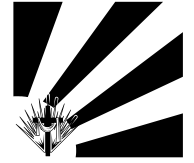




BLD PHOENIX

# VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 1

Year A

January 2011

## Month of January

**WORD:** *God's grace is upon those who share the light of Christ.*

### READINGS

**Jan 2** Is 60:1-6  
Is 72:1-2,7-8,10-13  
Eph 3:2-3a,5-6  
Mt 2:1-12

**Jan 9** Is 42:1-4,6-7  
Ps 29:1-4, 3,9-10  
Act 10:34-38  
Mt 3:13-17

**Jan 16 Int'l** Is 49:3,5-6  
Ps 40:2,4,7-10  
1Cor 1:1-3  
Jn 1:29-34

**Jan 16 Phil** Is 9:1-6, Ps 97:1-6  
Eph 1:3-6,15-18  
Mt 18:1-5,10

**Jan 23** Is 8:23-9:3  
Ps 27:1,4,13-14  
1Cor 1:10-13,17  
Mt 4:12-23

**Jan 30** Zep 2:3 -3:12-13  
Ps 146:6-10  
1Cor 1:26-31  
Mt 5:1-12a

### BIRTHDAYS

1-Manny Dizon	15-Eric Maglalong
4-Raffy Olloren	15-Lucy De Leon
5-Cecille Maglalong	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	

### ANNIVERSARIES

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

### THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of December 2010

<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 1,122.00
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$ 1,219.57
<i>Surplus (Deficit)</i>	\$ (97.57)

Website: [www.BLDPhoenix.com](http://www.BLDPhoenix.com) Group E-mail: [BLDPhoenix@yahoo.com](mailto:BLDPhoenix@yahoo.com)

## MONTHLY COUNSELS

### January 2 Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord (Self-giving)

**Theme:** The light of Christ shines upon those who share the joy of finding him.  
**Promise:** "Then you shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow." (Is 60: 5)

**Reflection:** The Jews of old diligently read Scripture and knew it by heart. They found the Messiah there but they refused to believe when the Son of God had finally come. But there came strangers into Jerusalem, outsiders from foreign lands who did not know Scripture, three Gentiles from the east saying, "Where is the newborn King of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." These three magi sought the wisdom of the Jews to inquire about the Messiah so they could find him. King Herod assembled all the chief priests and the scribes of the people and inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea." The ones who lacked knowledge of the Messiah came and worshipped him. The learned ones, those who had knowledge of him and were waiting for his coming did not go to worship him. Three foreigners came from far away. The hometown Jews were not stirred in their hearts to give him homage although Jerusalem is a mere few miles to Bethlehem. "When we are nearest to the means, we are farthest from the end." Yet a curious cooperation was actually going on then that is seldom raised to our consciousness. The magi knew the time of Christ's birth by a star. That was all they knew. The Jews, the chief priests who were 'teachers' and the scribes who were the 'lawyers' of their time whom Herod had assembled together knew the place of Christ's birth according to Scripture. The magi inquired and they got a response. Often it is that we know a part of the solution to some deep question and others know some other solution to the same question that afflicts us, but for some reason that baffles human behavior we tend to keep our knowledge instead of share it. We would rather keep in secret our discoveries as others too seem to hoard their own treasury of findings when it is obvious that giving and sharing them openly would benefit most if not all. The light of Christ shines on those who share the joy of finding him. The light of God's grace arises in the soul of every man who seeks Christ. Having encountered God, if we let our share of his light shine on others, and in turn, if others in the miraculous power of self-giving which is how God reveals himself to each of us by degrees, if those others also let their light shine, the darkness in our world would scatter and God's peace would gather where ultimately home is, which is in our hearts, where radiance is that throbs and overflows.

**PRAYER:** Dear God you reveal yourself to us by degrees, the better that we may seek your word and counsel constantly. May we learn to give of ourselves to you through our giving to others and to share our blessings to let our inner light that comes from you shine so that henceforth your presence in our midst may be as radiant as the sun every morning of our lives.

**Order:** "Rise up in splendor." Is 60: 1a

**Direction:** Proclaim your praises to the Lord. Share your blessings. Show a happy face to everyone you meet. God's star at its rising has stopped at where we are. God is with us. Rejoice.

### January 9 - The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (Justice)

**Theme:** The light of Christ shines upon those who are called to the cause of justice.

*Continued next page...*

*Counsels continued from page 1...*

**Promise:** "I have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you, and set you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness." (Is 42: 6-7)

**Reflection: John came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.** Jesus comes to John. Behold Jesus and John, the sinless with the sinner, God with his creature, the king with his herald. What a magnificent sight to behold that God has come to man, the abiding Word to his voice, the Light and its source to the lowly lamp. John must have thought, "How is it that you who have done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood, should come to me?" John refused to baptize him, "**I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?**" But Jesus said to him, "**Allow it now...it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.**" At another time much later on when Jesus took a towel and tied it around his waist, then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of his disciples, Peter refused and said to Jesus, "**You will never wash my feet.**" (Jn 13: 8a) But Jesus said to Peter, "**Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me.**" (John 13; 8b) First to John at his baptism and then to Peter before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew how to fulfill all righteousness and justice. Jesus always knows how to fulfill it all. By submitting to baptism, Jesus was fulfilling the purpose of his coming which was to do the Father's will. **The Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all.** (Is 53: 6b) Jesus submits to his Father's will for the sake of justice which requires that our guilt be washed away and with it the debt we owe and could not pay. In the name of justice too, the Father's response could not have been anything else than the anointing of Jesus, "**This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.**". And the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus like a dove for his divine empowerment.

**The heavens were opened.** The heavens open too at our baptism though beggars and vagabonds we are. God's door opens to all who are born again. The heavens open welcoming us to God's holy presence, not just us, but in his merciful justice, every person whom we invite who lovingly transforms his life in the name of Christ. Indeed, God is never far away. He is always with us.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, I was buried with you in your baptism and rose with you from the water and was made clean. You have baptized me with the Holy Spirit and in imitation of you I have come to do the Father's will. With you, in you and through you, help me to fulfill all righteousness and justice in my life. Amen.

**Order:** "**...fulfill all righteousness.**" Mt 3: 15

**Direction:** Be faithful to your baptismal vows.

### **January 16 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Witnessing)**

**Theme:** The light of Christ shines upon those who testify to the truth that he is the son of God.

**Promise:** "I will make you a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." (Is 49: 6b)

**Reflection:** Said John about Jesus, "**I did not know him but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be known to Israel.**" Again John said, "**I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one.'**" And finally John proclaimed, "**Now I have seen and testified that he is the son of God.**" "Behold anyone who has been baptized," I say, "any common, ordinary man after baptism." Behold anyone

who has not lived a heroic life. Behold anyone who has no spectacular story to tell to hold you spellbound. Any such one is a regular, ordinary, nondescript man upon whom John's disclaimer would aptly apply, "**I did not know him.**" But the reason that someone is baptized in my reckoning of God's will is for the Spirit to come down upon him and remain in him so that he may have a chance to offer a quiet smile or a loving glance to affirm someone else, so that he may give a spontaneous hug to one who most needs it at a proper time, so that if he so wills he may visit the sick or the lonely, so that he may confer tender gestures of empathy and so that he might have as many, small kindnesses he might make himself or others do to proclaim the presence of Jesus and the reason for his hope. By word and deed and manner, by example and witness, every one who bears the name Christian, these countless common and ordinary men they give endless testimony to the presence of Jesus. Whether we fast or we feast, when in our quiet ways we wait and watch to see which brother might be in great need because he might be fleeing God or seeking him, we are servants for the Lord in justice and charity. No servant is above his master especially as the Lord has **formed us as his servant from the womb.** The ordinariness that characterizes our days should not dampen our enthusiasm for life and God's blessings. In fact, simplicity must please the Lord. "**It is too little, the Lord says, for you to be my servant... I will make you a light to the nations.**" The Lord will have us do his bidding as he pleases and it pleases him **that his salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.** There is no better witnessing to Christ than to say, "**Here am I, Lord, I come to do your will.**"

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, help me live my life that everyone may see your image in what I do.

Also, help me that I may always be ready to celebrate your presence in every person I meet. The essence of good and happy living is that we are one another's witnesses to you, my Christ.

**Order:** "**Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.**" Jn 1: 29b

**Direction:** Always point out Jesus with our life and our work. Lead to Christ all we meet by our example and witness. Confess Jesus in our lives and share his blessings.

### **January 23 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mission)**

**Theme:** The light of Christ shines upon those who go to mission and become "fishers of men."

**Promise:** "You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest." Is 9: 2

**Reflection:** In the desert, Jesus was tempted by the devil through hunger, covetousness and ambition. After these temptations and after John was thrown into prison, Jesus began to preach to confirm John's teaching. When John was thrown into prison and after his death, the old law ceased and the new Gospel began through Christ. Even Christ's ministry needed workers. "**As he was walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew.**" Jesus **saw** two brothers, that is, he saw their hearts and their life. He has had yet no miracles. His only promise was, "**I will make you fishers of men.**"

*Continued next page...*

*Counsels continued from page 2...* **He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. He called them...and they followed him.** They will be **fishers of men**, a term that conjures familiar images of how men are drawn by Christ or by sin as fish are drawn by the net and as we must all be drawn back to Christ from our straying away. Jesus called his first disciples two and two as he later sent them two and two on their mission. These fishermen, **at once they left their nets and followed him.** Some scoff at what they left behind, only mended nets and an old boat, "How much could they have cost?" They left everything and have kept nothing for themselves. The elegance of their giving was not how much but out of how much they gave. Jesus found his first missionaries by the sea as they were actively engaged in their life's work casting and mending their fishing nets. Despite the hazards, hardships and the perils of the sea, these simple fishermen were not idle. They were gainfully employed and hard at work but when God called, Jesus was the mission. Jesus was and is above it all. **Fisher of men** is the work of God. Christ has elevated these common fishermen's old vocation to the supreme mission of all to which all men are united in the same mind and the same purpose. There is no rivalry or division in the mission to love God.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, I thank you for having drawn me closer to you. You have given meaning to my life and my work. Help me bring abundant joy and rejoicing to others who are in need of you.

**Order:** *"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

*Mt 4: 19b*

**Direction:** Be united in the same mind and in the same purpose. Let there be no rivalries and divisions among you. The good news of God is for us all.

#### January 30 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Pastoring)

**Theme:** The light of the Lord shines upon those who minister to the poor.

**Promise:** *"Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven."* Mt 5: 12

**Reflection:** **When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain.** Moses received the old law on the mountain. On a mountain too, Jesus is proclaiming the new Gospel. **And after he had sat down...he began to teach them.** *"He had sat down"* somehow evokes Christ's position of supreme authority. He did not sit down to rest but to teach. The disciples had come to him and with them the crowds. There was a multitude that gathered around Jesus, a multitude that found intimacy with him and the better for what Jesus had to say is for all. He spoke eight beatitudes that all began with *"Blessed are they..."* When Jesus said "blessed" he meant beyond happiness and beyond joy. He meant holiness, fullness of life, inner calm and peace that come only with being right with God. By blessed, he meant to describe those who love and fear the Lord and so in their lives they observe his Word. It does not mean perfection or complete absence of sin or malice. Blessed here means that we are drawn to God in a special manner, that is, our soul seeks the Lord in such a way that no other desire supercedes it in the time it takes hold of us. To be blessed as Jesus meant it is to feel empty despite our present satisfactions. Jesus spoke of eight beatitudes that started with *"Blessed are they..."* and he concluded with a ninth one, a radical departure from the first eight because it begins with *"Blessed are you..."*.

This last one is specially addressed to us and the management of relationships with our families, other people and the world. *"Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me."* This last one summarizes the possibilities of a lifetime seen from the prism of Christ's new Gospel. It is a harsh allusion to what we have to expect as Christ's disciples in our journey through life. But Christ's promise negates all the harshness and hardship and toil. *"Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven."*

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, I thirst for you. Thank you for filling my cup to the brim and I thank you for keeping me still empty until with what I have I have served the needy and the poor whose thirst is greater than mine.

**Order:** *"Seek the Lord...seek justice, seek humility."*

*Zep 2: 3a*

**Direction:** Be simple. Be humble. Serve the needy and the poor. Do not be judgmental. Live the message of the beatitudes. -RSC.

### !!! TEACHING MINISTRY UPDATE !!!

**January 14** after Praise & Worship

Topic: Introduction to Power Point Presentations

Speaker: Eric Maglalalng

Attendance: Everyone interested is invited

**January 21** after Praise & Worship

Topic: Matrimony

Attendance: **Everyone** is invited, youth, adults, visitors.

Speaker: Lorane Ward

**January 21 and 28** after Praise & Worship

Mock Teaching for TDP Graduates

PLEASE SCHEDULE WITH FORMATION APOSTOLATE

### SINGLES ENCOUNTER #3

February 4-6, 2011

Lake Pleasant Desert Outdoor Center

Please contact any Single Ministry member for more information.

*Happy New Year*

*From BLD Phoenix*

### 2011 ENCOUNTERS AND SEMINARS

**January 14-16:** Solo Parents Encounter #3

**February 4-6:** Singles Encounter #3

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

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

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

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

Please note the dates and take the opportunity to send out invitations in advance to your family and friends.