

BLD WASHINGTON



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY

SERVING THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Counsels

Prescription for True Happiness

Theme: “See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God (1 Jn. 3:1)

Word: Rv. 7:2-4, 9-14; Ps 24:1-6;
1 Jn 3:1-3; Mt 5:1-12

Order: We have the righteousness of Christ when we endure persecution for His sake.

(BLD Global Community reflection for October/November 2009)

REFLECTION: In Greek, “blessed” means “extremely fortunate, well off, and truly happy” because one is favored by God. Jesus, our LORD, invites us to live in a true inward peace that leads to a desire to be outward peacemakers, to bring reconciliation, to seek out opportunities for mercy and compassion, to pursue justice and righteousness as our hunger and thirst, and to persevere and endure, in spite of all fear, sorrow, helplessness, and persecution. And He will bring us to peace, which sorrow, loss, pain, and grief are powerless to touch, a happiness that shines through our tears, and a joy that nothing in life or death can take away (Jn. 16:22).

In St. Matthew’s Gospel reading this Sunday, the first three Beatitudes teach us that the true and lasting happiness we seek and long for can only be found in fleeing from evil and being delivered from sin, in poverty accepted for the love of God, in meekness and humility, and in tears of contrition. In contrast, the values of the world declare that we can achieve happiness in acquiring an abundance of things, of riches, and of honors.

The next two Beatitudes are our way of a Christian active life and are directed towards our neighbor. The Holy Spirit gave us the gift of fortitude for us to be courageous in seeking justice. The gift of counsel from the same Spirit inspires us to find the true remedy, prayer, and words that consoles and uplifts. Mercy is love in the face of sin and/or injury. Mercy is the presence of Jesus in a wounded and fractured world. Our God has been merciful to us, and we are to pass this gift on to others as when we pray the Lord’s Prayer: *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us*”. Also when Peter asked our LORD Jesus “*LORD, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him?*” Jesus answered, “*I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.*” Mt. 18:21-22

To be pure of heart means to be free of all selfish intentions and self-seeking desires. Those who are pure in heart will see God, because they are a spiritual mirror that reflects the very image of God. Purity of heart leads to contemplation. And the gift of

understanding from the Holy Spirit will give our soul true sight -- a sight that sees God in our neighbor, even on those that seem to be opposed to Him. We are able to see God in the Holy Scriptures, and the practical applications of the Gospel. The apostles, after being flogged, left the Sanhedrin *“rejoicing that they had been found worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name.”* (Acts 5:41) Contemplation of God leads to fruitfulness. By emulating God’s love for man, we peacemakers become children of Him. The gift of wisdom from the Holy Spirit gives us a taste of the mysteries of salvation by being able to see, speak, and experience all things in God.

What a great blessing would it be if we, disciples of Christ Jesus, are persecuted for righteousness, if we suffer rejection because of good deeds to our brothers and sisters, and insults, contempt, and criticism for the sake of our faith and our love for the One who died for us. Why? Because then we become an image of our Master crucified. *“Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.”* (Mt 5:11-12)

But for us, Christians, the cross is not a sign of defeat. But it is the ultimate sign of victory, of life with our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ. To be willing to stand with Him, guarantees that He will never abandon us. His rather radical message is very clear: that persecution and happiness go together. As true Christians, we long to share fully in the life of Jesus: His life, suffering, death, and resurrection. This is the gateway into the Kingdom of God. True happiness is to be with God! And *“everyone who has this hope based on God makes himself pure, as He is pure.”* (1 Jn. 3:3)

God’s Promise for the Week

“He shall receive a blessing from the Lord a reward from God his savior.” (Ps 24: 5)

November 1

**All Saints Day in the Philippines
Festive Celebrations Amidst the
Tombs** by *Friar Jack Wintz, O.F.M.*

I have many vivid memories of my three-year stint in the Philippines as a literature teacher at the Franciscan seminary college (Our Lady of the Angels) near Manila (1969-72). Among these memories is that of visiting cemeteries with Filipino families on November 1, All Saints Day. On that day, thousands and thousands of families come to the cemeteries to honor ancestors and relatives who have died—and to enjoy festive picnics and family reunions among the tombs.

Before the feast day itself, many have spruced up the tombs of their close relatives, often decorating them with flowers and balloons. The cemeteries in the Philippines, as a rule, do not consist of neat plots of grass with gravestones marking the presence of the deceased buried there below the earth. In the Philippines, many of the dead are laid to rest above ground in mausoleums (often white) of different sizes, some large enough to house the remains of many persons in separate compartments. Those who come to spend All Saints Day with their deceased relatives, therefore, gather together in this kind of setting. Here they come to find a place to sit on ledges or in the niches between the tombs. Here the families share

food and stories or even games together in a party-like atmosphere.

I still have a photo taken around 1970 that shows two young Filipino men sitting on folding chairs outside a mausoleum (as large as a small house) engrossed in a game of chess. In another photo, family members are sitting on the ground, their backs against the walls of mausoleums. A young man, flanked by two smiling children, looks up from a newspaper with other family members rounding out the circle. A pink portable radio sits on a ledge nearby, no doubt playing popular tunes.

At this point I want to introduce to you a Filipino Franciscan friar who, at age 50, has been celebrating All Saints Day celebrations in his country for most of his life. He is Father Nestor Manlangit, O.F.M., who, I'm proud to say, is a former student of mine. Father Nestor was born near the city of Legaspi in Southern Luzon. Over the last 23 years, he has done pastoral work in different parts of the Philippines. Hence, he has surely experienced All Saints Day celebrations in a variety of settings. At present he serves as assistant pastor at a well-known Manila parish, which is also a shrine of St. Anthony, known as Santuario de San Antonio.

Nestor and I have been exchanging e-mails quite frequently in recent weeks, and so it seemed quite natural for me to ask him to comment, as a native Filipino, on the All Saints Day celebrations (in his country's cemeteries). Here are some comments he was very willing to share with the readers of *Friar Jack's E-spirations*:

“The joyful and celebratory spirit that marks our own version of the ‘Day of the Dead’ is a nationwide phenomenon. Here it is celebrated on November 1 instead of November 2 (All Souls Day). I know of several attempts of well-known pastors to try to ‘correct’ the practice—that is, to get

people to observe November 2 as the real ‘All Souls Day’ or ‘Day of the Dead,’ but the practice has stuck on November 1. Old folks say it’s always been that way, so I guess it’s a national tradition that spans decades, if not centuries!

“The way it looks now,” Father Nestor continues, “it looks like we have two days instead of one to celebrate the Day of the Dead, although the government only recognizes November 1 as the national holiday (in accord with the popular practice). As a priest, I have sort of adopted this practice by linking the commemoration of our departed brothers and sisters with the Church’s teaching on the Communion of Saints and on our hope for the Resurrection. Consciously or unconsciously, we all look forward to being saints ourselves. This same hope is what makes us pray that our dear departed relatives and friends will finally experience the fullness of God’s kingdom and become saints as well.”

[You can read about other aspects of Friar Jack’s time in the Philippines in his spiritual autobiography, [*Lights: Revelations of God’s Goodness*](#).]

Source: <http://www.americancatholic.org/e-News/FriarJack/fj102805.asp>

Remembering the departed...



Love Offering

Oct. 09, 2009 \$ 707.00
Oct. 16, 2009 \$ 606.00
Oct. 23, 2009 \$ 704.00
Oct. 28, 2009 \$1,378.00

Thank you for your generosity!

November Calendar

Nov. 06 1st Friday Eucharistic Celebration
08 The Teaching of Jesus Christ
Disciples' Assembly
13 Praise & Worship
13-15 Marriage Encounter No. 10
14 Don Moen Benefit Concert
20 Praise & Worship
21 Flashback to the 50' to 80's
27 Thanksgiving Mass

Reminder

Please sign in and wear your
BLD IDs during Praise and
Worship and Community
Functions.

Community Calendar

Nov. 08, 2009
- **The Teaching of Jesus Christ**
Covenanted members
Cardinal McCarrick Center
12247 Georgia Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902
10:00 AM – 12:30 PM
- **Disciples' Assembly**
Cardinal McCarrick Center
12247 Georgia Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902
1:00 – 4:00 PM
Nov. 13-15, 2009
Marriage Encounter No. 10
Hilton Wash. Dulles Airport Hotel
13869 Park Center Road
Herndon, VA 20171
Nov. 14, 2009
Don Moen Benefit Concert for the
Philippine Typhoon Victims
Newark Symphony Hall
1030 Broad Street
Newark, NJ at 7:00 PM
Nov. 21, 2009
Flashback to the 50's to 80's
Fundraising Benefit Dance
Fort Myer Recreation Center
228 McNair Rd, Bldg 405
Fort Myer, VA 22211
5:00 - 11:00 PM
Please check our website www.bldwashington.com
for 2009 Schedule of Events.
