



# COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

COUNSELS

## Pope Tells WYD Youth that Salvation is an 'Invitation to be Part of a Love Story'

Speech at Vigil With Young People at Campo San Juan Pablo II – Metro Park

January 27, 2019 01:21 • Jim Fair • World Youth Days

“The salvation the Lord offers us is an invitation to be part of a love story interwoven with our personal stories; it is alive and wants to be born in our midst so that we can bear fruit just as we are, wherever we are and with everyone all around us.”

Those were the words of Pope Francis in his January 26, 2019, speech as he joined the vast crowds of young people at World Youth Day in Panama for a Vigil with young people at Campo San Juan Pablo II – Metro Park.

Salvation isn't something to be downloaded or discovered in a new “app”. It isn't a self-improvement project or some sort of tutorial, the Holy Father warned. No, it truly is a love story.

The Pope offered the example of Mary and her “yes” to God's will. He pointed out that she put no conditions on her acceptance. She didn't say she would give it a try or see how things went. No, she just said “yes.” But that didn't mean her life would be easy.

“Saying ‘yes’ to the Lord means preparing to embrace life as it comes, with all its fragility, its simplicity, and often enough too, with its conflicts and annoyances...it means embracing our country, our families and our friends as they are, with all their weak points and their flaws,” the Pope explained. “Embracing life is also seen in accepting things that are not perfect, pure or ‘distilled’, yet no less worthy of love. Is a disabled or frail person not worthy of love? Is a person who happens to be a foreigner, a person who made a mistake, a person ill or in prison,

...Continued on page 2

## God Calls All of Us to Be Prophets Too

THEME: We proclaim God's love when we follow Jesus and stand up for Him.

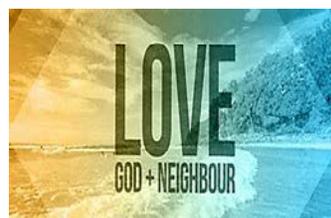
WORD: Jer 1:4-5,17-19 ~ Ps 71:1-2,3-4,5-6,15-17  
1 Cor 12:31-13:13 ~ Lk 4:21-30

ORDER: ““...stand up and tell them all that I command you.” (Jer 1:17a)

REFLECTION:

*In* his youth, Jeremiah was no different from any ordinary youth who dreamed 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.” In other words, we are to exercise our gift of prophecy 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 corruption, and censure those who perpetrate violence and lead people astray. This is easier said than done. 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.*”



In the Second Reading, St. Paul declares the 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. ...Continued on page 3

*Promise of the Week*

“...I am with you to deliver you.” - Jer 1:19b

# NEWS

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not worthy of love? We know what Jesus did: he embraced the leper, the blind man, the paralytic, the Pharisee and the sinner. He embraced the thief on the cross and even embraced and forgave those who crucified him.”

The Holy Father admitted that it is often hard to understand God’s love. But it is a gift to know that it comes despite our imperfections. God forgave even those who abandoned Him.

“Why did he do this? Because only what is loved can be saved. Only what is embraced can be transformed, Francis explained. “The Lord’s love is greater than all our problems, frailties and flaws. Yet it is precisely through our problems, frailties, and flaws that he wants to write this love story.

“He embraced the prodigal son, he embraced Peter after his denials and he always embraces us whenever we fall: he helps us to get up and get back on our feet. Because the worst fall, the fall that can ruin our lives, is to remain down and not allow ourselves to be helped up.”

The Holy Father also warned of four “without” that can leave a young person without roots and unable to grow: without work, without education, without community, without family. He said strong roots are necessary to keep a person grounded.

“There is a question that we older people have to ask ourselves, but also a question that you need to ask us and we have to answer: What roots are we providing for you, what foundations for you to grow as persons?” Francis said. “It is easy enough to criticize and complain about young people if we are depriving them of the jobs, education and community opportunities they need to take root and to dream of a future.

“Without education, it is difficult to dream of a future; without work, it is very difficult to dream of a future; without a family and community, it is almost impossible to dream of a future. Because dreaming of a future means learning how to answer not only the question what I am living for but also who I am living for, who makes it worthwhile for me to live my life.”



**Pope Francis** @Pontifex · 5h

The secret to navigating life well is to invite Jesus on board. The helm of life should be given to Him, so that He can direct the route.

4030 18717 Twitter

# Make Us Love You More

Earlier this year, at the Worship Leaders’ Forum, prayer leaders from among the married adults and solo parents, along with the Praise Ministry, gathered to discuss how BLD’s Friday worship services might be improved. It was a fruitful afternoon and many ideas were exchanged that will surely enhance what BLD already does best.

From all the things that were mentioned, it was a closing prayer in our small group discussion that really caught my attention, as well as my imagination, because I thought that it captured in six simple words what the afternoon was all about. In the very first line of Tita’s closing prayer, she simply said, “Lord, make us love You more.”

I was awestruck. And now that I’ve had almost a month to think about it, I still am.

At first I thought that it just defined what worship is all about. Not only are Friday nights supposed to be a demonstration of my enthusiasm for the Lord, I realized that worship should lead me onward and upward in an ascending spiral of loving God more. But it’s a prayer that doesn’t just apply to what we do in the Community on Fridays; it actually applies to all of BLD’s endeavors.

Then recently, I realized that it applies to even more than that.

## MAKE US LOVE YOU MORE

My human mind	And the only possible reason
Can’t think of any reason	That I could think of
Why Father God created me	Is because He
	wants me to be here
If He didn’t	Be here to seek Him
I wouldn’t even know	Be here to rejoice in Him.
that I could have existed	
I wouldn’t know	So I’ve come to realize
that I’m not here either	That it’s what Jesus had taught
	From the very beginning.
But in His wisdom	
Ever since I was conceived	We all can only live life to the fullest
I’ve been on His Earth	If we surrender to love
And for almost sixty years	Surrender to the Father’s love
Well... I’ve existed!	... and love Him.

Lord, always and everywhere,  
Make us love you more.

# HOPE AHEAD FOR ME

Jesus declared openly  
In Nazareth in Galilee  
That *the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me*  
*Because He has anointed Me*  
*He will give the captives liberty*  
*Deliver the poor from misery*  
*Open the eyes of the blind to see*  
*Let the oppressed go free*  
*Make a year for God to be happy*

This was the start that Jesus will be  
The fulfillment of Isaiah's messianic prophecy  
The new head of the Church body  
To be with us in perfect harmony

But Nazarenes saw Him differently  
Partly because of their familiarity  
For they knew Him and His family  
They thought that the Messiah had to be from royalty  
Not from a humble man of carpentry  
They rejected Him as Messiah defiantly  
And drove Him out of their city  
For He was not of their expectancy

But it's the will of God Almighty  
To deliver what a Messiah must be  
For His wisdom is deeper than the sea  
And can't be fathomed by humanity  
The Messiah was sent with humility  
With utmost obedience and mercy  
With silent meekness and divinity

Lord, those Nazarenes are like me  
For I have yet to truly follow Your way  
I've failed in the process constantly  
Am still blind to see Your Light for me  
Still bound to treasures too worldly  
Still sinful I seem to be  
But there is hope ahead for me  
For I'm a work-in-progress constantly  
Still striving for Your clemency

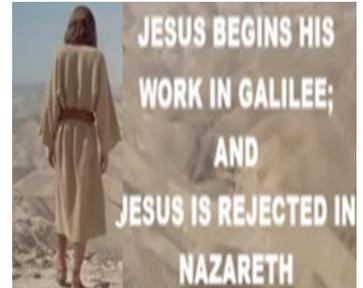
So, even at the eleventh hour,  
I'll beg for Your mercy  
Refine my soul and continue to mold me to be  
A renewed forgiven soul filled with humility  
Especially when eventually, this earth is behind me

# COUNSELS

(from page 1)

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 that in the end three gifts remain, "...**faith, hope and love...** **but the greatest of these is love.**" (1 Cor 13:13)

This Sunday's Gospel Reading 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 that they



wanted to kill Him? Simple answer is that their expectations and worldly mindset had betrayed them. First, they did not expect the Son of God to come from among them. And, if they had known that He would, 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 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.

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 love Him by simply repeating, "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, lead 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.*

Directions:

1. Actively participate in the social teachings of the church especially the Right to Life.
2. Be bold in sharing your faith with others.

# Disciples' Song

We wandered sun-drenched Galilee  
Where He gently taught and healed.  
And slowly, surely, we could see  
His holiness revealed.

But here on windswept Calvary  
dark clouds have blocked the sun.  
We whisper with the awe-struck guard:  
"He truly was the One."

His words kept coming back to us.  
We trusted when He said  
God's love would fill us with its light  
And raise us from the dead.

But in this shadowed upper room  
we cower and we hide.  
Till Thomas spoke with faith renewed:  
"My Lord, the Crucified."

We ventured out to foreign lands;  
His spirit filled our days.  
We witnessed to His saving grace  
And boldly sang His praise.

But in this dark and chilling cell  
We know fear's awful sting.  
Yet we join in Paul's song of joy:  
"All glory to our King."

We remember even now  
And we will tell His story...

**The Lord shall be our only light;  
Our God will be our glory.**  
(cf. Is 60:19)

## LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Last Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 2,895	\$8,169
Love Offerings	\$ 847	\$2,947
E-Giving	\$ 120	\$380
Mission	\$ 425	\$2,215

Financial details are available to all members through [treasury@bldnewark.com](mailto:treasury@bldnewark.com)  
Thank you for your continued support!

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Teaching Calendar

==> **Make-up session for what was scheduled for Jan 19**

**Teachings for Saturday, Feb 2, 1-6 pm DMP School Building**

- NCR / GIP (LSS 1-50 / ME 47,49,50 / SPE 20 / SE 38)

CMP II, Part I (LSS 1-48 / ME 48 / SPE 19)

**BLD NEWARK MEDICAL MISSION**  
JOSE PANGANIBAN, CAMARINES NORTE  
FEBRUARY 11 - 14, 2019

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

*Is your birthday coming up soon? If it is, then we want to hear from you. The Word Ministry is looking for people to write reflections to be based on the Mass readings that fall on their birthdays, for inclusion in the Covenant News. Guidelines for this initiative:*

- Articles are to be based on the Mass readings for the writer's birthday
- 400-450 words
- Subject to review and editing by members of the Word Ministry
- Due date:  
Must be submitted to [WORD@bldnewark.com](mailto:WORD@bldnewark.com), two weeks before the upcoming birthday
- for those whose birthdays have just recently passed, but for whom, what was read in Church that day still resonates, we would still want to receive your written reflections (submission deadline for these is the Friday after the birthday)

For more information, email us at [WORD@bldnewark.com](mailto:WORD@bldnewark.com)