mina Mantes,

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

THEME: The Holy Spirit empowers us to glorify the Father and the Son.

WORD : Prov 8:22-31 / Ps 8:4-9
Rom 5:1-5 / Jn 16:12-15

ORDER: Give glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION:

This Sunday we celebrate the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity. The whole concept of the Holy Trinity is a mystery, and we cannot fully understand it. Even St. Augustine found that it is one of the hardest and difficult to reflect on - though it is central to our Christian beliefs. Our minds can never fully grasp the mystery of God. We can never explain the three divine persons in the one divine nature. We simply believe it as a truth that Jesus in the Holy Spirit revealed to us. But rather than give a theological explanation of the dogma, the belief of faith that we and all Christians hold, both Catholic and non-Catholic alike, regarding the Trinity, we can focus more on what the Trinity means to us as Church and as individuals.

Today's readings from Proverbs, Romans and John are all about the union of the Triune God. The Book of Proverbs reflects on Wisdom, a quality that identifies with God the Father. St. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, teaches us that we have peace with God the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ, and that the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel, Jesus mentions the role of the Holy Spirit, His close relationship with God, and what the Holy Spirit is going to do for us as we go about our daily tasks.

In our daily lives, we may not be aware of it, but we are united in this mystery of the Blessed Trinity in many ways. How many times each day do we make the sign of the cross? It may be in our morning prayers, at grace before meals, at Mass, or even before we retire for the night. How often do we start our prayers "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"?

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you." (Jn 16:15)

STEADFAST IN ADVERSITY

“My son, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for trials. Be sincere of heart and steadfast, undisturbed in time of adversity. Cling to him, forsake him not; thus will your future be great. Accept whatever befalls you; in crushing misfortune be patient.” (Sir 2:1-4)

If we are determined to follow the Lord as His disciples, we already have or will inevitably face trials and temptations from the world, the flesh and our enemy.

We prepare ourselves for challenges that come in various forms: adversity, affliction, misfortune, tribulations, knowing all these bring us closer to God. *“Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” (Jas 1:2-4)*

The Lord never said that following Him would be easy. In fact, He forewarned us of things to come. *“Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt 5:10).* The true disciple takes responsibility and prepares for all eventualities, just as Jesus instructed: *“Which of you wishing to construct a tower does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if there is enough for its completion?” (Lk 14:28)*

Just as our Lord suffered and even died for us, we too are called to share in His suffering. Just as students follow the Master, we are likewise instructed: *“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.” (1Pt 2:21).* Everything is part of God’s plan: *“all who want to live religiously in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (2 Tim 3:12)* This is our destiny in the Lord: *“For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. For even when we were among you, we used to warn you in advance that we would undergo affliction, just as it has happened, as you know.” (1Thes 3:3-4)*

We are thus called to stand firm in our faith, persevering in all things, steadfast in love, anchored on the One who provides all our strength. Let us continue to serve and to love Him with our eyes set on the prize, which is our promised reward – the grace of everlasting life with Him! *“Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation, for when he has been proved he will receive the crown of life that he promised to those who love him.” (Jas 1:12)*

Love Knows No Envy

“There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us.” (Mk 9:39-40)

With this statement, Christ opened the way for other churches, apart from Catholicism, to spread His word and the Good News. The message of Christ has to be carried not only by one person or group but by a multitude of men. These groups include the Coptic Church of Alexandria, the various Orthodox churches, Protestants sects, and of course, our very own Catholic church to name a few. All these groups were given the mandate to live the new life Jesus has exemplified and for us to follow.

Let’s look closer to home. There are the Couples for Christ, the Ligaya ng Panginoon, Buklod, the People of Hope, etc. These groups, just like us, belong to the Catholic Charismatic movement that practices faith healing, prophecy, and worship in tongues (also called glossolalia). They, too, endorse the teaching of having a personal relationship with Jesus and have Him as their personal Savior.

Occasionally, a member of these groups might join BLD. We normally extend our hospitality and welcome them with open arms. We show them how BLD has a ministry for all age groups and family situations. We have outreaches not only within New Jersey but also in other states. This is how far-reaching our community has become.

But let’s turn the table around. What if a BLD member decides to leave our community and join another charismatic group? How do we react and feel about it? Do we feel threatened? Or hurt? Or even envious? This is not how Jesus wants us to face the situation. We have to look at the positive side and think that the person still clings to Jesus and has not abandoned Him. He still believes that the only “way” to eternal life is through Jesus. For whatever reason he may have, he is not leaving the faith but simply moving on to another environment. He does not “speak ill of” Jesus and “is not against” Him. His decision is to be respected.

Lastly, on the practical side of things, we should try to talk to the person and ask why he is leaving BLD. From his answer we can look at ourselves and see how we can improve our community. As they say, no one is perfect and there is always room for improvement.

TRUE FRIENDS

“For he who fears God behaves accordingly and his friend will be like himself.” (Sir 6:17)

My husband and I joined the Marriage Encounter (ME) in November 2000. I had always expressed to him my desire to go on a retreat with him but did not know of any available. One afternoon, as he was having his dental cleaning, the dentist invited him to attend the ME. Fortunately, the ME weekend fell on my birthday, so he reluctantly agreed to go as his gift to me.

We were touched by the Lord and felt His love for us. We were reminded that keeping Christ at the center of our marriage would bring us closer to each other. Through attendance at the corporate worships, ME reunions and teachings, we formed a bond with our fellow ME classmates, who grew and struggled with us in our spiritual journey.

It is a blessing to be in a community. For in it, we find friends, like ourselves who have been touched and understand that we were created to know, to love and to serve the Lord. We are surrounded by people that desire to grow in their love for the Lord and learn from each other of the obstacles and hardships that go along with discipleship that can be overcome with faith and hope in God. We are with people who fear the Lord and desire to please Him and to serve Him. An even greater blessing is for one's spouse to grow in his faith and love for the Lord.

Through this community I have gained friends who I can count on and trust with the knowledge of my problems and challenges in life. With just a call, text or email, my friends will pray for my intentions and encourage me to trust in the Lord. It is they who understand when I tell them what a blessing it is to have the Catholic or EWTN radio as a companion to my workday hour long commute, or know how it feels to be “elated” after a prayer service, prayer meeting or mass.

Oh what a blessing it is to be among God fearing people! Thank you Lord for this community, for through its encounters, families are introduced to a deeper love for you. May you continue to bless the community with faithful servants and may its members find their true friends in it and most especially find a **true friend** in Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41 (from page 1)

What follows is a pervading sense of relief and sheer joy of having achieved what they have aimed for.

This past Marriage Encounter #41 weekend (May 17-19), eleven couples went through the same experience of having achieved some form of victory, albeit not celebrated in the way the graduates and athletes do. What they had was pure and heavenly joy, a feeling where the glow of indescribable contentment of being loved engulfed each ME graduate. This is a feeling where coming home to their children and families meant a new **Continued on page 4**

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

How often do we think about the deep meaning of these words, and this simple, yet profound Trinitarian gesture?

During his homily at a Mass celebrating the Holy Trinity a few years back, Pope Benedict XVI gave emphasis and stress to the importance of glorifying the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Pope reminded us that God the Father will continue to love us and will never leave us. He also reminded us that God the Son loved us so much that He gave up His life so that we could have eternal life, and God the Holy Spirit is a spirit of love Who dwells within us.

This privileged knowledge that these Three Persons in One God can work together in unity can fill us with a sense of peace and confidence about our future. Friends may abandon us; family members may disappoint us; setbacks will inevitably come our way, but as the Holy Spirit unites us to the Father and to the Son, it can help us look at others and ourselves with love and appreciation and also help us live our lives in a hopeful way. In John 16:5-15, Jesus tells the disciples about the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's work is a unifying work that enlightens our minds. The Holy Spirit, Whom Jesus sent down after His Ascension into heaven, is a Spirit of unity whose task is to bind us together.

In that same Mass, Pope Benedict went on to explain that when the Holy Spirit empowers us to glorify the Father and the Son, it creates the unity and universality of the Catholic Church, overcoming barriers of nationality and language, and opening the people's hearts to work and serve one another. Our church, by its nature, one and universal, is destined to live among all nations and all its people in the most varied social context. When there are tensions and misunderstandings, the Holy Spirit creates unity and understanding. And in this modern world that we live in, when many people see themselves simply as individuals in competition or in conflict with one another, the Holy Spirit opens us to the experience of communion and helps us form one church.

The unity of the Triune God is not only important to the parishes and dioceses, but it is equally important and essential for the local Catholic communities, like BLD, which seek to be in full union with the universal church and its head, the Pope. Although this unifying action does not grind away all the differences among believers, it does value our different gifts and helps people place them at the service of the entire church.

Our God is rich in relationships, communication, and love for all His people. Our God models to us what the dynamic Trinitarian life is all about: relationships, communication and affection. The quality of our Christian life is based on imitation of the interior life of the Trinity. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit form the model for every human community, from the most simple and elementary, which is the family, all the way to the universal Church. It shows how love creates unity from diversity: unity of intentions, **Continued on page 4**

COUNSELS *(from page 3)*

of thought and of will from diversity of subjects, of characteristics and, in the human reality, of sex. We are diverse and yet called to be one, just as the Holy Trinity is distinctly three and one at the same time.

Understanding how we should faithfully proceed comes through the Holy Spirit. Indeed, for us to come together and to walk together the journey of faith, we need to be grounded in the Word of God, the revelation of God's face in Jesus Christ, the renewing force of God's Spirit, and the discovery of the love of God in the Blessed Trinity. If we can make this effort, then we can achieve Christian unity. Let's make it happen.

DIRECTION: In love foster unity in community.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER # 41 *(from page 3)*

beginning full of promise and greater resolve to make their house a home, where Christ's commandment of loving God and each other becomes their priority and purpose in living.

The ME #41 couples are: Adrian & Merian Berberabe, Joaquin & Elizabeth Bourdier, Manolo & Teresita Cruz, Prudencio & Corazon Delfin, Victor & Victoria Escalona, Nicholas & Suzette Ray Guinto*, Emmanuel & Edith Iheanacho, Julemmanuel & Myrna Rosete, Bruce & Lauren Sanfilippo*, Tom & Helen Tran, and Dennis & Aurora Pacia*, and their class shepherds are Audie & Vulet Chong.

The incredible feeling of pure and heavenly joy radiated to all who came to work and pray to ensure of the encounter's success. Primary witnesses to this heavenly transformation were members of the sponsoring class of ME#40, together with the Pastoral Team (Fr. Paul Lehman, Fr. Dave Sison, Deacon Emeruwa Anyanwu, Bong & Merle Encarnacion, Audie & Vulet Chong), Auxies, MLA, Liturgy, Praise, DCS and other members of the community who offered their time, talent and treasure all for the glory of our Lord Jesus.

Indeed, the Holy Spirit descended mightily upon Pine Hill Retreat Center as the rest of the Catholic world celebrated Pentecost Sunday. *Class Coordinators

WASHING OF THE FEET *(from page 1)*

Don Rodriguez, and Leonie Mariazeta. The candidates listened intently to them as they opened up their hearts and witnessed about how God has transformed them. On the eve of Pentecost Sunday, we truly felt the presence of the Holy Spirit at work within these candidates. During the retreat practicum, the candidates also washed each other's feet and drank from the same cup in a solemn and spirit-filled atmosphere to symbolize humility, intercession, and servanthood.

We praise The Lord for all the candidates who attended where healing, intercession, and servant hearts were transformed in their lives through God's grace and mercy. **All Glory & Honor to our Risen Lord as we unite as one community in our Lord's vineyard!**

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,785	57,350

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

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TEACHING CALENDAR

June 1* - Basic Bible Study (BBS) –LSS 1-40
Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-39
Apologetics – LSS 1-37

June 21 - John 6 Teaching – John 6
Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES ENCOUNTER # 30

May 31 – June 2, 2013

For details, contact: Danny/Me-Ann Sta Ana

(dstaana@yahoo.com)/Jutt Bustos (justin.bustos@gmail.com)

Solo Parents Encounter # 15 Weekend

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe

545 35th Street, Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

YOUTH ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 12-14, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Youth Coordinators - ycs@bldnewark.com

FAMILY ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP

Life in the Spirit Seminar ~ May 31-June 2, 2013

Contact: Msgr. Paul Schetelick: p.schetelick39@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			May 31	Mission
			June 7	Pastoral
			June 14	Evangelization
June 21	Formation			



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 22

Bulletin Edition

May 31, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Don't Create Sacrament of 'Pastoral Customs', Pope Preaches

CNA/EWTN NEWS 05/28/2013



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis warned that some Christians establish the eighth sacrament of “pastoral customs” when they insist on protocol instead of seeking to meet spiritual needs.

He made his remarks during his May 25 homily on the Gospel reading from Mark 10 in which the disciples rebuked people who were bringing children to Jesus.

“I remember once, coming out of the city of Salta, on the patronal feast, there was a humble lady who asked for a priest’s blessing,” Pope Francis recalled in the chapel of St. Martha’s House.

“The priest said, ‘*All right, but you were at the Mass*’ and explained the whole theology of blessing in the Church. ‘*You did well.*’ ‘*Ah, thank you father; yes father,*’ said the woman. When the priest had gone, the woman turned to another priest: ‘*Give me your blessing!*’

“All these words did not register with her,” the Pope underscored, “because she had another necessity: the need to be touched by the Lord. That is the faith that we always look for; this is the faith that brings the Holy Spirit. We must facilitate it, make it grow, help it grow.” He also pointed to the story of the blind man of Jericho, who was rebuked by the disciples because he cried out, “*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!*”

“The Gospel says that they didn’t want him to shout, but he wanted to shout more. Why? Because he had faith in Jesus! The Holy Spirit had put faith in his heart. And they said, ‘*No, you cannot do this! You don’t shout to the Lord. Protocol does not allow it.*’”

Pope Francis also used a more modern example by describing an encounter of a young couple with a parish secretary.

Continued on page 4

THE MIRACLE OF THE MULTIPLICATION OF BREAD

THEME: Frequently receiving the Holy Eucharist brings newness of life.

WORD: Gen: 14:18-20/Ps 110:1-4
1 Cor 11:23-26 Lk 9:11-17

ORDER: “*This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*”
(1 Cor 11:24-25)

REFLECTION:

The miracle of the *multiplication of bread* and fish, also referred to as *feeding the multitude*, brings out the essence of God, Who is not only greatly compassionate and generous in His ways but in humility willingly offered Himself as the sacrifice through His own transformation into the body & blood of Jesus Christ.

To put the story into the right perspective, after being told of the death of His beloved John the Baptist, He asked His disciples to “*Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.*” (Mark 6:31) However, upon crossing the Sea of Tiberius, He set aside His own personal grief as He was moved with compassion upon seeing the multitude waiting for Him at the other side of the shore, as they are “*like sheep without a shepherd*” (Mathew 9:36). He instead began teaching them the kingdom of God and healed their sick.

This great compassion propels Him to act with empathy for the people, who, by then, were hungry, as it was later in the day. Disregarding the advice of His disciples to let the people go and find food at nearby villages, He asked His disciples to feed the crowd themselves. Though puzzled, the disciples’ search produced five loaves and two fish. **Continued on page 3**

Promise of the Week

“*They all ate and were satisfied.*” (Lk 9:17)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

SURRENDER OWNERSHIP



He replied and said to him, *“Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth.” Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to [the] poor and*

you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me. At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.” (Mark 10:20-22)

Before us, in this passage, is a man who seemed to have it all. Yet when the Lord Jesus inventories this man’s life, He finds him to be lacking one very important thing that would have guaranteed him eternal life.

It is obvious that this man cared about where he would spend eternity. This tells me that he believed in Heaven and in Hell. It appears that he wanted the best afterlife that he could achieve. Jesus’ challenge to this rich young man was to surrender ownership of all his possessions. Jesus tested him in order to expose the idol in his heart, and sadly he failed the test. He was not prepared to part with his wealth in order to help others. More importantly, he was not willing to yield control of his life to Jesus.

This man’s money was in truth his god. He trusted money, worshiped money and received his fulfillment from money. Therefore, even though he was moral and upright, his god was his money. I might say that his money was not the problem - his love of money was.

Many in our day, myself included, share a common problem with this rich young man. We see ourselves as moral people and feel that we need nothing from God or man. Jesus doesn’t ask us to give up all that we own. He just wants us to know that we cannot receive the gift of eternal life while we are grasping the world. What Jesus wants us to know is that we are loved and we can be saved, but we have to be willing to turn from those things that have a hold on our lives. In other words, we cannot have Jesus and our sins!

Wealth, with all its power and potential, does not impress God and can never provide salvation for the soul.

How to Get the Best Seats in Heaven



*Today I wondered
Maybe just like James and John,
the sons of Zebedee...
Since it will be for eternity
What would it take to get the
best seats in heaven?*

*Then I thought of something I had already written...
I pray this helps to get all of us there...*

The Theory of Happiness

You’ve heard of the Theory of Relativity, $E = mc^2$
It ushered in the nuclear age.
Here’s an equation you might not have heard of yet:

$$H = \{(J + F + O) / s\} + S$$

I call it the Theory of Happiness,
To usher in, an Age of Joyfulness
And mathematically it says that:
Happiness is inversely proportional,
To the amount of attention One lavishes
Upon oneself,

... and it goes something like this:

When you think of and do things for loved ones,
Friends and Family,
And self becomes smaller...

When you pray for others and sincerely help them...
A little less of self, a little more of them...

When you think of what **Jesus** has done,
What He continues to do...

When you dedicate to Him,
The things that you do... and Praise Him...
Then the fraction that’s self grows smaller,
But Happiness transforms
Into something even **bigger**...

Come to think of it,
It’s really, not just a theory...
It becomes a Faith Law reality!
So when small “s” becomes the big “S”
That’s added to the equation,
The Self, God originally intended us to be
Then the cycle can continue on
On towards, limitless **Happiness**.

*So remember what Jesus said in Mark 10:44,
“Whoever wishes to be great among you will be the
Slave of all.”*

*That’s how one earns the most Happiness now,
And in His Glory, the best seats in Heaven.*

A Divine Encounter



As we commemorate the Feast of the Visitation, we are reminded of how the perfectly Divine plan of God is being unfolded as He works through people and events to accomplish His will.

As soon as the angel Gabriel revealed to Mary that she will miraculously conceive Jesus and that her cousin Elizabeth will also bear a son in her old age, she hastily traveled to Judea to visit her kinswoman. Here are two amazing women chosen by God for amazing purposes. As Mary entered Elizabeth's home and greeted her, the baby in her womb leaped (Lk 1:44). At this moment, Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and addressed words of praise to Mary as ***"the mother of my Lord."*** It can truly be said that Elizabeth was the first Christian to confess Jesus as Lord.

The predictions about the births of John and Jesus came before the meeting of their mothers. Unlike Mary, John was conceived, like the rest of us, with original sin, but was cleansed from sin through grace during the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, when he leaped in his mother's womb at the sound of Mary's greeting. Thus, our Redeemer, our Lady and John, the one whom Christ said, ***"among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist"*** (Mt 11:11), all came together, Jesus, Who is God and was not subject to sin, Mary, conceived without sin, and John, cleansed from sin. The Holy Spirit prompted John to signal his mother that the baby in Mary's womb was none other than the one he was sent ***"to prepare his ways."*** (Lk 1:76, 3:4) An unborn child being the first to recognize the Messiah in Mary's womb tells us that he was completely in tune with God's purpose for his life. It was at this blessed meeting of the Old and the New Testament that all the longings and expectations of thousands of years were being fulfilled, when John the Baptist greeted Christ, the Son of the Living God, who soon would become the Savior. It must have been the pure joy of messianic salvation that made John leap inside his mother's womb.

This revelation that John the Baptist and Jesus, still in their mothers' wombs, were able to communicate confirms beyond doubt the recognition of the value of life from its very beginning. St. Luke's account of the Visitation shows that the unborn John and Jesus most fittingly taught about the sacredness of life within the womb, not with words, but by their own Sacred life within the womb.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jesus then invited everyone to be seated. Then He took the bread, looked up into heaven, blessed and broke them after which it was given to the disciples for distribution to the crowds. The people ate and were all satisfied, and there were even twelve baskets of bread left over. The number who ate was five thousand men, not counting women and children. This also shows that the sharing of offerings coming from the heart, though small, meager or insignificant, in the hands of the Lord, can be multiplied to such a number that could not only fully satisfy but could exceed our expectations. It shows the magnanimity and generosity of Jesus, that His grace is not only sufficient but abundantly overflowing.

The underlying significance of this miracle is the foreshadowing of the Eucharist. The act of offering, blessing and the breaking of the bread before God and giving to His disciples for distribution to others is a prelude to the gift of the Holy Eucharist, the transformation of the bread into His flesh & blood. This shows His great love for us that He offered Himself as the sacrifice, allowed Himself to be broken but in the end, transformed Himself into the living bread, that whoever partakes of Him will never be hungry.

This act would be repeated at the last supper and the same act by which His apostles would recognize Him thereafter in the breaking of the bread. Likewise, this teaches us that partaking of the Holy Eucharist, Who is Jesus Christ Himself, is essential to attain eternal life and everlasting happiness.

The miracle is the manifestation of the character of God in Christ Jesus, Who is compassionate, abounding in mercy, magnanimous and generous in His ways, and open and willingly eager in offering Himself to anyone who wants to receive His body and blood, which is essential to attaining salvation through Him.

Father God, help me realize the magnanimity of your love. Grant me a kind and grateful heart to acknowledge that any and all my needs will be met with Your abounding kindness and compassion if I ask the Father through the mighty name of Jesus. That I may continue to receive you in the fullness of my whole being, your body and blood to nourish my belief and faith in you Lord Jesus, my Lord and my God.

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Receive Holy Communion frequently that you will be strengthened in your faith.**
2. **Follow Jesus through our mission activities.**

NEWS (from page 1)

“Good morning, the two of us — boyfriend and girlfriend — we want to get married,” the couple says. “And instead of saying, ‘That’s great!’ [the secretary says], ‘Oh, well, have a seat. If you want the Mass, it costs a lot’ Instead of receiving a good welcome — ‘It is a good thing to get married!’ —they get this response: ‘Do you have the certificate of baptism? All right ... ’ And they find a closed door,” the Pope said.

He described the situation as one where a “Christian has the ability to open a door, thanking God for this fact of a new marriage,” but, instead, the secretary controlled the faith when it was possible to have facilitated the couples’ faith. “There is always a temptation,” he said, “to try and take possession of the Lord.”

Before finishing his homily, Pope Francis painted one final scenario, that of a single mother who wants to have her child baptized. “Think about a single mother who goes to church, in the parish, and to the secretary she says: ‘I want my child baptized.’ “And then this Christian says: ‘No, you cannot because you’re not married!’ “But look: This girl who had the courage to carry her pregnancy and not to return her son to the sender. What is it? A closed door! This is not zeal! It is far from the Lord! It does not open doors!”

“And so, when we are on this street, (when) we have this attitude, we do not do good to people, the people of God. But Jesus instituted the seven sacraments, (and) with this attitude, we are establishing the eighth: the sacrament of pastoral customs!” he warned.

The Pope noted, “Jesus is indignant when he sees these things” because those who suffer are “his faithful people, the people that he loves so much.”

He concluded his homily by asking everyone to think about “the holy people of God, a simple people, who want to get closer to Jesus, and we think of so many Christians of goodwill who are wrong, and who, instead of opening a door, they close the door of goodwill. So we ask the Lord that all those who come to the Church find the doors open ... to meet this love of Jesus. We ask this grace.”

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			June 7	Pastoral
			June 14	Evangelization
			June 21	Formation
			June 28	Mission

“Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do... but how much love we put in that action.”

~ Mother Teresa

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LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,566	60,916

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TEACHING CALENDAR

June 1* - Basic Bible Study (BBS) –LSS 1-40
Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-39
Apologetics – LSS 1-37

June 21 - John 6 Teaching – John 6
Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SINGLES ENCOUNTER # 30

This weekend ~ May 31 – June 2, 2013

May the Lord fill all participants with His Love & Mercy!

SOLO PARENTS ENCOUNTER 15

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe

545 35th Street, Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277
Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

YOUTH ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 12-14, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Youth Coordinators ~ yca@bldnewark.com

FAMILY ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojoy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

Date/Time: June 8, 2013

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Annex Building

For questions, please email: yca@bldnewark.com

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP DAY

“I care for my home church.”

June 15, 2013 - 9:00 AM - 12 PM

Participants: All BLD members

Please bring your own cleaning materials, garbage bags...

Contacts: Your Ministry Coordinators/Class Shepherds

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 23

Bulletin Edition

June 7, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Singles Ministry harvests 20

CHRIST-LIKE COMPASSION



THEME: Compassion and sensitivity to the needs of others bring newness of life.

WORD: 1 Kgs 17:17-24 / Ps 30:2,4,5,6,11-13
Gal 1:11-19 / Lk 7:11-17

ORDER: Arise, Glorify God!

REFLECTION (ECSL):

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand." (Jn 10:28-30)*

The First and Gospel Readings this Sunday are similar. In the First Reading, Elijah begs God to restore the life of the dead son of a widow. In the gospel, nobody asks Jesus to do anything, but moved with pity on seeing the weeping widow, He takes it upon himself to restore her son to life. Evident in both cases is God's compassion.



Are we capable of the same compassion? It is not enough to have compassion in our hearts, for compassion must translate into concrete action. Jesus expressed compassion through positive action. He responded by doing what needed to be done to alleviate the suffering of the widowed mother. In His mercy, Jesus gives a glimpse of God's overflowing kindness and the graciousness of His kingdom, hence *"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."* (Lk 6:36)

In our moments of helplessness and hopelessness, especially when tragedy strikes, we should draw strength by clinging to God's tender mercies and his promise that he came *"that we may have life, life in all its fullness,"* (Jn 10:10).

Continued on page 3

Ten young men and an equal number of young women heeded God's call and attended the Singles Encounter #30 at Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison, NY on May 31 to June 2, 2013. Weeks before the event, only a handful of people had signed-up. It ballooned to 20 right at the start of the retreat. Coming from all walks of life, some from BLD Youth, they mingled and listened to the various talks and sharings throughout the weekend and were renewed by God's love.

The Pastoral team was composed of Spiritual Director Fr. Paul Lehman, assisted by Deacon Serge Bernatchez. The Facilitators who gave an insight into the spiritual way of life were Seg Ogang, Mhyllanie Guinto, Ron Bernal and Melissa Martinez. Praise God for they did a marvelous job preparing the new members to follow Christ's way of life.

The SE #30 graduates are: *Samantha Aglibut, Coleen Atienza, Molly Brillantes, James Calingo, Ryan Calingo, *Rafaelle Danta, Luckie Doria,

Continued on page 4

Promise of the Week

"You changed my mourning into dancing."
(Ps 30:12)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Giving Back

“So Jesus said to them, “Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.” They were utterly amazed at him.” (Mk 12:17)

The opponents of Jesus, more particularly the Pharisees and Sadducees, could not directly touch nor arrest Him for fear that the crowds might turn against them. So they devised a devious strategy to entrap Him, to make it appear as though He were involved with inciting people to rebel against the Roman authorities.

In those times, some revolts already had been staged but failed. The Jews wanted a theocracy, a God-state; and for them to have gentile Romans ruling over Israel was an offense against God. Paying taxes to a foreign ruler was a betrayal of God’s authority over His people.

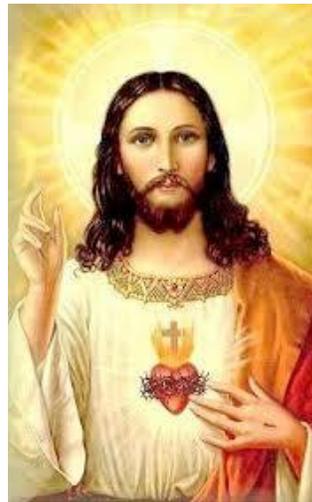
The Pharisees were out to catch Jesus openly supporting the revolt against the Romans. They seized the touchy issue of paying taxes. The Jews rejected paying taxes. On the other hand, the Roman leaders were very sensitive about anything that looked like resistance to their rule. If Jesus denied the validity of paying taxes, this could be the Jews' opportunity to turn Him over to the Romans for inciting the people to rebellion.

Jesus cleverly avoided the trap by pointing out that the money used to pay the tax, having the inscription and picture of Caesar, came from the Romans and should be paid back to them. Then Jesus emphatically directed the people to give God *His* due as well. The Pharisees may not have been converted but were amazed and impressed by the wisdom of His answer which satisfied both sides of the issue.

Today we take seriously our obligation to pay taxes and obey laws fearing retribution by the government. While submitting to the rule of the state is a good thing, we sometimes fail to submit to God's law because *His* retribution often is not taken seriously. The concept of losing the reward of heaven is just so far away that we choose to indulge in the pleasure of what is material and temporal. In so doing, we adhere to the State but deny God in our lives. Jesus’ message was clear: be diligent in fulfilling your obligation to the State and to God. We also must recognize that adherence to God takes precedence. ***“I die the king’s good servant, but God’s first.”*** (St. Thomas More)

Set God as the priority, and you will see the hand of God working in your life. He opens up the way for us. He makes the paths straight, guides and leads us in the way of righteousness. God takes care of our needs and answers all our prayers. ***“But seek first the kingdom (of God) and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.”*** (Mt 6:33)

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

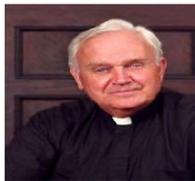


What exactly is the *Sacred Heart of Jesus*? Before delving into the question, it’d be best to understand where it most commonly can be seen. There are many beautiful paintings of Jesus with a visible heart in the center of His chest. This heart is surrounded by thorns with blood dripping from its side, and above that you usually can find a cross and flames.

I’m sure that many of you have seen this image previously at some point in your lives, but have you actually taken the time to admire it? Of course, the painting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is made to be aesthetically appealing to the eye, but the true meaning behind the painting is so much more beautiful than any painter ever could picture it. With all this being said, now would be a good time to touch once again upon the previously asked question: What exactly is the *Sacred Heart of Jesus*?

To put it simply, the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a symbol of God’s love for us in Christ Jesus and through the Holy Spirit. This means that it can represent God the Holy Trinity as well, because God *is* Love. It’s a heart filled with love for the Father and for all mankind. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is, therefore, a symbol of the love between Him and His Father and the Holy Spirit. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is a heart that causes the human will to strive for Christ and inspires us do good deeds in a Christ-like fashion.

In the actual image of the Sacred Heart, the thorns, flames, and cross, surrounding and above it, each symbolize something as well. The thorns are there to symbolize Jesus’ coronation as the King of Jews. The cross represents the passion and death of Jesus. The flames above the heart symbolize the burning love of Jesus and His never-ending mercy for us. The blood dripping from the side of the heart represents the piercings Jesus suffered as He hung from the cross, shedding His Precious Blood to save us from ourselves and our own sins. It ultimately represents His complete submission to the will of God the Father and His unflinching Love, Devotion, and Sacrifice for us.



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

THE BIBLE & THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY EUCHARIST

I thought it might be well to review the format of the Mass, especially since we have just celebrated the feast of Corpus Christi last Sunday, and that today we celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart. The love of the Heart of Jesus is closely connected to the Eucharist in which the heart of Jesus is burning in a special way for love of us.

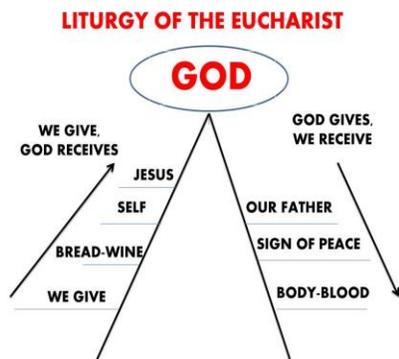
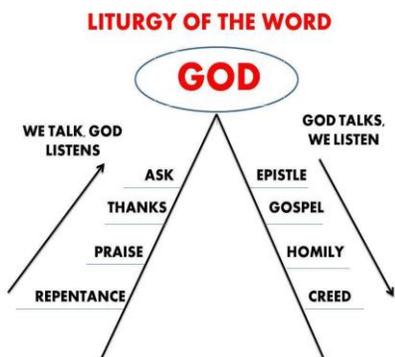
The Mass is clearly divided into two parts that could be summarized as love in words and love in action. The first part of the Mass is an interplay between our prayers, followed by our listening to God's response, the written and now proclaimed Word of God. Love here is expressed in our words, and God's Word from the Scriptures. The second part, the Eucharistic liturgy, is simply an exchange of gifts. We give ourselves internally, expressed externally by the gifts of bread and wine that are brought to the altar for future consecration. God gives Himself to us in Holy Communion, the very gift of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The opening prayer at every Mass always contains repentance for sin. Repentance is a constant dimension in the life of the Christian. Next follows what we have summarized as ACTS, Adoration, Contrition (acknowledged at the beginning of Mass), Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Notice that we stand during these opening prayers, since we are the actors. Then we sit to listen to the Bible and homily, because now we are receivers. Notice also the up-down movement between us and God.

We talk. God listens. God talks. We listen.

Even though words are used in this part of the Mass the underlying element is action, our action of giving and God's action of receiving, and God's action of giving and our action of receiving. We give ourselves in the bread and the wine. God gives us himself in the now consecrated bread and wine. Notice also here the up-down movement.

We give. God receives. God gives. We receive.



COUNSELS (from page 1)

In every experience of death, we must learn to rise up from our sorrow, stop weeping, and move on, as Jesus admonishes us: **“Do not weep.”** (Lk 7:13) The miracle at Nain is an affirmation that, with faith in Christ, deep sorrows, tragedies and even death can be overcome. There is assurance that when we feel broken, frustrated, discouraged and seemingly without hope, we need only continue waiting expectantly on our ever-faithful and merciful God: **“I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me and heard my cry.”** (Ps 40:1)

Let us be confident that when in need of help, we shall find mercy and grace from our God (Heb 4:15-16) Jesus is our strength, our life, and our hope. Just as he showed compassion to the widowed mother, we trust He will hear our cry for help, heal our ills, and give us what we are in dire need of. Let us keep ourselves open to the healing touch of Jesus, that He may continue His healing work in us and raise up the dead areas of our lives. Let us heed His call: **“Young man, I say to you, arise.”** (Lk 7:14)

May we experience the Lord's compassion even as He exhorts us to be merciful as He is merciful that, as we act with sensitivity and concern for others, we may find gladness and newness of life as promised: **“You changed my mourning into dancing.”** (Ps 30:12)

Lord, open our eyes that we may see You in our brothers and sisters.

Lord, open our ears that we may hear the cries of the hungry, the cold, the frightened, the oppressed.

Lord, open our hearts that we may love each other as You love us.

Renew in us Your spirit.

Lord, free us and make us one.

Amen.

(A prayer for compassion from Mother Teresa)

Reflection Questions:

1. How do we show our compassion and concern for our brothers and sisters who are undergoing trials and difficulties in life?
2. How can we, ourselves, overcome our sorrows and trials, and find the newness of life promised to us?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Arise from your complacency level.
2. Help alleviate the sufferings of your neighbors.

NEWS (from page 1)

Rosemarie Manansala, Patrick McGrail, Rayzaldy Pagdanganan, *Mikko Pepino, Johnson Pham, Leizl Samano, Maricel Tan, Chris Tarectecan, Kody Tolentino, and Kristine Villanueva. They will be led by SE #30 Class Shepherd, Sundee and Neneng Ikalina. (*coordinators)

The sponsoring class of SE #29, along with their class shepherd and the supporting auxies, did an excellent job running the event behind the scenes. It was like a well-oiled machine running smoothly although there were some hiccups along the way. The graduation on Sunday was overwhelmingly enjoyed by the new class together with family members, friends and members of the Singles Ministry. This is another victory for the Lord. **To God be the Glory!**

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,581	63,497

Financial details are available to all members through
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Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE
- June 28** - CDFP – Intro to the Word – ME-40
Golden Years Teaching – Golden Years
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Sienna Gift Inventory – LSS -38
Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37
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Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

KEYS TO REACHING INACTIVE CATHOLICS

Seminar with John and Therese Boucher

When: Saturday, June 29, 2013

Venue: Archdiocesan Center, Newark

Time: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Word Ministry Needs

CN Writers and Publishers

If interested, email word@bldnewark.com



MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

Date/Time: June 8, 2013

Location: Divine Mercy Parish Annex Building

For questions, please email: yca@bldnewark.com

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP DAY

"I care for my home church."

June 15, 2013 - 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Participants: All BLD members

Please bring your own cleaning materials, garbage bags...

Contacts: Your Ministry Coordinators/Class Shepherds

SOLO PARENTS ENCOUNTER 15

Date: June 21 - 23, 2013

Venue: Centro Guadalupe

545 35th Street, Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277

Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

YOUTH ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 12-14, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Youth Coordinators ~ yca@bldnewark.com

FAMILY ENCOUNTER # 20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojoy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			June 14	Evangelization
			June 21	Formation
			June 28	Mission
			July 5	Management

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 24

Bulletin Edition

June 14, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Pope Francis tells pilgrims: God forgives sins that wound

The Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus sets the tone for the whole month of June, the Holy Father says.

by ESTEFANIA AGUIRRE/CNA/EXCERPT FROM EWTN NEWS 06/10/2013



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis yesterday emphasized the mercy of God, declaring that God always forgives those who show him the “inner wounds” of their sins. *“Let us never forget this, he is pure mercy, let us go to Jesus!”* he exclaimed during his Angelus noon prayer.

The Pope said that the Feast of the Sacred Heart, celebrated June 7, “sets the tone” for the whole month. *“The heart of Jesus is the ultimate symbol of God’s mercy, but it is not an imaginary symbol, it is a real symbol, which represents the center, the source from which salvation for all humanity gushed forth,”* said the Pope. *“But the mercy of Jesus is not just sentiment: indeed, it is a force that gives life, that raises man up!”*

Pope Francis cited “the key story” of the death of Jesus according to St. John. *“This evangelist testifies to what he saw on Calvary, that a soldier, when Jesus was already dead, pierced his side with a spear, and from the wound flowed blood and water,”* he said. *“St. John recognized in that, apparently random sign, the fulfillment of prophecies,”* he added. *“From the heart of Jesus, the lamb slain on the cross, flow forgiveness and life for all men.”*

Continued on page 4

THE STRENGTH OF FORGIVENESS

THEME: Forgiving others and ourselves brings newness of life.

WORD: 2 Sam 12:7-10,13 / Ps 32:1,2,5,7,11
Gal 2:16,19-21 / Lk 7:36-8:3

ORDER: *“Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”* (Luke 7:50)

REFLECTION:

The gospel reading provides us a very good role model that we can emulate in our walk of faith. The choice is for us to make. There is the self-righteous Pharisee who even felt holier than Jesus when he looked with disdain at Jesus for allowing a sinful woman to touch him. There is also the picture of this sinful woman, believing in faith that she would be forgiven and accepted by Jesus, put all of her meager resources of oil and ointment to serve the Lord. She even bathed Jesus’ feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

In John 13, the same thing happened. But this time, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Master of everything, Jesus himself, got down on His knees and washed the feet of His 12 disciples. These were the 12 apostles, one of them would later betray Him, the other who was the supposed leader would deny Him three times and, of course, the rest would disappear and abandon Him during the most painful hours of His life. Jesus knew all this would happen but this did not cause Him to be selective of whose feet He would wash. Jesus washed all their feet.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“The Lord on his part has forgiven your sins, you shall not die.” (2 Samuel 12:13)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

OUR QUALIFICATION COMES FROM GOD

“Not that of ourselves we are qualified to take credit for anything as coming from us; rather, our qualification comes from God.” 2 Corinthians 3:5

Jesus would come into our lives sometimes uninvited. It happened to Zacchaeus, a corrupt tax collector. Jesus invited himself to dine with him. It also happened to Peter when Jesus came uninvited into his boat and told him to go back further, deeper into the lake and cast the net. Peter protested that he had been fishing all night and caught nothing. Despite Peter's misgivings, he obeyed and cast his net and to his surprise, caught a boatload of fish.

Yes, Jesus would come to our lives, to our boat, uninvited and even at times when we just want to be left alone. He called us into our ministry and equipped us to be the messenger of His Word. Just imagine Peter, after going all night fishing, tired, hungry and so disappointed without a catch. And then Jesus came, commanding him to go even further and fish again.

How many times we come home so tired, so frustrated about what transpired at work and then are called to worship on Friday and to top it all, to serve on weekends and even on weekdays. Why me Lord? I'm not prepared to do this kind of work. Can you send someone else instead? How much more do you want me to do? When *grace* comes in, how do I respond? Everything we have and everything we are comes from our Lord through the Holy Spirit. When we say yes, we become epistle of Christ, not by our own efforts but by the Spirit of God writing Christ into our hearts.

Lord Jesus, now that You have come into my life, create in me a bigger heart that I may receive Your unending *grace*. Help me persevere in everything that I do, especially in the fulfillment of my ministerial work. When anxiety, fear, inadequacy and even self-reliance take over, give me the *grace* to know that You alone equip me to be able to do the works that You destined me to do. Just like Peter, You want me to go that extra mile and never give up nor tire. In all my good works, help me realize that You do not call me because I am qualified, but You call and qualify me.

Encouragement through Affliction

The Lord uses each of our trials to speak to us and assure us of His enduring love. It has taken me many years to understand this; at least three years of CDFP (Christian Discipleship Formation program), many retreats and countless Word-sharing circles to understand this conundrum. It is through our afflictions that the Lord invites us to take our part in His passion and death so that through faith, we may share in His resurrection. In Romans 5:1-5 St. Paul reminds us, *“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access [by faith] to this grace in which we stand, and 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, and 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.”*

Each of us has a unique mission here on earth. We are all commissioned to go out and tell the world of His Good News, to declare how He has truly loved us **first**. He touches, in His own perfect time and way, the very core of our being so our eyes may be opened to the truth of our existence. And once He has revealed Himself to us, He invites us to use our unique stories and circumstances so we may bring others to Him, by sharing with them God's love, joy and peace.

It is only through faith that we are able to fulfill His plan in our lives. We have all been called to exercise the gifts that have been freely given to us through the Holy Spirit. Our personal “yes”, our *fiat*, is a function of our expression of our love for the Lord. He invites, He calls, but He will never force our acceptance. He gives us free will so that the sweetness of our “yes” may be our unique sacrifice and oblation before the Lord.

May we as a community fulfill the Lord's plan for us. May the gift of our “yes” rise up to the Heavens as a fragrant aroma, pleasing to the Lord. May the Lord continue to bless our community with authentic witnesses who will speak of His magnificent love. May His hope remain ablaze in our hearts. Amen!

“I Believe in The Resurrection of The Body” CCC 988-1014

The Resurrection of Christ, as professed in our Nicene Creed, is a unique belief and doctrine in our faith, the final journey we all look forward to when He comes. It is the center of our salvation and the foundation of our faith. Jesus’ resurrection conquered sin and death. That changed the world and the situation of mankind, securing what no one ever could take away from us: our salvation. Redemption was completed, the gates of heaven were opened and salvation is now ours and all we now have to do is to say, “Yes” to Christ.

When we profess “The resurrection of the body,” the body is referred to as our human flesh. This body has always been tainted with sin and brokenness that separates us from the Heavenly Father, and our immortal soul from our mortal flesh. We believe that Jesus embodied the Word of God, the Word Made Flesh, and thus revealed our redemption. He gave us the opportunity to resurrect our body and to live a fruitful life in Christ by denouncing the worldly needs of the flesh. It is in dying to oneself that we restore our life and are reunited with Christ. *“For to me life is Christ, and death is gain.”* (Phil 1:21)

Those who witnessed the resurrection of Christ were overwhelmed by their emotions; a reality that is far beyond the grasp of their human experience and limited intelligence. We too will be overwhelmed when we experience our own resurrection from our sinfulness and live a fruitful life with Christ. We will enter a new dimension, a renewed relationship with God filled with love, peace and joy, a taste of Heaven on earth.

We do not have to wait for that last day for our body to resurrect. Christ is always here waiting for us. Embrace this New Life He has offered us at The Pascal Mystery. He suffered and shed His precious blood for our sake. His resurrection from the dead gives us new hope, salvation and a glimpse of eternal life beyond this earthly journey.

In this Year of Faith, let us invite, share and walk with others in Christ. May our flesh resurrect from the bondage of sin and continue to live our life with Christ until the final resurrection when our mortal body meets our purified soul to live in the Father’s House throughout eternity, Amen.

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

He loved all of them and forgave all of them regardless of what He knew they were about to do to Him. Jesus put His very self at the feet of His disciples as a sign of His unparalleled humility and unquestioning love for them.

The sinful woman, realizing that she was in the presence of Jesus, someone who would accept her for who she was, not judge her or turn her away because of her sins, found forgiveness and a new life. The same is being asked of us. In our transformational journey of faith, especially in community life, we are called to be forgiving and to accept forgiveness. Remember the forgiveness promise during our Life in the Spirit Seminar or LSS, “I love you, I forgive you, please forgive me.” Forgiveness leads us to a new life, a life filled with love and compassion. When we have peace and joy in our hearts, it is so much easier to go out and serve the Lord with all our hearts and minds. The conflicting opinions and the differences of ideas now become bridges to find common ground towards a solution. Hurts and misunderstandings become opportunities to give each other second chances and an opportunity to forgive and give love. Let us be reminded in Matthew 7:5, *“remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother’s eye.”*

We are called to take the same position as the Lord did with the sinful woman, which is to be compassionate and forgiving. When we have forgiveness in our hearts, love pours out. We are filled with joy and we are energized to serve. It manifests itself in our willingness to accept assignments to any ministry or project. Hesitation or fear of unworthiness is replaced with the eagerness to serve. It shows in our boldness to evangelize friends and family to come and start a personal relationship with the Lord. Our new life of forgiveness expresses itself in our generosity to share our resources with the community and the people around us. This generosity of sharing our oil, ointment and tears is the kind of energy and inspiration that will help our community to continue the work of mission and evangelization to spread the word of God in this Year of Faith.

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Confess your faults to the Lord, avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.**
2. **Be quick to reconcile with your brethren.**

NEWS (from page 1)

The Pope cited Sunday's gospel reading, taken from Luke 7, as another example of the mercy of Jesus. The reading tells how Jesus, with His disciples, arrived in the village of Nain in Galilee at the very moment in which a funeral is taking place. "A boy is buried, the only son of a widow, Jesus' gaze immediately fixes itself on the weeping mother," Pope Francis said. St. Luke wrote, "Seeing her, the Lord was moved with great compassion for her."

"This compassion is the love of God for man, it is mercy, the attitude of God in contact with human misery, with our poverty, our suffering, our anguish," said the Pope. He believes that the biblical term "compassion" links the way God loves us to the way a mother loves her children, to the point of experiencing their pain when they suffer. "What is the fruit of this love?" he asked. "It is life!" The Pope told how Jesus said to the widow of Nain "do not weep" and then called the dead boy awaking him as if he had been asleep. "The mercy of God gives life to man, it raises him from the dead," said the Holy Father, who added, "The Lord is always watching us with mercy, always awaits us with mercy."

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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	July 12	Pastoral

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Contacts: Your Ministry Coordinators/Class Shepherds

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Venue: Centro Guadalupe

545 35th Street, Union City, New Jersey 07087

Cost: \$ 120.00 per person

Contact person: Charlotte Santiago SPE #14 (973) 865-8277
Joey Cadavillo SPE #14 (201) 449-8965

ME #41 GRAND REUNION

Date: June 30, 2013

Time: 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Location: Connell Hall, Divine Mercy Parish

Contacts: Audie/Vulet Chong: audie_chong@hotmail.com

YOUTH ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: July 12-14, 2013

Location: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Youth Coordinators ~ ycs@bldnewark.com

FAMILY ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Location: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojoy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 25

Bulletin Edition

June 21, 2013

A Message from our BLD Community Spiritual Director



28th BLD FOUNDATION ANNIVERSARY June 19, 2013

Let us thank the Lord for guiding BLD Manila and Global community through the past 28 years since BLD foundation. Happy Birthday to all of us in BLD!

The occasion is an opportunity for all of us to recall and give thanks to and for the original members and founders of BLD. It is the good Lord who brought us through the history of BLD moving on from year to year. The celebration, consisting essentially of thanking God for the 28 years of BLD history, really covers the year to year life of BLD, each covenant community, ECSL, CCSL, DCS finding their respective years of service through those years.

*May the occasion occurring in this Year of Faith be an opportunity for everybody to be renewed and empowered for the task of evangelization, in the spirit of **LIVE FAITH** and **SHARE FAITH**.*

+ Angel N. Lagdameo

+ANGEL N. LAGDAMEO

Archbishop of Jaro & BLD Community Spiritual Director
June 14, 2013

**May the blessing of the Lord
be upon us and our beloved
community!**



Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS

THE HEART OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

THEME: Dying to ourselves for the benefit of others brings newness of life.

**WORD: Zec 12:10,11;13:1 / Ps 63:2-6,8,9
Gal 3:26-29 / Lk 9:18-24**

ORDER: Deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Jesus.

REFLECTION:

To be His true followers, our Lord Jesus orders us to “*deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Him.*” This order also summarizes the cost of discipleship. Although this may sound daunting, in reality, we are doing this already as individuals and as a community. Our challenge is how to do more of what we currently do.

Denying ourselves involves praying to the Lord for guidance and listening to Him. Our challenge is: how can we listen *more* to the Him? When we listen to Him and do things His way, we deny ourselves, our own personal interests. We overcome our pride and let the Lord take control. We let the Holy Spirit rule our hearts and minds, and therefore, we belong to Him.

But how do we listen to Him? It is easy to say that we reflect on His word daily, yet even when we do this, we still sometimes fail to do things His way. We tailor our reflection to conform to our own personal desires. There are times when listening to God is made easier through the help of others. In our community, our DCS discerns the directions that are intended to guide us in following our Lord’s order. The direction, which is related to the order of denying ourselves, is: **Give out of love without expecting anything in return.**

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“... my soul clings fast to you, your right hand upholds me...” (Ps 63:9)

QUIET GENEROSITY

“But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” (Matthew 6:3-4)



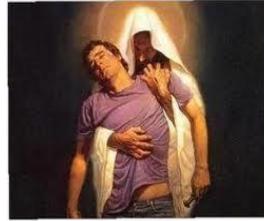
Since my LSS 7 years ago, I have grown to love the Lord in whatever I do. Through His Word, He touches and transforms me every day as I read the scripture and try to understand God’s message for my daily walk. Through the Holy Spirit’s guidance and power, the desire to serve and help others has become a yearning in my heart. Through encounters and other activities in the BLD community, we learned that humility and obedience are the two most important aspects of Jesus’ character. By walking in humility, I know I am bringing Jesus wherever I go... to friends, co-workers and even to people I encounter in the street. A conversation will come up and will lead them to recognizing God in their lives, and then I thank the Lord for choosing me as His lowly servant. As it says in John 15:16, ***“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.”***

As Catholics, we are called to be witnesses to our faith by the way we live our lives. We put our faith and our hope into action through various activities as we serve our brothers and sisters in the community. Charity is a Fruit of the Holy Spirit and the virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake and our neighbor as ourselves. My husband and I are blessed to be involved in a ministry that gives us many opportunities to share our attention and time. I learned to serve, not on my own time, but by the time that God gives me as He pleases. ***“Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.”*** (Matthew 6:1)

There are many ways to serve and many things to do to help, and only by the Grace of God we are able to do all these things. At times, I still feel inadequate; but I find that as we yield to the Holy Spirit, He equips us with the gifts that we need to serve His people

“When you can do good, defer it not, because ‘alms delivers from death’.” -St. Polycarp of Smyrna

When I am weak, then I am strong!



In the midst of our afflictions, the first thing that comes to mind is to call on the Lord and seek answers. If we don’t see a change in the circumstances of our life, we may feel that God has abandoned us. Is God testing us, or have we just been too impatient to wait for His response?

In 2005, while I was already suffering through a time of loss and grief, my son, who was stationed in Fort Hood, Texas for his military service, was charged with first-degree murder. I prayed so hard to God to keep my son safe while in prison and asked for forgiveness for his actions. Most of all, I prayed for justice and for the Lord to help me find a way to afford legal service because I knew my son was facing a death sentence. I was so overwhelmed. When I finally got a chance to speak to my son, the very first thing he asked was for me to forgive him and to pray for him and the man who died. He said he acted out on self-defense. I told him to pray every day and ask God for forgiveness every waking hour.

For weeks I couldn’t sleep or eat, but I focused on His love for us to have the strength and courage to face those who judged us. The military denied him any help, but I refused to give up. I was determined to get him out if God willed it; and He gave me courage to speak publicly. The support and love shown to us by many was quite touching, and we were moved by their willingness to help. It gave me hope, especially when they called just to let me know that our family was included in all their prayers. They were the angels God sent our way. ***“That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, persecutions, hardships, and troubles that I suffer for Christ, for when I am weak, then I am strong.”*** (2 Cor 12: 9) After six long months of incarceration, all 12 jurors returned a verdict of **NOT GUILTY.**

Jesus Christ was the energy in me. I relied on His words and promptings, and when others made every attempt to discourage me, I kept my mouth shut and moved on. I always prayed for everyone who judged us unfairly or insulted our family. I am a living witness to God’s power, that in the time of my great distress and weakness, I was indeed strong. My faith and trust in God became my shield, and I can never thank Him enough. Our real victory here was in making believers out of non-believers, those who saw how prayers are heard and answered by Him in His own time and not ours, and how faith and trust in God and His grace is all we need to survive.

DO WE REALLY UNDERSTAND SUFFERING?

Suffering is a mystery. It is difficult to understand especially if it is happening to you. Furthermore, we tend to equate suffering with punishment, a result of wrongdoing. Hence, we find it difficult to accept if we feel we have not done any wrong. It is no wonder we often hear, "It is God's will." However, this is a cop-out because it implies that our suffering is willed by God or, less offensively (and it borders on blasphemy), permitted by God. We lay the burden of responsibility for our suffering on God's shoulders. But it does not belong on God's shoulders because, when Adam and Eve committed the sin of disobedience, suffering and death entered our lives. We grow old and become weak. It could be the result of how we lived. It could be due to Mother Nature and the list goes on.

God is love, and in His goodness He has made suffering work for our sanctification. Suffering makes us strong spiritually, increases our faith, makes us more compassionate, and helps us know God more through the sharing of our pain with Jesus Christ. James 1:2-4 says, "*Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*" It is only through fire that gold is tested. The martyred saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary showed their love by embracing suffering. Through God's love, their suffering has helped in the salvation of many. Always remember that Jesus Christ has turned His suffering and death on the cross into our salvation.

Pope Francis said, "You cannot remove the cross from the path of Jesus, it is always there." We want to follow Jesus, and in doing so we will also encounter the cross. In our lives, let us overcome suffering with something much more powerful. Let us be willing to embrace suffering just as Jesus Christ embraced the cross: with obedience and love. This material world was designed to pass away because it is just a stepping stone into the eternal spiritual world where there will be no more suffering. "*He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, [for] the old order has passed away.*" (Rev 21:4)

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

Simply speaking, our actions and decisions should be based upon our love for God and others, especially those who are spiritually and/or physically weak, those who need love the most. Our community is and should remain a loving and caring community by helping others without expecting anything in return.

In addition to denying ourselves, we need to have the willingness to carry our cross in order to be a true follower of Jesus. Our challenge is our willingness to carry our cross daily, not once in a while, nor sometimes, not most of the time but always. Likewise, let us remember the one direction that is intended to guide us in following this order which is: **Offer our time, talent and treasure beyond our convenience.**

At the center of this order and direction is the Cross. Let us realize that Christ carried the cross to Calvary with love. He expected the difficulties that He would encounter as He brought His message of love to all.

Similarly, God's Word warns us that to follow Jesus entails encountering and experiencing some struggles, difficulties and pains. This doesn't happen because God wants us to suffer when we offer ourselves to serve Him. God wants us to know the realities of life on earth, the existence of dark forces that try to prevent us from reaching out to others and sharing the Good News. We need to realize that there is a constant battle between good and evil and that our struggles and pains are a purifying process which produces in us endurance, hope, and character.

As it is said, without the cross, there is no resurrection. Like Jesus, who embraced the cross to save us from our sinfulness, we have to willingly embrace the struggles and trials we encounter along the way. We should realize that these are not stumbling blocks that prevent us from carrying out the will of the Father. Rather, these are opportunities for us to make a difference in the lives of others, by fighting for the sanctity of life, by bringing joy to the elderly, by feeding the hungry, by caring for the sick, by building faith-based communities like ours. These are opportunities to live a life of faith. These are opportunities to be part of the New Evangelization by sharing with others, in humility, how Jesus has changed our lives.

While opportunities come and go, we may not choose only those that suit our personal preferences. This is not denying ourselves, nor does it signify our willingness to carry our own cross. If we choose to be a true follower of Jesus, all we need to say is "Yes Lord, I will" and pray for guidance and strength. This signifies our trust in Him: that if we persevered in our faith,

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 1)

He will give us the assurance that He is with us; and we will overcome the forces of evil whenever we call upon His name.

Eventually, if we deny ourselves and willingly carry our cross, we shall praise Him and express our gratitude to Him because our success has been due to His triumphant presence in our lives. At the end of the day, all the pains and sufferings are gone and all we feel is the joy of serving the Lord we love.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Give out of love, without expecting anything in return.
2. Carry your cross willingly.
3. Offer your time, talent and treasure beyond your convenience.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

INSTALLATION OF BLD ALTAR SERVERS, LECTORS, & EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

At the conclusion of worship, July 12th

Save the Date!

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Saturday, September 7, 2013

VFW, Manville, NJ

Contacts: Nong/Tricia Bustos (or members of ME #34)

	Date	Apostolate
	June 28	Management
	July 5	Mission
	July 12	Pastoral
	July 19	Evangelization

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,935	69,632

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

June 28 - CDFP – Intro to the Word – ME-40
Golden Years Teaching – Golden Years

July 19 - Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE

July 20* - Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit –LSS 1-39
Sienna Gift Inventory – LSS -38
Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

July 26 - Golden Years Teaching – Golden Years
Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER HEALING SEMINAR 1

When: June 29, Saturday, 7:00 AM - 9:00 PM

June 30, Sunday, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Venue: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway, NJ

Contact Person: Audrey Santos

audreysantos23@gmail.com

- Registration fee is \$50.00 to cover food, snacks and handouts.

KEYS TO REACHING INACTIVE CATHOLICS Seminar with John and Therese Boucher

Date: Saturday, June 29, 2013

Time: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Venue: Archdiocesan Center, Newark

ME #41 GRAND REUNION

Date: June 30, 2013

Time: 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Venue: Connell Hall, Divine Mercy Parish

Contacts: Audie/Vulet Chong: audie_chong@hotmail.com

YOUTH ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: July 12-14, 2013

Venue: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Youth Coordinators ~ ycs@bldnewark.com

FAMILY ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Venue: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

May the WORD of GOD dwell in us richly!

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



SPE #15 yields 13



Solo Parents Encounter #15 Retreat was held in Central Guadalupe Retreat House located at 545 35th Street, Union City NJ. The life changing event (from candidate's own words) happened last June 21st and concluded on June 23rd, 2013.

The retreat was attended by 13 Sisters in Christ, namely, Venina Barcega, Concepcion Burton, Maria Bolos**, Ellen Cotoner, Gigi Espejon*, Deborah Leung, Patricia McKiernan, Christine McSpedon, Encarnita Palacios, Fe Pulido Ruiz,* Carmen Tolentino**, Elizabeth Espino and Ruth Ureta*. Their Class Shepherds are Ver and Diana Nacion; who led the Sunday Morning Praise and Worship. (*Coordinators **Alternates)

The retreat's Spiritual Director was Msgr. Paul Schetelick. His teachings touched on a person's encounter with self, needs vs. responsibilities; change of status/new relationship, God's cold and distant character as judge and punisher as opposed to His role as lover and nurturer. After each talk, the Pastoral Team shared their testimonies and life experiences. The team was composed of Sol Cruz, Gladys Vicari, Dinah Encamacion, Libby Gutierrez, Margarita Ocasio, Mon Gatchalian and Niki (Mercedes) Nacion. Niki was also the facilitator of the event, working together with Angie Valeroso and Margie Ocasio.

Continued on page 4

FOLLOWING JESUS

THEME: **Committing ourselves to follow Jesus brings newness of life.**

WORD: 1 Kgs 19:16,19-21, Ps 16:1,2,5,7-11, Gal 5:1,13-18, Lk 9:51-62

ORDER: **Follow me...go and proclaim the Kingdom of God.**

REFLECTION:

When we reflect on the scripture readings for this 13th Sunday in Ordinary time we see that the call of God in our lives is more important than anything else as we serve Him and those whom we shepherd. Just as Elisha eventually accepted the call of God in his life through Elijah's anointing (1 Kgs 19), we too need to respond to those times in our life that God call us.

In the second reading from Galatians 5:1, Paul tells us that *"For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery."* Just as Elisha took the yoke of the oxen and slaughtered them, so too, Jesus takes our sins with Him on the Cross and forever casts them into the fires of hell never again to return to us. With this new freedom that we have, we are directed to *"serve one another through love."* (Gal 5:13b) Without the Holy Spirit, our serving one another bears no fruit. Our servanthood is fueled by our community, personal and contemplative prayers and empowered by frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Finally, in Luke's Gospel, we read about three different men with personal problems about following Jesus. Perhaps you can relate to one of them when you reflect on your own life.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desire of the flesh." (Gal 5:16)

First Things First

“Abram moved his tents and went on to settle near the terebinth of Mamre, which is at Hebron. There he built an altar to the Lord.” (Gen 13:18)

It is most fitting to have “God first” in all things not only in words and speech but in works and in truth.

In the history of creation “God first” in the life of Adam did not exist, so there was de-creation. Noah had “God first” and re-creation came. Abraham had “God first” and the greatest of faith as God’s chosen patriarch of humanity. His faith was counted as righteousness by God (Rom 4:13).

Abraham’s faith and obedience were tested beyond human endurance and comprehension. God commanded him to uproot his household, *“Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you”* (Gen 12:1), and he went. God compelled him to offer as sacrifice his most beloved son Isaac, and he obeyed. God’s blessings poured unto him are unparalleled in biblical history (Gen 12:1-3).

In our post-modern world, atheism believes there is no God; ergo they are God. Secularism is opposed to the sacred. Relativism says what is true to you may not be true to me. Superfluous society thrives on materialism. Commercialism aims at tangible profit and success. Politics desacralizes God; relies in man’s wisdom instead of the divine to cure society’s ills. Abortion is decriminalized and winning elections. Morality is lost.

Science relies on the technicians to gather facts to prove the truth so long as they can see, feel, touch, taste, hear and replicate them in the laboratory under controlled environment. These drive our spirituality as individual, family, community and nation farther and farther away from God.

As members of the body of Christ, we need to look back more seriously on the lived faith of Abraham.

Six of God’s covenants have already passed from Adam (marital), Noah (household), Abraham (tribal), Moses (national), David (national kingdom), and Jesus (universal ‘catholic’).

In our daily life and work, “God first” is a paradigm shift we all need. To witness for others, to meet Christ and the life it brings is, *“when you become a living mystery, to live in such a way that life does not make sense, if God doesn’t exist.”* (Cardinal Suhart).

“When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities.”

- Ezra Taft Benson

SOLID AS A ROCK

“Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.” (Mt. 7:24-25)

When I was young, I used to hear my grandfather telling my dad you “spare the rod and spoil the child” whenever my dad would not scold and spank any of my brothers who were misbehaving. So I thought the “rod” in my grandfather statement meant the “chinelas” (slippers) which in the Philippines is being used to hit the behinds of kids who did mischief in any way. In other words, if the slipper was spared, small children would remain undisciplined thus spoiling them.

It was only when I attended BLD’s Shepherds Training that I learned the deeper meaning of “sparing and spoiling”. Psalm 23 was one of the foundation verses of this particular teaching and one of its verses says *“with your rod and your staff, you comfort me”* (Ps. 23:4b). My teacher explained that the “rod” in the verse referred to the Word of God and the “staff” represented the Holy Spirit.

In the olden times, shepherds used only one tool to care for lambs and sheep. The sharp end is the rod to defend the sheep against predators or to discipline wayward sheep, while the curved end is to round up sheep into a flock or extricate those in bad situations. The word of God protects us from the enemy, the evil one. And whenever His word is invoked, the Holy Spirit comes down to comfort us. Using the rod and the staff, therefore, is a gesture of care and love. After all, *“God disciplines those whom He loves.”* (Heb 12:7)

The Word of God is living and effective. (Heb 4:12) It protects us from the enemy and therefore gives us rest and comfort that we are safe. If we do not teach the Word of God to our children and they do not observe those words, they have no way to distinguish what is right from wrong. *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”* (2 Tim 3:16-17) If we spare teaching the Word of God to our children, we spoil them and they could go wayward, unprotected from the temptations of the world and the flesh.

Truly when we hear the Word of God and observe them, we stand on a foundation that is solid as a rock. We remain upright no matter what trials or tribulations befall us because God is truly with us. Jesus is our refuge, our fortress. He is our shield, the Rock of our salvation!

THE POWER OF PRAYER



How powerful is it? The power of prayer should not be underestimated. James 5:16-18 declares, *“The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful. Elijah was a human being like us, yet He prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain upon the land. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth produced its fruits.”* God most definitely listens to prayers, answers prayers, and moves in response to prayers.

How do I tap into it? The power of prayer resides in the God who is being prayed to. 1 John 5:14 tells us, *“We have this confidence in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”* God answers prayers that are in agreement with His will. His answers are not always yes, but always in our best interest.

Our prayers being answered is not based on the eloquence of our prayers. We don't have to use certain words or phrases to get God to answer our prayers. *“In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”* (Matthew 6:7-8)

For what kind of things should I pray? God's help through the power of prayer is available for all kinds of requests and issues. Philippians 4:6-7 tells us, *“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”* The Lord's Prayer is a good example of how to pray and the things that should go into prayer - worship, trust in God, requests, confession, protection, etc. Pray for these kinds of things, but speak to God using your own words.

The Word of God is full of accounts describing the power of prayer in various situations. The power of prayer has overcome enemies (Psalm 6:9-10), conquered death (2 Kings 4:3-36), brought healing (James 5:14-15), and defeated demons (Mark 9:29). God, through prayer, opens eyes, changes hearts, heals wounds, and grants wisdom (James 1:5). The power of prayer should not be underestimated because it draws on the glory and might of the infinitely powerful God of the universe!

“...For we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings.” (Romans 8:26). As born again of God, we are indwelt by the Spirit of God. He expresses for us the unutterable. He, the Holy Spirit in you, makes the intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:27). And God searches your heart, not to know what your conscious prayers are, but to find out what the prayer of the Holy Spirit is.

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

For one, the Lord reminds him that following him is not easy. There will be times when he will not have a place *“to rest his head.”* (Lk 9:58) Will he be willing to sacrifice everything, even his life, in order to say yes to serve the Lord? How about us?

For another one, despite the call of Jesus to *“Follow me”* (Lk 9:59), he informs Jesus that he has to bury his father. In other words, I will follow you Lord but in my own time and way.

And for the third person, the need to say goodbye to family members is more important than responding promptly to the call of the Lord. It seems that this person would always be looking back as a requirement for him to follow the Lord. I do know that when I plant my tomatoes, I must continue to go forward, plant by plant, row by row, and not look back. If I do look back, the plant lines will be crooked and not on a straight path. This analogy is the same as for the call of the Lord in my life. Remember Lot's wife who looked back (Gen 19:26). Let us continue to look forward in the Lord's Vineyard.

Finally, our weekly theme tells us that *“Committing ourselves to follow Jesus brings newness of life.”* A reflection that I just recently read in the **Word Among Us** states that *“He (Jesus) is looking for something much deeper than mere infatuation. He wants us to be as deeply in love with Him as He is with us. The young man who asks to go home and bury his father is not wrong. But Jesus is trying to show him that anyone who experiences God's radical, passionate love will become equally radical in response--to the point where everything else is secondary.”* Through our Baptism in the Holy Spirit, we became new creations in the Lord. For many of us, our love for Jesus became so radical through the power of the Holy Spirit that we received the strength and grace to *“serve one another with love”*. We were able to *“love our neighbor as ourselves”*.

Let us tonight again recommit ourselves to following Jesus so that the *“newness of life”* that our theme speaks about will once again become a reality for us. Let us become refreshed again in the service of the Lord as I see and experience the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit in my life more and more each day. Just as Jesus *“resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem”* (Lk 9:51), let our Yes be Yes....for each time that we say Yes to the Lord, we will receive abundant graces and blessings.

DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Serve one another with love.**
- 2. Love your neighbor as yourself.**

NEWS (from page 1)

The sponsoring class (SPE#14), spearheaded by their head coordinator, Chuchit Gatmaitan, and guided by their class shepherds, Nestor and Cecil Vasquez, became living witnesses of God's greater glory by serving selflessly throughout the entire retreat.

The BLD Spiritual Director, Reverend Paul Lehman, culminated the event with a Eucharistic Celebration and graduation ceremony. The SPM Praise Ministry provided all the music/praise support for the entire event.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: **Saturday, August 10, 2013**

Venue: **Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ**

Time: **8:30 AM – 5:00 PM**

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: **Every 3rd Friday, After Worship**

Venue: **Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church**

INSTALLATION OF BLD ALTAR SERVERS, LECTORS, & EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

July 12th, at the conclusion of worship

Save the Date!

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: **Saturday, September 7, 2013**

Time: **7:00 PM – 12:00 AM**

Venue: **VFW, Manville NJ**

Donation: **Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40**

Contact Persons: **Nong/Tricia Bustos or any member of class ME #34**

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,470	73,102

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

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TEACHING CALENDAR

July 19 - Intercessory Formation – ME 37/SPE

July 20* - Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit –LSS 1-39

Sienna Gift Inventory – LSS -38

Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

July 26 - Golden Years Teaching – Golden Years

Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS



PRAYER HEALING SEMINAR 1 June 29 & 30, 2013

KEYS TO REACHING INACTIVE CATHOLICS

Seminar with John and Therese Boucher

Date: **Saturday, June 29, 2013**

Time: **9:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

Venue: **Archdiocesan Center, Newark**

ME #41 GRAND REUNION

Date: **Sunday, June 30, 2013**

Time: **1:00 – 4:00 PM**

Venue: **Connell Hall, Divine Mercy Parish**

Contacts: **Audie/Vulet Chong: audie_chong@hotmail.com**

YOUTH ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: **July 12-14, 2013**

Venue: **Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA**

Contacts: **Youth Coordinators ~ ycs@bldnewark.com**

FAMILY ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: **July 19-21, 2013**

Venue: **Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA**

Contacts: **Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com**

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

	Date	Apostolate
	July 5	Mission
	July 12	Pastoral
	July 19	Evangelization
	July 26	Formation



MOMENTS

<i>Happy Moments</i>	Praise GOD
<i>Difficult Moments</i>	Seek GOD
<i>Quiet Moments</i>	Worship GOD
<i>Painful Moments</i>	Trust GOD

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 27

Bulletin Edition

July 5, 2013



YEAR OF FAITH 2012-2013

THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURE

Before I was rediscovered by my Lord through this community, I consider myself a Catholic rooted in weak faith. For a long time, much of what I did was limited to lip service, far and distant from an honest service to God. A major part of the change that has redirected my journey back to the Lord is a clearer understanding of the Scripture.

Experiencing a deep conversion to Christ through our community's Christian Discipleship Formation Program teachings on the Sacred Scripture, made me read the Bible with great enthusiasm and interest. Scripture passages that I struggled to comprehend in the past, now became more understandable and transparent. There was no longer any doubt in my mind that what I was reading was God's word. It is a special book that stands out over all other books as it has the power to change people in subtle and radical ways.

In the past, the Bible was merely a decorative piece that was gathering dust at our home; but now it has become a shining light that tells me when to go, when to slow down or even when to stop. Contained within its pages are the basic teachings on how to live my life.

We thank God for the Church's unwavering affirmation that God is the Author of the Bible and it's forceful exhortation to all the Christian faithful to learn the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ by frequent reading of the Divine Scriptures (CCC 133).

In 2 Timothy 3:16, St. Paul wrote: "*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.*" The Greek word for "inspire" is "theopneustos" which means "God-breathed". We marvel at how God breathed upon us and "has gone adapting His language with thoughtful concern for our weak human nature" (Dei Verbum 13).

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Are We Missionaries of God's Love?

THEME: As modern day disciples, we spread His word when we go on mission.

WORD: Is 66:10-14 / Ps 66:1-7,16-20
Gal 6:14-18 / Lk 10:1-12,17-20

ORDER: Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. (Luke 10:3)

REFLECTION:

The first reading from the prophet Isaiah is filled with images of healing, hope, and a promise to the people of God that they will find comfort and security in the boundless love of God. For "*as a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you,*" declares Isaiah. God's constant provision for our daily bread reminds us of our own responsibility to ensure that all are fed according to God's plan and design, with food for the body and the soul, both of which are essential, like the deep bond between mother and infant.

The second reading, taken from St Paul's letter to the Galatians, tells us that what the world values most, wealth, prestige, power, etc., is unimportant, and that the only thing that really matters is to know Jesus and be a new creation in Christ.

Three words sum up this letter: peace, mercy and grace. For those who accept salvation from Christ, there is the gift of peace - the fullness of life in harmony with God and with one another, there is mercy for the coming judgment of God and when all is said and done, everything is grace! Peace is God's graciousness towards His people because of His covenant and is the reason and source of our sense of well-being and of God's protection and blessing.

Thus, the greeting of peace is not just an ordinary greeting or wish, but a sharing of God's gift of peace, joy, and well-being.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Your heart shall rejoice and your bodies flourish like grass, the Lord's power shall be known to His servants."
(Isaiah 66:14)

I'VE SEEN THE LORD!

It was Easter Sunday and the hospital unit where I work was quiet for a change. There was almost a feeling of sadness, like it was Good Friday. I remember talking to my co-worker, telling her how we don't even have anything religious to watch on TV. It was about 7 pm that night when one of my patients called my attention and showed me the image on TV and asked if it was a picture. I told her no, it's our chapel on our hospital TV. She pointed to the white cloud-like image of the Virgin Mary with an angel beside her on the carpet of the chapel's altar and asked if I see it too. She said she'd been seeing this image since 2 pm but didn't tell her nurse because she might think she's crazy. I saw it too, the image of the Virgin Mary holding the body of Jesus. We turned on the other TVs in the unit, and they were showing the same thing. I asked the nurses on the other floors to turn on their TVs, and they are seeing the same thing. By this time with most of the TVs turned on, people were focusing on the image in the chapel rendering their own similar interpretation as they saw it. Now we had a religious image to watch.

I was curious as to what's causing the image in the chapel, so I asked the security guard to check. We saw him touching the carpet where the area of the image was and he told us it was dirt from footsteps and said that he was amazed because the image that he saw was the face of Jesus. I thought he was kidding so I went down to the chapel with him. I felt sudden chills and tears in my eyes. There it was the face of Jesus looking down at me with thorns in His forehead and a straight line cut across His forehead. I called the rest of the nurses. They also saw the face of the Lord, so clear before their teary eyes.

The next day, I travelled to Sedona. To my surprise as I entered the chapel, I saw the exact replica of the image I saw on our chapel's carpet. It was the face of Jesus in bronze with a straight cut across His forehead. As I read the reading of the day it was John 20:18 ***"I have seen the Lord."***

Our chapel is now permanently closed with the closure of our hospital, but we are forever thankful and will always remember the day He showed His presence to everyone at the hospital, the day we all knew we had seen the Lord.

I'LL WALK WITH GOD

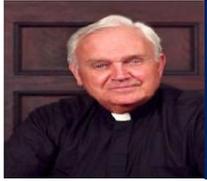
My sister and I have followed very different paths, one through the word of God and one through the word of men. I have always been a dreamer. I have always been so afraid to face the reality of being poor and have been so influenced by the values of men and the prestige of being rich. My sister, on the other hand, had a very different view and was content with being poor. She trusted God and left her future in His hands. She enslaved herself to help others. Through the help of our parish, she took catechetical courses and graduated as a teacher. I took her for granted then, because for me there was no monetary reward in teaching religion. I did not realize at the time that the Lord was preparing her for the task that He had planned for her.

As for me, I continued to pursue my dream and finally achieved it when I came to America. Here I continued to dream big, seeking my comfort in material things, so proud to take credit for my achievements and acquired wealth, so fascinated by successful people being featured in various money magazines. I did not realize I was slowly distancing myself from God and my family, never thanking God when my dreams became a reality.

Unquestionably, my sister was walking in the presence of the Lord while I was walking in the presence of men. In 1971, my sister decided to serve prisoners and this became a turning point in her career. I despised her idea of serving criminals. I felt they should all be punished and rot in jail. She didn't care how I or anyone else felt about her decision. To this day, 42 years later, she is still serving the prisoners, the blind and the needy.

"Many are invited but few are chosen." (Mt 22:14) With this scripture, the turning point in my life began. I had chosen to join BLD. The Lord showed me the way. He has left His footprints, His Word for me to trace Him as I walk with Him. He allowed me to look back on my sister's life and on all the precious things I failed to see. Now, I am no longer blind and I see my sister through the eyes of God. I know the meaning of success, of wealth through my sister who is rich in goodness and in love, who is so proud and happy to serve the prisoners and the abandoned.

Lord, thank you for my sister. ***"Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name give glory because of your faithfulness and love. I will walk in the presence of the Lord, in the land of the Living."*** (Ps 115: 1-2)



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

BIRTHDAYS & ETERNITY

With celebrations of birthdays this Friday, our thoughts turn to age and time spent on this side of eternity. But from the viewpoint of eternity, who is older, Fr. Dave at 40, young Zach at 16, or myself at 85? From the perspective of eternity we are all the same age. There is no time in heaven. There is no before and after, just “now”. We have no way of conceptualizing this. We move in time and die in time. The concept of eternity is an act of faith. We believe in God.

But how old is God? Is He really old at all? We cannot conceive the notions of no beginning and no end. Thus the atheist will say God and eternity do not exist. But if there is no eternity then we would not exist. God must be outside of time, as He is outside of creation. When God made the world, He also created time in which the world would move. There are many scientific suggestions as to how the world came into existence. Was there a big bang or did God do it literally in seven days? The reality is that it could not have come from itself, since it did not exist. That would be completely illogical.

There are practical conclusions to this reality. It is never too late to pray for a deceased relative or friend. Our prayers even though made in time cross over into the eternal now. If we forgot to pray for someone who may have died many years ago, we can start now, and our prayers will be a blessing to the person who may be in the timeless existence of purgatory. When we reflect on the Incarnation, we believe that the eternal Word of God entered time and creation to redeem the human race as a man in time. After His ascension, Jesus “went back” to heaven and eternity now with our human nature. When we celebrate Mass we are entering into the eternal action of Jesus, Who is always offering His sacrifice “at the right hand of the Father.” Mass, then, is making present now the sacrifice of Calvary reenacted in time so as to give us the opportunity to “be there” with Jesus, and to unite ourselves and our sacrifices with His eternal offering of self.

BLD loves birthdays. They are an excuse to have a party, and that is quite proper. Birthdays also remind us of our frailty and approaching end, but give us an opportunity to renew our conviction that we will never die. Human death for the believer is not an end, but a transition to an eternal youth celebrated forever in heaven. **Happy Birthday!**

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

The gospel of Luke tells how the Lord appoints 72 disciples and sends them out in pairs to preach the Good News, giving them Spirit-empowered and Spirit-guided instructions. We are the successors of those disciples and, like them, are being sent out to the various places Jesus intends to visit. He gives us similar instructions - what to say and do, to travel light, unburdened by unnecessary clutter and attachment to material things, and not overly concerned with our physical comfort. Our priorities must be the things of God. Like the original 72, we too are sent as Christ’s representatives, not as mere listeners or recipients of the word, but as instruments of the Lord to places and situations we find ourselves in. It is our faithfulness in our daily life that prepares the way for Christ. We have a mission from the Lord – a mission to preach His kingdom with love and service.

To keep our focus on our mission, we need to simplify our lives. There is such a thing as slavery to things and material possessions, as if these could ensure happiness. The Lord calls us to simplify our lives not only materially, but spiritually, so as not to complicate our mission. His call to us is also to simplify our mission, since we tend to become involved in too many issues, try to do too much too soon, and often end up doing none of them well. The activity, rather than the objective, becomes our focus.

We are likened to lambs (which are helpless animals) sent among wolves (which prey on sheep). We are to depend solely on God’s grace to provide what is necessary for our mission, and to help us overcome difficulties we may encounter along the way. For this reason, we must trust God and not things or money or our own talents and skills as we go about our missionary work. Like lambs, we are to be simple, gentle and docile, not out to overpower with all sorts of showy signs or threats of hellfire for those who do not convert. No! The way is through gentleness, caring and by means of quiet, steady work and good example.

The moment we profess being Christians, our behavior speaks for us. It becomes our witness. If we practice what we preach, if we are honest, dependable, generous, even-tempered, understanding, ever ready to lend a hand, and faithful to our word, then those we preach to will have strong reason to believe that indeed, God’s rule is not far from them, since God is already ruling our lives. Then we, as God’s missionaries, will receive His comfort in Isaiah 66:14, “...*Your heart shall rejoice and your bodies flourish like grass, the Lord’s power shall be known to His servants.*”

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

Reflection Questions:

1. How am I spreading the Good News of salvation in the way the Lord calls me?
2. How open am I to the instructions and disciplines of the Lord as I go out in mission?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Go on mission work and immerse yourself daily in the word of God to empower you.
2. Do acts of love for your neighbor at every opportunity.

YEAR OF FAITH (from page 1)

He loves us so dearly that he has stooped down to us and relayed His thoughts in a way which suits both our words and our ability to understand.

Indeed, the principal author of Scripture is God and that “the books of the Old and New Testament in their entirety, with all their parts are sacred and canonical because they are written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their author and have been handed on as such to the Church herself” (Dei Verbum 11).

God breathing is life giving. It is His breath that gave life to words with their divine meanings, WORD that was in the beginning with God and was God. The WORD made flesh, clothed in human words. St. Jerome aptly put it when he said, “**Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.**”

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,637	76,739

Financial details are available to all members through

treasury@bldnewark.com

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July 20* - Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit –LSS 1-39
 Sienna Gift Inventory – LSS -38
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 Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: July 12-14, 2013

Venue: Pine Hill Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA

Contacts: Youth Coordinators - ycs@bldnewark.com

FAMILY ENCOUNTER #20

Date/Time: July 19-21, 2013

Venue: Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA

Contacts: Mat/ Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

INSTALLATION OF BLD ALTAR SERVERS, LECTORS, & EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

July 12th, at the conclusion of worship

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2013

Time: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM

Venue: VFW, Manville NJ

Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos

BLD COMMUNITY DAY! 21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

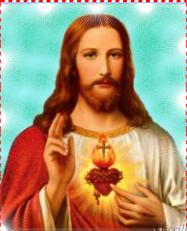
ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

	Date	Apostolate
	July 12	Pastoral
	July 19	Evangelization
	July 26	Formation
Aug 2	Management	

May the Word of God dwell in us richly!

	MOMENTS	
	<i>Happy Moments</i>	Praise GOD
	<i>Difficult Moments</i>	Seek GOD
	<i>Quiet Moments</i>	Worship GOD
<i>Painful Moments</i>	Trust GOD	

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

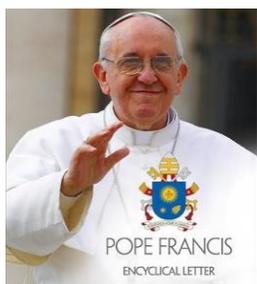
Volume 19 Issue 28

Bulletin Edition

July 12, 2013

LUMEN FIDEI

“LIGHT OF FAITH”



This is a brief summary (from a 27-pager) of the recent encyclical of Pope Francis, “Lumen Fidei” (Light of Faith). You are encouraged to read it slowly, meditatively. The encyclical is divided into four chapters after an introduction.

The introduction admits that this is a continuation of the work begun by Benedict XVI. How much is the work of Benedict and that of Francis, is unknown. We are reminded that in an age that has remarkably advanced in technology and modernity, faith is as important today as it was in past ages. Faith is not “a leap into the dark, nor a blind emotion, nor a subjective light, but a light from the past that opens up the horizons of the future.”

Chapter I. “WE HAVE BELIEVED IN LOVE”

Faith comes from hearing. Abraham, our father in faith, listened and obeyed. Faith makes us see with the eyes of Jesus. We are saved by faith working through works, resulting in a transformation into love.

Chapter II. “UNLESS YOU BELIEVE, YOU WILL NOT UNDERSTAND”

Our age finds objective truth to be unnecessary, resulting in relativism in which the quest for God and truth is rejected. Jesus is the Word made flesh. If we seek the truth we will find it in the person of Jesus, who wants Himself to be found.

Chapter III. “I DELIVERED TO YOU WHAT I ALSO RECEIVED.”

I believe leads to WE believe. Thus we have CHURCH, the proclaimer. Those who have opened their hearts to Jesus and truth cannot keep it to themselves.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS GOOD SAMARITAN

THEME: **As modern day disciples, we spread His word when we love our neighbor as ourselves.**

WORD: Dt 30:10-14; Ps 69: 14, 17, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37 Col 1:15-20; Lk 10:25-37

ORDER: *“You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” (Lk 10:27)*

REFLECTION:

“If God is all-loving and compassionate, then why is there so much suffering and evil in this world? What is God’s answer to this human dilemma? Jesus’ parable about a highway robbery gives us a helpful hint. Jesus told this dramatic story in response to a devout Jew who wanted to understand how to apply God’s great commandment of love to his everyday life circumstances. Jesus must have smiled when he heard this man challenge him to explain one’s duty towards their neighbor. For the Jewish believer, the law of love was plain and simple: “treat your neighbor as you would treat yourself.” The real issue for this believer was the correct definition of who is “my neighbor”. He understood “neighbor” to mean one’s fellow Jew who belonged to the same covenant which God made with the people of Israel. Up to a certain point, Jesus agreed with this sincere expert but at the same time, he challenged him to see that God’s view of neighbor went far beyond his narrow definition.

So why did the religious leaders refuse to give any help when they saw a half-dead victim lying by the roadside? Did they not recognize that this victim was their neighbor?

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“For the Lord hears the poor, and his own who are in bonds he spurns not.” (Ps 69:34)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

God's Unfailing Voice

“For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

(Matthew 10:20)

Oftentimes I hear other Christians say such things as, “the Lord spoke to me” or “thus says the Lord.” I never quite understood how these people could proclaim such things with much conviction. After being baptized in the Holy Spirit and seeking the Lord more in prayer through adoration, daily mass and Holy Scripture, I too, began to say the very same lines.

In retrospect, He has always spoken to me and at times asked me to bring His message to my brethren. I suppose He has been fine tuning my senses to be more in touch with Him and His voice. As a disciple, I have come to realize how much God depends on us to be His voice, as we are sent forth to proclaim liberty to the captives.

To allow God's spirit to speak through me requires a dying to self, a total childlike dependence, reliance and trust in His Divine Providence. The more I depend on God and take a leap of faith, the more I trust Him. This in turn releases me from my human expectations, limitations and anxieties. It is truly beautiful to walk in the Spirit and allow Him to use me especially when ministering to our brethren.

Time after time, I find myself in some predicament at home, at work, and even in church when I have been privileged to be the vessel and spokesperson for the voice of our Heavenly Father. Initially, I consider my task difficult as my thoughts can be driven by concerns about the other person's feelings and opposing opinions. The Lord has taught me that it is not my job to fully comprehend my role and understand His message but to obey and speak for Him.

Jesus said to his disciples prior to His departure, ***“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you to all truth and remind you of all I told you.”*** John 16:13 God's Word is truth and sharing the Truth requires boldness, which can only come from Him. Just as Jesus summoned His disciples in His time, He also calls us to do His work today. Whether it brings joy or rejection, we must stand firm and be His instruments.

GOD HAS A PLAN

“But now do not be distressed, and do not reproach yourselves for having sold me here. It was really for the sake of saving lives that God sent me here ahead of you.” (Genesis 45:5)

The Old Testament is a good source to look for heroes. We have Samson, Moses, Joshua, Daniel, David, and Joseph to name a few. One of the greater heroes is Joseph where Chapters 30 to 50 of Genesis focused on his life. He was proud but not arrogant, who dwells on his being his father's (Jacob) favorite. Oftentimes he disregarded his siblings' feelings, which ultimately led to his temporary downfall. His talent of being able to interpret dreams brought consternation to his brothers when he told them about the 11 stalks of corn and 11 stars bowing to him, the 11 being represented by his brothers.

Due to extreme jealousy, they all wanted to kill him but decided against it and sold him instead as a slave to a passing caravan. Misfortunes followed him but he remained pure and dedicated to the Lord. He was imprisoned where he met two other slaves, one of whom worked with the pharaoh. His gift led him to be recognized by the pharaoh when he interpreted the pharaoh's dream. He eventually ended up as the vizier of Egypt in charge of all its food and resources. This was when his brothers came to buy food for them when a massive famine hit the area. This was also when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers and forgave them for what they did to him. Joseph knew this was part of God's plan to bring about a greater good. He believed this even as bad things happened to him.

Forgiveness, trust in the Lord, and faith are all of Joseph's qualities that endeared him to the Lord. He was steadfast and never wavered, but believed. His generosity to those who did him wrong made him a role model for us to emulate.

This is akin to us, much like his brothers. We continuously sin against God, yet He welcomes us with open arms to join Him in His banquet. We are not condemned and punished but forgiven and accepted. Such is the greatness of God's love that we cannot help but respond to His invitation.

There is a saying, “when one door closes, another opens”. Therefore, let us not wallow in our misfortunes for when we are down and out, that's when He is very much with us.

THE STRENGTH OF MY FAITH



“Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, “Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you.” And from that hour the woman was cured.”
(Matthew 9:22)

In Matthew 9:18-26, we read of two instances of faith: first is about the official's daughter, followed by the hemorrhaging woman. While Jesus is with His disciples, an official approaches Him and asks Him to resurrect his dead daughter. However, on His way to the official's house, the woman suffering from a hemorrhage, believing that she will be cured, only touches His cloak and she is healed. We go back to the official's story and there is quite a commotion at his house. Everyone ridicules Him when He says that the girl is not dead but sleeping. Nevertheless, Jesus takes the girl's hand and she stands up.

Jesus shows His healing power in both instances of faith: the official's faith in his daughter's healing, and the woman's faith in her own healing. This only emphasizes the magnitude of Jesus' love and grace for us all. In the official's daughter's case, it was her father who had faith in Jesus' saving power, and she was healed. Even with all the disorder and mockery Jesus faced at the official's house, He still healed the girl. In the other woman's case, she had been suffering from hemorrhages for eighteen years. Yet she had persistence and patience in waiting on the Lord for Jesus' healing.

How should I apply this to my own life? In any circumstance in life, big or small, when things may seem confusing and we feel insecure, disappointed and lost, the one thing we have that no one can take away is our faith in Jesus Christ, our Rock and Redeemer. Jesus' saving power is there for the taking. We have only to believe even if our faith is the size of a mustard seed. It may take time, like the hemorrhaging woman, to be cured. But as Saint Paul says in Romans 5:3-5, ***“affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and 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.”***

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

And why did a Samaritan, an outsider who was despised by the Jews, treat this victim with special care at his own expense as he would care for his own family? Who was the real neighbor who showed brotherly compassion and mercy? Jesus makes the supposed villain, the despised Samaritan, the merciful one as an example for the status-conscious Jews. Why didn't the priest and Levite stop to help? The priest probably didn't want to risk the possibility of ritual impurity. His piety got in the way of charity. The Levite approached close to the victim, but stopped short of actually helping him. Perhaps he feared that bandits were using a decoy to ambush him. The Levite put personal safety ahead of saving his neighbor.

What does Jesus' story tell us about true love for one's neighbor? First, we must be willing to help even if others brought trouble on themselves through their own fault or negligence. Second, our love and concern to help others in need must be practical. Good intentions and show of pity, or empathizing with others, are not enough. And lastly, our love for others must be as wide and as inclusive as God's love. God excludes no one from His care and concern. God's love is unconditional. So we must be ready to do good to others for their sake, just as God is good to us. Jesus not only taught God's way of love, but he showed how far God was willing to go to share in our suffering and to restore us to wholeness of life and happiness. Jesus overcame sin, suffering, and death through His victory on the cross. His death brought us freedom from slavery to sin and the promise of everlasting life with God. He willingly shared in our suffering to bring us to the source of true healing and freedom from sin and oppression. True compassion not only empathizes with the one who is in pain, but takes that pain on oneself in order to bring freedom and restoration. Jesus truly identified with our plight, and He took the burden of our sinful condition upon Himself. He showed us the depths of God's love and compassion, by sharing in our suffering and by offering His life as an atoning sacrifice for our sins upon the cross. His suffering is redemptive because it brings us healing, restoration and the fullness of eternal life. God offers us true freedom from every form of oppression, sin, and suffering. And that way is through the cross of Jesus Christ.” (excerpt from www.dailyscripture.net copyright © 2013 Don Schwager)

What about in our community? Who do we treat as our “neighbor”

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

Are we active in our home parish, its soup kitchen and evangelization programs or do we only prefer to serve one another in BLD? Do we support our neighbors through the Church's social action programs for the poor, the homeless, the jobless, the unwed mothers? Perhaps we need to examine our motives and our consciences.

In loving God through our neighbor, may the Holy Spirit guide our hearts and minds to imitate the Good Samaritan. May the meditations and aspirations of our hearts flow into active loving and caring of our neighbor.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Treat everyone with compassion and mercy especially those who are difficult to love.
2. Love your neighbor as God loves you.
3. Support works of mercy.

LUMEN FIDEI (from page 1)

This transmission of faith happens first and foremost in Baptism, and reaches its highest expression in the Eucharist. Two other elements are necessary for this transmission: obedience to the commandments and prayer. The certitude of faith is guaranteed by apostolic succession, a gift to the Church to insure unity and an integral passing on of the truth

Chapter IV. "GOD PREPARES A CITY FOR THEM"

The first setting in which faith enlightens the human city is the family. Parents share faith with their children to lead them to their own mature faith. Faith often involves pain and suffering in which we find God's power to triumph over weakness. Mary is closely connected to what we believe. She teaches us to see with the eyes of Jesus.

To read St. Francis' first encyclical letter, click [here](#)

MOMENTS	
	<i>Happy Moments</i> Praise GOD
	<i>Difficult Moments</i> Seek GOD
	<i>Quiet Moments</i> Worship GOD
	<i>Painful Moments</i> Trust GOD

Marshaling		Schedule	
		Date	Apostolate
		July 19	Evangelization
		July 26	Formation
		Aug 2	Management
Aug 9	Mission		

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Contacts: Mat/Precy Yap - mateojy@hotmail.com

Tony/Marlene Brillantes - mbrill215@yahoo.com

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Time: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM

Venue: VFW, Manville NJ

Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos

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Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

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Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com



Event Location: St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, 700 Wyckoff Avenue Wyckoff, NJ 07481

Event Date: Oct 19, 2013

Event Time: 9:00 am CDT

May the Word of God dwell in us richly!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 29

Bulletin Edition

July 19, 2013

NEWS

YE # 20 yields 37



On July 12, 2013, 37 young adults arrived at the Pine Hill Retreat House in Canadensis, Pennsylvania where they spent the weekend growing closer to God and gaining friends.

The Youth Encounter #20 Class is composed of 20 boys and 17 girls, 4 of whom came from BLD-North Carolina. The candidates walked into the retreat as strangers, but by God's grace and through the love and efforts of the auxies, facilitators, and the Spiritual Director, Msgr. Paul Schetelick, the class emerged as a family with God as their center, praising Him and joyfully singing to Him their theme song, "I am free".

They played various games to get to know one another and listened to talks by the facilitators about love and affirmation. Discerned to lead in their spiritual journey are the YE 20 Youth Class Shepherds Justin Reyes and Erika Flores. Their Adult Class Shepherds who will act as loving parents are Ron and Dina Pangilinan. To assist the shepherds are class coordinators, Jules Almazar, Claude Chrysotome, Caitlyn Lagrada, Charlene Puertolano, Romy Balbastro, Lorenzo Syquia, Katrina Sarabia, and John Chan.

Thanks be to God and His great deeds. For *"...yours, Lord, are the greatness and might, majesty, and splendor, for all in the heaven and on the earth is yours; yours, Lord is kingship; and you are exalted as head above all."* (1 Chr 29:11)

Continued on page 4

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS

TRUE SERVANTHOOD: Active & Quiet for God

THEME: As modern day disciples, we spread His word when we listen to His voice.

WORD: Gn 18:1-10, Ps 15:2-5
Col 1:24-28, Lk 10:38-42

ORDER: Do not be anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing...listen to Me. (paraphrased)

REFLECTION:

God's visit to His chosen people not only signified his desire to communicate with them but more importantly, what He wanted to give them. In the Old Testament, His gift to Abraham and Sarah was a son. In the New Testament, for Martha and Mary, it was eternal life, present in the person of Jesus.

"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the better good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." (Lk 10:41-42).

The Lord reminded Martha of the need to *listen to His word* without ignoring the value of work. Jesus does not pass sweeping judgment upon Martha or Mary. He responds to Martha's question with profundity by pointing to what is most important in life, which is being in the presence of Christ. How often are we in the same situation? Nothing can justify forgetting Jesus in our daily work, not even the most important of concerns. We certainly cannot minimize the importance of prayer with the excuse that we are too busy with apostolate, with activities of formation, or with works of charity.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"One who thinks the truth in his heart... shall never be disturbed." (Ps 15:2b, 5b)

DIVINE REVELATION

“At that time Jesus said in reply, “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.” (Mt 11:25-27)

As for me, this is my definition of Divine Revelation: Revealed by God, Revealed through God and Revealed to whom the Son wishes to reveal it. Only the Son of God has the power to translate God’s true message. As it is written: it is hidden from both *the wise and the learned*. Jesus knew because He was the Chosen One, and it was the Father’s will. God the Father gave Jesus the solemn right to choose, to whom He would reveal these hidden things.

Who then is eligible to know and receive these things? The childlike.

The very first candidate God chose was Moses. *“The LORD said: Now listen to my words: If there are prophets among you, in visions I reveal myself to them in dreams I speak to them; Not so with my servant Moses! Throughout my house he is worthy of trust face to face I speak to him plainly and not in riddles.”* (Nm 12:6-8) The second candidate was Elijah. *“And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, the one who is to come.”* (Mt 11:14) The third candidate was John. *“Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”* (Mt 11:11) Even Blessed Virgin Mary is in this short list, in the Annunciation.

Who then does God call the least? He chose the childlike because of the purity of the message to be delivered and the purity of the one to receive it. In today’s terms, it is called raw, unaltered, unabated, unedited, or not manipulated information, pure innocence.

In Mark 10:13-16, Jesus said, *“Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.”*

After being in the ministry that deals with children for 8 years, the one thing I enjoy is making the complicated simple. This can be challenging, and yet fulfilling, because telling these Bible stories may seem so simple to the learned and wise but in their purity, they are God’s Revelation to the children who come and follow Him.

My Burden is Light

“Come to me, all who labor and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (Mt 11:28-30)

This particular verse had been made famous in a song by Filipino artists and has been a source of comfort and joy for anyone who is familiar with the melody. The lyrics and verse are so powerful if we truly listen to them. Jesus issued all of us an open invitation – *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Mt 11:28)

How do we respond when we are burdened by life’s challenges? When we discover our spouse’s infidelity, do we reflect on our own deficiencies, understand the gaps, and reach out to our spiritual counselor for guidance? Or do we confide with our friends, seek psychiatric help, and listen to our family’s advice to file for divorce? When our child confides that he is suffering with addiction, do we open our arms up to heaven and ask for God’s intervention? Or do we blame our child’s friends and threaten to cut off financial support? When we hear the news of a colleague’s promotion, do we thank God for the blessings or do we harbor feelings of resentment, complain, and whine that our efforts and hard work are not recognized?

Indeed, we have a clear choice in responding to Jesus’ call to reach out to Him. Furthermore, Jesus promised *“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”* (Mt 11:28-29) Twice He assured us that we can find rest in Him. How long are we going to have pride in our heart and refuse to reach out and learn from Jesus? Do we pick up the bible daily and reflect on how Jesus lived His life? During Jesus’ ministry, He opened the eyes of the blind, refused to throw a stone at the prostitute despite the pressure from the crowd, cautioned those He had healed to keep the miracles to themselves, and shared stories about the prodigal son.

With these, are we ready to share the yoke with Jesus and imitate His examples of trusting in God’s will, putting other’s needs first, and showing mercy and forgiveness? There is no time to waste. Come to Jesus. Lift up your hands to God and hold on tight. Whatever storms come our way, He will carry it all for us. Just come.

A LESSON ABOUT CHOICES

In a world filled with distractions, the story of Mary and Martha can help us set our life in order. An important lesson was recorded during that visit that should positively affect us. We can hope this spiritual lesson, so inseparably linked to our priorities, will have an impact on our lives.

Luke's account of this story shows the closeness between Jesus and this family. But, though Jesus felt a deep affinity for all three, their personalities and perspectives differed.

Martha's outlook on life was quite different from her sister's. Martha's words and actions depict her as practical and efficient, and nothing is wrong with that, as long as it does not interfere with more important things.

Mary, on the other hand, can seem a little lazy. Maybe she was a little shy. But we should pay close attention in Jesus' evaluation of Mary's actions. According to Jesus, Mary had chosen the good part. Mary was humble, convicted and dedicated to Jesus and His teachings that no expense or personal act was too great or demanding for her to honor her Savior. This attitude, outlook and perspective are exactly the kind of approach God desires in all His disciples.

Jesus said Mary made a conscious decision between two alternatives. She chose listening over preparing a meal. She chose to listen to the wisdom of Jesus while she had the opportunity.

People make choices. They are part of life. We have to make the choice as to whether we seek the good part. Jesus tells us that our highest priority in life should be to ***“seek first the Kingdom of God”*** (Mt 6:33). He also quoted in Deuteronomy 8:3 that ***“not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the LORD.”***

For Mary, Martha, Lazarus and the disciples, the Word of God was in their presence in the person of Christ. Mary knew and understood that Jesus' words were the most important needs of her life.

What did Jesus mean when He spoke of “that good part”? The apostle John answers this question: ***“For all that is in the world, sensual lust, enticement for the eyes, and a pretentious life, is not from the Father but is from the world. Yet the world and its enticement are passing away. But whoever does the will of God remains forever.”*** (1 Jn 2: 16-17).

God's truth and laws will abide forever. Our bodies won't. They must be replaced with Spirit bodies. The spiritual knowledge we accumulate in this life will be ours forever, never taken away from us. Like Mary, we must choose wisely.

Mary has chosen the better way, to be present and to listen to the Lord. Learn to invite Jesus into your daily life. Speak with Him about your concerns, hopes, anxieties, worries, and joys; then listen in silence to His response to you.

As much as we need to work, we also need to pray, to communicate with God, in order to make our work, our life, meaningful and grace-filled. How can we bring this about? By doing what Jesus wants us to do: to find Him in our daily work and in all circumstances of our lives and to listen and talk to Him in prayer.

“Blest are they who hear the word of God and keep it.” (Lk 11:28)

In today's modern age of instant messaging, it seems everyone is texting, emailing, or talking, but no one is actually listening. With our many communication tools, how come there is still so much misunderstanding and miscommunication in the world? What about in the BLD community? Are we truly listening to each other, to our elders in community? Why do many of us complain of having too many assignments, of feeling tired and burnt-out? Could it be because you and I have not given priority to *listening to the Lord*? Have we allowed our serving to replace our listening to God's Word? Are we so busy like Martha that we have neglected our prayer and quiet time before the Lord? How can we, as modern day disciples, spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to others if we ourselves do not allow time to listen to His voice? How about in our Word Sharing Circle? Are we practicing (LIPJASS) as we listen to each other's reflection in our group?

Nevertheless, it is there in the midst of daily work and by means of it that God wants to call us to a life of holiness. We are to sanctify the world and ourselves with a life of prayer that gives divine meaning to earthly tasks.

In order for God to use us to transform our world, we must first allow Him to renew us and be constantly connected to Him through the Holy Mass, the Holy Eucharist and other sacraments, daily Scripture readings, adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and by asking our Blessed Mother Mary to intercede for all of us as we strive to be better disciples of Her Son.

With the help of God's divine grace, we have to listen attentively to His word and serve Him, thereby striking a balance in Martha's and Mary's attitudes.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS *(from page 3)*

Our love of God should be inseparable from our apostolic zeal and our work be well done for the glory of God. If your worries lead you to lose the presence of God while you work, those worries are not good for you, even though your work itself might be good and necessary.

We must now understand more clearly that God is calling us to serve Him *in and from* the ordinary, materialistic, and worldly activities. We should understand there is something holy, something divine hidden in the most ordinary situations, and it is up to each of us to discover it. Are we *listening* to our thoughts or to our hearts?

DIRECTION:

Spend time with the Lord and listen to Him.

NEWS *(from page 1)*

Congratulations YE #20 Graduates!!!

NEWARK: Jonathan Alegria, Nathaniel Alegria, Jules Almazar, Ashley Antonio, Ezie Anyanwu, Chris Arceo, Sean Booc, Mergie Borreo, Melanie Borreo, Kelly Cabrera, John Chan, Claude Chrysostome, Michael Collado, Shirm Cordova-Chahu, Dana Decastro, Gabriel Doria, Yanny Kho, Jus Labang, Caitlyn Lagrada, Joanne Lim, Kristianne Lopez, Paul Mariano, Bernardo Matias, Angie McSpedon, Anna Christine Naraja, Charlene Puertollano, Jerome Ramos, Shay Reyes, Melissa Sanagustin, Katrina Sarabia, Jason Sorio, Kevin Sugay, & Eddison Ugaddan

NORTH CAROLINA: Gabe Aguirre, Rummel Balbastro, Kit Kat Bautista, & Lorenzo Syquia

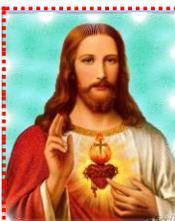
MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

Marshaling		Schedule	
	Date		Apostolate
	July 26		Formation
	Aug 2		Management
	Aug 9	Mission	
	Aug 16	Pastoral	



MOMENTS

<i>Happy Moments</i>	Praise GOD
<i>Difficult Moments</i>	Seek GOD
<i>Quiet Moments</i>	Worship GOD
<i>Painful Moments</i>	Trust GOD

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,397	83,227

Financial details are available to all members through
treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

July 20* - Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit –LSS 1-39
Sienna Gift Inventory – LSS -38
Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

July 26 - Golden Years Teaching – Golden Years
Friday: after worship, *Saturday: 1-6 pm

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

SAVE THE DATE! COMMUNITY TEACHING

September 21, 2013, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPE #15 GRAND REUNION

Date: Sunday, July 28, 2013

Time: 1:00 – 5:00 PM

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Ver and Diana Nacion (veranddiana@aol.com)

DLC PASTORAL HOUR

Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Time: 8:00 PM

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway, NJ

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2013

Time: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM

Venue: VFW, Manville NJ

Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos (nongb601@aol.com)

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com

May the Word of God dwell in us richly!

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 30

Bulletin Edition

July 26, 2013

NEWS

God blesses 14 families



“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
(Joshua 24:15)

On July 19-21, 2013, Family Encounter #20 was held at Malvern, Pennsylvania. Fourteen families (9 from BLD Newark and 5 from BLD Rockland) responded to this God’s beautiful invitation of love.

The retreat brought so much joy to these families as they experienced a spiritual high and deep emotional bonding with their family members like they had never experienced before. Not a dry eye could be seen as the families reconnected with God and with each other in ways they never could have imagined.

Truly the hand of God was very much on display during the entire weekend! Not even a 20-minute fire alarm interruption could make a dent on the spirits of all participants. As Fr. Ramon Ofredo, retreat’s spiritual director, wisely put it *“God has so inflamed the place that even the electrical boxes were overheating.”*

By God’s grace, Fr. Ramon brought new and exciting insights to the encounter; and the Loreto and Reyes families were off the charts in their sharing.

The sponsoring FE #19 class and their family class shepherd joyfully expressed their deep appreciation for the invaluable help that was joyfully and unselfishly extended by the Praise Ministry, Youth Ministry for the choreography, FLA ministry, Auxies, and DCS of BLD Newark and Rockland communities.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

KEEP KNOCKING, KEEP ASKING, KEEP SEEKING

THEME: As modern day disciples, we spread His word when we persevere in prayer.

WORD: Gn 18:20-32 / Ps 138:1-3,6-8
Col 2:12-14 / Lk 11:1-13

ORDER: Ask...seek...and knock (in prayer)

REFLECTION:

God’s Word comes to us to share the core of Jesus’ teaching on prayer. It consists of Jesus teaching a prayer to his disciples, a parable on the persistent neighbor, with assurances that God hears our prayers. The teaching concludes with the reminder that if we seek, we will get a response. It foreshadowed the gift of the Holy Spirit, Who is central to Luke’s theology and Who will play an important role in the growth of the early Church after Pentecost. It highlighted the need for persistence and perseverance if we are to lead a life of prayer.

Today, God walks within our community of prayerful disciples by focusing on Abraham who drew closer to God as he interceded for Sodom. Coming into God’s presence before praying is essentially important. *Drawing nearer to God* will always activate our prayer life. The closer we are to God, the better our prayer life will be. Being close to God will improve the energy and effectiveness of our praying. The more we are in God’s presence, the more we are aware and humbled by our nothingness paralleled to God’s mightiness, and our sinfulness in comparison to God’s holiness.

When God revealed to Abraham that Sodom was headed for impending destruction, Abraham’s compassion was immediately for the righteous who were living in that sinful city. *Continued on page 3*

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.” (Lk 11:9)**

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Servant Leader

Matthew 20:28 tells us *“Just so the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* This is the guiding verse for all leaders and should reflect in our life of service to Christ and to our neighbors.

How are servant leaders formed?



Looking back at my early college days, I remember a school organization that I joined only because it is one of the requirements to complete our entry program. We served at the Nayon Ng Kabataan, an orphanage for street children near the Manila International Airport. I had a great time handing out cookies and candies to the children and interacting with them through a program of songs and skits.

This service project was followed with more service projects involving visiting and entertaining patients at the Mandaluyong Mental Hospital, the largest facility for mental patients in the Philippines.

Moreover, here in the United States, this program of service continued. I was given many opportunities to serve at a soup kitchen in the lower east side on Manhattan through my alumni association from college. Then came that special calling, a call to serve the Lord through the BLD community.

One day, I found myself assigned to the youth ministry and it was truly a blessing and awe-inspiring experience to serve the Lord with our youths. It was such a joy to see them serve our poor brethren joyfully and humbly through the soup kitchen in Manhattan and in the various mission projects of the community: soup kitchens and nursing home visitations, sing at Sunday masses, serve at encounters and LSS in other districts, such as BLD Washington D.C. and Albany, and grow in love for Jesus.

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is in John 13:1-20, better known as the “Washing of the Feet”. Here the Lord Jesus shows us how a leader should conduct himself and the kind of life of service that is expected of a leader. Matthew 20: 14 says, *“...if I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet.”*

Lord, grant each one of us the grace of true discipleship. May we discover the true servant leadership in us and imitate Christ, who has exemplified true mission of service and love. Amen.

OMG!

“You shall not invoke the name of the LORD your God in vain. For the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who invokes his name in vain.” (Exodus 20:7)

“OMG!” This Commandment sounds harsh, but why is this so? What’s in a name anyway? If I know your name, we can be in relationship. To know the Name of God, then, is to be able to call upon Him and have a relationship with Him. Names are so important that in many countries we protect them with laws against defamation. But if we are to respect another person’s name, we must honor God’s holy Name all the more.

How do we know that God’s Name is “holy”? To be holy literally means that one is “set apart,” so God’s Holy Name is set apart from Caesar, from Zeus, from Baal and every other “deity.” In the Old Testament, God proves Himself peerless in name and in truth through Elijah’s contest against the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20-40). But in the New Testament, Jesus reveals the holiness and power of God’s Name by His authoritative teaching and mighty deeds. Moreover, He empowers all of His followers to drive out demons and perform mighty acts in His Name (Mark 16:17-18, see also Acts 3:6, 16:18).

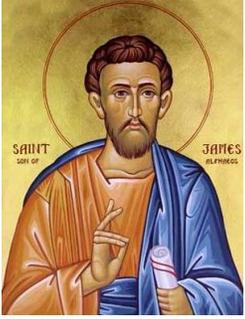
God also shows the holiness of His Name through His unsurpassed graciousness: if we pray in Jesus’ Name, He and the Father will grant our petition (John 14:13-14, 16:23). He is present when two or three gather in His Name (Matt 18:20). Indeed, there is no other name by which we can be saved (Acts 4:12), and if we call on the Lord, we will be saved (Joel 3:5). Those who give up everything for the sake of Jesus’ Name will receive eternal life (Matt 19:29).

It is because God’s Name is powerful, saving, and gracious that we must not take it in vain. This means of course that we cannot abuse God’s Name through blasphemy or vulgarity: we cannot say “OMG!” flippantly or say hateful or defiant things about God, nor can we take false oaths. But the Commandment also demands that we courageously bear witness to the powerful Name of God (CCC 2145).

In essence, this Commandment invites ongoing conversion by demanding respect for the Name. Through our fidelity in prayer and deed, Jesus’ Name should become like “honey in our mouths; melody in our ears; jubilation in our hearts.”¹ This Commandment invites us to set our speech apart by keeping God’s Name holy, for it is God’s Name that saves. Rather than saying “OMG!” in vain, through our prayer we should share with others that Jesus is “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

¹ St. Bernard of Clairvaux, “Sermon 15,” from *Commentary on the Song of Songs*.

ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE



He was out fishing with his brother, John, and his father, Zebedee. He could not help but witness with his very own eyes the huge number of fish that Simon caught through the power of Jesus. When Jesus asked James and John to do the same thing, they also caught an abundance of fish. As a result, John joined his brother, now known as St. James the Apostle, to leave behind their father and follow Jesus.

James did not know what God had in store for him. He witnessed more of Jesus' miracles, including the healing of Simon's mother-in-law. Jesus in particular also seemed to have great things planned for him. Jesus chose him as one of His twelve apostles and gave him the authority to cast out demons. Jesus called James and John the "Sons of Thunder" and gave them special responsibilities as well. When Jesus raised Jairus' daughter, He asked these three to come with Him. He also asked that they come with Him when He went up to the mountain to pray. This was where Jesus was transfigured while speaking to Moses and Elijah.

However, James did show his human weakness when he and John asked if one of them could sit at Jesus' right and the other at His left. It appeared that they lost focus on the mission of Christ, the mission of self-giving. Jesus redirected their thoughts by inviting them to drink from the cup he would drink from (in other words, without them knowing, James and John requested that they feel the pain and suffering that Jesus felt on the cross). There was a time when James and John were turned away by the Samaritans, and they wanted to send fire upon a town rather than heal it, an idea Jesus was strongly against.

Despite these shortcomings, James was one of the most faithful followers of Jesus Christ, who stood by Christ and continued to spread the works of Christ in Jerusalem where later he moved to reach out to Spain.

He was the one of the first martyred of the twelve apostles, beheaded by Herod upon returning back to Jerusalem. His body was later moved and buried in Compostela, Spain. In addition, he is well known as the patron saint of rheumatism, laborers, hat makers and countries like Spain, Chile, and Nicaragua.

Let us all honor the spiritually good deeds of St. James the Apostle not only on July 25th but every day!

"Lord, Almighty ever living God, who consecrated the first fruits of Your apostles by the blood of Saint James, grant, we pray, that Your Church may be strengthened by his faith and constantly sustained by his protection." (Roman Missal)

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

He was concerned about the well-being of the good people. The problem in Sodom was that few cared for the well-being of the righteous. Instead, most of Sodom's citizens were concerned about the prosperity of the wicked. Only Abraham, a righteous man, cared for the righteous people of Sodom.

God revealed to us how Abraham prayed single-mindedly and how determined he was for the righteous in Sodom to be spared. His determination was so great that he worked down the number needed to spare Sodom from fifty to ten, teaching us to be resolute, steadfast and persistent in our faith when we pray. Most of us are not as staunch in the pursuit of our spiritual goals as Abraham was. Hence, we cut short our own blessings, by not following through in our tasks and not being determined enough in our efforts to accomplish them.

Although Sodom was eventually destroyed, Abraham's prayers were still answered as the righteous were not destroyed with the wicked, for God delivered Lot and his family from the destruction of Sodom. Abraham's perseverance and efforts in prayer tell us that this can accomplish great things, even much more than we realize.

One of the remarkable characteristics of Abraham's prayer is his persistence as he seemingly haggled with God over the destiny of Sodom. He continually and sharply marked down the number of the righteous just to save them. From about fifty innocent people, he persistently went down to forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, and finally ten. Abraham must have been an importunate and thick-skinned man of prayer and this is what God expects of us.

There is no time frame involved in prayer; we can pray for something for weeks, months, even years. If we don't get an immediate answer to our request, or if events don't turn out exactly or as quickly as we hoped they would, our Lord's word to us is *"never lose heart."* We keep on praying unceasingly, and we don't give up. Keep knocking. Keep asking. Keep seeking. **PERSEVERE.**

Waiting on the Lord tells us that persistent, continual prayer that comes from the innermost part of our being is what moves the heart of our compassionate, loving God. To *pray without ceasing* does not mean we are literally to iterate and reiterate without cessation the words of prayer, but rather have hearts with a disposition of prayerfulness and a will to make our lives a prayer offering to our Father in heaven.

In summary, let our prayer be the key in the hand of faith to unlock God's treasures. The greatest and hardest preparation for heaven is within our hearts

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

and the spirit of prayer can affect this, for prayer is heart-work. Prayer is the voice of persevering faith.

Today, God speaks to us as a community and would like us to re-visit our Intercessory Ministry. Let it not be a mere stage in our Formation Program, but let it be God's persevering instrument in converting our lives to be truly an offering and a prayer to our God.

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Persevere in prayer.**
2. **Be faithful in interceding for one another.**

NEWS (from page 1)

As FE #20 families continue their journey, let us pray that the Lord will bless them, keep, them, and fill them with His grace always.

Congratulations FE #20 families!

From Newark: **Alegria family, Altieri family, Estiler family*, Manzo family, Ocaya family*, Osias family, Quevada family*, Richard family and Wong family;**

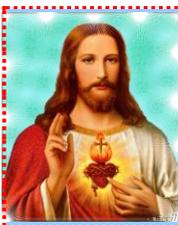
From Rockland: **Amano family*, De Guzman family, Pineda family, Quirante family and Timbang family.**

FE #20 family class shepherd: Rangel family

To God be the glory! Thank You Lord!

*Class coordinators

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Aug 2	Management
			Aug 9	Mission
			Aug 16	Pastoral
			Aug 23	Evangelization



MOMENTS

<i>Happy Moments</i>	Praise GOD
<i>Difficult Moments</i>	Seek GOD
<i>Quiet Moments</i>	Worship GOD
<i>Painful Moments</i>	Trust GOD

“Do not be afraid to go out on the streets and into public places like the first apostles who preached Christ and the Good News of salvation in the squares of cities, towns and villages. This is no time to be ashamed of the Gospel. It is time to preach it from the rooftops.”

-Blessed John Paul II, World Youth Day – 1993

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LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,050	86,277

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

SAVE THE DATE!

COMMUNITY TEACHING

September 21, 2013, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPE #15 GRAND REUNION

Date: Sunday, July 28, 2013

Time: 1:00 – 5:00 PM

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway, NJ

Contacts: Ver and Diana Nacion (veranddiana@aol.com)

DLC PASTORAL HOUR

Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2013

Time: 8:00 PM

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway, NJ

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2013

Time: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM

Venue: VFW, Manville NJ

Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos (nongb601@aol.com)

BLD COMMUNITY DAY! 21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

Chi1944@hotmail.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 31

Bulletin Edition

August 2, 2013

NEWS

Divine Mercy Parish families celebrate

The Divine Mercy Parish “Family Fun Day” sponsored by the BLD Mission ministry (DM pastoral) was held at the Divine Mercy Auditorium last Saturday, July 27, from 9 am to 12 noon. Several families from the parish attended: they created poster boards celebrating their families’ uniqueness and specialness; they prayed, sang and bonded.



The theme of the day was “placing God in the center of the family”. Dr. Rory Tiu gave a talk on “communication” and “Parent-Child relationships”; while Coleen Atienza presented to the kids on the topic of “Is there Jesus in the house?” The event gave the families a much needed forum to express their concerns and appreciate each other’s presence in their lives.

Pope Benedict XVI says “the Family is the ‘little Church.’” The family is the domestic church, and the sign of the communion of the Trinity. It is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. May all the families in the world be bonded through the Love of Christ as a Household of Faith. We thank the Mission ministry and the DM pastoral core in their unselfish service to the Lord.

COUNSELS

Following Jesus

THEME: We seek what is above when we store up heavenly treasures.

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: “*Think of what is above, not of what is on earth.*” (Col 3:2)

REFLECTION:



The readings for the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time should remind us of our priorities and the real meaning of life. In the gospel, Jesus warns those who are blinded by earthly possessions that these are not the most important things in life. “*But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal*” (Mt 6:20) – for this is most important. And that leads us to this week’s theme: **We seek what is above when we store up heavenly treasures.**

Before joining BLD, we tended to shy away from spiritual matters, preoccupied as we were with the pursuit of worldly security and our earthly needs. Our priorities were generally of this world, and focused on our financial success, social status, power and material possessions. These were the ‘anchors’ on which we based our sense of personal security, self-worth, and pride, even what we thought of as ‘happiness’. Our “old self” focused on expedience, and conveniently evaded the challenges of learning about and being involved in the teachings of the Lord. The result was a confused view of our real goals and the true meaning of life.

Our ‘Encounters’ and LSS experiences served as preparations that helped demolish our pride, melt our hearts, and set the scene for us to encounter the touch, the grace, and the presence of God in our lives. However this ‘mountain top’ experience eventually fades, and in time, we come back to reality, to the routine ordinariness of everyday life. It is imperative that we ... *Continued page 2*

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)

nurture the seeds planted in our hearts during those “renewal” experiences, if we are to maintain an effective and ongoing relationship with our God, especially if we wish to serve God in community.

We should ponder on these vital questions: What am I really seeking to attain in this life? What, for me, is the meaning of my existence in this world? Am I striving to lay away treasures in heaven and attain the life hereafter? Or am I a prisoner of greed and overreaching ambition? Let us keep the faith by being obedient to our God, placing Him above all our concerns and attachments in life, and be ready to share our lives and what we have with the poor and needy. *“Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions.”* (Lk 12:15)

There is nothing wrong with money or possessions in themselves. These are gifts from God. It is the excessive love and attachment to material things and our failure to share our blessings with others that is wrong, because blessings are given to us to be used for good purposes, not to be misused, or abused. Jesus reminds us in Lk 16:13 that, *“No servant can serve two masters”* and that *“you cannot serve both God and mammon.”* Indeed, once money and possessions become our master, we become their slaves and we lose sight of God and His two most important commandments - to love God above all things, and our neighbor as ourselves.

In the second reading, Paul exhorts us: *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above ... not of what is on earth,”* (Col.3:1-2). The pursuit of God’s Kingdom should always come first for us. “Above” is Christ and His message. To live as Jesus lived should be the focus and motivation behind all our strivings. As we are being renewed in the knowledge and image of Christ, we will discover that *“Christ is all and in all”* (Col.3:11), and everything else is “vanity of vanities” (Eccl.1:2). Then say, as St. Paul does in Phil 3:8, *“I consider them so much rubbish that I may gain Christ.”*

“What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?” (Lk 9:25) When earthly voices entice us to entertain other gods, we must not lose sight of our heavenly goal to store up treasure in heaven. We must resolve to cast away the vices that hinder us, especially greed, which is really the worship of a false god - ourselves.

Earthly possessions cannot give us genuine security. We are merely stewards of God’s grace, and our tenure on earth is brief – we are just passing through. The only thing that will really matter is whether we have grown rich in the sight of God. And what makes us rich in the sight of God is not who we are, nor what we own, or even what we have done, but what and who we are in Christ, and how we have lived our life. Only then can we claim God’s promise: *“When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory.”* (Col.3:4)

DIRECTIONS: “Live simply so others can simply live,” (Mother Teresa); be generous in sharing God’s provisions.

**LORD’S PROVISION
PREVIOUS WEEK’S**

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,951	90,228

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support
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TEACHING CALENDAR

SAVE THE DATE!

COMMUNITY TEACHING

Sept. 21, 2013, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLD Las Vegas - Marriage Encounter #3

When: October 26-27, 2013 (one night only)

For applications/registration, please contact:

Fatima and Weni Darvin - fatweni@yahoo.com
or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2013

Time: 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM

Venue: VFW, Manville NJ

Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

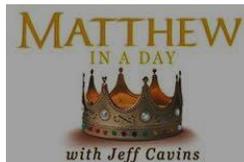
Date/Time: Saturday, August 10, 2013

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

Time: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

TEAMS	LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH
Red Team	A - C
Blue Team	D - G
Green Team	H - P
Yellow Team	Q - Z

For questions, please email: fla@bldnewark.com



Event Location: St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, 700 Wyckoff Avenue Wyckoff, NJ 07481
Event Date: Oct 19, 2013
Event Time: 9:00 am CDT

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Aug 9	Mission
			Aug 16	Pastoral
			Aug 23	Evangelization
			Aug 30	Formation

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 32

Bulletin Edition

August 9, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Pope Francis on World Youth Day

by JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES/EXCERPT FROM ZENIT NEWS 08/05/2013



Pope Francis recalled the joy of last week's World Youth Day Mass in Rio de Janeiro on Sunday's Angelus address to thousands gathered at St. Peter's Square. The Holy Father told the pilgrims that the World Youth Day is a

continuous journey, which began on the first WYD in 1985. "Let us always remember: the youth do not follow the Pope. They follow Jesus Christ carrying His cross; the Pope leads them and accompanies them on this journey of faith and hope," the Pope said.

"Young people are especially sensitive to the lack of meaning and values that surrounds them. And unfortunately they pay the consequences," the Pope said. "But meeting with the living Jesus in His great family that is the Church fills the heart with joy because it fills us with true life, with a profound good, that does not pass or go bad. We saw it in the faces of the kids in Rio." He also expressed his hope that they would take the experience of the event to their daily lives.

"So, I thank all the young people who participated... And I thank the Lord, too, for the meetings I had with the Pastors and people of that great country, Brazil. May the Lord repay all those who worked for this great feast of faith."

Reflecting on the Sunday Gospel, the Pope stated that the Word was relevant in today's society that "deceives young people with consumerism." He added, "True wealth is the love of God that is shared with one another. Whoever has experienced this love does not fear death and receives peace of heart."

FAITH & FAITHFULNESS

THEME: We seek what is above when we prepare for the Lord's coming with expectant faith.

WORD: Wis 18:6-9; Ps 33:1,12,18-21
Heb 11:1-2, 8-19; Lk 12:32-48

ORDER: Gird your loins and light your lamps and be ready to open immediately when He comes and knocks.

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday's readings, Jesus assures us of the abounding goodness of our Father who is pleased to give us the Kingdom. As we wait for the day of His Second Coming, we are reminded to gird our loins, light our lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding - ready to open the door immediately when He comes and knocks. We too must be vigilant by remaining open to God's graces in our lives, persevering in expectant faith and trusting in God's promise that He is pleased to give us the Kingdom.

The first reading tells of how the Israelites secretly worshipped and offered sacrifices to God and lived in obedience to the Divine Law. In the end, as God has promised, He rewarded them for their faith and faithfulness when He delivered them from the Egyptians. In faith, Abraham and Sarah, in the second reading, obeyed God and left Ur, their homeland to seek the land which God promised as their inheritance from Him.

Continued page 2

Promise of the Week

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon those who fear him, upon those who count on his mercy, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive through famine." (Ps 33:18-19)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

When put to the test, he offered up Isaac as a sacrifice believing that God could raise someone from the dead. Even though they did not reach the Promised Land, they were faithful to the end. God rewarded Abraham for his faith and faithfulness, for today he is in the Kingdom of Heaven where he is rejoicing in his inheritance of the promises of God

In the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus tells us to be prepared like servants waiting for the master's return - always seeking the heavenly treasures of the Kingdom for no one knows the hour when God shall call us. If the Master finds us faithful, we, the servants, will be rewarded. Jesus will sit down, serve and dine with us for our God who is ever faithful is pleased to give us the Kingdom!

Jesus however cautions us, *"Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."* (Lk. 12:48) Some will have to give greater accountability to God than others. We will be judged based on our faith and faithfulness to our covenant with God, on how our acts of faithfulness demonstrated our true faith in God. *"Faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead."* (James 2:17) What have we done with what we have been given? Have we been faithful to use the gifts we have been given to serve the community and the Catholic Church?

At our baptism, we were called to follow Jesus as His disciples and participate in the mission of the church to proclaim the Good News of salvation to all nations. God has made provisions for our weaknesses and needs to carry out this task. God gave us the supernatural power of the Eucharist and the sacraments to help us in our spiritual life. He gave us the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to be faithful and the spiritual gifts we need for our conversion and inner transformation for building up the church and uplifting the community. He gave us the Church by which we serve other believers in accordance with our common priesthood as lay faithful. He has given us community as the necessary structure to support us and help our spiritual growth by encouraging and nurturing among the members a sustained prayer life that they may bear much fruit.

Have we used these gifts in serving in our ministries and respective parishes? Have we been faithful to our commitment to do the tasks and fulfill the promises we have made in His Name to support our ministries, community and the Church? Have we been faithful in living out our covenant pledges 

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LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,227	93,455

Financial details are available to all members through
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TEACHING CALENDAR

SAVE THE DATE!

COMMUNITY TEACHING

Sept. 21, 2013, 1:00 - 4:00 PM

Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLD Las Vegas - Marriage Encounter #3

When: October 26-27, 2013 (one night only)

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BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: Saturday, September 7, 2013

Time: 7:00 PM - 12:00 AM

Venue: VFW, Manville NJ

Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40

Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos

BLD COMMUNITY DAY!

21ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Date: Tomorrow, August 10th, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Venue: Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ

 Marshaling Schedule	Date	Apostolate
	Aug 16	Pastoral
	Aug 23	Evangelization
	Aug 30	Formation
	Sep 6	Management

through the BLD community? Have we persevered in expectant faith to witness to our calling as disciples even in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges, grave difficulties, extreme inconveniences, and overwhelming temptation or spiritual warfare?

In the end, little flock, we should ask ourselves - have we pleased God that He will give us the Kingdom?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Always be in the state of grace.
2. Be faithful to your commitment and covenant pledges to the Lord through the BLD community.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 33

Bulletin Edition

August 16, 2013

The Lord pours abundant blessing of rays

After three straight days of rain mixed with thunderstorms, the Lord stooped down on His “own” and poured not the drenching rain, but rather, an abundant blessing of rays from the sun piercing through the clouds that quickly dried up playgrounds. How awesome is our God!

Last Saturday, August 10, 2013, our BLD Community celebrated the Community Day, which marked the 21st Anniversary of its existence in North America, at Grove 4 in Johnson Park in Piscataway, New Jersey.

As early as 7:00 am, all working committee coordinators and members showed up to set up the picnic area - food center, grilling station, tables, games and sports’ areas, etc. The morning worship started at 9:00 am, which was led by the Pepino family, followed by the Teams’ (Red, Blue, Green and Yellow) reading of the Oath of Sportsmanship, led by the Sports & Event’s commissioner, Nick Raagas, which marked the official start of the games.

The Eucharistic celebration started at 11:30 am, celebrated by Fr. Paul and concelebrated by Fr. Robert, and was followed by the most awaited part of the event – LUNCH: a plethora of succulent Filipino dishes, homemade pork loin barbecue, burgers and hotdogs coupled with a variety chips and desserts. Sodas, juices, coffee and tea were served all day long. For merienda, halo-halo, fruits, suman and other native *kakanin* were served.



The 'Mellow YELLOW' Team
CHAMPIONS of the
2013 BLD Newark Community Day
Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ
10 August 2013

The Ministry Presentation/Talent show was a total fun to watch, which was participated by John 6, Mark 10, Youth, Solo Parents and ME 39. The games and raffles of donated gifts enhanced the fun and excitement of the day.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Division or Peace?

THEME: We seek what is above when we persevere and fix our eyes on Jesus.

WORD: Jer 38:4-6, 8-10; Ps 40:2, 3, 4, 18;
Heb 12:1-4; Lk 12:49-53

ORDER: Rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us.

REFLECTION:

The readings this Sunday tell us about conflicts, division, deliverance and hope.

In the first reading, we read about the prophet Jeremiah being thrown into the cistern because the prince and the people did not like the words that the Lord spoke to them through Jeremiah.

The prophet tried to warn them about the impending capture and occupation of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. With a new King and government, there would naturally be changes and new laws. However, instead of heeding the advice of Jeremiah, they imprisoned him in the cistern.

In the Gospel, we find Jesus Himself proclaiming “Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth? No, I tell you but rather division” (Luke 2:51) father against son, mother against daughter, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law.

Reading this passage is confusing and quite hard to understand. Is not the message of Jesus about love, peace, unity not conflict and division? This is one of the hard sayings of Jesus. It must have shocked some of His listeners and it is shocking to us when we discover it is really in the Scripture. But it is in the Bible and we have to heed to it. *Continued on page 4*

Promise of the Week

“...The Lord hears my cry. He drew me out of the pit of destruction...; He made firm my steps.

(Psalms 40:1-2)



BLD Community Day

Aug. 10, 2013 @ Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ





BLD Community Day

Aug. 10, 2013 @ Johnson Park, Piscataway, NJ



COUNSELS (from page 1)

How does Jesus divide people? Scripture shows us clearly how He divides. Jesus spoke the truth and He is the truth, but the way people respond is what divides us. Because of our different personalities, different backgrounds and values and even our own hard-headedness, we take opposing views. We can accept the truth or reject it. There lies the problem.

During the time of Jesus, some believed He was the Messiah, but others did not. The Christian Orthodox was the first to separate from the church, Martin Luther followed and started the Reformation and now there are more than 20,000 Christian denominations. Some are pro-life, others pro-choice, some conservative, others liberal.

Now how do we overcome this human malady? How do we become loving, peaceful and united- the real message of Jesus? The answers really are fairly simple. They are found in our theme, order, and direction this week.

The theme “we seek what is above when we persevere and fix our eyes on Jesus,” the order “we rid yourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us,” and the directions “be reconciled with your neighbors and avail of the sacrament of Penance, spend more time in prayer, and reflect on the Word” are the solutions. They are not new. We know them. So let us follow these guidelines as discerned by our elders. Let us then maintain the course. Let us never give up. Even when it seems that we are losing the battle, let us take courage to endure and persevere to seek what is above and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Let us rid of our shortcomings and express sincere sorrow for our sins. Let us nourish our prayer life, raise our arms, sing praises and bend our knees.

Pope Paul VI, in his Apostolic Exhortation **Evangelii Nuntiandi** stated it this way: *“As evangelizers, we must offer Christ’s faithful not the image of people divided and separated by unedifying quarrels, but the image of people who are mature in faith and capable of finding a meeting-point beyond the real tensions, thanks to a shared, sincere and disinterested search for truth. Yes, the destiny of evangelization is certainly bound up with the witness of unity given by the Church.”*

So we who come here on Fridays to worship our Lord, we who reflect on the Word to seek the truth, let us never be a cause of division in this community, and within your family or friends. Rather, let us be peacemakers: mend broken relationships, mediate and build bridges. Lastly, let us always spread love, peace and joy!

Yes, the road is narrow but it is clear. With Jesus by our side and our Blessed Virgin Mary, our intercessor, how can we go wrong?

Lord Jesus, change our hearts to do away with ➔

The Lord poured ... (from page 1)

The day ended with the awarding of trophy to the champions - the Yellow Team.

We praise and thank You Father God for the blessings of fellowship, camaraderie, unity and harmony with one another as one big family - The BLD Community.

“Blessed the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.” (Psalm 33:12b)

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,230	96,685

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Thank you for your continued support

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SAVE THE DATE

COMMUNITY TEACHING

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Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date: **Saturday, Sept. 7, 2013** Time: **7:00 PM–12:00 AM**

Venue: **VFW, Manville New Jersey**

Donation: **Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40**

Contact Persons: **Nong/Tricia Bustos**



Event Location: St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, 700 Wyckoff Ave Wyckoff, NJ 07481

Date/Time: Oct 19, 2013, 9 am CDT

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: **Every 3rd Friday, After Worship**

Venue: **Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church**

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Aug 23	Evangelization
			Aug 30	Formation
			Sept 6	Management
			Sept 13	Mission

that portion that lives undiminished in us. So make our hearts that it no longer contain anything earthly or human. Let our hearts only be for You, and Your presence be its reward. Amen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be reconciled with your neighbors and avail of the Sacrament of Penance.
2. Spend more time in prayer and reflect on the Word.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 34

Bulletin Edition

August 23, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Pope Francis: 'Faith and Violence Are Incompatible'

During his weekly Sunday Angelus address, Pope Francis called on the faithful to look to God for strength in times of turmoil. He explained the words of Christ in last Sunday's Gospel "so that they are not misunderstood", where Jesus told his disciples: "*Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.*" (Lk 12:51)

"It means that the faith is not something decorative, ornamental; living the faith is not decorating life with a little religion," the Pope explained. "No, faith is not this. Faith entails choosing God as the basic criterion for life, and God is not empty, God is not neutral, God is always positive, God is love, and love is positive!"

The Pope said that it is not Christ who intends to divide men against each other, rather the choice to follow Jesus may divide us "even from the closest bonds."

"Following Jesus means rejecting evil, egoism, and choosing the good, truth, justice, even when that requires sacrifice and renunciation of our own interests. And, yes, this divides."

The Holy Father also reminded the faithful that the Gospel in no way authorizes the use of force in spreading the faith, and that the true force of Christians "is the force of truth and love."

"Faith and violence are incompatible!", he exclaimed. "But faith and strength go together. The Christian is not violent, but he is strong with the strength of meekness, the force of love."

The Holy Father led the faithful in praying for the violent situation occurring in Egypt, where hundreds have died and numerous Christian Churches were looted, vandalized and burnt to the ground. "Let us continue to pray for peace in Egypt. All together: *Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us!*" *Continued page 2*

THE NARROW GATE TO HEAVEN

THEME: We seek what is above when we strive to endure our trials with discipline.

WORD: Is 66:18-21; Ps 117:1, 2; Heb 12:5-7, 11-13; Lk 13:22-30

ORDER: Strive to enter through the narrow gate.

REFLECTION:

The gospel of Luke tells us to "*strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough.*" This verse reveals that one: disciples need to be spiritually strong to enter the narrow gate, for the weak won't get in; two: no privileged entry, neither complacency nor watered-down spirituality, will gain us admission to Heaven; and three: many souls attempt to get in because Heaven is the place to be in and there is no other.

In Matthew 16:24, Jesus says, "*Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.*" Jesus tells the disciples to imitate Him. As an athlete accepts rigorous training for a long race, the disciple faces the marathon of life, the marathon of serving the Lord by bearing his own crosses. In Hebrews 12:5b-6, we see this from a parental view: "*My son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reprov'd by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines; he scourges every son he acknowledges.*" God so loves us as His children that He is willing to train us by trials and tribulations so that we become accustomed to hardships and suffering. He trains us for the narrow gate. God's purpose is *Continued page 2*

Promise of the Week

"All discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it."

(Heb 12:11)

COUNSELS (from page 1)

to lead us to confront, remove, or change those habits, attitudes, and beliefs that keep us from growing into the full stature of Christ's image.

The Lord's testing of our faith produces perseverance. He says in James 1:2-4, *"Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."* Perfect and complete, ready for the narrow gate.

We are also to rejoice while our faith is tested as in fire. We read in 1 Peter 1:6-9, *"In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls."*

When we suffer trials, we also share in God's glory. Romans 8:17 explains about our sonship, *"If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him."*

"All discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it." (Heb 12:11) The training that St. Paul refers to can be compared to the discipleship formation program that we have in BLD. In the early stages of our BLD life, we are immediately asked to read/proclaim the Word of God to the congregation. What seems awkward at first soon comes naturally. Proclaiming the Word of God is our heritage, and should come easily to our lips. We then serve with the Intercessory ministry, learning to pray and intercede for others, where before we may have only prayed for our own needs. We also have the Immersion program, where we teach our children about God and share the Word with them. Then there's our Word sharing circles, wherein we are asked to reflect on the Word of God, and to give our testimonies of how God is working in us and manifests His love to us.

The Lord called us to a life of constant training. The disciple, alone or in community, trains in constant prayer, in serving our neighbors, to go out and evangelize, to be more loving and caring. As with the athlete, the start of training brings a lot pain and soreness but as we develop, our drooping hands and weak knees are strengthened to stay on the small and narrow road. It is the certain path leading us to our ↗

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

NEWS (from page 1)

He then prayed for the victims of a tragic disaster that occurred in Cebu in the Philippines, where a passenger ferry collided with a cargo ship on Friday night, killing over 50 people. *Source: Zenit.org*

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,372	100,057

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

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Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Sept 6 - CDFP Overview – SPE 15/SE
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Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

SAVE THE DATE!
COMMUNITY TEACHING
September 21, 2013, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLD Las Vegas – Marriage Encounter #3
When: October 26-27, 2013 (one night only)
For applications/registration, please contact:
Fatima and Weni Darvin - fatweni@yahoo.com
or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

BLD NEWARK DINNER DANCE

Date/Time: September 7, 2013, 7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
Venue: VFW, Manville NJ
Donation: Youth \$25, Singles \$35, Adult \$40
Contact Persons: Nong/Tricia Bustos

	Date	Apostolate
	Aug 30	Formation
	Sept 6	Management
	Sept 13	Mission
	Sept 20	Pastoral

reunion with our heavenly Father, to be able to *"recline at table in the Kingdom of God"* (Lk 13:29b).

"Blessed the one whom you guide, Lord, whom you teach by your instruction." (Ps 94:12)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Practice the Christian disciplines of humility, obedience, self-sacrifice, and forbearance.
2. Be thankful to the Lord in all circumstances, even in trials and sufferings.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 35

Summer Edition

August 30, 2013

Be Christians and Give Witness to the Faith

Pontiff Reflects on Christ's Call to "Enter By the Narrow Door"

Jesus does not exclude sinners, on the contrary, he "prefers sinners" to forgive them. Pope Francis emphasized this during his Sunday Angelus address to the thousands of pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square.

Reflecting on Sunday's Gospel, which recounted Jesus' response to the question on who will be saved, the Holy Father stated that Christ does not focus on how many will be saved, but rather, how to know the way to salvation.

"Try to enter by the narrow door, because many will try to enter but will not succeed." (Lk 13:12)

"What does Jesus wish to say? What is the door by which we should enter? And why does Jesus talk about a narrow door?," the Holy Father asked. The image of the door appears various times in the Gospel and reminds us of the door of a house, of the domestic hearth, where we find security, love, warmth. Jesus tells us that there is a door that permits us to enter into God's family, in the warmth of the house of God, into communion with him. This door is Jesus himself.

The Door of Faith.

No one is excluded from entering this door, even sinners. *"Precisely because of this you are preferred, because Jesus prefers the sinner, always, to forgive them. Jesus is always waiting for you, to embrace you, to forgive you. Do not be afraid. Wake up, take heart to enter His door. Everyone is invited to enter by this door, to enter the door of faith, to enter into His life, and to let Him enter into our life to transform it, renew it, give us complete and lasting joy."*

The Gospel calls us to reflect on which door we wish to enter, "to enter the door of faith in Jesus" and allow Him to enter in our lives, and leave behind selfishness and indifference to others, while illuminating their lives. *"It is a tranquil light that lasts forever and gives us peace. This is the light that we encounter if we enter the door of Jesus,"* the Holy Father said.

Continued on page 2

COUNSELS

True Humility Comes from the Heart

THEME: **We bear the nature and character of Jesus when we are humble of heart.**

WORD: **Sir 3:17,18,20,28,29/Ps 68:4-7,10,11
Heb 12:18,19,22-24/Lk 14:1,7-14**

ORDER: **"Conduct your affairs with humility."
(Sir 3:17)**

REFLECTION:

This week's order is to "Conduct your affairs with humility" and is clearly reflected in the first reading. In fact, humility is one of the seven heavenly virtues. Wikipedia defines humility as *"modest behavior, selflessness, and the giving of respect. Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less. It is a spirit of self-examination and charity toward people you disagree with. It is the courage of the heart that is necessary to undertake tasks which are difficult, tedious or unglamorous, and to graciously accept the sacrifices involved. It is the reverence for those who have wisdom and those who selflessly teach in love. It is giving credit where credit is due; not unfairly glorifying one's own self."*

As imperfect vessels, you and I are full of pride and ambition. We want to be recognized as the best at what we do. We tend to think we are better than everyone else. We want to have a place of honor, to be "spotlighted." We want to be acknowledged and highly praised for our service, which we should be doing out of love anyway. But no matter how we do or how we perceive ourselves, there will always be someone else better than us.

As I reflect on my renewed life in Christ through the BLD community, I realize that there are basically three major instances where I discovered the true meaning of humility.

Continued on page 2

Promise of the Week

**"Humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favor with God."
(Sir 3:18)**

COUNSELS (from page 1)

My first experience of humility in community was when I learned to accept that I cannot be everything and that there will always be someone better than me. I should not try to be someone I cannot be.

As in the first reading, ***“What is too sublime for you, seek not, into things beyond your strength search not.”*** (Sir 3:21) Then in the Gospel, Jesus tells of the parable at the wedding banquet where one should not assume the place of honor for there may be one more honorable than you. ***“For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”*** (Luke 14:11) I learned just to strive for excellence to the best of my ability and talent and God will take care of the rest.

The second instance for me was when I felt the Lord lead me to examine my conscience as to how I treated others who were less fortunate than me. Did I look down on them and despise them? As there are people better off than me, there are also those who are not as blessed as I am. Yet we all belong to God’s family. We are all God’s children. We are all created in His image and likeness. To look down on someone is to look down on yourself and God.

Jesus showed us perfect humility. He walked among sinners and the outcasts of society while others shunned them and classified them as too lowly for them to mingle with. To practice true humility is to accept those less fortunate and talented than you without seeking ulterior gains or recognition. True humility should come from the heart, the inward spirit. Simply speaking, our actions and decisions should be based upon our respect and love for God and others, especially those who are spiritually and/or physically weak. Our community is diverse and comes from all walks of life, and as such, we should remain a loving and caring community by practicing humility and helping others without expecting anything in return.

This leads me to the third instance where I learned about the humility of Jesus during the course of my discipleship formation. Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, gave up His right to glory and obeyed God the Father. He came down from heaven, took the form of man, and willingly suffered and died on the cross for something that He was not guilty of our own sins! Jesus IS the model of humility! And if we are to follow Jesus, we must follow his example, to rid ourselves of all pride and selfishness, and to love one another in humility. Even to His death, Jesus forgave those who crucified Him - an example of true humility, which can only come from the heart.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Regard others as more important than you.
2. Be open to receive critique or correction.

CN archives are available at www.bldnewark.net, click on Covenant News.

NEWS (from page 1)

Christ’s message in the Gospel is that being a Christian is not having a label, but rather, to be a Christian is to be in the truth.

“Each one answer for himself! Never Christians by label!” the Pope exclaimed. *“Christians in truth and of the heart. Be Christians and witness to the faith in prayer, in works of charity, in promoting justice, in doing good. Our whole life must pass through the narrow door that is Christ.”*

SOURCE: JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES/EXCERPT FROM ZENIT NEWS 08/026/2013

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,143	103,200

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treasury@bldnewark.com

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Fatima and Weni Darvin - fatweni@yahoo.com

or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

Salubungan - September 6, 2013

Invocation Mass - October 4, 2013

LSS Proper - October 5-6, 2013

Venue: St. Mary’s Church/Auditorium

Contact Persons: Joven/Lisa Soriano - lsa@bldnewark.com

<div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Marshaling</div>  <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Schedule</div>	Date	Apostolate
	Sept 6	Management
	Sept 13	Mission
	Sept 20	Pastoral
	Sept 27	Evangelization



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 36

Bulletin Edition

September 6, 2013

YEAR OF FAITH

The Church, Mother and Teacher (CCC #2030-2046)

Have you ever asked yourself, “What is the Catholic Church all about?” Or, has someone asked you, “Why do I have to follow the Church’s teachings when all I need is to obey what the Bible says?”

A mother’s role, as we all know it, is to be the primary caregiver, nurturer, and teacher of her child. In similar fashion, and as explained in our Catechism in paragraphs 2030 through 2046, the Church is both Mother and Teacher for all Christians. Through the Catholic Church, the Christian disciple “receives God’s Word and the sacraments, learns the examples of the Saints and their spiritual Traditions, and celebrates the holy mysteries in the liturgical year” (CatholiCity.com).

The Church has the right to teach because that authority and responsibility was given to her by Jesus Christ Himself through the Apostles and their successors (Mt 16:18-19, Mt 28:19-20, 1 Tim 3:15). The Church’s Magisterium, i.e., the Pope and the Bishops in communion with him and aided by the early Church Fathers and theologians, “provides the authoritative interpretation of Divine Revelation, both Holy Scripture and Tradition, and assures the truth of the Faith by use of Revelation and right reason, i.e. truth, as guided and protected by the Holy Spirit” (Bender, Vita Nostra in Ecclesia). When the Magisterium is preaching or teaching on faith and morals, they are also ensured by the charism of infallibility.

The following five precepts of the Church (CCC #2041-2043) “are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the very necessary minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor.”

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

CHRISTLIKE DISCIPLESHIP

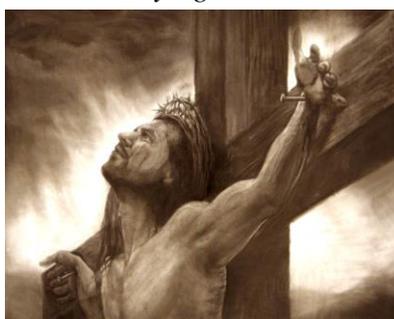
THEME: We bear the nature and character of Jesus when we suffer for His sake.

**WORD: Wis 9:13-18/Ps 90:3-6,12,13,14-17
Phlm 9-10,12-17/Lk 14:25-33**

REFLECTION:

Discipleship has its own reward from God – He “*prosper the work of our hands.*” (Ps 90:17)

The gospel this week is recognized as among the *hard sayings* of Jesus. It tells us there is a price to pay if we choose to become His disciples. His love is free, unconditional, but the demands of discipleship are absolute – our whole heart and soul. His call must take priority over everything else, even before concern for parents, siblings or children. To be a follower of Christ, we must be prepared to carry our cross just as Christ carried His. The difference is that in carrying our cross, we draw strength, courage and patience from Him. It is He who will lead us through sufferings into glory with Him and in Him.



The cross is the proving ground of our discipleship. It is where we demonstrate our commitment, our loyalty to Christ. The cross in our life traces that unique path by which we follow the Lord. It is how we come to spiritual maturity in our journey of faith and to future glory with Christ forever.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“And may the gracious care of the Lord our God be ours; prosper the works of our hands for us.”

(Ps 90:17)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Endings and Beginnings

*The ocean's waves
They are receding
They are approaching.*

*Some place in the world
There is a sun that's setting
And the same sun rising*

*In every second is a moment
Simultaneously ending and beginning
Savor every moment,
Remember the ending
Look forward to beginnings*

*Life is full of seconds
Life is full of moments
Savor life's seconds, yes, its every moment
Celebrate each new beginning*

*In every second is a moment
Simultaneously ending and beginning
Savor every moment,
Remember the ending
Look forward to beginnings*

*Life is full of seconds
Life is full of moments
But therein is God's guarantee*

*For everyone with hope and belief in Christ,
Even for those who have fallen asleep,
He will bring us all with Him (1 Thes 4:14)
And in the end... is a permanent...
And peaceful beginning*

FROM DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

“He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
(Col 1: 13-14)

Leonardo DaVinci once used an art technique called Chiaroscuro, contrasting light and shadow. In our lives we have the tendency to vacillate between the two spectrums of light and darkness, be it in our thoughts or in our deeds. What was God's definitive response to our wounded human condition? Jesus.

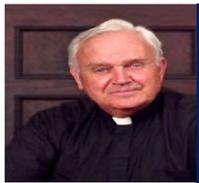
Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Baptism which is the doorway of our faith, the gift of sonship in which we cry “Abba Father.” We become friends and more importantly co-heirs with Christ. The Council of Trent (1547) promulgated that we are justified in Christ through this sacrament. Consequently, it transforms us from the fallen family of Adam into the family of God the Father, the kingdom of God the Son, and the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Moving into the light of Christ, we see our imperfections; we become small and humble before God as we become more cognizant of our flawed human nature. Moving closer to the light means we are able to expose and see ourselves more clearly, much like when we look closely at ourselves in a mirror and see the texture and details of our faces. Conversely, the farther we stand from the light of Christ, the harder it is to see our broken character, the dirt on our faces, so to speak. Hence, saints know they are sinners, while sinners think they are saints.

Jesus is the gift of the Father to us. What we do with our lives is our gift back to Him. If we so choose, we use the gift of freewill to be conduits and channels of God's love to others. Consequently, we become what we receive in the Eucharist, the body of Christ. You might ask, what is the effect of the Eucharist in me? Simple, take a look at the person that you have become.

Recall during LSS, we are reminded to be the “light and salt of the earth.” It is our duty as baptized Christians to evangelize and to share in Christ's mission as Priest, Prophet, and King. Have we become complacent?

Let your light shine upon others. By so doing God is glorified through your good works. (Mat 5:16). This light remains lit so long as we nurture our relationship with God through the sacraments and in daily prayer. He is the eternal source of this flame born out of the ultimate display of charity, the cross, the tree of life. Peter Kreeft wrote, “We write the story of our lives with the very pen strokes of our own free choices.” Choose to be the light of Christ.



FR. PAUL SPEAKS



On reflecting on the material that I have been asked to share, I concluded that the subject of angels might elicit some interest. I received my inspiration from the article on angels in the September edition

of the Magnificat, which many of you subscribe to. I recommend reading the article which has some interesting observations on the nine choirs, or orders, of angels. The subject of angels may be of no practical interest for many people. But from God's perspective there must have been some reason for their creation. The main reason for their existence is to bring into being that great crowd of these invisible, spirit only beings, who would spend their whole existence adoring and praising God. When we do the same here on earth, we are joining in that heavenly chorus, extolling the holiness and presence of the triune God. You can get a glimpse of the huge multitude on angels by reading the book of Revelation where myriads and myriads of angels are adoring God night and day. The heavenly spirits do this better than we do because they don't get tired or distracted. They are doing now in heaven what we will be doing with them for all eternity, praising and worshipping God.

The technical meaning of the word *angel* is *one who is sent*, from which we get the words, *evangelization* or *evangelist*. Thus these heavenly spirits are called angels only if they are sent to be our guardian angels or to announce some event to the visible world. The amazing thing about angels is that they can do two things at the same time, namely, take care of us and adore God. The three major archangels mentioned in Scripture are Michel, Raphael and Gabriel. Notice the "el" (the Hebrew word for God) as part of their names. Michael: "Who is like God." Raphael: "God heals." Gabriel: "God is strong." Their feast day is usually on September 29, which this year is omitted because it falls on a Sunday.

The angels, like the saints, love us and with their praises goes their intercession. This is especially true for our personal guardian angel. Do we ever notice the presence of our guardian angel, sent by God as another manifestation of his love? The opposite are the *bad* angels, those spirit beings who failed to acknowledge and reverence God before they, like we, could be admitted into heaven. They hate us and will do everything to prevent us from joining the saints and angels in heaven. Thanks be to God for the victory of Jesus who has conquered sin and the legions of devils who hate us and almighty God!

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

God desires that we surrender everything to Him. He wants us to offer everything that we are, everything that we have to Him: our marriage, our job, our friendships, our possessions, our very lives. We must not be afraid to lose these because God knows what is best for us.

Detachment and self-denial are required. Nothing, including natural ties and affections - can come between us and the Lord. Anything less than total commitment is not acceptable (Lk 14:27). His call comes with an authority that goes beyond any other demand that might be made upon us.

The moral teaching of the gospel is indeed enormously challenging. More than anything else, it asks us to put Jesus and the values that He embodies and proclaims at the very center of our lives and to make them the norm of our conduct. Jesus stands for God and God's kingdom, for peace and justice, for service and self-giving love. True discipleship requires that such things be dominant in our lives, to bear the name and character of Jesus. Discipleship is a serious commitment. We must be prepared to suffer for His sake and must place Him above everything and everybody. A disciple who commits himself to Jesus must consider seriously his strength and resources. Only one who is capable of radical and wholehearted decision can become a true disciple.

A person can become bitter or better in the midst of suffering, depending on the individual person's attitude. The courageous takes up his/her cross; the cowardly merely drags his/her cross along. And that makes all the difference in the world. An American Jesuit priest writes: *"If you do not experience more peace in your life, it is not because of what is happening to you. It all depends on how you choose to look at things. If you go through the day with blaming, angry and critical thoughts, you will feel miserable because you are making yourself miserable. But if you go through the same with excusing, forgiving and loving thoughts, you will feel more at peace. You cannot always choose what is happening to you, but you can choose the way you think about what is happening to you. With this understanding we can show God we love Him by giving Him countless signs of love in our daily life."* By doing what is asked of us, a great and abundant reward awaits us, for He promised in Ps 90:17 *"to prosper the works of our hands"*.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Creator of all, you call for risk-taking loyalty and commitment that puts you before family and friends and everything else in our life. We want to live the life you intend for us and for all people. Show us how to become fully engaged as disciples of Jesus Christ. Help us to get our priorities straight, so we can faithfully obey your will. We want to give our best to the work you call us to do through this community. Amen.

Reflection Question:

God expects our complete devotion and faithful obedience as His disciples. How are we responding?

NEWS (from page 1)

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor;
2. Confess your sins at least once a year;
3. Receive Holy Communion during the Easter season;
4. Observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church; and
5. Provide for the needs of the Church according to one's own ability.

As followers of Jesus Christ and members of His Body, the Church, we are duty-bound to proclaim the Good News to all. The best way we can accomplish this is by being faithful to our beliefs and constant in our witnessing and moral lives. The Church increases, grows, and develops through the holiness of her faithful (CCC #2045). By living with the mind of Christ, Christians *hasten the coming of the Reign of God*, "a kingdom of justice, love, and peace" (CCC #2046).

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pope Francis issued an urgent appeal: PRAY & FAST FOR PEACE IN SYRIA, MIDDLE EAST & THE WHOLE WORLD

WHEN: Saturday, September 7, 2013, particularly from 1 to 5 p.m. EDT (7 to 11 p.m. Rome time)

WHO: All Catholics, Christians and people of good will

WHERE: St. Peter's Square, your Parish, home or other community

HOW: Pray the Rosary, fast, read the Scripture, go to confession, participate in Eucharistic adoration

9/13/13 - MISSION MARSHALING IN-CHARGE

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Tithe/Love Offering	3,093	106,293
Habagat Fund	684	*

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LSS Proper ~ October 5-6, 2013

Venue: St. Mary's Church/Auditorium

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano ~ lsa@bldnewark.com

BLD Las Vegas - Marriage Encounter #3

When: October 26-27, 2013 (one night only)

For applications/registration, please contact:

Fatima and Weni Darvin - fatweni@yahoo.com

or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

JOHN 6 CROSSING #14

(for children ages 12-14 years old)

Dates: Friday October 18 – Sunday October 20, 2013

Venue: St. Peter's Retreat House

149 William Street

Belleville, NJ 07109

Application: Online at BLDNewarkJohn6.weebly.com

Contact Persons: Ernest & Nellie Sun

BLDNewarkJohn6@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

Chi1944@hotmail.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 37

Bulletin Edition

September 13, 2013

NEWS

Embrace Peace, Pope Tells 100,000 Gathered For Vatican Prayer Vigil



VATICAN - Pope Francis denounced war as a “defeat for humanity” and called on world leaders and individual Christians alike to rebuild a “shattered” harmony.

“Let us pray and work for reconciliation and peace, and become in every place, all men and women of reconciliation and peace,” the

Pope exhorted the crowds.

At the start of the vigil, an image of Mary known as *Salus Populi Romani*, (Protectress of the Roman People), was placed near the altar to serve as an inspiration for prayer seeking peace throughout the globe and especially in Syria. Pope Francis vigorously emphasized the need to seek peace. “War always marks the failure of peace. It is always a defeat for humanity... Even today, we let ourselves be guided by idols, by selfishness, by our own interests, and this attitude persists,” he lamented. “We have perfected our weapons, our conscience has fallen asleep, and we have sharpened our ideas to justify ourselves.”

“Can we get out of this spiral of sorrow and death? Can we learn once again to walk and live in the ways of peace?”, he asked.

“Yes, it is possible for everyone!” He called on every person, including those who govern nations, to say “Yes” to peace.

The Pope placed the crucifixion of Jesus Christ at the center of his homily. “My Christian faith urges me to look to the cross. How I wish that all men and women of goodwill would look to the cross, if only for a moment!... In the silence of the cross, the uproar of weapons ceases, and the language of reconciliation, forgiveness, dialogue and peace is spoken,” he explained.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

A GOD WHO CELEBRATES

THEME: We bear the nature and character of Jesus when we reconcile ourselves to God and to others unconditionally.

WORD: Ex 32:7-11, 13-14; Ps 51: 3,4,12,13, 17, 19; 1 Tim 1:12-17; Lk 15: 1-32

ORDER: **“Go after the lost one.”** Lk 15: 3

REFLECTION:

The readings for this Sunday tell us of the Father’s boundless mercy, an image of God in Jesus shown in His word and example.

In the first reading, after God delivered them from the slavery of Egypt, the Israelites returned to paganism and idolatry *“making for themselves a molten calf and worshipping it”* (Exodus 32:8). Because of this, God threatened to punish them. But in His great mercy and with Moses’ mediation, He forgave them and offered them a time to repent and return to Him. He would still fulfill His covenant with them as given to Abraham.

In 1 Timothy 1:13, God pursued Saul *“who was once a blasphemer and persecutor and an arrogant man”* for he *“acted out of ignorance”* in his unbelief. He offered him His mercy and turned him into Saint Paul, who did the most in spreading the faith during the early Church. Paul’s conversion is proof that *“Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.”* (1 Tim 1:15)

During His life on earth, Christ dealt mostly with *“tax collectors and sinners”* (Lk 15:1), the outcasts of society. He provided them the kind of presence in which they felt accepted and loved, revealing to them God’s infinite mercy towards sinners. In this atmosphere, they were able to respond and change. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

“... there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.”
(Lk 15:7)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

PUT ON A NEW SELF



“Stop lying to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed, for knowledge, in the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all and in all.”

Colossians 3:9-11

As I reflect on this scripture, I am reminded of the carefree lifestyle that I lived back home, even when I already had a family with three children.

When my wife and my twin daughters left for the U.S for cancer treatment, I started to feel miserable, heartbroken and frustrated especially after I was denied an entry visa to this country three times. I tried to be content with long distance calls from my wife to learn of the progress of my daughter’s treatment. This was the lowest point in my life, and I felt depressed and helpless. This also marked the turning point in my life as I started to turn to God. I learned to pray asking for forgiveness for my sins. I made a commitment to God that I would change my ways. I wanted so much to be with my daughters and wife.

God answered my prayers as one day I received a call from the U.S. Consulate advising me of entry visas for me and my son. Filled with excitement after picking up our visas, we stopped by a church to praise and thank God for answered prayers.

Upon our arrival in this country, my son and I went directly from the airport to the hospital to visit my sick daughter. It was an emotional reunion with my family. Days went by and thank God, my daughter went into remission. We became one family again, bonded by God’s love. I spent most of my time with my family; no more alcohol, no more gambling and most of all, no more bad influences.

Then came the “calling” from God as we were invited to join the BLD ME. I am glad we joined this community as this solidified our renewal in Christ. As we are now assigned to the Service Ministry, I look forward every week using my God-given talent in preparing a hearty meal for our fellowship.

I thank the good Lord for giving me the chance to change and realize that ***“Christ is all and in all”***.

PEACE IN FORGIVENESS



When the apostles asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, he stated, ***“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name... forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”*** (Matt 6:12)

He emphasized to us the importance of forgiveness.

A few years ago, I received a call from a hospital: “Yes, it is me, your sister. I am in the intensive care unit and the doctor is talking about advanced cancer that is inoperable. I told him nothing should be done without the consent of my older brother.” I found it hard to believe this call as I have not heard from her for years. She disappeared from the family circle after our mother’s death and did many unpleasant and shameful things. Suddenly, all these bad memories resurfaced in my mind.

That night I couldn’t sleep as I was reminded of the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). The father goes out of his way to give his peace and forgiveness. What if she has asked God for forgiveness? Should I be like the older son, resenting his father for welcoming his prodigal son? He was dwelling on the past and self-righteousness; ***“Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders.”*** (Luke 15:29) I also remembered Luke 7:48, when Jesus said to the sinful woman who was bathing his feet and anointing them, ***“Your sins are forgiven.”***

I decided to go see her and to help her get the best care possible and most importantly, to embrace her. There was no mention of the past. In Colossians 3:13, we are told to ***“bear with one another and forgive one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.”*** Thus, true forgiveness sets no conditions.

During her agonizing battle with cancer, God helped me forgive and not dwell on the past, with its resentment and anger, and to help her face death with dignity and without guilt, fear, self-pity, nor reminders of failures or embarrassments. She demonstrated courage during her last days and felt peace through forgiveness. Then I realized that I was laying down the foundation for my own peace. ***“Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful.”*** (Col 3:15).

A Reflection from SEASIC

Seattle Singles Inter District Conference, August 23 – 25, 2013



Of the various things during that weekend, this one keeps coming to mind. “Pray for me. And allow me to pray for you.” SIC Saturday night really hit home with many of us. It was the simple realization that there are still things in this life holding us back from the Lord. In our human weakness, we cling to the things of this world and continue on with old destructive habits because these are familiar and are safe to do. These become our fake shelter, our false front, or another mask that blocks us from the true potential that God sees in us.

So I ask and really reflect upon the following: What are the barriers in my heart that prevent me from seeking you, Lord? What things of this world am I still unable to let go of? What fears do I still allow to possess my inmost being? Why can't I always trust that through you, Lord, all things are possible?

That weekend was another reminder of how God is continuously molding us to be the person he wants us to be. It was so humbling to see some long-time members of the greater Singles community say “I can't do this alone. Help bring me closer to the Lord. I need your prayers.” We wonder why He keeps calling such imperfect disciples like us. Then God made us realize that He does not call the qualified. He qualifies the called.

We must recognize the importance of prayers. In community, we can get caught up with the duties and tasks assigned to us. Yet one focus of worship is that we intercede for others, for those within and outside of our community, for all who need our prayers. We often say “a family that prays together, stays together.” Let's make that alive and true to us today.

Lastly, I just want to say how much you all matter to me. Through the grace of God, you helped me grow spiritually in ways that I couldn't imagine. To think where I was before BLD only two years ago and where I am now, I feel so blessed to be a part of this community, specifically the Singles Ministry of BLD Newark. To God be the Glory!

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

The Pharisees and scribes were scandalized at seeing Jesus spend so much time with them. These self-appointed religious leaders were so proud of their strict observance of their religious beliefs that they despised other Jews who were not behaving as they did. They had no concern for sinners because the central dogma of their religion was: “**God loves the virtuous and hates the sinner**”, assuming that they are like God. In response to their criticisms, Jesus told them three parables.

A shepherd in Christ's time shared the unenviable status of a sinner. A woman was considered a second-class citizen, a mere property of man. Yet Jesus chose a shepherd and a woman to play the role of God in His parables of the “**the lost sheep**” and “**the lost coin**” to show us how God feels when we go out to look for and find lost souls.

In the parable of the prodigal son, the father welcomes home his wayward son with open arms and a celebration, for his “**son was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.**” (Lk15:24) His elder son, however, was so bitter and resentful of this kind reception that he refused to take part in the celebration in spite of his father's pleading, “**My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours.**” (Lk 15: 31) Although he stayed at home, his obedience to his father was to him a show of respect to his father but without love and forgiveness to his brother.

The Pharisees failed to see that the father represents God, and his wayward son, the sinners with whom Christ was associating and that the elder son represents themselves, for their perceived faithfulness to God was completely for selfish motives. They lack charity for their fellowmen and remained hardhearted in their pride, refusing to accept Christ and His message of salvation.

Every person is precious to God and He is urging us to come home. He asks us to enter into His light and to discover that, in Him, all people are equally and completely loved. In God's light we can finally see our neighbor as the one who belongs as much to God as we do. He wants us all to be present at the banquet and be united with Him and one another in joyful celebration. Our God is one who celebrates and promises that “**...there will be more joy in heaven over the return of a repentant sinner.**”(Lk 15:7) He celebrates the return of those who left His church and the victory of people over a common evil. He delights when we do the right thing and applauds the success of someone in his fight against a long-standing addiction. He praises and finds joy in seeing a community like the Bukas Loob sa Diyos in loving reconciliation

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

with one another and its successful mission of proclaiming the gospel message for the renewal of all.

There is a younger son and an older son in each one of us, and we are called to become the father who loves unconditionally. Let us respond to God's invitation to come home; and when we do, let us bring with us that lost part of ourselves, which He has been tracking down, reconciled **wholly** and **entirely** with God and others.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Persevere in bringing people back to Christ.
2. Be quick to reconcile with one another.
3. Receive the sacrament of reconciliation regularly.

NEWS (from page 1)

Each person must realize that "to be human means to care for one another. Forgiveness, dialogue, reconciliation, these are the words of peace in beloved Syria, in the Middle East, in all the world," the Pope said.

After his homily, Pope Francis joined tens of thousands of people in silent adoration before the Eucharist. He noticeably clutched his own pectoral cross.

Source: *KERRY LENARTOWICK/ EWTN NEWS 09/08/2013*

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW COVENANT DISCIPLES!

Ron Bernal, Justin Bustos, Darlene Calotes, Vanessa Fabe, Louis Lomuntad, Carol Manguiat-Lomuntad, Melissa Martinez, Jennifer Mendiola, Pauline Montemayor, Jennifer Ompod, Alyssa Sta Ana, Walter Wade, Franklin Lim, Anjou Martinez, Mel Martinez, Emily Padoginog, Robert Pagodinog, Jean Richard, Marie Richard, Jose Gabriel, Mely Gabriel, and Jun Viernes

"As Covenant Disciples, we exhort you to grow and multiply in good works, to spread the Word of Jesus, and to nurture the love of each other in Community." (ECSL)

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH'S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH

337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ

6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM

October 16th thru November 20th

Rectory Basement

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS

Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant

9/20/13 – PASTORAL MARSHALING IN-CHARGE

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,296	109,589
Habagat Fund	1,416	2,100

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Sept 14* - Formation Assembly – Class Shepherds/Teachers

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: 1:00 – 6:00 PM

***** "AN AFTERNOON OF PRAYER & REFLECTION"

September 21, 2013, 12:00 – 4:00 PM

Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

Contacts: King/Arlene Rigor ~ teaching@bldnewark.com

Please RSVP on or before September 14th

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

Invocation Mass ~ October 4, 2013

LSS Proper ~ October 5-6, 2013

Venue: St. Mary's Church/Auditorium

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano ~ lsa@bldnewark.com

BLD Las Vegas – Marriage Encounter #3

When: October 26-27, 2013 (one night only)

For applications/registration, please contact:

Fatima and Weni Darvin - fatweni@yahoo.com

or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

JOHN 6 CROSSING #14

(for children ages 12-14 years old)

Dates: Friday October 18 – Sunday October 20, 2013

Venue: St. Peter's Retreat House

149 William Street

Belleville, NJ 07109

Application: Online at BLDNewarkJohn6.weebly.com

Contact Persons: Ernest & Nellie Sun

BLDNewarkJohn6@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

Chi1944@hotmail.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 38

Bulletin Edition

September 20, 2013

NEWS

God's Loving Grace Triumphs at the First SPM East Coast Inter-District Conference



Solo Parents from BLD East Coast Districts including Newark, Washington DC, Rockland, Long Island and Camden basked in renewed awareness of God's love at the 1st Solo Parents Ministry Inter-District Conference that was held on Saturday, Sept 14, 2013, at the Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium in Rahway, NJ. It was a spirit-filled day that exuded fervor and fellowship amongst SPM members, Class Shepherds, SPM Apostolate servants and other guests.

The SPM Conference opened with an inter-district SPM praise and worship and a welcome talk from the SPM Newark Ministry Heads. The conference program covered three modules; spiritual talks on Solo Parents' deepening friendship through "The Ways of Prayer" by Fr. Dennis Kaelin, DMP Pastor and "The Our Father", which highlighted Msgr. Paul Schetelick's richest understanding of the greatest prayer that every Christian knows by heart.

The conference second module on SPM Journey involved inter-district presentation on the Solo Parents profile and activities delving into the SPM history and present growth opportunities for improved evangelization dynamics and membership retention, which were fleshed-out through group workshop and sharing of subsequent ideas. The conference discussions culminated with the exuberant acceptance of SPM Washington DC as the sponsor of the next SPM East Coast Inter-district Conference in 2015!

The successful first time meeting of Solo Parents from across the East Coast Districts was capped with the
Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

A Call For Responsible And Caring Stewardship

THEME: We bear the nature and character of Jesus when we are trustworthy stewards of His resources.

WORD: Am 8:4-7 / Ps 113:1,2,4-8
1Tim 2:1-8 / Lk 16:1-13

ORDER: Prepare a full account of your stewardship.

REFLECTION:

In the Gospel of Luke, the parable of good stewardship challenges us not only to be smart but honest managers. By reasons of recession and ongoing threat of terrorists' attack, we now live in difficult and uncertain times. Like the manager in the Gospel account, we have to face the reality that our future is not safe and secure. How should we manage infinite resources that God entrusted to us? He blesses us not only with financial and material things but the opportunity to seek His kingdom where love, peace and harmony abound. Jesus told His disciples, "*for the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light.*" (Luke 16:8b) The children of this world see the things of the present time and not the things that will give us eternal life. As children of light, we must use our material resources of the present to guarantee spiritual dividends in the future.

God expects of us to exercise Christian stewardship. It is the very center of our identity. In His love for us, He constantly gives us with the gifts of time, talent, treasure. But along with each gift comes responsibilities and abilities to manage and accomplish what he has planned for our lives. God would like to see us use these resources to help our neighbors who are in need, the poor, the infirm, the lowly and destitute.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"He rises up the lowly from the dust, from the dunghill he lifts up the poor to seat them with princess, with the princess of his own people." (Ps 113: 7-8)

MY CARELESS RESPONSE

“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.” (Roman Missal 3rd Edition)

As Catholics, we utter these words in preparation for our privileged Divine encounter with Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist. However, are we sincere from our heart when we say this response or do we simply state the words as a ceremonial routine?

Embarrassingly, I am guilty for the many times I have considered this response as one ordinary response at Holy Mass, forgetting its true essence. Instead of meditating on these words, I am busy looking around or thinking of something else.

As a devout Catholic, I was taught to prepare myself for Holy Communion and to receive Jesus in heart, body, and soul in the Holy Eucharist. But why do I not take extra care to prepare and give great significance to my true communion with the Lord? Could this be the reason why I am I tempted to chat with the person sitting next to me or look around right after receiving the Holy Host, instead of kneeling at the pew to pray deeply and repent of my sins and meditate on our Lord’s Divine Mercy?

At every Holy Mass in Holy Communion I receive something far more incredible than anything in the world, the Very Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ! By humbly and sincerely recognizing my unworthiness before my fellow worshipers and professing from my heart before God, Who establishes my worth through His mercy and grace, that this intimate & sacred union with Jesus brings true healing and reconciliation, I can be certain that something extraordinary will happen to me. As Jesus said to the centurion after asking healing for his servant, **“You may go; as you have believed, let it be done for you.”** (Mt 8:13), my “union” with the Lord will certainly produce a miracle in my life. Holy Communion is the best highlight and privilege that I should never let go!

Lord Jesus, the next time I have the opportunity to proclaim before You and the community my unworthiness, I sincerely pray that through my great faith, Your promise of health, wholeness and salvation will be mine, and I will have the grace to respond to Your invitation with the same conviction as that of the Centurion belief on what You can do. Grant me the grace to prepare to receive you fully, beholding You, seeing You with the eyes of faith. Amen.

Yes, Jesus gladly comes to me in the Eucharist! How blessed am I who are called to the supper of the Lamb!

Behind Our Material Obsession

“Those who want to be rich are falling into temptation and into a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils, and some people in their desire for it have strayed from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.” (1 Tim 6:9-10)

The motivation defines why one wants to be rich. If you aspire to be rich for love of what money brings, luxury, privilege, honor and power, then money becomes the root of all evil. Not that money is evil in itself or its fruits. All of them, wealth or its resulting fruits are neither good nor bad.

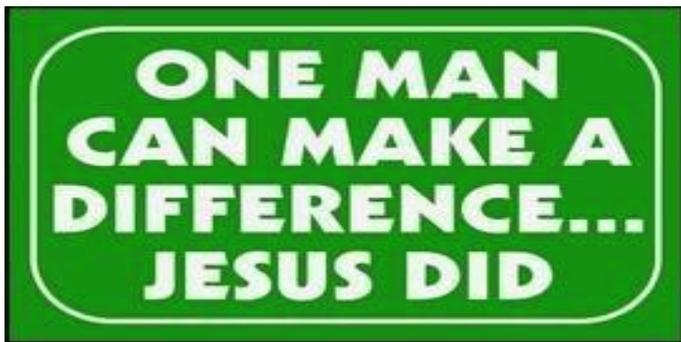
However, human experience tells us that it can lead to immoral cravings. The rich have the tendency to use money and believe that display or showing of wealth brings about esteem distinction and reputation. They use money to buy places of honor and privilege. They employ money to acquire power and authority; some even manipulate money to get themselves elected to public office. Thus to recoup money spent, some politicians look for money used up to acquire greater returns on their “investment” leading to corruption.

There are those who even apply money as a ploy for charitable acts. In reality, the motive is to use money to build a kind image appealing to people as in entities making donations for ulterior commercial purposes. Faith became relegated to the background or if not totally disregarded. The exercise of love becomes love of self rather than the love of Christ to others. When this happens, the wedge between the rich and God becomes well entrenched that leads to spiritual loss, broken relationships and corrupt reputations. These are the sorrow, pain and grief that pierce the wealthy like thorns leading to destruction. The paramount and most noble use of money, power and privilege is to give honor and glory to God as in helping the poor and the less fortunate and thus making a difference in other people’s lives, not just our own. It may appear to be impossible to enter into the narrow door as a needle for a camel to enter (Mk 10:25), but it will become of a reality for those who seek first the kingdom of God (Mt 6:33).

Finally, the verse that follows, **“But you, man of God, avoid all this. Instead, pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.”** (1 Tim 6:11), is not only the exhortation of St. Paul to Timothy but addressed to us all.

One Man Can Make A Difference

I saw this on a bumper sticker the other day:



At the time, my only reaction was “YEAH!”...

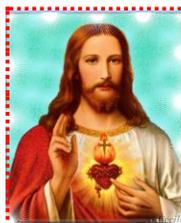
And then I thought about it some more. I started thinking, what if Jesus had not come when He did 2000 years ago, how would the world have turned out over the past two millennia? If everything else that has happened since then, still happened, how would the world and our lives be different? What would people and countries be fighting about? What would we be caring about? Would “friend” on Facebook mean something else?

And then I was a little stunned by this question: Over the past two thousand years, what would the world’s standard of LOVE have been, if the Son of God had not come? What would it be today...now?

Most of us would probably still believe in God... But, although it has been subjected to many interpretations (through all that has happened in the world) He did establish for us - LOVE’s Ultimate Standard-dying on the cross to redeem mankind.

May this drive any doubt away: go “ALL IN” and maximize LIFE - have His Standard of LOVE guide all of our actions ...all of our days.

SEEK JESUS



MOMENTS

<i>Happy Moments</i>	Praise GOD
<i>Difficult Moments</i>	Seek GOD
<i>Quiet Moments</i>	Worship GOD
<i>Painful Moments</i>	Trust GOD

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

“He raises up the lowly from the dust, from the dunghill, he lifts up the poor from the ash heap.” (Ps 113:7)

God’s self giving love should move and encourage us to share and extend to our fellowmen the generosity we have received. There are many activities, projects and events that our Community offers to alleviate poverty and help the lowly and the poor. To mention a few, we have the Medical Mission, we are supporting *Gawad Kalinga* housing and livelihood projects, we do nursing home visitations, and we volunteer in the soup kitchen. These initiatives are all possible through our contributions from tithes and love offerings as well as from the kindness of donors and benefactors. As such, we can individually and collectively work to attain what is important in His Kingdom, by nurturing and sharing the gifts and blessings we have received from God.

Moreover, let us examine ourselves on how faithful we have been as stewards of God’s gifts. Have we exercised it with prudence, honesty and integrity? As stewards of God’s words, the treasure of His truth, have we proclaimed His words by the way we speak and deeds we have done? Are we good witnesses to others, especially to the needy, of His love?

In 2 Tim 1:14, it says *“Guard this rich trust with the help of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us.”* We must use God’s living Word, the treasure entrusted to us, and invests it in the lives of others. We must invite our family and friends to our BLD encounters and Life in the Spirit Seminar. One day we will have to account of our stewardship, and we too shall be commended and rewarded for our prudence, honesty and kindness.

We are stewards of God’s material wealth. Everything comes from Him including life itself. In Luke 16:13 it says, *“No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”* If God is our Master, then money is our servant for use in His Kingdom. If we regard money as our master, then our lives is spent as a total waste. God demands whole devotion that puts Him first in everything we do. *“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all things will be given to you besides.”* (Mt 6: 33). Let us make money as our tool and the vehicle and seize today’s opportunity as investment in winning souls for the Lord.

Today, we are called upon to the ideals of responsible and caring stewardship. We should make money as the servant and God as the true master.

(Continued on page 4)

COUNSELS (from page 3)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Be trustworthy in all aspects of your life.
2. Nurture and share the gifts and charism that you have received from God.

NEWS (from page 4)

Celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which was celebrated by Rev. Paul Lehman, spiritual director of BLD Newark.

Indeed the SPM inter-district conference was a resounding success through genuine collaborative efforts of everyone who unselfishly shared their time, talents and gifts through more than two months of preparation and most especially, by God's amazing grace. It is truly God's incredible blessings to SPM.

Praise the Lord for all the gifted and chosen disciples who continuously work in HIS SPM Vineyard!
To Him be the Glory forever and ever!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH'S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

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 337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
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 October 16th thru November 20th

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
 Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
 Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
 georgemaryann@hotmail.com

BLD Las Vegas - Marriage Encounter #3

When: October 26-27, 2013 (one night only)
 For applications/registration, please contact:
 Fatima and Weni Darvin - fatweni@yahoo.com
 or Chito and Aileen Ciocon - chitoaileen@fastmail.fm

The Filipino Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Newark invites us all to:

A Joint Eucharistic Celebration in honor of the two Filipino saints - **San Lorenzo Ruiz and San Pedro Calungsod**

September 29th, Sunday, 3:00 PM
 Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart at 89 Ridge
 Street, Newark, NJ 07104

BLD Contact persons: Ray & Tess Salmo
raycsalmo@aol.com

	Schedule	
	Date	Apostolate
	Sept 27	Evangelization
	Oct 4	Formation
	Oct 11	Management
Oct 18	Mission	

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,297	112,886

Financial details are available to all members through
treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Sept 27*** - Effective Intercessor/Prayer Warrior – ME 38
 - Christian Servanthood – ME 39, SPE 14
 - Basics of Prayer – ME 41, SPE 15, SE
- Oct 12** - Advanced Intercession/Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS 1-37
 - CMP 2, Part 1 – LSS 1-38
 - Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-39
- Oct 19**** - Washing of the Feet/Agony of the Garden – ME 39, SPE 14, SE

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM,

**Saturday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

“AN AFTERNOON OF PRAYER & REFLECTION”

Saturday, September 21st, 12:00 – 4:00 PM

Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ

Contacts: King/Arlene Rigor - teaching@bldnewark.com

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 LSS Proper - October 5-6, 2013

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(for children ages 12-14 years old)

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Contact Persons: Ernest & Nellie Sun

BLDNewarkJohn6@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

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Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 39

Bulletin Edition

September 27, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

BLD Members Ponder Their Relationship with God



In a refreshing halt to the busyness of BLD activities, a full house of BLD members (at St. Mark's Church in Rahway) spent last Saturday afternoon in meaningful reflection and prayer. *"Where are you in your relationship with yourself and your God?"* the presenter and moderator, Judy Schiavo asked. Using a combination of talks, touching poems, music and songs, highlighted by insightful questions, she gently guided everyone to try to arrive at some answers.

Early on, Ms. Schiavo started with the exhortation to fall in love with God, citing that falling in love decides everything that one does, "in the morning and the rest of the day." She defined, that which most of us are probably guilty of at some point in our lives, **spiritual sloth**, when we refuse the joy that God is giving us, thinking instead that we're not a big deal, that God does not care about us. She described anger as an addiction that darkens everything and how desire to control people often leads to anger. Additionally, two life statements resonated loudly: that life begins at the end of our comfort zone, and that we need to develop the grace to live in the present moment.

In an exercise in humility, all who were there also spent some time taking stock of and acknowledging both gifts, as well as shortcomings, recognizing and identifying compulsions that keep us away from God.

Continued on page 4

THE ONE WHOM GOD HELPS

THEME: We bear the nature and character of Jesus when we share our blessings with the poor.

WORD: Am 6:1,4-7 / Ps 146:7-10
1 Tm 6:11-13 / Lk 16:19-31

ORDER: *"Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness."*
(Luke 16:19)

REFLECTION:

In this Sunday's first reading, the prophet Amos spoke about the affluent being complacent and at ease, going about their own business unaware, better yet, unconcerned about their surroundings. No consideration was extended to their fellowmen while self-indulging and pampering themselves in luxuries, thoughtless of the misfortunes and suffering of others, specifically the **POOR**. Mind you, Amos' ministry was about 760 years before Christ and through millennia for many of the poor, who dominate the majority of this planet, development and progress have been stagnating. The poor of ancient times and today still lack the basic necessities of life such as food, water, clothing and shelter.

St. Luke's Gospel illustrates a contrasting view towards the rich man and the poor man, Lazarus. The rich man clearly had everything in his earthly life, nice clothes, most expensive foods and presumably a comfortable home. Lazarus had nothing. He was struggling to survive, begging for scraps; and on occasion, dogs would lick his sores. Just as it was mentioned by Amos, the rich man valued worldly possessions and wealth and showed no compassion for the poor or anyone else but himself. Lazarus was

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Blessed is he who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets captives free." (Psalms 146:7)

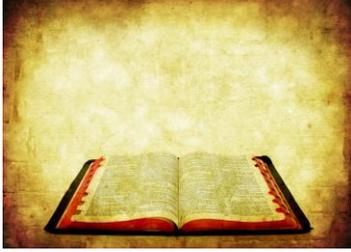
Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Am I a distant relative?

“My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it.” (Luke 8:21)

Like so many passages in Scripture, this one invites an individual response: *am I a distant relative?*

In this verse, we recall to mind Christ preaching in a



house at Capernaum.

From Nazareth Mary, His mother, and some of His near kinsmen came to see Jesus. But a multitude of people surrounding Him, who did not believe in

Him, prevented Mary and companions from coming near Him. Then a voice from the crowd, meaning to reproach Jesus and to interrupt his work, made known to Jesus that His mother and His brothers were standing outside wishing to see Him. Jesus, pointing to his disciples, replied: *“My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it.”* (Luke 8:21)

On this occasion, when many gathered to hear Jesus, He never lost an opportunity to teach His disciples a spiritual lesson about the kingdom of God. He pointed to a higher reality of spiritual kinship, namely *the family of God*. Membership in Jesus’ family does not depend upon physical relationship with Him but on obedience to the word of God.

Pause a little and think of our living relationship with God? *Am I a close or a distant relative of God?* God did not intend for us to be alone, but to be with others. He gives us many opportunities for developing relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. An early martyr once said that “a Christian’s only relatives are the saints.” Those who follow Jesus Christ and who seek the will of God enter into a new family, a family of *saints* here on earth and in heaven. Jesus changes the order of relationships and shows that true kinship is not just a matter of flesh and blood. Our adoption as sons and daughters of God transforms all our relationships and requires a new order of loyalty to God and His kingdom.

Let us therefore continue to strengthen our relationships in the BLD community and with all those around us because **true friendship** strengthens our love for God and for neighbor.

Heavenly Father, you bless us with family and friends, spiritual and natural. Help us to love them with charity and grace. May we always prefer Your will and seek to do what is right and good in all our relationships.

TRAVELING LIGHT

“He said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic.” (Luke 9:3)

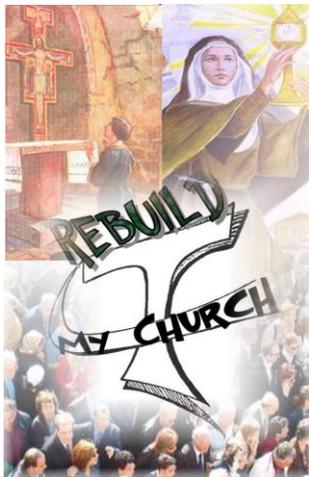
Okay, now let’s see...I’ll need my bathing suit, flip flops for the sand, a tee shirt and an extra pair of shorts, a hat for the sun, a good book to read and my iPod, a beach umbrella and blanket, sunscreen, insect repellent...and that’s just for one afternoon at the beach. When Jesus sent His disciples out with “neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money,” they probably would be walking the dusty roads of Galilee for months, sleeping wherever they could and eating whatever was offered to them. And for that journey, they didn’t need to pack a thing... no clothes, no food, no money, nothing! That really is traveling light. The idea is so foreign to us. But Jesus was teaching His disciples, and us, an important lesson. He wanted them not only to **preach** the Good News, but to **live** it. The footnote for this verse in the NAB lays it out for us: “the absolute detachment required of the disciple leads to complete reliance on God.” Wow! For a great plan-making, list-writing, suitcase-packer like me, this is an incredible thought...**complete reliance on God!**

One afternoon, as Jesus sat on a hillside preaching, He told the gathered crowd how foolish it was to go on fussing and worrying about the future when all they needed to do was trust in the providence of God. He said, *“If even the smallest things are beyond your control, why are you anxious about the rest?”* (Luke 12:26) There have been times in my life when I realized that my situation was definitely beyond my control...sitting in the ER in a bloody sweatshirt with an ice pack on my head, or holding my mother’s frail hand in the ICU, or waiting to hear if my kids were all safe after a bad storm had passed. Those times became moments of grace that made me realize that the only way to have any peace at all was to place all my trust in God, to lean with all my strength on the wisdom and power and goodness of God. For me, that is the very definition of faith.

Sometimes all the planning and fussing and worrying come first, and then I remind myself that Jesus told His disciples to travel light. “Take nothing for the journey,” He said. The only necessary thing is complete reliance on God. Don’t leave home without it.

IT'S TIME TO REBUILD

The Book of Haggai is the first in the last group of prophetic Old Testament historical books that reveal life in the restoration community. Haggai exposes the perils that accompany times when the exiles are faced with discouraging circumstances and hope burns dim during



the reconstruction of the Temple. The book shows what the duty of God's people should be in such times, and how God will help us. The living message of this book is this: that whenever we face problems in fulfilling His will, we should do our duty as the Word of God reveals it, with the assurances that as we do, God Himself will provide all that we need.

Similarly, we often get our priorities out of order. We wait for direction from God to act when He has already told us what He wants us to do. While waiting, we get involved in matters that require our energy and resources that are self-directed. What we should be doing is reading the Word, learning what God wants us to do, and then putting first things first. We need to make His agenda our agenda. When we do this, He will be with us.

Like the exiles, we lose the proper perspective on what God has called us to do. We easily get distracted when we look at the things that other members have done, thinking our little contribution is so insignificant that it is not worth the time and effort.

If that is our attitude, we need to remind ourselves that the same God who enabled the exiles to thrive has promised to be with us and to enable us to succeed in our calling. Our task in the will of God is just as important now as the task of other believers was in days gone by. We need to focus on what God has given us to do. We need to concentrate on serving faithfully.

We too struggle with unrealistic expectations, like the post-exiled community did. Why is our church not growing like before? Why are we not seeing more fruit in our ministry? Why do we not see more spiritual power in our lives? Ultimately all these blessings will come by the will of a sovereign God who chooses to bless whom and how He will.

We cannot expect His blessing simply because we are doing His work. We need to look deeper into ourselves and into His Word. We can count on His blessings as He promised to bless those who follow Him sincerely.

Now let us ask ourselves: Is it time to rebuild?

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

asking for charity from the rich man, the rich man could have helped if he felt like it but he did not. It is evident that the rich man lacked the desire for God's guidance and did not heed His Words "*Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.*" (Matthew 25:40)

In this parable Jesus granted us a peek and allowed us to visualize what is beyond this world. When both men died, the rich man was tormented in the netherworld while Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham's side and was comforted. The tables were turned and their roles were reversed; it was now the rich man who was begging for help. This is the same person, while in this world, who did not help anyone, not even someone he knew. You see, the rich man knew Lazarus while they were alive because in Luke 16:24 it states "*And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.'*" He knew Lazarus by name! When the rich man finally realized that it is pleasing to the Lord to help the less fortunate, it was too late. Judgment had been passed.

We are blessed because in the second reading, St. Paul provided instructions on spiritual development and a way to avoid the torment the rich man experienced after death. First Timothy 6:11 says, "*But you, man of God, avoid all this. Instead, pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.*" These are guidelines to the *true* riches that each and every one of us should desire. As Christ's followers, we are asked to consider others as ourselves **without exception**. It is the second greatest commandment, "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" (Matthew 22:39)

We are **NOT** being asked to become poor but rather to share our blessing with the poor. There are many ways for us to share our blessings. Let us not forget that the *poor* among us may be the ones driving a Mercedes, who need spiritual guidance, or the elderly who have lost hope and are depressed, the single mom who truly struggles to make ends meet, or the couple among us who are both unemployed. Yes, brothers and sisters, it is easy to identify the poor when you are in the slums or serving the soup kitchens; but the poor may be right at our doorstep, right here in our community. Let us open our eyes and ears to their silent cries. Let us help in whatever way we can, most especially in remembering them in our prayers **daily**.

As a community, we strive to extend our helping hands to the poor ones in the Philippines through special collections, our Medical Mission and Scholarship of Hope foundation. *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS (from page 3)

May our hearts be opened to help other nations as well. May we, individually, take to heart our responsibilities to the poor and tithe according to our true capacity, donating whole-heartedly. May we support our own parish's Social Justice programs and serve in them joyfully. May we heed Lord's command to love one another, not as we think we can, but just as we love the Lord Himself, for the Lord loves the poor, the widows and the defenseless. May we as a community of modern-day disciples truly be *like Christ* to all.

Imagine for a moment what it would be like if **every person on earth** gave away 10% of his resources to those in need. Just imagine!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Serve the poor by doing corporal acts of mercy.
2. Support social justice programs of the church.

NEWS (from page 4)

After a few sharings from the audience, as the afternoon was concluding, Ms. Schiavo exclaimed how happy she was that she found the Church alive and well in BLD - and that next time, rather than her talking, she was just going to relax, sit back and listen.

In the end, it was as promised – with His blessings, “An Afternoon of Reflection and Prayer” and a renewed beginning for all who were there.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH'S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH, Rectory Basement
337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM
October 16th thru November 20th

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

The Filipino Apostolate of the Archdiocese of Newark invites us all to:
A Joint Eucharistic Celebration in honor of the two Filipino saints - San Lorenzo Ruiz and San Pedro Calungsod
September 29th, Sunday, 3:00 PM
Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart at 89 Ridge Street, Newark, NJ 07104
BLD Contact persons: Ray & Tess Salmo
raycsalmo@aol.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,702	116,588

Financial details are available to all members through
treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Oct 12** - Advanced Intercession/Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS 1-37
- CMP 2, Part 1 – LSS 1-38
- Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-39
- Oct 19**** - Washing of the Feet/Agony of the Garden – ME 39, SPE 14, SE
- Nov 2**** - New Creation Realities – LSS 1-41
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-40
CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-39
CMP 2 Part 2 – LSS 1-38

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM,
**Saturday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

Invocation Mass ~ October 4, 2013

LSS Proper ~ October 5-6, 2013

Venue: St. Mary's Church/Auditorium

Contacts: Joven/Lisa Soriano ~ lsa@bldnewark.com

JOHN 6 CROSSING #14

(for children ages 12-14 years old)

Dates: Friday, October 18 – Sunday, October 20, 2013

Venue: St. Peter's Retreat House
149 William Street
Belleville, NJ 07109

Application: Online at BLDNewarkJohn6.weebly.com

Contact Persons: Ernest & Nellie Sun

BLDNewarkJohn6@yahoo.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Oct 4	Formation
		Oct 11	Management
		Oct 17	Mission
		Oct 25	Pastoral

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 40

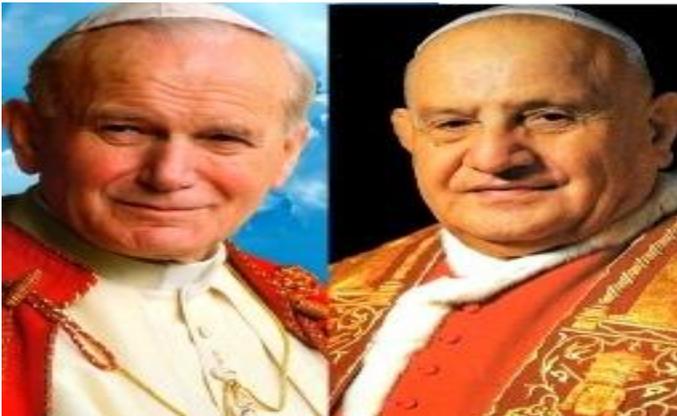
Bulletin Edition

October 4, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

It's Official: John Paul II and John XXIII to Be Canonized April 27, 2014



VATICAN CITY — Blessed Popes John XXIII and John Paul II will be canonized on April 27, 2014, Divine Mercy Sunday, the Vatican has officially confirmed.

In a statement released this morning, the Vatican said that Pope Francis “decreed that Blesseds John XXIII and John Paul II will be enrolled among the saints on April 27, 2014, the Second Sunday of Easter, of the Divine Mercy.”

The news was widely expected. The Register was among the first to report the high probability of Divine Mercy Sunday as the chosen date when Pope Francis revealed it in a conversation earlier this month.

On July 5, Pope Francis both approved the promulgation of a decree paving the way for their canonizations and convoked the consistory. During a papal press conference on his return from Rio de Janeiro on July 28, Francis said both popes would be canonized together. He said that a joint canonization would be “a message for the Church: These two were wonderful, both of them.”

Divine Mercy Sunday was a special day for Blessed John Paul II, who established the feast in 2000. Its origins date back to Polish nun, St. Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), who had a devotion to the Divine Mercy after an encounter with Jesus.

In visions and conversations with Jesus, St. Faustina said Jesus asked her specifically for a feast of Divine Mercy to be established so mankind would take refuge in Jesus. Blessed John Paul II died on the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2005.

Continued on page 4

THE FAITH TO PERSEVERE

THEME: We are living witnesses of Jesus when we fulfill God’s vision for the community.

WORD: Heb 1:2,3,2:2-4 / Ps 95:1,2,6,7,8,9
2 Tm 1:6-8,13,14 / Lk 17:5-10

ORDER: “Bear your share of hardship for the gospel with strength that comes from God.” (2 Tm1:8)

REFLECTION:

In the first reading, Habakkuk pleads for help, but God seems not to listen. “*I cry out to you, ‘Violence’, but you do not intervene.*” (Heb 1:2) At times, when life’s trials and difficulties overwhelm us, human desperation leads us to even question if God is still in control. Sickness and diseases remain rampant. Earthquakes and natural calamities devastate people. Wars and conflicts destroy our peace. The poor continue to be victims of injustice and exploitation. Deceivers and the corrupt prevail over the righteous and the honest. Strife and discord are present even among the God-fearing. Perplexed by all these, the faithful tend to ask: Is there hope? When will we see the end of all these? When will God finally intervene?

Only God Himself can answer these questions. For “*God’s vision has its time, will not disappoint and will surely come.*” (Heb 2:3) God’s intervention and move will come in His own time, in His own way, as He admonishes: “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*” (Is 55:8-9)

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily. For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint; if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late.”

(Heb 2:2-3)

GOD IS WITH YOU

My years in BLD are grace-filled years of self-discovery and inner healing, with countless opportunities in building my relationship with God and others. Serving in various ministries opened my mind, heart and spirit to many things and most importantly to know God more, to love Him more and serve Him with all my heart.

“From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to evangelize, and to lead others to the yes of faith in Jesus Christ,” states the *Catechism* (CCC 429). Elsewhere, the *Catechism* repeats Saint Paul’s reminder that it is the love of Christ that urges us on “**For the love of Christ impels us, once we have come to the conviction that one died for all; therefore, all have died**” (2 Cor 5:14) and that God “**who wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth**” (1 Tim. 2:4; see CCC 851). Just as Christ came to do the will of the Father, all those baptized into Christ should seek to do the same.

My personal experiences with God and His wonderful works were the way to teach others as better witness of the Gospel. Having been baptized in the Spirit and receiving the gift(s) of the Holy Spirit, we shall bear fruits.

With God’s love planted in each of us, the fruits of Spirit - joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—these will help us plant good seeds in our lives and others, so they will also bear the fruits of the Spirit.

Faith is best shared when we talk about our beliefs and spiritual journey. We become conscious that every moment is an opportunity to lead others to God. Even amidst suffering and trials, we find that God is with us. It is like climbing a mountain. To reach the peak and enjoy the beauty of the sky, think it is heaven and see what lies below or around you. It is the reward of the rough climb. We are strong when we are weak because God is faithful. “*We shall steer safely through every storm, so long as our heart is right, our intention fervent, our courage steadfast, and our trust fixed on God.*” -St. Francis De Sales

A deep love for Jesus Christ and recognition of the dignity of every man should be each person’s desire, so that all will be saved.

“*Without the Way there is no going; without the Truth there is no knowing; without the Life there is no living.*” -Thomas A Kempis

Who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

“*At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me.”* (Matthew 18:1-5)

Jesus, replying to the question of the disciples, said, “**Unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.**” (Mt 18:3)

What must we do to turn and become like children? Jesus, once more, used a very familiar example: becoming like children. If we are to enter the kingdom of heaven, we must examine our ways and recall those angelic attitudes that we had when we were little children. We must change and turn those ways that are no longer *childlike*. We must also identify and eliminate those ways that are *childish*.

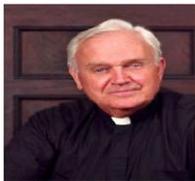
We were children at one time, so we know what Jesus is telling us. We know that He is looking for those childlike characteristics that most adults, even during Jesus’ time may be lacking. Perhaps some of the childlike attitudes that the Lord is looking for are:

- Simplicity – destitute of ambition, pride, and haughtiness
- Teachable – willingness to listen and learn
- Unworldly – free of worldly worries and sophistications
- Trusting - assured reliance on the character, ability, and strength of God
- Innocence – carefree living, loving & enjoying life to the fullest
- Approachability – simply open and easy to meet or deal with
- Helplessness and Dependency – reliant upon the Father
- Unsophisticated – unadulterated and pure in ways
- Easy to forgive and forget – not holding grudges.

We must therefore strive to be *childlike* in our ways. As we mature, we must however put away the *childish* ways in us. 1 Corinthians 13:11 says, “**When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.**”

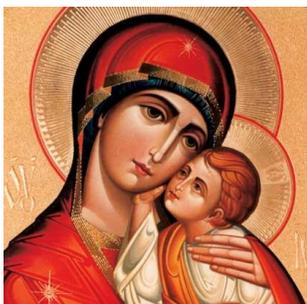
For those of us who are struggling to overcome our *childish* ways, St Paul also mentioned that the only power to overcome *childish* ways is to offer this as a sacrifice to God:

“**Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.**” (Rom 12:1)



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

Since we are in the month of October, it might be well to reflect, perhaps a little more deeply, on the role of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in our Christian life. We all probably have



some kind of devotion to Mary. Behind this devotion, that seems to be a very “Catholic” thing, is the unique role that Mary has in the life of every person who has any kind of relationship with Jesus, whether we are aware of it or not. Many of our Protestant brothers and sisters have a problem with the Hail Mary which salutes Mary as the mother of God. Yet the words of Scripture in Luke’s gospel of the Visitation quote Elizabeth: **“How is it that the mother of my Lord should visit me?”** Mary is obviously not the mother of the divine nature of Jesus which existed eternally before Mary, but the mother of the human nature which is the second person of God’s instrument in our salvation. The earliest Church documents refer to Mary as the “Theotokos”, the God-bearer.

Another question comes up regarding the perpetual virginity of Mary. Some will concede that Mary conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, but that thereafter she bore other children in the normal course of human conception. Quotes are made from the passages in the gospels, which refer to the brothers and sisters of Jesus. This question was addressed by the early doctors of the Church. For example, St. Jerome (360-420 A.D.) insists: “In Holy Scripture there are four kinds of brethren - by nature, race, kindred, and love.” He accuses those who deny the perpetual virginity of Mary “as outraging the Virgin.”

What about the terms “mediatrix” and “co-redemptrix”? In a very broad sense, we are all instruments of grace by our prayer and evangelization. God uses our prayer to communicate forgiveness and favors on those for whom we are interceding. But Mary had a very unique role in the life and death of Jesus. She was and still is the mother of Jesus. Motherhood involves a very special relationship that all will admit. But what if the mother is the one who supplied the human nature for the Son of God? Because God used her in the very moment of the incarnation in that Jesus came into humanity through Mary, so Jesus uses her intercession now in coming into relationship with us.

When we give ourselves to Mary (for instance in the total consecration taught by St. Louis de Montfort), we are making explicit what is already happening in the divine order of things. In the abstract, Mary’s role is not necessary. But in the lived reality of God’s Will, there is no way we can avoid contact with Mary, the mother of Jesus.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Faith is God’s gift, and only those who have this gift can hold on to their faith and continue to believe in God’s omnipresence and omniscience in the darkest moments of their lives. Remember the lesson of ‘Footprints in the Sand’ when the original two sets of footprints became only one set, because God carried the man? For God has said, **“I will never forsake you or abandon you.”** (Heb 13:5). God never leaves us; it is we who abandon Him every time we commit sin. We just have to be sensitive and wait patiently for the Lord’s move concerning our worries. We may not fully understand His ways but, in faith, we should be compliant with His will and His perfect plan for us! Yes, we ought to let God be God!

The second reading inspires the Community’s Word for October - **True disciples are living witnesses of Jesus, through faith in Him** - and challenges us as members of BLD to live lives of genuine faith, even in the face of difficulties, always conscious to live and behave in a Christ-like manner at all times and in all circumstances, whether in and out of Community.

In the gospel reading, the apostles ask the Lord to, **“Increase our faith.”** (Lk 17:5). Jesus’ response is: **“If you have faith ...”** (Lk 17:6) meaning it is the sincerity of our faith that truly matters. And for faith to increase, what counts is putting faith into real life practice. When faith is weak, we should, like the apostles, ask the Lord in humble prayer to increase our faith. Little by little, build up your faith daily, through mass, the Eucharist, prayers, bible reading, reflections, worship, etc., so that it may grow stronger and deeper day by day. Faith will definitely grow as we deliberately choose to act in and live by faith.

As we mature spiritually, we come to realize that everything good is God’s grace. But we cannot please God by merely complying with the barest minimum requirements of our faith, content to always be at the receiving end of His grace, lest we become the **“expendable servant”** (Lk 17:10) who merely did his duty and nothing more. A true and faithful servant of the Lord delights in doing his best, contributing and utilizing his entire God-given talents and resources, and acknowledging that all is gift. He does not serve to win praise for himself but to glorify God in all his accomplishments. He considers it a privilege to serve, and be a part of God’s great plan. For, in faith, we believe **“God is the One who made all things, and all things are for His glory. He wanted to have many children share His glory.”** (Heb 2:10)

Reflection Questions:

1. What situations at the time of the prophet Habakkuk are still happening today?

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

2. In your personal circumstances, how can you be a faithful servant of the Lord?

PROPHECIES:

1. Be bold; do not be scared or be ashamed to testify for Me, for you have the strength of the Holy Spirit in you.
2. Why are you afraid? Why do you fill your life with worry and anxiety? I am here by your side. Go out and spread the gospel of love.
3. Watch closely. Listen keenly. Feel deeply. For I walk among you. I am in the people you meet. I am in the people you serve.
4. Do not be afraid. Your community's activities and mission are on track. They will accomplish the works that I have sent you to do.
5. For whatever you ask of Me, have patience. My answer will come in perfect time.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Increase your faith in the Lord through prayers.
2. Embrace and understand our Community Vision and Mission so that you will not be sidetracked by strife and discord.
3. Know and put to heart the structures and disciplines of community life.

NEWS (from page 1)

The theme of mercy is also central to the pontificate of Pope Francis. Usually, two miracles attributed to a candidate's intercession are required to become a saint. A French nun who was inexplicably cured of Parkinson's disease led to John Paul II's beatification on May 1, 2011. A second miracle, which must occur after a beatification, involved a Costa Rican woman who was cured of a cerebral aneurysm the very day of John Paul II's beatification.

For Blessed John XXIII, who was pope from 1958 to 1963 and convened the Second Vatican Council, Pope Francis took the rare step of waiving the requirement of a second miracle, paving the way for his imminent canonization.

Source: EDWARD PENTIN/NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER/09/30/13

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH'S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH, Rectory Basement
337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM, Oct. 16th thru Nov. 20th

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,938	120,526

Financial details are available to all members through
treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Oct 12** - Advanced Intercession/Orientation to Spiritual Warfare – LSS 1-37
- CMP 2, Part 1 – LSS 1-38
- Encounter with Jesus – LSS 1-39
- Oct 19**** - Washing of the Feet/Agony of the Garden – ME 39, SPE 14, SE
- Nov 2**** - New Creation Realities – LSS 1-41
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-40
CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-39
CMP 2 Part 2 – LSS 1-38

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM,
**Saturday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOHN 6 CROSSING #14

(for children ages 12-14 years old)

Dates: Friday, October 18 – Sunday, October 20, 2013

Venue: St. Peter's Retreat House
149 William Street
Belleville, NJ 07109

Application: Online at BLDNewarkJohn6.weebly.com

Contact Persons: Ernest & Nellie Sun

BLDNewarkJohn6@yahoo.com

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #42

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013

Venue: Pine Hill Retreat House
Canadensis, PA

Contact Persons: Marc/Emma Belmonte

mla@bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Oct 11	Management
		Oct 18	Mission
		Oct 25	Pastoral
		Nov 1	Evangelization

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 41

Bulletin Edition

October 11, 2013

NEWS

GOD'S WORK IN LSS 41

The community's 41st LSS weekend held October 4-6, 2013 at Divine Mercy Auditorium, Rahway, NJ was a resounding success, an affirmation of God's work among His people.

LSS #41 was again a witness of God's bountiful harvest in His vineyard. The presence and warmth of the Holy Spirit were felt by many as our Lord manifested His Power and transforming grace upon all. The gifts of tongues and prophesy were among the many blessings received by all as can be gleaned from various hearty expressions of faith, which we take liberty to share:

"I had to let go of some issues of pride and asked forgiveness from people whom I have hurt."

"I experienced love from God and received the gift of tongues."

"God exposed and revealed to me some things that I have to remove from my life. It is hard but it has to be done."



"The LSS experience was very uplifting for me. I was able to feel the happiness that only God can bring us. I am very happy that I found the strength to answer God's call and to come back to Him again."

"To be baptized in the Spirit does not only make you feel clean and released but also makes you feel reborn - starting a new life with God. Accepting the grace or gifts of the Holy Spirit was electrifying and very powerful that no words can explain how I felt. All I know now is I am thankful and will forever cherish this "date" with God."

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

REMEMBERING IN GRATITUDE

THEME: We are living witnesses of Jesus when we glorify Him with gratitude.

**WORD: 2 Kgs 5:14-17/Ps 98:1-4
2 Tm 2:8-13/Lk 17:11-19**

ORDER: "Return to God, glorify Him with thanksgiving." (Lk 17: 15 - paraphrased)

REFLECTION:

This Sunday's Gospel highlights God's enduring love amidst man's lack of appreciation and gratitude for all He has done for us. It talks about Jesus and the ten lepers, who in their helplessness, asked for mercy. It dwells on how Jesus responded with His kindheartedness, and unconditionally healed them. It brought to light how only one came back to thank Jesus with a grateful heart, yet the other nine went their selfish ways without acknowledging the healing work of Jesus, without even as much as a "thank you." They may have been so excited about their restored health that they completely forgot about Jesus, the One Who healed them and made them whole again.

Such a scenario has not changed even in the present times. This may be quite typical of the people in the world today. Everyone is so busy with their own affairs, most often believing that all they have, all their giftedness and blessings, are due them, neither acknowledging nor thanking God for His life-giving blessings.

Ingratitude or lack of thankfulness is an inherent characteristic of our sinful nature, which

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"If we persevere we shall also reign with him." (2 Tm 2:12a)

RESISTANCE IS FUTILE

“But Jonah made ready to flee to Tarshish, away from the LORD.” (Jon 1:3)

God had a plan for Jonah to go to Nineveh but he tried to resist by fleeing from the Lord. While on the run, a raging storm engulfed his boat. No matter how hard the crew tried, they could not escape the power of the storm. In a way, I can relate to Jonah’s experience.

Because of work, my family moved every four to five years. So far it has taken us to Los Angeles, Dallas, Chicago, Tulsa, San Francisco, and New Jersey. Each time, my wife had to quit her job and start all over again. She gave up her career so I could have mine. When we relocated to San Francisco in late 1999, this was the last straw for her.

However, in February of 2003 I was “offered” to move again, this time to our NY office. Knowing how my wife felt, I politely declined. I started looking for another job both inside and outside my company so we could stay in San Francisco but nothing came up. To make matters worse I was having a very difficult time dealing with my new business partners who were all based in NY. The stress was killing me and things were not looking good. Six months later, the offer came up again and this time I reluctantly said ‘yes’.

My decision to move to our NY office was blessed as it took only 22 days to sell our home, find another in New Jersey, and get all our belongings moved across the country. The whole transfer went so perfectly that within three days, I was in my New York Midtown office.

The best part of our move was having joined BLD which would never have happened in the West Coast. My wife and I often talk about how awesome God’s plan has been for us; how we tried to “resist” His plan by making plans of our own; how it became “stormy” at work, not unlike the storm that engulfed Jonah. When we finally said ‘yes’ and left everything to the Almighty, He went to work and placed everything in order.

This past September marked our 10th year in the New York-New Jersey metro area since the time I asked my wife to give me five years after which we would move back to San Francisco.

God’s plan is from all eternity and is so perfect for us. Our lives offer us many opportunities to further embrace and live that plan. *“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you—oracle of the Lord—plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.” (Jer 29:11)*

“MARTHA, MARTHA”



In 2010, I was blessed to attend a cooking demo by Filipino celebrity chef, Fr. Leo Patalinghug. Fr. Leo asked someone from his audience to help him slice some peppers for the steak fajitas he was preparing using his recipe that had won an award at Food Network’s *Throwdown with Bobby Flay*. As was his practice, when the food was about ready and before serving a bite to everyone, he asked for another volunteer to be the first to taste the fajitas and provide a comment.

After the initial taste test, he then requested his two volunteers to identify themselves. The taster was Maria and the cooking assistant was Martha, reminiscent of the two biblical characters who embodied the extremes of work and prayer.

In the seven plus years my family has been in BLD, I have heard the story of Mary and Martha numerous times. In that same time and on many occasions, I have been guilty of labeling some members as being “too Martha,” others as being “too Mary.” In each of those occurrences, I judged them based on my own self concocted standards.

As with all of the stories and passages in the Bible, God’s Word may bring new insights; and so it was when I reflected on Luke 10:38-42. I realized that all these years, I was projecting myself as a self-righteous mix of Martha and Mary; not that I was being a hard worker, but because I was conceitedly comparing myself to others, not only as Martha, but also as Mary thinking that Christ will side with me, while missing His point all along that *“there is need of only one thing”* (Lk 10:42).

Lord, for the times I backslide, please forgive me. Let me be reminded that it’s time to dismantle my altar of self-absorption. It does not matter whether I am a better Martha or Mary, or not. My focus must be on You alone. With Your guidance, may I rebound, refocus and celebrate my life, my work and my prayer for You, not in comparison to anyone or anything, but solely dedicated as an offering to You. Then and only then, can I claim, *“the better part”* (Lk 10:42), in work and in prayer, the true joy of knowing You.



FEAST OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

St. Pius V established this feast in 1573. The purpose was to thank God for the victory of Christians over the Turks at Lepanto, a victory attributed to the praying of the rosary. Clement XI extended the feast to the universal Church in 1716.

The development of the rosary has a long history. First, a practice developed of praying 150 Our Father's in imitation of the 150 Psalms; then there was a parallel practice of praying 150 Hail Mary's. Soon a mystery of Jesus' life was attached to each Hail Mary. Though Mary's act of giving the rosary to St. Dominic is recognized as a legend, the development of this prayer form owes much to the followers of St. Dominic. One of them, Alan de la Roche, was known as "the apostle of the rosary." He founded the first Confraternity of the Rosary in the 15th century. In the 16th century the rosary was developed to its present form—with the 15 mysteries (Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious). In 2002, Pope John Paul II added five Mysteries of Light to this devotion.

The purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the great mysteries of our salvation. Pius XII called it a compendium of the gospel. The main focus is on Jesus: His birth, life, death and resurrection. The Our Father's remind us that Jesus' Father is the initiator of salvation. The Hail Mary's remind us to join with Mary in contemplating these mysteries. They also make us aware that Mary was and is intimately joined with her Son in all the mysteries of His earthly and heavenly existence. The Glory Be's remind us that the purpose of all life is to glorify the Trinity.

The rosary appeals to many because of its simplicity. The constant repetition of words helps create an atmosphere in which to contemplate the mysteries of God. We sense that Jesus and Mary are with us in the joys and sorrows of life. We grow in hope that God will bring us to share in the glory of Jesus and Mary forever.

"The rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christ-centered prayer. It has the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety. It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial Magnificat for the work of the redemptive Incarnation which began in her virginal womb. It can be said that the rosary is, in some sense, a prayer-commentary on the final chapter of the Vatican II Constitution Lumen Gentium, a chapter that discusses the wondrous presence of the Mother of God in the mystery of Christ and the Church." (Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, The Rosary of the Virgin Mary).

COUNSELS (from page 1)

St. Paul explains in Romans 1:21: *"For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened."*

When we examine this Sunday's Gospel closely, it appears that Jesus may be asking us to look beyond physical healing. He wants us to consider the more important aspect of spiritual healing which enables man not only to see his real self and recognize his shortcomings, but to be able to acknowledge God above all things as the Source of life, all healing and blessings.

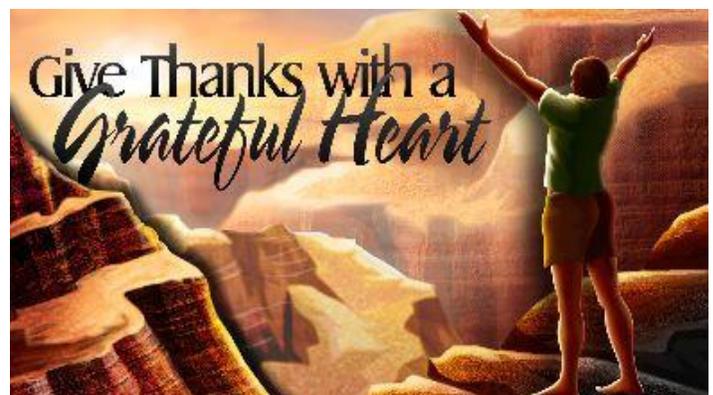
The lone man who thanked Jesus received total healing from Jesus. When Jesus said to the man, "Stand up and go on your way; Your faith has healed and saved you," this man received a double blessing! Not only was he healed of the skin disease, but He was also made right with God because of his desire to return to Jesus and thank Him. This man received far beyond physical healing, he was made whole.

In our lives, we walk around totally forgetful of how blessed we are. We fail to appreciate all the good things God has done for us. Most mornings we wake up forgetting to give thanks for our life, our loving family, our good health, our spiritual community, our new life in Christ. We purposely become unmindful of what it was like before we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives animating and giving us direction and purpose through His Word and Community.

Lest we forget, all things come from God. Let us give Him all praise and thanksgiving. *"In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."* (1 Thes 5:18)

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) In all circumstances, give thanks.
- 2) Recognize the blessings you receive.



NEWS (from page 1)

Signs of renewal and change of heart were evident as participants joyfully lifted their hands in praise, heartily sang to the Lord and openly expressed their gratefulness to God for His mercy and forgiveness. Many were relieved of burdens as the Holy Spirit took domicile in their hearts.

LSS 41 was an awesome and memorable experience as Spiritual Director Msgr. Paul Schetelick exhorted everyone to place Jesus Christ at the center of their lives by praying daily and regularly receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.

We praise and thank our Lord for a glorious LSS weekend. **TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

Congratulations LSS 41 Graduates!

ME 41:

Lou Almasora, Noli & Terry Cruz, Nick & Suzette Guinto, Emmanuel & Edith Iheanacho, and Dennis & Alice Pacia

Amazing Grace:

Athanasie Uwamariya and Gaspar & Mary Stells Waffuba

Solo Parents:

Venina Barcega, Maria Bolos, Connie Burton, Ellen Cotoner, Gigi Espejon, Deborah Leung, Patricia Mckiernan, Encarnita Palacios, Fe Ruiz, Carmen Tolentino, and Ruth Ureta

Singles:

Samantha Aglibut, Coleen Atienza, James Calingo, Rafaella Danta, Luckie Doria, John Estrella, Camille Loreto, Rosemarie Manansala, Jan Michael Pepino, Kristine Villanueva, Patricia Philippeaux, James Santiago, Pam Johnson, and Roman Nolasco

Infillers:

Gerardo Fusco, Jojo & Bing Gabriel, and Karen Japson

Non-Encounters:

Irene Castor, Chona De Leon, and Sonia Domagtoy

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

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6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM, Oct. 16th thru Nov. 20th

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November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

	Schedule	
	Date	Apostolate
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	Nov 1	Evangelization
Nov 8	Formation	

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

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(for children ages 12-14 years old)

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Venue: St. Peter's Retreat House
149 William Street, Belleville, NJ 07109
Application: Online at BLDNewarkJohn6.weebly.com
Contact Persons: Ernest & Nellie Sun
BLDNewarkJohn6@yahoo.com

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #42

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013
Venue: Pine Hill Retreat House
Canadensis, PA
Contact Persons: Marc/Emma Belmonte
mmla@bldnewark.com

SINGLES ENCOUNTER #31

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013
Venue: Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, New York
Contact Persons: Jutt Bustos
Sundee/Neneng Ikalina
Application forms available at: registration table and
bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship
Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014
Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines
Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez
chi1944@hotmail.com

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 42

Bulletin Edition

October 18, 2013

NEWS

Pope Francis: Thank Your Family

“These are essential words for our life in common,” the Holy Father told a crowd of 150,000 gathered for Mass in St. Peter’s Square Oct. 13

by KERRI LENARTOWICK/CNA/EWTN NEWS 10/13/2013



VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis on Sunday preached about the importance of gratitude and thankfulness for the Christian community and for family life.

“If we can realize that everything is God’s gift, how happy will our hearts be! Everything is His gift.

He is our strength!” he told the crowd of about 150,000 gathered for Mass in St. Peter’s Square on Oct. 13.

“Saying ‘thank you’ is such an easy thing and yet so hard,” his homily continued. “How often do we say ‘thank you’ to one another in our families? These are essential words for our life in common.” The Pope gave special attention to the need to show consideration for one’s family.

“If families can say these three things, they will be fine: ‘sorry,’ ‘excuse me,’ ‘thank you.’ How often do we say ‘thank you’ in our families? How often do we say ‘thank you’ to those who help us, those close to us, those at our side throughout life? All too often we take everything for granted.”

The Pope spoke after a weekend of Marian prayer that culminated in a special act of entrustment of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to Mary’s maternal care.

As the original statue of Our Lady of Fatima stood nearby, Pope Francis reflected on Mary’s relationship with God as an example of Christian gratitude.

Mary’s words at the Annunciation, “My soul magnifies the Lord,” are “a song of praise and

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

Perseverance in Prayer

THEME: **We are living witnesses of Jesus when we persevere in prayer.**

WORD: **Ex 17:8-13 / Ps 121: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
2 Tm 3: 14 - 4:2 / Lk 18: 1-8**

ORDER: *“Proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.” (2 Timothy 4:2)*

REFLECTION:

The essence of our readings this Sunday tells us about the expression of our personal relationship with God, which is through Prayer. It entails the lifting of mind, heart and soul to God or requesting good things from God with a humble and contrite heart and in accordance with His Will.

In the first reading from Exodus, we are encouraged to come together in prayer as Moses, together with Aaron and Hur, did. Here we see the victory that happens when others pray for the same things, just as we do during our community intercessions. The persistence shown in these acts demonstrates the type of praying that God is asking of us. In the context of our daily lives, we have to support the hands of those who pray and those with contemplative vocations in the church. For without prayer, our Church cannot be victorious in the spiritual battles it continually faces. We all know that the BLD is a “praying community” and that the diligence and discipline of prayer are always emphasized and apparent in all of our community activities. No event or program will ever start or end without prayer. Vigil prayers begin at the start of every seminar or encounter and are sustained until the victory celebration of the Holy

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“The Lord will guard you from all evil; he will guard your life.” (Ps 121:7)

GOD HAS NO FAVORITES

I have been taught from a very young age that all men are created equal and that God shows no partiality or preference to any person or group because he loves all of us equally. Doubt about the validity of these teachings started to creep in when I entered my high school years. I saw some of my classmates were better off due to their parent's position and/or possessions. Some had an easier time in passing the exams while I and others had to scramble and work hard to get the same grades. The same thing happened in my college days. To pay for my tuition, my parents struggled and gave up some basic necessities while others in my class need not sacrifice at all because money was not a problem for them.

When I started working I had to consistently work hard to impress supervisors, but others seemed to just breeze along and were getting promoted with the least amount of effort on their part. Later on in life, these inequities became more pronounced as I witnessed how the privileged few with the most resources trampled the rights of the poor majority.

This started my questioning. Do we really have a God who loves everyone equally and does not show any favoritism? How come some families experience more tragedies and calamities than others, such as loss of loved ones, illnesses, addictions and lack of provisions? Does he love them less because they seem to get the short end of the stick most of the time?

When I measured everything according to worldly standards, I began to question God's fairness and justice. In His mercy he brought me to BLD where I learned more about God's ways in Scripture through community teachings and the sharing of fellow travelers in this journey of faith. It was here that I learned and became convicted that God has a perfect plan for every one of us, but oftentimes our limited intellect cannot comprehend it. We all tend to make God fit into our definition of who He is, what he should be and what He has to do for us. Even Job started questioning God about all the misfortunes that had overtaken him. In His mercy, God opened Job's eyes and heart to understand. And like him, we should admit before the Lord that we are dealing with great things we do not understand and things too wonderful that we cannot know, because as stated in Isaiah 55:8-9, God's ways are not our ways and His thoughts are far above our thoughts. In His time we will all know how much He loves each of us.

St. Luke The Evangelist *His Works and Virtues*

St. Luke, the patron saint of physicians, surgeons, and artists, was a great contributor to the Word of God and an exceptional evangelist. He is widely known throughout the many denominations of Christianity as the writer of the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. In these accounts of Jesus and his Apostles, St. Luke provides a Scriptural basis of the Church's history that becomes the foundation of many of its primary beliefs and dogma.

St. Luke's Gospel portrays some of his values and virtues through several parables and instances. One virtue that remained prominent is his respect for the poor. He believed that everyone holds the right to social justice and that God saw goodness in all of mankind, including the less fortunate. The parables of Lazarus, ignored by the Rich Man, and the Good Samaritan are both explicitly told in St. Luke's Gospel. Also, his version of the Beatitudes features the line, "***Blessed are you who are poor,***" (Lk 6:20) rather than, "***Blessed are the poor in spirit...***" (Mt 5:3).

Another virtue St. Luke possessed was his respect for women. His Gospel contains stories of a few of the women in Jesus' life, particularly Mary. It is the only book that contains the Annunciation, Mary's visit to Elizabeth including the Magnificat, the Presentation, and the story of Jesus' disappearance in Jerusalem. St. Luke is also credited for providing a couple of lines in the Hail Mary: "*Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you,*" (Restated: Lk 1:28) and, "*...blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.*" (Lk 1:42).

God's forgiveness for sinners and His eagerness to accept them if they ask to be forgiven are also virtues exhibited in his Gospel. The parable of the prodigal son and his welcome back home, despite his past malevolence, was featured in this book. It also tells of the forgiven woman, who groveled on her knees asking for forgiveness, washing Jesus' feet with her tears. These stories exemplify God's magnanimity towards malice and willingness to grant mercy.

St. Luke's virtues can be summarized as one major theme: God grants mercy towards all men and women alike, no matter what their individualities may be. Because of his virtuous temperament, insightful words, and his unfailing faith in God, Luke, the apostle and gospel writer, became St. Luke who serves as a role model for all Christians.

THE WORDS OF THE CENTURION

“Lord, ... I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof... but say the word and let my servant be healed” (Lk 7:6-7)

How many years have we been receiving the Holy Eucharist? 10, 20, 30, 40 years, but have we ever reflected and sincerely believed in our hearts these words, which originally came from the mouth of a centurion 2,000 years ago?

Included in the liturgy of the Mass and prayed before we receive the Holy Communion, these are powerful words, and Jesus Himself marveled at the strong faith of the centurion. In His amazement, He uttered that He had not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. A centurion is a key officer in the Roman army who commanded 80 to 100 soldiers. The centurion truly believed in the authority and word of Jesus Christ, and he compared them to his own power of getting things done just by ordering his servants and soldiers.

There are three lessons we can learn from this story. First, we must always have humility no matter what our status in life may be. The centurion was an officer of the mighty Roman army and he could have just ordered Jesus to heal his servant. But he did not and instead chose to beg and ask for Jesus' help. His humility was further shown by his words, “I am not worthy.....” Second, we must always have the love and concern for one another. He probably had many important tasks and responsibilities and yet he took time off to care and seek help for one of his many servants. And third, we must always have a strong faith in Jesus Christ.

The words of the centurion continue to remind us that we are about to receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ. We pray from the bottom of our hearts that He does not need to enter the temple of our souls, our bodies, and yet by His great love, He comes. There is no other instance when we can be physically closer to Jesus Christ than when we eat His body and drink His blood. It is this belief, this strong faith, that assures us that we are going to be healed physically and spiritually by Jesus Christ. So next time and every time we receive Holy Communion, let us meditate on the words of the centurion and truly believe.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Eucharist at the conclusion of the event. During the Friday worships, prayer warriors are stationed at the four corners of the worship area and the petition slips are gathered for intercessory prayer.

In the second reading, St. Paul teaches us on being relentless in our faithfulness to God. In 2 Tm 3:14, he exhorts us to: ***“Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed...,”*** that is out of the Sacred Scriptures. Since all scripture is inspired by God, as followers of Christ, we have the responsibility to search and study the scriptures as fully as we can ***“so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work”*** (2 Tm 3:17). The first “good work” is prayer, which has to be taught to Christians through *tireless and patient teaching*. Hence, St. Paul orders us to ***“proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching”*** (2 Tm 4: 2). Our faith is manifested through our perseverance in prayer.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus instructs the disciples to ***“...pray always without becoming weary”*** (Lk 18:8) as depicted by the persistent widow. Most of us can relate to her resilience in asking the judge for a just decision, as we are always asking God for something whether for ourselves or for others. By constantly seeking and asking for a response, she gets an answer, even better is that it is in her favor. What do we ultimately seek? We seek our heavenly inheritance. By living an unwavering life of prayer, we can transcend our relationship with God. ***“Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?”*** (Lk 18:7a) Jesus wants to make it absolutely clear that God wants man to ask Him, even to pester Him. It is His Will that we pray but not only for our needs but for other people and situations as well. If our BLD community is to avoid being routed in the difficult battles of our day, all of us must persevere in prayer and help others to achieve persistent prayer, rather than depend on external busyness.

Prayer plays a vital role in our community life. We need to support and reinforce one another as we put into action the new vision and mission of our community. A community united, working as one, free of division, free of worldly concerns, moving forward in faith, fully dependent on the righteous Father to give us all our needs, and a community who remains faithful to what she has learned and believed, giving thanks to God, is an empowered community ready to bring the love of Jesus to the un-evangelized.

God hears our prayers and always responds with whatever is best for us. A prayer request, however, presupposes **faith** which is why the Gospel ends with

continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

something for us to ponder over: *“But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”* (Lk 18:8) We need to develop the habit of persistent prayer so we can remain faithful Christians. **Are we listening?**

DIRECTIONS:

- Read the Scriptures regularly.
- Be faithful in lifting up the community through the intercessory prayers.
- Bring the Good News to the un-evangelized.

NEWS (from page 1)

not only for what He did for her, but for what He had done throughout the history of salvation,” the Pope explained.

This history reveals that “God surprises us.”

“It is precisely in poverty, in weakness and in humility that He reveals himself and grants us His love, which saves us, heals us and gives us strength,” the Pope explained.

The journey to salvation also entails a commitment on the part of those following the path of Christ, which is not always easy.

“I ask myself: Am I a Christian by fits and starts or am I a Christian full time?” the Pope said. “Our culture of the ephemeral, the relative, also takes its toll on the way we live our faith. God asks us to be faithful to Him, daily, in our everyday life.”

Fortunately, the Christian knows that “we can be unfaithful, but He [God] cannot: He is ‘the faithful one’,” he added.

One woman in the crowd shed tears as Pope Francis said that God in His mercy “never tires of stretching out His hand to lift us up, to encourage us to continue our journey, to come back and tell Him of our weakness, so that He can grant us His strength.”

“This is the real journey: to walk with the Lord always, even at moments of weakness, even in our sins.”

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH'S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH, Rectory Basement
337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM, Oct. 16th thru Nov. 20th

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,122	126,761

Financial details are available to all members through
treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

Oct 19*** - Washing of the Feet/Agony of the Garden – ME 39, SPE 14, SE

Nov 2** - New Creation Realities – LSS 1-41
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-40
CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-39
CMP 2 Part 2 – LSS 1-38

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

***Saturday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LSS 41 GRAND REUNION

When: **Sunday, October 20th at 1:00 PM**

Venue: **Divine Mercy School Library, Rahway, NJ**

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #42

Dates: **Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013**

Venue: **Pine Hill Retreat House**

Canadensis, PA

Contact Persons: **Marc/Emma Belmonte**

mla@bldnewark.com

SINGLES ENCOUNTER #31

Dates: **Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013**

Venue: **Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, New York**

Contact Persons : **Jutt Bustos**

Sundee/Neneng Ikalina

Application forms available at: registration table and
bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: **Every 3rd Friday, After Worship**

Venue: **Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church**

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: **February 17-20, 2014**

Venue: **Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines**

Contact Persons: **Mel/Remy Hernandez**

chi1944@hotmail.com

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Oct 25	Pastoral
			Nov 1	Evangelization
			Nov 8	Formation
			Nov 15	Management

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 43

Bulletin Edition

October 25, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

John 6 Crossing # 14 triumphs

God is good! This year's Crossing was at the brink of being cancelled as we had only 3 candidates on Friday 10/11/13, a week from the retreat. We rallied and asked everyone to pray hard and evangelize, especially the John 6 kids. By the end of the weekend, we had promising results. By Monday evening, we had a potential of 10 candidates. By Wednesday evening, we had a confirmed 15 candidates. And by Friday, the start of the retreat weekend, we had 18 candidates, which included BLD Rockland!

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6.

John 6 Crossing #14 is very special in that not all the kids are from BLD or even Christians! And we had three Spiritual Directors, Fr. Paul Lehman, Msgr. Paul Schetelick, and Fr. Dave Sison. *Continued on page 4*

Retreatants experience Jesus' humility

On October 19, 2013, Washing of the Feet and Agony in the Garden retreat was held in Divine Mercy Library with 21 participants from the ME, SPE and Singles. The attendees moved their hearts from curiosity to growing enthusiasm to emulate the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As they imbibed the character of a true disciple, the virtue of humility and the need to pray and intercede were tenaciously embraced through their experience in the workshops that followed the teaching, sharing and personal reflection sessions.

The retreat was a collective effort of various ministries, Service, Intercessory and Teaching Ministry, with full support from the Praise and Witness Development Ministries. *Continued on page 4*

HUMILITY IN PRAYER

THEME: We are living witnesses of Jesus when we are pure and humble of heart.

WORD: Sir 35:12-14,16-18/Ps 34:2,3,17,18/ 2 TM 4:6-8, 16-18/Lk 18:9-14

ORDER: Humble yourself before God.
(Lk 18:14- paraphrased)

REFLECTION:

When we read the word of God, we have to allow the Holy Spirit to enliven the word in hearts so that we may be transformed into His new creation.

The Book of Sirach reminds us that our God is just and has no favorites. He listens to everyone's prayers - the oppressed, the widows, and the orphans. He listens to the prayers of the lowly and there is no delay in His answer. It is just, right and timely. Let us then have confidence in the power of our prayer when we ask humbly in our time of need.

The reading from St. Paul's letter to Timothy was taken from the last chapter of his letter. It begins with Paul's recognition that his martyrdom was near and uses athletic competitions to express his perseverance in his trust in Christ. In all forms of difficulties, he stayed on course as a disciple. Paul gave us words of encouragement to go on, to keep up the good fight. No matter what the difficulty, we must always remember that the Spirit within us is greater than he that is in the world (1 Jn 4:4) and we must keep fighting and continue in the race. We need to trust in Jesus, as Paul did, and our Lord will use our repentant hearts in a powerful way. *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"When the just cry out, the Lord hears them, and from all their distress he rescues them."

(Ps 24:18)

GOD IS ABLE

Husbands and wives are not only to love one another but are to help one another with the burdens of this fallen world. Whereas certain roles of husbands and wives were universally accepted in past generations, many marriages in modern society have become complete partnerships in every way, from finances to daily chores to childrearing. Love, friendship, and financial support between husbands and wives have become more vital than ever to ensure that children are raised in a loving and stable family.

Imagine that you found someone who lifted half of your hardships off of your back. Imagine that person became your beloved spouse, and you planned to spend the rest of your life receiving that person's help and friendship and love. Now imagine that person was taken away from you, either through death or divorce. The burdens that were lifted off of you are thrown upon you again, seemingly for the rest of your life. This is the reality of the solo parents of our community of believers. Solo parents cry out to God in disbelief. How can God ask anyone to suddenly start carrying twice the weight of hardships and trials? Is God able to lift any of these burdens? Is God able to help us? Is God able to love us?

Our Heavenly Father is not distant; He calls us - *"so that people might seek God, even perhaps grope for Him and find Him, though indeed He is not far from any one of us"* (Acts 17:27). Hence, He is able to be close to us while we struggle with our burdens.

We, solo parents, can be so hurt by our circumstances that we sometimes question our faith, and we sin whenever we disobey God's commands. Every imperfect sacrifice we could ever offer God could not lift us to the perfect holiness of the Lord. It would seem impossible for any of us to enjoy eternal life with God. Is God able to welcome us into His kingdom?

However, Jesus Christ our Lord suffered and died, becoming the perfect Sacrifice to atone for our sins, and He conquered death by rising on the third day (1 John 4:10). He is the perfect and living Sacrifice we offer to God to wash our sins clean, and we offer Him to our Heavenly Father every time we celebrate the Holy Mass.

The Solo Parents Ministry of BLD brings broken hearts back into full communion with the universal Church. The solo parents of BLD remind one another that *"The Lord does not delay his promise, as some regard "delay," but he is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* (2 Peter 3:9)

The broken hearts of solo parents are transformed into devout children of God, just as *"[Abraham] did not doubt God's promise in unbelief; rather, he was* ➔

Everything is OK!

"Our help is in the name of the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth." (Psalms 124:8)

Have you ever been awakened in the middle of the night by a scary dream? Someone is chasing you or threatening your life and you are running so hard that you actually break into a sweat? The dream seems so real that it's hard to get back to sleep. You have to tell yourself, "Everything's okay. It was only a dream." It seems to me that my mind does a lot of its worrying at night. That's when it forgets what my heart has known for a long time, "Everything is okay. God is with me." My troubled mind worries about car payments and doctor bills; but my heart says, "God will provide." And what about the mess our world is in? There is plenty to worry about, and it can be very scary. That is, it would be scary if we had to face it on our own. But again my heart reminds me, "Everything is okay. God is still in charge."

Jesus often told His disciples that they should not be afraid. His final promise in St Matthew's Gospel says, *"And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."* (Matthew 28:20) The Scriptures are full of reassurances like that one. Their message is wonderfully clear. *"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."* (Psalms 23:4) Stop worrying long enough to hear His words of comfort. *"Be still and know that I am God!"* (Psalms 46:11) Recognize His presence. Let the peace of God that you already carry in your heart fill your mind and spread to every corner of your being. *"Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your lifespan?"* (Luke 12:25) Of course not!

Are worries keeping you awake at night? There are a lot of places people look for help when they are worried or afraid. The best idea? Open the Word of God. Read the promises He makes to you. Take them into your heart and let them calm your fears. He is saying to you, "Everything is okay. I am with you. There is nothing to fear." Psalm 121 says it so well, *"The LORD will guard you from all evil; he will guard your soul. The LORD will guard your coming and going both now and forever."*

.....
empowered by faith and gave glory to God and was fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to do" (Romans 4:20-21). If God is able to give Abraham descendants as numerous as the stars, if God is able to wash our sins clean, if God is able to bring us into full communion with Him, then He is able to do anything.

Pope: Attachment to Money Destroys People, Families and Relationships

Reflects on the Effects of Greed During Morning Mass at Casa Santa Marta

Excerpt from Zenit.org/Junno Arocho Esteves/10-21-2013

In his homily, Pope Francis warned of destruction of people, families and relationships brought on by the attachment to money and greed.

The Holy Father reflected on Luke's Gospel, which recalls the moment when Jesus is asked to resolve a problem between two brothers arguing over their inheritance.

"How many families have we seen destroyed by the problem of money?," the Holy Father asked. "Brother against brother, father against son. This is the first result that this attitude of being attached to money does: it destroys!" "When a person is attached to money, he destroys himself, he destroys the family. Money destroys! It does, doesn't it? It binds you."

The Pope observed that while money can serve to bring good things to others, especially in works of human development, an attachment can only bring about the destruction of one's self. Referring to Christ's parables of the rich man who lives to accumulate treasures for himself, the Holy Father said that such greed leads to an idolatry that destroys one's relationship with others.

"It's not money, but the attitude, what we call greed. Then too this greed makes you sick, because it makes you think of everything in terms of money," the Holy Father said. "It destroys you, it makes you sick. And in the end – this is the most important thing – greed is an instrument of idolatry because it goes along a way contrary to what God has done for us."

"Saint Paul," Pope Francis continued, "tells us that Jesus Christ, who was rich, made Himself poor to enrich us. That is the path of God: humility, to lower oneself in order to serve. Greed, on the other hand, takes us on a contrary path: You, who are a poor human, make yourself God for vanity's sake. It is idolatry!"

The 76 year old pontiff went on to say that for this reason, Christ speaks strongly in the Gospel's against this attachment to money, which can impede one from trusting in God in moments of need. The path of greed is contrary to the path of God and "destroys all human fraternity. Concluding his homily, Pope Francis called on the faithful that the path taught by Christ is "not the path of poverty for poverty's sake" but rather to use "the way of poverty as an instrument, so that God may be God, so that He will be the only Lord."

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 1)

The letter ends with a hopeful prayer that Jesus will continue to protect him from all his enemies until he is safely in the kingdom of God. And for us, we will realize completely that when we are finally at home in heaven with our wonderful Lord Jesus, that the fight and the race were well worth it.

In Luke's Gospel, the parable of the Pharisee and tax collector examines two attitudes of praying: humility and self-righteousness. Jesus challenges us to consider whether we pray like the Pharisee or like the tax collector. His focus is attitude and motive. The Pharisee does a lot of good things that a good Jew does. So he goes to the temple area and tells God how wonderful and virtuous he is compared to many men, especially this tax collector who is at the temple with him. In essence he is telling God how good he is and that he has no need of God's grace and mercy.

Note that the parable does not discourage devotional work but calls into question the motives behind the work. The tax collector, in contrast, knows he is a sinner and in humility asks for God's mercy. He leaves the temple pardoned and at peace while the Pharisee leaves the temple with his illusion and arrogance. In Jesus' time, this story caused offense to those who regarded tax collectors as sinners who were not worthy of God's mercy, but praised by Jesus over a "religious leader". Let us not judge the Pharisee too harshly, Let us think of times when we did some good work to impress people and the times we felt we were better than others. We need to realize that in our prayer life, we sometimes could be the Pharisee, the tax collector or somewhere in between.

This is a warning for us that pride leads to illusions and self-deception. Humility, on the other hand, helps us to see ourselves as we really are – always in need of God's love and mercy. "***I dwell in the high and holy place and also with him who is of contrite and humble spirit.***" (Isaiah 57:15)

Let us, therefore, ask our Lord to give us the grace:

1. To be humble of heart
2. Not to boast and advertise our good deeds
3. Not to stand in judgment others.

My God and Father, look into my heart and direct all my thoughts and actions that everything I do may be pure as you are pure. Amen.

DIRECTION:

- Look into yourself and recognize your weaknesses and failings and bring them to God in humble prayer.

POPE (from page 3)

“All the goods that we have, the Lord gives them to us to advance the world, to advance humanity, to help, to help others. Today may the Word of the Lord remain in our hearts: ‘Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not depend on that which they possess.’”

JOHN 6 (from page 1)

All we needed was an open heart and a yearning to learn more about the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As expected, the kids were apprehensive in the beginning, but by Friday evening, they were all bonding. By Sunday afternoon, the 35 gallon trash cans were filled with tissue paper. A true blessing only from the Lord. This is only the beginning of the long journey for these kids. Please continue to support and pray for these graduates of Crossing #14: **Mark Agapito, Joaquin Antonio Cariaso, Reynaldo Cobarrubias, Hubert Deiparine, Maria Deiparine, Xavier Delfierro, Lance Dizon, Jillian Francisco, Nicholas Gonzalez, Dominic Guinto, Jewel Lamp, Katrina Manigbas, Anamaria Pais, Paolo Rivera, Francisco Rodriguez, Madeline Tanchingco, Sirr Carlo Timbang, and Tyree Lewis.**

Special thanks to all God’s servants who made this spirit filled weekend a success – sponsoring class, John 6 praise, study team, sharers, WCD Ministry, Liturgy, youth auxies, adult auxies, ME36 & 37 immersion, core members, and Spiritual Directors.

RETREATANTS (from page 1)

We thank Father Paul Lehman for conducting the retreat as the retreat master and the sharers who tirelessly and graciously apportioned their time and talent for the success of the retreat. The event concluded with a Eucharistic celebration with all hearts burning with thanksgiving and joy. Praise be to God!!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH’S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH, Rectory Basement
337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM, Oct. 16th thru Nov. 20th

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

LORD’S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK’S

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TEACHING CALENDAR

- Nov 2**** - New Creation Realities – LSS 1-41
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-40
CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-39
CMP 2 Part 2 – LSS 1-38
- Nov 8*** - Intro to Commitment – LSS 1-40/SE
- Nov 15*** - Jesus in OT – **Amazing Grace**
- Nov 29*** - Christian Servanthood – ME 39; SPE 14
Anointing & Laying of Hands – ME 38
Golden Years Teaching - GYM
- Dec 7**** - Sienna Gift Inventory – ME 39-41/SPE 14-15/SE
- Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38
- Healing and Deliverance
- Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #42

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013

Venue: Pine Hill Retreat House

Canadensis, PA

Contact Persons: Marc/Emma Belmonte

mla@bldnewark.com

SINGLES ENCOUNTER #31

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013

Venue: Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, New York

Contact Persons : Jutt Bustos & Sundee/Neneng Ikalina

Application forms available at: registration table and
bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary’s Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Nov 1	Evangelization
			Nov 8	Formation
			Nov 15	Management
			Nov 22	Mission

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 44

Bulletin Edition

November 1, 2013

NEWS

The LORD REIGNS!



The BLD assisted parish of Divine Mercy, held its second “Falling in Love with Jesus” seminar on Oct. 26-27. The 33 candidates from the Parish were comprised of mostly women, two of whom attended the retreat with their spouses; a large number of participants were from the Parish’s Spanish language-based group. The event was blessed with four priests, spearheaded by Fr. Bismarck Chau, a charismatic bilingual priest from the Archdiocese of Newark; the other three were Fr. Robert Lamirez, Fr. Bill Halbing and Fr. Dennis Kaelin, pastor of Divine Mercy Parish.

About 10 graduates of FLWJ # 1 served and were paired with BLD members in all teams - Action, Piety, Liturgy and Study. All were empowered to serve with two of them leading the prayers of the morning Worship. Although full of challenges – least of which were language hurdles and coordination of the priests’ schedules, the seminar went smoothly as it progressed and moved with the Spirit. The Lord removed all barriers of language and culture, blessing everyone there, BLD members as well as nonmembers alike.

The candidates felt so blessed, and in ... *Continued page 4*

COUNSELS

Honoring Christ

THEME: We honor the sovereignty of Christ.

WORD: Wis 11:22-12:2 / Ps 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13, 14 / 2 Thes 1:11-2:2 / Lk 19:1-10

ORDER: *“...give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in the light.”*
(Col 1:12)

REFLECTION:



The word for November is not as easy as it sounds because the danger is that we may turn living and sharing the gospel into a simple formula, on the assumption that by doing so, we are honoring Christ. In fact we need to first define what ‘living’ and ‘sharing’ the gospel really mean before we can even begin to bring the gospel of Christ to others.

Living and sharing the gospel could only mean one thing – we are to clothe ourselves with Christ and His gospel, and share it, not only with those who have not heard it, but more so with those the church refers to as baptized Christians who have not been living their Catholic faith. In simple terms, what the word for the month is saying, is that we are to go out and evangelize especially at this time of the new evangelization, when changing societies and cultures call us to do something new: to live our communitarian experience of faith in a renewed way, as Blessed John Paul once said: “to proclaim it through an evangelization that is new in its ardor, in its methods, and in its expressions.”

But proclaiming the gospel is not a formula, like choosing and memorizing several verses and sharing it with others when an opportunity presents itself. Many have gone out to sow, but ... *Continued page 3*

Promise of the Week

“The Lord supports all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down.” (Ps 145:14)

My Hope Is in God's Mercy

In the book "Have a Little Faith" by Mitch Albom - sportswriter and frequent Sunday morning guest commentator on ESPN, the author features two "men of God" that he had grown to admire. One of them was the Jewish Rabbi he had known since childhood who was dying. The other was a church Pastor he had met when scouting the mean streets of Detroit for possible beneficiaries of donations from a foundation he was establishing.



The book starts out with a strange request from the Rabbi - he wanted Mitch to write and deliver his eulogy. What ensued was a refreshing re-acquaintance not only with his Rabbi, but for the sportswriter,

a re-acquaintance with God. In the weekly meetings they had, memories were re-lived, but new insights on hope and faith were also revealed, for both of them.

The Pastor's story, which was interspersed in chapters throughout the book, starts with his early troubled life - doing drugs, getting involved in criminal activities, almost getting killed. But then somehow, when he was at his lowest point, he turned to God. He joined a church and was eventually assigned to a poor neighborhood in Detroit, in a decrepit crumbling building that served the community. As Mitch Albom grew to realize firsthand whenever he visited with the pastor, the spiritual and physical challenges for God's message in the midst of urban plight are daunting. And yet, this man of God persevered.

"Have a Little Faith" is a quick entertaining read and quite inspiring, with many faith lessons from both the Rabbi and the Pastor stories. Eventually, the author delivers that eulogy and he channels foundation funds towards that poor church. What struck me most though, was towards the book's end, where he described a conversation with the Pastor about the many good things he was doing for the community that his struggling church was in.

Mitch asked him if he thought that the good would earn him a place in heaven. The Pastor's humble answer was that he thought that none of the good could ever repay for the bad things he had done before. None of it could repay for how he was saved from that. But that he had to try and try...He had to hope... Still, one day, all he could really say to God will be this - "Lord, I am at your mercy."

For Eternity...

"For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

(Jn 6:40)

Imagine This

What if one day you asked,
"God, do you exist?"
And you got an answer,
"YES!"

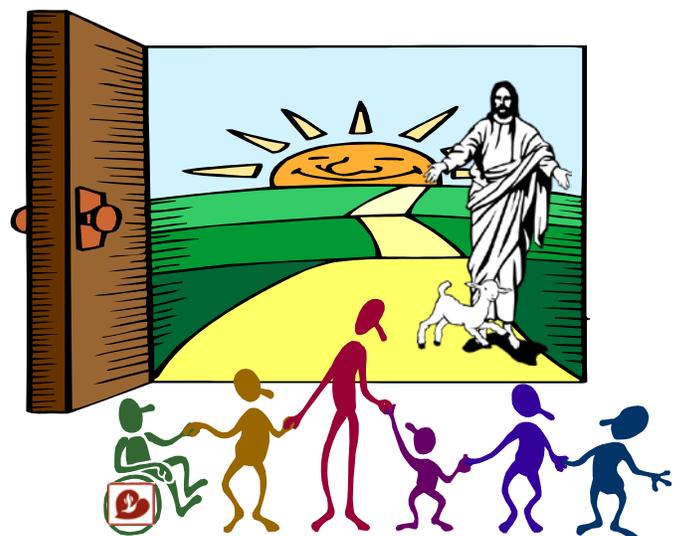
What if you questioned,
"Jesus, were You really here on Earth?"
And His response was,
"YES!"

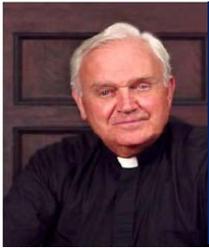
Imagine the joy you would feel
When you hear that "YES!"
How grateful would you be
When you know that you've sinned
And you wonder,
"God will You forgive me?"
...And He says,
"YES!"?

Some day, each of us will ask
"Father God, can I join You for eternity?"
Imagine that day and Him saying,
"YES! ..."

"Because you listened to My Son,
Followed and believed,
Now join Me!"

"TRUE JOY is yours!
JOIN ME...FOR ETERNITY!"





FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS (from page 1)

have become discouraged when the results fall below their expectations.

It is because faith and belief cannot be quantified or equated with a mathematical formula like measuring the seeds you plant and expecting a corresponding yield. What does this mean? In Mt 13:8, Christ tells us - ***“some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.”*** The four types of soil in this parable represent the four types of responses people have to God’s Word. Some people are like ‘good soil’ - responsive and fruitful; others are like shallow ground - initially enthusiastic and accepting, but quickly lose interest and commitment; while still others are choked off by distracting concerns.

What we must not forget is that though we are the ones who plant, it is the Holy Spirit who will use our words to lead others to Christ. This is actually what evangelization is all about. It’s not about us, but about the Holy Spirit moving in our lives to help us, not only in our journey of faith but also in our work in the Lord’s vineyard. The presence of the Holy Spirit is what makes the encounter with Jesus possible. This encounter should lead us not only to a spiritual experience but also to a genuine conversion as we are freed and delivered from our bondage to sin, and find ourselves placing our entire beings in the hands of God.

This beautiful co-mingling of the divine nature of God and the human character of man at the time of the encounter is what turns man into a partaker of the divine attributes of God, such that through the gifts of the Holy Spirit we are given the power to escape from the corruption of the world caused by evil desires (2 Pt 1:4). This, in essence, is what the new evangelization is about. The new evangelization should lead to an encounter with the person of Christ for those who have not heard of Him, and to a “re-encounter” for those who have moved away from the faith, especially the baptized Catholics who are no longer practicing their faith. It is through this encounter or re-encounter with Christ that the Holy Spirit moves and takes possession of our being to empower us to live and share the gospel to the ends of the earth. Hence, evangelism is for all Christians. As disciples, we are called to go and also make disciples of others – whether that ‘other’ lives next door or in another country.

This is what happened to Zacchaeus whose encounter with Jesus leads to his conversion (Lk 19:1-10). The Sadducees also had the same experience when they encountered Jesus who explained to them the principle of life in the future world (Lk 20:27-38). To live and share the gospel is to be steadfast in ...*Continued page 4*

We sometimes refer to people whom we think are holy as being saintly. What exactly is a saint? First, there are relatively few saints walking alive on the face of the earth. That is why “purgatory” is a remarkable alternative given to us by God for the many good people who die, but are not quite ready for heaven. But who exactly is a saint? It is he or she who has died and entered heaven perfectly capable of “seeing” God. But how do we “see” God who is invisible and has no human body? (We put aside for the moment the question of the bodies of Jesus and Mary now in heaven, for future discussion.) I know we are beginning with more questions than answers, but this is merely to surface the issue of eternal salvation. We obviously cannot see the invisible God with our visible eyes. But we can experience God through the activities of the will and mind. This is the so called beatific vision. The saint knows God, admittedly incompletely, but experiences in a direct way in his intellect the reality of God, which in turn draws us deeper and deeper in love for this incomprehensible Presence. This divine activity produces a profound joy that transcends all human pleasures we may have here on earth.

Our earthly liturgies at this time of the year remind us of these extraterrestrial realities. All Saints day celebrates the relationship we have with those in heaven. They are in communion with us praying for us even when we are not aware. All Souls day celebrates our communion with the saints who are “saved”, but who need a further cleansing from the human defects and venial sins contracted during their lives on earth. We are in communion with both.

We should be consoled here in this life that we are able to connect with the reality of God through prayer. We don’t have to wait for the beatific vision to experience the joy of intimacy with the Lord. It may be that, as St. Paul reminds us, that we see now darkly as in a mirror. But we can still experience this incredible loving God. Contemplative prayer is the human experience that puts us in contact with the direct activity of God. Contemplation is a yielding, a letting go, that in some way mirrors the divine activity we will hopefully some day experience in heaven. In contemplative prayer we transcend the limitations or rather God transcends the limitations of our earthly life and gives a direct taste of the Presence of God. Pray TO our heavenly saints and pray FOR the saints detained in their loving purgation. This is our communion, an interplay between heaven and earth. 



COUNSELS *(from page 3)*

faith that we may be able to withstand whatever troubles come our way (Lk 21:5-19). An encounter with Christ on the cross opens our eyes to the realization that we have been purchased, and that our lives are not our own. This is the encounter that can merit us a place in paradise (Lk 23:35-43).

Thus, to live and share the gospel is not an option but a command to all who call Jesus Lord. We may not all be evangelists in the true sense of the word, but because we have received the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit, we too, have to go out and help fulfil the Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20). And as we obey, we are assured of the abiding presence of Christ in our midst and in our circumstances. It is in obeying this commandment to evangelize that we honor the sovereignty of Christ in the way we live and share the gospel.

Prophecies and Directions

1. Salvation is near to those who love and serve Me.
2. I will fulfill your good resolve and works of faith for My glory.
3. Give hope to others by being generous to them, especially to the poor.
4. Honor God in the way we live our lives, putting Him first in all we do and say.



Reflection Guide:

Reflect on your own encounter with Jesus and bring to mind the things you surrendered to him. Are you still living out your 5-point pledge (for Committed Disciples) and your 8-point Covenant Pledge (for Covenanted Disciples)? If not, what prevents you from fulfilling these pledges?

NEWS *(from page 1)*

their sharings expressed how much Love, Joy and Peace they felt. Even the last minute signups among them, despite almost impromptu shepherding, became open vessels of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you to everyone who served and supported this powerful event. Let us all continue to spread the Good News of Salvation to all the ends of the Earth!

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH'S LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

ST. ANTONINUS PARISH, Rectory Basement
337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM, Oct. 16th thru Nov. 20th

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$3,843	\$133,838

"Earthquake Collection" - \$1,642

Financial details are available through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support
Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Nov 2** - New Creation Realities – LSS 1-41
Encounter with Jesus - LSS 1-40
CMP 1 Part 1 – LSS 1-39
CMP 2 Part 2 – LSS 1-38
- Nov 8* - Intro to Commitment – LSS 1-40/SE
- Nov 15* - Jesus in OT – Amazing Grace
- Nov 29* - Christian Servanthood – ME 39; SPE 14
Anointing & Laying of Hands – ME 38
Golden Years Teaching - GYM
- Dec 7** - Sienna Gift Inventory – ME 39-41/SPE 14-15/SE
- Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38
- Healing and Deliverance
- Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #42

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013

Venue: Pine Hill Retreat House
Canadensis, PA

Contact Persons: Marc/Emma Belmonte
mla@bldnewark.com

SINGLES ENCOUNTER #31

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013

Venue: Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, New York

Contact Persons : Jutt Bustos & Sundee/Neneng Ikalina
Application forms available at: registration table and
bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez
chi1944@hotmail.com

	Date	Apostolate
	Nov 8	Formation
	Nov 15	Management
	Nov 22	Mission
	Nov 29	Pastoral

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 45

Bulletin Edition

November 8, 2013

NEWS

Pope Francis on Eternity

Rome, November 04, 2013 ([Zenit.org](http://zenit.org))



Pope Francis reminded the congregation at St Peter's Square on Friday, November 1, All Saints Day, that "the goal of our existence is not death, but Heaven." The saints, he said, are "the friends of God," and they assure us that His promise does not disappoint. The Holy Father also stressed that the saints are not supermen, nor were they perfect. They were people who, before reaching the glory of Heaven lived a normal life, with joys and sorrows, struggles and hopes. What changed their lives, the Holy Father explained, was the knowledge of the love of God. "To be saintly is not a privilege of a few, but a vocation for everyone. We are all called to walk the path of holiness, and this pathway has a name and a face. It is Jesus Christ," he added.

Francis then celebrated Mass at the Roman cemetery of Campo Verano. He focused on salvation as a gift from God, not a fruit of good works. The Pope reminded that "we can only enter the doors of Heaven, thanks to the blood of Christ. It is He who judges us and who opens the door to Heaven. This is our hope." Francis further said that if we walk the path of Christ accompanied by this hope, "He will never let us down." Each of us may think "about the end of our lives" and must "look forward to it with hope and with the joy of being received by the Lord."

He noted that St. Paul "speaks of the love of God as the deepest, most invincible motive for our Christian hope. "Even if our entire existence is surrounded by threats, nothing will ever separate us from the love that Christ himself gained for us, giving of himself completely," Francis said. "This reality of faithful love that God has for each of us helps us to face our daily life with serenity and strength." He continued, "Only the sin of man can break this bond, but even in this case God will always search for him to restore that union that lasts even after death. This certainty gives a new and full meaning to earthly life and opens us to hope for life beyond death."

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

FAITHFUL IN FAITH

THEME: We honor the sovereignty of Christ when we put our hope in the God of the living.

WORD: 2 Mc 7: 1-2, 9-14; Ps17:1,5-6,8,15;
2 Thes 2:16-3:5; Lk 20:27-38

ORDER : Encourage your hearts and strengthen them in every good deed and word.

REFLECTION:

The Gospel reading for Sunday November 10th tells of the Sadducees asking Jesus "At the resurrection, whose wife will that woman be, for all seven brothers had been married to her?" (Luke 20:33) This story of the seven brothers marrying the same woman is a circumstance of following the Levirate Marriage, as mentioned in the book of Deuteronomy 25:5-10, that decrees, if a man dies childless his brother should take his widow and marry her, so that she would bear children and continue the line of the deceased brother. Although the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, life after death, they wanted to entrap Jesus to hear how He would respond to them. Jesus' response was "*The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry or are given in marriage.*" (Luke 20:34-35)

What Jesus meant by "children of this age" are those who live their lives as though life on this earth is the end all. Their focus is on their relationships here in this life and how they can attain the current goals they have set. Their self-fulfillment is established in accordance with the standards of this world. Success and happiness is defined as material wealth, fame, and power. There is nothing to look forward to after death so they must fulfill all their earthly desires.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The Lord directs your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ." (2 Thes 2:16)

A CHOIR OF ANGELS

“But am afflicted and in pain; let your saving help, O God protect me. I will praise the name of God in song and I will glorify him with thanksgiving.”

(Psalm 69:29-31)

September 21, 2013 at 7 PM was a special night on my calendar. This was the night when I will be united with the choir to sing at ‘A Night of Praise and Inspiration’. I am truly blessed not with a wonderful singing voice but with a passable one packed with a lot of patience ready to learn. We get invited to sing in churches for fund raising events. Through the years, I have noted that our repertoire has changed. For this September 21 Concert, it was all worship songs.

Singing or listening to praise music makes the stresses of everyday life, pressures from work and family life lighter. It gives the singer or the listener that certain peace that comes NOT just from the melody but from the words. There are a lot of times that tears fall from my eyes as each word uttered resonates in my heart. Singing praise songs brings about serenity and calmness or extreme joy that one would want to jump and just be happy.

One of the practices in preparation for this concert was held at home, I had the privilege of listening to the choir sing. What I heard was music coming from the voices of angels. The house was filled with music and was enveloped by the light of Christ. I felt protected by angels singing with us. I suddenly felt my shirt getting wet from the tears that flowed from my eyes. What a privilege and a blessing indeed!

Borrowing from the words of one of the songs we sang,

“...What if your blessings come thru raindrops, what if your healing comes thru tears, what if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know You’re here. What if trials of this life, are our mercies in disguise...”

Are not the words so true? Bad things that happen in our life can really be blessings from the Lord viewed from a different light. It teaches us the meaning of patience, faith, forgiveness, healing and mercy.

Dearest Jesus, grant me:

- *Forgiveness and mercy for all the sins that I have committed so that each song of praise I sing will be heard by my Heavenly Father*
- *Thanks for all the blessings that I have received whether these are in the form of trials or joys*
- *The grace to continue to sing praises to you*
- *Calmness of the heart that only You can give me*

AMEN.

In His Dwelling Place

“One thing I ask of the LORD; this I seek: To dwell in the LORD’s house all the days of my life, to gaze on the LORD’s beauty, to visit his temple.” (Psalm 27:4)

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for the gift of life, and for the blessings to be among those who know You are the Son of God.

Thank You for the gift of sight that allows me to see the wondrous things You made and for my soul to help me see beyond my sight.

Thank you for all the things and especially my heart, in which You placed magnetic seeds of grace that draw me forever to Your love.

I know You hold me in the Palm of Your Hand and shield me with Your Holy Face. Yet, as the years go by, Lord, I fear the yoke of sickness and pain, and worry how my life will end.

And so I humbly come to ask You Lord, that when my time comes to leave here below, do not call me by a sudden death nor by an accident that tears the body part.

Not by an illness that leaves the mind confused or the senses impaired.

Not by a malady that wears out the soul, or at the mercy of evil forces.

Not with a heart filled with hate, or a body racked with pain.

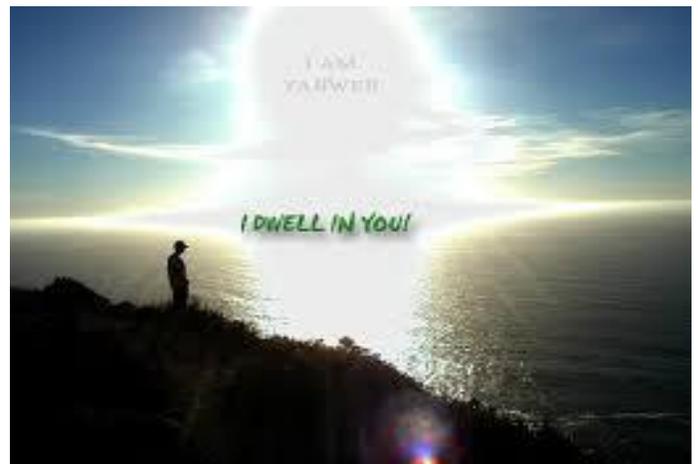
Not abandoned, lonely, without love or care.

Not by my own hands, in a moment of despair.

Jesus, let death come as a gentle friend, to sit and linger with me until You call my name.

Then let me enter Your Heavenly Home to receive Your final gift of grace, and look upon the divine countenance of Your Holy Face. Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Face of Jesus for a Peaceful Death, Straight from the heart, A Prayer Companion, Rev. Fr. Mario Jose C. Ladra



My Peace

When asked to reflect on Psalm 131 for an article called "My Peace", I engaged in an in depth reading of its verses and prayed for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to help me find the Word of God's message of peace within the verses.

I found out the psalm is a song of trust, in which the psalmist gives up self-sufficiency (Ps 131:1), like a babe enjoying the comfort of its mother's lap (Ps 131:2), thus providing a model for Israel's faith (Ps 131:3). I was struck by the words "stilled my soul" and I kind of knew the scripture is talking about an interior peace that resides in one's heart. I reflected on my typical day at work and I came to a realization of just how busy my schedule is - gym, hospital rounds, patient care, hospital consults, personnel and administrative issues in the office. How can my soul be stilled in the situations I find myself in? Is this busy-ness so ingrained in me it doesn't bother me? Or is because I am simply content with life that I do not find this distressing? I ask the Lord's forgiveness for the times when I actually get agitated and irritated by the littlest nuisances in my staff's or patient's actions. Knowing myself, I am vocal to point out my concerns if something is not at par with my standard. I try to be the advocate who feels that someone higher up has to know that something is not right about an issue. How then could I be at peace with my life? How do I find joy in this seemingly chaotic frame of mind?

In Psalm 131, verse 1, David says, my heart is not proud nor my eyes haughty. He is telling me not to succumb to the sin of pride which finds expression when one becomes self absorbed - perhaps blinded by the successes they may have attained in their chosen field, or by their wealth or high status in society or look down on people - become haughty. In this verse he is praying to God and telling Him how he has given up his old self. In verse 2, David continues to teach us on he has learned to still his soul to find peace in his heart like a baby weaned from its mother's milk enjoying the comfort of its mother's lap. In verse 3, David exhorts Israel encompassing all the faithful to keep their hope in the Lord so they too can attain peace.

I am thankful to the Lord for using our BLD community as the instrument through whom I have been equipped by learning how to pray, knowing the scriptures through community worship, word sharings and teachings and fortifying my soul with the sacraments - to let the peace of Jesus come into my heart and let Him rule over my mind its thoughts and my body and its actions. My intimate and personal encounter with Jesus has allowed the Holy Spirit to help me establish an order of things to do and of letting go when it comes to outcome according to His will as only He alone can control that. It is through the Holy Spirit's gift of faith and in trusting in Him who provides me strength and guidance in everything I say and

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (continued from page 1)

Success and happiness is defined as material wealth, fame, and power. There is nothing to look forward to after death so they must fulfill all their earthly desires.

On the other hand, those who are deemed worthy to attain the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead are those who believe and practice in their lives the essential tenet of the Christian faith on the resurrection of the body. In the same way that Christ lived a life of service and sacrifice on earth, willingly embraced the cross in obedience to His Father's will, and was raised from the dead on the third day, those deemed worthy of the coming age believe that as long as they follow the example of Christ's life they too will forever live with the risen Christ after they die. Their lives are focused on the eternal life which will be theirs after their journey here on earth is done. Hence, in preparation for their eternal reward, they follow Christ's path of love for the Father, steadfastness in faith, doing good in word and in working for the good of all. "***They can no longer die, for they are like angels; and they are the children of God because they are the ones who will rise.***" (Luke 20:36)

A beautiful example of fortitude in their faith is the story of the mother and her seven sons in the first reading taken from the Second Book of Maccabees Chapter 7. They stood firm and did not accede to the king's order to transgress the laws they have been taught through the generations. They were tortured and maltreated and they accepted these because of their belief that obedience to God is worth more than their lives, knowing that the God who loves them will raise them up to eternal life. One of the brothers spoke clearly of his belief in the resurrection in these words in verse 9 of the reading: "***You are depriving us of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us up to live again forever. It is for his laws that we are dying.***"

In the gospel according to Luke, Jesus also spoke these words: "***That the dead will rise even Moses made known in the passage about the bush, when he called out 'Lord, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive'.***" (Luke 20: 37-39) After He has spoken, the scribes acknowledged that he answered them well. Let us direct our minds and our hearts to the Him who is the source of life everlasting. His relationship with us endures time and space. This world, our material possessions, even our relationships will pass as we leave this life.

When we are called home by our Father, are we ready to come back to Him and ask Him to welcome us? Are we ready for the coming age?

Continued on page 4

MY PEACE (continued from page 3)

do, that I am able to bear the fruit of peace and able to accomplish His will in my life. In Philippians 4:7, the Word promises that the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. For this peace and joy to remain in our hearts, we should always fill our hearts and mind with whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious and to keep on doing what we have learned and received and heard and seen in Christ. Amen.

COUNSELS (continued from page 3)

Can we say that we have truly followed Christ's example of love that we are worthy to come in His presence?

Father in heaven hide us in the shadow of your wings that we may not falter in following You. Guide our minds and our hearts that we may be content with whatever graces You have given us. Make us realize that the true reward is in Heaven and not here on earth. Relieve us of all anxieties and fears that cause us to stray from the path of righteousness. By Your grace and mercy, strengthen our resolve to always do Your Divine Will.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Affirm one another.
2. Continue to support our mission works and give hope to those in need.

NEWS (continued from page 1)

On Monday, the Holy Father celebrated a Mass for the cardinals and bishops who have died this year. In his homily, he said that when we die, our life and work are in the hands of God, hands marked by the wounds of love, wounds that Jesus chose to preserve to "make us feel his mercy." Francis added that "our sins are also in God's hands, those merciful hands with their 'wounds' of love. It is not by chance that Jesus wanted to preserve the wounds on his hands to make us feel his mercy. This is our strength and our hope!"

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

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ST. ANTONINUS PARISH, Rectory Basement
337 So. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ
6 Wednesdays 8:00 – 10:30 PM, Oct. 16th thru Nov. 20th

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ON CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

November 24, 2013 at the 10 AM MASS
Fr. Joseph Meagher, Celebrant
Contact Persons: George/MaryAnn McGehrin
georgemaryann@hotmail.com

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2609	136,447
Earthquake Collection	446	2,088

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treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

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Nov 29* - Christian Servanthood – **ME 39; SPE 14**
 Anointing & Laying of Hands – **ME 38**
 Golden Years Teaching - **GYM**
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 - Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38
 - Healing and Deliverance
 - Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37
Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER #42

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013
 Venue: Pine Hill Retreat House
 Canadensis, PA
 Contact Persons: Marc/Emma Belmonte
mla@bldnewark.com

SINGLES ENCOUNTER #31

Dates: Fri, November 15 – Sun, November 17, 2013
 Venue: Graymoor Spiritual Center, Garrison, New York
 Contact Persons : Jutt Bustos & Sundee/Neneng Ikalina
 Application forms available at: registration table and
bldnewark.com

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship
 Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014
 Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines
 Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez
chi1944@hotmail.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Nov 15	Management
		Nov 22	Mission
		Nov 29	Pastoral
		Dec 6	Evangelization

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 46

Bulletin Edition

November 15, 2013

Pope: "God's Love is Eternal, It Cannot Change"

Pontiff Leads Thousands in Prayer for Typhoon Victims in the Philippines

Vatican City, November 11, 2013 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org))
[Junno Arocho Esteves](http://www.zenit.org)

Pope Francis reflected on Christ's response regarding the resurrection of the dead during his weekly Angelus address on Sunday at St. Peter's Square. Tens of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world gathered to listen to the Holy Father.

Regarding the Sunday Gospel, in which the Sadducees proposed a hypothetical situation to ridicule the belief in the resurrection of the dead, the Holy Father stated that Christ not only responds but also "launches a counterattack" using the Scripture "with simplicity and an originality that fills us with admiration for our Master, the only Master."

"Jesus finds the proof of the resurrection in the episode about Moses and the burning bush, where God reveals himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," the Holy Father said. "The name of God is connected to the men and women to which He binds himself, and this link is stronger than death. And we can also say of God's relationship with us, with each one of us: He is our God! He is the God of each one of us! It is as if He bore our name. It pleases Him to say it, and this is the covenant."

The Holy Father went on to say that God, who is the God of the living and not of the dead, forms a covenant with man through Christ, who overcame death through His death and resurrection. Through Him, God gives us eternal life, a life that "is not merely an embellishment of this present life: it transcends our imagination, because God continually awakens wonder in us with His love and with His mercy."

"So, what will happen is *Continued on page 4*

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

COUNSELS

God's Promise to the Faithful

THEME: We honor the sovereignty of Christ when we remain steadfast in our faith.

WORD: Mal 3:19-20a; Ps 98:5-6, 7-8, 9; 2 Thes 3:7-12; Lk 21:5-19

ORDER: Persevere in your faith and you will secure your lives.

REFLECTION:

"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)

What an awesome promise from God for those that remain steadfast in their faith!

During the time of Malachi, some followers asked why should one obey the Lord's commandments if things go well for those who do evil and tempt God? This question has been asked not only by the Israelites over two thousand years ago, but still continues to be asked in our present time. And perhaps more in this generation, because of mankind's unbridled passion for instant gratification, with little or no regard for a consequence that they don't see nor believe, such as the 2nd Coming of Christ or the pains of hell. The prophet replied that a day of judgment will come when the wicked will be destroyed. However, Malachi sends a message of hope and justification for those who persevere in Christ. ***"But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays."*** (Malachi 3:20a) The Psalm reaffirms the 1st Reading's emphasis that God comes to rule the world with justice. The Lord is NOT unaware of the trials and worries of those who fear him; in fact he is like a great king who records the good deeds of the just.

In St. Luke's Gospel, Jesus *Continued on page 3*

Promise of the Week

"For you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays." (Malachi 3:20)

WISDOM

Heavenly or Earthly

We live in a world where a growing number of people no longer seek God for His counsel and wisdom. With the recent government shutdown and the constant bickering among our leaders that we witness everyday, God plays no role. Instead, man is so entrenched in his own idea and purported wisdom, that as a nation we become so polarized and separated from each other, without regard to the consequences of our actions and decisions. As we struggle to satisfy and fight for our own personal cause, ideals and passion, we drift away from each other all the more. A world that is detached from anything divine can become a dangerous place to live in. And we are so because we see and suffer disillusionment, fear, doubts, worry and frustrations.

How then as a community of Faith can we contribute to make this world a better place? In community, we come together to pray for our nation and the rest of the world but we too can find reasons to separate ways.

Community life can be so exhilarating because we feel the warmth and love of each other. We open up to each other, the walls we built around us are torn down, our masks are lifted out and we become vulnerable to each other. But then, community life too can be a terrible or difficult place to be in, because it is a place of woundedness, differences, emotions, imperfections, opinions and ideas. We are raised differently as we come from different walks of life; we think and do things differently. It is a haven of inescapable conflicts and issues, and we constantly find ourselves in the midst of them.

The grace of God overflows amongst us as we strive and realize that behind the myriad of our differences is one unifying thread that keeps us knitted together. God is in us who loves us. In the eyes of God, we are more than broken people but His very own sons and daughters. God's wisdom has been poured out upon us through His Spirit that scrutinizes everything even the depths of our hearts. We grow in His Spirit when we acknowledge our own poverty and recognize others' richness and we learn to see each other as God sees us. We begin to think and act in heavenly ways. We learn to listen, to care and to love.

This is wisdom from above.

His Heavenly Home

Picture this: a cold, winter night in which the snow is falling so furiously, that you cannot see through the sheets of precipitation in front of you.

You are blinded. You are scared. You are lost. You are ready to give up and be enveloped in this snowstorm... Yet off in a far distance, you see a light.

A simple glance of it fills you with warmth and courage. And it fills you with enough strength to carry on, to fight the snow, and seek its source.

As you push through the storm with each step, you are burdened even more by its cold and weight, yet the light has such a glorious aura that you cannot stop now. Despite how many times you may fall, the thought of finding rest in this mysterious light is enough for you to get back up. And each time you rise, you are changed, as if the light is guiding you, calling you, reaching out for you. In your desperation, it becomes a source of hope—so much, that it is only thing you desire and wish to seek in your suffering. Finally, as you approach it, you make a stunning discovery.

It is more than just a candle, more than just a lamp, more than just a streetlight. It is the light shining from a home—the only home for miles. The picturesque abode shines so brightly, it is as if

angels dwell inside... no, something greater.

As you rush to knock on the door, a man dressed in white—whiter than the surrounding snow—opens it before you. And sees you. And acknowledges your humanity. And without hesitation—no second thought of who you are, where you are from, or what you have done to be in this storm—this man welcomes you into his home to find rest.

One look at him and you see his hospitable persona, his unconditional concern, and his loving spirit for you: a beauty like no other. This man has welcomed you into his home because you have sought it wholeheartedly.

And He will welcome you into His kingdom, His house, His dwelling place... because you have sought HIM wholeheartedly.

“One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek Him in His temple.” (Psalms 27:4)



With the liturgical year coming to a close, the church turns its attention to the “End Times,” thus framing the Christian year with apocalyptic images. The challenge to Christians is how to incorporate the sense of urgency contained in these passages into our modern spirituality.

What might be a way to enrich our spirituality with the kind of readings from Scripture we have been given today? St. Paul gives a helpful insight in his second letter to the Thessalonians. If you read both of Paul’s letters to the Thessalonians you learn that today’s passage is part of a bigger picture in which Paul also wrote compellingly about the Second Coming of Christ and the final judgment of the world.

Paul himself worked hard for the spread of the Gospel and established many churches, supporting himself as he went about teaching and preaching.. Paul was agitating for a renewed vision of humanity, “a way of inviting you to share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thessalonians 2:14). Central to the glory of Jesus Christ is that it does not share in the glory of any earthly kingdom. Paul stresses not giving up on normal life even when one is not sure about the future. It is this very sense of being uncertain that can help us figure out what is most important, and gives us a sense of urgency that informs the way we sort out our true and deep spiritual needs.

What is unnecessary or trivial? What is essential or important? Christian spirituality, it has been said, is about prioritizing our loves. Love of God, love of neighbor and self, love of our enemies. The demands of love require our attention, especially when many others, people and institutions, clamor for our attention and allegiance.

None of this is easy. Christians have been lulled into complacency in modern times just as they were in the first century. We live in very distressing times. The Scripture for today reminds us to attend to the important things of life, remembering the demands of justice and the invitation of a radical Love. None of this is to say that we cannot take care of ourselves, too. We must take time to rest, to pray (for these things are also “right”), in order to keep our hearts soft and alive to the God-presence. In this way we can live without anxiety but with confidence, trusting that our words and actions will be the necessary ones for today’s strife-torn world.

Jesus explains that even in times of disaster, we are NOT to draw back nor despair, because He will always be with us, and our perseverance will secure our lives. St. Paul tells the Thessalonians who are unwilling to work that they should not eat. Furthermore, he advised the Thessalonians to disregard what the false prophets are concluding that since the “Parousia” or the 2nd Coming of Christ was at hand, why should they still continue to work? If we were told that the world is coming to an end, say in 40 days, should we stop what we are doing and just idly wait for the second coming of the Lord?

The early martyrs like St. Stephen were persecuted because they believed that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Today, believers and even the leaders of the Church suffer a different kind of persecution. In this sinful world we know today, there are powers that don’t want us to be free from persecutions. These powers are the DEVIL, the WORLD, and the FLESH. Now let’s expound on how these forces persecute us.

The first is the DEVIL, which we should never underestimate because it has the power to manipulate us into sinning. The grace we receive from our Sacraments is our only defense against this enemy, and Jesus Christ has the power and authority to dismiss him when he oppresses us.

The second is the WORLD, which represents individual or groups, other religions, governments, or worldly systems that oppose Jesus Christ. Following God’s Commandments is very hard to do, and may be a sacrifice for many, but by the grace of God and by obeying His Commandments, we can be shielded against the WORLD.

The third is the FLESH. The sins of the FLESH are the products of the seven CAPITAL SINS (PRIDE, GREED, GLUTTONY, LUST, SLOTH, ENVY, and ANGER). They are the greatest threat to the virtuous life, truly many fall deeper into sin because they refuse to believe that they are capable of repentance and change. They become despondent and feel unworthy to be forgiven by God. We must always remember that Jesus Christ desires us to turn to Him, to die to our old selves so that we can have a new life – the vindicated life that He wants us to have.

God will take care of these forces because He is always ready to give us the wisdom to be steadfast in our faith. We should not be afraid and must remain resolute in giving testimony to Christ. Even the disciples are warned by Jesus that they too will suffer – not from unfaithfulness, but from persecution because of their faithfulness. *Continued on page 4*

COUNSELS *(from page 3)*

Persecution is an opportunity to grow in our faith. And we must not worry about what we will say because the Father will give us wisdom and His Spirit. **DO NOT BE AFRAID!** Persevere! This is what the Lord tells His disciples, and this is the way we will survive.”

Only God knows the exact moment when the world would end as we know it. So why should we just hopelessly stop living because of the belief that the 2nd Coming is imminent? On the contrary, shouldn't we, all the more reason, savor all our remaining days by giving ourselves wholeheartedly to the daily struggles of Christian living? Shouldn't we continue to persevere in our faith by continuing the good works we do for the Lord and our community? Shouldn't we always be in a state of grace so we are always ready to come face to face with our Creator?

Today's readings show us that even in the midst of a world gone mad, we are still empowered to bring God's order to any situation. Whether it is by our behavior, our words, or our presence, believers have been given the power to share God's message no matter where we are. We must not let distractions of the world's chaos and disorder dispel God's perfect plan of salvation.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Continue the good works you do for the Lord.
2. Worship the Lord at all times.

NEWS ... *(from page 3)*

precisely the contrary of what the Sadducees expected. It is not this life that illuminates eternity, the other life, the one that awaits us, but eternity – that life – that illuminates and gives hope to the earthly life of each one of us! If we look at things only with human eyes, we are brought to say that man's journey runs from life to death. This is obvious!,” the Pope exclaimed.

Prior to reciting that Angelus prayer, the Pope told the faithful that Jesus gives a different perspective than that of the Sadducees; that our pilgrimage runs from death to life, a pilgrimage towards the fullness of life. The Sacraments, prayer and fraternity with others, he continued, are a preview of the risen life.

“Our experience of his love and his fidelity lights a fire in our heart and increases our faith in the resurrection. In fact, if God is faithful and loves, it cannot be for a limited time: fidelity is eternal, it cannot change. God's love is eternal, it cannot change! It is not for a limited time: it is forever! And to go forward! He is faithful forever and he awaits us, each of us, he accompanies each of us with this eternal fidelity,” the Pope said. ↗

Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,298	139,745
Typhoon Yolanda	954	*

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

	Date	Apostolate
	Nov 22	Mission
	Nov 29	Pastoral
	Dec 6	Evangelization
	Dec 13	Formation

TEACHING CALENDAR

Nov 29* - Christian Servanthood – **ME 39; SPE 14**

Anointing & Laying of Hands – **ME 38**

Golden Years Teaching - **GYM**

Dec 7** - Sienna Gift Inventory – **ME 39-41/SPE 14-15/SE**

- Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38

- Healing and Deliverance

- Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

DLC MEETING

When: **Tuesday, November 19, 2013, 7:30 pm**

Venue: **Divine Mercy Parish Library, Rahway NJ**

SPECIAL COLLECTION

Typhoon Yolanda Victims - There will be an extra collection this Friday and the succeeding Fridays.

If unable to attend the Friday worship or have family, friends or organizations send donations, please mail to:

BLD Newark

PO Box 139

114 Oak Tree Ave

South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Make the check payable to **BLD Newark**, in the memo write **Typhoon Yolanda**. Acknowledgement letters are available if needed. BLD Newark is a 501C approved tax exempt organization. Org # 223-562-329/000.

Moment of Silence for the Philippines

After the recitation of the Angelus, the Holy Father greeted the pilgrims from various countries present in the square. Leading the faithful in prayer, Pope Francis called for a moment of silence for the victims of the super typhoon that recently struck the Philippines while assuring them of his closeness. “Unfortunately, there are many victims and enormous damage. Let us pray for a moment in silence and then to Our Lady for these brothers and sisters of ours and let us try also to help them concretely.”

After the moment of silence, the faithful joined Pope Francis in praying the Hail Mary for the victims of the super typhoon.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 47

Bulletin Edition

November 22, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Singles Ministry gives glory to God

GIVE THANKS TO THE KING!



THEME: We honor the sovereignty of Christ when we proclaim Him our Lord and King.

WORD: **2 Sm 5:1-3/Ps 122:1-5**
Col 1:12-20/Lk 23:35-43

ORDER: *“Give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance.”*
(Col 1:12)

REFLECTION:

This Sunday, we will celebrate the Solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. This feast reminds us of Christ’s Kingship and Sovereignty over all the earth and that we are His people and He is our God. We were created by God and for God alone, who gave us His Only Son for the forgiveness of our sins, out of His abounding love and goodness. Therefore, **whatever we do, in word or deed, in all circumstances, we should give thanks to God the Father!**

It is truly unthinkable that Jesus, whom St. Paul characterizes in terms both majestic and magnificent in his doxology (*“the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation....”* Colossians 1:15-20) is also described in Luke as the derided and rejected King who hang on the cross to suffer the same fate as the two criminals by His side. Why would Jesus do it? **LOVE, God's unimaginable love.** Herein lies His authority as Lord and King, the basis of His sovereignty. He loved us and died for us to save us from our sins. This is what makes **Jesus**, beyond doubt, a **KING without compare**, and this gives us every reason to thank God the Father for Jesus!

Sadly, like one of the criminals in the gospel, we often **fail to take** the redemptive work of Christ on the cross and His mercy that allows us to be joined to His

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
(Col 1:13)

It is with great joy and jubilation that we reveal the awesome work of the Lord in the just concluded Singles Encounter #31 held at Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison, New York on November 15 to 17, 2013. Eighteen young men and women answered the call of the Lord to know Him deeper and set up a firm, lasting and intimate relationship throughout their lives.

Continued on page 4

BLD welcomes ME #42



Last Friday, November 15, 2013 was a beautiful autumn day at the Pine Hill Retreat Center in Canadensis, PA. It was an auspicious start for the 3-day Marriage Encounter #42 weekend, as the sponsoring ME 41 class

Continued on page 4

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

Lord, Please let me see!

For many years I was so blinded by my earthbound values that I could not see beyond them. My focus was personal recognition, self-advancement and accumulating material wealth. I was so consumed by these that my faith wavered to the point of near abandonment. Attending Sunday mass or any religious event was a chore that I tried to avoid as much as possible. I questioned the Church on its position on many things, specifically contributions and almsgiving. I once asked, why do I have to contribute so much money for a baptism? Would my child be deprived of the sacrament if I could not afford what was being asked?

It was not until the Lord called me to BLD, followed by 2 years of discipleship formation, that my perspective changed. I came to the realization that all these worldly concerns did not matter. What IS expected of me and what counted most is how I shared Christ's blessings and love. In Lk 18:41, Jesus asked the blind beggar, *"What do you want me to do for you? He replied, 'Lord, please let me see.'"*

The Lord allowed me to see not only with my eyes but with my mind and heart. I have learned to solely rely on God's divine providence, believing that He will minister to my needs rather than to my wants. This past month was financially challenging for my spouse and me. We had a few unexpected expenditures and we were wondering where to draw the additional funds. We were also approached for contributions to help disaster victims and the less fortunate. I was hesitant to give since our funds were low. However, we prayed on it and decided to give knowing that we could forego a few luxuries and the next paycheck was only a couple of weeks away.

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Mt 7:7) A few days after the contribution checks have cleared and our reserve funds were exhausted, our generous, faithful Lord blessed us with a vendor refund check, a dividend check and a \$100 raffle prize. A total sum that far exceeded what we gave.

Thank You, Lord, for allowing me to see the beauty of following Your will. All glory and praise to You, my Lord and Savior!



**Jesus said,
"My Kingdom is
not of this world."**

John 18:36

John 6 Corner:

THANKSGIVING IS...



We all know that the Thanksgiving Holiday is a day we remember all that God has blessed us with and become grateful for what we have now. Thanksgiving is a day that we acknowledge all God gives us, like He blessed the Pilgrims with a feast back in the 1600's. Thanksgiving is a time of gathering, kindness, and rejoicing. We should all remember that we are nothing without the presence of God in our lives.

I truly love Thanksgiving and it is one of my favorite holidays. Every year, my mom, dad, and brother spend quality time with one another. We watch movies, talk about our day, and gather at the dinner table to eat delicious food my dad made. We call some relatives who live far away and wish them a happy Thanksgiving and wish they would be with us now.

My family gathers up some of my old clothes that don't fit me and toys that my brother and I don't play with and donate them to our Church, so they can be sent to all the children who are less fortunate than us. We go to Church and pray to thank God for letting us have these blessings He gives us. We do these acts to become better disciples of God, and to give back to Him after all He has done for us.

The part my family and I love most is rejoicing about the gifts we received. God has blessed me with a good home, home-cooked meals, and loving and close family that care for me so much. I can't thank God enough for what He has given me. As we near Thanksgiving, I try to put my mind in the right mind-set that God wants us to be. I try to finish my chores, not be disobedient to my family, and study a lot harder in school. I do this because this is how I will give back to God this year. I rejoice that I am here today and wouldn't want anything more.

We often forget the true meaning of Thanksgiving and just remember it as a day to be with family. However, we also must know that God has brought us into this world and gave us all these wonderful things. We must acknowledge that God always gives abundantly and we must do our best to give back to Him.

SAINT CECILIA

Patron Saint of Musicians and Church Music

Born in Rome in 2nd century AD and raised a Christian in a noble Roman household, St. Cecilia had no desire for the wedding that was arranged for her.



On the night of her wedding, she explained her faith to her bridegroom Valerian, saying that an angel has crowns for them both if he respected her virginity and became a Christian. Valerian went to Pope Urban for baptism and subsequently brought his brother into the faith. The story continues with the martyrdom of the

brothers followed by Cecilia, whom the judge ordered be scalded to death in her bath. When this failed, he ordered her beheaded. The legend about Cecilia's death says that after being struck three times on the neck with a sword, she lived for three days, and asked the pope to convert her home into a church. The Church of St. Cecilia in Trastevere is reputedly built on the site of the house in which she lived. The original church was constructed in the fourth century; her incorrupt remains (she is known to be the first saint to be incorrupt) were placed there in the ninth century and the church was rebuilt in 1599.

Her feast day became an occasion for musical concerts and festivals. Since the time of the Renaissance she has usually been portrayed with a viola or other small musical instrument evidently to express what was often attributed to her that while the musicians played at her nuptials "she sang in her heart to God." She has become a symbol of the Church's conviction that good music is an integral part of the liturgy. Vatican II explains: "Liturgical action is given a more noble form when sacred rites are solemnized in song, with the active participation of the people. Choirs must be diligently promoted, but bishops and other pastors must ensure that, whenever the sacred action is to be celebrated with song, the whole body of the faithful may be able to contribute that active participation which is rightfully theirs... Religious singing by the people is to be skillfully fostered, so that voices of the faithful may ring out." (Vatican II, *Constitution on the Liturgy*, 112-118) This is a conviction shared by us in the BLD community.

St. Cecilia is one of seven women, excluding the Blessed Virgin, commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

own suffering seriously, sometimes taking it for granted or challenging it, especially when things do not go our way and when tragedy strikes.

This is clearly illustrated in the gospel. We are presented with two types of criminals: the penitent thief and the impenitent thief. The first saw Jesus as the Savior and King of the world despite His lowly appearance, which caused him to acknowledge that his punishment for wrongdoing was just, to proclaim the Lord innocent, to pray with confidence by saying, "***Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom.***" (Luke 23:42), even though he never heard any of Jesus' teachings, saw Him heal the sick and raise the dead or any visible sign of Jesus' kingship. The second was blinded by selfishness and pride, which caused him to deny and mock Jesus by saying, "***Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us.***" (Luke 23:39) Both thieves needed forgiveness and were in the presence of Jesus as He offered Himself in sacrifice for them and for all mankind, but they responded to His act of love and mercy very differently.

The penitent criminal's humility, recognition of Jesus as Lord and King and his pleading for mercy merited Jesus' loving attention. He asked that He should remember him, but our Lord promised him even more, "***Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.***" (Luke 23:43) Jesus' Divine Mercy, forgiveness and promise of a place in His Kingdom apply to all of us, too. In fact, Christ's Kingdom is in our hearts now. When we acknowledge our sins and repent of them and when we receive Jesus fully into our hearts, desiring everything that God wills, in all circumstances and without reservations, His Kingdom is realized within us. Therefore, St. Paul exhorts us to "***give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light. He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.***" (Colossians 1:13-14).

As Advent draws near, let us pause from the frenzy of busy living and take time to examine the depth of our appreciation for God's love for us by reflecting on the following questions:

1. In the last 2 weeks, have I challenged, questioned or doubted (in words, thoughts, or actions) Jesus' Kingship?
2. What have I done to stay in the state of grace during moments of despair?
3. Did I look at the recent tragedy of Typhoon Yolanda as an opportunity to hold onto God's Promise of Hope and Deliverance, and did I make an effort to encourage those who were disheartened to trust God and love Him even more? ***Continued on page 4***

COUNSELS *(from page 3)*

As followers of Christ, it is our responsibility to boldly proclaim God's love and mercy to all and to encourage one another to have faith in God in all circumstances. Let us pray for God's grace to be truly thankful especially during trying moments, and to express our appreciation in ways that proclaim Him Lord and King of our lives. Like the Psalmist and the penitent thief, may we, especially the victims of Typhoon Yolanda, go rejoicing to the house of our Lord and King (Psalm 122:1), marching towards the Kingdom with confidence, believing that the promise to rise from our death and live in the splendor of everlasting life with Jesus will be ours.

MAY CHRIST THE KING REIGN IN OUR HEARTS NOW AND FOREVER!

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Lead others to accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.**
2. **Live the Gospel so all will know that Jesus is the King of your life.**
3. **Receive the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation as often as possible.**
4. **Forgive and reconcile with one another.**

SINGLES ... *(from page 1)*

The graduates of SE #31 are: Alex Apostol, Dee Lorraine Solon, Edderic Ugaddan, Elven Espinar, *Matt Trinidad, Gene Celestino, James Santiago, *Jamie Buhain, Katryn Fajardo, *Kriczet Danta, Lauren Lopina, Megan Fitzsimmons, Nicole Coscio, Paul Aguinaldo, *Rebecca Madrigal, Rorie Reyes, Tiniel Roopchandsingh and Trixie Jose. Ed and Armi Bayudan will be their Class Shepherds who will lead and guide them in their spiritual journey as they join the rest of the Singles Ministry.

The Pastoral Team was made up of Fr. Dave Sison with facilitators Amanda Anderson, Rasheed Espejon, Jennifer Mendiola and Eric Cruz. They were just stupendous in managing the spiritual exercises for the new graduates to follow in Jesus' footstep.

Our enduring thanks goes to the sponsoring class of SE #30 along with their class shepherds who tirelessly and seamlessly worked behind the scene, and equally to the able support of all auxies from Newark, Seattle and DC as well as the volunteers.

For God we declare our victory and to God we give glory. (*Coordinators)

ME #42 *(from page 1)*

welcomed the arriving candidates: Roger & Love Babol, Bo & Bing Frio*, Carey & Denise Gross, Rico & Rose Lopez*, Runnie & Jo-An Santiago*, Marcial & Tess Santos, and Fr. Jim Tucker. Their class shepherd will be Tony & Tatess Abad. (*Coordinators) ↗

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,754	142,499
Typhoon Yolanda	6,688	7,642

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Nov 29	Pastoral
			Dec 6	Evangelization
			Dec 13	Formation
			Dec 20	Management

TEACHING CALENDAR

Nov 29* - Christian Servanthood – ME 39; SPE 14

Anointing & Laying of Hands – ME 38

Golden Years Teaching - GYM

Dec 7** - Sienna Gift Inventory – ME 39-41/SPE 14-15/SE

- Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38

- Healing and Deliverance

- Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING!

When: Sunday, November 24, 2013

Adoration at 9 AM, Mass at 10 AM

Venue: St. Antoninus Catholic Church

337 South Orange Avenue, Newark NJ

SPECIAL COLLECTION

FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA VICTIMS

Monetary Donation: Every Friday (during Worship).

You can also mail your donations to:

BLD Newark, PO Box 139, 114

Oak Tree Ave, South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Make the check payable to **BLD Newark**, in the memo write **Typhoon Yolanda**.

Acknowledgement letters are available if needed. BLD Newark is a 501C approved tax exempt organization. Org # 223-562-329/000.

Donation of Goods:

Bring to Divine Mercy Parish on Friday nights, starting November 29th

Put items in balikbayan box, do not seal

Make a list of goods in each box (general list, not detailed)

Contact Persons: Nong and Tricia Bustos

The Pastoral Team for ME 42 consisted of: Rev. Michael B. Semana, Nong & Tricia Bustos and Carlito & Arlene Claricia.

The marriage encounter weekend was a complete success. The couples strengthened their love for God and each other and will go forth with a greater commitment to one another.



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 48

Bulletin Edition

November 29, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

ASPIRANT'S RETREAT

November 22-24, 2013

What a spiritual and blessed event the Aspirant's Retreat was!! Although all candidates admitted to not knowing what the retreat is all about, everyone felt they were summoned by the Spirit of God. The candidates, **Ditto Fernando, Sag Ogang** and **Maris Manansala-Manguiat** of Singles Ministry, **Libarid Maljian** and **Rhoden Lynford** of Solo Parents' Ministry, Newark, **Elizabeth Leighton** of Rockland Outreach and ME 37 couples, **Lenon & Anne Ceria, Rick & Isabel Yglesias**, all found a deeper personal relationship with God.



Fr. Paul Lehman, conducted the Retreat himself. He explained discipleship as knowing, believing, following, and serving Jesus, that Jesus Christ is the only way, the truth and the light;

and the Triune God is the source of all authority!

Fr. Lehman expounded further on the importance of obedience in servanthood, exemplified by Jesus in His trust of the Father's will, in contrast to Adam's disobedience. The Aspirant's Retreat is the culmination of the three-year Christian Development Formation Program, offered through the Teaching Ministry and the beginning of a 6-month Discipleship Training leading to full covenanted discipleship in the Spiritual Community of Bukas Loob sa Diyos. As witnesses to His love, we all should evangelize and spread the word of God far and wide. *"Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."* Luke 16:15. Modern evangelization depends upon the complete conversion of covenanted disciples to apostleship, calling us to become vicars who stand for Christ throughout all the earth!

"ADVENTUS" God is Here

THEME: We bring Jesus to birth in our life when we prepare for His coming with vigilance.

WORD: **IS 2:1-5/PS 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 ROM 13:11-14/MT 24:37-44**

ORDER: Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.

REFLECTION:

The Matthean Gospel account for the 1st Sunday of Advent begins with a familiar truism, that indeed history will repeat itself. *"As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man."* (Mt 24:37) Jesus is coming again impassioned by the constancy of His love for us. So too, the Scripture has recorded that, following the Great Flood and for many centuries after that, our human attitude and patterns of behavior have not changed. His coming bears some deep reflection and contemplation on our part.

God has provided us a divine map that should help us navigate our own lives today. We can either dread this coming or await it in joy and anticipation. We can ignore all the signs and continue on in our merry way, or we can find shelter in the ark.

This season of advent, we come together in thanksgiving for Christ's first coming. It is a season of recommitment and renewal of our faith in His continual coming and for preparing ourselves in anticipation of His Second Coming.

The church has taught us that Advent's essential meaning is rooted in its original Latin word *adventus* which means arrival, God is here, Emmanuel, God with us.

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"Those who love you prosper."

(Ps 122:6)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

TWO SMALL COINS

“When he looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasury and he noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, “I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood.” Luke 21:1-4

If we are to believe that life, as they say, is a gamble, then the act of giving is the easiest way to lose. No trading or barter is done. Goods and services are not exchanged. At most, the giver gets a smile or a handshake. And the last time I checked, smiles and handshakes aren't that big as equities on Wall Street! This makes me wonder: If the act of giving is a one-way street, why do people bother with such “selfless” acts?

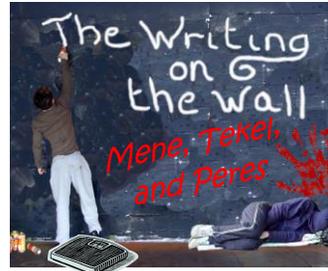
What is more puzzling is when those who barely make ends meet, share what they have with other people. In the passage about the widow who gives two coins as a temple offering, Jesus says that she has put in more than all the money the other people had given. Why? Because unlike other people who chose to give what they didn't need anymore, the widow gave all she had. Never mind the unleavened bread loaves she'd been eyeing to last her for a day or two, or maybe the oil crushed from olives to soothe her arthritic pangs on those cold desert evenings. Two coins are all she had and down it went as offering. We can see the widow's action as a way to purge the spirit, to make it new and in the process, reinforce a stronger faith in Him who always provides. She who is and has nothing surrenders everything and in doing so, unknowingly becomes more than she had ever expected, most especially in the eyes of God.

These days, if “practicality” were to put up a fast-food chain, a large population would bloat and chow down on extra servings of narcissism served on an I-me-myself platter. So what's the point of giving if you can't get anything in return? And then to give all you have as if today will be an eternal standstill and tomorrow won't arrive?

The selfless act of giving may be frowned upon as impractical or as a blind act of optimism. But in a world where a virtual spectrum dictates economy and government shutdowns are possible, why can't we choose to believe that something small---a random act of kindness, a pat on the back, and yes, even your two cents' worth ---can go a long way.

Oh and you want to hear an old story? Once, someone chose to give EVERYTHING he had (life and limbs included) to people He barely knew. And it is because of Him that I am saved. And it is because of Him that I get the strength to write these words. Amen.

Measuring Up



A long, long time ago (Daniel chapter 5), there was some writing on a wall: **“TEKEL, you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting”** (verse 27).

They wondered what it meant. The king soon found out. **“That very night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was slain.”** (Daniel 5:30)

One day, in our individual futures, each of us too, will find out. For we all will be part of this scenario at the Gates of Heaven:

St. Peter: **“Next!”**

Me: “That would be me!”

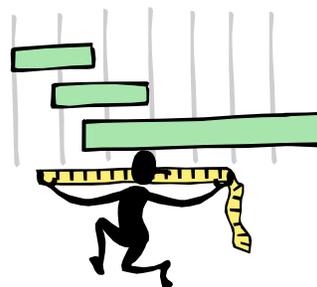
St. Peter: “Okay...now, before you can enter into heaven, we have to check one thing. Please step on this scale.”

Me: “I knew it, I should have gone on that diet...”

St. Peter: “Oh, this is a special scale. It doesn't check your physical weight; although, while you were there on earth, that diet and those exercises would have really helped you.

St. Peter: Instead, it measures your spirit's condition. It detects: what you did, what you didn't do, what you took, what you gave away, how you exercised your faith...or if you did not.”

Me: “I knew it... I could have... I should have done more...”



Jesus said, **“For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”** (Luke 6:38)

I pray that on that day, when you and I humbly step on that scale, even though we could have done more, that we will not be found wanting.

Psalm 100:1

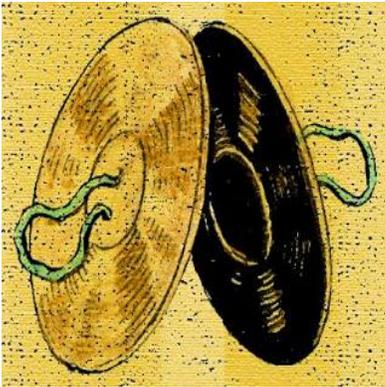
**“A psalm of thanksgiving.
Shout joyfully to the LORD, all you lands”**

TRUE FAITH

“For, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Romans 10:9.

In this verse, St. Paul is teaching us to adhere to a two-fold command: confess and believe. We need to heed both in order to be saved; we cannot simply do one and neglect the other. For example, I can attend Friday worships, raise my hands in praise, and exclaim loudly and boldly that Jesus is Lord. However, if I don't believe in my heart in His saving power, then all my efforts are in vain. I would merely be ***“a resounding gong or clashing cymbal,”*** as St. Paul says in his letter of the Corinthians (1 Cor



13:1). I find that it is easier to simply confess and proclaim His name out loud, and far more difficult to keep that belief enkindled in my own heart. We confess the lordship of Christ with our mouths, but they are hollow words if our faith has not been ingrained in our hearts and is not lived out in our daily lives. For example, when life is difficult and presents me with trials and tribulations out of my control, I often find it difficult to believe.



Faith begins when we confess our complete dependence and love for the One True God. We then must surrender to Him and His perfect will. This faith leads us to believe in God's promises, especially the promise that our bodies will be raised up one day like Christ's was. Finally, faith is described also in St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians (6:16) as a shield to defend against the ***“flaming arrows of the evil one.”*** When we take up the shield of faith, we are protected. We are defended. We will be saved.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

Since the term, 2nd coming seems to imply that He left, the Church points out that this season is a celebration of His Presence; that He never abandoned or left us. This is the mysterious truth of the All-knowing, All-present God Who was, Who is and Who is to come. That He came, He remains, and He is coming again.

In his letter to the Romans, St Paul exhorts us to, ***“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ”*** (Rom 13:14). Advent is an anticipation of Jesus' being born into our own lives: a new Bethlehem, a new manger and a new inn, where He is welcomed and wrapped with our fidelity and love.

Christ's love for us is never satisfied. He comes to us continually. He comes into our lives, not every thousand years, but every day. He is a Father who keeps his promise, and He comes again in many ways that we take for granted. If taking the form of a slave and dying on the cross was not enough, our Eucharistic Lord humbly conceals Himself in the form of bread and wine, so He can be with us.

He is more than our Lord. He is our bridegroom and each soul is his bride Nothing else matters to him but the desire to come again and take his spouse away, this time for good.

The Lord understands our human condition. After all, He created us. We would not need to go to confession had we lived a perfect life after our baptism; but we have not. The waters of baptism washed away the stain of original sin, but subsequent sins followed, our sins. Our concupiscence makes it hard for us to acknowledge our sins and woundedness with open honesty. With our baptism comes the forgiveness of sins, but we continue to fail Him. He comes again and initiates reconciliation to find fresh dwelling in a contrite heart. In his Treatise on Grace, St Thomas Aquinas suggested that grace is built on nature. As weak and frail as we all are, when we strive to take the first step to be holy and to be good, His grace overflows all the more. It fortifies and strengthens us with the fervor of the Advent Spirit. Blessed John Paul the 2nd saw much human weakness and cruelty in his life, yet he presided over more canonizations than all of the other Popes combined in the annals of our Church history. His message was one of trust. He knew what man is capable of doing, and yet remained optimistic with the blessed hope that sinners, like all of us, can become citizens of heaven.

We are together in this terrestrial pilgrimage; and as a community, what should we begin and

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

continue to do in preparation for this season? Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, before being elected Pope Francis, stood before the assembly of Cardinals and gave them a foretaste of his pontifical journey. He exhorted the Church and all its members to undertake a serious introspection and inventory of its ways, habits, and activities including its failures. He said that our Lord continues to wait as He knocks at our door. This time, He is waiting and knocking, not from the outside, but from the inside. But our Lord is more than in ourselves, with ourselves, and for ourselves. He wants us to open our doors and let Him out for others.

As we wait for His coming, He also waits for us, that we may lead a life that is increasingly like Him. So when He comes, He will recognize each one of us.

DIRECTION:

Partake of the sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist faithfully.

Marshaling		Schedule	Date	Apostolate
			Dec 6	Evangelization
			Dec 13	Formation
			Dec 20	Management
			Dec 27	Mission

THANKSGIVING TABLE

PRAYER

O Gracious God, we give you thanks for your overflowing generosity to us. Thank you for the blessings of the food we eat and especially for this feast today. Thank you for our home and family and friends, especially for the presence of those gathered here. Thank you for our health, our work and our play. Please send help to those who are hungry, alone, sick and suffering war and violence. Open our hearts to your love. We ask your blessing through Christ your son. Amen.

From *Celebrating Faith: Year-round Activities For Catholic Families*, by Mary Cronk Farrell



Please notify Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,722	145,221
Typhoon Yolanda	4848	12,490

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Dec 7****
- Sienna Gift Inventory – ME 39-41/SPE 14-15/SE
 - Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38
 - Healing and Deliverance
 - Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

PRAYER COUNSELING 1

Date: November 30, Saturday, 7:00 AM – 9:00 PM

December 1, Sunday, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Venue: Library, Divine Mercy Parish, Rahway NJ

Participants must have taken the Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS).

Registration Fee: \$50 (includes meals, handouts)

Contact: Pastoral Ministry (Nong & Tricia Bustos)

pastoral@bldnewark.com

SPECIAL COLLECTION

FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA VICTIMS

Monetary Donation: Every Friday (during Worship).

You can also mail your donations to:

BLD Newark, PO Box 139, 114

Oak Tree Ave, South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Make the check payable to **BLD Newark**, in the memo write **Typhoon Yolanda**.

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Donation of Goods:

Bring to Divine Mercy Parish on Friday nights, starting November 29th

Put items in balikbayan box, do not seal

Make a list of goods in each box (general list, not detailed)

Contact Persons: Nong and Tricia Bustos



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 49

Bulletin Edition

December 6, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Retreatants experience healing

“I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” (Ez 36:26)



The Prayer Healing Retreat, held at Divine Mercy Parish, Nov 30 & Dec 1, was blessed with 40 attendees who expressed their gratitude to the Lord for helping them identify the root causes of an individual’s struggles in building a closer relationship with God and others.

The attendees found inner healing through the teachings of our Prayer Counselors, the group sessions, live counseling and pray-overs. As usual, the Lord blessed the weekend retreat with the love and support of our community through the Liturgy, Praise, Technical, Service and auxies from other ministries, who offered their time to serve during the weekend.

The 32 participants from BLD Newark included 6 from Singles, 3 from Single Parents, and 23 from ME classes, who were joined by 6 from BLD Allentown, 2 from Divine Mercy.

We trust that the Lord will allow the inner healing that the attendees have experienced to endure forever in their lives.

“I recognized that whatever God does will endure forever; there is no adding to it, or taking from it. Thus has God done that he may be revered.”

(Eccl 3:14)

WELCOME JESUS’ BIRTH

THEME: **We bring Jesus to birth in our life when we produce good fruit as evidence of our repentance.**

WORD: **Is 11:1-10/PS 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 ROM 15:4-9 /MT 3:1-12**

ORDER: *“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.”* (Rom 13:14)

REFLECTION:

The first Sunday of December this year marked the start of the Advent Season, the season when the faithful in joyous anticipation prepare, not only for the first Noel, but for what also could be the Second Coming. Many people may also overlook the spiritual significance of the Season and get carried away by the celebrations and social gatherings that come with the occasion.



The Word for the month of December: *“A joyful spiritual preparation brings Jesus to birth in our lives”* invites us to change our perspective. Advent should be a time for reflection, repentance, and receiving sacraments, a fitting time for making amends, changing our ways and transforming our lives, a time to welcome Jesus’ birth within us and allow him to live in our hearts. It is a good time to give Him the gift He has long wanted from us: our steadfast and unwavering commitment to Him. We do know what will please Jesus for His birthday, so let us give it to Him!

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

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

(Ps 72:12)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

A SIGN FROM HEAVEN



When I think about the Feeding of the Four Thousand with the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and the fish, I imagine myself being as awestruck as the disciples of Jesus had been. This miracle is truly a sign from Heaven. They went from having only “seven loaves and a few small fish” to having enough to feed four thousand. The people had been with Jesus for three days and had had nothing to eat until then. The crowd did not leave hungry. They came away satisfied. The disciples even had seven baskets of leftovers!

God can never be outdone. This miracle serves as a reminder for me that God truly equips those who are called. The disciples thought they did not have much to offer the hungry crowd. They even wanted to send them away and have the crowds buy food for themselves as written in Matthew 14:14-21. Just like the disciples, we may think we do not have the abilities, the gifts and talents to serve Jesus in his kingdom; but God knows best. He provides us with what we need, and even more than we can imagine, in order to serve in His kingdom. He takes what we think are small gifts and useless talents and multiplies them into something so grand, like the miracle of the loaves and the fish. And the awesome thing is that, though we have doubts about our abilities to serve him, He fully entrusts us, His disciples, to go out there and serve His people. Before we know it, we have touched one soul, perhaps a friend, or a family member who has been away from God. And they in turn serve others with the love of God. Before we know it, we too have fed a multitude of hungry souls in God’s kingdom. Though we will never know for sure how many we’ve served, all that matters is that God knows.

The great significance of this great passage is the transferring of power from Jesus’ Kingdom over to His disciples. As scripture says, “he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.” Just as Jesus gave authority to His disciples to proclaim the good news of His Kingdom, He gives to us, at this very moment in our lives, the power to do what they did through the Holy Spirit and strength we receive from the Holy Eucharist, which continually sustains us. The next time we have doubts about serving God, let us look at this sign from Heaven – the multiplication of the loaves and the fish and the feeding of the four thousand- and say to ourselves, Yes Lord! With You, all things are possible.

The Wise Builder

The passage about the wise and foolish builders (Mt 7:24-25) offers rich food for thought for us from two vantage points. First, in the context of Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus is delivering His Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7), which He concludes with many warnings to the listeners (Mt 7:13-29). These warnings contain a series of contrasting statements including the lesson about the wise and foolish builders. This sets the context for understanding Jesus’ saying that “*everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a prudent man who built his house upon stone*” (Mt 7:24).

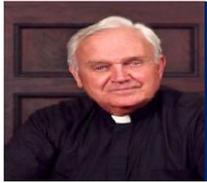
According to the teaching here, the prudent person’s house, founded on stone, withstands dramatic and powerful storms; while the foolish person, who builds the home on sand, loses the house. On one level, this is striking as it speaks generally about faith, which can keep us standing amid storms. But more importantly, Jesus’ contrast of wise and foolish builders is about being *doers* and not simply *hearers* of the word (cf. Jas 1:22; see also Dt 31:12), as the ones who act on Jesus’ words do the will of the Father, and will enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt 7:21).

A second vantage point emerges when we recall the role *building* plays in the New Testament. In Pauline thought, *building up* is an important part of community ethics (see for example 1 Cor 14:3-26). Also, the Church and each individual Christian are expressed using the metaphor of buildings. The Church is a temple of the Spirit (1 Cor 3:16), and each Christian’s body is likewise a temple of the Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). The Church is also a growing building with Jesus as the cornerstone; and in Him, everything “*is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord*” (Eph 2:20-21).

To appreciate the warning in Matthew 7:24-25, we must therefore examine whether we are doers and hearers of the Word and people committed to the Father’s will. On what foundation or cornerstone am I building my house? Am I keeping the temple of my body holy? Am I building up others with the charisms God has bestowed on me? This means more than studying scripture. It means radical discipleship in the model of Jesus. In other words, I need not only the bible, but the Church and her sacraments, through which we commune with and are reconciled with God and with each other. I need the Church because she is the spouse of the Word, Christ’s Body, and God’s people.

The Word is not simply the words of scripture, but a Person who became flesh (Jn 1:14) and “*went about doing good*” (Acts 10:38). A wise builder, a hearer and doer of the word, is therefore one who will emulate Jesus’ humility and love, His healing ministry, His commitment to the poor and marginalized, His total opposition to evil.

Continued on page 4



FR. PAUL SPEAKS

COUNSELS (from page 1)

I opened last Sunday’s liturgy with “Happy New Year.” For truly the first Sunday of Advent is the beginning of the church year. We go back to cycle A for the readings. The spirit of the season, in some sense, projects us back to the time of the Old Testament with its emphasis on waiting and longing for the Redeemer. Even though Jesus the Redeemer has already come, we know deep in our honest awareness that we have not fully embraced him.

Advent is a time of expectant waiting and hoping, not passive inactivity. The coming of Jesus, with his gifts of love and peace, can be expressed in many differing metaphors. We can use one of my favorite ones when we pray for rain and dew to fall down from the sky. **“Drop down dew you heavens from above, and let the skies rain down the Just One. Let the earth bud forth the Savior !”** (Is 45:8) We use the word, “dew” at the very beginning of the second Eucharistic prayer. “Make holy, therefore, these gifts we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Dew and rain bring refreshment and fertility to a dry earth. So the Holy Spirit is begged to change the simple elements of bread and wine into the living Body and Blood of Jesus, so that we can be spiritually refreshed and renewed.

We seem to be living in “dry” times. The economy and the job market are not inspiring confidence in the decisions of our political leaders. There seems to be a pervasive cloud of cynicism overshadowing our country. There are many suggested political solutions; but they all are missing the mark because Jesus and his gospel message are not only missing, but not even allowed in the discussion! Conversion and repentance are the right political answer. We should link in our prayerful thinking a desire for answers that only God and his Spirit can give. If every Christian turned more deeply to Jesus with a new confidence in the mercy that he wishes to pour upon us, we might begin to see a change in the way political and economic policies are handled. Prayer can be very practical. Prayer can work miracles. My encouragement to all of you is to look more realistically into your prayer life. Do you give enough time to read the scriptures and listen to the inner urgings of the Lord? If we are too busy to give time to the Lord, we are truly TOO busy. The BLD covenant spells out a public commitment to private prayer. Are we keeping our promises?

This month’s Order is: **“...Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.”** (Rom 13:14) As true servants, let us recognize that everything we receive is by God's grace. We have to persevere in our commitment and free ourselves from the distractions of this secular world. We have to spend time getting to know who Jesus is in our life. We should take delight in living a Christ-like life, glorifying God for every blessing. We ought to consciously act and live in faith, fervently asking the Lord to always fill our hearts with His goodness, love, peace and joy.

But there has to be a difference in our celebration of Christmas this year, as compared to the previous years. We have to pause for a while, step back and be more responsive to the reality of the times. We cannot play deaf and blind to the pressing needs of the victims of the recent natural and mad-made calamities both here and in our native countries. Perhaps we can scale down our gift-giving and partying this year and channel the savings to help alleviate the plight of our less-fortunate brothers and sisters.

As we prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of our Messiah, let us not only heed John the Baptist’s message to **“repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”** (Mt 3:2) but also show our solidarity with our suffering brethren by praying for them and **“let us try also to help them concretely** (Pope Francis, *Vatican City, Nov 11, 2013*.)” Despite what the rest of the world is telling us, let us content ourselves in the knowledge that we have what matters most – Christ’s presence in our lives, the source of our inner strength, joy, and wisdom.

We give glory, to You, Jesus Christ for coming into our lives!

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Go to confession regularly especially this Advent as we prepare for the coming of the Lord.**
2. **Be obedient to God’s will and walk in His Light, that His grace will be effective in your life.**

“The season of Advent is like springtime in nature, when everything is renewed, and so is fresh and healthy. Advent is also meant to do this to us – to refresh us and make us healthy, to be able to receive Christ in whatever form He may come to us.”

-Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

The Wise.. (continued from page 2)

Since the Word came to redeem the world (“*God so loved the world...*” Jn 3:16), I ought to examine the state of the world and how the Word might be speaking to me today. How is the Word speaking to us in Pope Francis and his ministry? Through the example of the saints? In the events in the church and the world today? Everyone who desires to be a *doer* and *hearer* of the Word and a *wise builder* ought to ask: “What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ?” (St Ignatius of Loyola- Spiritual Exercises)

BLD VISION

We are a community of disciples inspired by the Holy Spirit to be living witnesses for transformation in Christ to bring about a world of justice, human development and true peace.

BLD MISSION

In response to the challenges of our particular place, time and culture:

For our families:

- We will evangelize families and build communities of faith through encounters, Life in the Spirit Seminars and discipleship formation.
- We will give formation on personal and family prayer, pro-life values, Catholic social teachings and stewardship.

For our communities:

- We will actively participate in the life and mission of the Church in accord with our God-given gifts.

For our country:

- We will work on poverty alleviation through scholarships, housing for the poor and advocacies for life, environment and good governance.

Five (5) W's of Community Life

1. **Worship** – let us be faithful in giving honor and praise to the Lord by living out our pledge of personal, conjugal, family and community prayer.
2. **Word** – know the LORD through reading and reflecting on the gospel. Seek direction and guidance through the words in the Scripture.
3. **Witness** – let others see Jesus in you – see Jesus in every person you meet.
4. **Work** – giving a full day's work for a full day's pay – exercising Christian values and ethics.
5. **Warfare** – recognize that the enemy is like a roaring lion ready to devour, not sitting on the sidelines waiting for us to fall but aggressively seeking our destruction. Intercede daily for the needs and concerns of our family.

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	3,063	148,284
Typhoon Yolanda	3,698	16,188

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Dec 7**** - Sienna Gift Inventory – ME 39-41/SPE 14-15/SE
 - Understanding Corporate Worship – LSS 1-38
 - Healing and Deliverance – LSS 1-38
 - Prayer Leadership – LSS 1-37
- Jan 3*** - CDFP Overview – ME 42
 Intro to the Word – ME 42

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: **Every 3rd Friday, After Worship**

Venue: **Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church**

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: **February 17-20, 2014**

Venue: **Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines**

Contact Persons: **Mel/Remy Hernandez**

chi1944@hotmail.com

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FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA VICTIMS

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		Dec 13	Formation
		Dec 20	Management
		Dec 27	Mission
		Jan 3	Pastoral

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Interested in reading the Catechism in a year? Subscribe to flocknote.com/catechism.

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COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 50

Bulletin Edition

December 13, 2013

NEWS

COUNSELS

Pope Francis Says Youth Important in Proclaiming Christ in the Digital Age

Address Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council of the Laity

Vatican City, December 09, 2013 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org))

Pope Francis has said that proclaiming Christ in the digital era is a special field for the work of youth.

In an address to the Pontifical Council for the Laity whose members were concluding their plenary assembly on the theme of “Proclaiming Christ in the Digital Era”, the Holy Father began by saying that the theme chosen by the dicastery recalls the Church in the first centuries, who “wished to measure up to the extraordinary legacy of Greek culture.”

“Faced with philosophies of great depth and an educational method of exceptional value, but infused with pagan elements, the Fathers did not shy away from comparison, nor did they compromise with any ideas contrary to their faith,” the Holy Father said.

“Instead, they were able to recognize and assimilate the most elevated concepts, transforming them from within in the light of the Word of God. They implemented St. Paul's call to 'test everything, hold on to the good.'”

While warning of “dangerous illusions and traps to be avoided from the internet”, the Pope said that if guided by the Holy Spirit, they can discover opportunities to lead mankind towards God.”

The most important possibility that digital communication offers, he continued, is the proclamation of the Gospel that requires authentic and direct human relations. Technological skills, although important, is insufficient.

“This, however, does not mean that the presence of the Church on the web is useless; on the contrary, it

Continued on page 4

GOD COMES

TO THOSE WHO WAIT

THEME: We bring Jesus to birth in our life when we proclaim the Good News to the poor.

WORD: **IS 35:1-6A,10/PS 146:6-7,8-9, 9-10 JAS 5:7-10/MT 11:2-11**

ORDER: **Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.**

REFLECTION:

As we continue our journey through this Advent season, this Sunday's readings remind us of the joys and struggles that come in waiting on the Lord. As most of us know, the waiting game is often not an easy one. How often do we find ourselves growing impatient, eagerly waiting and begging for the Lord to answer us? But as it says in the second reading “*Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord.*” (Jas 5:7)

The prophet Isaiah reminds us in that waiting and trusting in God reaps its own rewards. Often times, when we deeply want something and we wait so eagerly for it, we become blinded by our desire and fail to see how God's hands are so delicately working in our lives. We may often become discouraged, hopeless and even afraid that what we hope, seek and ask for may never come. However, God's promise is firm as it states “*Be strong, fear not!*” *Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you.*” (Is 35: 4)

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“They will bloom with abundant flowers and rejoice with joyful song.” (Is 35:2)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

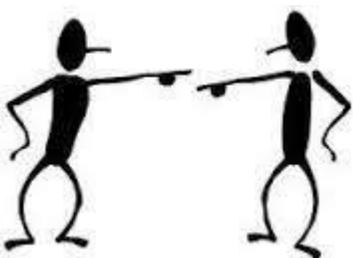
THE BLAME GAME

“The man replied, “The woman whom you put here with me—she gave me fruit from the tree, so I ate it.” The LORD God then asked the woman: “Why did you do such a thing?” The woman answered, “The snake tricked me into it, so I ate it.”

(Gn 3:12-13)

What is it in human nature that causes us to push errors or mistakes aside and find someone we can shove it to? What makes it for us humans so difficult to admit mistakes? Why is it so much easier to put the blame on others?

When things happen or when we do something wrong, do we like to blame others or do we blame



God? Matthew 7:3 reads: *“Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye?”* We often shift the blame so we wouldn’t look bad. As

Christians, we have to accept our own mistakes and be accountable for our wrongdoings. We have a tendency to shift the blame because we do not want to suffer the consequences. We don’t realize that we become a hypocrite when we judge and when we point our finger at anyone. In Matthew 7:5 Jesus says, *“You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother’s eye.”*

Proverbs 28:13 says, *“He who conceals his sins prospers not, but he who confesses and forsakes them obtains mercy.”* When people try to hide the fact that they messed up by blame shifting, they only dig themselves deeper into an ugly situation.

Let us not speak the language that Adam and Eve spoke. Take courage and know that Christ forgives us. 1 John 1:9 tells us, *“If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.”*

Let’s take courage and say “I messed up and I can learn from this” instead of pointing at somebody else or even blame God. Let the love of Christ strengthen us and allow us to confess our sins like the Psalmist did. Let us stand on the solid rock, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

“The day we stop blaming others is the day we begin to discover who we truly are.”

(Jeremybins.com)

Prepare the Way



With each passing day, the moment of Jesus’ entrance into the world draws nearer. However, in the rush to get presents under the tree, manage an increasingly hectic schedule, and still remember to eat and sleep, we often bow under the pressures of daily living, neglecting our spirituality. The highways of our spirituality grow barren, untraveled. This coming liturgical season calls for rededication to our faith. These coming days serve as reminders that the Lord will always uphold His covenants, and the birth of His son is the first movement in this fulfillment. It is now up to us to uphold our end.

In Isaiah 40: 3, we find a clear command: *“Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God.”* We are to realign ourselves, recalibrate our sights, setting Love in the center. The following verse provides for us the steps to be taken in this process. Let every valley be lifted up. Take every low point, everything we bear, hide, or burry, and offer it up to the one who will carry it all. Let every mountain be made low. Dismantle any inner pride, our egos, all that we place high be brought back to dust. Allow humility to erode these mountains. Let the rugged land be made plain. Be unashamed, plain in your beliefs and convictions. Hide no love, no kindness. Only *“then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed”* (Isaiah 40: 5).

Together, we can forge a straight path to Jesus this Advent. Let us follow the signs He has left for us, just as the three Wise Kings did. May this season be one where we can welcome Jesus into hearts filled with peace. Course unchanging and path laid clear, may each of us be guided to a Christmas day where Jesus is the first present we open.

THE FAVORED ONE



Mother Mary's role in man's salvation began so unexpectedly when Angel Gabriel came to visit and gave her the news of what was to happen to

her. He said: "**Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.**" (Lk 1:28)

He told her not to be afraid as she has found favor with God. She will be with child and will give birth to a Son, Whom she will name Jesus, Who will be great and called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David and will reign over the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never end. He will be holy and called Son of God. (Lk 1:30-35).

The news was so wonderful but it brought confusion in her heart and frightened her. How can she bear a child when she has no relations with man? It did not appear to be a blessing from God especially for a young 16-year-old girl who was now mysteriously pregnant. For Mother Mary, it was wonderful, yet disastrous. There must have been times when she questioned God. "Why me, my Lord? Why not someone else?"

Today God reveals to us that His ways do not always conform to human expectations. God comes to His people in unexpected ways. He may come with great power and abundance for His people yet He may also choose the sad path of pain and suffering, which we opt to normally avoid and not accept. But God never tells us to do something without enabling us. He blesses us with His grace and empowerment. Ours will be unmerited favor which turns from loss to gain, poverty to plenty, pain to pleasure, evil to goodness, ugliness to beauty and sorrow to joy, if we abide by God's plan for us.

Mother Mary showed us how we should respond with an obedient heart to God's will in our life no matter how difficult it will be to pursue. In Mother Mary's Magnificat, she prayed: "*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior... for He Who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.*"

Today, God's call is upon us to be His favored one. Let us respond with great openness and allow the Holy Spirit to work deep within us.

COUNSELS (from page 1)

And "*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) God's word strongly reminds us that the Lord will come and will deliver us into an abundance of His joy and blessings. He will not fault us nor fail us. He will turn our struggles and discouragement into a blessing that is filled with a greater sense of hope and faith in Him.

The reward of waiting on God, however, is not just the blessing that we receive in the end, but even more so in the journey itself as it draws us closer to the Lord and increases our faith in Him. The journey of waiting is often misperceived to be something negative, trying and tolling. However, it is really an opportunity for us to seek God more, to know Him more, and increase our trust in Him. It is the time when we grow in our faith, hope and trust in God. As we wait for the Lord's joyful coming during Advent, it is a time for us to draw ourselves closer to Him and prepare for His birth into our lives once again.

Waiting can at times feel painful and dreary. It is in our times of waiting that God works in us and changes and prunes us to be more patient, understanding and accepting of His will. When we wait for so long and become blinded by our own discouragement and lack of faith, we fail to recognize the Lord and His blessings. Sometimes the answer may not be what we expected and instead we turn to seek it elsewhere. Let us not be misled and fooled by our own human sight and mind. He works so intricately and mysteriously, that we sometimes fail to even realize the changes we are already undergoing. Let us remember that the Lord will always help us to see Him, no matter how blind we may become by our own human struggles and imperfections. "*The Lord gives sight to the blind; the Lord raises up those who were bowed down.*" (Ps 146:8).

Let us allow the Lord to continue to heal us and open up our minds and senses that we may be able to recognize and know His presence in our lives and accept His blessings in whatever form they may come. As it says in the second reading, "*You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand.*" (Jas 7:8). Let us focus then, not on the pain and suffering in waiting but instead on the growth that is happening within us and on the blessings that will be coming from above.

So my dear brothers and sisters, let us not grow weary in faith as we wait on the Lord. Let us continue

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

to cling to Him and His promises, with full faith and trust in our hearts that He will answer us. Let us wait with endurance, patience and understanding and be prepared and ready to accept the Lord and His blessings whenever and however they may come. And as God fills us with His grace and gifts, let us also share those gifts with those who are in need. For what He give us is meant to be shared, which will furthermore be our testament of God's goodness and providence in our lives.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Endure your hardships with patience and strength that come from the Lord.
2. Be vigilant in prayer and steadfast in faith.

NEWS (from page 1)

is indispensable to be present, always in an evangelical style, in what has become for many people, especially the young, a sort of life environment, to reawaken the insuppressible questions the heart asks about the meaning of existence, and to indicate the way to Him Who is the answer, the divine Mercy made flesh, the Lord Jesus," the Pope said.

Concluding his address, Pope Francis told the members that the Church will continue in searching new ways to evangelize. In this mission, he concluded, "the contribution and the witness of lay faithful as shown every day to be indispensable."

"Advent's intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope....It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope."

-Pope Benedict XVI

Marshaling		Schedule
		
	Date	Apostolate
	Dec 20	Management
	Dec 27	Mission
	Jan 3	Pastoral
	Jan 10	Evangelization

Interested in studying all four gospels of the Holy Bible in a year? Subscribe to flocknote.com/gospel.

Interested in reading the Catechism in a year? Subscribe to flocknote.com/catechism.

Subscription is FREE!

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	2,235	150,519
Typhoon Yolanda	2,690	18,878

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Jan 3*** - CDFP Overview – ME 42
Intro to the Word – ME 42
- Jan 17*** - John 6 Teaching
- Jan 18**** - Christian Parenting – ME 41 & 42/SPE 15
- CMP 1 Part 2 – LSS 1-39
- Feb 1**** - Community Teaching
- Venue:** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ
Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANOINTING OF THE SICK/PRAY OVER

When: Every 3rd Friday, After Worship

Venue: Small Room at the side of St. Mary's Church

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

SPECIAL COLLECTION

FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA VICTIMS

Monetary Donation: Every Friday (during Worship).

You can also mail your donations to:

BLD Newark, PO Box 139, 114

Oak Tree Ave, South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Make the check payable to **BLD Newark**, in the memo write **Typhoon Yolanda**.

Acknowledgement letters are available if needed. BLD Newark is a 501C approved tax exempt organization. Org # 223-562-329/000.

Donation of Goods:

Bring to Divine Mercy Parish on Friday nights, starting November 29th

Put items in balikbayan box, do not seal

Make a list of goods in each box (general list, not detailed)

Contact Persons: Nong and Tricia Bustos



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 51

Bulletin Edition

Dec. 20, 2013

2013 Christmas Message of Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo

BUKAS LOOB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY

(Open in Spirit to God)



With Christmas 2013 and the New Year 2014, as exhorted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, we celebrate in a special way the YEAR OF THE LAITY as our preparation for the 500th year of our Christianity come 2021.

Many of our brothers and sisters in the typhoon path of Yolanda are still suffering from its effects which may take some time to overcome. Charity in the spirit of solidarity with the poor victims of Yolanda must invite everyone to the call of self-sacrifice for the victims. This time we are witnesses of such charity.

I reiterate the CBCP questions in the Pastoral Letter: "What are you doing to create wealth, to preserve wealth, and to share wealth (with emphasis on share)? Do the more prosperous among you feel the sufferings of our poor brothers and sisters, and do you think of ways and means to help alleviate their poverty, and help them towards prosperity?"

While we are grateful that we have been preserved from the situation that our fellow countrymen are suffering from, let us look at it as an invitation, a challenge, an opportunity to go out of our way in order to help them.

I take this occasion to relay to BLD the gratitude of the people who have been the recipients of your earlier contributions ... a manifestation of how charity is multiplied by generosity.

May the example of our two LAY Filipino saints, Lorenzo Ruiz and Pedro Calungsod, be our inspiration for the coming Year of the Laity.

Archbishop of Jaro & BLD Community Spiritual Director
December 6, 2013



COUNSELS TRUST IN HIS POWER

THEME: **We bring Jesus to birth in our life when, like Joseph, we listen to the voice of God and obey.**

WORD: **Is 7:10-14 ~ Ps 24:1-6 ~ Rom 1:1-7 ~ Mt 1:18-24**

ORDER: **Do as the Lord commands you.**

REFLECTION:

Nativity set is a common ornament in a Catholic household. Focus of attention would naturally be Jesus with Mary, the three Magi with their presents and the Shepherds. St. Joseph is inconspicuously in the background gazing at Jesus and Mary. This just man does not utter any word in any of the Gospel accounts and yet through his resounding obedience of faith led him to Bethlehem to be the overseer of the Lord's birth. It was he who was chosen to be the guardian of God the Father's most precious treasures-the Incarnate Word and his most holy Mother.

But months before this joyous event, Joseph, a descendant of King David, faced a difficult predicament. Before he and Mary were to get married, she was found to be with a Child and he was not the father. He must have been devastated and did not know how to deal with Mary's astonishing motherhood.

In the first reading, another descendant of David, King Ahaz faced a difficult situation. His Kingdom was invaded by an alliance of Syria and Northern Kingdom in an effort to force him into an alliance with them against the mighty empire of Assyria. He was to choose between the mighty empire of Assyria and the alliance of Syria and Northern Kingdom. Prophet Isaiah came to the picture and challenged King Ahaz to trust in the power of God and not into political alliances. Centuries before him, God already promised to King Ahaz' ancestor, King David through the Prophet Nathan. "Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever." (2 Sm 7:16)
Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God his savior." (Ps 24:5)

Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!

The Genealogy of Jesus

Sing A New Song



Every morning, we always hear the tweeting of the birds happily chirping, almost musical, by our room's window as they get their taste of the ripe berries offered to them by the tree they are on. For all we know,

they may be singing songs of contentment and praise.

We are so blessed by GOD, with shelter, food, family, friends, etc. More so blessed with His love, mercy, and healing. I am yet to see someone exclaiming "What a wonderful day it is! Look at that magnificent sun or "How nice to see you this excellent morning!"

Psalm 33:2-3 says, "**Praise the Lord with a harp; make music to him on a ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully and shout for joy.**" Why not? We are alive because GOD has given us our lives, the air we breathe, the food we eat, our ability to communicate, our community; ah... too much more to mention.

Yes, we know that God never promised us a life that's like a bed of roses or a box of chocolates. Yolanda/Haiyan, the strongest typhoon ever to hit any nation, hit the Philippines with its wrath, destroying practically everything on its path. Thousands died, but life remained. Though faced with the painful task of rebuilding and getting their lives back, they can even manage to smile.

"But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them from death, and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield."(Psalm 33: 18-20).

With about 80% of its people as Catholics, are we also not to be considered God's chosen people? "**Happy the nation whose GOD is the Lord, the people chosen as his very own.**"(Psalm 33:12)

"May Your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in You." (Psalm 33:22).

Dear Lord, let our lives be a song of praise to You. We pray that we may trust and depend in Your love. May we see Your hand at work in our daily lives, see You in every person we meet, feel You in everything we do. May all our actions be lifted to glorify You. May our lives be a new offering to You, as our sign of love, gratitude and thanksgiving. AMEN.

Since the beginning of our spiritual journey to grow closer to the Almighty Father in Heaven, we have been introduced to the Savior of our world, the Son of Yahweh, Jesus the Christ. His story, His passion, and His legacy all begin with two individuals, the beautiful Virgin Mary and the hardworking carpenter, Joseph.

Both were blessed with the task bestowed by God to conceive His son. Jesus' genealogy bears the names of the ones who provided life to Jesus, names that are forever engraved in our faith.

What can the lineage be traced back to? Or in other words, "Where are they from?"

The answer can only come from the Bible where the genealogy of Jesus is explained in two passages. One is from the Gospel of Matthew and the other is from the Gospel of Luke. These readings provide two completely different lineages. In Matthew 1:1-17, Jesus is traced all the way back to Abraham, but in Luke 3:23-38, it traces Jesus all the way back to Adam. Matthew traces the lineage from Joseph directly while

David to Jesus	
Matthew 1:6-16	Luke 3:21-31
1. David	1. David
2. Solomon	2. Nathan
3. Roboam	3. Mattatha
4. Abia	4. Menan
5. Asa	5. Melea
6. Josaphat	6. Eliakim
7. Joram	7. Jonan
8. Ozias	8. Joseph
9. Joatham	9. Juda
10. Achaz	10. Simeon
11. Ezekias	11. Levi
12. Manasses	12. Matthat
13. Amon	13. Jorim
14. Josias	14. Eliezer
15. Jechonias	15. Jose
16. Salathiel	16. Er
17. Zorobabel	17. Elmodam
18. Abiud	18. Cosam
19. Eliakim	19. Addi
20. Azor	20. Melchi
21. Sadoc	21. Neri
22. Achim	22. Salathiel
23. Eliud	23. Zorobabel
24. Eleazar	24. Rhesa
25. Matthan	25. Joanna
26. Jacob	26. Juda
27. Joseph	27. Joseph
28. Jesus	28. Semei
	29. Mattathias
	30. Maath
	31. Nagge
	32. Esli
	33. Naum
	34. Amos
	35. Mattathias
	36. Joseph
	37. Janna
	38. Melchi
	39. Levi
	40. Matthat
	41. Heli
	42. Joseph
	43. Jesus

Luke traces the lineage from Mary's side.

A look at the writers can explain the difference. Matthew was an Israelite who wrote for the Jews. Luke, on the other hand, was a Levite, a non-Jew. His writings were intended to introduce Jesus to the rest of the world. We see here that Matthew relates Jesus back to Abraham. Abraham is known to be the father of Israel, which in turns means he was the father of the Jewish people. Matthew uses this explanation in order to prove that Jesus was indeed the King of the Jews, making Jesus more relatable to the Jewish people. Luke relates Jesus back to Adam, the first man ever to be born. By doing this, Luke is saying that Jesus is related to the man who began the human race. Through this statement, he is making Christianity relatable to everyone, not only to the Jews.

Continued on page 4

Christmas Quotes

“Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ... Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ~Angel Gabriel, Luke 1:28-33

“He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.” ~St. Augustine

*“Mankind is a great, an immense family... This is proved by what we feel in our hearts at Christmas.”
~Pope John Paul XXIII*

*“Christmas is a day of meaning and traditions, a special day spent in the warm circle of family and friends.”
~Margaret Thatcher*

“It is impossible to conceive how different things would have turned out if that birth had not happened whenever, wherever, however it did ... for millions of people who have lived since, the birth of Jesus made possible not just a new way of understanding life but a new way of living it. It is a truth that, for twenty centuries, there have been untold numbers of men and women who, in untold numbers of ways, have been so grasped by the child who was born, so caught up in the message He taught and the life He lived, that they have found themselves profoundly changed by their relationship with Him.” ~Frederick Buechner

“Christmas is based on an exchange of gifts, the gift of God to man – His unspeakable gift of His Son, and the gift of man to God – when we present our bodies as a living sacrifice.” ~Vance Havner

“You can never truly enjoy Christmas until you can look up into the Father’s face and tell him you have received His Christmas gift.” ~John R. Rice

*“Joy is the true gift of Christmas, not the expensive gifts that call for time and money. We can communicate this joy simply: with a smile, a kind gesture, a little help, forgiveness. And the joy we give will certainly come back to us.... Let us pray that this presence of the liberating joy of God shines forth in our lives.”
~Benedict XVI*

“Rejoice and be glad that so great and good a Lord, on coming into the Virgin’s womb, willed to appear despised, needy, and poor in this world, so that men who were in dire poverty and suffering in great need of heavenly food might be made rich in him.” ~St. Claire

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

And so Isaiah told Ahaz to remain steadfast with the Lord, reminding him that the Lord would fulfill His covenant with David and even challenging Ahaz to ask for a sign. Despite Isaiah’s assurance, deep inside, Ahaz remained afraid and confined within his limited imagination. He even refused to have hope in God. To Isaiah’s dismay, Ahaz trusted his own clever instinct and decided to seek a protection treaty with Assyria. His decision gave him security and saved his kingdom from destruction but, on the other hand, he paid a heavy price. Through his alliance with Assyria, idols were introduced and an altar was built dedicated to the Assyrian gods in the temple at Jerusalem.

When we are confronted with a tough predicament, who do we look for? To whom do we rely on? Things happen to us all the time that will make us anxious, afraid or even tempted to give up hope. We look for solutions, looking for ways and often relying upon our own power, relying upon the things of the world and even compromise our belief in God. Isaiah reminds us of God’s faithfulness and teaches us to cultivate an attitude of trust in the Lord.

The Gospel focuses on Joseph, who also faced a dilemma of his own. He sought an answer to this unsettling question on how to deal with Mary’s pregnancy and looked for a way out from what was for him a difficult situation. Joseph was truly a just man. He respected the law but also loved Mary. He balanced the demands of the law and demands of love. He decided to divorce her quietly. But even his righteousness was not enough to comprehend the plan of God. Isaiah’s prophecy in the first reading, which mirrored Nathan’s prophecy that the Kingdom of David would stand forever, was revealed in Joseph’s dream about a King who would rule forever. Joseph’s important virtue was his obedience and faith. He lived his life not within the confines of his own will but resolved to live his life according to God’s mysterious design.

And so in this advent season, we are reminded of God’s revelation of His love to all of us through the gift of the Word. Through His mercy, we are constantly renewed and made new. Our being here in this community is no accident. He directed us here. Continue to trust in the Lord and you will not be overwhelmed, you will endure for God is with us. He gave Jesus so that we may become sharers in his divine nature.

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Proclaim and witness to our renewed life in Jesus Christ.**
2. **As disciples, pray for the grace to listen and obey the Lord.**

The Genealogy of Jesus (from page 2)

Even if this difference exists, one thing is clear, though. There is one common strand that unites each and every individual in the line. Whether it is Abraham or Adam, Joseph or Mary, or even you and I, we are all connected due to the fact that we are all children of a wonderful God.

LET US CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA VICTIMS

*Loving Father, You are our Shelter and our Strength.
In Your Love and Mercy, we come to You
with hearts full of trust and hope.*

*We lift up to You all the victims of Typhoon Yolanda.
May You comfort them and hold them close to Your
heart, especially those who are grieving for the loss of
their loved ones this Christmas day. May those who
have lost homes find shelter, enough food, and clean
water. Bless those who are sick and injured that their
health may be restored completely.*

*As they travel through this dark valley of sorrow, may
Your love, peace, and joy be felt, especially on
Christmas day! Give them the faith, the hope and the
love to carry on.*

This we ask through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS



Come celebrate The Feast:

The Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
AT THE MOVIES!!

Mary of Nazareth (watch trailer and more at maryfilm.com)

Wednesday January 1st, 2014

Showtimes: 9AM, 12:30PM, 4PM, 7:30PM

Location: [AMC LOEWS JERSEY GARDENS](#)

651 Kapkowski Road, Elizabeth, NJ 07201

TICKETS \$15.00 (\$1.82 fee applies)

PRIVATE SCREENING ****Must Purchase in Advance online or
by phone****

****Tickets cannot be purchased at Theater****

For tickets call 1-888-71-TICKETS (1-888-718-4253) Or
<http://oceanofmercyevents.showclix.com>

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual \$	YTD \$
Tithe/Love Offering	3,174	153,693
Typhoon Yolanda	3,142	22,020
Mission	4,000	25,619
Christmas Envelope	177	177

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Jan 3* - CDFP Overview – ME 42
Intro to the Word – ME 42
- Jan 17* - John 6 Teaching
- Jan 18** - Christian Parenting – ME 41 & 42/SPE 15
- CMP 1 Part 2 – LSS 1-39
- Feb 1** - Community Teaching

Venue: Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

SPECIAL COLLECTION

FOR TYPHOON YOLANDA VICTIMS

Donations can be mailed to:

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114 Oak Tree Avenue

South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Please make check payable to BLD Newark, in the memo write *Typhoon Yolanda*

On the envelope, provide a complete return address so that we can send you an acknowledgement letter.

Or...

1. Go to BLD website www.BLDNewark.com
2. Click on **MINISTRIES** tab on the top
3. Click on **TREASURY** - here you will see the "Donate" icon

For donations of goods...

We have 128 boxes of relief goods ready for loading to a shipping container. Please hold off bringing more relief goods to Divine Mercy until further notice.

Contact Persons: Nong and Tricia Bustos

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Dec 27	Mission
	Jan 3	Pastoral	
	Jan 10	Evangelization	
	Jan 17	Formation	

A Blessed and Merry Christmas to all!



COVENANT NEWS



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 19 Issue 52

Bulletin Edition

December 27, 2013

NEWS

BLD Newark sings, dances and celebrates Christmas



In a Birthday Party so big that it took two Friday nights to celebrate, BLD recently held its annual Christmas celebrations at Divine Mercy Parish. As with everything BLD, praise for our Lord started things off. On December 13th, Pauline Montemayor and Vanessa Fabe led a stirring Community Worship, supported by Singles Ministry Praise's signature approach to song and music. And then, on Friday, December 20th, the Worship began with Gene and Bing Ymbong, followed by members - adults and kids – of the various BLD Pastoral Ministries. Among its many highlights were the Ymbongs' heartfelt reflections about St. Joseph and Mother Mary, the kids of varying ages reading powerful petition prayers, one of the highest of praises all year led by two from Singles, and the beautiful voice of BecBec Laxina singing "Light of a Million Mornings."

Line dancing and singing headlined both nights. Big applause rewarded all of the presenters - from the very youngest of Mark 10, on thru BLD's most senior members, as well as its newest from the most recent encounter classes. Newark's five DCS couples made things even more memorable, when for a finale, they came out in costumes and rocked the dancefloor to the tune of "Rockin Around the Christmas Tree." The dancing itself continued on after the formal programs, led by Suzie Atienza, Mely Romero and Divine Mercy's very own, Fr. Robert Lamirez. The food was specially prepared by the tireless members of the Service Ministry.

Above the cheerful chatter, prayers still permeated the parties – from Fr. Paul Lehman's opening blessings, the presentation segues by the emcee - Walter Wade, DSL Noel & Letty Trillana's Psalm 1 exhortation that started the first night's program, up to and beyond the second Friday's closing "To God Be the Glory."

Thanks go out to our God and to all who made the celebrations possible, as well as to all who were there. Smiles, hugs and kisses abounded, with everyone looking forward to Christmas Day itself with even more joy, resounding this prayer in their hearts: "Come Lord Jesus Come!"

COUNSELS

Love Your Family

THEME: We bring Jesus to birth in our life when we honor our parents and those who exercise pastoral authority over us.

WORD: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 / Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5
Col 3:12-21 / Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

- ORDER:**
1. Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Col 3:17).
 2. Put on love, that is the bond of perfection.

REFLECTION:

Ex 20:12 and Dt 5:16 establish the promise of long life and prosperity to those who honor their father and their mother. It is the 4th catechetical tradition. God bestowed a special blessing of stewardship to a father over his household. As a father, it reminds me to be vigilant and to be mindful of my deeds and actions. The role of a father establishes a healthy foundation and basis of a family unit. "When he prays, he is heard" (Sir 3:5) and "he... atones for his sins" (Sir 3:3) and he "will live a long life" (Sir 3:6). In this season of Christmas, let us restore and harmonize relationships with our families. Put God's love into action, forgive and continue to build beautiful memories together. Seek and share that special blessing that uniquely comes from a father. Children, take care of your fathers especially in their old age, when their minds may be failing, be considerate and speak tenderly to them. Corollary to that is a blessing from God.

At work I care for seniors. The vast majority are suffering from dementia. Each day I am afforded that chance to fulfill God's command. Sirach 3:14 reads that "kindness to a father will not be forgotten."



Recently, I had a profound spiritual encounter when I greeted an elderly at work. She has end-stage dementia and has limited ability to engage in a sensible conversation. I met her in the hallway, held her hands ... *Continued, page 3*

Promise of the Week

"Whoever reveres his father will live a long life; he obeys his father brings comfort to his mother." (Sir 3:6)

Pope Francis: “Jesus is the Light Who Brightens the Darkness”

“God loves us, He so loves us that He gave us His Son to be our brother, to be light in our darkness.” These were the words proclaimed by Pope Francis during his homily at Midnight Mass on Tuesday night.

The Pope began his homily reflecting on the first reading from the prophet Isaiah which he said “never ceases to touch us” The reading, he explained, is not an emotional or sentimental matter but rather, it states our reality of light and darkness in our lives.

“In this night, as the spirit of darkness enfolds the world, there takes place anew the event which always amazes and surprises us: the people who walk see a great light. A light which makes us reflect on this mystery: the mystery of walking and seeing,” he said.

The Pope explained that throughout in the history of salvation, the image of walking begins with Abraham who was called by God to go to the land He would show him. From that point our identity has been related to a people on pilgrimage towards the promised land.

“This history has always been accompanied by the Lord! He is ever faithful to His covenant and to His promises. Because He is faithful, God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all,” he said. However, in our own personal history, there are moments of both light and darkness.

“If we love God and our brothers and sisters, we walk in the light; but if our heart is closed, if we are dominated by pride, deceit, self-seeking, then darkness falls within us and around us,” the Holy Father noted. The Christmas celebration reminds us that in this journey, Christ has taken on our humanity and thus, entered our history and shared our journey.

The 77 year old Pontiff noted that shepherds, the least in society, became the first to receive the news of Christ’s birth. We, as Christians, are called to keep watch as they did.

“Together with them, let us pause before the Child, let us pause in silence. Together with them, let us thank the Lord for having given Jesus to us, and with them let us raise from the depths of our hearts the praises of His fidelity: We bless you, Lord God most high, Who lowered Yourself for our sake. You are immense, and You made Yourself small; You are rich and You made yourself poor; You are all-powerful and You made yourself vulnerable,” he said.

Concluding his homily, Pope Francis called on the faithful to share “the joy of the Gospel” which proclaims God’s love for us in giving us His Son.

“To us the Lord repeats: “Do not be afraid!”. As the angels said to the shepherds: “Do not be afraid!” And I also repeat to all of you: “Do not be afraid!,” he exclaimed. “Our Father is patient, He loves us, He gives us Jesus to guide us on the way, which leads to the promised land. Jesus is the light Who brightens the darkness. He is mercy: our Father always forgives us. He is our peace.” (J.A.E.) - Excerpt from Zenit.org/Dec 26, 2013

A 2014 New Year Prayer



Today as we gather in the Name of our Lord Jesus, we give God special thanks for the new life He has blessed each of us in community. Lord Almighty, You know how much we love and revere Your Word, Your Work and Witness that formed us; not only because of friends we have gained for a short time, but for families for life, and for what You stand, which has made us men for others, loving and compassionate.

As we bid adieu to 2013, we thank You, O Lord, for this time of celebration. Bless our time together; bless those we love wherever they are. We offer our heartfelt thanks for those who have worked so creatively to make our community an authentic instrument of Your love and mercy. Always give us a taste of the days and months of the year that was. Help us recall pleasant memories, special friendships, even its pains and sorrows; but don't leave us with just our past.

In the New Year of 2014, may our brotherhood give us not only a sense of belonging but a sense of satisfaction that we have upheld the standards You have set for us. Keep deep within us Your heart and soul and Your very essence. In the New Year and the years to come, enrich us as we continue on our perpetual quest for excellence through charity in Christian discipleship.

Lord, continue to sit with us at the table of love and service each day of our lives. Bless our work for You, our relationships, and make us truly a gift to one another. Grant us tenderness toward those who struggle. Help us to be kind in word and in deed.

Remind us always that each day is a gift, to be lived as beautifully as possible within our abilities and our means, and to be men for others as You have prepared us to be.

Lord, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in the New Year may we use the time still left to us to be more than we thought possible. Allow us to make amends for our wrongful past with the hope that one day we will be truly deserving of all Your blessings.

All these we pray through Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.



COUNSELS (from page 1)

and just randomly asked her to pray over me. Do you ever recall a moment in your life where you truly felt it was God standing in front of you? She uttered the most profound prayer, a blessing with no hitch in words. The message was so personal and specific to my discernment. I stood still, in silence, in tears, filled with God's love.

In the Psalm readings, the salient emphasis is on reverence to God. The word "fear" should not be taken in its literal sense, rather deep awe and adoration. God is love and He does not want us to fear Him; On the contrary, He wants us to love Him. Blessed is he who fears the lord, from it wisdom begins.

In the 2nd reading, St. Paul exhorts us all to "**put on love**" in all that we do, for without love, there is no merit in our works. It is "**the bond of perfection**" (Col 3:14). It is who God is and what He wants us to do with our lives is to love one another. Whatever grievances we may have, let the peace of Christ lead us to admonish and forgive, just as Christ has forgiven us. Secondly, St. Paul reminds us all to be good stewards in our role in the family of God. Let us not take into wrong context his exhortation for wives to be subordinate to their husbands. While husbands are the head of the household, they are to love their wives unconditionally as Christ loved the Church and to die for her. Agape love is realized in the mutual giving and dying to self. A gentle reminder to us fathers, do not provoke our children and misuse authority; rather embrace their youthful spirit and pray for them. Do not be quick tempered when they make mistakes but be present and provide sound counsel despite the circumstance. "**Be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**" (James 1:19) Do not hastily react - but reflect. We are to listen more than we speak. The ability to hear God's voice is through contemplation, in silence. In fact the foundation of prayer is interior silence. The underlying theme of the Gospel is obedience. St. Joseph trusted and obeyed God without questioning.

Mother Mary also exemplifies that humble act in her fiat; her "yes" became that heavenly ladder by which God reached mankind. Jesus repeats that very same act of perfect obedience despite His human agony in the garden. There is no better way to demonstrate love than to give up one's life for the sake of others (Jn 15:13). Man's true joy is not found in self-gratification, but in self-sacrifice. So how do we show our love of God? Obey His will and let that be our gift to Him this Christmas. Do not be distracted with the external festive celebration. Find its true meaning in the quiet of your soul. Jesus' birth was so humble, in a manger, no crib, not even a pillow under his head. Joseph listened and obeyed, and so we also must do.

Pope Francis exhorts us that "*there are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter.*" Rejoice! Share the good news! For "**woe to me if I do not preach it.**" (1 Cor 9:16).

Direction:

1. **Love your family.**
2. **Put Jesus at the center of your family.**



A MOMENT AGO

This coming Wednesday, 2014 will begin. As it does, there will be that point in time when 2013 was just a moment ago...



A Moment Ago

There's a song that goes
"It's just another new year's eve"
For many, this may be true
But, I have this wish,
For me and for you:

This New Year's Eve
May it instead, really be
One of many starts
Of years of abundant life
Where we always allow God
To renew our hearts

In 2014, each time that we are daunted
By the challenges of tomorrow
Leave any despair, dispatch any sorrow
To that moment that just passed
Then resolve to do our best
Cause then God will do the rest

In 2014, in times
When it feels like we're choosing
The wrong thing again
Change that choice of a moment ago
Think of how Love would decide
Then see how much we can grow

When we're sad, when we're happy
Whether we are here, or over there
In two thousand fourteen
No matter what we've done
Or where we have been

Each next time,
Restart from the last moment
Turn to God and realize
That with Jesus, True Freedom, we can actualize

Through any difficulties that may arise
Through times when Life is good
Times when Life seems so hard
If from that moment, from a short while ago
If to Him we turn and return

Then in the year of two thousand fourteen
And then too, in all the years after,
That we will be in
Life will always be beautiful
And Life becomes ever more Joyful!
Even from... just a moment ago.

Happy New Year BLD!

2013 BLD NEWARK EVENTS

End of Year Report

1st Quarter 2013

March for Life	January 25
Medical Mission	February 18-21
Youth YLSS	March 1-3

2nd Quarter 2013

Adult LSS #40	April 12-14
Youth Washing of the Feet Retreat	April 13
Teachers' Development Program	April 20-21
Marriage Encounter #41	May 17-19
Washing of the Feet/Agony in the Garden Retreat	May 18
Singles Encounter #30	May 31-June 2
Solo Parents Annual Retreat	June 9
Community "Clean-Up Day"	June 15
Solo Parent Encounter #15	June 21-23

3rd Quarter 2013

Youth Encounter #20	July 12-14
Family Encounter # 20	July 19-21
Community Day	August 10
Singles Inter-district Conference	August 23-25
BLD Dinner Dance	September 7
An Afternoon of Prayer and Reflection	September 14
Youth: Battle of the Classes	September 21

4th Quarter 2013

Adult LSS # 41	October 4-6
John 6 Crossing #14	October 18-20
Washing of the Feet / Agony in the Garden Retreat	October 19
BLD-Assisted Parish: Divine Mercy Falling in love with Jesus #2 Project "I DO"	October 26-27 November 2
Mark 10 Parade of Saints	November 1
Marriage Encounter #42	November 15-17
Singles Encounter #31	
Aspirants' Retreat	November 22-24
Prayer Healing #1 Retreat	Nov 30-Dec 1
Christmas Ministry/ME Class Presentations	Dec 13 & 20

Recurring Events

Mission: Nursing Home Visit	Every 2nd Sat (monthly)
Mission: Soup Kitchen	Every 4th Sat (monthly)
Teachings	Every 1st & 3rd Sat (except summer months and December)
Discipling Session	Every 4th Sat (monthly)

LORD'S PROVISION

Collections	Actual	YTD
Tithe/Love Offering	\$2,946	\$156,639
Typhoon Yolanda	1,410	23,430
Mission Collections	291	25,910
Christmas Envelopes	1,104	1,281

Financial details are available to all members through treasury@bldnewark.com

Thank you for your continued support!

Stewardship - It's a way of life!

TEACHING CALENDAR

- Jan 3*** - CDFP Overview – ME 42
Intro to the Word – ME 42
- Jan 17*** - John 6 Teaching
- Jan 18**** - Christian Parenting – ME 41 & 42/SPE 15
- CMP 1 Part 2 – LSS 1-39
- Feb 1**** - Community Teaching
- Venue:** Divine Mercy Parish School Classrooms, Rahway, NJ

Time: *Friday after worship, **Saturday 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

2014 MEDICAL MISSION

Date: February 17-20, 2014

Venue: Bayambang Pangasinan, Philippines

Contact Persons: Mel/Remy Hernandez

chi1944@hotmail.com

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Contact Persons: Nong and Tricia Bustos



Marshaling  Schedule	Date	Apostolate
	Jan 03	Pastoral
	Jan 10	Evangelization
	Jan 17	Formation
	Jan 24	Management

Please notify the Word Ministry if you have not been receiving your soft copies by emailing: word@bldnewark.com