

This Sunday's Counsel

THEME:

Jesus lights our path when we turn away from sin and follow His ways.

PROMISE:

"...the Lord shows sinners the way...teaches the humble his way." (Ps 25: 8b, 9b)

WORD:

Jon 3: 1-5, 10/ Ps 25: 4-5, 6-7, 8-9/ 1 Cor 7: 29-31/ Mk 1: 14-20

ORDER:

- Repent, and believe in the gospel. (Mk 1: 15b)

DIRECTIONS:

- Keep your eyes focused on Jesus and His commandments.
- Nourish your hearts daily with the Word of God.
- Resolve to have good intentions daily through increased prayers and sacrifice.
- Strive to be always in the grace of God by receiving His sacraments.



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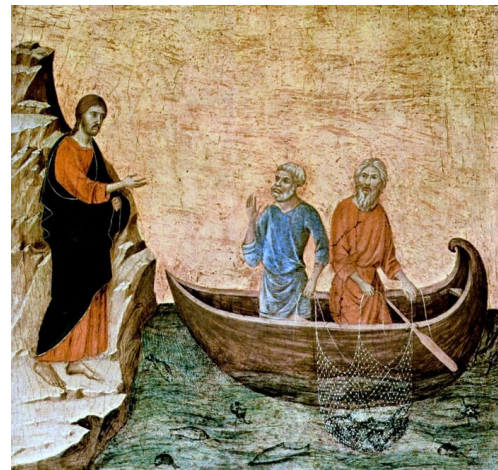
Come And Follow Him

REFLECTION:

"The Kingdom of heaven is at hand," says the Lord. Repent and believe.

All throughout the Scriptures, God has called each one of us then and now to change from our sinful ways to one that is righteous in His eyes. He warned us through the prophets then, and now we are hearing His word again, through our readings, of the dangers of losing our lives if we do not undergo a radical change for the life of the gospel. In His infinite compassion God gives us all the leeway to come to terms with the lifestyle that is not of Him. In His infinite goodness God has given us every opportunity to change from our wickedness. He is always seeking us out and He rejoices when we return to Him. He wanted us to have that interior change impressed in our hearts and live in the person of Christ.

We heard from the prophecy of Jonah that when the people of Nineveh repented and sought forgiveness and believed in God, God in His infinite mercy relented on His threatened punishment. God's mercy is relentless; He will always find us and draw us back to His loving mercy. And even if we stray far from God, we can always come



back because God is eternally offering His love, mercy and compassion to us. All He desires is for each one of us to have a loving personal relationship that is eternal. He understands each one of us when we humbly acknowledge and surrender our dependence on Him and on everything according to His divine will and if we are still in the dark, God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will guide and teach us His ways.

We never know what year 2024 will bring. St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians reminds us that "time is running out."

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Tending the Flock

True Christian Conversion

Paul's conversion matured in his encounter with the Risen Christ; it was this encounter that radically changed his life. What happened to him on the road to Damascus is what Jesus asks in today's Gospel: Saul is converted because, thanks to the divine light, "he has believed in the Gospel". In this consists his and our conversion: in believing in Jesus dead and risen and in opening to the illumination of his divine grace. In that moment Saul understood that his salvation did not depend on good works fulfilled according to the law, but on the fact that Jesus died also for him the persecutor and has risen. This truth by which every Christian life is enlightened thanks to Baptism completely overturns our way of life. To be converted means, also for each one of us, to believe that Jesus "has given himself for me", dying on the Cross (cf. Gal 2: 20) and, risen, lives with me and in me. Entrusting myself to the power of his forgiveness, letting myself be taken by his hand, I can come out of the quicksands of pride and sin, of deceit and sadness, of selfishness and of every false security, to know and live the richness of his love.

Conversion — See Page 2

Last Week's Prophecies

- I called you once; I called you twice; I called you many times but you followed with hesitancy, unwillingly and with a heavy heart. Be bold, take courage and know that My hand will always hold you and I will be beside you through everything and in every way.



- You declare that you are doing God's will because it matches your desire. My child, this is when you need spiritual direction.
- I choose you among the assembly of these people. Take courage for I will lead you to the place I prepared for you.

Online Giving

You can now send your tithes and love offerings via **Paypal**.
Donate link can be found at www.bldtrenton.com

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

The Lord's Provision

January 12, 2024

Tithe :\$660.00
Love Offering :\$252.00

Thank you for your generosity!!!

God's Blessings

Birthday

Ino Dominguez	1/20	Rissa Gomez	1/24
Manny Maramara	1/20	Aileen Ciocon	1/25
Fe Odon	1/20	Patrick Calugay	1/25
Jing Nieveras	1/21	Grace Padolina	1/25

Anniversary

Eugene & Malou Yosuco	1/20
Toto & Sette Lemon	1/20
Roy & Arlene Roldan	1/21
Jun & Gay Anito	1/22
Rene & Grace Gallofin	1/23

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



Faith Is An Encounter

Two disciples, thanks to the Baptist's witness, start to follow Jesus; He "saw them following, and said to them, 'What do you seek?'" (v. 38). They are the first words Jesus addresses to them: first of all, He invites them to look within, to ask themselves about the desires they carry in their heart. "What are you seeking?". The Lord does not want to make proselytes, He does not want to gain superficial followers; the Lord wants people who question themselves and let themselves be challenged by His Word. Therefore, to be disciples of Jesus, it is necessary first of all to seek Him, it is necessary to seek Him, then to have an open, searching heart, not a satiated or complacent heart.

What were the first disciples seeking through the second verb: to stay? They were not seeking news or information about God, or signs or miracles, but they wished to meet Jesus, to meet the Messiah, to talk with Him, to stay with Him, to listen to Him. What is the first question they ask? "Where are you staying?" (v. 38). And Christ invites them to stay with Him: "Come and see" (v. 39). To stay with Him, to remain with Him: this is the most important thing for the disciple of the Lord. In short, faith is not a theory, no; it is an encounter – it is an encounter. It is going to see where the Lord stays, and dwelling with Him. Encountering the Lord and staying with Him.

~ Pope Francis



Conversion - Cont'd from Page 1

Dear friends, the invitation to conversion, confirmed by St. Paul's witness, resounds today, at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, as particularly important also on the ecumenical level. The Apostle indicates to us the spiritual attitude appropriate to being able to progress along the way of communion. He writes to the Philippians, "It is not that I have reached it yet, or have already finished my course; but I am racing to grasp the prize if possible, since I have been grasped by Christ [Jesus] (3: 12). Certainly, we Christians still have not reached the goal of full unity, but if we let ourselves be continually converted by the Lord Jesus, we will surely reach it.

~ Pope Benedict XVI
Angelus Message,
January 25, 2009

Come - Cont'd from Page 1

We all know that our life on earth is transient and none of us has any control over the future. All our trials and difficulties, no matter how troubling, are temporary and the circumstances of our lives, no matter how painful or distracting, should not keep us from living the gospel. With all these struggles, the best we can do is keep our eyes focused on Jesus.

St. Paul says, the "world in its present form is passing away." He calls all people at all stages of life to make the gospel number one and to keep our sense of purpose in life that God has designed for each of us, that is, to serve and be one in union with Him in heaven.

"This is the time of fulfillment".
"The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand",

says the Lord. In truth it is here and now—this is the grand design of God the Father for our salvation that has been fulfilled two thousand years ago. We are in it and we are living it now. Brothers and sisters, this is the eternal design of the will of God reaching fulfillment in our Lord Jesus Christ. And Jesus reminds us again, "Repent and believe in the gospel". There is a great urgency in this order from Christ as we all know what is happening in our world today. Our challenge is the call to change our disposition towards life and reality, a need for interior change of heart towards sins that brings real transformation in our lives and gives rise to new ways of living that exalt Christ and give witness to the truth of the gospel

of Jesus.

And Jesus continually reminds us in our gospel readings to turn away from sins and follow Him. He is calling right now regardless of our circumstances to live out His teachings in our walk with Him. Jesus never tires of calling and reminding each of us to repent and believe and be always one with Him. Think for a moment how little control we have over our future and how quickly time passes away. This should make us all quiver and perhaps stop making excuses in serving and following our Lord every day for we never know how much time we have left. So let us all heed the call of our Lord Jesus: "Come and follow me."

