



VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 3

March 2007

Month of March

WORD: *As a community of Christ, our citizenship is in heaven.*

Mar 04 Gn 15:5-12, 17-18
Ps 27:1, 7-9, 13-14
Phil 3:17-4:1
Lk 9:28b-36

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

Mar 18 Jos 5:9a, 10-12
Ps 34:2-7
2 Cor 5:17-21
Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Mar 25 Is 43:16-21
Ps 126:1-6
Phil 3:8-14
Jn 8:1-11

DIRECTIONS (BLD GLOBAL):

1. *Wait for the Lord with courage and be stouthearted; wait on the Lord's leading and listen to His voice.*
2. *As Disciples of Christ, be ready for trials, difficulties and sufferings, for only in these tribulations that true discipleship is honed to maturity in Christ.*
3. *Go and intensify your mission work: feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give shelter to the poor, heal the sick, and visit the imprisoned.*

PROPHECIES (BLD GLOBAL):

1. *Listen to my Son Jesus and do whatever he tells you; then you will live in the goodness and bounty of heaven.*
2. *If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily; for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

DCS Monthly Reflections

1st Week: 2nd Sunday of Lent (Obedience)

Theme: We are citizens of heaven when we listen to and imitate Jesus, the Son.

Promise: *"He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body."* (Phil 3:21)

Order: *"This is my chosen Son, listen to Him."* (Luke 9:35)

Direction: Wait for the LORD with courage; be stouthearted, and wait for the LORD. Stand firm in the Lord.

Reflection:

"Abram put his faith in the LORD, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness." (Gen 15: 6). Righteousness, obviously it is an important attribute in God's judgment for men. This character has been mentioned over one hundred times in the NAB begin with Genesis 15:6 and ends with Revelation 19:11 *"... He judges and wages war in righteousness."*

God placed very heavy emphasis on our righteous behavior. How could we practice this important virtue?

Morality, justice, decency, uprightness, rectitude, and honesty; all these defines righteousness. How could we in our wickedness and spiritual dryness be able to achieve these! By ourselves, we are far from able to come close to the mark. However, our understanding Father, knows well enough of our weaknesses; promised to uplift us. *"He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body."* (Phil 3:21).

To overcome our weakness, like Abram, we are, empowered by faith to give glory to God; to wait for the LORD with courage stouthearted, and to stand firm in the Lord, and to listen to Him with obedience.

2nd Week 3rd Sunday of Lent (Witnessing)

Theme: We are citizens of heaven when we lead others to repentance.

Promise: *"He pardons all your iniquities; he heals all your ills"* (Ps 103:3)

Direction: *"If you do not repent, you will all perish as they did."*

Reflection:

This Lenten season once again reminds us to repent and be renewed. In the Psalm it says, "Merciful and gracious is the Lord, slow to anger and abounding in kindness." The Lord's mercy is infinite and knows no bounds and he will always forgive those who come to him and seek his mercy. The Lord encourages us to forgive and ask for forgiveness to God and to those whom we may have offended for the Lord's forgiveness is complete and brings healing to our body and soul. Let us therefore, cultivate fertile ground upon which we will plant and grow our life, may it be filled with goodness, love and mercy as we reflect on the significance of Jesus' passion and death on the cross.

Continued next page...

DCS Reflections continued...

3rd Week: 4th Sunday of Lent (Humility)

Theme: We are citizens of heaven when we reconcile with the Father.

Promise: *“When the poor one called out, the Lord heard, and from all his distress he saved him.”* (Ps 34:7)

Order: On behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Directions: Show our sincerity of our reconciliation with God by continuing our support of the community. We should support the projects we have, which have been pretty much studied and prayed over like the Gawad Kalinga. Let us see the face of Jesus in the faces of those poor struggling people. We should offer our time and talent in taking care of the spiritual growth of the young ones in Mark 10. Assist and support the youth and the other groups. Call and encourage back members of the SE, SPE and past LSS to renew their association with the Lord.

Reflections:

As we get into the lent season we tend to be more on the prayerful and sacrificial mood. We go to churches for prayer vigils, say novenas and go to confession. However we tend to go back to our old selves once lent is over. St. Paul tells us that we are new creations and that we should reconcile to God and his ways. He is not counting the number of times we fall, he is an all forgiving Father. We should change our lives and our attitudes. While it is difficult to imagine our relationship with God, it is easier to see how we change in our relationship with our fellow men. Let us show kindness to others where before we would only think of ourselves. Let us be the example of good Christian life - stand up for what is moral and right, not just what is legal or convenient. The community offers lots of opportunities for us to do that. We can share our time, talent and resource and be ministers to others, to the young ones, to the youth, and all other needs. By reconciling ourselves with others we are reconciling ourselves with God, for "before we were dead and now we are back to life, we were lost and now we are found".

ORDER (BLD GLOBAL)

“This is my chosen Son,
listen to Him.”
(Luke 9:35)

4th Week 5th Sunday of Lent (Compassion)

Theme: We are citizens of heaven when we do not condemn others.

Promise: *“Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing.”* (Ps 126:5)

ORDER: “Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more”. (John 8:11).

DIRECTION: We should not pre-judge or pass judgment to any of our brothers and sisters as we will be judged as well. We should avoid acting righteous as we are not as we are not righteous. We should not measure the help we give to others as we will also be measured.

REFLECTION:

While this story appears to be an honest attempt by some of the scribes and Pharisees to pursue justice, it is really the story of yet another trap set by Jesus’ enemies to ensnare him. According to Jewish law, adultery was a capital crime punishable by death (Leviticus 20:10). But according to Roman law – which governed occupied Palestine – Jews had no authority to put a man to death. So if Jesus had agreed with the Pharisees, he would be violating the Roman law. But if he disagreed, he would be identified as a false teacher. Jesus’ opponents must have felt very secure about their trap. Today, they would surely get the man!

Once again, Jesus’ enemies underestimated him. In his response, Jesus writes in the sand and says, *“Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her”* (John 8:7). With that, the whole crowd dispersed. Why did this one sentence have such a dramatic impact on the crowd? Because it became clear that whatever judgment they leveled against this woman would be leveled against them for their own sins. If she were condemned, so would they be as well. There were only two responses: to ask Jesus for forgiveness or to walk away and let the woman live. Since the crowd was not willing to repent, they chose to walk away.

They should have stayed. The woman did, and she received mercy. Jesus showered her with a grace that washed away her sins. Even though the woman was guilty as charged, Jesus issued a decree of divine forgiveness and set her on a new path. Jesus knew that he was the only one qualified to cast a stone at this woman. Still, he chose to die for her instead. He chooses the same for us. May we all come to embrace his mercy, and let it change us dramatically! Dear Lord, we are all like this woman. We are all unworthy to cast a stone. We ask you to wash us clean so that we might go out today freed from bondage to sin and strengthened against temptation. AMEN. †

BLD Phoenix 2007 Encounters and Seminars

May 4-6 YE#3 Venue to be determined
July 27-29 YLSS Mount Claret
Aug 10-12 SPE#2 Mount Claret
Sep 14-16 LSS#5 Mount Claret
Oct 26-28 Aspirants Retreat
Venue to be determined

(*ME - Marriage Encounter; YE - Youth Encounter; YLSS - Youth Life in the Spirit Seminar; SPE - Solo Parents Encounter; LSS - Life In The Spirit Seminar*)

TEACHINGS FOR MARCH

March 23 - Christian Love
(for selected members)
after Praise & Worship

Apr 1 - Christian Faith
(for selected members)
time and venue to be announced

Birthdays

2 - Miggy Arrieta (YE 1)
7 - Gee Go (ME 5)
9 - Josie Mata (LSS 2)
9 - Marieta Rullan (LSS 3)
10 - Cely Andaya (LSS 1)
14 - Ding Osorio (ME 2)
15 - Nikki Magnaye (YE 1)
20 - Luigi Castillo (YE 1)
25 - Frances Castillo (YE 2)
25 - May Siongco (ME 4)
27 - Paolo Castro (LSS 3)
29 - Imelda Abrea (LSS 3)

Anniversaries

9 - Ross & Maria David (ME 5)
12 - Bing & Myra Magnaye (ME 1)
12 - Rob & Wendy Dinglasan (ME 5)

BLD Phoenix Marriage Encounter #6

Scottsdale, AZ - BLD Phoenix welcomes 8 couples as graduates of Marriage Encounter #6. The ME 6 Weekend was held on February 2-4, 2007 at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, AZ. The Pastoral Team consisted of the weekend's Spiritual Director, Fr. Tito Ignacio from New Jersey, Sharer Couple Chito and Aileen Ciocon who are also from New Jersey & BLD Phoenix' District Shepherds, and another Sharer Couple Jess and Ning Laforteza who are Phoenix' very own homegrown ME sharers - this being also a meaningful experience for the BLD Phoenix community who, for the first time, has emerged its own ME sharers.

This event was sponsored by the ME 5 class and together with the BLD Phoenix auxies who came and helped during the weekend, truly it became a successful community event. The work of the Lord has been completed again through the works of His servants in the BLD Phoenix community. As the Lord gives us this community as His vineyard, may He continue to use each one of us to bring more workers in His vineyard for His glory.



Seated L-R: Pastoral Team-Chito & Aileen Ciocon, Fr. Tito Ignacio, Ning & Jess Laforteza; Standing L-R: Class Shepherds-Pedro & Cita Rivera, ME 6 Class-Art & Edith David, Carl & Glo Javier, Elmer & Thelma Alata, Lester & JoRose Rodriguez, Rod & Grace Ibe, Butch & Bing Omega, Jack & Tess Marquez, Joe & Lina Saguid

Monthly Schedule

1st Fridays: Holy Mass w/ Anointing-7:30 PM
2nd, 4th & 5th Fridays: Praise & Worship-7:30 PM
3rd Fridays: Youth Praise & Worship-7:30 PM
(Venue for Friday activities: OLV Chapel)

March 25 Filipino Sunday Mass - 5:00 PM at OLV
(Sponsored by BLD Phoenix)

Church Calendar

Mar 26 - Feast of the Annunciation
Apr 1 - Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)
Apr 6 - Good Friday
Apr 8 - Easter Sunday

Ministry Announcements

Intercessory Ministry

Please update petitions monthly for continuous prayers and/or update 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 dennyc1220@cox.net.

IDLC

° 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. You may check the Diocese website for training schedule:

<http://safeenvironmenttraining.org/index.php>

° Monthly IDLC meeting will be on **March 24, 2007** at 12:00 noon at Victory Home Care 1103 S. Mesa Drive, Mesa AZ 85210 (Villaraza Building)

Secretariat Ministry

Personal data forms are already available at the Registration Area. This is for all encountered members/LSS graduates to update the community database. All forms are to be turned in to Secretariat.

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of February 2007

<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 3,022.38
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$ 1,078.34
<i>Surplus (Deficits)</i>	\$ 1,944.04

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

Thank you for your generosity!

www.BLDPhoenix.com



The Pope's "Eloquent Message of Love" On Contemplating Christ Crucified

VATICAN CITY, FEB. 25, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This year, the Lenten message is inspired in the verse of John's Gospel, which in turn goes back to a messianic prophecy of Zechariah: "They shall look on him whom they have pierced" (John 19:37).

The beloved disciple, present with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and the other women on Calvary, was an eyewitness of the thrust of the spear which pierced Christ's side, so that blood and water came out (cf. John 19:31-34). This gesture of an unknown Roman soldier, destined to be lost in oblivion, was imprinted on the eyes and heart of the apostle, who recounted it in his Gospel. In the course of the centuries, how many conversions have taken place precisely thanks to the eloquent message of love that he receives who contemplates Jesus crucified!

Therefore, we enter the Lenten season with our gaze fixed on Jesus' side. In the encyclical letter "Deus Caritas Est" (cf. No. 12), I wished to underline that only by gazing on Jesus, dead on the cross for us, can we know and contemplate this fundamental truth: "God is love" (1 John 4:8,16). "In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move" ("Deus Caritas Est," No. 12).

Contemplating the Crucified with the eyes of faith, we can understand profoundly what sin is, its tragic gravity, and at the same time the incommensurable power of the Lord's forgiveness and mercy. During these days of Lent, let us not distance our hearts from this mystery of profound humanity and lofty spirituality.

On contemplating Christ, let us feel at the same time that we are contemplated by him. He whom we ourselves have pierced with our faults does not cease to shed over the world an inexhaustible torrent of merciful love. May humanity understand that only from this source is it possible to draw the spiritual energy indispensable to build that peace and happiness for which every human being is ceaselessly searching.

Let us pray to the Virgin Mary, whose soul was pierced next to her Son's cross, to obtain for us the gift of a firm faith. That, guiding us on our Lenten journey, she may help us leave everything that impedes us from listening to Christ and his word of salvation.

In particular, entrust to the Virgin Mary the week of Spiritual Exercises that will begin this afternoon in the Vatican, and in which I and my collaborators of the Roman Curia will participate.

Dear brothers and sisters: Please support me with your prayer and I will be happy to do the same in the recollection of the retreat, invoking divine power on each one of you, on your families and your communities. †