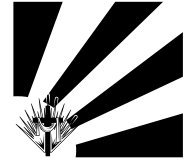




BLD PHOENIX

VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 6

Year A

June 2011

Month of June

WORD: *Christ assures His presence to those He commissions to proclaim the Kingdom of God.*

READINGS

- June 5** Acts 1:1-11
Ps 47:2-3,6-7,8-9
Eph 1:17-23
Mt 28:16-20
- June 12** Acts 2:1-11
Ps 104:1,24,29-30,31,34
1Cor 12:3-7,12-13
Jn 20:19-23
- June 19** Ex 34:4-6, 8-9
Dn 3:52-56
2Cor 13:11-13
Jn 3:16-18
- June 26** Dt 8:2-3,14-16
Ps 104:12-15,19-20
1Cor 10:16-17
Jn 6:51-58

2011 ENCOUNTERS AND SEMINARS

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

July 29-31 - Youth Encounter #7

October 8-9: Marriage Encounter #12

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

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 6 - Ramon Cuasay | 15 - Vic Zapanta |
| 8 - Jack Marquez | 21 - Rob Omega |
| 8 - Sharon Fernando | 21 - Malou Reyes |
| 12 - Bing Omega | 26 - Romy Tioseco |
| 13 - Nina Custodio | 28 - Rock Calvo |
| 14 - Bea Bautista | 29 - Mario De Leon |
| 15 - Betty Jaravata | |

ANNIVERSARIES

- 19 - Jess & Ning Laforteza
17 - Gerry & Gladdine Bautista
16 - Tony & Venus Fuentes

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of May 2011

<i>Receipts</i>	\$1,151.00
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$ 465.57
<i>Surplus (Deficit)</i>	\$ 685.43

Website: www.BLDPhoenix.com
Group E-mail: BLDPhoenix@yahoo.com

MONTHLY COUNSELS

June 5 Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

Theme: We proclaim the kingdom of God when we make disciples of all nations.

Promise: "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (Mt 28:20b)

Reflection: In the hill country, in a town of Judah many years back where Mary traveled to visit her cousin Elizabeth, at the sound of Mary's greeting, infant John the Baptist leapt in Elizabeth's womb. Even in the womb where God dwells, before his very person his yet unborn herald recognizes him and leaps with joy. That was in another time. This time **eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them.** In this travel there is joy too but with a tinge of sadness for the disciples were twelve strong in number once. O, how small the church was then. Though no one speaks about the defection of one of them from their company, they are first to acknowledge that not all who are called by God stay to the end. They know about betrayals, denials and doubts. They know that there is a difference between hearing and heeding, between following and believing, between belonging and being. In the mountain to which Jesus ordered them, **when they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.** O, why are we of little faith? Always, God's revelation meets two responses. Sometimes we doubt. Sometimes we believe. And when we believe we do fall on our knees to adore and pay God homage. Often the concern of the community is to keep the poor and the weak abreast and close to the rest lest they fall by the wayside. The community moves forward together as one. The other concern is for all to submit to the supreme authority no one usurps. **Jesus said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me."** God's reign has begun and he holds sovereignty over all of creation. **"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations."** He charges us with a great mission that requires zeal, courage and certainty. Where do they come from these qualities demanded by leadership and fellowship? They arise from the blessed assurance of Christ's abiding presence. **"And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."** The dynamism of discipleship is ultimately a motion from doubt to certainty and the perfection of the person from fear to faith. It is the intriguing human flight from darkness to light in the living rhythm of song and dance, the awakening of man's spirit from its bewilderment and confusion, its leap in confidence to love, passion, service, sainthood and martyrdom. It means flinging open our once locked doors to the breadth of the entire cosmos for if we accept the premise that the church is the gift of the ascended Lord to the world, then we need to carry the limits of the church to the ends of the earth..

Prayer: At your ascension O Jesus, you tasked eleven disciples to continue your work on earth. You charged them as you now charge us with the same mission. Abide with us O Lord, as you stayed with them. Help us to banish our doubts. Help us to rebuke our fears. Help us to touch and speak to unreached hearts and ears. Amen.

Order: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." (Mt 28: 19)

Direction: We must baptize every one we meet with the spirit of God's love. Go, and cross boundaries of cultures and friendships or stay where you are, and initiate loving, serving, sharing, helping and bearing other people's burdens because God is in us and with us. *Continued next page...*

JUNE: Month of the Sacred Heart

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us.

Counsels continued from page 1...

June 12 Pentecost Sunday

Theme: We proclaim the kingdom of God when we exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Promise: *"When you send forth the Holy Spirit, they are created, and renew the face of the earth."* (Ps 104: 30)

Reflection: **When the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst.**

This is the Christ, victorious over death, unconfined by the tomb, alive and glorious. **He showed them his hands and his side.**

We see his pierced side, the mark of nails on his hands and feet.

On the testimony of his resurrection rests the hope of our own resurrection. He is risen from the dead. It is true. Then it is also true that every word he spoke before his death is true. Not a word of his teachings we dispute, no truth he spoke we disavow, his every promise we look forward to so our ways, our lives, our hearts are ours for a time but only ours that we may give them back to him as we dismiss our fear of death and rebuke its sting and indignities. **The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.**

We rejoice too despite our locked doors, our fears, our doubts, our hiding in shame, our sloth in service, our cowardice in love.

To Jesus all barriers, bolts, hearts and hesitations crumble and open to his coming. The places he cannot enter however, except on invitation, are the places of mammon and other idols where there is no faith that Jesus is God and Lord. **Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you."** God blesses us with his peace and that is how we come to the knowledge of ourselves. God's peace is what draws out courage and love. **"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."** It may seem sometimes that God gives a command that is impossible for us to fulfill. It may be that he is giving us a chance to own up to our helplessness without the merit of his grace. **"Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."** To the apostles Jesus bestows the power to forgive sins as exercised by the ordained ministers of the Old Testament. Our ordained clergy has these priestly powers too in the confessional. Though anointed priest, king and prophet at our baptism, our universal priesthood does not confer to us the sacramental power to forgive and retain sins reserved only to ordained priesthood in the confessional. To love God and to serve him are two things however that we universally seek and require of ourselves. We love God by bending our knees to worship him. Love also requires that we bend our backs in the service of Christ through our service to all of God's men. Love without works is dead. To love is to serve. We serve not for the sake of serving. We serve neither for the sacrifice that it entails nor for the reward that comes with it. We serve solely for the sake of God who deserves to be loved and served. When Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on us, we make naught of ourselves and God makes us a new creation.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for the honor of making me the temple of the Holy Spirit. Let me speak, and love and serve as the Spirit enables me, that I may do the mighty acts of God in my life. Amen.

Order: **"Renew the face of the earth."** (Ps 104: 30b)

Direction: Allow the Holy Spirit to work in us. Share the Spirit through prayer, work, and participation in all community activities and in the discharge of the duties, responsibilities and assignments of our station in life.

June 19 The Solemnity of the Holy Trinity

Theme: We proclaim the kingdom of God when we share our belief in the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Promise: *"...everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."* (Jn 3: 16b)

Reflection: Ecumenism discourages us to talk of exclusion, rejection and judgment. **Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.** It is easy to falsely read from the statement that salvation is a reward for belief. That kind of reading also implies that God withholds love and salvation until we believe. That too is false. **God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.** Salvation is the mysterious work of the Triune God. It does not solely rest on a belief system or the contents of a faith. It depends too on how we come to faith, how we experience God and how we meet and relate to the three persons in the Godhead. How much did God love? **God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.** That is how much God loved and still loves. In what way does God love? **That everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.** God does not condemn. **Whoever believes in him will not be condemned.** God comes as physician to heal and as savior to redeem, not to judge and not to condemn. **But whoever does not believe has already been condemned.** God knows who belongs to him. God also knows if we are already judged. We are all God's creation. God's doing is our life. Our doing is what condemns us. God invites us all to the light. But there are those who prefer darkness. Those who do not accept God's invitation to come to the light will not stand in the light. God also invites us to eternal life. Those who do not accept his invitation will not have eternal life. Endowed with free agency and self command, man could indeed choose to unravel God's divine design to the peril of his soul.

Prayer: Dear God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity, do not let us perish without the benefits of your mercy. Before you we name our sins. We claim our guilt. We are heartily sorry. Forgive us our trespasses and grant us, O merciful God the chance to live with you in eternity. Amen.

Order: **"Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace."** (2 Cor 13:11a)

Direction: Believe or die. Cling to Christ or perish. God created man in us. We created the sinner in us. We must give up and denounce that which we have made in us and retain only what is of God. Let us agree with one another to do only God's love and work in our lives.

June 26 Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Theme: We proclaim the kingdom of God when we testify to the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist.

Promise: *"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."* (Jn 6: 56)

Reflection: We should not make mockery of Christ ever. We should never strike him off from our lives either. God remains God regardless of whether we believe in him or not or whether we accept him or not....Continued on page 4

VIA LUCIS REFLECTIONS

“What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do?” (Jn 6:30b) Instead of singing praises to God, in his slowness to believe, man remains callous in his doubt, questioning and demanding, bereft of trust, beggarly in faith. The devotional practice of the Way of the Cross is a means to draw out love, the awakening of conscience and the dawning of repentance. A less established meditational practice on the Stations of the Resurrection, Via Lucis or Way of Light also aims at bringing into deeper consciousness the reality of God, that he suffered and died, that he rose from the dead and ascended to heaven all for the purpose of his redemptive love for man. The brief thoughts that follow are collated from reflections read at the first ever BLD Phoenix Via Lucis Devotion, May 21, Saturday, in St Bernadette’s.

1st Station- Jesus Rises from the Dead. *Jesus lives. O risen Christ, O redeemer of souls, what shall it be for me when I close my eyes and come to the end of my days? Shall I meet your justice? Or shall I meet your mercy? It is your love and mercy O Christ that I seek. Help me to show my love and share of myself with others. -LRLC*

2nd Station- The Disciples Find the Empty Tomb. *Lord Jesus, make me as empty as your tomb, empty of all that separates me from you and fill me with your risen presence. The empty tomb is a silent witness that greatly motivates us to seek the Risen Lord at work in our midst. The empty and lonely places of human life are precisely where the Lord wishes to work and be revealed. -JC*

3rd Station- Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene. *Dear Jesus, thank you for showing yourself to Mary Magdalene, a humble and perfect example of human fault and failing, a model penitent. I am like the Magdalene, a ransomed and restored man, a repentant and forgiven sinner. To Mary, -to look, to seek, to touch - these things could not suffice for love. Like her, with faith and joy, let me proclaim to all who can hear, “I have seen the Lord.” -RSC*

4th Station - Jesus Walks with the Disciples to Emmaus. *Let us join the two disciples in their walk to Emmaus. Jesus is telling me that to have lifelong friends is not through easy and unchallenging times but through difficult circumstances of shared trials. God allows us to experience periods of questioning and confusion. Jesus allows us moments when we do not recognize him. These are the times that should not weaken our faith but strengthen it. - BR*

5th Station - Jesus Reveals Himself in the Breaking of the Bread. *We praise and thank you Lord for the gift of your sacred body and blood in the Eucharist. This is the sign of your deep love for us and the fulfillment of your pledge that you will be always with us. When our senses fail to recognize you traveling with us in life’s journey, give us the grace to see you with eyes of faith, love you as you love us and hope to never ever be separated from you like when you vanished from the sight of your two disciples in Emmaus at the breaking of the bread. - AO and CO.*

6th Station - Jesus Appears to the Disciples. *Lord Jesus Christ, you are always near to those who seek your presence. I was lonely and lost. The doors of my heart were locked. My eyes were blinded by unworthiness. I have failed you so many times and so many times I have turned my back on you. I was in darkness. I was afraid. But you, O Lord, you came to my rescue. You took me back in your loving arms. - EB*

7th Station - Jesus Confers on His Disciples the Power to Forgive Sins. *The passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ are one mission set forth in motion by God our Father for the sole purpose of forgiving all our sins. We cannot forgive at all if we are left on our own. How can we really expect ourselves to forgive sins? After ME, I realized how much I am loved and I resolved to love back. I cannot just love every time, and so I struggled on until I received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in me makes it always possible to forgive myself and others. - MK*

8th Station - Jesus Confirms Thomas in Faith. *We had been years in America and my father had the same question every time I called him, “When are you coming home to see me that I too may see your family?” Our petition for permanent residency dragged on. “When are you coming home?” My answer was always the same, “Soon,” until my father took ill and died. Never will he see me again nor will he ever see my family. I doubted God’s presence then, but with prayer and time, God’s help and the community’s, we received our residency card, we went home, we visited my father’s grave and attended my mother in law’s funeral. God, you are indeed a loving God. You answer prayers, you heal wounds, you show the efficacy of the cross, you grant good things, you give us peace. But all these you do in your own time. - GB*

9th Station - Jesus Appears to His Disciples on the Shore of Lake Galilee. *I believe that Jesus is with me when I eat to satisfy my hunger and replenish my body in strength. Jesus invites us, “Come, have breakfast.” In my emotional state of wayward exuberance that shifts to dreariness and despair, I am reminded of my own failures and follies. What can the Lord do to a defeated old man and a derelict wretch like me? His voice tells me, “Come dine and break your fast.” It is then I feel renewed strength and I move forward to the new work of God for me. - PGR*

We come before you, O Jesus, admitting the troubles in our hearts, and affirming that you are the way, the truth and the life. You called your disciples to the charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. We seek to live in you, O Christ, in the same way you live in the bread and wine you give us in the Eucharist and in the food you provide us in your plenty. We also believe that you are the unseen guest at the table of our home. - CR

10th Station - Jesus Confers Primacy on Peter *Jesus conferred primacy to Peter. For Peter, this meant sacrifice, hardship and death. It meant total commitment and his entire life as leader of the church and shepherd of his flock. My salvation comes from Christ’s suffering. My joy comes from his sorrowing. My life comes from his dying. Like Peter, like each one of the popes, I was conferred a primacy of duty and responsibility by Jesus. It means I must lead my family which is my domestic church. It means I must shepherd my wife, my son and myself, before all else. - CMC Continued on pg 4...*

11th Station - Jesus Entrusts His Disciples with a Universal

Mission. I had anger and bitterness in the early part of my life. The BLD community through SPE and LSS rekindled the meaning of my dormant faith. Being able to let go of my resentment and bitterness helped me to forgive myself and then forgive the people who hurt me. Lord Jesus, may the witness of my life proclaim your holy name and so draw others into union with you. - IG

12th Station - Jesus Ascend in to Heaven. At first look, it seems amiss to celebrate Ascension. We are celebrating the departure of Jesus from us. No longer will he be on earth. It would seem more fortunate if we were living in Israel in the first century and could access Jesus directly for healing and guidance. The descent of Jesus into hell and his ascension into heaven freed the first century Christians from fear of what lay outside of their experience. They were no longer afraid of death because Jesus conquered death by dying and rising from the grave. Fear of an unpredictable, whimsical Divine Providence was laid to rest by Jesus ascending into the right hand of the Father. In the 21st century, what are we afraid of as we reflect on and celebrate the Ascension of our Lord? - RT

It had to have been a very painful decision for God to sacrifice his only begotten Son who was crucified, who died and was buried by the very same people he tried to help and protect. I will never doubt Jesus or give him up. If the Father could give up his Son for me, if his Son could give up his life to save me, who am I to question him or to complain about issues and problems? God does everything for a reason. I trust that he will not give me any trial or tribulation unless he believes I can handle it. - JT

13th Station - Mary and the Disciples Await the Coming of the Holy Spirit. Ten days after the Resurrection, Mary and the disciples waited. They waited in prayer and meditation. The Israelites traveled and waited 40 years in the desert before they reached the Promised Land. Parents have to wait 9 months before a child is born. The baby waits several months before it eats solid food. Waiting is important in our lives. Waiting filled with meaningful prayer to be able to hear God's whisper and to be able to see God's handiwork in our lives allows for our gradual and internal conversion. Lord God, help us to find the upper room in our hearts where we can pray and wait for the Holy Spirit to come, change and convert us. - AC

14th Station - Jesus Sends the Spirit Promised by the Father to His Disciples. It was in YLSS that I first really learned a lot about the Holy Spirit, what accepting it would do for my life and how it would keep my faith strong. My experience did not suddenly change my faith. It took me many encounters, it took me to be an auxie, it took me to be a member of praise ministry, to become a witness to the Holy Spirit's power. The Holy Spirit in me tells me that I may have many trials ahead but I shall overcome these trials. The Holy Spirit has taken my life to new places. O Holy Spirit, consume me with your holy fire and change me every day of my life. - LC

Counsels continued from page 2...

We cannot believe in him or accept him unless we choose to do so. It is a moral choice we have to make freely and without coercion. Bread, meat and drink are to our body as Christ in the Eucharist is to our soul. **Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.** We must be as quick to seriously study Scripture as we are swift to listen to the word of God. To believe in God's word and accept it is not for the purpose of gain or privilege, but to not believe in it and to not accept it is to reject Christ to our peril and ruin. **For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.** To not believe in his word and to not accept it is dipping our bread in the bowl of other gods. It is a betrayal. It is like Judas dipping his bread in the dish of Christ. **Unless you eat the flesh...and drink his blood** is crude and bare language that scandalizes only the doubters and unbelievers. The faithful are not shocked or offended by the same naked vocabulary. Adam and Eve in the garden, their dilemma was to eat or not to eat the forbidden fruit. To eat or not to eat the Eucharist is not the same dilemma. We consume the body and blood of Christ to appropriate his life and so confess to our absolute dependence on him. What hunger and thirst do not cry out for satisfaction? If we share in God's death, we share in his life. If we share in his suffering, we share in his joy. **This is the bread that came down from heaven.**

Prayer: I believe Jesus that I consume your body and blood when I approach your table. May I always approach you in a state of grace. Wash away my unworthiness in the confessional so that I may always appropriately receive your abiding presence. Only you my Lord can satisfy my hunger and thirst. Amen.

Order: "...eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood." (Jn 6: 53b)

Direction: Receive the Lord in the Eucharist. Share his blessing with others. Confess your sins. Consume God in a state of grace or you consume him to your condemnation.-RSC.

!!! TEACHING MINISTRY UPDATE!!!

**June 10: Main Hall
AFTER Praise and Worship
Topic: Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit
EVERYONE IS INVITED. COME ONE. COME ALL.**

**June 17: Main Hall
AFTER Praise and Worship
Topic: Christian Love**

**June 24: Main Hall
AFTER Praise and Worship
Topic: Christian Faith**

**July 8: Main Hall
AFTER Praise and Worship
Topic: The Body and Blood of Christ**