



BLD PHOENIX Valley of the SON

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



Volume 3, Issue 12

December 2008

Month of November

WORD: *As disciples of Christ, we prepare for the revelation of our Lord.*

READINGS

Nov 30	Is 63:16b-17, 19b,64:2-7 Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37
Dec 7	Is 40:1-5, 9-11 Ps 85:9-14 2Pt 3:8-14 Mk 1:1-8
Dec 14	Is 61:1-2a, 10-11 Lk 1:46-50, 53-54 1Th 5:16-24 Jn 1:6-8, 19-28
Dec 21	Sa 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14, 16 Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29 Rom 16:25-27 Lk 1:26-28
Dec 28	Sir 3:2-7, 12-14 Ps 128:1-5 Col 3:12-21 Lk 2:22-40

DIRECTIONS (BLD GLOBAL):

1. Watch, work together as family of evangelizers, see the life of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.
2. Be reconciled with God through the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist, daily masses, reading and reflecting on His word, and regular visits to the Blessed Sacrament.
3. Reconcile with others and forgive those who have hurt you in any way and ask for forgiveness from those whom you have hurt.

PROPHECIES (BLD GLOBAL):

1. In humility, be the vessel of reconciliation in Community for pride brings nothing but dissension. Be like Me for I am meek and humble of heart.
2. Prepare the path in your hearts for I, your Father, will come into your life at any time.

“Remain in Me” - - An Exhortation for Us All

“Remain in me, as I remain in you... If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”
(John 15:4,7-8)

Thus was the Gospel according to St. John which was read during the Eucharistic celebration held at the Our Lady of the Valley chapel on Saturday, December 13, 2008, on the occasion of the **First DCS Emergence** held in BLD Phoenix. The Mass, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, were both officiated by the community’s Spiritual Director, Rev. Reggie Carreon.

The sacred occasion signified a truly historic milestone in the life of the BLD community in the Phoenix valley! It capped the official transition of BLD Phoenix from a district-in-process, which was governed by four appointed Core couples, to a full-fledged district which will be governed by four District Council of Stewards (DCS) couples. Thirty-two covenanted disciples prayed before the Blessed Sacrament before casting their nominations for ten couple nominees. The emergence process and the tabulations were very ably conducted by the DCEO (District Council of Emergence Overseers). Final results, wherein four couples will be emerged (one couple to head each of the four apostolates), will be coming from the ECSL (Executive Council of Servant Leaders) in Manila.

It was exactly three years ago, on December 15, 2005, that the newly appointed District-in-Process Shepherds, Chito and Aileen Ciocon, had paid their first visit to the community. Only by God’s grace and with the cooperation of every member in the community, did the process of rebuilding the community and repairing relationships commence. It was a time of introspection, of healing, of learning to work together again, of forgiving one another, of re-focusing on the Lord and on the mission that He had entrusted to the community. It was an awesome and challenging undertaking for everyone but “with God, nothing is impossible.”

As we look back at what the Lord has accomplished through the community, and how He has guided and led it to where it is today, we are filled with immense gratitude because He not only revived and prospered the community, but in the process He also restored, renewed, and transformed all of us in one way or another.

As we “prepare the way of the Lord” this Advent and await to celebrate the memorial of His birth, let us cherish in our hearts and always remember that each one of us has been called to “remain in Him.” Remaining attached to the Vine is the only way we can “bear much fruit” for the Kingdom of God here on earth. Go forth, BLD Phoenix! Our prayers are with you!

ADVENT REFLECTIONS



For our Community, Advent 2008 comes with a very stern warning from the Lord, ***“Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.”*** Yet most of us Filipino Catholics love Advent so much, we try to stretch it as long as possible. There is a distinct pleasure in anticipating Christmas for both “old” and “young”. The joyous season celebrates the birth of Christ, our Lord and Savior, who needs to be reborn in our hearts.

Our Word for Advent this year is: ***“As disciples of Christ we prepare for the revelation of our Lord”*** which means that as disciples in Community, we need to take specific steps to ensure that Christ is “reborn” in our hearts, and that our bodies are worthy temples of the Holy Spirit throughout the whole year. It also means “dying” to our old sinful self. God calls each one of us to allow him to transform us back to the original image He intended us to be when He created us. As the prophet Isaiah declares: ***“Yet O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay and You are potter, we are all the work of Your hands”*** (Is 64:7-8). Through our spiritual rebirth in the Christ child, Advent also prepares us for the coming glory of the triumphant Christ at the end time, and for our individual departure from this life.

Following these urgent considerations, the ECSL formulated the following **Themes and Promises** for Advent 2009 to guide the Global BLD Community in its preparation for the rebirth of our Savior and Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ:

Week 1: 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT [Faithfulness]

Theme: We prepare for the revelation of our Lord when we do our ministry work well.

Promise: *“He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”* 1 Cor 3:8



As disciples of Christ in Community, we render service to one another and to those outside our immediate community - our parishes and the larger Church, institutional outreaches, and the “poor” - within specific Ministries. This ministry should also include giving our surprise gift of service to our own family members this Christmas season.

Week 2: 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT [Fruitfulness]

Theme: We prepare for the revelation of our Lord when we bring the message of repentance to God’s people.

Promise: *“Near indeed is the salvation to those who fear him.”* Ps 85:10



The greatest obstacle for God to reign in the hearts of man is sin – above all, the sin of pride. So John preached humble repentance. But repentance is no small task. It involves the whole man. First of all, man must acknowledge that he really is a sinner and in need of a Savior, and this is often hard to do. Then too, repentance is not merely some external act of penance, but rather, a thorough turn-around, a change of attitude a transformation of the heart. As disciples in community, our shepherding experiences have brought us face to face with a loving God, who is all holy and yet all merciful and loving.

That is why in our effort to bring God’s people to repentance, our own personal experiences of God’s love, mercy and compassion, become the touchstones through which we can bring our brothers and sisters to reconciliation with God. The gift of love and forgiveness we received from God become our own testimony to others that they too, may come to believe that God is the one looking out and calling them back to Him. Then by God’s grace we become fruitful in the vineyard of our God.

Order: ***“Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come”***(Mk 13:33)

Advent Reflections *continued...*

Week 3: 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT [Witnessing]

Theme: We prepare for the revelation of our Lord when we testify that Jesus is our Salvation.

Promise: *“He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy.”*Lk 1:54



This year on December 25, will be Christmas all over again. Every year, our Church celebrates this day as a cycle because the liturgy is the living re-presentation of the events of the past so that we may participate in them. *The Constitution on the Liturgy* (102) of Vatican II expressed it this way: *“Within the cycle of a year the Church unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from his Incarnation and birth to the day of Pentecost.*

Recalling thus the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of the Lord’s powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present for all time, and the faithful are enabled to lay hold of them and become filled with saving grace.”

St. Paul says, we should ***“rejoice always”*** with a joy which is present also when things go wrong, even in times of persecution (1Thes 6:16). We should ***“pray constantly”*** interceding for ourselves and others, not limiting our prayer to set times or places (1Thes 6:17). We should ***“give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God”*** who made himself known to us ***“in Christ Jesus”*** (1Thes 6:18). Hence, as disciples of Christ in our BLD Community, there is a need for us to testify to others, with our lives, that Jesus is our salvation, the source of our joy.

Week 4: 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT [Obedience]

Theme: We prepare for the revelation of our Lord when we humbly accept the will of the Father.

Promise: *“My kindness is established forever; in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.”* Ps 89:3



In doing the will of God, may we have the loving obedience of Mary, mother of God and our mother, with her ready acceptance of God’s will, ***“I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say”*** (Lk 1:38). In our struggle to obey God’s will, let us take the prayer of St John Gabriel Perboyre to heart; *“O my divine Savior, transform me into yourself. May my hands be the hands of Jesus. May my tongue be the tongue of Jesus. Grant that every faculty of my body may serve only to glorify You. Above all, transform my soul and all its powers that my memory, my will and my affections may be the memory, the will, and the affections of Jesus. I pray You that You destroy in me all that is not of You. Grant that I may live but in You and by You and for You, and that I may truly say with St. Paul, “I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me.” Amen.*

Week 5: FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY [Love]

Theme: We prepare for the revelation of our Lord when we are a community of love.

Promise: *“You shall eat the fruit of your handiwork, blessed shall you be and favored.”* Ps 128:22



Conscientious Catholics follow a consistent ethic. We respect children in the womb because Jesus began his human existence in the womb of Mary. We respect and endeavor to make our family as a community of love because Jesus led a family life at Nazareth. We respect aliens because Jesus was an alien in Egypt. We respect the poor because Jesus lived as a poor person “who had no place to lay his head.” We respect the life even of criminals because Jesus, though innocent, died as a criminal. In one of the prefaces of this Christmas season, we proclaim to the Father the motive for our ethic: *“Father, your eternal Son has taken upon himself our human weakness, giving our mortal nature immortal value.”* By becoming human, Jesus has given all humans a high dignity.



BLD Phoenix Celebrates Healing Through the Eucharist with Fr. Fernando Suarez

As it is always, the healing scene was perfect at St Mary's Church, Chandler, December 3, because the spirit of

God was moving. The crowds came with their lame, their blind, their deaf, their many wounds and pains, and on this nameless sea of many faces, the healing touch of Jesus came. While many went home cured and healed, all who were there were at awe, compelled to affirm their faith that God is alive. Jesus visited the valley, by way of Father Fernando Suarez, the charismatic Philippine born priest ordained in Canada six years ago, whose hands have been used by heaven to bring God's healing powers to his people. "God's healing flows from the Eucharist," Fr. Suarez says, crediting no one else but God who wills that any man is healed by fervent prayer if it pleased the Lord. Lay volunteers from St Mary's Parish, St. Mary's parish priest, Fr. Dan McBride, other visiting priests, the ubiquitous helping hand of BLD-Phoenix and its support from the Filipino community made the Eucharistic celebration a memorable healing mass, as all masses are meant to be.

Proceeds from the event were donated to Mary, Mother of the Poor, the foundation of Father Suarez that has helped the poor in the Philippines to build schools and seminaries, give jobs to families, and, ultimately, to build a basilica for Mother Mary. BLD-Phoenix has supported one more great cause for Christ.

BLD Phoenix had the privilege and honor of serving God through the healing mass of Fr. Fernando Suarez at St. Mary's Parish in Chandler, Arizona. On December 3rd, Fr. Fernando officiated the Eucharistic Celebration before conducting his healing service for over 2,000 people. Many witnessed the life changing miracles that occurred that night. Hearing was restored to deaf ears, the wheelchair bound stood and walked, and the spiritually dry were replenished. Fr. Suarez repeated in his homily, "I am not the healer, Jesus is the healer." This humble priest emphasized that he is merely the servant through which Jesus heals the faithful.

I first heard about this extraordinary priest during announcements after our Praise & Worship on Fridays and was excited to participate in such a powerful mass. I contributed in my small, yet necessary role as a "catcher," along with other BLD members. Some were assigned to Crowd Control while several others to Food Control. As a group we were identifiable in our red shirts and the spirit of eagerness and enthusiasm we displayed to help facilitate this event. Seeing Fr. Suarez in action as we caught those overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit reminded me of the Scriptures when witnesses at first hand experienced Jesus healing the lame, the blind, and the deaf more than 2,000 years ago. I felt the Real Presence of Jesus and was struck with awe and thanksgiving as I listened to the testimonies being given. I realized how especially blessed we were as a group to witness and serve in this capacity.

The teamwork that BLD members exhibited was impressive. Volunteer meetings were held weeks before the event to discuss details and organize the group. Members arrived hours before the mass to pray and help prepare for the night. *Continued in next column...*



For more information about Fr. Suarez and his ministry, Mary Mother of the poor, please check www.fatherfernando.com.

Volunteers ushered and directed the crowd to fill the main church, Hurtado Hall and the chairs in the courtyard for overflow. During the healing service, we tirelessly caught droves of people and willingly switched places to accommodate the person we were catching. We stayed until the last person was prayed over by Fr. Suarez, and were "catchers" to each other when it was our turn to rest in the Holy Spirit. Following the service, a dinner reception was organized by the assigned volunteers and everyone pitched in to put away the tables and chairs.

After a full day at work, and an emotionally and physically tiring night on our feet at the healing mass, I anticipated feeling exhausted the following day and for my back to ache and my feet to be sore. Instead, I found myself sharing with another BLD member who had also volunteered, that we both felt spiritually renewed, and that we had slept like babies the night before despite the lack of sleep we both had had. Indeed, Jesus Christ answered the prayers of those who came to the mass seeking healing and restoration, but he did not forget those who labored in his vineyard and also bestowed upon us his graces. Through our service at the healing mass of Fr. Suarez, the Holy Spirit gave us strength, rest, and inspiration.



Happy volunteer faces...

Ministry Announcements

Intercessory Ministry:

- ◆ Please update petitions monthly for continuous prayers and/or update Intercessory ministry heads for answered prayers. You may please make/update prayer requests through a link in the website or e-mail ministry heads: Denny & Nina Custodio at dennycl220@cox.net.

DLC:

- ◆ To all DCS and Ministry Heads (and all those Involved in handling minors) please take the Safety Environment Training for Ministries offered by local parishes. Please check the Diocese website for training Schedule:
<http://safeenvironmenttraining.org/index.php>

Secretariat

- ◆ Please wear your community I.D. If you do not have one please contact Evan & Joie Pangilinan directly or e-mail: evanjoie@yahoo.com.

Word:

- ◆ Please share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord or an answered prayer with the community thru an article (350 words max). E-mail to eunex@aol.com.
- ◆ Please share your **2009 New Year's resolution(s)!!!** You may write in three sentences or less about your New Year's resolutions and email to eunex@aol.com. Please send email by **December 28, 2008**. Only 5-10 entries will be published so better get those resolutions in!

Dec 28 - Come and celebrate the Eucharist together with the Filipino Community at Our Lady of the Valley's 5 PM Filipino Mass!

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of November 2008

Receipts	\$ 4,290.20
Disbursements	\$ 1,221.98
Surplus (Deficits)	\$ 3,068.22

See Treasury Logbook for details-available at Registration Area or see Treasury Ministry Heads Pedro & Cita Rivera

Thank you for your generosity!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Lito Caguioa (ME 7)
- 2 - Eeve Tejada (YE 2)
- 7 - Lulu Lam (ME 2 Newark)
- 13 - Eunice Lureñana (ME 1)
- 16 - Earnesto Farinas (LSS 3)
- 20 - Maria Hilary Cassano (ME 5)
- 26 - Eva Ward (ME 4)
- 30 - Judy Bautista (ME 7)
- 30 - Steve Hey (ME 4)
- 31 - Alvin Beronia (YE)



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 11 - Fr. Reggie Carreon (ME 5)
- 20 - Ramon & Fe Querol (ME 4)
- 21 - Rollie & Justice Tabora (ME 7)
- 22 - Lee & Arlene Junia (ME 2)
- 22 - Ariel & Judy Bautista (ME 7)
- 25 - Simon & Lulu Lam (ME 2 Newark)
- 25 - Jun & Lina Saguid (ME 6)
- 30 - Pedro & Cita Rivera (ME 3)



BLD Christmas Party 2008



The BLD Phoenix Christmas Party 2008 was filled with entertainment, fellowship, and most importantly, with the spirit of Advent as we wait for the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Weeks of preparation went into this special event held at the Mountain View Community Center in Scottsdale on December 13th. Performance and skit rehearsals were held by the ME groups, the Youth, Singles, and Mark 10. It was a fitting venue with a stage and a large room for tables and chairs, a spacious dance floor with our own beloved DJ (Tito Butch and his apprentice DJ son, Rob), and a well decorated Christmas Tree with Santa Claus (Richard Bauer) at tree side as a photo op. A nice spread of food served buffet style consisted of Filipino favorites like Lechon Kawali, Afritada, and Menudo, not to mention the assortment of sweets such as biko, chocolate cake, and cookies. It was certainly a feast!

We were clad in our Christmas colors and all came bearing gifts to share with each other in the gift exchange. Sporadically throughout the night, raffles prizes were given away that ranged from a variety of stocking stuffers to a weekend trip and a tropical cruise. Each table was adorned with a silver Christmas Tree centerpiece and colorful confetti. Christmas tunes and dance music echoed through the night accompanied by a merriment crowd, eager to pair up in ballroom dancing or join the group in line dancing. The atmosphere was definitely festive!

Highlights of the night included performances by the ministry groups. A dance recital to the Twelve Days of Christmas by our adorable Mark 10 stole the show while the ME group thoroughly entertained us with a comedy-filled rendition of Star Wars with a Christmas twist. The Star Wars characters played by a cast of ME members depicted the story of how Jesus was born. It was a memorable skit for the Star Wars fans and Star Wars ignorants alike, as the ewoks and Yoda (played by Simon Lam) had us falling out of our seats from laughter. In addition, the talented Youth and Singles choreographed routines that boasted their dance skills of rhythm and agility. Great performances everybody!

Simply put, to illustrate what the Christmas party was like, think company holiday party, meets theater, club, and bingo night. There was even an "after party" at the Alba residence where the dancing continued on until midnight. Let's just say the celebration was as unique as the people who pieced it together and the people who attended it. God truly blessed BLD Phoenix with the spirit of love, peace, and joy, and these elements were clearly evident in this night filled with giving and celebration.



*From BLD
Phoenix*



Thursday, December 25 - Christmas
Thursday, January 1 - Solemnity, Mary Mother of God
Both days are Holy Days of Obligation
(Please check your local parish for Mass times)



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY

A Private Lay Association of the Faithful in the Archdiocese of Newark

Advent & Christmas Message

To our beloved Community,

We are blessed with a name, *Bukas-Loob sa Diyos* (Open in Spirit to God), that reveals who we are and how we are to God.

We are first and foremost a community belonging to God – *sa Diyos*. The Lord gave Himself freely and fully to us in the new covenant of His blood (Lk 22:20). In response, we have given ourselves freely and completely to the Lord in our Baptismal covenant, whose pledges we renewed in express ways through our community covenant.

Because we are *sa Diyos*, we are *Bukas-Loob* to Him. As His servants, “our eyes are on the LORD our God, till we are shown favor” (Ps 123:2), our docile hearts are open to Him in obedience (Ps 119:32). This openness of heart expresses our invitation and connection to the Lord. Our heart’s hospitality to God invites the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, who teaches us about Jesus and guides us to a deeper communion with Him.

We are a community in quest for God in His fullness. He has planted the seed of faith that continues to grow in us. We “have tasted that the Lord is good” (1 Pt 2:3). We desire to know Him more and more, and we long to dwell in His goodness all the days of our life (Ps 27:4).

Our being *Bukas-Loob sa Diyos* is our fervent prayer to be joined to Christ, to become one Spirit with Him (1 Cor 6:17).

May we live up to the name given us by our God – *Bukas-Loob sa Diyos*- every day of our lives. May our experience of counting the days until our next community worship be as Advent, and may our weekly gathering to give homage to our God in the Eucharist and in worship, in Word and in fellowship be as Christmas. May Christ be found in us always!

We give you the love of Christ in our heart. Thank you for your love. We wish you all a blessed Advent and Christmas.

For the Newark District Council of Stewards,

Mon & Bingle Chan
Presiding Stewards
BLD Newark

“Lift up your heads, O gates; rise up, you ancient portals,
that the King of Glory may enter” (Ps 24:7).



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS **COVENANT COMMUNITY**

A Private Lay Association of the Faithful in the Diocese of **Phoenix**

BLD Phoenix Community Schedule

Schedule for 2009

Jan 30 - Feb 1 -- Solo Parents Encounter #3
Desert Outdoor Center
41402 N. 87th Ave Peoria 85383

Mar 27-29 -- Marriage Encounter #9
Camp Pinerock
1400 Pine Dr. Prescott 86303

June 19-21 -- Life in the Spirit Seminar #8
Venue to be announced

Aug 7-9 -- Youth Encounter #5
Venue to be announced

Sept 12 -- Community Day
Venue to be announced

Nov 6-8 -- Marriage Encounter #10
Venue to be announced

Dec 12 -- Christmas Party 2009
Venue to be announced

Invitation Letters & Registration Forms are available from class shepherds & members. These are also available online for printing at www.bldphoenix.com.

Friday Eucharistic Celebration, Praise & Worship Schedule

1st Fridays -- Healing Mass 8:00 PM at Our Lady of the Valley Church
2nd - Last Fridays -- Praise & Worship at Our Lady of the Valley Chapel
7:30 PM Rosary
8:00 PM Praise & Worship

Praise & Worship Schedule is the same for the following ministries held at designated areas in the Church (OLV):

Youth Ministry
Mark 10 Ministry

Please check out www.bldphoenix.com for more details.