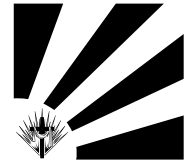




BLD PHOENIX

Valley of the SON

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



Volume 3, Issue 10

October 2008

Month of October

WORD: *God calls us to fruitful servanthood in His vineyard.*

READINGS

- Oct 05** Is 5:1-7
Ps 80:9,12-16,19-20
Phil 4:6-9
Mt 21:33-43
- Oct 12** Is 25:6-10a
Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-6
Phil 4:12-14,19-20
Mt 22:1-14
- Oct 19** Is 45:1,4-6
Ps 96:1,3-5,7-10
Thes 1:1-5b
Mt 22:15-21
- Oct 26** Ex 22:20-26
Ps 18:2-3,3-4,47,51
Thes 1:5c-10
Mt 22:34-40

DIRECTIONS (BLD GLOBAL):

- In everything we do in life and in Community, let us seek the Lord's guidance and serve the kingdom of God with humility.*
- Continue to nourish, care and protect the flock that the Lord has entrusted to you.*

PROPHECIES (BLD GLOBAL):

- You are among the chosen ones. I have planted you in my vineyard and nourished you; now I want you to bear good fruit.*
- Have nothing to fear; keep on doing what you have learned, received, heard and seen in me.*

ORDER (BLD GLOBAL):

"Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you."
(Philippians 4:9)

Oct 26 - Come and celebrate the Eucharist together with the Filipino Community at Our Lady of the Valley's BLD-Sponsored 5 PM Filipino Mass!

REFLECTION FOR OCTOBER

Word: God calls us to fruitful servanthood in His vineyard

Order: *"Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you."* (Phil 4:9)

As part of the Body of Christ, the Bukas Loob sa Diyos Covenant Community, welcomes into its fold all who wish to have a personal encounter and relationship with the Lord, and to personally experience the love of Jesus Christ. The charism of Servanthood, with its Vision and Mission (as expressed in shepherding and guiding the flock), form the basis of the BLD formation and nurturing of each disciple in the Lord. Our Community Values, Norms and Culture for attaining this objective of Christian discipleship is founded upon the values of the Gospel.

Under our Community Values, we have both Personal and Communitarian Values. Among the personal values, grouped under self-responsibility, is FRUITFULNESS, which is best described as the habit of choosing to live one's life in Christ as His witness and disciple. The opposite of fruitfulness is barrenness, which implies a meaningless, unregenerated existence. SERVANTHOOD is the umbrella value of all Communitarian Values. It encompasses openness to love, willingness to serve, readiness to offer, preparedness to give what is valuable or useful to others. As disciples of Christ, it is our responsibility to be fruitful in God's vineyard.

The word for the month – **"God calls us to fruitful servanthood in His vineyard"** – brings us to the purpose of our membership in this Community of believers. Our faith tells us that we are created "to know, to love and to serve God". First and foremost we are not only exhorted, but also commanded to know God, for that is the way we can love Him and eventually serve Him. This call to service takes away from us any ground for boasting, for everything is grace. This grace to respond in service does not come from us, anymore than faith is our own doing. These are gifts from the Father and the initiative is His, **"We love because he first loved us"** (1John 4:19).

For the first week, the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, our theme is: **Fruitful servanthood in God's vineyard is living out our formation in Christian discipleship.**

If we are to produce good fruit for the Lord, we need to ask him for a strong aversion to sin, especially lack of charity and critical spirit towards others, our impatience, festering resentment, unforgiveness, and sloth. Time and again we need to reject whatever displeases the Lord and live by how we have been formed as disciples of Christ. If we do not, then we shall be cut off from the vine as unproductive branches are cut and put into the fire. Jesus said, **"I am the true vine, and my father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, to make it bear even more"** (John 15:1-2). But if we do live in him, God's love will permeate our lives. Our minds will be filled with all that is *true, honorable, upright and pure, good and praiseworthy*, fruits that God expects from us (Philippians 4:8.) As we live a fruitful life, we receive the peace of God, which **"surpasses all understanding and will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"** (Phil 4:7). When our minds are filled with God's goodness, we will bear fruit for his kingdom. His promise is: **"The Kingdom of God will be...given to a people that will produce its fruit"**. (Matt 21:43)

(Cont. to pg 3)

September 13-14, 2008- BLD Phoenix held its **7th Life in the Spirit Seminar** at St. Stephen's Retreat Center in Phoenix. Fr. Pete Literal from Washington DC was the Spiritual Director. LSS #7 was attended by 28 participants including BLD Phoenix' very own Spiritual Director Fr. Reggie Carreon. The LSS weekend was commenced with an Invocation Mass on Friday Sept 12 at Our Lady of the Valley Church. By the grace of God, the community emerged

two homegrown couple sharers for this LSS. They were joined by three other local sharers who completed the lineup of facilitators. Truly when the Holy Spirit works in us and we allow Him to work upon us, He manifests Himself in the most beautiful way that no human words can ever describe. BLD Phoenix welcomes the graduates of LSS #7. There are also no words to express the gratitude felt for those who helped in making this weekend a success!



MY BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

This weekend, by far, was one of the best weekends of my life. No earthly words can accurately and precisely describe this sacred experience, so I wrote this in the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for guidance.

Saturday morning, I entered the main room feeling reverent and willing. I didn't experience any form of oppression that would have discouraged me from attending and was thankful for God's grace. As we started praise and worship, the songs brought tears to my eyes and a longing in my heart. It didn't take long until I was overwhelmed with emotion. Tears poured out, my voice became louder, and my jaws started to vibrate as my tongue began fluttering. I fell back in my chair and trembled as I felt the Holy Spirit consoling my heart and soul. I noticed later as I started to calm down, that an elder in community was embracing me and praying with me. At this point, with this little preview I received, I could not wait for what was to come and I looked forward to the evening.

Saturday night was the most special night. After the mass and the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, I prayed for the Holy Spirit to come. I said the Come Holy Spirit prayer several times as Father Pete started to sprinkle holy water at the candidates in front of the room. All of a sudden I began to tremble and cry. I slouched back in my chair with my eyes closed and my teeth started to chatter. Next, I was helped to the floor and placed in a supine position. I opened my mouth and felt my tongue take a life of its own. I remembered my body continuing to tremble from my head down to my feet.

With my eyes closed, I did not see a bright light as others may have experienced, nor had any visions. My sight was numbed, as if my little human mind would not be able to comprehend the sight of God, and therefore I couldn't physically see Him but yet I knew He was there. Unlike my senses, my heart, mind, and soul were fully engaged in Him. I realized that in His presence my senses were only good for worldly and human stimulation. My hearing was limited to the voices of Father Pete, my shepherd, and some of the noises made by a couple close to where I was. The CD that was playing so loudly even faded away.

I would intermittently hear Father Pete and my shepherd instructing me to take deep breaths, but my concentration and focus remained on Him.

For the first time, I felt the most genuine form of praise, worship and adoration. I felt He revealed Himself to me, not because I earned it or deserved it, but because He loves me. He knew my heart's sincere desire to be with Him that He was generous with His Presence and intensely consumed me with His Spirit. First, I kept exploding with exaltation. Then it was followed with remorse and sorrow for my sins as I asked for His mercy and forgiveness. Then afterwards it was nothing but thanking Him for his mercy, and glorifying Him and praising Him. He poured His Spirit into my heart and I was filled with Perfect Love and Perfect Peace.

His Presence was the true gift, and the gift of tongues was simply the divine way of praising Him in a manner only He understood. I was in paradise! (Just the thought of my love for Him and His love for us, fills me with the Spirit that my teeth start to chatter.) I believe this is what it would be like to be with Him in Heaven. I felt satisfied and completed.

Nothing else mattered, nothing worldly mattered. I didn't think about my family, or myself, or anything of this world. I felt only the Holy Spirit. I had not an ounce of doubt, fear or anxiety. I was assured of the certainty of his teachings: that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that we must die in order to live. These Scriptures were personified in my epiphany.

For the first time, I felt I was able to completely and absolutely follow his Greatest Commandment and loved Him with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind, and with all my strength.

-Christine T. Minch LSS7



Reflection for October *continued...*

The second week is the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time and the theme is: **Fruitful servanthood in God's vineyard is responding to His invitation to evangelize.** The Lord invites us to a lavish banquet, and God himself is leading us to this place, the *holy mountain*, where *the Lord of hosts has prepared the very best that only he can give.* Jesus, as our Shepherd is inviting and calling us to follow him to the many different paths to which each of us is called. This royal banquet represents the salvation that Jesus spoke of in the parable of the king who gave a marriage feast. But he respects our freedom, and here, we are told of the many who refused the invitation. Although he has tried to inveigle the invited guests with the excellence of the feast he has prepared, the invited guests make all kinds of excuses, refusing the invitation. Still God never tires, and the invitations continue. Today, every movement of the Holy Spirit in the Community is yet another invitation from God to the banquet of his kingdom. Let us respond to the call, we who have experienced the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, and let us help others to respond to the invitation with a renewed desire to evangelize and strive for unity in his Body. In this we will bear much fruit for the Kingdom. Our promise is: ***“Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.”*** (Psalm 23:6)

The third week of the month is the Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time and our theme is: **Fruitful servanthood in God's vineyard is giving what is due to His Name.** In asking to see the *coin that pays the census tax* and being *handed a Roman coin*, (Matthew 22:19), Jesus reaffirms our duty to obey civil authority. But he also states quite clearly, that we are to respect the rights of God. Human activity cannot be reduced to strictly social and political spheres of action. Every individual has a profound religious dimension to his being. The image on the coin reveals both its origins and its value. Similarly, our heavenly Father has etched his own image on each of us (Genesis 1:26) and placed an indescribable value on every human life. Even though we may turn away from God in sin, he never withdraws his image from us. God is patient and faithful, though it may take time for the Spirit to restore God's image in us when we desecrate that image through sin.

To address him as “Lord” is not merely to acknowledge his supreme authority over our life. It is not only a matter of speech and action,

Continued on page 4....

BLD-Phoenix Goes to Slide Rock

It was the perfect weather for a picnic, and so we thought. The sun and heat was just right, the breeze was soothing, the mountains welcome everyone with all their beauty. Some came early, some came just on time, and some came in no time. Whatever time that is, everyone met eye to eye at the North Ramada in Slide Rock, Sedona. With a little bit of patience after almost a 2 hour drive from phoenix or more for others, one by one the people came in their most comfortable picnic attire. Encountered married couples, solo-parents, youth, singles, Mark 10 and soon to be encountered families and friends enjoyed each other's company. Food was perfectly overflowing! Enseladang talong, bagoong, kare-kare, fried tilapia, steamed bangus, adobo, puto and dinuguan, etc. etc. and not to mention the snacks! It was a banquet ready for big appetites. While lavishing ourselves with the food the community also enjoyed the fellowship of jokes, stories, and posing for pictures. We just 'hang out', as the youth would say, at Slide Rock just enjoying what nature had to offer. Whether a group was hiking through the forest trails, or wading, swimming, sliding in the ice cold water (that's why its called slide rock?), or playing music, or just chillin' out, youth of every age were enjoying the cool and relaxing moment just being there.

And maybe the Lord saw how much we enjoyed the beauty of His nature that he poured so much Love by opening the heavens... then it rained! He must've said '*I will make it more beautiful it's time to give them a shower!*' Haha! And like a garden freshly watered, we too were soaked! There goes the perfect weather, but it was perfect for God. J

Visiting Slide Rock was truly a sight to behold especially if you are a first timer. Red rocks really struck! We usually hear God say '*this is only a speck of my grandeur and majesty, wait till you experience truly being with me?*'. Awesome God you are truly a sight to behold. How wonderful are the works of your hands. If only we could stay forever or at least longer, we could've reflected more on your awesome wonders and mystery. In the presence of nature, in the presence of the body of Christ that is with us through our BLD community, there is something more to look forward to. Your Glory and Majesty in the life to come!

Please visit our community website www.bldphoenix.com for pictures! God bless everyone and enjoy the pictures!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Tessie Marquez (ME 6)
- 6 - Chris Korte (ME 3)
- 11 - Ross David (ME 5)
- 17 - Jomel De Jesus (YE 1)
- 17 - Eva Tejada (SPE 1)
- 20 - Kate De Jesus (YE 2)
- 20 - Ramon Gutierrez (ME 7)
- 23 - Myra Magnaye (ME 1)
- 26 - Timaira Magnaye (YE)
- 29 - Rey Conopio (ME 1)



SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 - Lester & JoRose Rodriquez (ME6)
- 24 - Patrick & Madeline Merrick (ME 5)
- 26 - Rey & Mary Ann Conopio (ME 1)
- 30 - Jonathan & Eunice Lurenana (ME 1)
- 30 - Mario & Lucy De Leon (ME 6 Davao)



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 dennyc1220@cox.net.

IDLIC:

- ◆ 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 Schedule:
<http://safeenvironmenttraining.org/index.php>

Secretariat

- ◆ Please wear your community I.D. If you do not have one contact Evan & Joie Pangilinan directly or e-mail: evanjoie@yahoo.com.

Word:

- ◆ Share your walk/faith/transformation in the Lord or an answered prayer with the community thru an article (350 words max). E-mail to eunex@aol.com.

BLD Phoenix Community Schedule

Last Quarter 2008

Dec 13 - **Community Christmas Party**
4-8 pm Mountain View Community Center
8625 E. Mountain View Rd
Scottsdale AZ 85258

Dec 19 - **Simbang Gabi** (BLD-Sponsored
Mass)

7 pm Our Lady of the Valley Church
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Schedule for 2009

Jan 30 - Feb 1- **Solo Parents Encounter #3**
Desert Outdoor Center
41402 N. 87th Ave Peoria 85383

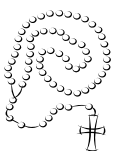
THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of September 2008

<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 3,671.60
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$ 1,680.99
<i>Surplus (Deficits)</i>	\$ 1,990.61

See Treasury Logbook for details-available at Registration Area or see Treasury Ministry Heads Pedro & Cita Rivera

Thank you for your generosity!



OCTOBER: Month of the Holy Rosary. "Since the prayers of the Rosary come from such excellent sources-from Our Lord Himself, from inspired Scripture, and from the Church-it is not surprising that the Rosary is so dear to our Blessed Mother and so powerful with heaven. Pray the Rosary!

Reflection for October *continued...*

but a conversion of the heart, an experience of personal transformation that makes of one a good tree capable of bearing good fruit. The good impression one tries to give will not hold if one harbors evil in one's heart. With this transformation, one begins to speak and act based on the Word of God. One listens to and lives according to the Word. *"A good tree does not bear rotten fruit...nor do they gather grapes from bramble... For every tree is known by its own fruit. A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good..."* (Luke 6:43-45). And the promise is: *"I have called you by name, giving you a title..."* (Isaiah 45:4b).

The fourth week brings us to the Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time with the theme: **Fruitful servanthood in God's vineyard is loving Him in our neighbor.** In some ways, we understand that we must love God wholeheartedly, but we still struggle with the call to love our neighbors just as radically. That is why the Law of Moses strictly warned the Israelites that they must not *molest or oppress an alien* (Exodus 22:21). Our natures are not inclined to love others so deeply. What is asked of us is to humbly submit our need for God and to find our strength in him. He gives us the grace and our hearts can be softened as we yield to Jesus. By the power of his Spirit we, in turn, can open ourselves to him and find freedom from sin and a divine ability to love others, far surpassing the limits of our human nature. This reminds us to refrain from attaching our self-worth to our service to him and to the ministries we are involved in. Our self-worth is found in God's unconditional love for us as his children. Our service is based on our love relationship with him, and others, not on our desire to gain prestige as a measure of our innate goodness or our position of leadership, or the number of activities we engage in the Community. It is the realization that it is when God works through us that we can bear the fruit he desires from us: *"He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing...By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so proved to be my disciples"*. (John 15:5-8). All of God's disciples are to exercise servanthood in its deepest meaning that points to Jesus' own service to the people of God - his own vineyard. And the promise is: *"If he cries out to me, I will hear him for I am compassionate"* (Exodus 22:26b)

Fruitful servanthood entails sanctification and offering up to God of every noble human reality. As part of the Body of Christ in our Community we encounter many opportunities to give good fruit to the Lord. As we heed God's order for us this month of October, let us look to the cloud of witnesses we have - St. Therese of the child Jesus and St. Francis of Assisi who have borne much fruit in the seed that the Lord has planted in them. St. Paul tells us boldly to *"Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you."* (Philippians 4:9) He made himself as a model for us to follow because he is assured that it is no longer the person Paul that lives, but Christ who lives in him. (Galatians 2:20) We can also claim the same, by God's infinite grace.