

## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

We prepare for Christ's coming when we repent and ask forgiveness of our sins.

### PROMISE:

*"The Lord himself will give his benefits...and prepare the way of his steps."* (Ps 85: 13a, 14b)

### WORD:

Is 40: 1-5, 9-11/  
Ps 85: 9-10, 11-12, 13-14/ 2 Pt 3: 8-14/ Mk 1: 1-8



Send your prayer requests to:

<https://www.bldtrenton.com/intercessory>



BLD Trenton



# Community News

Volume 23, Issue 48

<http://bldtrenton.com>

December 8, 2023

## Confess And Repent

### REFLECTION:

The prophecy of Isaiah speaks of a voice crying out in the desert to prepare the way of the Lord (cf. Is 40:3). This was fulfilled when "John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins," (Mk 1: 4). This call is as significant today as it was at the time of Christ. It is a fitting reminder to the faithful that to receive God's forgiveness, we should acknowledge our sinfulness, make straight our morally crooked ways, and smooth the rough edges of our character. We need God. Without Him we would not even exist. As St. Augustine wrote, "God created us without us; but He cannot save us without us."

On the 2nd Sunday of Advent our theme is - We prepare for Christ's coming when we repent and ask forgiveness of our sins, to transform our lives. Advent is the time to be still and to listen to God's word in preparation for His coming. The second reading tells us that "the Lord is patient, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to



repentance," (2 Pt 3: 9). Sin separates us from the love of God, yet sin is forgiven when it is confessed and acknowledged with humility from a repentant heart. It is an important step that we should take this Advent season and to realize that God is all loving and forgiving.

Desiring to know God is not enough. We must develop constant awareness of God's real presence in our life. To do so, we must repent and achieve transformation of the heart and mind by turning away from our sinfulness and invoking God's grace and mercy, so that we may produce good fruit, as witnessed through our thoughts, words and deeds. The fruit of true repentance is restoring our relationship with God that we lost by our sinfulness. Our hearts must be freed from our attachment to worldliness and unnecessary cares and worries, so that God can inhabit our souls and we can have a personal relationship with Him.

With repentance comes genuine conversion of heart, which assures us that God will

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## A Life Free From Sin Is Possible

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, defined by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854, states that "The Most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, preserved exempt from all stain of original sin" (Ineffabilis Deus).



For us as members of the Catholic faith, the Immaculate Conception is not just significant, it is essential. Because of the grace of God, Mary was preserved from sin. Because Mary was preserved from sin, she was prepared to become the sinless Mother of Jesus, who by his life, death and resurrection, has ransomed us from sin. Because of Mary's Immaculate Conception, because of her "yes" to God, we have been redeemed, and given the promise of eternal life through the merits of Mary's Son, Jesus.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception places Our Lady before the

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### Online Giving

You can now send your tithes and love offerings via **Paypal**.  
Donate link can be found at  
[www.bldtrenton.com](http://www.bldtrenton.com)

Or mail check to:  
BLD Trenton Foundation, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1367  
Toms River, NJ 08754

### The Lord's Provision

**December 1, 2023**

Tithe :\$165.00  
Love Offering :\$190.00

**Thank you for your generosity!!!**

### God's Blessings

#### Birthday

Anne Belonia	12/8	Tet Edralin	12/12
Ludy Cuasay	12/8	Criselda Gabriel	12/12
Thomas Edralin	12/9	Alvin Hernandez	12/12
Susan McNamara	12/9	Hermie Paderon	12/12
Cecile Vasquez	12/10	Lulu Villa	12/12
Faye Dizon	12/11	Phoebe Panahon	12/13

Chinky Rubiato 12/13

#### Anniversary

Manny & Yoly Crisol	12/9
Ed & Olyn Bautista	12/11
Bong & Faye Dizon	12/11
Abbot & Chie Del Pilar	12/14
Glenn & Jo Ramos	12/14

### Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?

For Mama Mary's visit - Beth Felibrico 732-995-7407  
For Prayer Service - Mary Anne Arias 732-688-3962

*I will hear what the God proclaims;  
the Lord—for he proclaims  
peace to his people.*

### Free From Sin - Cont'd from Page 1

faithful as an example of what God can do and what we can do, if like Mary, we put ourselves in God's hands and at God's service, always open to what God asks and always seeking to fulfill God's will.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception also encourages us to do our best to remain free from sin. Although we are all born with original sin and through the grace of Baptism are freed from sin, in the course of our life, because of human weakness, we fail and commit sin. The Immaculate Conception reminds us that if we cooperate with God's grace, as did the Blessed Virgin Mary, we can lead a life as free from sin as is humanly possible.

From [www.nationalshrine.org](http://www.nationalshrine.org)

### Tending the Flack

### Live In Moderation

This period of the liturgical year brings into the limelight the two figures who played a preeminent role in the preparation for the historic coming of the Lord Jesus: the Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist. Mark's Gospel focuses on the latter... Starting with his external appearance, John is presented as a very ascetic figure: he was clothed in camel-skin and his food was locusts and wild honey that he found in the Judean desert (cf. Mk 1:6).

Jesus himself once compared him to the people "in kings' houses" who are "clothed in soft raiment" (Mt 11: 8). John the Baptist's style must remind all Christians to opt for a lifestyle of moderation, especially in preparation for the celebration of the Christmas festivity, in which the Lord, as St. Paul would say, "though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9).

~ Pope Benedict XVI  
Angelus Message,  
December 4, 2011



### LSS #23

Thank you to all who prayed, supported and assisted in last month's Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS) #23. The new class held their grand reunion on the 3rd of December at St. Monica Church in Jackson. All glory to our God!

### Immaculate Conception Prayer

*Father, you prepared  
the Virgin Mary to be  
the worthy Mother of your Son. You  
made it possible for her  
to share beforehand in  
the salvation of your Son,  
Jesus Christ, who would  
bring life by His death,  
and kept her without sin  
from the first moment of  
her conception.*

*Give us the grace by her prayers ever to  
live in your presence  
without sin. We ask this  
through the same Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

### Repent - Cont'd from Page 1

always be present to us, through us, and in us, as we reflect Him in everything we do and say by our own witnessing. Let us be consistently upright and righteous in our attitudes and behavior, repentant of our shortcomings and weaknesses, eliminating arrogance and pride from our lives and instead, cultivating humility, like John the Baptist who acknowledged his limitations and proclaimed Christ as mightier than himself.

God longs to show us His mercy and grace. He wants to give us comfort but only insofar as our hearts are open and waiting for Him. For our part as believers, we should hasten the coming of the day of the Lord with pure and blameless hearts, because "The Lord himself will give his benefits...and prepare the way of his steps." (Ps 85: 13a, 14b). Let us then be prepared to welcome Him not only on Christmas, but whenever and in whatever way He may come knocking at the door of our lives. 🙏

Adapted from [www.bldworld.org](http://www.bldworld.org)