

This Sunday's *Counsel*

THEME:

Our life in Christ is fruitful when all our relationships are centered on Him.

PROMISE:

"...whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Mt 10: 39b)

WORD:

2 Kgs 4: 8-11, 14-16a/ Ps 89: 2-3, 16-17, 18-19/ Rom 6: 3-4, 8-11/ Mt 10: 37-42

ORDER:

- Think of yourself as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus. (Rom 6: 11)

DIRECTIONS:

- Take up your cross and surrender your life to God's will
- Live a life of generosity, hospitality and faithfulness.
- Put God above all else and serve with joy in your heart.



BLD Trenton



Community News

Volume 23, Issue 25

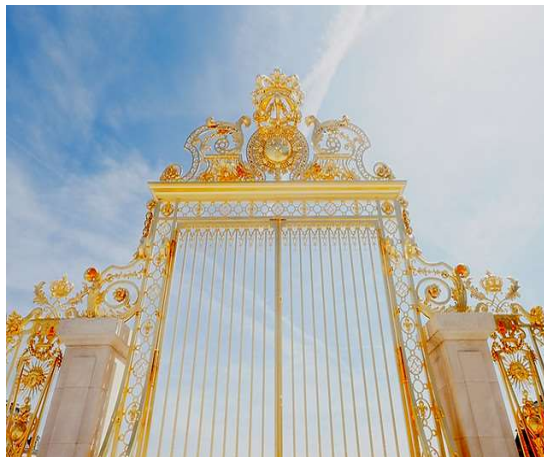
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June 30, 2023

Our Sweet Reward

REFLECTION:

Matthew chapter 10 has been the Gospel reading for the past two weeks. In order to gain a bird's eye view of what is expected of us as a disciple, we must first review the chapter as a whole. It begins by identifying the disciples individually. As the chapter progresses, Jesus commissions them by giving them authority over unclean spirits, to cure diseases and illnesses. He then warns them of the coming persecution that they will encounter. "Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves." However, He encourages them to overcome persecution, "do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." Last Sunday, Jesus promised and gave his disciples the assurance to "not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowl-



edges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father." Then on verse 34-36, He warns "Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's enemies will be those of his household."

Now we arrive at this week's Gospel, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me." These demands sound quite radical. After all, did Jesus not grow up with Mary and Joseph as a child, did He not experience their love and should He not reciprocate their love for Him? As the

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Tending the Flock

Be Willing To Give Up The World

See how great is the impairment to those who have an exaggerated love for their own life. And how great is the blessing to those who are ready to give up their lives for a well-ordered love! So he bids his disciples to be willing to give up parents, children, natural relationships, kinships, the world and even their own lives. How onerous are these injunctions! But then he immediately sets forth the greater blessings of rightly ordered love. Thus these instructions, Jesus says, are so far from harming that they in fact are of greatest benefit. It is their opposites that injure. He then counsels them, as he so often does, in accord with the very desires that they already possess. Why should you be willing to give up your life? Only because you love it inordinately. So for the very reason of loving it ordinately, you will scorn loving it inordinately, and so it will be to your advantage to the highest degree. You will then in the truest sense love your life. Jesus does not reason in this way only in the case of the love of parents or children. He teaches the same with regard to your very life, which is nearest to you of all.

~ John Chrysostom, 344-407 A.D.
Homily 35.2, The Gospel of Matthew



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The Lord's Provision

June 23, 2023

Tithe :\$385.00
Love Offering :\$306.00

Thank you for your generosity!!!

God's Blessings

Birthday

Dominic Balcon	7/1	Linda Mijares	7/4
Agnes Palecki	7/1	Fr. Paul Lehman	7/5
Amor Japitana	7/2	Ruby Brooks	7/6

Anniversary

Jaime & Loring Pascua	6/30
Allan & Maria Diaz	7/2
Dennis & Jaine Buenafe	7/2
Dada & Janette Alberto	7/3
Edwin & Marissa Orienza	7/5

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



Fear Not

Jesus repeats to his disciples three different times: "have no fear" Mt 10: 26, 28, 31).

Shortly prior to this, he had spoken to them about the persecutions they would have to undergo for the Gospel, a fact that is still a reality. Since its beginning, in fact, the Church has experienced, together with joys – of which she has had many – many persecutions. It seems paradoxical: the proclamation of the Kingdom of God is a message of peace and justice, founded on fraternal charity and on forgiveness; and yet it meets with opposition, violence, persecution.

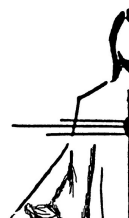
Jesus, however, says not to fear, not because everything will be all right in the world, no, but because we are precious to his Father and nothing that is good will be lost.

~ Pope Francis

*You are the splendor of my strength,
O God, and by your favor
my horn is exalted.*

Last Week's Prophecies

- *My child, remember that your actions speak louder than your words.*



- *Stand firm! Do not fear, for whatever smallest sacrifices you did, you will have your rewards with My Father.*

- *My children, the Word that I give is life, live in it, be nourished by it, and proclaim it boldly.*

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story of Matthew 10 progressed we got a sense of the increasing expectation of a disciple. What Jesus is asking from us is to prioritize what is important in our lives. As tonight's Theme states: Our new life in Christ is fruitful when all our relationships are centered on Him. And when we are guided by this prioritization, we are Promised: "...whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." As disciples, we are to make Him "our Lord and our God". In other words, we are to make Him the center of our lives. Everything about us, our minds, our will, our senses, our body, our private life, our public life, our whole being belongs to Him. He is the Lord of our life! We are to devote our whole life to Him, not just one hour on a Sunday! This is the reason why Jesus uses language that pierces our hearts, "whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." This verse from this week's Reading correlates with The Greatest Commandment from Matthew 22:37: "You

shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

Since Jesus is asking us to prioritize Him over our family members, what does the Catechism of the Catholic Church comment about this topic? From CCC 2232, it states: "Family ties are important but not absolute. Just as the child grows to maturity and human and spiritual autonomy, so his unique vocation which comes from God asserts itself more clearly and forcefully. Parents should respect this call and encourage their children to follow it. They must be convinced that the first vocation of the Christian is to follow Jesus"

As we read further in this week's Gospel, what are the other expectations of a disciple? It involves taking up our cross which translates into obedience to our Abba Father's will, sacrifice, and self-denial. Now as modern-day Christians, the cross is not what it originally meant which literally was a death sentence. We now live in a relatively comfortable

setting in which we are not in danger from any religious persecution. So how are we as BLD Trenton members manifest that our lives is Christ-centered? I would submit that prioritizing our time to be the hands and feet of Jesus is a good beginning. Being truly active in our assigned ministries is a good example. Each of us serve in our individual role in the mystical BLD body with Christ as the head. Some of you are active in your individual parishes either through daily mass, adoration, being an usher, lector, or eucharistic minister. You are all faithful disciples of our Lord who do not receive any stipend but freely give back to our Lord your time, talent, and treasures because you are living a Christ-centered lives.

Now that we are aware of what is expected of us as disciples, the Gospel continues further to describe what our reward will be, "whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." That, my brothers and sisters, is our sweet reward! Amen!

