



Month of February

WORD: *The authority and word of Jesus Christ heal and renew our life.*

READINGS

- Feb 01 Dt 18:15-20
 Ps 95:1-2, 6-9
 1 Cor 7:32-35
 Mk 1:21-28
- Feb 08 Jb 7:1-4, 6-7
 Ps 147:1-6
 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23
 Mk 1:29-39
- Feb 15 Lv 13:1-2, 44-46
 Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11
 1 Cor 10:31-11:1
 Mk 1:40-45
- Feb 22 Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25
 Ps 41:2-5, 13-14
 2 Cor 1:18-22
 Mk 2:1-12

ORDER (BLD GLOBAL):

“Come let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the Lord who has made us.” (Psalm 95:6)

DIRECTIONS (BLD GLOBAL):

1. *Keep on searching God’s purpose in your life; continue to develop a deeper relationship with Him through daily prayers, Eucharist, reading/meditating on His word.*
2. *Be the shining light for others in the community by being more concrete in your mission work that will help the poor in a sustainable way.*

PROPHECIES (BLD GLOBAL):

1. *I am the Holy One of God; know that I have authority over you and I can work miracles in your life.*
2. *In moments of weakness and temptation, call on the name of Jesus and be assured of My protection.*

February Weekly Reflections

The **Catechism of the Catholic Church** teaches us that, in Hebrew, the name Jesus means **“God saves”**. This was the name by which the angel Gabriel called Him during the annunciation, expressing both Christ’s identity and His mission. Since it is God alone, who can forgive sins. And it is God who, in Jesus, “will save His people from their sins” (Mt. 1:21). In the history of salvation, God did not just deliver Israel “out of the house of bondage” by bringing them out of Egypt, but He also saved them from their sins, which are always an offense against God, who alone, can forgive sin (CCC 430-431)

The name Jesus signifies that the very name of God is present in the person of the Son. He was made man for the universal and definitive redemption from sin. It is this divine name that, alone, brings salvation. Hence all can invoke His name, for Jesus united Himself to all men through His incarnation, and “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (CCC 432).

Jesus said: **“I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly”** (Jn 10:10). Jesus did not personally come to lead the Israelites out of their physical captivity in Egypt, but He came to lead sinners - all sinners - out of their spiritual bondage, so that they may love and serve God. Like the Israelites of old, our sins separate us from God, it deprives us of His glory (Isa.59:1, Rm. 3:23). Hence Jesus wants everyone to be converted from our sinful life because of His great love for us.

The readings for the month of February speak of the different healings that Jesus performed to **“demonstrate His sovereignty by works of power over nature, illnesses, demons, death, and sin” (CCC 447).**

The theme and promise for the first week are:

Theme: **Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we recognize Him as the Holy One of God.**

Promise: **“I will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him.” (Dt. 18:18b)**

Even before Jesus began His public ministry, the Israelites were already expecting the Prophet mentioned by Moses in the first reading. In the Gospel we are told that after Jesus called His first disciples, they went to a synagogue - the place of teaching and instruction – where Jesus was interrupted by a man possessed with an unclean spirit. To show that His teachings carried the authority of God, Jesus expelled the evil spirit from the man, building faith in the man and among those who witnessed the spiritual healing. As disciples of Christ, we continue to be healed from the effects of our old sinful life and are renewed whenever we confess that Jesus is the Holy One of God in both our words and deeds.

Order: *“Listen to My voice and harden not your heart”.* Ps 95:7

Directions: Be prayerful and trust in the Lord. *Continued on page 3...*

Ash Wednesday

February 25 - Wednesday is Ash Wednesday and marks the start of the holy season of Lent. On Ash Wednesday Catholics are obliged to **fast** (one full meal, two light ones) and to **abstain** from eating meat (chicken’s meat, incidentally!). Fridays of Lent are obligatory days of abstaining from eating meat. Please check your local parish for service times.

On January 16, 2009 at Our Lady of the Valley Church, the BLD Phoenix community witnessed the anointing of the newly emerged District Council of Stewards (DCS) with a Eucharistic Celebration officiated by Fr. Reggie Carreon (BLD Phoenix Spiritual Director). The conclusion to the community's very first emergence which took place on December 13, 2008 marked the beginning of



new life for the community and most especially for four BLD Phoenix couples. The four couples were suitably depicted in St. Mark's gospel that day about the four men carrying a paralytic to get to Jesus and be cured. Four beloved BLD Phoenix couples are given the task to promote the community's vision and mission. Through the collaborative works carried out by the different ministries under the four apostolates, they each must direct all for the purpose of bringing God's people close to Him and ultimately for His greater glory. Below is a short reflection by our very own Formation Apostolate stewards, Ramon & Ludy Cuasay.

On Receiving Gifts and Giving Back

Years back, at our Aspirants Retreat, we personally chose the subject, "Gifts," to talk to God about before the Blessed Sacrament. We started with the notion, that when one gives, the recipient gives something back in gratitude. The act of giving and the giving back that it invites is common to all cultures. But God's gift giving and our giving back are at a different level. There is in place a perpetual cycle of exchanges between God and us, with one difference. In the human level, there is parity between the parties exchanging gifts, namely, the reciprocal gift often equals the value of the earlier gift, for if it were to exceed it, there comes a contest for honor. As the cycle goes, the reciprocal gifts escalate in value, and, the failure to return a higher valued gift means losing the contest for honor. But with the Lord, the stakes are different, and yet, really the same; different, because we cannot ever return a gift of similar value than what we have been given by the Lord; the same, because, spiritually, we remain compelled to make a return. Personally, we have from the start lost the competition for honor. There is no competing against the Lord's lavish gifts. Most of the gifts we return to the Lord have been poorly prepared, half hearted, perhaps, not ever worth God's time, ever. And yet, God keeps on giving to us.



The Lord has chosen to give us an opportunity to serve in the DCS. Now we know that nowhere else in Phoenix is there a couple in need of more prayers and

support than this couple. Our giving back to the Lord is our yes, but BLD Phoenix, you would please offer us, and all the others in the newly emerged DCS, your prayers and your cooperation that our tasks and responsibilities be accomplished as much as God himself expects of us. We know that the Lord and all of you, our BLD family, are watching. Even before our anointing, the work has began. †

"If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Ps 95:7-8

It was one of those perfect weathers that Arizonans boast of – a high of 76 degrees in the winter. On Friday, Jan 30, 2009 at the Desert Outdoor Center located on a hill overlooking Lake Pleasant, the sponsoring class SPE #2 together with a few auxies went about the typical hustle and bustle of a BLD encounter weekend. All eager and hopeful to welcome the would-be SPE class members of SPE #3. However, despite the hectic picture, there was a seeming calmness paired with undisturbed disposition that was so like the picturesque view of the placid waters of Lake Pleasant.

SPE #3 candidates arrived one after the other. Some came in with visible signs of disquiet shown in their eyes, questions written all over their faces but showed a hint of eagerness to be there nonetheless. 17 individuals that day have knowingly (or may have unknowingly) responded to the Lord's calling. The SPE #3 weekend was directed spiritually by Fr. Pete Literal who flew in from Washington, DC. The Pastoral Team whom the Lord called to touch the hearts of the candidates included Ramon Gatchalian, Long Cruzada who are both from Newark, NJ; Marie Lazaro and first time home-grown sharer, Cecilia Andaya who are both from Phoenix.

On Sunday, February 1, as every grace-filled encounter weekend concludes without fail, 17 individuals went on to their respective homes with all smiles (it was Superbowl Sunday with the AZ Cards playing, no less). Their eyes gleaming from bliss infusing within (and well of course from tears of joy). Carved in their faces is the image of respite from knowing that even if they are solo/single parents, they will never walk alone in this world and the next. As a praying community, we continue to intercede especially for the graduates together with SPE #3 class shepherd, Eva Tejada and co-class shepherd, Erlinda Clarin.

The weekend experience was just one of the many signs establishing that Christ is ever present with the fire of the Holy Spirit blazing and filling the hearts of His faithful. We just have to remain in Him that He may remain in us. Truly the Lord has used the BLD community again to carry out His plans especially through the sponsoring class and the auxies who, untiringly and lovingly, dedicated this weekend for service all for the glory of God. The BLD Phoenix community warmly welcomes the graduates of SPE #3: Mila Alaan, April Alfonso, Emily Bello, Ermina Berez, Lilia Dagdayan, Joyce Dimailig, Linda Dote, Purita Fernandez, Emy Gacia, Evelyn Latada, Bong Obrique, Marco Ocampo, Ric Villaraza, Jack Wallman, Gigi Whitby, Gloria Yap, and Patricia Ybarra.



February Reflections *continued...*

The theme and promise for the second week are:

Theme: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we receive Him and preach the Good News of Salvation.

Promise: *"He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds."*

Andrew, Peter, John and James, who were the first disciples to answer the call of Jesus to follow him, were witnesses to Jesus' expulsion of the evil spirit at the synagogue.

When they reached the house of Peter's mother-in-law, they were told that she was sick. Jesus took her by the hand, raised her to her feet, healing her, and she began to serve them. In the second reading, St. Paul describes his own technique for calling others to Jesus, "I made myself a slave so as to win as many as possible... I do all that I do for the sake of the gospel in the hope of sharing in its blessings (1 Cor. 9: 22-23). Like the first disciples and St. Paul, we should witness to our new life in the spirit by inviting others to share our joy in the Lord.

Order: *"Be imitators of me as I am Christ".* 1 Cor 11:1

Directions: Do everything for the glory of God by being compassionate and by reaching out to others' needs.

The theme and promise of the third week are:

Theme: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we reach out to and care for the poor and the marginalized.

Promise: *"Blessed is he whose fault is taken away, whose sin is covered."*(Psalm 32: 1)

The first reading and the gospel both speak of a leper. At the time of Jesus, lepers were despised and isolated from society. They were barred from the fellowship of men, must dwell alone outside the camp; go around in torn clothing with bared heads and covered upper lips, crying out "Unclean, unclean," as they went around the town, warning others of their polluted presence. Jesus met the desperation of the leper's human need with understanding and compassion. He stretched out his hands and touched him, something no one would have dared to do. But to Jesus, the leper was not 'unclean', but simply a human soul in desperate need.

We are blessed to have been healed of our sinful past and to have our lives renewed in Jesus Christ. But our lives should not be lived for own well-being alone. St. Paul says in the second reading, **"Imitate me as I imitate Christ"** (1 Cor.11:1). As Jesus did in the gospel, we should reach out to care for the poor and the marginalized, that we may truly can give glory to God who wants everyone to be saved. We should heed what the word of God tells us: ***"Do not exasperate the downtrodden, delay not to give to the needy; a beggar in distress does not reject; avert not your face from the poor. He who does a kindness is remembered afterward; when he falls, he will find support"*** (Sir. 4:3, 4; 2:30).

Order: *"Remember not the event of the past.* Is 43:18

Directions: Be faithful when you say yes to the Lord; go to confession.

The fourth week, the theme and promise are:

Theme: Jesus Christ heals and renews our life when we lead others to repentance.

Promise: *"Your sins I remember no more."*(Is. 43:25b)

The Gospel narrates the story of four friends who bring a paralytic to Jesus through an opening on the roof. Jesus first forgives

February Reflections *continued...*

the sins of the paralytic, then restores him to health, and he is able to walk again. As renewed followers of Jesus, we have experienced the healing love of Jesus after we have repented, confessed, and received absolution for our sins. We should witness to our new life through our deeds, prioritizing spiritual values over worldly concerns and goods. We should find contentment in the simple life, which we can share with others, especially the poor. We should no longer pride ourselves into falsely believing that all that we are comes from our own hard work. Rather, we should rely more and more on the grace of God, and become more compassionate and forgiving of others. We can then bring others to Jesus as we embody the words, ***"God is gracious and merciful. Slow to anger and abounding in love. The Lord is good and compassionate to every creature"*** (Ps. 145: 8-9). As we humble ourselves and confess our sins, we will be forgiven, for His Word says: ***"As far as the east is from the west, so far have our sins been removed from us, as a father has compassion on his children so the Lord has compassion on the faithful"***. (Ps. 103:12-13).

Order: *"Repent, and believe in the Gospel".* Mk 1:15

Directions: Frequent confession and receive communion.

February Teaching Schedule

Teachings will be held on February 22, at the Victory Home Care office located at 1212 N Spenser St, Mesa, from 12:30 to 4:30PM. Please bring your Bible, pen & paper.

Reminder:

The BLD Phoenix Valentine's **Love Doubles Bowling Tournament** is going to be this Saturday **February 14, 2009** at 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. It will be at the Brunswick Zone Mesa (1754 W. Southern Avenue, Mesa, AZ 85202)

For more information, please contact Manny at 480-600-6810 cell or email mannysiongco@yahoo.com OR

May at 480-600-6818 cell or email lsiongco@yahoo.com

Thank you & hope to see you all! 🙏

Featured Saint of the Month



Valentine was a holy priest in Rome, who, with St. Marius and his family, assisted the martyrs in the persecution under Claudius II. He was apprehended, and sent by the emperor to the prefect of Rome, who, on finding all his promises to make him renounce his faith in effectual, commended him to be beaten with clubs, and afterwards, to be beheaded, which was executed on February 14, about the year 270. Pope Julius I is said to have built a church near Ponte Mole to his memory, which for a long time gave name to the gate now called Porta del Popolo, formerly, Porta Valetini. The greatest part of his relics are now in the church of St. Praxedes. His name is celebrated as that of an illustrious martyr in the sacramentary of St. Gregory, the Roman Missal of Thomasius, in the calendar of F. Fronto and that of Allatius, in Bede, Usuard, Ado, Notker and all other martyrologies on this day. To abolish the heathens lewd superstitious custom of boys drawing the names of girls, in honor of their goddess Februata Juno, on the fifteenth of this month, several zealous pastors substituted the names of saints in billets given on this day.

He is the Patron Saint of affianced couples, bee keepers, engaged couples, epilepsy, fainting, greetings, happy marriages, love, lovers, plague, travellers, young people. He is represented in pictures with birds & roses.

The Waters in Lourdes



February 11 is the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes. I was at Lourdes with my wife in August last year. We were part of the North American Volunteers of Lourdes. For the ten days that we were there, we were, as the French called us, *hospitalliers*. We cared for the sick pilgrims who came to the shrine. We met them at the bus and train stations and at the airport, carried them or their luggage on stretchers, pushed the wheelchairs, and generally got them on their way to the shrine on their pilgrimage of hope and healing. Or we helped make their beds, scrubbed the floors of the hospices, served meals, washed dishes and utensils, on our own pilgrimage of humility and obedience. Every night at the processions, we prayed for and with them. And at the baths, we also prayed with them, physically prepared them for their immersion into the waters and helped dress them as they emerged from the waters, in various ways, touched and transformed.

On the day we left for Lourdes, I missed the last two steps of our main stairs. I was flung forwards and banged my right shoulder against our wall that broke my fall. I was in tears. Immediately and from then on, I could not walk straight or raise my right arm. But I was not going to miss our Lourdes volunteer work at any cost. In dire circumstances, in the BLD tradition of confidence, I know that the Lord always provides. On the third day of much pain in Lourdes, I was assigned to the baths and before that day was over, as is customary, the workers are prayed over and they are immersed in the waters. My right shoulder and chest were horribly bruised and blue. How pitiful I must have looked to those who prayed for me. When I emerged from the waters my great pain and disability were gone or at least, I thought so. I certainly could move more freely and my work in the following days did not produce as much discomfort as it used to. On our last day in Lourdes, I asked to be immersed in the baths one more time. Though it took six weeks for all my bruises and blue marks to disappear, and although I still have an occasional, minor twinge on my right shoulder, what Our Lady of Lourdes has done for me is a miracle. Healing is possible through faith and prayer. The occasional pain in my shoulder to me is merely a reminder that both faith and prayer are life long processes. I cannot and shall not do without them, for as long as I live. †

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of January 2009

<i>Receipts</i>	\$3,245.54
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$1,886.10
<i>Surplus (Deficits)</i>	\$1,359.44

FUNDRAISING COLLECTIONS

<i>Praise Ministry</i>	\$2,200.00
<i>Caroling 2008</i>	\$3,895.00
<i>SPE#2 (for SPE#3)</i>	\$3,608.00
<i>ME#8 (for ME#9)</i>	\$4,465.00
<i>Golf Tournament</i>	<u>\$5,510.00</u>
Total	\$19,678.00

Solo Parents Encounter #3 Financial Report Summary

<i>Total Collection</i>	\$8,354.65
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$7,280.65
<i>Total Surplus</i>	\$1,073.35

*For more details, see Treasury Ministry Heads,
Pedro & Cita Rivera.*

Thank you for your generosity!

Philippines to Host 5th Asian Youth Day



Manila, Philippines - The capital of the Philippines will host the next world youth day in Asia, from November 20-27, 2009. The 5th Asian Youth Day, organized by the youth department of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), will focus on the Eucharist.

The FABC reported that the goal of the event is to "renew Asian youth's faith in and love for the Word of God and the Eucharist," and to help them integrate these realities into their lives. The meeting, which aims to gather 2,000 young representatives from 22 countries, draws its theme from the synod of bishops on the Word of God last October in Rome.

The Asian Youth Days began in Thailand in 1999, and the most recent was held in Hong Kong in 2006.

Similar to World Youth Days, the Asian event will include the welcome of pilgrims by parishes and host families, plenary sessions on the Word and Eucharist, reflections and testimonies, workshops, times of prayer and liturgies.

The encounter's focus on the Eucharist will be in conjunction with the theme of the 9th plenary assembly of the FABC, to be held Aug. 10-16 in Manila. The session will center on the topic of "Living Eucharist in Asia."

Marriage Encounter #9 is on March 27-29, 2009

at Camp Pinerock 1400 Pine Dr. Prescott 86303

Please contact ME 8 members for application & more information or visit www.BLDPhoenix.com.

February BIRTHDAYS

2 -Crosby Cortez
13- Esther Ruales
13- Gilliene Yap
15- Edward James Justimbaste
17- Art David
18- May Ann Fajardo
21- Peter Parian
23- Patricia Ybarra
24- Venus Fuentes
25- April Alfonso
26- Bheng Gaña

ANNIVERSARIES

-none on file-

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 schedules:

<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). Please E-mail to eunex@aol.com.