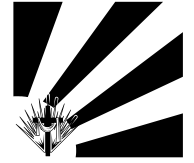




BLD PHOENIX

# VALLEY OF THE SON



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 9

Year A

September 2011

## Month of September

**WORD:** *Jesus upholds a virtuous man.*

### READINGS

<b>Sept 4</b>	Ez 33:7-9 Ps 95:1-2,6-9 Rom 13:8-10 Mt 18:15-20
<b>Sept 11</b>	Sir 27:30-28:7 Ps 103:1-4,9-12 Rom 14:7-9 Mt 18:21-35
<b>Sept 18</b>	Is 55:6-9 Ps 145:2-3,8-9,17-18 Phil 1:20-24,27 Mt 20:1-16
<b>Sept 25</b>	Ez 18:25-28 Ps 25:4-9 Phil 2:1-11 Mt 21:28-32

### BIRTHDAYS

6 - Fr. Reggie Carreon	23 - Stephen Sabado
7 - Pedro Rivera	24 - Adri Junia
17 - Tito Llanes	25 - Malou Llanes
21 - Bushen Rivera	26 - Bing Magnaye
21 - Waricel Rafael	27 - Jon Ward
22 - Ma. Theresa Querol	

### ANNIVERSARIES

7 - Tammy & Waricel Rafael
8 - Rudy & Betty Jaravata
9 - Meloy & Donna Larracas
11 - Dante & Maribel Siongco
13 - Phogs & Bheng Gana
18 - Willie & Mei-Ann Gregorio

Please wear your BLD ID during Praise & Worship and other BLD community activities. This will help on introductions with new members & visitors. If you need your BLD ID replaced please contact Art & Marissa Crisostomo or email [secretariat@blldphoenix.com](mailto:secretariat@blldphoenix.com). Thank you.

### THE LORD'S PROVISIONS

Cash flow as of Aug 2011

<i>Receipts</i>	\$2,099.00
<i>Disbursements</i>	\$1,365.71
<i>Surplus (Deficit)</i>	\$ 733.89

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

### MONTHLY COUNSELS

#### September 4 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 18: 15-20)

**Theme:** Jesus upholds those who commit to a life of prayer and reconciliation.  
**Promise:** *"If two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father." (Mt 18: 19)*

**Reflection:** **"If your brother sins against you, go tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother."** The both of you would have fought off hostility and loss. Personally, I do feel that I have an obligation to prevent any one in my company from giving offense. If I hesitate to tell him his fault then I cooperate in keeping him bound to his error of ways. I should not ignore it or leave him alone. I must draw him to the right and win him back. Neither should I make idle chatter of his fault. The ultimate purpose of everyone's diligence with him is to win him for the Lord. Our hesitation to help or our dismissal of what he has done may not be the reason for his ruin but we would not want to forfeit our chance to bring him to the right. **"You, son of man, I have appointed watchman for the house of Israel."** (Ez 33:7a) What makes us think that in our community we have no ministry? God's abiding presence does inspire in each of us the desire to submit to no other allegiance but to his values, therefore our relationship with every one is itself our ministry. We must cheerfully relate to every one who gives us a hand, who shares us of his time, each one who touches us, tries us, tests us, or questions us. What we need in the community is the same values we treasure in our homes, to break bread together, to enjoy refreshing drinks in fellowship, to make polite conversation and inquiries into one another's family goings on but always with a respect for each other's so called private space, and to learn how to bear with general human indifference and seeming inflexibilities and rigidities, that is, that we should try to be pleasant and amiable despite disappointments, ruffled feathers and bad weather. We must love our neighbor in person and in prayer without conditions or motives. The ultimate goal of our relationships is restoration and submission to the truth of God's love. That is when the heavenly Father establishes the mature discipline of the soul. For even if we reproach others as we must in handling correction within our community of believers so long as it is done with sincere affection it returns to each one of us as a blessing. As Jesus has done to all he has met, we must always attempt to establish rules of conduct and discipline in all our relationships. Always must we inspire the conditions of good cheer and friendship where we are.

**Prayer:** O Jesus, you who have loved us help us to love in your manner so that the world may know how Christians love and forgive one another. Amen.

**Order:** **"Harden not your hearts."** (Psalm 95: 8a)

**Directions:** Forgive one another. Reconcile. Be watchful of your words and actions. Love one another because love is the fulfillment of God's law.

#### September 11 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 18: 21-35)

**Theme:** Jesus upholds those who can forgive with love.

**Promise:** *He pardons all your iniquities; he heals all your ills."* (Ps 103: 3)

**Reflection:** In the parable of the unmerciful servant, the master forgives him an enormous debt. Debt is used as a metaphor for sin. Peter asks Jesus, **"Lord, if my brother sins against me how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?"** Peter's question allows us to make a few observations. Peter seems to understand forgiveness and how to bear with the offender. Peter appears to be more than twice as generous as the old rabbinic law which..... *Continued on page 3...*

## “MASTER, ARE YOU GOING TO WASH MY FEET?”

Back in August, BLD held a retreat called Agony in the Garden/Washing of the Feet. During this retreat we were given scripture readings and reflection topics. I would like to share with you one of my reflections from the retreat. Reflection topic: *Reflect on the times that you felt God had wanted to draw close to you but you felt unworthy, and thus refused God's grace. If applicable, extend the reflection do the time you finally accepted and received God's grace and the feeling it gave.* Reflection scripture: John 13: 6-11 *“He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Master, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand later.” Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well.” Jesus said to him, “Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed, for he is clean all over; so you are clean, but not all.” For he knew who would betray him; for this reason, he said, “Not all of you are clean.”*

Let me preface by letting you know that I am a graduate of ME class #1 Phoenix and LSS class #1 and #2 in Phoenix. I had let prayer meetings and became active in the Praise Ministry. So I was involved with BLD from the beginning and was active for about 4 years up until there was a division in the community – East and West. I was torn and bitter. People had been hurt. But I had decided to start praise and worship with a group of people who lived in the East Valley.

After a few years of intermittently attending and serving at this praise and worship and breaking off into another group, emptiness grew in my heart. It almost felt nice not to have go anywhere on a Friday night and be able to schedule a get together with friends or night out with the family. But there was a longing and thirst that burned dimly inside of me. I could feel God calling me, but partly my pride and my friendship with the people who also left BLD made me feel unworthy and refused to hear His call. I knew God was trying to draw me closer to him. Every Sunday I would go to Church and wish I could sing with the choir, but with my busy schedule and family responsibilities I knew it would be too much. Months went by and I continued to ignore God's soft prompting. I still attended praise and worship in the East Valley every now and then but the emptiness and longing in my heart grew bigger and bigger and the thirst for our Lord was not satisfied. Then my close friends, whom I had been singing and praising God with, from the East Valley, gave me the saddest news. They were moving back to the Philippines. I was devastated.

Shortly after, I attended the baby shower of the daughter of one of my ME 1 classmates. It was nice to see old friends again. Everyone was so welcoming. While I was there, one of the BLD Praise instrumentalists asked me to come back to BLD and sing in the praise ministry. He said that they were in dire need of more singers. At first, I refused, again because I felt unworthy of this request and did not believe that I was needed. But he asked again. I could see the grace and mercy of God in his face and I could hear God's calling in his voice. How could I say no to that? My heart was making melodies as it was leaping with joy...and still is! -JC

## SAVE THE DATE !!!

Sept 17: Community Day

Sept 23-25: Youth Encounter #7

Oct 8-9: Marriage Encounter #12

### On Fraternal Correction

*“There Is a Co-responsibility in the Journey of the Christian Life”*

...The apostle Paul affirms that the whole Law of God has its fullness in love in such a way that in our relationships with others, the 10 Commandments and every precept are summed up thus: *“You will love your neighbor as yourself”* (cf. Romans 13:8-10). The Gospel text, taken from Matthew 18, which treats of the life of the Christian community, tells us that brotherly love also includes reciprocal responsibility, on account of which, if my brother sins against me, I must be charitable to him and, first of all, speak with him personally, showing him that that what he said or did is not good. This way of behaving is called **fraternal correction**: it is not a reaction to the offense I have suffered but a being moved by love for my brother. St. Augustine comments: *“He who has offended you, in offending you, he has caused himself a grave injury, and will you not care for the wound of your brother?... You must forget that you have been offended but not your brother's wound”* (Sermon 82, 7). And what if my brother does not listen to me? In today's Gospel, Jesus indicates a gradual approach: first go back and talk to him with two or three other persons so as to help him better grasp what he has done; if despite this he rejects the observation, the community must be told; and if he does not listen to the community either, it is necessary to make him see the rupture that he himself has provoked, separating himself from the Church. All of this shows that there is a co-responsibility in the journey of the Christian life: everyone, conscious of his own limits and defects, is called to welcome fraternal correction and to help others with this particular service.....Another fruit of charity in the community is unified prayer. Jesus says: *“If two of you on earth agree to ask for something, my Father who is in heaven will grant it. Because wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst”* (Matthew 18:19-20). Personal prayer is certainly important, indeed indispensable, but the Lord assures his presence in the community that -- even if it is very small -- is united and of one accord, because it reflects the reality itself of God One-and-Three, perfect communion of love. Origen says that “we must play in this symphony” ...that is, within this concord of the Christian community. We must participate both in fraternal correction, which requires much humility and simplicity of heart, and in prayer, that it might rise up to God from a community truly united in Christ.

Let us plead for all of this through the intercession of Mary Most Holy, Mother of the Church. Amen.

*-Excerpt from Pope Benedict XVI's address to the crowds at Castel Gandolfo Sept 4, 2011*



**What is CDFP?** *It is the formation program provided by BLD which means Christian Discipleship Formation Program.* Please find more information at: [www.bldphoenix.com/cdfpformationprog.html](http://www.bldphoenix.com/cdfpformationprog.html)

allows one to forgive a mere three times. Perhaps in terms of practicality Peter's question implies at the natural human complaint against what seems to be a leniency that repeat and unreasonable offenders may stretch to absurdity. Finally, however, one may also say that Peter is still not beyond counting. Jesus tells Peter that ultimate forgiveness is perpetual and without condition or limits. Peter must also know by heart various conflicted and conflicting human fallacies? One is that there are those who sin and think lightly of their transgressions amidst the spectrum of human iniquities. The other is that there are those who sin and scrupulously presume their fault is beyond forgiveness. There are also those who upon hurting God and others want healing and promptly seek forgiveness. To them it is a matter of honor to own up to their shame and guilt and seek the justice that their fault and deceit deserve. For them, while the sorrow of their offense is sharp, their heart desires peace. Some may ask, "Why postpone meeting justice to my deathbed?" Their reason and insight are laudable. Indeed, "Why postpone making right to that time when one is weak and dying, when at such a time what one needs most is mercy and not justice?" Lastly, the parable of the unmerciful servant is least if at all about borrowing or lending money, time or attention. It is about forgiveness. Divine forgiveness illustrates that God's grace and love are extravagant and undeserved. The forgiven is forgiving. The unforgiving is not forgiven. Consider Joseph who was sold by his brothers to slavery. Remember Stephen who was stoned to death. Behold Jesus on the cross. All three were forgiving men. To be forgiving is specially needed in every Christian community. It is the wellspring of love by which all Christians are known. We should be as informed as Peter who learned about forgiveness from Jesus. Bear with offenses. Be generous with forgiveness.

**Prayer:** Love flows from you to me, O Jesus. Thank you for love. Like a torch that is passed, the favor of forgiveness is passed on. I love because I was first loved by you, Jesus. In the same manner, I forgive because I was first forgiven by you. Amen.

**Order: "Forgive your neighbor's injustice." (Sir 28: 2a)**

**Directions:** Overlook faults. Hate not your neighbors. Forgive without conditions or limits.

### **September 18 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 20: 1-16)**

**Theme:** Jesus upholds those with generous hearts.

**Promise:** "The Lord is good to all and compassionate toward all his works." (Ps 145: 9)

**Reflection:** How long ago has it been since I was a child? I did not want lectures, lessons and platitudes. Like all children what I wanted was firsthand experience. What matter bruises? What matter wounds? I loved show and tell. There is nothing like having or experiencing the genuine things: the lambent beauty of flames, the cruel rage of fire gutting homes; the smell of cinnamon, the taste of cotton candy now billowy then suddenly gone with its sticky wetness on the fingers and as it lingers on the lips. To be a child is not make believe. To be like children is a way of life. **Unless you become like children you shall not enter the kingdom of God.** The great ones in the kingdom of God are not those who do great things and work wonders but the little ones, the insignificant and unnoticed children who simply receive and who merely and completely depend on God's mercies. Jesus is asking us through the parable of the lost sheep to remember when we were children when someone always came for us who strayed and limped and stumbled into the discovery of things oblivious of danger. The parable of the vineyard alludes to greatness in the kingdom of God that depends on the willingness to accept or fill in any position ...

however early or late the hour, to take the challenge of new beginnings and hard tasks as they come and are offered, to be ready for the unexpectedness of generousities and/or hostilities in life but always to have the courage to simply submit to God's will and grace and yet still know with maturity of mind that position or privilege does not necessarily make one more deserving of God's favor. In God's kingdom there is no greater or lesser. There is no more deserving or less deserving. There is no pining. There is no envying. **The first shall be last, and the last first.** Each one gets his own reward, for God's reward is not related to our works and deeds but they are dependent on God's work in our lives based solely on his grace, his will, his spirit and generosity as it pleases him to provide. We must all return to the root of things, to be worthy of God's love.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, what more do I seek beyond salvation? Help me to be as generous to others as you have been to me that we may all submit to your will and grace. Amen.

**Order: "Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Phil 1: 27a)**

**Directions:** Return to basics. Pray. Read the Bible. Know the sacraments. The Lord is good to all and compassionate toward all his works.

### **September 25 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 21: 28-32)**

**Theme:** Jesus upholds those who do the Father's will.

**Promise:** "If he...does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life." (Ez 18: 27)

**Reflection: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not what I want but what you want." (Mt 26: 39)** The heavenly Father is pleased that his only begotten Son submits to his will. It is parental anticipation about children, the eternal story. What will they do? It is the story of God the Father's anticipation about us his children. What shall we do? It is the same story of the father who went to his first son and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today?" What shall that son do? There is perfect obedience like Christ's obedience to the Father. Then there is human obedience, pretend obedience, hesitant, delayed. I know that a promise is not the same as a deed done and fulfilled. It is not the promise but the deed that wins honor and respect. To hear is not the same as to heed. To heed is to follow. To follow is to believe and to honor authority. To follow is to obey. Which kind of obedience is it for me? If I am able to make answer to the question I must do so. Because I find I have been unrighteous, I must repent. Because I have been disobedient, I must mend my ways. The goal of life is obedience to God, to be reconciled to the Father, to turn back to him from whom I have been set apart by my stubborn ways, to turn back to him whom I have disobeyed. I certainly would not wish to call on God and say, "Lord, Lord," and hear him say, "I do not know you." Therefore, I resolve that I must be in the manner of saying, "Lord, Lord," not only in words but I should be saying, "Lord, Lord" in my life, in my deeds, in my being. The Lord does not wish a hypocrite out of me. God expects that my life is in line with my faith, my words with my work and my thoughts with my deeds. Jesus loves me and upholds me, I must do the Father's will.

**Prayer:** Jesus let me not say one thing and do another. Take hypocrisy, selfishness and pride out of my heart. Help me do what is right and just. Amen. **Order: "Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory." (Phil 2: 3a)** **Directions:** Do what is right and just. Do the Father's will. Obey in humility. -RSC