



COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

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NEWS

COUNSELS

Our Hearts Break for Our Muslim Brothers and Sisters

Statement by the Coalition of Religious Leaders of New Jersey⁽¹⁾

Source: RCAN.org

March 18, 2019

The name of God and of humanity were desecrated today in Christchurch, New Zealand when people filled with hate violated the sacred precincts of two mosques and murdered 49 innocent people during prayer. We grieve with the bereaved families of the victims and their communities, and we condemn in the strongest terms possible these barbaric acts of premeditated violence and murder.

Today we must all see ourselves as Muslims. We must see ourselves as Muslims because when one of us is singled out on the basis of our faith all of us are hurt and humanity is violated.

Today we must see ourselves as Muslims because to be a Muslim means to submit to the will of Allah, the will of God. And the will of God is that we should not hate. Rather, it is that we should love all of God's children and hold each and every one sacred, created one and all in God's image.

Today and every day we stand in solidarity with our Muslim sisters and brothers and join them in praying for strength and healing. May God bless them and us all with peace.

⁽¹⁾The statement above was endorsed by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of the Newark Archdiocese, along with 37 other religious leaders of New Jersey.

The Importance of Repentance

THEME: We respond to God's unconditional love when we seek Him with reverence and humility.

WORD: Ex 3:1-8a,13-15 ~ Ps 103:1-2,3-4,6-7,8,11
1 Cor 10:1-6,10-12 ~ Lk 13:1-9

ORDER: "...repent" (Lk 13:3)

REFLECTION:

In the Gospel reading this Sunday, some people told Jesus about some Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. The intention of the crowd seemed to be to ask Jesus to explain why these people suffered. It was common, especially during the time of Jesus, to equate people's suffering with their sinfulness. Jesus, however, challenged this interpretation. He pointed out that those who were massacred were no more sinful than the ones who reported the situation to Him, and that their misfortunes should not have been interpreted as punishment for sin.

The second case that they cited is similar, when eighteen people were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them. Jesus asked if they thought that those who died were more guilty than everyone else. But Jesus was not interested in assigning guilt. **"I will remember their sins no more."** (Heb 8:12) Jesus was more interested in repentance than sin and its punishment. So, He replied that they should repent and that if they did not, then they all would perish.



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Promise of the Week

He redeems your life from destruction, crowns you with kindness and compassion. – cf. Ps 103:4

More about last month's Medical Mission...

Embodying the Love of the Good Shepherd



They came in droves, barangay by barangay, in jeepneys and buses by land, and on out-rigger and pump-boats by sea. The people of the poblaciones (population) made the trek to the Roy Padilla Sr. Memorial Stadium in the town center because they heard that there was healing there.

This year, BLD Newark's annual missionary endeavor to render free healthcare to the sick and the needy in the Philippines was conducted in the municipality of Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte, in the Bicol region of the Philippines, from February 11-14, 2019. Jose Panganiban is the mining capital of the province and was previously called *Mambulao*, from the local word *mambulawan* (meaning bountiful in gold). Jose Panganiban, the person the town was later named after, was a famous writer and essayist whose nom de plume or pen name is Jomapa. He lived during the Spanish period and was a contemporary of Philippine National hero Jose Rizal (pen name Laong Laan, Dimasalang), Marcelo H. Del Pilar (Plaridel), and Mariano Ponce. In 1889, together with other Filipino exiles in Barcelona, Spain, they published the newspaper "La Solidaridad." La Solidaridad was also the name of their secret organization that at that time, was struggling for human rights under Spanish Rule.

Today, the people of Jose Panganiban still struggle, but now, it's with poverty and major health issues. Their main source of income had been "subsistence mining." Despite the health risks of mining, even young children were put to work. →→

→ But when the government issued a cease and desist order two years ago, all mining was stopped and that main livelihood was lost. The local economy was shattered; thousands of families were displaced, including many of the local indigenous people.

Good healthcare became largely inaccessible. This is compounded by the considerable distance of the town from the capital city of Daet, where more modern hospitals could provide advanced services. For many, healthcare is now, altogether, unavailable. So, in and around Jose Panganiban, there is widespread human suffering and misery.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "...misery elicited the compassion of Christ the Savior, who willingly took it upon himself and identified himself with the least of his brethren." (CCC 2448) So, as followers of Christ and indispensable parts of His Mystical Body - the Church, we join Her mission to do works of mercy and to come to the aid of the poor in their spiritual and physical needs.

It is with this one united desire to carry out God's purposes, and for the love of God, that the BLD Newark medical/dental mission team of volunteers embarked on a mission of love for those in desperate need of care in Jose Panganiban. Thus, the BLD Newark volunteers, joined by members from other BLD Districts (as near as Trenton, NJ, and as far away as the Middle East, many of whom regularly join the medical/ dental mission each year), all travelled to this remote town. Once there, they were joined by their local counterparts – volunteers from the townspeople, including staffers of the municipal mayor and his team of councilors.

The local people were very friendly and accommodating. The patients endured the heat of the day and the brief, but periodic, sudden torrential rains that fell heavily. Their indomitable spirit inspired the mission volunteers to do their utmost for the people - offering warm smiles, kind words and good deeds to all who sought their help. The volunteers were palpably touched by the people's child-like reliance on the doctors, dentists, nurses, administrative and support staff, who all gave their time, talent and treasure to witness to the people of Jose Panganiban the Hope that we have in Jesus. With their willing hands and untiring labors and dedication, the BLD medical mission team was able to demonstrate to the people of Jose Panganiban that all things are possible when we believe in Jesus Christ our Universal Savior, our King and our God.

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COUNSELS

(from page 1)

Today, many still associate misfortune with punishment for sins. When bad things happen to a friend or neighbor, do we think of them as being punished? Do we think that they are suffering because they have more sins than us? Or do we think of what happened, empathize, and then realize that they are not more sinful, but that we all should always be ready and humbly repentant over our sins?

The value of repentance cannot be over emphasized especially during this time of Lent. Our DCS, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, discerned our order for this week as **“Repent.”** This has to be taken seriously as it is a message from God to our Community.

In the second part of the Gospel, we learn that a person had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and that for three years, it had not produced any fruit. In frustration, the person told his gardener to cut the tree down because it was just taking up space. The gardener, however, responded by asking that the tree be given one more year, promising that he would fertilize it and cultivate the ground around it.

Reflecting on this reading, the first thing that came to my mind was the thought of God’s immense love for us, how even when we fail, God still loves us and will always be there for us. God knows that we are all sinners, but despite that, what pleases Him is that we continue to strive to live our lives according to His teachings.

Jesus tells us that He will never abandon us, and we must remember this. Isn’t it comforting to know that He loves you and will always be there for you in good times and in bad? But, more importantly, He also said that when we sin, we must repent and seek forgiveness.

It is easy to see His love for us, as evidenced by His immense patience with us. This is embodied in the parable. The owner of the orchard already wanted to cut the tree down because it did not bear fruit; but the gardener asked that the tree be given another chance.



Here, one can say that Jesus is the gardener and we are the fig tree. Jesus has everlasting patience with us. It is not always easy to be patient, →→

Embodying the Love of the Good Shepherd (from page 2)

We pray that they may have the faith to claim their healing and their restoration to wellness and wholeness, after having witnessed the love of Jesus through the BLD missionaries, who had embodied the love of the Good Shepherd Who loves, tends and feeds His sheep. We pray that beyond the few days that we had been able to offer during the medical mission, that the people of Jose Panganiban be moved, inspired, and invigorated further by this same love of neighbor. And then, that they resolve to build on this early foundation, a better healthcare program for their small town, with everyone pitching in – local government officials, miners, farmers and fishermen, along with businesses and community organizations.

To God Be the Glory Forever and Ever!

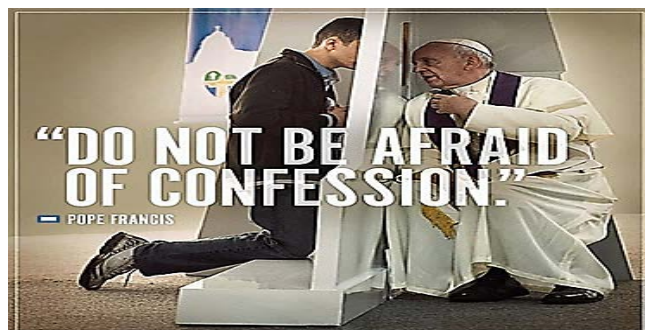
→ and we actually fail many times. Even in our own family settings, with people we love, we’ve probably lost our patience numerous times. Jesus knows that this will happen, but He won’t give up on us.

Finally, let us not forget the great mercy of God that He extends to us. Since Jesus has shown us mercy, then we should also show mercy to others.

As we continue on our Lenten journey, let us follow the example of Jesus. Let us take some time to show love, patience and mercy to others. Let us follow His teachings as best we can, and ask for His guidance when things are difficult. Remember also, that this Lent is a good time for us to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Father God please grant us the grace to more deeply understand Your love for us, Your patience when we go astray, and Your mercy when we fall down. And help us to always realize the importance of repentance. We ask these things in the name of Your Son Jesus, Amen.

Direction: Be reconciled with God by receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



Who I am, Where I've Been and Where I'm Going

Childhood is a time for exploring the world,
for learning and growing.

We look for adventure and new ideas,
full of eagerness and dreams.

Through it all, we become individuals.

We develop character.

We discover, "Who I Am."

But growing into adulthood
can be a chilling experience.

We need to keep warm,

In order to shelter "Who I Am."

So, we acquire a heavy overcoat

and begin to fill its deep pockets
with all the troubles we encounter,

with regrets and unfulfilled dreams,

sadness and failed relationships,

with broken promises and unforgiven sins.

The overcoat is called, "Where I've Been."

We come to Mass weighed down
by "Where I've Been"

and unable to lift our hearts

from under that load.

But Jesus invites us

to place that heavy old coat,

with all its bulging pockets, on His altar

and to offer it up with

the bread and wine of the Eucharist.

And when we do,

we join our lives

and our sacrifices with His,

leaving that miserable old coat

in His loving hands.

Because when we let Jesus
take care of "Where I've Been".....

Then ...

"Who I Am" can go in peace.

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	\$ 1,499	\$ 17,255
Love Offerings	\$ 887	\$ 8,722
E-Giving	\$ 405	\$ 1,475
Mission	\$ 96	\$ 9,729

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

Thank you for your continued support!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

DISCIPLES' ASSEMBLY: 12-4 PM

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2019

Life in the Spirit Seminar #51
April 5-7, 2019
Salubungan is on March 1, 2019
Contacts: Earl & Flo Manguiat

BLD NEWARK
7 Last Words of Christ
Reflections by:
Msgr. Paul Schetelick
DMP Auditorium
April 13, 2019 1 - 6 PM
Seats are limited. Email community.retreat@bldnewark.com to RSVP, or Register online at www.bldnewark.com and click on Community Retreat flyer
Registration Deadline: March 28

Marriage Encounter Weekend 52
18th -19th of May 2019,
Sacred Heart Center, Newton, New Jersey
I hold you in my heart, for we have shared together God's blessing.
Philippians 1:7
Please contact mla@bldnewark.com
BLD Newark

INSTALLATION OF REV. FR. ALEXANDER T. CRUZ AS PASTOR

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2019 - 4:00 PM; DIVINE MERCY

PARISH, 232 CENTRAL AVE, RAHWAY, NJ

Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Mar 29	Formation
		Apr 5	Management
		Apr 12	Mission
		Apr 26	Pastoral