



## This Sunday's *Counsel*

### THEME:

There is joy and hope in our lives when we truly repent.

### PROMISE:

*"He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save."* (Psalm 72:13)

### WORD:

Is 11:1-10/ Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17/ Rom 15:4-9/ Mt 3:1-12

### ORDER:

- *Repent.* (Mt 3:2)
- *"Prepare the way of the Lord."* (Mt 3:3)
- *"Glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Rom 15:6)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation Eucharist.
- Perform corporal works of mercy.
- Serve the poor through our mission works.
- Faithfully attend our Praise and Worship.
- Pray and meditate on the Word.

## Repentance Must Bear Fruits

**REFLECTION:** Our gospel reading for this second Sunday of advent talks about repentance. It is timely that we are celebrating the season of advent. We all know that we celebrate advent as a preparation for the nativity of our Lord and Jesus' coming.

In the gospel, John the Baptist preached and said, *"Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"* Repentance means the act of reviewing one's actions and feeling contrition or regret for past wrongs. It also means to convert, to change ways, and to turn back to God. It starts with admitting and acknowledging our sins. You can search up the word repentance and we can find that it has a lot of meanings. However, repentance will have no meaning if it remains to be a word. In Matthew 3:1-12 it says, *"Produce good fruits as evidence of your repentance."* Thus, repentance must have tangible things to show. If we are repentant, we need to put flesh to the conversion and repentance as we aspire. There are numerous ways to show these things toward our family, friends, co-workers, and in our community. In our BLD community, we can show it towards our brothers and sisters by loving each other, and having good relationship with one another, by preaching and evangelizing, by helping others, and by doing good deeds or charitable works. We need to show these actions in the flesh. Consequently, we will be able to transform not just our lives but our hearts, and our faith in Christ. Thus, when we repent, when we have to fully open our hearts, accept God's work and mercy, and truly seek for his forgiveness. For in return, we will be able to see the fullness of joy & open the way for Christ's coming.



May this season of advent remind us of John's message from the gospel — we have to prepare the way of the Lord through repentance & reforming our lives. The take home question is: Are we really preparing for Christ's coming? Or for the holiday season?

## Know Your Saints

### Saint Nicholas: Santa Claus

Born of a wealthy family in Asia Minor around 280 A.D., Nicholas used his inheritance to help the poor. He became the bishop of Myra and made sure the Church shared its riches with the needy. Many stories of his generosity have come to us through the centuries.

Once, he learned about a father who planned to sell his daughters into slavery because of poverty. During the next three nights, Nicholas secretly threw bags of gold into the house— one for each daughter to pay the debt and save the daughters.

Another time Nicholas brought back to life three young boys who had been murdered and hidden in a barrel of brine to hide the terrible crime. He also saved three innocent men from execution by Emperor Constantine, who heard Nicholas' prayer in a dream and knew God had spoken through the holy bishop. He was said to have frequently persuaded thieves to return what they stole, thus, he is a patron saint of thieves who repent and want to become just.

After Nicholas died in 342, many other stories arose of his generosity, especially to children. These stories form the modern legend of Santa Clause, another kindly gift-giver who reveals the limitless bounty in store for every Child of God.

More than twelve hundred churches around the world have been dedicated in honor of St. Nicholas. By the Middle Ages, his feast day of December 6 had become a special day for people to show generosity to friends and family as a means of preparing for the Christmas season and the coming of Jesus Christ.



## Teaching Schedule

Dec 8 - ME 19 - Advanced Intercession and  
Spiritual Warfare

### Save the Date

Dec 21 : Christmas Caroling 11 AM—4 PM  
Jan 10-12 : Singles Encounter  
Venue: America's Keswick  
Whiting, NJ  
Feb 5-12 : Medical Mission to the Philippines

## **God's Blessings**

### **Birthday**

Leo Alquiros	12/6	Anne Belonia	12/8
Jason Bustos	12/6	Ludy Cuasay	12/8
Norms Llave	12/7	Faye Dizon	12/11
Lucy Mabunay	12/7	Alvin Hernandez	12/12

### **Anniversary**

John & Daday Young	12/7
Manny & Yoly Crisol	12/9
Ed & Olyn Bautista	12/11
Bong & Faye Dizon	12/11

*Justice shall flourish in his time,  
And fullness of peace for ever.*

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

For Blessed Mother's visit - Tess Corso 732-604-1914  
For Prayer Service - Morris Teves 732-597-2016

### Marshalls

Dec 6 - Jeff Sarmiento  
Alfred Panganiban  
Dec 13 - Morris Teves  
Jomar Janolo

### The Lord's Provision November 29, 2019

Tithes: \$485.00  
Love Offering: \$210.00

*Thank you for your  
generosity!!*

### Simbang Gabi Schedule

December 14 - St. Justin  
December 16 - St. Benedict  
December 19 - St. Anselm  
December 20 - St. Monica  
December 22 - St. Thomas

*"Well done, my good and  
faithful servant..."*  
- Mt 25:23

**Adolfo Arias**  
1956—2019

*Thank you for  
your service,  
Kuya Popong.*

### Memorial Mass

Join Popong's family on Saturday,  
December 7, 2019 , 10:00 AM at  
co-Cathedral of St. Robert  
Bellarmine, Freehold, NJ

## **Christ's Lights**

Like the prophets of the Old Testament, John the Baptist devoted his entire life to prayer and the word of God. He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness where he was tested and grew in the word of God. The Holy Spirit prepared John for the mission entrusted to him as forerunner of the Messiah, Jesus Christ - the Word of God who became man for our salvation (John 1:1,14). John pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world by offering his life on the cross as the atoning sacrifice for our sins and the sin of the world (John 1:29).

Jesus tells us that John the Baptist was more than a prophet (Luke 7:26). John was the voice of the Consoler who is coming (John 1:23; Isaiah 40:1-3). He completed the cycle of prophets begun by Elijah (Matthew 11:13-14). What the prophets had carefully searched for and angels longed to see, now came to completion as John made the way ready for the coming of the Messiah, God's Anointed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. With John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit begins the restoration to the human race of the "divine likeness", prefiguring what would be achieved with and in the Lord Jesus.

John's baptism was for repentance - turning away from sin and taking on a new way of life according to God's word. Our baptism in Jesus Christ by water and the Spirit results in a new birth and entry into God's kingdom as his beloved sons and daughters (John 3:5). The Lord Jesus gives us the fire of his Spirit so that we may radiate the joy and truth of the Gospel to a world in desperate need of God's light and truth. His word has power to change and transform our lives that we may be lights pointing others to Christ. Like John the Baptist, we too are called to give testimony to the light and truth of Jesus Christ. Do you point others to Christ in the way you live, work, and speak?

*"Lord, let your light burn brightly in my heart that I may know the joy and freedom of your kingdom. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and empower me to witness the truth of your Gospel and to point others to Jesus Christ."*

*Adapted from [dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org](http://dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org)*

**This Sunday's  
Counsel**

**THEME:**

There is joy and hope in our lives when we serve the needs of the poor.

**PROMISE:**

*"The Lord God keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry...sets captives free."* (Psalm 146:6-7)

**WORD:**

Is 35:1-6, 10/ Ps 146:6-10/ Jas 5:7-10/ Mt 11:2-11

**ORDER:**

- *Repent.* (Mt 3:2)
- *"Prepare the way of the Lord."* (Mt 3:3)
- *"Glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Rom 15:6)

**DIRECTIONS:**

- Avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation Eucharist.
- Perform corporal works of mercy.
- Serve the poor through our mission works.
- Faithfully attend our Praise and Worship.
- Pray and meditate on the Word.



**BLD Trenton**

# Community News



Volume 19, Issue 50

<http://bldtrenton.com>

December 13, 2019

## The Joy In Giving Joy

**REFLECTION:** God emptied Himself in Christ. He became human for us and by doing this He showed us the way to joy. Joy to the world was announced when He gave up everything for us. It is only in complete self-surrender that we find self-fulfillment that is joy. God shows us that true joy consists of complete selflessness, and this can be made real when we are face to face with our poor brothers and sisters. Our poor neighbors will remain invisible until we recognize them and serve them personally or in community-led outreaches. Serving the needs of the poor is a visible evidence of God's presence in the world and of His magnanimity. We experience joy in giving joy.



Jesus is telling us, *"Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine you did for me,"* (Mt 25:40). Who is the "least brother?" He is the marginalized, the neglected, the hungry who can barely eat at least on meal a day, the homeless who finds his bed under the bridge or by the sidewalk, the sick who cannot afford hospitalization, those who are depressed, oppressed and abused, those who are spiritually de-

prived and those who are helpless. The most beautiful and touching part of what Jesus is saying is that He identifies Himself with these persons in need and empathize with them. And by serving them, we are in fact serving Jesus.

St. Martin of Tours, before he became a monk and bishop, served the Roman army at age 15. Martin strove to live an upright life in the military, giving away much of his pay to the poor. His generosity led to a life changing incident when he encountered a man near a gate at the city of France, freezing without warm clothing. As his fellow soldiers passed by

*Joy — See Page 2*

**M**

*"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

Luke 2:11, 14

**E**

As we celebrate this Christmas season, our thoughts turn to that sacred event long ago when the Prince of Peace and the Light of the World was born, our Lord Jesus Christ who is our Savior and Redeemer. During this season, we will be celebrating Hope, Peace, Love and Joy and we pray that all four of these would fill your life in every way this Christmas and beyond. This Christmas, as in all previous years, we celebrate "Emmanuel" (God with us). Without Christ's presence among us we would be lost. Through God's presence working within us we are being healed, transformed, reconciled and made whole.

**S**

As we come to celebrate this blessed occasion, on behalf of the District Council of Stewards (DCS) we would like to take a moment to wish you a very Merry Christmas. We would like to extend to all our deepest appreciation on how you unselfishly have given of your time, to serve so sacrificially this past year. Whether it's leading groups; shepherding, taking care of children; feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, praying for the deceased; setting up for worship; playing music; serving on a mission trip, or any one of the countless other (usually unseen) tasks that keep our community running, we are very grateful.

**S**

**A**

We sincerely pray this Christmastime that the light and testimony of the Savior will come into our hearts, that our lives will reflect his life and attributes, and that people everywhere will accept the blessings of his mercy and grace that are made possible through his atoning sacrifice.

**G**

**E**

*Message- See Page 2*

### Save the Date

**Dec 21** : Christmas Caroling 11 AM—4 PM  
**Jan 10-12** : Singles Encounter  
 Venue: America's Keswick  
 Whiting, NJ  
**Feb 5-12** : Medical Mission to the Philippines

### Marshalls

**Dec 13** - Morris Teves & Jomar Janolo  
**Dec 20** - Dave Smith & Gil Ocena

### The Lord's Provision December 6, 2019

Tithes: \$675.00 Love Offering: \$299.00

*Thank you for your generosity!!*

### God's Blessings

#### Birthday

Phoebe Panahon	12/13	Dan Catarata	12/17
Chinky Rubiato	12/13	Yoly Alcasid	12/18
Kat Madamba	12/15	Bill Bunoan	12/18
Eric Alberto	12/17	Isabel Guerrero	12/18
Leo Llave	12/17	Ace Camposano	12/19
Ricky Gomez	12/17	Ross Jacinto	12/19

#### Anniversary

Abbot & Chie Del Pilar	12/14
Glenn & Jo Ramo	12/14

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

For Blessed Mother's visit - Tess Corso 732-604-1914  
 For Prayer Service - Morris Teves 732-597-2016

### God's Assurance



Jesus knew that what the Father in heaven had sent him to accomplish for our sake would supersede all that the prophets had done and foreseen in the past. Jesus' atoning death on the cross cancels the debt of our sins and sets us free to live as citizens of his kingdom. He gives us pardon, healing, and abundant life through his Holy Spirit, and the promise of unending joy with him in his everlasting kingdom.

John the Baptist paid the ultimate sacrifice of his life for speaking God's word and preparing the way for Jesus the Lord and Savior of the world. The Lord Jesus offers us the same assurance of faith and the strength to stand against every force that would try to rob us of our conviction and courage to live and proclaim the *good news* (the *Gospel*) of God's kingdom. Do you know the joy, strength, and power which Jesus gives to every one who puts their trust in him and the power of the Holy Spirit? Ask the Lord Jesus to increase your faith and hope in his promises for you.

"Lord Jesus, strengthen my trust in your word and my hope in the saving power of your kingdom. Free me from everything that would hold me back from pursuing your kingdom and your will for my life."

*Adapted from [dailyscripture.servantoftheword.org](http://dailyscripture.servantoftheword.org)*

### Simbang Gabi Schedule

December 14	-	St. Justin
December 16	-	St. Benedict
December 19	-	St. Anselm
December 20	-	St. Monica
December 22	-	St. Thomas

### Message—Cont'd from Page 1

May each of us be blessed during this joyous time of the year, and may we acknowledge with gratitude our Heavenly Father's incomparable gift to us — his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless,

Art and Agnes Monta  
 Cluster District Shepherds

### Joy - Cont'd from Page 1

the man, Martin stopped and cut his cloak into two halves with his sword, giving one half to the freezing beggar. That night, the unbaptized soldier saw Christ in a dream, wearing the half cloak he gave to the poor man. Jesus declared: "Martin, a catechumen, has clothed me with this garment." Waking up in the morning he found his cloak restored in full.

As members of a Christian community, we are also given the chance to serve Jesus in the prisons with those who are deprived of liberty, in the families who can barely send their children to school, in various charity missions

and activities which uplift the lives of impoverished people. There is always joy in our hearts every time we become part of such activities when we are able to serve the needs of the poor who are able to see a ray of hope as they experience our touch, our smile and our compassion for them.

In return, we too are blessed and we receive unexplainable joy and hope in our lives. As we minister to the last, the least, and the lost among us, we are assured that the Lord will not abandon His people. And so, we can claim His promise in Psalm 146:6-7, "*The Lord keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry.....and sets captives*

*free.*"

A Blessed Christmas to everyone! Let us give thanks to God Almighty who humbled Himself as a poor baby that we may be made rich! Peace, Love, Joy to all!

### Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help us to give ourselves completely to our brothers and sisters who are the least, the lost, the rejected and the abandoned, by serving them and bringing them the joy of Christmas, knowing that as we do, we serve You, our Lord and Savior. And may You enrich our lives with the hope of Your coming and the promise of eternal life. Amen.

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



# Community News

## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

There is joy and hope in our lives when we entrust our family to God's care and protection.

### PROMISE:

*"Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walk in his ways...for you shall be favored." (Ps 128:1-2)*

### WORD:

Sir 3:2-6,12-14/ Ps 128:1-5/ Col 3:12-21/ Mt 2:13-15,19-23

### ORDER:

- *Let the peace of Christ control your hearts.* (Col 3:15)
- *Be thankful.* (Col 3:15)
- *Put on love.* (Col 3:15)
- *Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.* (Col 3:17)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Be kind and forgiving within your family.
- Be gentle and patient when dealing with our brothers and sisters.
- Emulate the Holy family in practicing the virtues of family life.

## Entrusting The Family

**REFLECTION:** Today most people would think that if you took the advice of a dream, you're either crazy or need more sleep. But in the case of the Holy Family, the circumstances they were facing were a bit more unique than those encountered by the average family.

to Egypt where they remained until he once again received word from the angel about what to do next.

Joseph had undoubtedly received the new greatest joy of his life with the forming of his new family and would do all that he could to keep them safe. His jour-



The Holy Family had already experienced more than anyone before them had or ever will in the type of situation they were in: traveling a long and tiring journey to Bethlehem, only finding shelter in a stable instead of a comfortable inn, and at last delivering the Savior of all mankind and laying Him to rest in an old manger. Taking heed of the warning received from the angel about Herod's intentions for the baby Christ, Joseph acted with haste and began yet another long and tiring journey from Bethlehem

ney so far had seemed difficult enough with the obstacles he and his pregnant wife had already faced traveling to Bethlehem, and there was still more to come with the journey ahead to Egypt with their newborn child. Even beyond that point in their lives there would come countless unknown hardships with the many years that would follow while raising a family. Joseph had not lost his trust in the will and power of God, and he would not lose this trust now.

*Entrusting — See Page 2*

## Know Your Saints

### Saint John: Patron of Writers

As one of the original disciples, John experienced the wonder of living each day with Jesus. He traveled everywhere with Jesus and saw him performed many miracles. John was present at the Last Supper and was the only disciple who did not leave Jesus during his Passion and Crucifixion.



John had a very good memory of all these events and his Gospel offers a vivid account of Jesus' life. He also wrote three Epistles and the Book of the Apocalypse.

The Jewish religion as seen in the Old Testament was a religion of hope: when God the Father revealed Himself through His Messiah, the world would be one step closer to Paradise. Many of the early Christians had been Jews and held this unique belief in future salvation. The Gospel according to John shows that Jesus is not only the Jewish Messiah, but the Son of god and Messiah for all humankind.

Many miracles surround John. Tradition says that Emperor Dometian had him brought to Rome, beaten, poisoned, and thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil, but he stepped out unharmed and was banished to Patmos instead. Another time, unbelievers tried to stone him, but the rocks turned and hit the throwers. He cast out a demon from a pagan temple and fire from heaven struck down two hundred idol worshippers. John raised the dead worshippers, and they were baptized immediately.

For his faithfulness to Jesus, St. John is know as "the beloved disciple". He died in the second century at age ninety-four in Ephesus in modern Turkey. He is honored as patron saint of writers, among many other titles.

### Save the Date

**Jan 10-12** : Singles Encounter  
 Venue: America's Keswick  
 Whiting, NJ  
**Feb 5-12** : Medical Mission to the Philippines

### Marshalls

**Dec 27** - Ramon Cuasay & Eric Bustamante  
**Jan 3** - Art Monta & Raul Caragay

### The Lord's Provision December 13, 2019

**Tithes: \$760.00 Love Offering: \$339.00**  
*Thank you for your generosity!!*

### God's Blessings

#### Birthday

Nest Navarro	12/27	Zooey Gonzalez	12/31
Sona David	12/29	Ernest Roldan	12/31
Rizal Mijares	12/30	Emmanuett Nagbe	1/1

#### Anniversary

Tony & Mabel Bartocillo	12/27
Bert & Cora Velez	12/27
Bong & Julie Saria	12/28
Ringo & Fe Odon	12/28
Nino & Chicklette Fajardo	12/29
Arnold & Malou Paderon	12/29
Ernesto & Elora Kho	12/30
Joel & Estela Bermudo	1/1
Vic & Lucy Mabunay	1/2

## Family Reunion

*"Christ's peace must reign in your hearts."*  
 —Colossians 3:15

We want to celebrate Christmas with our families. Therefore, Christmas is especially difficult for us if a loved one has died in the last year. However, we have the great hope of our families getting together for the eternal happiness of heaven. We will have a family reunion in heaven in the not too distant future, and if the Lord has His way, not one family member will be missing (see Jn 6:39; 1 Tm 2:4).

For your family to stay together for an eternity of Christmases, you must:

- Repent of sin and decide to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mk 12:30).
- Talk to your family members about your love for Jesus.
- Be in right relationship with family members.

- Honor your parents (Sir 3:2), be submissive to your husband, lay down your life for your wife (Col 3:18-19), disciple your children.
- Pray together daily as a married couple and as a family (see Mt 18:19-20).
- Forgive family members seven times seventy times (Mt 18:22; see Col 3:13).

Many of you feel very discouraged about the spiritual state of your families. Be instead confident that the Lord loves each member of your family, even to death on the cross. Jesus will change the hardest heart. Be hopeful.



*Adapted from [www.presentationministries.com](http://www.presentationministries.com)*

### Entrusting - Cont'd from Page 1

This Sunday's gospel is an ideal model to take after as each of our families continues to grow with God as the cornerstone of our foundation. Just as Joseph entrusted his family to the will of the Lord, each of our families should be inspired to do likewise. Even the Holy Family was not exempt from facing hardships within their lives, and every family has no doubt experienced, is experiencing, or will experience their own personal difficulties that have the potential to form rifts among one another. But when we look to the model of the Holy Family when we experience such trials, the best thing we can do is to learn from the lesson in this gospel: entrusting our family to God. Throughout the obstacles the Holy Family faced God was ever-present and supporting them the entire time, even in ways they

may not have seen. Our faith should also remain just as steadfast; we must not give up on God, for God has and never will give up on us. It is our faith in God that everything will work out in His time and in His ways that will protect us through any trials. He will be the light that guides us through the darkness.

Furthermore, this gospel can also teach us a lesson about what drives family decisions as a whole. It's a little hard to believe that Mary was happy about the decision to travel yet another journey shortly after giving birth. And, surely, she would have been less convinced when Joseph told her that he was instructed to do so in a dream. But regardless, Mary believed Joseph about what would be best for the safety of their new family because she had faith in her husband despite any doubts she may have had. So too should we be

inspired by their unity. Though we may not understand the choices our family makes, those decisions are driven by a greater desire for what will be best for us. Each member of a family is called to move past any reluctance or skepticism in order to truly have faith in one another and to move forward in trust. But before we can accept or follow such decisions, it is also important to be open to sharing the reasons behind our conclusions so that we can better understand why these decisions were made. That is the exchange each family is called to make with one another in order to truly grow and prosper: honesty and trust.

Ultimately, this gospel offers two take-aways from which our community can learn and grow from about familial unity: have trust in God and trust in one another, for neither will lead you astray.