Pope on Climate: ‘There Remains a Window of Opportunity, But We Must Not Allow It to Close’

Pope’s Address to United Nations Conference on Climate in Madrid

Source: Zenit.org

‘There remains a window of opportunity, but we must not allow it to close…’

Pope Francis expressed this, speaking about climate change and care for Creation, in a message he sent to Carolina Schmidt, Minister of the Environment of Chile and President of Cop 25, and to the participants in the United Nations Conference on Climate.

Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, read the text at the opening of the conference taking place in Madrid, Spain, from December 2-13, 2019.

In the text, the Holy Father calls for words to be translated into action, lamenting that much more could be done to limit global warming.

With an appeal to protect our common home, he urged: “We must not place the burden on the next generations to take on the problems caused by the previous ones.”

“Instead, we should give them the opportunity to remember our generation as the one that renewed and acted on – with honest, responsible and courageous awareness – the fundamental need to collaborate in order to preserve and cultivate our common home,” he countered, praying: “May we offer the next generation concrete reasons to hope and work for a good and dignified future!”

The Holy Father concluded, with his hope “that this spirit will animate the work of COP25, for which I wish every success.”

True Repentance

Theme: There is joy and hope in our lives when we truly repent.

Order: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.” (Mt 3:3b)

Reflection:

What does it mean to truly repent?

The Greek word for repentance, as used in the Gospel, is metanoia, which means, “a change in one’s way of life resulting from penitence or spiritual conversion.” This change entails a profound interior conversion in which one firmly turns away from worldly darkness, and embraces a new way of life as Christ’s disciple. It is dying to self, discarding one’s former way of life in favor of the Way, the Truth and Life that is Christ Himself.

Such repentance is aptly described in Scriptures: ”…return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning. Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God,” (Jl 2:12-13).

When we return to God with our whole heart, we see, with stark clarity, the numerous occasions of sin we’ve succumbed to, when we failed to love God. The rending of our heart drives us toward a desire to do penance, for we see our lowliness in the Divine light that shines the way

Promise of the Week

“He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save.” – cf. Ps 72:13
BLD Newark held Prayer Healing Seminar II during the weekend before Thanksgiving. As evidenced by the three sharings below that were submitted to the Word Ministry last week, its positive impacts were, and will continue to be felt by the seminar’s participants, way beyond the holiday that followed the retreat that weekend.

**PRAYER HEALS**

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.” (Jas 5:16).

I was blessed to attend the most recent BLD retreat that the Community offered, which was the Prayer Healing Seminar II. I learned so much from its deeply powerful and moving teachings which offered more ways of using God’s gifts for ourselves, and for others. Indeed, participating in our BLD Community has altogether strengthened my knowledge of my faith, and solidified my trust and faith in God. Over the years I have seen God’s miracles, and I know that God stands by us even when we think that our prayers have not been answered as we’ve requested. I now also go to confession more, which has made me feel so much closer to God when I tell Him my sins and promise to sin no more.

But, as the retreat seemed to point out, I often sin again; and as badly as I want to change, I keep repeating the same sins. Yes, I do pray and ask the Lord to change me, but sometimes, I feel stuck in patterns of behavior and I don’t know how God wants me to change.

“Turn back, LORD, rescue my soul; save me because of your mercy.” (Ps 6:5)

Spiritual wounds from our past come in all shapes and sizes starting in early childhood, and going all the way to this moment. Many people struggle with internal pain and emotional hurts that seem impossible to heal. Spiritual wounds can be from any age; they are usually associated with accidents, physical, verbal and/or sexual abuse, or any emotional pain that we can’t cope with.

Many of us wear masks to cover things up. Pains from the past, trauma, generational sins, or childhood hurts, might get tucked away somewhere, and because of the mask, we might go about life without thinking about their impact on us at all.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Mt 11:28)

However, the fact that they are buried deep inside us doesn’t mean that they don’t reveal themselves to negatively impact all that we do in life, can cause us to sin and remain far from God. We might be so removed from what has happened to us or what has happened within our families that we don’t know why we do what we do. Why do I get so angry? Why do I feel so scared? Why do I worry so much?

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds (cf. Ps 147:3). The most important lesson I learned in Prayer Healing II is that through prayer, identification of hurts, forgiveness, life changes and knowledge of the Word of God, our Father in Heaven can heal the deepest wounds of our souls. Inner healing is about allowing the grace and peace of Jesus to care for us, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, to heal us through forgiveness and reconciliation, and with the courage to change. Through it all, Jesus sees us as we are, and in spite of our resistance and sinful ways, He loves us.

Inner healing through prayer is powerful, and our sacramental life in the Church serves as our protection. Indeed Jesus is our armor, and there is power before the Blessed Sacrament. Our families are constantly being attacked by the spirits of the world and the influence of Satan. Therefore, go often to visit Jesus, to spend time with Him. In our woundedness, standing with Jesus is what will make us stronger. God loves us and has plans for each one of us.

“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)

The next two sharings are from members of the Singles Ministry who attended PH 2 (one of them, now living in California, even flew in for the weekend just to attend it!).

“Lord, reveal to me something I still don’t understand about myself. Lord, reveal to me the parts in my life where I still need to be healed.”

This was a prayer that I didn’t realize I had been praying frequently for the past few months, a prayer that was soon going to be answered in the form of an email - it was an invitation from the BLD Newark Prayer Healing Team to attend Prayer Healing Seminar II.

I had attended Prayer Healing I five years ago, and until I received this invitation, I didn’t know that the Prayer Healing Seminar is conducted in two parts! But I was able to attend part two, and am so delighted that I’ve completed it. Part one was definitely... Continued on page 3
an enlightening experience where I gained insights about how to minister to others through counseling, and insights about the areas in my own life where I required healing. But once the weekend for PH2 began, it became clear that for me, the five years between the two seminars was necessary in order to get the most out of both of them.

And in this one, every teaching seemed to be able to address every question that I hadn’t realized I had wanted answered for a long time - from those about how to counsel others by querying the specific and deeper issues in their past experiences, to understanding even more about generational sin, inner healing, and all other topics that I only remember touching on in Shepherd’s Training.

Every time we met in our small groups, it was an affirmation of how the closeness of our community, no matter if we hardly knew each other before meeting, can bring healing to each of us through prayerful counseling. And every time we concluded each teaching with songs of praise, I felt uplifted and hopeful for what God can and will accomplish through each of us in our ministries.

For sure, my prayers were answered through this weekend. I am incredibly grateful for having attended it. I had already considered it to be such a blessing to have gone to the first seminar years ago, and then, at this one an abundance of blessings came again all at once after having completed it - and yet the work is far from done! I’m grateful to the Newark Prayer Healing Team for reaching out to me, and for the BLD Community that continues to welcome me and nourish me with wisdom and knowledge, peace, joy, and love.

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PRAYER HEALS...

Prayer Healing Seminar II is one of the most anticipated retreats in the Community. As I prepared for going to it, I had mixed emotions though, thinking that past hurts and pains might get dug up again. Despite having those feelings, I went, focusing on the sole purpose of the retreat, which was to heal myself from anything that was hindering me from receiving God’s unending love.

At the seminar, I heard them point out that every person is facing a battle from within; for our fervent conversion. It is this light that will clearly reveal any of our attachments to sin.

Before their conversion, a couple in the Community lived together without the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage. Their relationship was characterized by constant bickering and throwing of things every time that they quarreled. The husband was heavy into gambling and womanizing. In his younger days, he left home and indulged in all kinds of vices. He now describes himself as very much like the “prodigal son” who worked in a pig farm, who similarly lived a life of dissipation.

One day, a friend invited the couple to join a renewal community, and so, they had their union solemnized in the Catholic Church. This gave way to true repentance and profound transformation in their lives. They have since experienced many miracles, including the husband’s two successful angioplasty procedures and the Lord’s bountiful provisions as the hospital bills were somehow fully paid for despite the family’s lack of funds.

Love, peace and joy now reign in their family. They have been serving their community for eighteen years now. They’ve dedicated their lives to the Lord and have faithfully served Him.

Nonetheless, as part of human nature, even with spiritual transformation, temptation and sin will continue to be a challenge. Understanding root causes and working on how to avoid sin is what will lead to spiritual maturity. Family healing prayers, praying the Rosary, spending time in Eucharistic Adoration and consulting a spiritual counselor will surely help. Devotion to Mama Mary, …Continued on page 4

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COUNSELS

and I learned that God’s healing love surpasses everything. We are all wounded. It’s just that some of us carry wounds that are deeper and more intense than others.

The past is something I never want to talk about but with God’s wisdom, He filled my heart with the assurance that hurts from the past don’t define me; rather they are just a part of growing. The opportunity of taking this retreat gave me a wider scope to clearly see and hear God’s call that He wants me to be whole in Him.
COUNSELs

(from page 3)

praying for the poor souls in Purgatory and to the saints is another great remedy against temptation and evil.

True repentance also means striving to live a righteous life and going back to the Lord in the Sacrament of Reconciliation whenever we sin again. St. John Paul II, who is known to have gone to confession every week, said, "Those who go to confession frequently, and do so with the desire to make progress, will notice the strides that they make in their spiritual lives."

Being poor in spirit means humbling ourselves before the Lord and acknowledging that we are sinful as we continue in our struggles to be right before God. As sinners, we are spiritually destitute, lost and broken. But as the theme of the week reminds us, there is joy and hope in our lives when we truly repent. And therefore, as we strive to be holy, we can always claim God’s promise when we allow Him to remain in our hearts:

“He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save.” (cf. Ps 72:13)

Direction:

Practice the steps of repairing wrongdoing:
- Recognition, Remorse, Renunciation,
  Restitution and Reconciliation.

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Lord’s Provision
Previous Week’s Collections:

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Friday, December 13 and 20
Ministry and Class Presentations
After Community Praise and Worship

Friday, December 27
Family Worship
Followed by the Praise Ministry’s Christmas presentation

YLSS Salubungan
Friday, January 3, 2020

MEDICAL MISSION 2020

Jordan, Guimaras, Philippines
February 10 to 13, 2020
2000 Hail Mary’s for the Medical Mission – Saturday, January 25, 2020 at the DMP Library

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