



**Bukás Loób sa Diyós**

(Open in Spirit to God)

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC COVENANT COMMUNITY  
DISTRICT OF NEWARK

# COVENANT NEWS

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## NEWS

### Pope at Audience: St. Joseph a model for meaningful human relationships

Taken from Vatican News: [Pope at Audience: St. Joseph a model for meaningful human relationships - Vatican News](#)

Pope Francis continues his catechesis series on St. Joseph at the Wednesday General Audience, and says that Joseph shows that even those who appear on the margins of society have a special role in God's plan of salvation.

By Devin Watkins

The Pope picked up his catechesis on St. Joseph at the weekly General Audience, reflecting on his role in salvation history.

Focusing on how he is presented in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew, Pope Francis noted that both evangelists compose a genealogy of Jesus, which begins either with Abraham (as in Matthew) or Adam (as in Luke) and culminates in Joseph and Jesus.

Both Luke and Matthew, said the Pope, present Joseph not as the biological father of Jesus but in any case, as "fully the father of Jesus."

"Through him, Jesus fulfils the history of the covenant and salvation between God and man."

#### Servant of Christ

Pope Francis said Matthew shows us that Joseph represents a central point in God's plan of salvation, even though he appears discreet and apparently on the margins of the story and of society.

"Joseph lives his agency without ever seeking to take over the scene," he said. ...Continued on page 2

## COUNSELS

### Season of Hope and Expectation

THEME: We prepare for the coming of Jesus, our Savior, when we transform our ways through repentance and forgiveness of sins.

WORD: Bar 5:1-9/ Ps 126:1-2,2-3,4-5,6/  
Phil 1:4-6,8-11/ Lk 3:1-6

ORDER: **"Strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father..."**  
(1 Thes 3:13)

REFLECTION:



**T**he Season of Advent is here. It is the start of a new liturgical year. Advent reminds us of our identity as people of hope waiting for the second coming of Christ, and a people who remembers and celebrates the first coming of Christ. Ironically though, this is also the time when people would tend to overlook the spiritual significance of the season, easily carried away by the material trimmings and glitter that come with the occasion. Some tend to by-pass the spiritual preparation and jump right away into the frenzy of decorations, shopping, gift-giving, vacations, and family gatherings. ...Continued on page 3

### Promise of the Week

**"The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Lk 3:5b-6)**

# NEWS

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Everyone, he added, can find in St. Joseph—who often goes unnoticed or hidden—an intercessor and a guide in difficult moments.

“He reminds us that all those who are seemingly hidden or in the 'second row' have unparalleled agency in the history of salvation,” said the Pope. “The world needs these men and women.”

## **Guardian of the Redeemer**

The Pope then turned to the Gospel of Luke, where Joseph is portrayed as “the guardian of Jesus and Mary.”

This role extends throughout history to make him also “the Guardian of the Church”. God, he added, offers St. Joseph as a response to the question Cain put to God after killing his brother: “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

“Joseph, with his life, seems to want to tell us that we are always called to feel that we are the guardians of our brothers and sisters, the custodians of those placed close to us, of those whom the Lord entrusts to us through the circumstances of life,” he said.

## **Patron of the afflicted**

Pope Francis noted that St. Joseph offers our “fluid” modern society a model of how to treat human relations. The Gospel accounts of Jesus’ genealogy, said the Pope, remind us that “our lives are made up of bonds that precede and accompany us. The Son of God chose to come into the world by way of such bonds.”

The Pope added that his thoughts go out to all those who struggle to find meaningful relationships in their own lives, saying this situation leaves many people feeling alone and lacking the strength to strive ahead.

## **Support in difficulties**

Pope Francis concluded his catechesis by offering a prayer to help everyone who struggles with loneliness, adding that they can find in St. Joseph “an ally, a friend, and a support.”

*Saint Joseph, you who guarded the bond  
with Mary and Jesus,*

*help us to care for the relationships in our lives.*

*May no one experience the sense of abandonment  
that comes from loneliness.*

*Let each of us be reconciled with our own history,  
with those who have gone before, and recognise even  
in the mistakes made a way through which  
Providence has made its way, and evil did not have  
the last word.*

*Show yourself to be a friend to those who struggle  
the most, and as you supported Mary and Jesus in  
difficult times, support us too on our journey. Amen.*

# \*6 May the Advent of 2021 bring light to our darkened world\*\*

Peace be with you!

Last week, we joyfully celebrated Thanksgiving Day with our family and friends, giving thanks for God’s continued blessings. For most of us, this included several degrees of freedom from the quarantine that virus lockdowns had imposed on us. For all of us, we gave thanks, most especially for God’s gift of life.

Now we move on to the season of Advent, which is a period of waiting and preparing.

Over the next few weeks, darkness will set in earlier, the nights will get longer and colder, just as it was dark and cold on that first Christmas Eve. Then suddenly, in that little town in Bethlehem, light shined down from Heaven and the silence on that hillside was broken by the choirs of angels announcing the birth of Christ. They sang with joy, the same joy that the world now celebrates at Christmas.

In contrast to that night, our cities have holiday lights; we hold gatherings and festivities, and play jolly music everywhere. Cars will fill our streets, shoppers will be crowding the stores and tempers will flare up once again when people get distracted by the fuss and the busy-ness, overlooking the true reason for why we celebrate.

So, this year, during these 4 weeks of Advent, let us spend more quiet time in the darkness with Christ and truly prepare for this joyful season and what awaits us - the Birth of Christ. In Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, let us visit Him and spend time to talk to Him, giving thanks for the many things that He has done for us and that He has given us, while looking forward to the greater blessings that are to come. In darkness while we wait and pray, the Advent wreath will be lit, one candle a week; as its light gradually enters our churches and our homes, let us all eagerly wait for the arrival of the Light of Christ.

I invite you my BLD sisters and brothers in Christ, to be vigilant in this season of

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# COUNSELS

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Our community word for December reminds us that as God's beloved children, we are to live in hope, peace and love, always with joy in our hearts, for the coming of Jesus, our Savior. Advent is an opportune time in our life to reflect, repent, and receive the Sacraments, a most fitting time to amend our ways and brings transformation to our life. It is a time to welcome Jesus again to be born in us and be in our hearts forever. It is a time to offer Jesus the gift that He has always been expecting from us – our steadfast commitment and unwavering resolve to be deeper in love with Him and be His true followers. We know that our gift of dedication will please Jesus, so we must be ready to give it to Him.

"Strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father ... (1Thes 3:13). Everything we receive is by God's grace. We have to strengthen our commitment to the Lord and free ourselves from worldly distractions. This means that we should spend more time knowing and serving Jesus, rather than becoming preoccupied with earthly desires and priorities. We should gladden ourselves living like Christ and glorifying God for every blessing that we receive. We ought to consciously act and live in faith, fervently asking the Lord to always fill our hearts with His goodness, love, joy and peace.

To help us spiritually prepare to celebrate the coming of our Savior, let us reflect on the readings of Advent.

The theme for the 1st Sunday of Advent tells us – We prepare for the coming of Jesus, our Savior, when we pray and conduct ourselves in a manner pleasing to God. As we start the Advent season, we are immediately given a wake-up call. We are to walk in the light of the Lord and learn to be people of peace. We are expected to cast away all deeds of darkness and to put on the armor of light. To be prepared means to always pray and stay alert not to walk away from God's precepts so we can welcome the Lord with faith-filled expectation. When we live this kind of life, we can be assured of this promise - "All the paths of the Lord are kindness and constancy toward those who keep his covenant and his decrees," (Ps 25:10).

The theme for the 2nd Sunday of Advent gives us this direction – We prepare for the coming of Jesus, our Savior, when we transform our ways through repentance and forgiveness of sins. We hear St. John the Baptist firmly proclaiming to the people: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths." (Lk 3:4) for the reign of God is at hand. He calls for →→

→ a fruitful and lasting conversion of those who have gone astray. Heeding this call truly prepares us in this lifetime for the coming of Jesus, as we are given this promise – "The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Lk 3:5b-6).

We prepare for the coming of Jesus, our Savior, when we joyfully proclaim the Good News to His people, is the theme for the 3rd Sunday of Advent. The readings of this Sunday give us the reason to rejoice because of the good news that we have been saved. Jesus was born; He became man to bring salvation to this world. His ministry of teaching and healing proved that He was the awaited Messiah and His mission was to bring man back to God. Therefore, we must always be glad and rejoice in the Lord, because as St. Paul tells the Philippians – "The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus," (Phil 4:7).

For the 4th Sunday of Advent, the theme is – We prepare for the coming of Jesus, our Savior, when like Mary, we humbly obey the will of God. Our greatest role model of humility and obedience is the Blessed Virgin Mother. Together with St. Joseph, Mary gave everything up to accept God's invitation to be a key instrument in His salvific plan for man. She became the mother of the Messiah. We too are asked to place our full trust in God, be submissive to His call and be obedient to His plans for us. Sometimes, following God's word is challenging, but we can be assured that everything works for us who truly love Jesus, in this promise – "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled," (Lk 1:45).



Finally, the 5th week is the Feast of the Holy Family and our theme is – We prepare for the coming of Jesus, our Savior, when we, like the Holy Family, bond in love with our family and one another. The family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is the model to be imitated by all families. Celebrating this feast should remind us to ever be grateful for the gift of our family, where we first felt love and where we learned to faithfully honor those in authority over us. A family that respects each member will truly live a long life as expressed in this promise – "For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork, blessed shall you be and favored," (Ps 128:2).

This coming Christmas will be the 2nd year into the Covid-19 pandemic. Once again, it behooves us who

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# COUNSELS

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have been blessed with life and provisions to be more sensitive to the needs of the times. Our vigilance for the coming of the Lord should involve our awareness of the pressing needs of people who are still suffering, grieving for the loss of loved ones, or severely affected by the present crisis and other calamities.

We are all children of the Father. All of us are called to show care and empathy for our disaster-stricken brethren, perhaps by cutting back on our Christmas spending and donating instead to groups that serve the needs of those who are wanting. Then truly, this season will be a season of love, peace, joy and hope for all.

A Merry Christmas and blessed New Year! Let us give glory to our Lord Jesus Christ for coming into our lives.

## Directions

1. *Jesus is the reason for the season; persevere in your prayer life, share love and joy to the poor and needy.*
2. *Go to confession; repent, be transformed and renew your life in Christ.*

## Advent of 2021...

hope; and through our prayers, fasting, good deeds and sacrifices, to prepare ourselves for Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Who is to come. During this season and beyond, let us all be reminded that Jesus Christ is the Reason for the Season.

### Reflection:

- \* In what ways do you plan to be vigilant this Advent season
- \* What are some of the practices and traditions you have that might bring for us and others a deeper Advent spirituality?
- \* How can you and I invite Jesus into our lives this Christmas?

—You may send your reflection responses to the BLD Word Ministry.

—Together, let us bring the Light of Christ to this darkened world. Amen.

**Share your Time and Talent: Become a Covenant News contributor!**

### Questions of the month:

**What are your Christmas traditions? How do you celebrate Christmas?**

Send your responses to Word Ministry at [Word@BLDNewark.com](mailto:Word@BLDNewark.com).

## LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Last Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings / E-Giving / Mailed Checks	\$ 856.00	\$97,953.97
Covid 19 Collection	\$ -	\$ 1,990.00
Mission	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00

Financial details are available to all members through

[treasury@bldnewark.com](mailto:treasury@bldnewark.com)

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR



**BLD Newark Livestream**  
**EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION**  
FRIDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2021 • 8:00 PM

### **BLD Academy Enrichment Teaching** **On Personal Values**

**Friday, December 3, 2021, After 1<sup>st</sup> Friday Mass**  
**In-Person: Divine Mercy Parish Auditorium**

**Please join our own Intercessory Ministry in their**  
**nightly community prayers via Zoom.**

**Everyone is most welcome to participate**  
**Zoom ID: 2265467380 / PW: 750109 @6:30PM**

**For more details, please contact**  
**Ram & Claire Bautista**

### **Soup Kitchen**

**Saturday, December 18, 2021| 9:00AM**  
**Missionaries of Charity**  
**Mission Ministry – Contact: Rene & Claire Monje**



Joe Tobin @CardinalJW Tobin · Dec 1

Loving Mother Mary, help us to wait patiently for your Son's return in glory.  
May His light shine in us this Advent season.