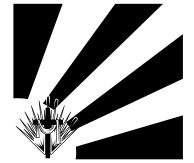




BLD PHOENIX

# VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 4

Year A

April 2011

## Month of April

**WORD:** *The Spirit of the Lord dwells upon the children of light.*

### READINGS

**April 3** 1 Sm 16:1,6-7,10-13  
Ps 23:1-6  
Eph 5:8-14  
Jn 9:1-41

**April 10** Ezk 37:12-14  
Ps 130:1-8  
Rom 8:8-11  
Jn 11:1-45

**April 17** Is 50:4-7  
Ps 22:8-9,17-20,23-24  
Phil 2:6-11  
Mt 26:14 to 27:66

**April 24** Acts 10:34,37-43  
Ps 118:1-2,16-17,22-23  
Col 3:1-4 or 1Cor5:6b-8  
Jn 20:1-9

### Lenten Daily Devotion

Kyrie, Eleison.

In Your mercy, Lord,  
watch over me this day.

Christe, Eleison.

Guide me in Your ways,  
lead me in Your truth.

Kyrie, Eleison.

Bring me to the joy of heaven,  
in Your mercy, Lord.

### 2011 ENCOUNTERS, SEMINARS & OTHER ACTIVITIES

**May 6:** Salubungan for LSS #10 (after 1st Friday Mass)

**June 17-19:** Life In The Spirit Seminar #10

**July 29-31** - Youth Encounter #7

**Sept 23-25:** Marriage Encounter #12

**Nov 11-13:** Youth Life In The Spirit Seminar #5

### THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of March 2011

Receipts \$1,714.00

Disbursements \$ 414.00

Surplus (Deficit) \$1,300.00

### MONTHLY COUNSELS

#### April 3 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent (Fruitfulness)

**Theme:** We are children of light when we produce fruit of goodness, righteousness and truth.

**Promise:** "He guides me in the right paths for his name's sake..." (Ps 23: 3)

**Reflection:** "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" To this day, we cling to the ancient notion that someone's death, illness, misfortune or suffering is a consequence of sin. Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents sinned." There is no connection between sin and suffering. Nor is God responsible for misfortune. Yet and still in the face of tragedy, we ask in utter doubt and disbelief, "Why me?" "It is so that the works of God may be made visible." In the Gospel story, the blind man did not ask to be healed. Without being asked Jesus performs a miracle. Overlooked and unappreciated is God's initiative of blessings in our lives. Our blessings come unearned and undeserved and we remain unsatisfied, but when tragedy strikes, we grumble and murmur. Like Samuel given God's directive to go to Jesse of Bethlehem to choose the Lord's king among Jesse's sons, we think that to make a choice in our lives is a simple task. Like Samuel we rely on our instincts and do not trust in God's instructions and ways. **Not as man sees does God see.** Like Samuel with his assumptions, we may be set up for failure in our first attempts **that the works of God may be made visible.** In our slow progress at spiritual growth and maturity and in our eventually responsible determination and dutiful working out of details in imitation of God's ways, we ultimately reach a level of consciousness when we see God's initiative **handsome to behold** and only then does the spirit of God rush upon all our work and our choices. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." (Eph 5:14) Though we are not blind, in our pursuit of things we often do not see the obvious. Many things we overlook and do not appreciate. We are still in darkness. We have not yet become **the light in the Lord.** We have yet to produce the products of light in our lives. Let us go then and do our works of mercy and compassion. Let us pray then and serve both the living and the dead. Let us be fruitful in the name of Jesus the Christ.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, God of darkness and light, God of the blind and those who have sight, help us that we may see that the center of our lives is the healing of our relationship with you and with one another. Let us give the proper value to the many simply overlooked and unappreciated things in our lives which you have blessed us with through family, friends and events. Amen.

**Order:** "Live as children of light." (Eph 5: 8b)

**Direction:** Pray and bear fruit. Go to confession. Prepare for Lent. Live the passion, death and resurrection of Christ and apply the message in all we do that others too may see Christ.

#### April 10 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent (Faith and Belief)

**Theme:** We are children of light when we firmly believe that Christ will raise us up to new life.

**Promise:** "I will put my spirit in you that you may live..." (Ez 37: 14a)

**Reflection:** There are two kinds of deaths in our world. There is physical death. There is spiritual death. We die but once in our physical body but we die innumerable spiritual deaths in the innumerable times we sin and lose the state of grace. It is unfortunate that man deals with physical and spiritual death in two distinct ways that betray his confused values.

*Continued on page 3...*

## Prayer to be Freed of the Seven Deadly Sins

O meek Savior and Prince of Peace, implant in me the virtues of gentleness and patience. Let me curb the fury of anger and restrain all resentment and impatience so as to overcome evil with good, attain your peace, and rejoice in your love.

O Model of humility, divest me of all pride and arrogance. Let me acknowledge my weakness and sinfulness, so that I may bear mockery and contempt for your sake and esteem myself as lowly in your sight.

O Teacher of abstinence, help me to serve you rather than our appetites. Keep me from gluttony - the inordinate love of food and drink and let me hunger and thirst for your justice.

O Lover of purity, remove all lust from my heart, so that I may serve you with a pure mind and a chaste body.

O Father of the poor, help me to avoid all covetousness for earthly goods and give me a love for heavenly things. Inspire me to give to the needy, just as you gave your life that I might inherit eternal treasures.

O Exemplar of love, keep me from all envy and ill-will. Let the grace of your love dwell in me that I may rejoice in the happiness of others and bewail their adversities.

O zealous Lover of souls, keep me from all sloth of mind or body. Inspire me with zeal for your glory, so that I may do all things for you and in you.

Amen.

*"Look at His adorable face.  
Look at His glazed and sunken eyes.  
Look at His wounds.  
Look Jesus in the Face.  
There, you will see how He loves us."  
~ St. Therese of Lisieux*



*A prayerful Lenten season and  
a meaningful Easter  
to all...may the spirit of Lent  
bring us closer to Jesus,  
grant us peace and unite us  
as a community - as a family.*

*Counsels continued from page 1...*He does everything he knows of to avert his physical death or at least to indefinitely postpone its inevitable coming. He does not visibly seem to make effort to diligently avoid his countless spiritual deaths. Yet sometimes he is tempted to read meaning and warning in a loved one's demise, a broken marriage, a job loss, a prodigal son or a wayward daughter. He sometimes thinks he gets the message and believes that **the hour is coming, and is now here**. It is fair to say then, that if we see that God is telling us something in everything that happens, then with faith and belief we can live our lives with greater meaning and conviction. We do not have to ponder these questions that seem to unduly occupy other people's time: Does God order his life by human demands or by his independent divine directive? When is the opportune time that God should manifest his action? Does God wait for us to go through suffering before he acts? Why is there pain, misfortune or death? With faith and belief, we ought to have the confidence to say that life's events simply affirm our trust in God and our willingness to embrace his design for us without any questions about his motives and without expended energy in unraveling the ways of his will and time. If we truly believe that we are God's **"O My people,"** it is best that we leave him in peace. We can never fully conceive how God works but if we trust that in our present difficult circumstances he can raise us up to new life, we should also trust that he will raise us from the dead. The story of Lazarus being raised from the dead vindicates not only our genuine recognition of God's power over life and death but more importantly our dire need of a new life, our need to be transformed before death comes to us and our confidence that God is in total control of our human affairs.

**Prayer:** Dear God, thank you that you put up with me, that you bear my offenses and that you have suffered for me. Please help me to mind my soul as much as I mind my body. Help me live a holy life. Like the risen Lazarus, I am untied and I am free. Help me not to stumble again in my life. Amen.

**Order:** **"Lazarus, come out!" (Jn 11: 43b) "Untie him and let him go." (Jn 11: 44b)**

**Direction:** Let us free ourselves from anger and resentment. Let us help others do likewise. Let us be united in giving glory to God. Let us do these things in faith.

#### **April 17 Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (Endurance)**

**Theme:** We are children of light when we endure suffering and persecution for the sake of the gospel.

**Promise:** *"The Lord God is my help therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame." (Is 50: 2)*

**Reflection:** The prophecies about the Lord come to fulfillment. The king comes on a colt, on the foal of a donkey. The crowds bear palm branches and greet the king with **"Hosanna,"** although this same king becomes the suffering servant who **"gave my back to those who beat me."** Yet too, **"I shall not be put to shame...that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them,"** so through the centuries the example of the Lord has endured through the blood of saints and martyrs and the unity of a faithful church. The long Gospel narrative draws out the experience of not only the historical Jesus but also every individual believer's story and humanity's communal story of salvation. The theology of redemptive suffering transcends the ages. **"My time is at hand,"** says the Lord a few times so that

by such repetition we are able to prepare and make ready for what it is to come. Then Jesus makes the poignant statement of his time, **"One of you will betray me."** By avoiding the mention of the name of Judas the Lord gives him some cover and a chance at repentance. In our time Jesus repeatedly makes the same under statement with telling grief, **"One of you will betray me,"** to which we reply, **"Surely, it is not I Lord?"** We ask in exceeding sorrow because we are conscious we will not do that particular grievous crime of which he speaks but we are conscious too that we are capable of many other indescribable and filthy deeds. Guilty of equivalent crimes of the heart and mindful of their consequences, we ask the same question, **"Is it I, Lord?"** We ask the question and we blush in shame. How dare we dip our hand with Jesus into the dish? But Jesus endures us and our betrayals. He endures the faults and iniquities of all of us who are upon him. And in our hearts we ask, as if to justify ourselves, **"Was it not written that Judas was to betray him? If not Judas, would not another one have betrayed him?"** So to this day, if we refuse to endure the stigma of suffering that is a consequence of our faults, we still would not understand Christ's passion and death. It is not by what was written or prophesied that Judas betrayed Jesus but by Judas himself by his own volition. It is not by necessity that we commit evil. By our own self command and free agency we could choose love and repentance. It is not that we had been born that we become wicked but that we become wicked on our own. Jesus endures the weaknesses and temptations of us all. The least we can do is to claim our iniquities and confess to them. Once more **and not seven times but seventy-seven times** God endures us, gives us cover and a chance at repentance. O, if only once and for all we could pray, **"The Lord is my help therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame."**

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, indeed have I betrayed you. I am heartily sorry for having offended you. I humbly accept whatever punishment is meted by your justice. I pray only that your mercy spare me yet again. Help me endure and persevere in my life for love of you. Amen.

**Order:** **"Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test." (Mt 26: 41a)**

**Direction:** Remain in God's company. Receive the sacraments frequently. Be more prayerful. Keep watch and endure with Jesus before the Blessed Sacrament.

#### **April 24 Easter Sunday - The Resurrection (Witnessing)**

**Theme:** We are children of light when we bear witness to the living Christ.

**Promise:** *"When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory." (Col 3: 4)*

**Reflection:** The revelation of the risen Christ according to John's Gospel addresses the witness of Mary Magdalene, Peter and John. Three witnesses saw the same things and came to different conclusions. The Magdalene said, **"They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him."** So Peter and John ran and came to the tomb. Peter **went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place.**

*Continued next page...*

*Counsels continued...* Then John went in **and he saw and believed**. There are three witnesses to the truth even as only two in number is required by Jewish law. They have not met the risen Christ but only the evidences that implied the resurrection – **the stone removed from the tomb**, the empty tomb and the grave cloths carefully rolled in place. To us, the risen Christ is only accounted for by others as in this Gospel and in other resurrection appearances so that we who are far removed from that time and place might be blessed who have not seen it ourselves but yet believe. How does one come to Easter faith? Some have come to believe through the various resurrection appearances, some through the empty tomb and some through the teaching of the church. Of the four Gospels, John’s Gospel is the only one that reports how one has come to resurrection faith through the mere sight of the empty tomb. Who was first in the tomb does not matter. **The first shall be last**, if the full fervor of faith is lacking. Those who are late in coming may yet have a surge in boldness and courage to make up for their earlier slowness in faith, their previous ignorance, their unbelief and the guilt that comes with these faults. Sometimes, those honored with position and privilege are more active and willing in their pursuit of faith. Ultimately, faith though it solidly rests on witness, is a gratuitous gift, the result of divine revelation. Faith though it relies on witness depends more not on witness but on faith itself, and faith often is not something fully formed from the beginning as in the case of the first witnesses, **for they did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead**. Some have delayed recognition of truth even as some see and believe from the start. But faith once established is nurtured through constant moral effort and the witnessing of others who have the sense of the good that comes from above and the grace of God’s word in the humility of their person and in the dignity of all that they do.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, you have raised me to a new life here on earth and I sincerely believe you will raise me again with you on your second coming. I thank you for the good witnessing of others who have helped me cling to my faith. By the witness of my own life, please help me bring other souls to you that they may know you and love you too. Amen.

**Order:** “Seek what is above, where Christ is seated...Think of what is above, not of what is on earth.” (Col 3: 1a-2)

**Direction:** Rejoice that there is hope for everyone. Clear out the old life. Start anew and give thanks that we can witness to the risen Christ. -RSC

**LENTEN FACT...**

**Passiontide** is the last two weeks of Lent, when the readings and prayers of the liturgy focus on the Passion of Our Lord. The word 'passion', in the Christian sense, does not mean an intense emotion; it refers to the historical events of Jesus' suffering and death. Although for several centuries the Fifth Sunday of Lent was known as Passion Sunday, after the Second Vatican Council this name was restored to the Sunday at beginning of Holy Week, formerly called Palm Sunday. As a penitential season of the Church, Passiontide is evidently even more ancient than Lent.

Then a voice came from the sky: **"I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."** (John 12:28)

**!!! TEACHING MINISTRY UPDATE!!!**

**April 8: MAIN HALL**  
**After Praise and Worship**  
**Topic: THE BIBLE AS A BOOK**  
**Speaker: Cita Rivera**  
**EVERYONE IS INVITED. COME ONE. COME ALL.**

**April 22, Room 1, After Praise and Worship**  
**Youth Ministry Teaching**  
**“Matrimony, Wounds of Humanity and the Youth of BLD”**  
**Speaker: Ramon Cuasay**  
**Two Videos, A Talk and an Open Forum**

**April 29, Main Hall, After Praise and Worship**  
**Topic: Response to the Word of God**  
**Speaker: Simon Lam**  
**EVERYONE IS INVITED. COME ONE. COME ALL.**

<b>BIRTHDAYS</b>	
1-Simon Lam	24 - Edith David
2-Fe Sabado	24 - Donna Larracaso
3-Glo Javier	21 - Tony Fuentes
4-Villa Sandstedt	22 - Amor Obispo
9-Joyce Clark	25 - Chay Maravillas
11-Justice Tabora	28 - Denny Custodio
12-Rollie Tabora	28-Dante Siongco
12 - Ann Conopio	29-Ruby Dizon
<b>ANNIVERSARIES</b>	
5 - Mike & Villa Sandstedt	
7 - Art & Marissa Crisostomo	
18 - Manny & May Siongco	
19 - Vic & Pam Zapanta	
23 -Mark & Cecile Lockey	
26 - Jack & Tess Marquez	
28 - John & Eva Ward	
28 - Eric & Cecille Maglalang	

**BASIC QUESTIONS ABOUT LENT**

**In Lent, who has to abstain from meat?**

Catholics from age 15 and up are to abstain from meat on days of abstinence. (Canon 1252)

**What counts as meat?**

Food is considered meat if it comes from an animal that walks on land. This includes mammals and fowl. Crab? Not meat.

**Can we fast and do our private Lenten practices on Sundays in Lent?**

Even in Lent, Sunday is a solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord and is therefore not a day of fasting and penance. The Sundays during Lent are not counted among its forty days. Recognizing this can help to focus the goal of our private Lenten practices: the Easter joy that comes from being conformed to Christ Himself. Sundays in Lent strengthen us with a small foretaste of the Resurrection along our journey through the desert of Lent. Breaking with our Lenten fasts (in moderation, of course) can be apart of this foretaste.

-SSJ Cathedral, Phoenix Bulletin