



# COVENANT NEWS

BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY • ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Volume 23 Issue 35

Bulletin Edition

September 1, 2017

## NEWS

## COUNSELS

### Cardinal calls on community for aid and prayers for victims of Hurricane Harvey (source: RCAN.org)

In the wake of news in recent days about the devastating effects of Hurricane Harvey, which has resulted in historic flooding and deaths and continues to threaten people in Texas and Louisiana, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark, has authorized a special voluntary collection in all parishes of the Archdiocese of Newark during the weekends of September 2-3 and 9-10. Funds from this special collection will assist the victims of Hurricane Harvey through the humanitarian and recovery efforts of Catholic Charities USA and through pastoral outreach and rebuilding support to impacted dioceses in Texas and Louisiana through the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In calling on the people of the Archdiocese to support the relief effort, Cardinal Tobin said: "Our hearts and prayers go out to the families that have lost loved ones and to all who have lost homes and businesses along with their sense of peace and normalcy. We also stand with bishops in the region who have the difficult task of providing pastoral care in these most trying times."

The Cardinal also asked that the victims of this disaster be remembered in the General Intercessions at Mass and all other prayer services at churches and schools within the Archdiocese.

Anyone interested in making a donation to this relief effort may do so at any Catholic parish, or may send donations to:

**Archdiocese of Newark**  
– Hurricane Harvey Relief,  
c/o Office of Finance, P.O. Box 9500  
Newark, NJ 07104-0500

### Real Discipleship

THEME: Our hearts are enlightened when we trust in God's plan for our life.

WORD: Jer 20:7-9 ~ Ps 63:2,3-4,5-6,8-9  
Rom 12:1-2 ~ Mt 16:21-27

ORDER: **"Be transformed."**  
(Rom 12:2b)

REFLECTION:

**I**n the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says: **"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."** (Mt 16:24) He teaches us that to deny oneself is to make a choice between our desires and God's will for us. It means to give up our preferences and to do what God plans for our life, to take up the cross of doing what is right, and be willing to bear it. Carrying our cross also means accepting and living through the inconveniences, and sometimes enduring the sufferings and sorrows of life. Jesus points out that the way to become His disciples involves dying to self, bearing our crosses and readily committing to follow Him. Our Community word this month - **Jesus enlightens the hearts of those who trust in God's ways** - encourages us to stand firm in faith as we first seek God's kingdom.

Peter was just favored as the "Rock" on which Jesus was to build His Church; but suddenly, the "Rock" turned sandy and unreliable. **"God forbid, Lord!"** Peter rebuked Jesus. It was a rejection of the cross. In one instance, Peter was walking in the Spirit, then, in the next he was thinking about himself. Peter called Jesus **"Lord,"** but then, tells Him what to do. Jesus abruptly called him out of his comfort zone and into reality

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### Promise of the Week

**"Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."**  
(Mt 16:25b)

The following article is from the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration; it's a sharing on Community from a member of ME 1:

## More Alive...More Colorful... More Joyful and Peaceful

Good afternoon. My name is Way Gomez. My husband, Norby and I attended BLD Newark's ME-1. Yes, I have been a member of this Community for 25 years now! As is true for many of you, my life has never been the same. My world became **more alive, more colorful, more joyful and peaceful.** How did this come about?

Norby and I had been married for 16 years before we attended the ME. I never thought we needed to go and I was bored by that whole weekend. I couldn't identify with the sharers, and I felt weird, so I just went through the motions; my mind was at home thinking about my young daughter who was sick when we left her that Friday night.

I was a very unwilling participant, not just during the ME, but also in the following months leading up to the LSS. Norby attended Friday worships without me.

I was not a particularly religious person. What was more important to me was organizing and carrying out my responsibilities at work and at home, relying mostly on myself to accomplish them. I was a busybody, preoccupied with anticipating my husband's and children's needs and serving them. I would be physically present, but often, I was unable to express and show signs of love and affection for them. This was in contrast to Norby, who was a sweet, loving husband, and a doting father to our children. I had many rules for myself and my family to follow so that things would work smoothly. I was very structured and critical.

***"In my distress I called out: Lord! I cried out to my God. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry to him reached his ears."*** (Ps 18:7)

As the months passed, the bonding amongst us in ME-1 and that of our children, the discovery of my personal relationship with the Lord, and attending BLD's teachings opened my whole being to new horizons of knowing God and my faith. I recognized the hardness of my heart and discovered the root of this heart of stone through the retreats the Community offered. I was able to release the hurts and pains that were lodged in my heart, and forgave the person who had hurt me deeply. My heart gradually softened and I finally understood Norby's lament to me, about his praying that his patience not wear out →→

→ during all those long years when he waited for me to show signs of, and return, his and the children's expressions of love and affection.

Then, after he got sick, Norby patiently endured, without any complaints, twelve long years of dialysis, painful leg cramps and humbling immobility, helplessness and utter dependence on people around him. Looking back, I realize now that the Lord used this time to bond our family more strongly as our children encouraged him and showered him with love and attention. They became Norby's source of support and strength. I too suffered with him throughout his ordeal, but I didn't surrender. Eventually, I did learn to let go of my dreams for us - of enjoying our grandson and future grandchildren together, of seeing them embraced by the love and care of a doting grandfather, along with the dream for us to fully savor together the fruits for our family of his strong faith in God. Friends and priests in the Community helped me accept and understand his illness. Our burden was made lighter and bearable through the Community's unceasing prayers of intercession, and the helping hands of friends and neighbors. There was an outpouring of assistance from BLD brethren who selflessly shared their time, talents and resources - with many helping with transportation to and from doctors, dialysis centers, emergency rooms and hospitals.

While now a widow living alone, I have no fears, but have full trust in the Lord. I boast of God's faithfulness in blessing me with peace of mind in spite of the challenges I encounter in my daily grind. Life in Community can be a series of frustrations, disappointments and rewards. I sometimes fail to understand how things are handled. There can still be times when I am puzzled and ask why, despite years in Community, love does not prevail in relationships when conflicts arise among members. But God always sets me aright. He would quickly remind me that there is no perfect community and that I am not perfect either. As Norby used to remind me in the past, "Pray about it - whatever it is. It's tough to be in leadership in whatever capacity. People have different personalities and opinions. You are not serving BLD for them - it's for the Lord. If you stop going to worship, you are the loser. Satan is victorious over you as you allow frustrations to overcome you." And when I remember this, I am humbled.

I am thankful to our Lord Who continually allows me to attend the weekly worship, and serve in the Praise and Intercessory ministries *Continued on page 4*

From a member of the Singles Ministry:

# The Parable of the Talents



In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus gives us the Parable of the Talents. Now, in this sense, these “talents” represent a certain value of money; generally believed to be quite large (approximately 15+ years’ wages). However, when we hear the word talent, we usually think of the inherent abilities that we have: artistically, musically, athletically, and so on.

In many ways, the three servants and the talents they were given represent all of us. We all have our own talents and abilities, and while some may seem more talented than others, that should not matter. What does matter is that whatever we have is a gift from God, and it is meant to be cherished.

Of course, it is one thing to have these talents; using them is another thing altogether. We may be jealous of those who have more talents than us, or those whose talents are better than our own, but we should not shy away from our talents because of this. The Gospel echoes this warning as well: the servant who is given one talent has it taken from him, and then he is thrown out by the master. This is meant to show us why we should not hide what we have from others. Not only are we not contributing anything, but in doing so, others are forced to do more - and when they do, it would actually make us look weaker.

So how can we be sure to use our talents wisely? There are many ways for us to use our talents, including within our own BLD Community. Whether it be using musical talents in the Praise ministry, praying unceasingly for others in Intercessory, teaching the Community, managing the various ministries, or in many other fields, the opportunities for us to use our talents are many.

God did not give us our talents for us to bury them or for them to simply be returned to Him without benefitting others. Rather, He wants us to use our talents to enrich our lives and the lives of those around us. This is how we can fulfill our purpose in this life and be the people God wants us to be.

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where suffering needed to be faced. In doing this, He reminded Peter that he only saw things from a human perspective, and that he did not understand God’s plan.

Sometimes, because pride and self-reliance creep in on us, we too fail right after attaining a great spiritual victory. We cannot claim Jesus as Lord, but not believe in what He says and disobey His commands. We cannot have it both ways. In like manner, we cannot ask Him for good things and blessings if we do not accept all of His answers along the way. The cost of discipleship is high because many times we have to give up our tendency to be self-sufficient and our attachment to our earthly desires. And this requires us to discern what God wants us to do.

To be called disciples and followers of Jesus we have to embrace our own cross in order to attain eternal glory. Embracing our daily cross requires constant courage, which we need, so that we can face all the demands of our Christian faith, for we may also have to bear hardships. In living up to this, Jesus offers the assurance and hope of gaining eternal life, as the reward for “losing our life.” As followers of Jesus we should let Him show us the way. Instead of seeking our own personal gain, we should allow every experience - even in moments of distress, struggles and difficulties, to draw us into a closer relationship with our Lord, Who continues to invite us to place our burdens upon His shoulders.

We may be so used to so much comfort and indifference that we now fear facing life’s challenges. We may tend to withdraw rather than deal with what’s before us, including the many possibilities that are there. This is the reason why we might be living unfulfilled lives, filled with regret and disappointment. A life of constantly running from our responsibilities exhausts our strength. It moves us away from the destiny planned by God for us. The theme for this week – **Our hearts are enlightened when we trust in God’s plan for our lives** - will enable us to look to the Cross, not as a sign of pain, but as a symbol of hope. Our faith has brought us to the living God and urges us to bear our crosses daily to the end.

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The Cross shows how our rebellion can distance us from the Lord and can cause pain to the very heart of God. If we ignore the cross of life, we will never grow out of, or mature beyond, our comfort zones. Be it emotional, financial or personal, the Lord says that carrying the cross is how our discipleship becomes real. It is necessary if we are to find our way to full discipleship. Jesus teaches us to not be afraid of taking risks, knowing that this is the only way to discover our life. Let us then stand firm and hold on to His promise in Matthew 16:25, ***“Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”***

Prayer:

*Almighty God, Your will is our salvation and You desire only what is best for us. Grant us the grace to participate in Your saving works by following Your ways and cooperating in Your holy will. Lead and direct us so that we will not be stumbling blocks to Your divine plan. May all we do always be for Your greater glory. Amen.*

Reflection Guides:

1. What are the things and circumstances in my life that I have to give up so that I can follow Jesus and fulfill His plans for me?
2. How can I show that Jesus is truly my Lord and my Savior?

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## More Alive...More Colorful...

(from page 2)

of the Community, and do spiritual and corporal works of mercy. I was hardened clay, but our Lord sprinkled me with the Holy Spirit and remolded me, slowly but surely. My spirituality improved as my desire to know Him more became insatiable. The more I pray for other people, the more I appreciate His faithfulness. I've realized too that each day spent in God's service is its own reward as I see people's face light up, happy and grateful for whatever service God enables me to do for them. I am able to express and share my feelings with those who've also lost their loved ones.

Now I know that God, through the BLD Community, has prepared me to be strong and faithful to Him, so that I may come to understand the hills and valleys and the storms of life, and never lose hope in the knowledge that He is with us and goes ahead of us if we allow Him to do so. With deepest gratitude in my heart, I say this, ***“Praises and thanks be to God! For I have a loving and understanding family, neighbors, friends, ...and the BLD Community.”***

A pdf of this Covenant News and more information about BLD are available online at [BLDNEWARK.com](http://BLDNEWARK.com)

# LORD'S PROVISION

Previous Week's

Collections:	Prior Week	YTD
Tithes	\$ 1,275	\$ 46,743
Love Offerings	\$ 1,333	\$ 43,060
Mission Collections	\$ 99	\$ 4,002

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

Teachings for Saturday, September 16 - 1 to 6 pm:

- \* Christian Parenting (LSS 1-48)
- \* Christian Maturity Program 1, Part 1 (LSS 1-47)
- \* Shepherds' Training (LSS 1-46)



### Life in the Spirit Seminar #48

Salubungan - Friday, September 1  
Seminar - October 13-15, 2017

"Come Holy Spirit ..."

Please contact: [Earl & Flo Manguiat](#)

### John 6 Crossing #16

October 6-8, 2017  
Fellowship Deaconry  
Basking Ridge, NJ

"... let the children come to me ..."



Please contact: [Tony & Marlene Brillantes](#)

### Marriage Encounter #49



November 17-19, 2017  
Hotel Executive Suites  
30 Minue St, Carteret, NJ

Please contact: [Efren & Yollie Cruz](#)

### "Unlocking the Mystery" - Bible Study by Jeff Cavins

Divine Mercy Parish, Room 104 classroom

September 18 - November 6, 2017

8 Sessions every Monday night from 7:15-9:15 pm

Contacts: Ray/Susie Atienza, BLD Assisted Parish Coordinators

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Marshaling	Schedule	Date	Apostolate
		Sep 8	Formation
	Sep 15	Management	
	Sep 22	Mission	
	Sep 29	Pastoral	