



Bukás Loób sa Diyós

(Open in Spirit to God)

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC COVENANT COMMUNITY
DISTRICT OF NEWARK

COVENANT NEWS

Volume 27 Issue 28

Bulletin Edition

July 23, 2021

NEWS

COUNSELS

BLD Newark welcomes its new Spiritual Director



Cardinal Tobin appoints Fr. Joseph Meagher from St. Antoninus Parish



Archdiocese of Newark
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

July 9, 2021

Reverend Joseph A. Meagher
St. Antoninus Parish
337 South Orange Avenue
Newark, New Jersey 07103

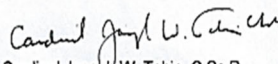
Dear Father Meagher:

I hereby appoint you Spiritual Director of the Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Catholic Charismatic Covenant Community. This appointment is effective immediately.

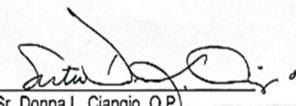
I pray that God may continue to bless you and all members of the Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Catholic Charismatic Covenant Community.

Please count on my friendship and the support of my prayer.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,


Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

Attest:


Sr. Donna L. Ciangio, O.P.
Chancellor

rp

c: Very Reverend John J. Chadwick, Vicar General
Very Reverend Charles Pinyan, Vicar for Clergy
Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Catholic Charismatic Covenant Community

Archdiocesan Center

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Abundant Life in Jesus

THEME: God's grace works in our life when we rely on His divine provision and generosity.

WORD : 2 Kgs 4:42-44 ~ Ps 145:10-11,15-16,17-18
Eph 4:1-6 ~ Jn 6:1-15

ORDER: "...live in the manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience..." – Eph 4:1-2

REFLECTION:

"Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted." – Jn 6:11

The feeding of the five-thousand is the only miracle performed by Jesus that is found in each of the four Gospels. Unlike the synoptic Gospels by Mark, Matthew and Luke, John does not record very many miracles; but this one is in there among the seven signs of Christ's divinity that John includes in his account. He put it in, I think, because he believed it to be very remarkable because its meaning went beyond just feeding the multitude with physical food.

St. John links this miracle to Jesus' mission of bringing the love of the Father to us, which He embodies in the Eucharist (from the Greek word "Eukharistia" which means "thanksgiving"). The event also recalls the "manna from heaven" that God fed the Jews in the wilderness during the Exodus. Because the miracle occurred as Passover was approaching, it was, in effect, ...Continued on page 3

Promise of the Week

"The eyes of all look hopefully to you... you open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." – Ps 145:15,16

Fishers of Men

Two Sundays ago, the First Reading was about how Amos was used by God to prophesy to the people of Israel. He was not a prophet, but an ordinary person, who was used by God to denounce the crimes that were being committed by the gentile nations, to tell Israel that even they had sinned and were guilty of the same crimes, and to prophesy the destruction of Israel.

This was where the Order for the week was taken from and our Theme of heeding Christ's call to mission. Briefly put, Jesus invites us to be part of His call to evangelization, to be out there and be fishers of men. Jesus established His Church on the foundation of the twelve apostles. These men had no extraordinary skills. They were not religious nor refined. They were ordinary people, mostly fishermen, and I'd surmise that at first, they didn't know much about what Jesus had in mind for them. He only gave a few specific instructions – to go two by two, with no extra provisions, except for a walking stick and a pair of sandals. And yet, these men became the pioneers of the Church, even when they were not without faults and shortcomings.

God chose them for a purpose — to fan the flames of the Gospel that would spread across the face of the earth and continue to burn bright throughout the centuries. God selected each of them to carry out His plan. What can we learn from these ordinary fishermen who became remarkable fishers of men? For one, a fisherman must have patience as he cannot force the fish to come to his net. Remember how many times – maybe every year – you've called a friend to remind him/her to join an encounter? You may sound silly inviting a friend to an encounter when he/she has just been in a tragedy, or just lost a loved one, or had just been through a divorce. But, as long as we reach out to them, at the appropriate time, God will be the one to touch their hearts and minds to lead them to conversion.

Like fishing, spreading God's message is not only difficult but can also be dangerous. Jesus gave this warning to His disciples: ***“Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves”*** (Mt 10:16). There are many out there who will try to destroy the messenger in order to stifle the message. We are not immune from this. But the messenger, like the fisherman, must continue with firm courage and resolve to deliver God's message even in the midst of the turbulent waves and winds of opposition. That is why Jesus instructed the Twelve ***“to take nothing for the journey”*** so that they would not rely on what they had, but trust fully in the power and grace of God.

...Continued on page 4

A Weekend to Remember

The past year has been a very difficult one for everyone. Early on, our area was hit hard by the coronavirus. So many people were infected; hospitals ran out of ICU beds and many people were dying. The virus struck fear in peoples' hearts and soon enough, lockdown was declared and masks were mandated. Infections spread so fast from coast to coast that people had no choice but to stay home. Ironically, it was during the lockdown, that our ME class was blessed and was brought even closer together, thanks to the group's prayer meeting every night via Zoom to pray for each other and for those community members who had been impacted by the coronavirus.

Early this year, after assurances from the FDA about several vaccines' efficacy and safety, finally, people had a choice to get inoculated. And soon enough, we reached a critical vaccination rate that assured us that we could forgo our masks and get out of the house to see family and friends in person once again. So in our ME, everybody became excited by the possibility of getting together in person. We all remembered our ME weekend in Allentown, PA fifteen years ago. Back then, we didn't know how things would go and we could not have imagined how over the years, our lives would change. We have never been the same since.

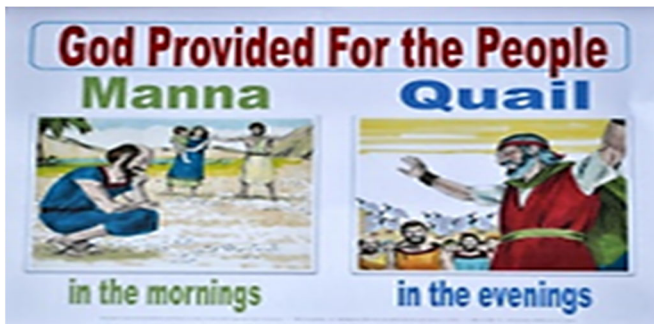
Yes, fifteen years have passed since that faith-filled weekend. During the first three, we were so energetic and enthusiastic, and our days were filled with community activities - weekly praise and worship, teachings, shepherding sessions, retreats, serving through different ministries, soup kitchens, etc. etc...and learning to pray individually and together as a class. We bonded tightly; but after three years, as the monthly class reunions ended, attendance at different activities also waxed and waned. Nonetheless, the Spirit was with us as classmates continued to reach out to one another through phone calls, emails and text messages. There were informal gatherings here and there and everyone looked forward to a yearly Christmas party and reunion.

With the easing of lockdowns came the possibility of celebrating our 15th Anniversary together. After the long hiatus, all of us knew that a few hours in a day would not be enough to satisfy our longing to be with each other. So, arrangements were made for a long weekend out of town, in a house big enough to accommodate twelve couples, with spacious grounds that were far from next door neighbors, with quiet surroundings, with beautiful greenery and a nearby lake to highlight the beauty of God's creation! We also organized ourselves into teams to take care of our physical needs; and like a well-oiled machine, the weekend came and flew by without a hitch.

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COUNSELS (from page 1)

a Passover feast that Jesus offered to the hungry multitude.



This reminds us of another verse in the Gospel of John: ***“I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly”*** (Jn 10:10). Abundance in our life with the Lord Jesus is clearly an important element of the message of this miracle of the feeding of the five-thousand. In and through Jesus, we not only have our fill to the brim, but have it to overflowing. The twelve wicker baskets of leftover fragments were proof of this – especially since it was just five loaves and two fish that He started with. Abundance also characterized Jesus’ first miracle when He turned water into high quality wine at the wedding feast in Cana.

God in Jesus cannot be outdone in generosity. He always provides for our every need. And truly, as echoed in this Sunday’s Psalm: ***“...you open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing”*** (Ps 145:16). The loaves and fish became more than enough to feed so many because they passed through Jesus’ hands, ***“...for nothing is impossible with God”*** (Lk 1:37). When we bring what little we have to Jesus, and it passes through His hands, it becomes an abundance of blessings!

This is how our BLD community started. In 1992, my wife and I and two other BLD couples were called to pray about laying the groundwork for a New Jersey outreach of BLD Toronto by sponsoring Marriage Encounter No. 1. Although we did not have much personal resources to start it with, we pooled what we had and devoted ourselves to prayer, worship and to the ministry of the Word.

In preparing for that ME weekend, we encountered all sorts of problems, not just financial – venue availability, manpower support, candidates’ issues, etc. But we persisted in prayer. We did not doubt that God would provide if it were His will to start His community of believers in this place. We simply cast all our cares into God’s hands, in His providence.

...And God heard us! →→

→ The miracle happened! In August of 1992, God gave us a harvest of nineteen pioneering couples and a nun to form a community!



Then, they sponsored ME#2, ME#2 sponsored ME#3, and so on. Our numbers multiplied including, not just couples, but also children, youth, singles, solo parents and families in New Jersey. And today, we now have BLD districts in fifteen dioceses across the United States! God multiplied our numbers to thousands of individuals and families who got to know Him more intimately and now serve His Church. What a God of abundance we have!

Lord, our Provider, thank You for continuing to grace us with miracles in our lives; for feeding us, not just physically, but spiritually as well. You are the Bread that feeds the hungers of life, the Bread that makes us one with You. Continue to minister through us, so that we may respond to Your command to feed the multitude around us who seek Your mercy and love. Feed us lord with the bread of everlasting life until our souls are satisfied.

And may we always be...



Directions:

1. Do not be anxious about anything and present everything in prayer and petition with thanksgiving to God
2. Always give thanks to the Lord for providing for our every need.
3. Share our resources no matter how limited.

Fishers of Men (from page 2)

A fisherman must have the right equipment and technique in order to catch fish. Jesus patiently taught the apostles, using parables and everyday examples, which made Him very effective. Today, our tools and techniques are even more far-reaching – we are now able to utilize mass media and virtual tools in our work of spreading the Good News.

A fisherman must remain invisible to the fish, otherwise they'll be scared and flee. Such is the case for us now. The central focus should always be Jesus and His message, and the messenger must not try to grab the spotlight; he must be humble. He is to attract people to Christ, not to himself. Ultimately, he has to realize that it is God Who is doing the work, and that he is only an instrument. A self-absorbed messenger who always blows his own horn will surely drive people away.

By our baptism, each of us is called to take up the role of priest, king and prophet. We are called to be priests because we are called to intercede for others. We are called to be kings because we are called to serve others. We recognize that true kingship is given to all who serve others and seek their well-being first. We are called to be prophets because the Word of God must be proclaimed. Understand that prophecy does not come from us, but that it comes from Him and is a matter of our proclaiming the Word of God to others.

The Second Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians, further speaks of being called, being chosen for the praise of His glory. We can really be transformed when we recognize that each of us is chosen. Faith has not just *happened* to us, but we have been chosen and must respond to that calling.

The Twelve were called, chosen, given a mission and were sent out. For those of us who believe, we are the Church, and within the Church we have various roles, but these roles don't make anyone better or worse. The roles simply involve SERVICE to others.

Going back to the lessons of a fisherman, there's one central message in our mission as fishers of men. Jesus tells us: ***"You are the light of the world."*** The best way to become fishers of men is to reflect the Light of Christ. The way to be effective proclaimers of the Word of God is by our good examples. We must live the teachings of Christ. We ourselves should be the living Gospel in the world.

As Pope Paul VI rightly noted, "modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."

A Weekend to Remember (from page 2)

There was enough food, supplies and entertainment, without neglecting the focal point of our gathering - recognizing, worshiping and serving God. We were able to attend a Saturday anticipated mass at a special little church where we comprised more than half of the very friendly congregation (they were even so amazed that we made the time to go to Mass even though we were on vacation). After we got back to the big house, we had a nice dinner followed by praise and worship.

The prayers were beautiful and powerful coming from inspired and hallowed hearts! We followed the same format for the reunion as we had done in the past. Each gathering, including this one, has always been so uplifting, and this time, everybody picked up where they had left off from before, seemingly without skipping a beat. Different experiences and happenings, joyful, humorous and tearful events and challenges were shared freely and voluntarily by each couple. We all had our ups and downs. We opened up and spoke from our hearts and our minds without fear of judgment or recrimination. We shared intimate details of our lives, as individuals and as couples; we talked about our fears, our hopes and our dreams. We admitted that we were broken, but we also realized that as we continue on, it is through our brokenness that we bond as a community. We opened our hearts, laughed, cried and shared hugs and kisses. **LOVE** was so palpable as everyone showed support, understanding, sympathy and oneness in mind and heart. Truly, God is in each one of us, ***"...for when I am weak, then I am strong"*** (2 Cor 12:10).

As the years go by, we would love to see all of them back in our Community once more, but each of us follows our respective journeys as God allows us to pursue them. But BLD reunions always leave us in awe of God's love and goodness for they enable us to see how God works in each of our lives. And we continue to trust that the One Who began a good work in us will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus... **THANK YOU LORD!**

LORD'S PROVISION PREVIOUS WEEK'S

Collections:	Last Week	YTD
Tithes & Love Offerings / E-Giving / Mailed Checks	\$ 3,414	\$ 62,660
Covid 19 Collection	\$ -	\$ 1,990
Mission	\$ -	\$ 5,000

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Retreat and Disciples' Assembly - Saturday, August 14, 2021

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