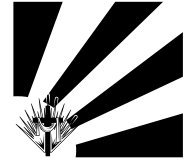




BLD PHOENIX

VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 3

Year A

March 2011

Month of March

WORD: *Blessings will be upon those who obey the Word of God.*

READINGS

Mar 6 Dt 11:18, 26-28
Ps 31:2-3, 3-4, 17, 25
Rom 3:21-25, 28
Mt 7:21-27

Mar 13 Gen 2:7-9, 3:1-7
Ps 51:3-6, 12-14, 17
Rom 5:12-19
Mt 4:1-11

Mar 20 Gen 12:1-4
Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
2 Tm 1:1-10
Mt 17:1-9

Mar 27 Ex 17:3-7
Ps 95:1-2, 6-9
Rom 5:1-2, 5-8
Jn 4:5-42 or
Jn 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42

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.

ANNIVERSARIES

1 - Rock & Rosie Calvo
8 - Jerome & Sharon Fernando
12 - Bing & Myra Magnaye
12 - Cal & Amor Obispo
16 - Joel & Chay Maravillas

THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of February 2011
Receipts \$1,456.00
Disbursements \$2,388.60
Surplus (Deficit) \$ (932.60)

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

MONTHLY COUNSELS

March 6 9th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Obedience)

Theme: Those who obey the word of God will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Promise: "Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock..." (Mt 7:24)

Reflection: "Take these words of mine into your heart and soul." The Lord means what he says. He is patient and gives as plenty of slack to comply. The Lord alone is our rock of safety. Without him there is no salvation for **all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven."** God looks at the heart. He requires action, not lip service, not compliments of courtesy. Pray, we must, but we must be earnest in prayer. Pronounce God's name, we ought to, but it is more important to do his will, to be docile and to be obedient to his ways. Sanctification is wrought by both saying and doing, when our words and deeds come together willingly and lovingly and are not parted. "**Did we not prophesy in your name?**" This may be true but did God choose, send and sanction it? To each of us is a separate calling. When we help others we must neither neglect ourselves and fall short of salvation. "**Did we not drive out demons in your name?**" Even Judas cast out devils. "**Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?**" The deaf hear, the lame walk, the sick rise and are healed, but holy witness and sacred lives are more established ways of building our house on rock. Jesus forgives us and confers us his mercy not because of good works but because of our obedience and our love. We must not rest on privilege and performance past or present. We must make a lifetime of what we proclaim. We must not tempt God to say, "**I never knew you,**" for he well knows our disobedience and perversity. Upon what rests our hope to enter God's kingdom? God seeks obedience, humility, sincerity and truthfulness. He shuns disobedience, pride, pretense and hypocrisy. What indeed is in our heart's ancient corruption that we call the Lord, "**Lord, Lord**" and not do what he says? When God cleans his threshing floor, he will separate the chaff from the wheat, the braggarts from the beggars. We are lowly beggars before God's holiness and must recognize how far we are from his expectations so that we are not drawn into the current of the passing world but drawn instead to Christ in the obedience of little children hungry and thirsty for God's love and mercy.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, I mourn the corruption and the sins of my life. Let me make it up to you for all who do not believe, adore, hope and love you. Where I am lacking in the gap between my obedience and my promise, help me fill that God-sized hole with your mercy. Amen.

Order: "Take these words of mine into your heart and soul." (Dt 11: 18a)

Direction: Disdain disobedience, deception, hypocrisy, falsehood and self flattery. Come with a clean heart to the Lord.

March 13 1st Sunday of Lent (Temperance)

Theme: Those who obey the word of God will overcome temptation.

Promise: "...just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so, through one righteous act, acquittal and life came to all." (Rom 5: 18)

Reflection: The Lord God formed Adam and Eve and planted a garden in Eden. This is the story of salvation, the creation of man and his fall, this story of God and his love for humanity which is also the story of the serpent. There is a cunning serpent in every paradise.

Continued next page...

Counsels continued from page 1... **Just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act, acquittal and life came to all.** We lost paradise in the transgression of the first Adam. We regained it in the obedience of the new Adam in Jesus Christ in the simple and complex mystery of the Father's love for all his creation. There is no temperance, no restraint, no limit in God's love for us but the stumbling blocks and distractions to our desire to reciprocate his affection are legion. They are called temptations. No man is immune from them. Even Christ was tempted. **Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.** God permits temptations to test our mettle, to probe our resolve, to keep us ever dependent on his assistance. O God, **you are faithful and do not allow us to be tempted beyond our endurance, but along with the temptation give us the means to withstand it.** Who indeed but God can lead us through the world's inhospitable dangers, tempestuousness and wickedness? The serpent is cunning, subtle and wily, so each of Satan's temptations Christ resisted and he preceded his defense based on Scripture with the phrase, **"It is written."** Truth is in Scripture. To know the truth, to know God's word, to know his promise is to obey. *"In my heart I treasure your promise/ that I may not sin against you."* (Psalm 119: 11). The source of temptation is always what appeals to our senses and therefore arises from legitimate needs and natural desires. The cunning serpent is always poised to pounce. He orders temptations to fit our strengths and weaknesses. He makes them personal and unique to each of our stations and circumstances but they remain mere afflictions until we yield to them. The only proper response to temptations is to overcome them, to oppose and reject them at once. All temptations are bearable with God's help. God will see us through them all.

Prayer: Jesus, please help me start each day by offering myself to your service and command. It was not for naught that you carried the cross, shed your blood and laid down your life for me. Dear Jesus, help me weigh my worldly needs against heaven's desire for me. Amen.

Order: **"The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve."** (Mt 4: 10)

Direction: Temper your physical needs. Maximize your spiritual desires. Desire only what is of God.

March 20 2nd Sunday of Lent (Holiness)

Theme: Those who obey the word of God will grow in holiness.

Promise: *"I will make you a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."* (Gn 12: 2)

Reflection: **"Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you."** Does not our life's story begin the same way? God calls each one of us to life, address and future unknown. To Abram, God promises a great nation of uncountable descendants. To each one of us, he promises life and all its challenges, rigor and discipline. We take heart because as to Abram and so to us, God promises, **"I will bless you."** As we encounter the problems that life brings to us or that we bring to life, we know that God's grace is with us. He saved us and called us to a holy life. He invites us to join him and to do as he does, **"Bear your share of hardship for the gospel."** Jesus in his life and most of all in his passion was subject to abuse, ridicule, insult and humiliation. On three brief occasions in his life we do encounter a glimpse of his divinity: at his birth,

at his baptism and **up a high mountain** at his transfiguration. To Peter, James and John, and also to us, he gives a glimpse of his power and might to prepare us as witnesses to his passion and death, and, to brace us up to our own mortality. **His face shone like the sun**, that same sacred face which later was slapped, shamed, insulted and spat upon. We too have dishonored that face. **His clothes became bright as light.** His body shone through his clothes. **"Lord, it is good that we are here."** O Lord, once, we too had a face that shone like the sun, as at our baptism. Iniquity has tarnished it since then. O Lord, many times too have we felt that our **clothes became white as light** as after confession, communion, fasting and abstinence or on our knees before the Blessed Sacrament. But since then, our sloth and weaknesses have hidden away the light of your holiness in us. Remind us, Jesus, do remind us, **"Bear your share of hardship for the gospel."** Remind us, Jesus, **"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him."** Remind us, Jesus, remind us, in our confusion and human frailty, **"Rise and do not be afraid."** O holy God, have mercy on us.

Prayer: Lord, it is good that we are here. We acknowledge your every blessing. We give thanks for your patience that has put up with us, your mercy that has saved us and your kindness that has caused us to kneel before your cross to seek your forgiveness for all our faults. Holy Jesus, make us holy. Amen.

Order: **"...bear your share of hardship for the gospel..."** (2 Tm 1: 8b)

Direction: Carry your cross. Bear your trials. Acknowledge your blessings. Give thanks to the Lord.

March 27 3rd Sunday of Lent (Faith)

Theme: Those who obey the word of God will be made right in his sight.

Promise: *"...the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* (Jn 4: 14b)

Reflection: As the Israelites journeyed long from Egypt to the Promised Land, in their thirst for water, they grumbled against Moses and Moses complained to God and the people quarreled there and tested the Lord, **"Is the Lord in our midst or not?"** We are no different from the Israelites. Without faith we have no peace with God or hope in his glory. Nor are we different from the Samaritan woman at the well from whom Jesus asked, **"Give me a drink."** Observe our similarities with the Samaritan woman as she uses various names to address Jesus during their dialogue that seem to signify her growing perception if not knowledge of Jesus, **"How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman for a drink?"** After Jesus had answered her, the woman said to him, **"Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep, where then can you get this living water?"** When Jesus said, **"Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst,"** the woman said to him, **"Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."** Then Jesus asked her to go get her husband and the woman said to him that she had no husband, so Jesus answered her, **"You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband.' For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband."** The woman said to him, **"Sir, I can see you are a prophet."** *Continued on pg. 4...*

...lent

A Time for Traditions



Traditions for Growth

Spring is the season when seeds start to sprout, beginning their pilgrimage through the cold dark earth into the light. The word “lent” comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for springtime, *lencten*. In springtime, sunlight, water, and rich soil help plants grow. Our Lenten growth is nurtured by the three disciplines of Lent: fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. Discipline is often associated with punishment, but it comes from the same word as disciple, a word that means learner or pupil. Be a learner this Lent and let God’s grace help you to grow.

Traditions for Almsgiving

Operation Rice Bowl: Substitute a simple meal one day a week (usually Friday) and put the money saved into the “rice bowl” used by Catholic Relief Services for the hungry of the world.

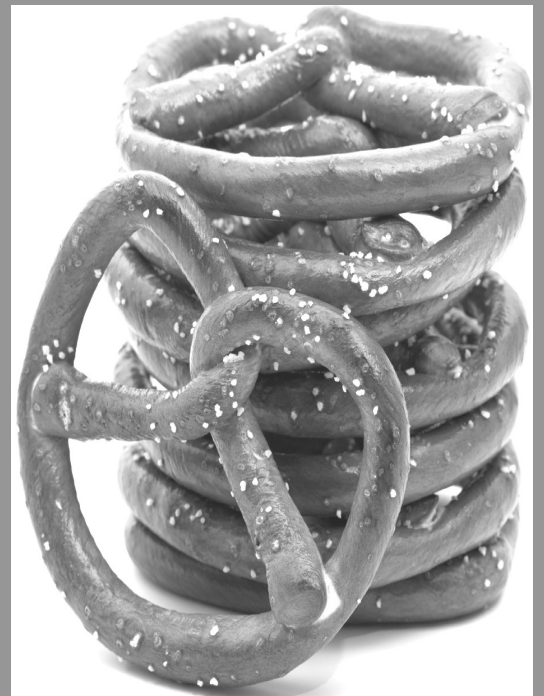
Make a house (by attaching a construction paper roof to a small box) and collect money for Habitat for Humanity to improve housing for the poor.

There are many ways to share...your own parish will be able to direct you to charitable agencies. The BLD community will also benefit from your pledges to carry out its mission and vision through various activities throughout the year.

Traditional Food for Fasting

Did you know that pretzels are a Lenten food? Their name comes from *bracellae*, “little arms”, for their shape of two arms crossed in prayer. These are easy and fun to make.

Mix 1 pkg. active yeast with 1 Tbs., sugar in 1 1/2 cups luke-warm water. Mixture should bubble. Stir in 1 tsp. salt and 4 cups flour. Place on floured board and knead in 1/2 cup more flour. Knead about 8 minutes. Divide into pieces, roll into ropes, and shape into pretzels. (As you fold the “little arms” pray the Lord’s Prayer or another Lenten prayer.) Let rise until about double in size. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place pretzels on greased cookie sheet. Brush with mixture of 1 egg yolk mixed with 2 Tbs. water, and sprinkle with kosher salt. Bake 12 minutes or until golden brown.



!!! TEACHING MINISTRY UPDATE111

March 11: THE NEW BLD FORMATION PROGRAM A BRIEF INTRODUCTION BEFORE THE START OF FELLOWSHIP

March 11, Rooms 5 and 6, AFTER Praise and Worship
Topic: The Five Languages of Love
EVERYONE IS INVITED. COME ONE. COME ALL.

March 18, Room 1, AFTER Praise and Worship
Youth Ministry Teaching
Topic: One More Look at Matrimony
Open Forum after 30 minute videos

March 25, Rooms 5 and 6, AFTER Praise and Worship
Topic: Approaches to the Bible
THOSE WHO HAVE MISSED THIS TEACHING AND ALL
INTERESTED PARTIES ARE WELCOME

2011 ENCOUNTERS AND SEMINARS

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

Singles Encounter No.3

Glory and praise to the Father for a successful BLD Phoenix
Singles Encounter weekend on February 4-6, 2011.
BLD Phoenix warmly welcomes the graduates of SE #3.
Another fruitful community effort.
Thank you to all who served.



*Counsels continued from page 2...*She talked about worship. Then Jesus said to her, **“The hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem... when true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth.”** The woman said to him, **“I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ.”** Jesus said to her, **“I am he, the one speaking with you.”** At that moment the disciples returned, the woman left her water jar, went into town and said to the people, **“Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?”** In her dialogue with Jesus, the Samaritan woman addressed him first as a **Jew**, then **sir**, then **prophet** and lastly, she asked, **“Could he possibly be the Christ?”** We are the Samaritan woman in search for the Messiah. We cannot find him even if God has taken the initiative to come to us until we have the faith to welcome him and recognize him. In our faith journey, like the Samaritan woman we are still evolving, growing and maturing. Only when we become **justified by faith** and **have peace with God** shall we stop our grumbling. Only then shall we stop asking the incredulous question, **“Is the Lord in our midst or not?”** Only then too shall we go beyond ourselves to ultimately confess that the Christ is God.

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for bringing me to my deepening faith. Forgive my grumbling, sinning and straying away. Help me to worship you in Spirit and in truth. There is no other God but you. To you I give my love, my all. Amen.

Order: **“...worship the Father in Spirit and truth.”**

(Jn 4: 23 a)

Direction: Be faithful to God, to your covenant and to yourself. Let your promises become true. -RSC

Prayer Traditions

Lenten Examination of Conscience: The Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.

+ *Do I bring God a truly contrite spirit? Do I hold anything back?*

In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,

+ *What choices have made me fail? Did I consciously make them?*

I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.

+ *How does my sin violate God's covenant with me? With God who is present in my neighbor?*

I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,

+ *Do I try to live a good life all on my own? How does God's grace help me?*

And to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

+ *Are there times in my daily life that lead to sin? What can I do to avoid them?*

Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

The English translation of the Act of Contrition from the Rite of Penance C 1974, ICCEL. All rights reserved.