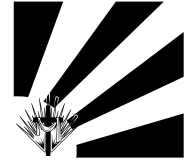




BLD PHOENIX

# VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 5, Issue 1

Ordinary Time Year C

January 2010

### Month of January

**WORD:** *God's love is glorified in the sonship of Jesus.*

### READINGS:

- Jan 3           Is 60:1-6  
                  Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-13  
                  Ep 3:2-3a,5-6  
                  Mt 2:1-12
- Jan 10          Is 42:1-4, 6-7  
                  Ps 29:1-2,3-4,3, 9-10  
                  Acts 10:34-38  
                  3:15-16,21-22
- Jan 17 (Phil)   Is 9:1-6  
                  Ps 97:1-6  
                  Ep 1:3-6,15-18  
                  Lk 2:41-52
- Jan 17 (Int'l)   Is 62:1-5  
                  Ps 96:1-3, 7-10  
                  1Cor 12:4-11  
                  Jn 2:1-11
- Jan 24          Neh 8:2-4a,5-6,8-10  
                  Ps 19:8-10,15  
                  1Cor 12:12-30  
                  Lk1:1-4;4:14-21
- Jan 31          Jer 1:4-5,17-19  
                  Ps 71:1-6,15,17  
                  1Cor 12:31-13:1-3 or  
                  1Cor 13:4-13  
                  Lk 4:21-30

### Inside January Issue:

- New Year Message from DCS ..... pg 1
- Monthly Counsels..... pg 1, 2, 3
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- The Lord's Provisions ..... pg 4



## A Blessed New Year

from BLD Phoenix

Website: [www.BLDPhoenix.com](http://www.BLDPhoenix.com)  
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**"Before man are life and death, whichever he chooses shall be given him."**

(Sirach 15: 17)

Such a choice does not come only at the beginning of the year. Every morning as a new day begins , and every time we begin anything at all, if we had such an urgent understanding of what it means to choose between life and death, between God and anything else, we could do away with New Year's resolutions because we would be living the upright lives worthy of the heirs of heaven. Are we ready to be God's beloved?

The choice is ours to make.

The Christ Child will not coerce us. Happy New Year.

— The DCS, BLD Phoenix —

### MONTHLY COUNSELS

#### **Jan 10: The Lord's Baptism (Fear of the Lord)**

**Theme:** The sonship of Jesus is manifested upon those who fear the Lord and act uprightly.

**Promise:** *"Here is my servant whom I uphold...he shall bring forth justice to the nations."* (Is 42:1)

**Reflection:** People in the time of Jesus were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ. People in our time might be asking whether Jesus if he were the Christ, why was he lining up with the rest of sinners to be baptized. To the people's question, John said he was not the Christ, **"But one mightier than I is coming."** On the part of Jesus, who is God become man and who is like us in everything save sin, he submitted himself to baptism to show us how we must be obedient before the Father. In both situations, both John and Jesus were models of humility. We are told that fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Fear of the Lord, wisdom and humility are human qualities we must endeavor to achieve to enter into an intimate relationship with God so that his Spirit may also descend upon us. We can know that the Lord has grasped us by the hand when we act uprightly, when we submit to his will, when we serve willingly, when with our presence and compassion we open the eyes of the blind , when with our consolation and encouragement we bring out prisoners from confinement. BLD brothers and sisters, love and serve that we may not miss the voice come from heaven saying, **"You are my beloved son; with you I am well pleased."**

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, banish my fears of everything but the fear of you. With that fear, please grant me the grace to live as I ought and the wisdom to avoid what is not upright or just. Amen.

**Order:** *"...open the eyes of the blind."* (Is 42: 7)

**Direction:** Evangelize through the example of your life and witness. Be humble. Serve willingly and with justice.

*Continued next page...*

**FCCA invites all BLD members, family & friends for the celebration of the Feast of the Sto. Nino on Jan. 17 at OLV. There will be Sinulog at 4 PM. Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Olmstead and fellowship follows after Mass.**

*Counsels continued from page 1...*

**Jan 17: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Fruitfulness)**

**Theme:** The sonship of Jesus is manifested upon those who bring glad tidings to the poor.

**Promise:** "You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord, a royal diadem held by your God." (Is 62:3)

**Reflection:** Mary said to Jesus in Cana, "They have no wine."

Jesus responded with lavish generosity afterwards despite what seemed like initial protestation, "Woman, how does your concern affect me?" The dialogue aftermath demonstrates both the confident mother's intuition and trust, and the son's abundance and obedience. It is Mary's perceptiveness and sensitiveness that make her our great intercessor. It is Christ's love that is the glory of his goodness. But if in our mortal lives by **wine** we mean passion, what we do best and what gives us joy, then are we not to make certain that we keep our **good wine to the end**? So what is our passion in life? What do we do best? What gives us joy? It differs with each of us according to the gifts that the Lord has given us. If we have a gift for music, do we not sing? Do we not whistle? Do you not dance? If God gave us wisdom, shall we not share it? If we have a warm heart shall we not ready our arm for someone to lean on? To every man is a different passion, a different **wine**. What are we to do with our gifts? Shall the wine be hoarded in the cellar? Shall it waste and not be shared? What we do with our gifts and blessings must conform to the implied command in Mary's words to the servers in Cana, "Do whatever he tells you." When we share what we have God makes us more fruitful. What we share with others makes them more fruitful too.

**Prayer:** Dear God, teach us love, obedience and generosity. Let their fruit be faith, cheerfulness and friends. Amen.

**Order:** "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2:9b)

**Direction:** Be obedient. Share your gifts. Do not hoard your blessings and other resources. Life is for sharing.

**Jan 24: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Charity)**

**Theme:** The sonship of Jesus is manifested among those who bring glad tidings to the poor.

**Promise:** "Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength." (Neh 8: 10)

**Reflection:** Among those who live in abject poverty, what raises the man to dignity and self respect is the expectation that there must be some meaning to his condition. "Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength." As the poor man accepts the absurdities of his life, his thoughts make God who is the source of all things become the central object of his existence. The person of God who is absent from this man's premises or the zest of being which he has never experienced where he is confined, gives to him the hope and reason to look for him or it, whomever or whatever he has marked himself to find. It is not idleness for instance for the poor man and each one of us in our varying degrees of poverty to get caught in our deep insignificance inside this infinite extravagance of creation and yet be consoled with the thought that he who created us has indeed reserved some role for us just for being. So the people in Nehemiah's time prostrated and wept at their understanding of the law of the Lord and whatever measure of discernment it has afforded them about the plight of their lives.

**January Teachings Schedule**

Teaching Topics: Christian Giving, Christian Suffering  
For ME 8 and others interested  
(Post-LSS and Encountered Adults)  
When: **January 31, 2010** at 1 to 4PM  
Where: Victory Home Care Offices  
1212 N Spencer St., Mesa 85203  
Please bring you Bible, Notebook and Pen!

*"And He gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God." (Ephesians 4:11-14)*

*Counsels continued...*

But they were admonished not to be sad, for rejoicing in the Lord must be their strength. So it must be for us for in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. The practical meaning of God's word is that we though many, are one. We were all created by one God, all loved by the same God, all saved by his one death, and all expectant of his one promise. Jew or Gentile, white, black or brown, poor or rich, man, woman or child or unborn, the certainty of his teachings will be upon us like his Spirit, that as we live, and love and pray and serve together, he will bring us the glad tidings that the words of our mouths and the thoughts of our hearts have found favor before him.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, help us to accept our role as our brother's keepers. When we embrace their pain and sufferings, and share them our ease and joys, we bring glad tidings to you.

**Order:** "Give glad tidings to the poor." (1 Cor12: 31)

**Direction:** Rejoice that you live and you are blessed. Tell others to come and see and share your joy.

**Jan 31: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Selflessness)**

**Theme:** The sonship of Jesus is manifested upon those who love unconditionally.

**Promise:** "They will fight against you, but not prevail over you, for I am with you and will rescue you." (Jer 1:19)

**Reflection:** "Is this the son of Joseph?" The ingredients of pride, doubt and envy are at the core of the question. We try to measure people by our own imperfections. What we bring to anywhere is what we get out of it. If we bring faith we get honest answers. If we bring sincerity, we get trust. It takes wisdom to be open to every person we meet, to hear him out and to accept him as he is. The son of Joseph did not make the cut. He was rejected like the rejected stone that became the cornerstone. Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, says the Lord. So if we forget our prejudices and selfishness and remember only that the Lord in his wisdom has given each of us his own set of skills, strengths and gifts, that gesture is a good beginning in the meeting of minds and the service of souls. To respect in every person we meet his measure of wisdom and strength and limits goes a long way towards the reciprocation of the same dignities.

## Sponsoring ME #10 Weekend

One important concept clicked with us this past ME weekend: **that we were part of a community.** A community is like a well-oiled machine, with all its members making up the parts of the machine, and the Holy Spirit being the oil that lubricates the parts with love and strength to ensure functioning. And that's exactly what happened Friday night. The different members of the community (sharers, pastoral team, spiritual director, auxies, praise team, and sponsoring class) were anointed by the Holy Spirit to enable them to carry out their purpose and role for the weekend's success.

Our class was divided up into teams and given tasks and responsibilities, but we were guided, assisted and encouraged all along, never once feeling a lack of support from the community. In hindsight, we understood the importance of the ME reunions, without which our class would not have been able to bond and develop the camaraderie to build up our team.

From each moment-to-moment of the weekend, we had flashbacks of our own memories as candidates. We recognized the candidates' look of uncertainties that we also once had in our faces, and understood the flood of emotions they experienced that we also felt last year.

We were humbled and inspired by the dedication and service of everyone involved, and how our ME class was seamlessly incorporated into this community of service. The fellowship among the community members, the genuine concern for each candidate, and the continuous prayers in the vigil room were all examples of true love for our neighbor.

Being behind-the-scenes also made us more grateful for the ease of the weekend. We realized the amount of effort, time and dedication it took for ME #8 to sponsor our class of 21 couples, and in retreat lodgings hours away in Prescott. Being part of the sponsoring class was an honor because we were able to give back to the candidates what we had so generously received the previous year.

We both agreed that our experience this past ME weekend as members of the sponsoring class was more fulfilling than our experience as candidates. Simply because we were on the giving end and not the receiving end, and the saying, "it is better to give than to receive" proved to be very true.

## Counsels continued from page 2...

If we love and see the goodness in others, there can only be harmony and understanding. Love never fails. If we give to all men what in turn we expect them to give us, namely, to give them the affection and respect that are due to them by the merits of their virtue, with no judgment or prejudice, and wish them grace, and bid them Godspeed, and attribute to them no ill motives, and explain in the best light possible everything they do, and offer them our hands in friendship, and in the end they still remain mortal enemies then we must yet remember God's promise in its stark truth, "They will fight against you, but not prevail over you, for I am with you and will rescue you."

Prayer: Dear God, I thank you for your love. Help me to love without envy or prejudice.

Order: "Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts."

Direction: Do not be selfish. Share everything you have. Bear one another's faults. Forgive and forget.-RSC.

Praise and thanksgiving to our Lord God, for together as a couple, we saw the glory of God in all aspects of ME weekend and understood the mechanics of the community...our BLD community. CTM

*"This grace of Christian marriage is a fruit of Christ's cross, the source of all Christian life." CCC 1615...The BLD family, together with ME 10 class shepherds Denny & Nina Custodio and co-class shepherds Simon & Lulu Lam, warmly welcome the graduates of ME 10: Jenn & Russell Bolosan, Remy & Johnny Devera, Au & Paz Esteban, Mei-Ann & Willie Gregorio, Malou & Tito Llanes, Cecile & Mark Lockey, Wari & Tammy Rafael, Fe & Andy Sabado and Pure & Jack Wallman.*



## Appointment of New Intercessory Ministry Coordinators

As appointed by the District Council of Stewards of BLD Phoenix and as endorsed by its District Servant Leaders, the Executive Council of Servant Leaders is of one heart and one mind in confirming the appointment of **Cal & Amor Obispo as Intercessory Ministry Coordinators**. May the Lord who sees all our actions empower you with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit as you fulfill the task ahead of you. ***“Tend the flock of God in your midst, (overseeing) not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”*** (1 Peter 5:2-4)



**Save the Date: February 17, 2010**  
**ASH WEDNESDAY 2010 - check your local parish**  
**for service times**

## Remember Not Just the Three Kings on Epiphany

Here's a Christmas season riddle: What happens when you put together magi, a river, and a wedding feast? You get an Epiphany! “Epiphany” means a “revelation”, “manifestation”, or “appearing”, and on this great Christmas season feast we remember how God was revealed to the world as an infant in a manger. Among the first to see this were the magi, foreigners who followed a star to see the Christ Child (Matthew 2:1-12).

But the story of the magi is just one part of the “revelation celebration.” For the Eastern Orthodox churches, Epiphany (January 6) is also the day to remember Christ’s revelation as God’s beloved Son at His baptism in the river Jordan (Matthew 3:16-17). On this day they celebrate the sacrament of baptism, and in some (very cold!) countries, cross shaped holes will be cut in frozen rivers to immerse the new Christians!

This still isn't a complete picture of Epiphany. Christ’s divinity was also revealed at the wedding feast at Cana, where Jesus turned six jars of water into wine (John 2:1-11). Here, Christ reveals His divine power through this first of His miracles.

These three stories form a *triptych*. A triptych is a piece of art divided into three panels or sections showing different, yet related, scenes, and their combination gives the entire work deeper meaning. So these three Gospel passages show meaning of Christ’s birth in human flesh.

The Epiphany is not only about revealing Christ’s divinity but also about highlighting His humanity. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ’s body, broken and handed over, risen and glorified, transforms our human lives into divine revelations—signs—of God with us.

When you celebrate Epiphany this year, remember not just the three kings but also the three ways God’s wondrous love for humanity is revealed. And the next time you see a tiny baby, dip your hand in the water of the font, or toast the bride and groom at a wedding, see if you can recognize the divine presence of God revealed in these holy, human events. †

## Balancing Tithing, Saving, and Debt Reduction in a Down Economy

An economic downturn can upend the best of economic plans, but even during tough times, the principles you should use to set priorities for giving, saving, and debt reduction remain the same. What are those principles?

- ◆ Recognize that all we have ultimately comes from the Lord and belongs to him (Dt. 10:14).
- ◆ Be generous with the Lord as a way of thanking Him for the many gifts He has given you. The world says pay yourself first, but the Scriptural principle is to pay God first (Pr. 3:9).
- ◆ Have a plan and work the plan (Lk. 14:28-30).

In addition to paying the Lord from our first fruits, it’s a good idea – even during tough times – to give to a level that makes you stretch a bit. It’s called sacrificial giving, and the Lord honors such gifts, no matter the amount, because they are given out of love.

Before deciding how much to give, save, and apply toward debt repayment, make sure you place all of these, along with the rest of your expenses into an annual spending plan. Without an effective plan, you’ll find yourself playing a shell game with your money, feeling as though you are making progress one moment, only to be caught off-guard by unexpected bills at another moment.

A well designed plan helps you see the big picture, allows you to make appropriate allocations between giving, saving and debt reduction, and provides a realistic understanding of the resources available for other spending categories. God love you!

-**Veritas Financial Ministries** - develops Stewards of Providence by equipping people to manage their personal finances according to Catholic principles. [www.VeritasFinancialMinistries.com](http://www.VeritasFinancialMinistries.com)

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1 - Manny Dizon	15 - Eric Maglalang
4 - Raffy Olloren	15 - Lucy De Leon
5 - Cecille Maglalang	15 - Gerry Bautista
6 - Au Esteban	20 - Mariz Cortez
10 - Joe Saguid	24 - Butch Omega
11 - Alex Alba	24 - Phogz Gaña
12 - Fe Querol	30 - Cita Rivera
14 - Tess Binarao	

### JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

2 - Art & Edith David  
 5 - Carl & Glo Javier  
 12 - Harmon & Chita Dilema  
 18 - Butch & Bing Omega  
 18 - Tito & Malou Llanes  
 20 - Alex & Lina Alba  
 31 - Ben & Becky Felipe

### THE LORD’S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of December 2009

<i>Receipts</i>	\$1,508.00
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$2,675.94
<i>Surplus (Deficits)</i>	\$(1,167.94)

For more details, see Treasury Ministry Heads, Pedro & Cita Rivera. **Thank you for your generosity!**