

BLD WASHINGTON



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY

SERVING THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Counsels

Submitting to God's Perfect Will

Theme: We are open to the Father's will when we break the strongholds that separate us from Him and from one another.

Word: Nm 11:25-29; Ps 19:8, 10, 12-14; Jas 5:1-6; Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Order: *"Do not cause one of these little ones who believe in me to sin."*
(Mk. 9:42a)

(BLD Global Community reflection for September 2009)

REFLECTION:

Mark's Gospel has a strong sense of urgency because Jesus proclaims the Gospel and the arrival of the kingdom of God on earth (Mark 1:14). Mark wrote the Gospel to urge the Christian community in Rome to believe in the Gospel as their salvation depended on their faith.

This Sunday's readings convey the same urgent message today. Jesus urges His followers to avoid sin at all cost. Sin is against the Father's will and separates us from God and from one another. The same sins committed repeatedly becomes a vice and creates strongholds in our lives that block the Lord's blessings and make it very difficult for us to live according to the Gospel.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus' disciples forbade someone from driving out demons in His name

because he did not belong to their group. Jesus rebuked his disciples for their exclusivity (Mark 9:38-40). Similarly in the first reading, Moses rebuked his aide Joshua for his intolerance for wanting Moses to stop two men in camp from prophesying because they were not anointed with the seventy elders. (Num 11:29). Do we become jealous when other people are doing just as good or better? In community, do we feel that the good that others do steals the thunder from us thus diverting the spotlight away from our good works?

St. Paul says: *"Love is...not jealous... but rejoices with the truth,"* (1 Cor 13:4, 6). Instead of rejoicing we exclude others and stifle their gifts when we become jealous or envious. This causes separation from God and disunity and division among one another. We judge our brethren in community and try to become mind readers. Our community members have a lot to offer with their different gifts and natural talents that are needed in building the kingdom of God. We should exhort everyone to use their gifts for building the community in the spirit of collaboration.

We can overcome envy and jealousy with the love of God that has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us through baptism. (Romans 5:5). Love purifies our hearts and makes us more charitable towards others.

Jesus uses images on bodily maiming as He encourages His followers to use drastic measures to avoid sin and its harmful consequences. We need to preserve our souls at the expense of parts of our bodies. We do not have to be maimed or blinded literally to avoid hell. Cutting off bodily parts that cause us to sin means avoiding places and situations that could tempt us to sin. We can resist temptation only with the help of the Holy Spirit and with prayer and immersion in and adherence to the Word of

God through Scripture. We need to submit to God's will and obey and worship God who is our supreme goal in life that is worth the sacrifice of our bodies so that we can join the Holy Trinity for all eternity.

Jesus also warns that Gehenna or hell awaits whoever causes scandal to the little ones. "Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. ... He damages virtue and integrity; he may even draw his brother into spiritual death." (CCC 2284) Persons with pastoral authority (parents, teachers and priests) should take care not to set bad examples that might lead the young in faith under their pastoral care to sin and thereby weaken their faith, hope or charity.

Finally, in the second reading St. James warns against the unjust rich who hoard wealth only for their pleasure and are unwilling to share generously with the poor or the needy. Here, the sin of greed tremendously separates us from our heavenly Father and directly opposes His will. We should store up eternal treasures in heaven and not corruptible, perishable earthly ones.

The Lord shows us the way and tells us that openness and submission to the will of the Father will break down these strongholds that separate us from Him. *"The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul; the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple."* (Psalm 19:8). The law in this and every instance is the Lord's perfect will. The Lord promised that whoever does work in His Name will be rewarded. *"For whoever is not against us is for us. Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward."* (Mark 9:40-41). Lastly, the Lord promised whoever obeys his commandments will be rewarded. *"The fear of the Lord is pure...The statutes of the Lord are true, all of them just;... By them your servant is instructed; obeying them brings much reward."* (Ps 19:10,12)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Do not stifle the work of the Holy Spirit in you and in others.
2. Store treasures in heaven, not earthly ones.

God's Promise for the Week

"Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will surely not lose his reward." (Mk 9: 41)

September 23

St. Padre Pio da Pietrelcina

(1887-1968)



In one of the largest such ceremonies in history, Pope John Paul II canonized Padre Pio of Pietrelcina on June 16, 2002. It was the 45th canonization ceremony in Pope John Paul's pontificate. More than 300,000 people braved blistering heat as they filled St. Peter's Square and nearby streets. They heard the Holy Father praise the new saint for his prayer and charity. "This is the most concrete synthesis of Padre Pio's teaching," said the pope. He also stressed Padre Pio's witness to the power of suffering. If accepted with love, the Holy Father stressed, such suffering can lead to "a privileged path of sanctity."

Many people have turned to the Italian Capuchin Franciscan to intercede with God on their behalf; among them was the future Pope John Paul II. In 1962, when he was

still an archbishop in Poland, he wrote to Padre Pio and asked him to pray for a Polish woman with throat cancer. Within two weeks, she had been cured of her life-threatening disease.

Born Francesco Forgione, Padre Pio grew up in a family of farmers in southern Italy. Twice (1898-1903 and 1910-17) his father worked in Jamaica, New York, to provide the family income.

At the age of 15, Francesco joined the Capuchins and took the name of Pio. He was ordained in 1910 and was drafted during World War I. After he was discovered to have tuberculosis, he was discharged. In 1917 he was assigned to the friary in San Giovanni Rotondo, 75 miles from the city of Bari on the Adriatic.

On September 20, 1918, as he was making his thanksgiving after Mass, Padre Pio had a vision of Jesus. When the vision ended, he had the stigmata in his hands, feet and side.

Life became more complicated after that. Medical doctors, Church authorities and curiosity seekers came to see Padre Pio. In 1924 and again in 1931, the authenticity of the stigmata was questioned; Padre Pio was not permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to hear confessions. He did not complain of these decisions, which were soon reversed. However, he wrote no letters after 1924. His only other writing, a pamphlet on the agony of Jesus, was done before 1924.

Padre Pio rarely left the friary after he received the stigmata, but busloads of people soon began coming to see him. Each morning after a 5 a.m. Mass in a crowded church, he heard confessions until noon. He took a mid-morning break to bless the sick and all who came to see him. Every afternoon he also heard confessions. In time his confessional ministry would take 10 hours a day; penitents had to take a number so that the situation could be handled. Many

of them have said that Padre Pio knew details of their lives that they had never mentioned.

Padre Pio saw Jesus in all the sick and suffering. At his urging, a fine hospital was built on nearby Mount Gargano. The idea arose in 1940; a committee began to collect money. Ground was broken in 1946. Building the hospital was a technical wonder because of the difficulty of getting water there and of hauling up the building supplies. This "House for the Alleviation of Suffering" has 350 beds.

A number of people have reported cures they believe were received through the intercession of Padre Pio. Those who assisted at his Masses came away edified; several curiosity seekers were deeply moved. Like St. Francis, Padre Pio sometimes had his habit torn or cut by souvenir hunters.

One of Padre Pio's sufferings was that unscrupulous people several times circulated prophecies that they claimed originated from him. He never made prophecies about world events and never gave an opinion on matters that he felt belonged to Church authorities to decide. He died on September 23, 1968, and was beatified in 1999.

Comment: At Padre Pio's canonization Mass in 2002, Pope John Paul II referred to that day's Gospel (Matthew 11:25-30) and said: "The Gospel image of 'yoke' evokes the many trials that the humble Capuchin of San Giovanni Rotondo endured. Today we contemplate in him how sweet is the 'yoke' of Christ and indeed how light the burden are whenever someone carries these with faithful love. The life and mission of Padre Pio testify that difficulties and sorrows, if accepted with love, transform themselves into a privileged journey of holiness, which opens the person toward a greater good, known only to the Lord."

Quote: "The life of a Christian is nothing but a perpetual struggle against self; there is no flowering of the soul to the beauty of its perfection except at the price of pain" (saying of Padre Pio).

Source:

<http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/saint.aspx?id=1147>

Love Offering

Sept. 04, 2009 \$1,171.00
Sept. 07, 2009 \$ 941.00
Sept. 18, 2009 \$1,216.00
Sept. 25, 2009 \$1,209.00

Thank you for your generosity!

Reminder

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

September Calendar

- Sept. 04 Eucharistic Celebration
- 11 Praise & Worship
Romance w/o Regret
Excellence in Worship
- 18 Praise & Worship
- 18-20 Singles Encounter No. 4
- 20 Concert by Carlos Ibay
- 25 Praise & Worship
- 26 Growth in Prayer
CMP 1 Part 3
Teaching of Christ
- 27 Healing and Deliverance

Community Calendar

- Nov. 13-15, 2009
Marriage Encounter No. 10
Dulles Hilton, Dulles, Virginia
- Nov. 21, 2009
Dinner Dance – BLD Annual Fund
Raising Event

Please check our website www.bldwashington.com for 2009 Schedule of Events.