



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 22 Issue 39

Bulletin Edition

September 23, 2016

NEWS

Catholics Must Overcome Partisan Divide on Immigration, Say US Bishops

“We must seek a world in which everyone has access to the economic, political, and social opportunities to live in freedom and dignity, and to achieve a full life through the use of their God-given gifts”

September 16, 2016 / ZENIT.org / Staff Policy

Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, auxiliary bishop of Seattle and Chairman of the Bishops’ Committee on Migration, issued the following statement this week:

On September 19, the United Nations General Assembly is calling together for the first time a summit level meeting of Heads of State and government officials to discuss the large movement of refugees and migrants in the world today. The event will highlight the need for shared responsibility by the international community to address migration related crises around the world. This provides an opportunity for the bishops to bring attention to their long-standing teachings on migration, which are rooted in the Gospel message of welcome and grounded in Catholic social teaching.

Standing before the United States Congress, Pope Francis called on all Americans to “seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. In a word, if we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities.”

His words are prescient to our situation today, in which we find ourselves immersed in an environment that lays bare divisions and disagreements that undermine solidarity and authentic community. As Catholics, we are called to overcome the partisan divides that separate us and instead focus on the moral teachings of the Church that will help us build a vibrant public square.

The Catholic bishops of the United States recognize the responsibility of nations to control their borders. Maintaining secure and reliable procedures that effectively manage the flow of people entering the United States is an important component of our immigration system.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

A Call for Deep Introspection

THEME: We bear the character of Jesus when we reach out to the poor and care for them.

WORD: Am 6:1a,4-7 ~ Ps 146:7,8-9,9-10
1 Tm 6:11-16 ~ Lk 16:19-31

ORDER: ***“Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience and gentleness.”*** 1 Tm 6:11b

REFLECTION:

In the First Reading, the words of Amos are directed to the complacent rulers of the southern and northern kingdoms who lived in luxury and feasted on the choicest foods, painting a picture of self-indulgence, oblivious to the moral decline of the kingdoms. The picture is timeless as we still see this condition in our own time. A population in moral, economic, and political disorder is ruled over by unconcerned leaders who live only for themselves, indifferent to the needs of the people, doing just enough to stay in power.

This condition is echoed in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke’s Gospel. It has two distinct messages. The first deals with the after-life fate of the two main characters, that clearly shows a reversal of fortunes after their death; and the second is about the lessons to be learned by the living about caring for the poor. It hints of God’s concern for those in need as it also warns of a future accounting that will take place after death.

The Psalm continues this message and praises God as Creator, and as Redeemer of the poor and the oppressed. ***“The Lord sets prisoners free... gives sight to the blind... raises up those who are bowed down.”*** (Ps 146:7-8)

Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

“Blessed the one... who keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, who gives bread to the hungry.”

Ps 146:5,6,7

Keep Calm and Pray On

“On the day I cried out, you answered; you strengthened my spirit. All the kings of earth will praise you, LORD, when they hear the words of your mouth. They will sing of the ways of the LORD: “How great is the glory of the LORD!” (Ps 138:3-5)

How often have I petitioned God for something? I prayed for good health, good looks, prayed for guidance, good weather, prayed for clarity in a situation, prayed to win the lottery, prayed to change my status, prayed to change people, myself included. I often call on God, but maybe I have not always heard *how* He answers me. Sometimes I feel like I’m met with silence, or that He may be ignoring me, or that I better stop praying for the same thing over and over again because I may be nagging Him. The psalms of David are full of his struggles with prayer.

“Answer me when I call, my saving God. When troubles hem me in, set me free; take pity on me, hear my prayer.” (Ps 4:2)

“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why so far from my call for help, from my cries of anguish? My God, I call by day, but you do not answer; by night, but I have no relief.” (Ps 22:2-3)

“LORD, the God of my salvation, I call out by day; at night I cry aloud in your presence.” (Ps 88:2)

Poor David, he calls out for an answer; he calls out day and night! That’s a lot of calling. He must have a bad network! (But seriously, Lord, can you hear me now?!?) Someone once told me that God answers all prayers -”yes, no, or ask again.” And that’s what David did, day and night, until God answered him.

Psalms 138:3 says, ***“On the day I cried out, you answered; you strengthened my spirit.”*** I’m moved that in this moment of ultimate thanksgiving, David stresses that God didn’t just magically answer his petition, but gave him the strength to persevere (albeit 138 Psalms later). David also highlights that the blessing, or the answer, was not just for him, but for everyone, and that the conviction was so great even kings sang their praises for the fidelity of the Lord. It is a great reminder to spread the blessings, to impart words of encouragement, to be open to being the answer to someone else’s prayer. This is why we have community, and it is what allows a continuation of unity in faith. Keep calm, pray on, and you will get your answer. Be confident that God honors His promises to you.

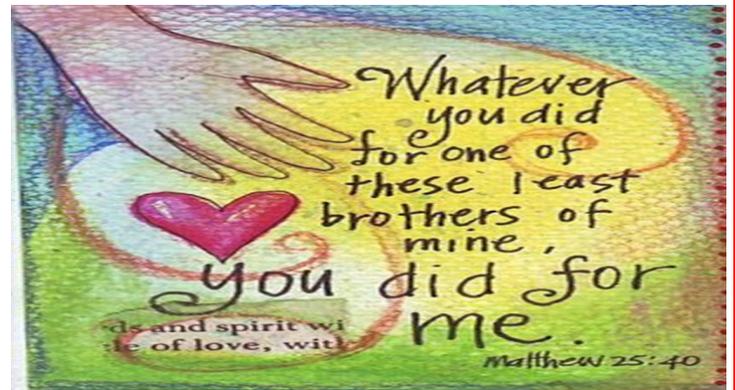
THE GREATER GOAL

“There are in truth three states of the converted: the beginning, the middle, and the perfection. In the beginning they experience the charms of sweetness; in the middle the contests of temptation; and in the end the fullness of perfection.”

— Pope St. Gregory the Great

Though we may not always recognize them, we encounter these same three stages in everyday life. Think of a vocation, a course of study, a job, a ministry or a relationship. In the beginning we see and experience the charm, beauty and excitement. Through the middle we may be challenged by difficulties and trials. Ultimately, we realize our goals and reap the reward of our sacrifice, when all the hard work, and most of all the love, that we put into our studies, our work, and relationships pays off, and we experience the fullness of perfection. Our big paycheck awaits.

When St Gregory spoke of the “fullness of perfection” he had a very different goal in mind. He wasn’t telling us to make lots of money, but to keep our eyes focused on the *greater goal*, to persevere and remain faithful, because the perfection of the journey of life is Heaven. In His description of the Final Judgment, Jesus said:



When one wisely shares his time, talent and treasure with others, especially those who could never pay him back, he is investing in sanctifying grace, knowing that his earthly treasures have no value in the eyes of God.

Early this month the world celebrated the “perfect” journey of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, an example of perseverance in love, service and joy. She wrote: “The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, the fruit of service is peace.” We all witnessed the beginning, middle and perfection of her journey. She kept her eyes on the “greater goal” so that now we celebrate her life and ask for her intercession.

St Mother Theresa of Calcutta, pray for us. Amen.

A.S.A.P.

Always Say A Prayer

“Let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry.” (Ps 88:3)

This week’s readings tell the story of Job. The short version is this: God is testing Job through trials. Will Job prevail in his faith in the Lord and persevere in prayer? Will we see the glory of God in Job’s life?

Job had been blessed with many things in his early life: the bountiful fruits of his hard labor and his plentiful livestock. What happens when all of his blessings are stripped away from him? When his oxen, sheep, camels and even his children are gone? He is filled with grief. Who does he turn to? Will he curse the name of God or lift up his burdens to the Lord?

Perhaps you have experienced the hopelessness of Job in your own life. Have you ever hit “rock bottom”? Have you asked yourself, “Why me?” or “What have I done to deserve this?” Do you question the providence of God? In your moment of pain, in the face of trials, heart ache, turmoil, or when you have no strength left in your body to continue, what do you do? When you feel there is no answer, or when the burden is too heavy to carry, do you give up the race, or do you press on?

My son was a healthy full term baby at 8 lbs, 1 oz. I held him and he roomed in with me that first night in the hospital. The next day, he demonstrated tachypnea (rapid breathing) and was sent to the NICU. My heart sank; no mother wants her child in the NICU. I turned to God in prayer, because this is our Faith: that even in our darkest hour, we continue to pray to the Lord and bless His name. ***“Let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry”*** (Ps 88:3). After a week’s worth of x-rays, needle pricks, blood draws, and oxygen treatments, my son showed much improvement; and I was allowed to take him home from the hospital. I am grateful to the Lord, as well as to the Blessed Virgin Mary for her intercession, because I now have a handsome boy who just turned one year old last week. Alleluia! The Lord God has shown to me His unending mercies.

In the end, Job turned to God with a humble and repentant heart and once again experienced the goodness of the Lord. God sees us and hears us, and knows our hearts’ desires. When we continue to call on Him and to be strong in our faith, dedicating our hearts to the Lord, He acknowledges our need, answers our prayers, and blesses us tenfold!

COUNSELS

(from page 1)

It tells us that God’s concern for the poor should, likewise, be the heart of our Christian responsibility.

The theme for this week is: We bear the character of Jesus when we reach out to the poor and care for them. BLD’s Vision and Mission keeps us grounded in our Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy (see page 4 for BLD Vision and Mission). We are witnesses to the community’s efforts to spread the Good News of God’s Kingdom in the many outreaches that we have started and nurtured. We have seen disciples trek across the continent to found new communities and fly across the Pacific to do corporal works of mercy; we visited the sick, clothed the naked, fed the hungry and gave drink to the thirsty. Praise God for His grace and mercy!

The needy, however, are not just those we see across the ocean in our old country, but they can be all around us. They may be sitting beside us right now. We may not be lacking materially, but some or many among us may have wounded souls and spirits, and are in need of a kindred spirit.

Do we take the time to reach out, to comfort the afflicted, counsel the doubtful, or instruct the ignorant? Do we bear wrongs patiently, forgive freely? Or do we allow the hurts to fester and defile us and our brethren? Our faith and conviction are tested when we are hurt and the need to correct a brother or sister comes up. Do we correct wrongdoings out of love and not as the outcome of irritation at another’s faults, or out of offended pride or wounded vanity? These questions call for deep introspection. Let us ask our Father to guide us and open our hearts to receive and give corrections in private, and in love as Jesus taught us. Our community norms exhort us to love one another, to minister to each other’s pastoral needs, and to help each other grow in the love of Christ.

Two weeks ago, we heard the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son. We also heard about the delight of the shepherd, the widow and the father in finding the lost. Last week’s Gospel reading illustrated that in the end there will be an accounting of our stewardship. Just a thought about this Sunday’s Gospel - what if we reached out to the rich man and made him aware of his indifference and sins of omission? What if he listened and took care of Lazarus? The rich man then would not be eternally separated from the love of the Father, to the Father’s delight and joy!

The time to go beyond studying what Jesus said is now. We cannot afford to be like the rich man and ignore the obvious need of our brethren in and out of community.

Continued on page 4

COUNSELS

(from page 3)

Now is the time to make our personal relationship with Christ real in our actions. Paul's letter to Timothy for the Christian community of Ephesus further explains one's spiritual responsibility. Paul holds him to the highest standards of behavior, charging him to "*pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. Compete well for the faith. Lay hold of eternal life... to keep the commandment without stain.*" (1 Tim 6:11-12,14) The call is clear; we cannot allow the hardships and pleasures, the ups and downs of living to make us lose sight of what matters most, an afterlife spent eternally with our loving God.

Directions:

1. Live a virtuous life, imitating Christ.
2. Minister to the pastoral needs of our brethren.
3. Participate actively in and pray for our community's mission works.

NEWS

(from page 1)

In addition, we will continue to underscore the right of people to migrate who are unable to find the means to support themselves and their families in their homeland, or who are fleeing persecution and violence. Sovereign nations should find a way to accommodate this right.

But it is not enough that we welcome the migrants into our communities. The political and religious leaders of this great nation must work with the leaders of other countries to help create the conditions so people do not feel compelled to migrate in the first place. We must promote the common good everywhere, so that people in all nations can live a life where their human dignity is protected. We must nurture a culture that prioritizes family unity and which rejects situations where families are forced apart because economic opportunities are not available where they live. We must seek a world in which everyone has access to the economic, political, and social opportunities to live in freedom and dignity, and to achieve a full life through the use of their God-given gifts.

Mercy Merci Raffle Fundraiser



**Support BLD! Please ask families and friends to help us out... Tickets are just \$2 each!
Drawing Date: Friday, October 14, 2016**

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

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings	\$ 2,445	\$ 99,216
Mission Collections	\$ 86	\$ 5,564
Fundraising Raffle	\$ 3,620	\$ 9,900

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LSS 46-B – October 7-9, 2016

Contacts: Lito.Vibar@bldnewark.com,

Earl.Manguiat@bldnewark.com, Flo.Manguiat@bldnewark.com

John 6 Crossings # 17

Retreat for children, ages 11-14.

October 7-9, 2016

Fellowship Deaconry, 3575 Valley Road,
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Contacts: Marlene.Brillantes@bldnewark.com

Tony.Brillantes@bldnewark.com

Marriage Encounter # 47

November 18-20, 2016

Hotel Executive Suites

30 Minue Street, Carteret, NJ

Contact email: MLA@bldnewark.com

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 30	Mission
		Oct 7	Pastoral
		Oct 14	Evangelization
		Oct 21	Formation

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 & 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 BLD 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.