

**This Sunday's
Counsel**

THEME: We respond to God's unconditional love when our hearts are filled with righteousness.

PROMISE: "They shall bear fruit even in old age; vigorous and sturdy shall they be." (Ps 92:15)

WORD: Sir 27:4-7/
Ps 92:2-3, 13-16/
1Cor 15:54-58/ Lk 6:39-45

ORDERS: "Be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord" (1Cor 15:58)
"Give thanks to the Lord" (Ps 92:2)

DIRECTIONS:

- Avail of the sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Empty our hearts of worldly desires to allow Christ to fill it.
- Be righteous and have a pure heart in serving the Lord.
- Be faithful in attending Praise and Worship and receiving the Holy Eucharist.



BLD Trenton



Community News

Volume 19, Issue 9

<http://bldtrenton.com>

March 1, 2019

Ambassadors Of Love

REFLECTION: We respond to God's unconditional love when our hearts are filled with righteousness. Is God's love really unconditional? Yes, it is indeed unconditional. The very essence of God is love, he just doesn't love, He is love. But it does not mean that He loves everything we do. When we are lost and commit sins against God, He will provide a way for us to find love and holiness, because He loves us deeply. During our LSS, we heard from our brothers and sisters how they found God's love in the darkest and lowest time of their lives. God's love has rescued them and gave them light. God has showed them the joy of justice. Even in our own personal experiences, we also can say that we have experienced God's love in our darkest moment. Maybe we can count multiple occasions when we felt God's love in our lives. This unconditional love has made us change our ways. This love

has transformed us and made us grow spiritually. This love has made us more giving and forgiving, made us slow to anger and rich in compassion. These are some of the fruits of our transformation and growth. This transformation and growth have filled our hearts with righteousness. In Sirach 27:6 it says, "The fruit of a tree shows the care it has had." God had nurtured our growth with His love and we shall bear fruit even in our old age. Luke 6:39 says, "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?" How can we heal our blindness and see the light of God? By always availing of the sacraments, prayers, spiritual reading, studying the faith, penance. Through these actions we can be guide to others. When we see the light of God, we become transformed, bear fruit and have growth. Through this transformation, when we see the light of God and



Ambassadors — See Page 2

**Know
Your
Saints**

St. Katharine Drexel: Patron of Racial Justice

Born in Philadelphia in 1858 to wealthy railroad entrepreneurs, she was taught from an early age to use her wealth for the benefit of others. She had an excellent education and travelled widely. When she was twenty-six her father died, leaving a sizable estate to her and her two sisters.

Katherine had always been interested in the plight of the Indians and so when she met Pope Leo XIII during a trip to Rome she asked him to send missionaries to Wyoming to staff the schools she was financing. The Pope responded: "But why not be a missionary yourself, my child?" After spending some time in discernment and visiting reservations, she entered the Sisters of Mercy Convent in Pittsburgh in 1889. Her decision rocked Philadelphia social circles. The Philadelphia Public Ledger carried a banner headline: "Miss Drexel Enters a Catholic Convent—Gives Up Seven Million."

In 1891, she founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, which provides religious education within the Native American and African American communities. She opened and supported nearly sixty missions and schools in the next forty-five years, among which, Xavier University of Louisiana, the first university for blacks in the country, all along enduring harassment by segregationists and the Klan. After suffering a heart attack at 77, Katharine spent the next 20 years of her life in prayer and meditation at the motherhouse of her congregation in Bensalem, PA. She died on March 3, 1955 and was canonized in 2000 by Pope John Paul II.



Save the Date

Mar 22-24 : Solo Parents Encounter
 Venue : Days Inn, New Brunswick
Mar 30 : Agony in the Garden Retreat
 Venue : St. Robert Church, Freehold
Apr 27-28 : Marriage Encounter # 21
 Venue : Executive Suites, Carteret

Marshall Assignment

Mar 1 - Edgar Arabit & Dave Smith
Mar 8 - Bong Dizon & Alan Pontepiedra
Mar 15 - Arnold Paderon & Leo Duarte

WRITERS NEEDED

Calling everyone to contribute to our Community News. We welcome spiritual articles, testimonies, and reflections of 300 words or less. Please submit manuscripts by e-mail to bldword@gmail.com.

The Lord's Provision
Feb. 22, 2019

Tithes: \$160.00
Love Offering: \$110.00

Thank You For Your Generosity

God's Blessings
Birthday

Drin Aparicio 3/2 Rolly Salomia 3/6
 Nilda Araga 3/3 Rey Inid 3/7

Anniversary

Renato & Elena Madarang 3/1
 Eric & Luz Mecenas 3/4

Teaching Schedule

Mar 2 - ME 19 World & Flesh/ Body & Blood of Christ
Mar 16 - ME 20 Approach to the Word/ Word of God/ Response to the Word
Mar 23 - ME 18 Advance Intercession
 Spiritual Warfare
 Healing & Deliverance

Where, O death, is your sting?

A Model To Follow

The Washing of the Feet retreat served as a reminder of when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. It showed His humility, sincerity and love towards his disciples, when he performed this act. During this retreat, I felt that God wants us to be aware of the people around us who need help, and be able to provide them support and comfort and service from our hearts. He would want us to share the gifts and talents that He has blessed us with. He has given us these blessings to voluntarily serve our brothers and sisters, without hesitation. I feel that hearing God's word is effective in our everyday lives, so I would like to learn more about Him and be able to humbly surrender all to Him. I want to be able to spread more love, be a good servant and messenger, serve the community and do more volunteer work.

"Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me."
 -Jn 13:8



(BLD's annual Washing of the Feet Retreat was held on February 23, 2019 at St. Thomas Church, Old Bridge. Above is a reflection by one of the participants.)

Ambassadors: *Continued from Page 1* remain in Jesus Christ, we can as disciples be like our own teacher.

To sustain this transformation and growth, we have to always remind ourselves of the word of God in 1Cor 15:58: *"Be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord"*. We should empty ourselves of self-righteousness and self-gratification. We should always have a pure heart to serve our brothers and sisters. We should not seek recognition for all that we do. When we devote our works to the Lord, our labor is not in vain.

Our hearts are filled with righteousness when we bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit. *"In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law,"* (Gal 5:22-23). We are filled with righteousness when we show love to one another. The gospel last week says love your enemies and do good to those who hate you. This is how God wants us to love our brothers and sisters. We are filled with righteousness when we have patience with one another. Patience means we need to wait on the Lord and recognize when His word works the way He said it would. Patience also means bearing with one another's shortcomings.

As we prepare for Lent, the holiest season of our church, we should always strive to build our community by showing love and understanding to one another. Let us be more giving and forgiving. Let's encourage one another and be ready to give our help especially to those who are experiencing difficulty in their lives. Let us be Christ's ambassador to one another.



THEME: We respond to God's unconditional love when we believe and obey every word that comes from God.

PROMISE: "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Rom 10:13)

WORD: Dt 26:4-10/ Ps 91:1-2, 10-15/ Rom 10:8-13/ Lk 4:1-13

ORDERS:

- "One does not live on bread alone." (Lk 4:4)
"You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve." (Lk 4:8)
- "You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test." (Lk 4:12)

DIRECTIONS:

- Take care of our own and each other's spiritual needs by prayer, fasting and giving, especially during this Lenten season.
- Ground ourselves on the Word and authority of the Scriptures. By words and actions, proclaim that the Lord is our God, in every small place of our daily life – at home, workplace, community, and parish.
- Pray and be open in Spirit with God, believe in God alone and trust in His Divine Will.

Believe and Obey

REFLECTION: Our theme for the 1st Sunday of Lent is inspired by the events when Jesus was tempted by the devil for 40 days. The temptations of Jesus were not easy because they challenged the status of Jesus as the "Son of God." A person weakened by hunger, fatigue and complete deprivation could succumb to the cunning invitation of the devil to be comforted, empowered and in control. But not Jesus. He thwarted these temptations by invoking the word of God at every turn. He demonstrated that the most effective weapon against the snares of the devil is claiming the word of God as the source of truth and strength. He knew that it is the Father's will that he became man to suffer and die to fulfill the covenant of God's unconditional love for mankind.

Calling on the name of the Lord to be saved is not enough. It demands from us not only to believe, but also to obey every word that comes from God. It requires that to love God, we must follow His will and turn to Him alone. Jesus tells us: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my



Father..." (Mt. 7:21). What happens to our life when we abide in God's word? When

we abide in the Lord and allow His word to abide in and nourish us spiritually, we become what God wants us to be - to experience and accomplish what God wants us to accomplish and to know what God wants us to know. Jesus is very explicit in telling us: "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you," (Jn 15:7). This is a vital reality in the life of a Christian. Our only hope of seeing God's best in our life is to hold fast to the truth of God's word operating in us, in our thoughts, words, and

Believe — See Page 2

FUN FACTS OF OUR FAITH

Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust

The beginning of the holy season of Lent, called Ash Wednesday, is traditionally marked by the imposition of ashes on the forehead in the shape of a cross by the priest or deacon who proclaims: "You are dust and to dust you shall return." Given during the mass to all, even non-Christians, as a visible sign of penance, the ashes come from the palms of the previous year's Palm Sunday that had been blessed with holy water then burned with incense to give them scent.

Ash Wednesday is one of only two days during the year when the Church mandates Catholics to fast, the other being Good Friday. It is not mentioned in the Bible and the Church does not consider it a holy day of obligation. However, the use of ashes as a sign of repentance goes back to the earliest books of the Old Testament (Jer 6:26, Dn 9:3, Jon 3:6, Jb 2:8) and the New Testament (Mt 11:21, Lk 10:13). During the forty days of Lent, the faithful are challenged to focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

It is noteworthy that Ash Wednesday is not observed only by Catholics nowadays. Some Protestant congregations have joined this custom and even extended it beyond the confines of their churches as shown by the Episcopalians who, in 2010, started Ashes To Go, a movement to distribute ashes in street corners, train stations and other public places.



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The Lord's Provision Mar 1, 2019

Tithes: \$405.00
Love Offering: \$262.00

*Thank You For Your
Generosity*

God's Blessings Birthday

Edgar Arabit 3/8 Mèlo Mabutas 3/10
Gil Ocena 3/8 Argie Pe 3/13
Elma Pontepiedra 3/10 Ed Bautista 3/14

Anniversary

Cesar & Rosalie Angeles 3/10
Nestor & Chat Conde 3/13

Teaching Schedule

Mar 16 - ME 20 Approach to the Word/ Word
of God/ Response to the Word
Mar 23 - ME 18 Advance Intercession
Spiritual Warfare

*Be with me, Lord,
when I am in trouble.*



Temptation

Jesus did not rely on his own human strength and will-power for overcoming temptation. He relied on the Holy Spirit to give him strength, wisdom, courage, and self-control. The Lord Jesus knows that we cannot fight temptation on our own. We need the strength and guidance of the Holy Spirit to help us. The Lord Jesus gives us his Holy Spirit to help us in our weakness (Romans 8:26) and to be our guide and strength in times of testing (1 Corinthians 10:13). The Lord gives grace to those who humbly acknowledge their dependence on him (James 4:6) and he helps us to stand firm against the attacks of Satan who seeks to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8-10; Ephesians 6:10-18). The Lord Jesus is ever ready to pour out his Spirit upon us that we may have the courage we need to repent of our sins and to turn away from them, and to reject the lies and deceits of Satan. God wants us to "fight the good fight of the faith" (1 Timothy 6:12) with the strength and help which comes from the Holy Spirit.

The forty days of Lent is the annual retreat of the people of God in imitation of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness. We are called to journey with the Lord in a special season of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, repentance, and renewal as we prepare to celebrate the feast of Easter, the Christian Passover. The Lord gives us spiritual food and supernatural strength to seek his face and to prepare ourselves for spiritual combat and testing.

Adapted from www.dailyscripture.net

Believe: *Continued from Page 1*

deeds.

Believing in Jesus and obeying His direction for our life keep us in His company throughout our faith journey. Unlike those disciples who left Him because they stopped believing in Him, let us not wait for the Lord to ask: "Do you want to go away?" Instead, we should be like Peter who boldly declared: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life... we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," (cf Jn 6:66-69).

To ensure that we abide in Christ, it is important that we read and study God's word consistently, thoroughly and reflectively, and then obey it. Jesus is telling us, "He who has my commandments and keeps them...loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him," (Jn 14:21). We must continue to study His word and let the Holy Scripture teach us to make us wise and deepen our faith in Christ. St. Paul tells us, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work," (cf. Tim 3:14-17).

Believing God's word leads us to communicate and pray to God. Sometimes, we wonder why our prayers are seemingly not answered, and why blessings do not flow freely. We should go back to Christ's exhortation to love and forgive one another. Perhaps, there is still unforgiveness in our hearts that even praying "Our Father" becomes pretentious. Jesus has promised: "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," (Rom 10:13). Let us be worthy to receive God's salvation and forgiveness by truly believing and obeying His holy word.

Adapted from www.bldworld.com

**This Sunday's
Counsel**

THEME: We respond to God's unconditional love when we allow Him to transform our lives.

PROMISE: "He will change our lowly body to conform with His glorified body." (Phil 3:21a).

WORD: Gn 15:5-12, 17-18/ Ps 27:1-9, 13-14/ Phil 3:17-4:1/ Lk 9:28-36

ORDER: "Listen to Him." (Lk 9:35)

DIRECTIONS:

- Dedicate more time in prayers.
- Soak yourselves with the word of God.
- Reconcile with God and with one another.
- Avail of the sacrament of reconciliation on a regular basis.



BLD Trenton



Community News

Volume 19, Issue 11

<http://bldtrenton.com>

March 15, 2019

Listen To Him

REFLECTION: By His transfiguration, Jesus is giving us a beautiful glimpse of our destiny and our "destination." He is showing us what our earthly pilgrimage is leading us to. The Transfiguration is a sign of Jesus' resurrection and a promise of our own resurrection.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Peter, John, and James see Jesus "transfigured," speaking with Moses and Elijah about His "exodus". By His death and resurrection, Jesus will lead a new Exodus—liberating not only Israel but every race and people; not from bondage to Pharaoh, but from slavery to sin and death. He will lead all mankind, not to the territory promised to Abraham in the First Reading, but to the heavenly place that St. Paul described in his Epistle to the Philippians.

Moses, the giver of God's law, and the great prophet Elijah, were the only Old Testament figures to hear the voice and see the glory of God atop a mountain (see Exodus 24:15–18; 1 Kings 19:8–18). Today's scene resembles God's revelation to Moses (Exodus 24:1; 34:29). But when the divine cloud departs, Moses and Elijah are gone. Only Jesus remains. He has revealed the glory of the Trinity—the voice of the



Father, the glorified Son, and the Spirit in the shining cloud. He is the Son of God.

"Listen to Him," the Voice tells us from the clouds. If, like Abraham, we put our faith in His words, one day we too will be delivered into "the land of the living" that we sing of in the Psalm. We will share in His resurrection, as Paul promises, our lowly bodies glorified like His.

We have to carefully ponder every word of His teaching and begin to base our life on what He says. How much pain, anxiety, and strife come into this world and our lives simply because we do not listen to the Lord and obey His teachings. Our stubbornness, lack of forgiveness, unchastity, greed, lack of concern for the

Listen — See Page 2

The 2019 BLD Medical Mission

On February 6-9 2019, the BLD districts of Trenton and Camden held a medical mission in the Philippines. Following is a recollection of the event by one of the volunteers.

The Mission started with a send-off blessing by the DCS of BLD Trenton at the St. William the Abbot Church. On Wednesday, February 6, at 5:30 AM, our group of 30+ volunteers assembled at Hotel 101 Manila, Mall of Asia, Pasay City and drove south to Trece Martirez City where inmates of the Cavite Provincial Jail welcomed us with smiles in their new bright orange T-shirts that BLD had donated. A Holy Mass was held, made solemn with music by the prison choir and assistance of Sr. Violeta and the Ursuline sisters. In the afternoon, we drove to Tagaytay City, stopping at Taal Lake and volcano for pictures. The following morning, we had Holy Mass at the Holy Spirit Mission Service Center. Then, we were off to Batangas City where patients had been waiting at the new Sports Complex Center since 5:00 AM.

The mayor welcomed us in a dinner reception at the Lubok Beach Resort, owned by Christopher & Sandy De Leon. In the morning of Friday, we returned to the Sports Complex to treat more patients after mass. When we finished around 5:00 PM, the rest of our group of 21 then proceeded to Lucena City for dinner at Leo Alquiros' Circa Del Rio Resort. The next day, we had breakfast and Holy Mass at Kamay ni Hesus, officiated by its founder, Fr. Joseph Faller. Thereafter, we drove to the Gawad Kalinga Village in Barangay Liwayway, Mauban, Quezon for another day of mission work. The villagers showed their appreciation with songs and dances performed by their kids. Leo's motorboat then took us to Cagbalete Island Resort for an overnight stay before we head back for Manila on Sunday, February 10.

A total of 1,145 adult and pediatric patients, including 92 patients treated by the local dental society of Trece Martires City, benefited from the 4-day activity. They were

Medical Mission—See Page 2

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Teaching Schedule

Mar 16 - ME 20 Approach to the Word/ Word of God/ Response to the Word

Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers

Bert & Cora Velez

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

God's Blessings

Birthday

Bobby Ilagan	3/15	Amanda Roche	3/17
Edwin Orienza	3/15	Jerry Baguio	3/17
Joy Pagente	3/15	Ron King	3/18
Chiclette Fajardo	3/16	Lucy Mecenas	3/18
Paolo DelValle	3/17	Dan Wong	3/18
Rosalind Mirandilla	3/17	Trisha Arriola	3/20

Anniversary

Gabs & Aileen Lagunilla 3/15

Marshall Assignment

Mar 15 - Arnold Paderon & Leo Duarte

Mar 22 - Eugene Yosucico & Toti Araga

The Lord's Provision—Mar 8, 2019

Tithes: \$315.00 Love Offering: \$352.00

Thank You For Your Generosity

Medical Mission - continued from Page 1

treated for various conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, URI, skin rashes, anemia, high cholesterol and uric acid, allergies, acid, allergies, dermatoses, earaches, primary complex, arthritis, hyper acid, bronchitis, gout, skin problems, allergies and asthma. They also received multi-vitamins and medications that we had brought.

We wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our benefactors, donors & everyone with the guidance of The Holy Spirit, making this 2019 medical mission a success. Thanks, most especially, to all our volunteer missionaries who, with great determination, patience, love and faith in God, answered the call: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you do to these brethren of mine, you did for me," (Mt 25:40).



Listen - continued from Page 1

poor, idolatry, and lack of spirituality bring great suffering to us and to others. If we would but give our life to the Lord and ask Him to conform us to His word, so much suffering would vanish. We would have so much more peace and experience greater joy and hope.

We need to meet Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation often because there are times when we do not listen to Him, times when we deny Him, not in the courtyard of the high priest in Jerusalem, but maybe in our families, or perhaps where we work, or maybe in our communities. We do not have to be conquered or governed by our weaknesses or sinfulness. Just as Peter, James and John received the special grace of seeing Jesus transfigured and many other graces, we too have received many graces from Jesus to help us become the great people He has called us to be and to witness to Him wherever life demands.

The Lord teaches us His Word. As we grow in knowledge of the Scripture, our vision grows, our understanding deepens, and we see things differently. Immersion in the Scriptures disposes us for heavenly vision. Likewise, for us to transform, we should be ready to take the mind of Christ. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. Let us put away the old self of our former way of life and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth. Let us make the climb with Jesus; take up our cross and follow Him through His passion death and resurrection. Listen to Jesus and by His grace conform our life to what we hear Him say. There is no greater source for joy, peace, and hope.



THEME: We respond to God's unconditional love when we seek Him with reverence and humility.

PROMISE: "He redeems your life from destruction, he crowns you with kindness and compassion."
(Ps 103:4)

WORD: Ex 3:1-8, 13-15/ Ps 103:1-4, 6-8, 11/ 1Cor 10:1-6, 10-12/ Lk 13:1-9

ORDER: "Repent!"
(Lk 13:3)

DIRECTIONS:

- Reconcile with God and with one another.
- Fast, pray and meditate on the words of God.
- Give alms and do corporal works of mercy.

God Of Second Chances

REFLECTION: To seek God with reverence and humility, as Moses demonstrated in his encounter with God in the burning bush, is to acknowledge who we are before God and that we are sinners. One way of doing that is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation - Confession. Confession is more than admitting our



sins. It means admitting to God's Mercy. By confessing our sins and by acknowledging God's mercy, we get a second chance.

The Gospel parable of the fig tree is a story of mercy, repentance and forgiveness. The gardener - who represents Jesus pleading for us - shows patience. He prunes away the useless parts, provides better nourishment. Jesus does that for us when we go to confession. And although God will judge us, still He shows mercy and offers opportunity for us to change our ways and become fruitful. Just before Jesus tells this parable, we

learn of two events or tragedies that had happened. One was an act of human wickedness, the other an act of nature - both leading to the deaths of many people. These misfortunes and tragedies are invitations for our conversion. That's why Jesus says for two times: "if you do not repent, you will perish as they did."

An important distinction needs to be made between "how we are growing" and "how we are being grown". When we focus on our growth, we run the risk of thinking that it's just about us and, even more, that we, in fact, are the ones doing it. But when we focus on "being grown" - how we are trained, shaped and molded, the focus shifts from us to the One who is doing the cultivating, the Master Gardener, Jesus Himself. We can easily focus on our Christian practices- our penances, prayer, mission, charity and service - all wonderful opportunities to draw closer to the Lord. But at some point we need to be open and shift our focus, not on what we are doing, but on what is being done to us and in us, how the Master Gardener is cultivating us, molding and shaping us. When we focus on Jesus, we come to know, imitate and develop a special relationship with Him.

Second Chances — See Page 2

Know Your Saints

Saint Patrick: Patron of Engineers

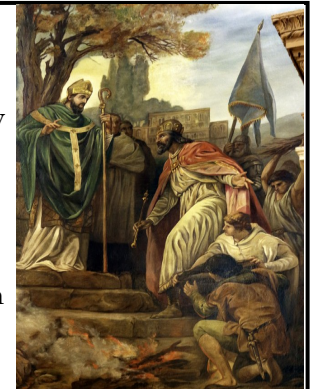
Born in 387 A.D., Patrick was the son of a prominent Roman family that lived in Scotland. When he was sixteen he was kidnapped from his home by pagan pirates who took him to Ireland. There he lived as a slave for six years until he escaped. Instead of anger, Patrick felt love for his captors. He vowed to return and convert the Irish people to Christianity.

During the next thirty years, that is exactly what Patrick did. He studied for the priesthood in France and was consecrated a bishop at the age of 43. He was sent by the Pope in 433 to Christianize Ireland. As a captive, Patrick had learned to speak the Irish language, and he became familiar with the teachings of the Druids, the priests whose pagan religion he would replace with Christianity.

He traveled throughout Ireland, to the farthest part of the island, preaching the word of Christ. He baptized all the Irish kings and their subjects. When addressing the king of Ireland on Easter Sunday, he used a humble native flower, the shamrock, with its triple leaf and single stem to explain the doctrine of the trinity.

Patrick founded three monasteries and filled the countryside with churches and schools of learning and worship. He ordained many priest and consecrated no fewer than 350 bishops.

The memory of his good works is so strong that, even today, people of Ireland talk about him as if he had died just a few years ago instead of in the fifth century. He died on March 17, which is his feast day.



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Teaching Schedule

Apr 6 - Advance Intercession and Spiritual Warfare
 Apr 27 - Shepherds Training 2
 May 11- Christian Discipline
 Christian Community

God's Blessings

Birthday

Bob Academia	3/22	Fr. Pete Literal	3/25
Ryan Retirado	3/22	Janette Alberto	3/26
Jun Fincalero	3/23	Alex Santos	3/26
Hannah Raymond	3/23	Emma Teves	3/26
Ginelle Lamela	3/23	Ling Navarro	3/27
		Maria San Rafael	3/28

Anniversary

Fr. Vic Coronado 3/27 (ordination)

Marshall Assignment

Mar 22 - Eugene Yosucio & Toti Araga
 Mar 29 - Elner Jamolod & Jean DeJean

Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers

Jojo & Vicma Cac

The Lord's Provision—Mar 15, 2019

Tithes: \$315.00 Love Offering: \$352.00

Thank You For Your Generosity

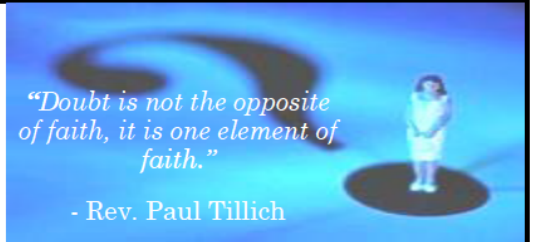
Doubt and Faith

Excerpt from the book, *"Anna and the Exodus Moon & Other Stories"*
 by: Gene P. Del Carmen

The first term paper I wrote for my graduate school theology class in 2012 was titled "Priesthood—A Decade After the Scandals." It was in 2002 when the Boston Globe first reported the story of Catholic priests abusing innocent children under their care in the Archdiocese of Boston. It turned out that clergy abuse had been going on for more than sixty years, in almost all faith groups, worldwide. You might rightfully ask, where was God when those defenseless, prepubescent children were crying out for help? They were severely warned never to tell their parents. Why did the superiors tolerate, and in some cases cover up for, those priests? During those sixty-plus years of silent, unthinkable clergy abuse, why didn't our supposedly all-loving, all-knowing God do something? As a result, a lot of the faithful stopped going to church at a time when attendance was already dwindling.

Doubt is something even the most faithful follower experiences from time to time, mainly during times of unspeakable tragedy. Through those moments of heavy, despairing doubt, all we ask is to feel or recognize some assuring signs from our God proving he is still close by and very much engaged in steering our lives—just like Thomas, the apostle who refused to believe that Jesus was alive until he saw his wounds from the cross. Thomas then believed again. Most of us want to fully believe again. But just like the clergy abuse that went on heartlessly for more than sixty years, the God we worship might not readily give us some prompt discernible signs, thus causing our doubts to linger, even intensify. Mother Teresa, now a beloved saint, was a good example.

(To be continued)



Second Chances - continued from Page 1

Here in our community, we tend to lose sight of Jesus when we focus more on our community activities. In our keenness to get things done, we miss out the spiritual aspect of why we do things here. God doesn't do the cultivating in isolation. It is in community, growing in communion with one another, that we are cultivated and shaped to reflect back our true character, to reflect back the work of the Gardener who is Jesus. And this work of Jesus, the Gardener is what we call Mercy.

It is in and through Mercy, practicing and experiencing Mercy that we are trained, grown, and shaped. It is not easy, for sure. We all know this to be true in how we hurt, or how we've been hurt; in how we are forgiven and sometimes struggle to forgive; in how we hold one another accountable; in how we are humbled or practice humility; in how we love.

So, how do we practice mercy? Yes, we must show compassion to those who are grieving, care for the poor, do what we can to better our society. However, everything we do must relate to the Church' primary purpose, namely, the salvation of souls. We can start by giving somebody a chance to be close to God. It can be as simple as inviting someone to a parish activity. It shouldn't be so hard. "Would you like to come to Healing Mass with me? Or join me for a parish breakfast or dinner? A Friday night worship? Or perhaps, a retreat or an encounter?"

Lent is a time when the Church calls us to be attentive to this act of Mercy - to cultivation and to being cultivated in the garden of life. Lent is a word that in its root actually means spring. In Lent, there is always the promise of springtime, there is always the promise of Easter, where once again we can be surprised by grace and reflect back to one another the Mercy of God. Amen!

This Sunday's Counsel

THEME: We respond to God's unconditional love when we repent of our wrongdoings and be reconciled with Him and others.

PROMISE:
Whoever is in Christ is a new creation." (2Cor 5:17a)

WORD: Jos 5:9-12/
Ps 34:2-7/ 2Cor 5:17-21/Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

ORDER:

- "Taste and see the goodness of the Lord" (Ps 34)
- "Be reconciled to God" (2Cor 5:20)

DIRECTIONS

- Faithfully attend the Holy mass and receive the Holy Eucharist.
- Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Be ready to forgive and seek forgiveness.



BLD Trenton



Community News

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March 29, 2019

Sharing In God's Joy

REFLECTION: "I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7).

This verse from St. Luke describes how God values our conversion which is beautifully reflected in the parable of The Prodigal Son.

Who are we in this parable, are we the younger brother who was lost, or are we the older one who stayed with his father. The younger son represents rebellion to God.

Just like the younger son, we rebel against God by committing sins, as we indulge in ways that are not heavenly.

"A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not reject" (Ps 51:19).

Is this all what we have to do when we sin? Do we just repent and Let God forgive our sins and then pretend our sins never happened? The answer is a big fat NO. We must also learn to be still and learn to



know our God, reject sins and live the way He wants us to live, with love and compassion to everyone. We must take ownership of our sins and stop blaming anyone else.

Or are we the older son? Are we not capable of experiencing joy when a sinner returns to God? Are we that self-righteous that we refused to welcome back a repentant sinner with open arms? Are we like the older brother, that we cannot comprehend our Father's love, mercy and compassion to everyone.

And lastly, let us not forget the father. The Parable of the Prodigal Son is not about the merits of the two brothers but, rather, the love of their father. Jesus wishes to teach us that we are children of God not because of our own merits but because of the infinite love of our merciful Father.

According to Pope Francis, we must

Sharing Joy — See Page 2

FUN FACTS OF OUR FAITH

The Devil's Advocate

Officially called Promotor Fidei, Latin for Promoter of the Faith, this person performs a vital role in the investigation into the life and writings of someone being proposed for canonization. The office was established in 1587 by Pope Sixtus V to deal juridically with processes of beatification and canonization. Before 1234, the church did not have a formal process and saints were chosen by popular acclaim such that sometimes figures of legends were honored as saints. Hence, the Church saw the need to tighten the process and the *Advocatus Diaboli* (Devil's Advocate) was devised to prevent any rash decisions concerning miracles or virtues of the candidates for the honors of the altar. He was a canon lawyer whose job was to go out and find weaknesses and negatives about the candidate and then he would bring his objections as to why the person should not be canonized or beatified. Then, every objection he brought up was to be answered to his satisfaction, otherwise, the process could not proceed. This procedure, though, made it difficult for a person to be canonized.

Pope John Paul II moved the canonization process away from a trial by fire form of scrutiny and reduced the role of the Devil's Advocate, now known also as Prelate Theologian, to only three things: he is to preside over the meeting of the theologians with the right to vote, to prepare the report on the meeting itself, and then to be present as an expert at the meeting of the Cardinals and Bishops. He provides a report of what his findings are but that report does not mandate there be a satisfactory answer to each objection.



Teaching Schedule

Apr 27	- ME 18	-	Shepherds Training 2
May 5	- ME 18	-	Advance Intercession and Spiritual Warfare
May 11	- ME 19	-	Christian Discipline Christian Community
May 18	- ME 20	-	Road to Emmaus Jesus in the Old Testament

Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers

Nestor & Chat Conde, Toy & Malen Juarez, Manny & Evelyn Palacios, Leo & Nonette Duarte

Marshall Assignment

Mar 29 - Elner Jamolod & Jean DeJean
Apr 5 - Leo Duarte & Pris Brenda

The Lord's Provision—Mar 22, 2019

Tithes: \$545.00 Love Offering: \$284.00
Thank You For Your Generosity

God's Blessings

Birthdays

Pris Brenda	3/29	Allan Diaz	4/1
Nin Brenda	3/30	Rene Odon	4/2
Jamie Fune	3/30	Elvie Atienza	4/3
Jho-Jho Alabastro	3/30	Jasmin Zulueta	4/3
Gay Anito	3/31	DV DelValle	4/4
Elora Kho	3/31	Mike Zarraga	4/4
Walter Cintron	4/1	Ringo Odon	4/4

Save the Date

Mar 30 : Agony in the Garden Retreat
Venue : St. Robert Church, Freehold, NJ
Apr 27-28 : Marriage Encounter # 21
Venue : Executive Suites, Carteret, NJ
Jun 29 : "Summer to Remember" Fundraiser
Venue : Jumping Brook Country Club
Neptune, NJ

Sharing Joy - continued from Page 1

learn to accept the Father's mercy which transcends both reward and punishment. By calling and preparing the feast of thanksgiving, the Father is asking us to share HIS joy by recognizing each other as a brother. This parable, in effect, is challenging each one of us to open our hearts to HIS reconciling love, and to become merciful like the Father.

Doubt and Faith

Excerpt from the book, "Anna and the Exodus Moon & Other Stories"
by: Gene P. Del Carmen

(Continued from last week's issue)

For the last forty years of her life, Mother Teresa of Calcutta had a deep crisis of faith in her God. It was not just a case of periodic passing doubt; it was much more intense. In one of her first letters to her spiritual confidant, Reverend Michael Van Der Peet, in 1949, she wrote that "she felt alone and in a state of spiritual pain." That was about the time when she started caring for the poor and dying in Calcutta, India. In more than forty letters that were compiled in a book entitled "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light," she wrote about her deep torment and struggles to fight off feelings of "darkness" and "torture."



Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Macedonia, on August 26, 1910. At age twelve, she strongly felt the call of God and knew she had to be a missionary nun. At age eighteen, she joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish community of nuns with missions in India. There, she received the name of Sister Mary Teresa after Saint Therese of Lisieux. When she made her Final Profession of Vows, she was renamed Mother Teresa. From 1931–1948, she taught at Saint Mary's High School for Girls in Calcutta, a pricey private school. But the poverty and suffering she witnessed outside the convent walls touched her heart so deeply that she sought permission to devote herself to also working among the poorest of the poor in the slums of Calcutta. With no start-up funds, she boldly depended on Divine Providence for guidance and started an open-air school for slum children while continuing to teach at Saint Mary's. Soon, she was joined by volunteers, and the financial support poured in. She became the principal at her school in 1944. On September 10, 1946, while traveling on a train from Calcutta to Darjeeling in the Himalayan foothills, Mother Teresa recounted that she experienced a second calling, "a call within a call," as she explained. She said that in her solitary remoteness in that rickety train, Christ spoke to her heart, instructing her to abandon teaching and work fulltime in the slums of Calcutta, aiding the city's poorest and most afflicted, India's so-called "untouchables." She referred to this experience intimately as her "Inspiration Day." The grace of this moment "would carry her and her newfound inner fire into a new life."

(To be continued)



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This powerful movie is about the apparitions of the Blessed Mother to four young girls in Garabandal, Spain, in the early 1960s. Come receive the message she has for you!

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Tickets will be available at: www.regmovies.com

For more information visit: www.garabandalthemovie.com

"I strongly recommend this movie. The event is another indication from heaven encouraging us to hold fast to faith and rosary in these turbulent times."

- Fr. Tim Byerley, Pastor
St. Peter Church
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