



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 27 Issue 16

Bulletin Edition

April 30, 2021

NEWS

COUNSELS

BLD Farewell Letter from Msgr. Paul Schetelick

April 27, 2021

My dearest Brothers and Sisters,

As we, the church, have just celebrated Good Shepherd Sunday, I send this letter to the great faithful flock of Bukas Loob sa Diyos of Newark. I have been so blessed to be of service to this loving community for over 20 years. With a heavy heart, I have submitted my full retirement letter to Cardinal Tobin, ending my formally appointed term from Archbishop Myers as your fulltime Spiritual Director.

As a new DCS is to be installed, there needs to be a fulltime Spiritual Director who will bond with the discerned leadership over the next 3 years. Because of all the Covid 19 protocols my former allegations are still being addressed by the Office for Protecting God's Children. The process has been long and very tiring and is still not completed. I wrote the Cardinal to express how important it is during this transition period for a new Spiritual Director to be appointed as soon as possible since I cannot yet be of any help. I have kept everyone in my daily prayers and my masses for your wellness and your holiness. And when this process for my return to "good standing" is completed, I will always be available for weekends, as I was for Fr. Lehman when he needed me.

Ever grateful for your love and your love offerings during these last many difficult months, my heart is full because of each of you.

In Christ's great Easter and beyond peace,
In my love and endless gratitude,
Rev. Msgr. Paul Schetelick

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Remain in Me, as I Remain in You

THEME: We remain in Jesus' love and bear much fruit when we keep His commandments.

WORD: Acts 9:26-31 ~ Ps 22:26-27,28,30,31-32
1 Jn 3:18-24 ~ Jn 15:1-8

ORDER: "...believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us." - 1 Jn 3:23

REFLECTION:

In the Gospel for this Sunday, the Fifth Sunday of Easter, Jesus portrays Himself as the vine, and the disciples, the branches, who He desired to be fruitful. **"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit."**

From the vine comes all that is necessary for the branches to survive and grow. **"Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing."**



"Remain in me, as I remain in you." Jesus invited His disciples to this spiritual intimacy, to be connected, to abide in Him as He abided in them. To be separated from the vine is to die spiritually. Jesus gave them the imagery of a branch removed from the vine, withered, and gathered by people to be thrown into a fire and burned. ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you." - Jn 15:7

“...as of first importance”

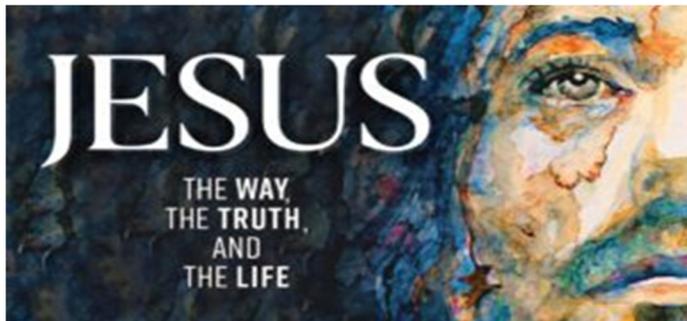
- 1 Cor 15:3

In the reading for this Monday’s daily Mass (May 3), St. Paul describes the fundamental basis of our Christian faith *“as of first importance.”* He was referring to how *“Christ died for our sins... that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day”* (1 Cor 15:4). And in the Gospel for the same day is this verse that a priest at a BLD retreat once referred to as the most important passage in the whole Bible:

“I am the way and the truth and the life”

– Jn 14:6

Given the many worldly concerns that we deal with each and every day, it’s easy to forget how Jesus should be of **first importance** in our lives. But what we must ask ourselves, and answer, is what does this really entail?



It starts with believing that He is the Truth, that He is Who He says He is – the Son of God... the very embodiment of God’s Love, given to us. Those who say that they believe in God, albeit, not necessarily the Christian God, I fear, are shortchanging themselves. They deprive themselves of the very love of God.

Jesus is also the Life, and life is most fulfilled when we admit our woundedness and allow His saving power to heal us. Life will continue on, whether one believes in His capacity to do this or not. But it’s believing that He is the Life... that’s what will fill ours to the brim.

Then, He is the Way.

Some Christian denominations argue that since Jesus already won the ultimate victory by rising from the dead, that the cross no longer has to have His body portrayed on it. In my simple mind, they’re forgetting this part of what He said in John 14:6... He said, ***“I am the way...”***

Why there is suffering in the world will, I’m afraid, forever remain a mystery. What isn’t a mystery is that loving involves sacrifice, and that in giving us life, that that is what God, and in particular, our Christian God, is asking us to do – to love, →→

NEWS

(from page 1)

The following is the letter that was sent to Msgr. Paul by the DCS, in response to his farewell message:

April 27, 2021

Rev. Msgr. Paul Schetelick

Spiritual Director, BLD Newark

Dearest Monsi,

May the peace and joy from your loving service to our Risen Lord remain in you! We cannot thank God enough for blessing our community with your steadfast efforts in performing your work of ministry that is founded upon **“love”** for Him and us. We hope that our feelings can be best expressed in the 1st letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians... ***“remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father...”*** (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3)

We do not claim that we readily understand everything that happens in our journey of life in Him. We live our faith in God with our belief that His ways are not our ways. We trust that His loving ways are better than ours, including the desires of our hearts.

He is our all-knowing God, not only what we say and do, but also how we feel for Him and others. We hope that it is sufficient enough to express our gratitude for your loving and untiring service to God and our community through the words of St. Paul ...***“To this end, we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every effort of faith, that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, in accord with the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.”*** (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12)

With our faith in Him, we are forever grateful.

DCS of BLD Newark

→ not ourselves, but others. And Jesus, by dying, has shown us the ultimate way to do this.

Death, in and of itself, doesn’t really have a purpose. But it’s in living and dying because of love... that’s what will ensure for us, our rising once again, just like He did at Easter.



COUNSELS (from page 1)

Jesus told His disciples that they were already pruned because of the word that He spoke to them; and He promised: ***“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.”*** Jesus continued to reveal to them their connection to the Father. ***“By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”*** Hearing the allegory of the vine and the branches must have given consolation to the disciples who feared that Jesus would soon leave them.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ is here present among us. Christ is here in this Church, for without Christ there is no Church. He is the vine, we are the branches! We are all connected to one another, created to live, connected to God. As St. Paul says, ***“Now you are Christ’s body, and individually parts of it.”*** (1 Cor 12:27)

We remain connected to the body of Christ when we immerse ourselves in the prayer of the Church, when we are in steady communion with God, and when we regularly speak to Him. We grow in the knowledge of God by constantly reading His Word, soaking in the Truth of the Bible. We are nourished when we receive the Sacraments and celebrate the Eucharist. ***“We stay close to the Christ who forgives our sins and who enlivens our spirits”*** (We Live in Him, He in Us Bishop Barron). We become responsive and relevant when we extend a helping hand to those in need, and pray for. Engaging in corporal and spiritual works of mercy keeps us attached to the Vine. As St. John exhorts, ***“... let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.”***

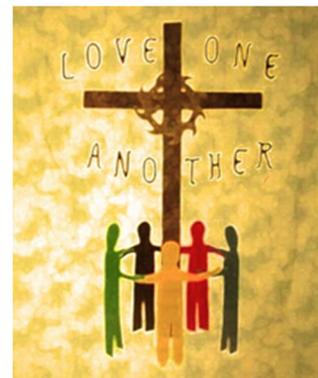
Events in the past year-and-a-half, mainly the pandemic, made worse by social unrest and natural disasters, caused untold burdens – critical illnesses and deaths; grief, isolation and emotional problems; unemployment and financial difficulties. These were not things that we would just hear about. They happened to people we know – our neighbors, our friends, our family and members of our BLD community.

With humility and faithfulness we could view these trials and hardships as opportunities that bring us closer to God, that teach us to be strong, to learn and grow, and to feel the Father’s love and care for us as He continues to prune us. We realize and appreciate our connectedness when we touch, and are touched in our giving and receiving of one another. The community pantry in the Philippines, →→

→ with the motto: “Give what you can give; take (only) what you need” has certainly caught fire in a good way. What started as a good deed by a couple in a community in Metro Manila has spread throughout the different provinces. It has helped poor families who, even before the pandemic, were under constant pressure to make both ends meet. And it has given those who have, the opportunity to share their food and other resources.

There may be times when we find it hard to accept others, or to extend ourselves to them. This may be because of our own prejudices, or our suspicion that the past transgressions by others will happen again. For example, as narrated in the First Reading, the early Christians did not want to get near Saul; they were afraid of him. Barnabas, who saw that his conversion was genuine, introduced Saul to the apostles and reported to them how Saul had seen the Lord. Barnabas had made it possible to dispel any misunderstandings among them. So, Saul was then able to move freely in Jerusalem to conduct his mission of evangelization. And when the brothers learned that Hellenists were trying to kill Saul, they protected him by sending him to Tarsus.

St. John reminds us: ***“...believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us.”*** At the Last Supper, Jesus gave the disciples a new commandment: ***“love one another, as I have loved you.”*** Love for others was no longer just about our neighbor, our countrymen. Loving one another is now a testament that we belong to Christ. It is modeled on His own acts of charity. It is divine (cf. Scott Hahn) and it reflects the love of Jesus for His followers.



“We love because he first loved us.”

- 1 Jn 4:19

When we keep His commandments we remain in Jesus’ love and bear much fruit. Jesus inspires and empowers us to be responsive, relevant and fruitful; to do what will have lasting value; to bear the fruit that God the Holy Spirit bears through us, as we have been appointed to bear.

We empty our hearts to be filled by the Holy Spirit, and now we can shout with joy: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people!

...Continued on page 4

COUNSELS (from page 3)

Directions:

1. Deepen your knowledge of God by reading His word constantly, receiving the Sacraments and celebrating the Eucharist.
2. Love not only in words but more so in deed and truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

File this under "Not Stewardship"

A mega-church pastor was once asked by a newspaper reporter how he was able to reconcile the Christian message that he was preaching with the lavish lifestyle that he and his family enjoyed. He answered the question by citing the agreement that he said he had with God that absolved him of any guilt.

Like other churches, each Sunday, he would exhort his followers to contribute money... and they did! Then per his deal with God, he would take all of the contributions, toss them up in the air towards heaven, and say... "Here God, You can take all that You want!!! ...As for what's for me, I'll just settle for the leftovers that come back down."

Amazon Smile Is Now Available on Your Phone:



Dear Charity Administrator,

We are happy to share that your supporters can now use the Amazon Shopping app on their mobile phone to sign up for AmazonSmile and select "Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Foundation, Inc - Bld Newark" as their favorite charity. This is a great opportunity to engage with your supporters to help increase your AmazonSmile donations.

Instructions to our friends and BLD family

Want to help make a difference while you shop in the Amazon app, at no extra cost to you? Simply follow the instructions below to select "Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Foundation, Inc - Bld Newark" as your charity and activate AmazonSmile in the app. They'll donate a portion of your eligible mobile app purchases to us.

How it works:

1. Open the Amazon app on your phone
2. Select the main menu (=) & tap on "AmazonSmile" within Programs & Features
3. Select "Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Foundation, Inc - Bld Newark" as your charity
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the mobile app

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

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

| Collections: | Last Week | YTD |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Tithes & Love Offerings / E-Giving / Mailed Checks | \$ 2,725 | \$ 32,448 |
| Mission | \$ - | \$5,000 |



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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



Teaching Calendar

CMP 2, PART 2 – CHRISTIAN SUFFERING WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021 @ 7:45 PM

for: ME 47-52 / SPE 18-21 / SE 33-38 /
2021 Discipling Class / Everyone wishing to take a refresher course

Appeal to Help Covid-19 Victims in the Philippines

Donations can be made via:

- Separate envelopes during our Friday events
- Checks payable to BLD Newark; mail to:

"For Covid-19 victims"
c/o Vino & Beth Guiang
604 Kenneth Ave.

South Plainfield, NJ 07080

- On-line via e-Giving on our BLD Newark website.

The Word Ministry Is Looking for Your Reflections for Inclusion in the Covenant News!!!

Should you wish to see your compositions in a future CN issue, please email them to cez.calingo@bldnewark.com

THANK YOU!