

BLD WASHINGTON



# BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY

SERVING THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

## Counsels

### *Self-giving*

**Theme:** Jesus leads us to eternal life when we live in love – kind to one another, compassionate and forgiving.

**Word:** Jesus, the Living Bread, leads us to eternal life.

**Promise:** *“Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from Him comes to me.” (John 6:45b)*

*(BLD Global Community reflection for August 2009)*

**REFLECTION:** The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring, “Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, this has always been the conviction of the Church, The holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine, a change occurs in the whole substance of the bread, which becomes the body of Christ our Lord, while the substance of the wine transforms into his blood. This change, the holy Catholic Church fittingly and properly calls ‘transubstantiation’ (CCC 1376).

Indeed, it is this belief that distinguishes our Catholic faith from all the other Christian faiths. In this, we are assured of Jesus’ real presence in what others might view as mere remembrance, or symbolic reenactment of an act that happened more than 2000 years ago. We Catholics rally around Jesus’ radical proclamation, *“I myself am the living bread come down from heaven...the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world”* (John6:51). Jesus’ first intention in instituting the Eucharist is to give him as food. Indeed it is often said that we are what we eat, and when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we can boldly claim with St. Paul that

*“It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me”* (Galatians 2:20). Communion, that is to accept Jesus as food and believe that through his presence in us we are transformed to become truly the sons and daughters of God, is the ultimate act of faith.

In the first reading Elijah the prophet, was fleeing from Jezebel and was on his way to Horeb. During that long and difficult journey, he got so tired he wanted to die. *“Enough O Lord! Take my life’. Lying down there he fell asleep...”* (1Kings 19:4). An angel of the Lord woke him up and offered him bread, asking him to eat for he still has a long journey ahead. Elijah ate and was sufficiently strengthened to continue his journey to Horeb, the mountain of God. What he could not do on his own strength, he could do with the meal that the Lord gave him when he was at the point of despair.

Here Elijah, called by the Lord to the faith, stands for us. In biblical language, mountains are almost always places of transformation. Each of us has a personal Mt. Horeb to climb. Mt. Horeb also represents the holy mountain of God – heaven - from where God our Father, calls us to our final destination. The length of the journey, forty days, represents our own long arduous journey on earth - saddled with much opposition, hardship, temptations and difficult moments. How many times did we see Elijah weakening, becoming so exhausted, he just wanted to give up? But just like Elijah, we too are awakened from our stupor by an angel of our Mother Church sent by God in his infinite wisdom - the BLD Community. Here, we meet Jesus in our many encounter and formation programs, at the core of which is our Eucharistic Celebrations in which we gather around God’s table to receive nourishment and strength for our daily spiritual journey. This is enshrined in our fourth pledge to the Lord when we become Covenanted Disciples of the community: *“We shall regularly receive the Sacraments of our Faith, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and bear witness to the power of God’s grace in our lives;”*

In the sixth chapter of John, we see Jesus gradually building up to open before us an excellent perspective on reality – God’s perspective. First, by multiplying loaves and fishes he miraculously satisfies his listeners’ physical hunger (John 6 1-14). Next, he challenges them to seek the food that lasts to eternal life, not that which perishes (6:27). Finally, he tells them that he himself is the new manna from heaven and that those who eat this bread will live forever (6:51).

In the Eucharist we receive Jesus, the bread of life. Unlike the bread brought by the angel to Elijah, who sustained him only for a time, the bread offered by Jesus gives eternal life. This “eternal life” does not only refer to a happy existence after death. But because the bread ‘transubstantiates’ – not just symbolically - into the actual body of Jesus, every time we receive it we are actually being filled with his divine life. Through Jesus, the believer participates in the life of God. If we stop to reflect upon it, this is an overwhelming, awesome reality. It means life without beginning or end, a life of love and happy self-giving, a joy that overcomes every sorrow.

As Jesus has given himself to us as food and sustenance for the journey, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, inspiring us and transforming our lives as he guides and enables us to follow the path to the mountain of God. St. Paul speaks about surrendering to the life of the Spirit by getting rid of all that is not of God in our lives – *bitterness, passion and anger, harsh words, slander, and malice of every kind* (Ephesians 4:31). For Jesus to lead us to eternal life, we are to follow the way of love. The theme for the week tells us: **Jesus leads us to eternal life when we live in love – kind to one another, compassionate, and forgiving.** It is by being kind, compassionate, and, forgiving that we can fulfill our community value of self-giving, a virtue that promotes unity with others.

Jesus wants to reorient our lives toward him, to make him our first priority. With his life in us, we are given the power to put off sin (Ephesians 4:22) and to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1). When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion we receive him who healed the centurion’s servant, who forgave the woman caught in adultery, and who rose victorious from the grave. We receive him who longs to transform us from glory to glory (2Corinthians 3:18). Jesus wants to share this life with us. Let us receive him always with reverence, bringing to him our hunger for forgiveness, healing and strength. It is then that we can move forward to do his will to comfort the sorrowful, free the

oppressed, encouraged the weary. And as he lives in us, his promise in John 6:45b: *“Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me,”* finds fulfillment.

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## BLD Annual Community Day

The BLD Annual Community Day was an oasis for everyone as the heat index rose to 95 degrees. The day began with the Holy Mass celebrated by our spiritual director, Father Francis Alves. In the homily, the community was exhorted to revel on the feast that Christ offers – Himself.


Invigorated by the Eucharist, the community enjoyed the bountiful preparations of this year’s sponsoring class, ME 9. Highlights of the picnic included raffle prizes, games, and performances by Mark 10, John 6, the Youth, and the Solo Parents. Notably, it was a pleasure to see the teens support the younger members in their presentations. What great examples of stewardship!

This year’s Community Day was indeed a day of wholesome fun shared amongst family and friends. Looking at the sea of joyful faces, an onlooker would have easily recognized a community gathered in and by Christ’s love.

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## August 6 - Transfiguration of the Lord



 The upper part of the [Transfiguration](#) (1520) by [Raphael](#), depicting [Elijah](#), [Jesus](#), and [Moses](#) (holding the [Tablets of the Law](#)).

The Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, in which Christ Jesus, beloved only-begotten Son of the eternal Father, revealed his glory in the presence of the holy Apostles Peter, James and John, with the law and prophets as witnesses, so that he might make the regeneration of grace visible in the lowliness of our servile form which he had united himself, and the image of God in which man was created, although corrupted in Adam, might be proclaimed restored in Christ unto the ends of the earth.

All three Synoptic Gospels tell the story of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-9; Luke 9:28-36). With remarkable agreement, all three place the event shortly after Peter's confession of faith that Jesus is the Messiah and Jesus' first prediction of his passion and death. Peter's eagerness to erect tents or booths on the spot suggests it occurred during the Jewish weeklong, fall Feast of Booths.

In spite of the texts' agreement, it is difficult to reconstruct the disciples' experience, according to Scripture scholars, because the Gospels draw heavily on Old Testament descriptions of the Sinai encounter with God and prophetic visions of the Son of Man. Certainly Peter, James and John had a glimpse of Jesus' divinity strong enough to strike fear into their hearts. Such an experience defies description, so they drew on familiar religious language to describe it. And certainly Jesus warned them that his glory and his suffering were to be inextricably connected—a theme John highlights throughout his Gospel.

Tradition names Mount Tabor as the site of the revelation. A church first raised there in the fourth century was dedicated on August 6. A feast in honor of the Transfiguration was celebrated in the Eastern Church from about that time. Western observance began in some localities about the eighth century.

On July 22, 1456, Crusaders defeated the Turks at Belgrade. News of the victory reached Rome on August 6, and Pope Callistus III placed the feast on the Roman calendar the following year.

Source:  
<http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/saint.aspx?id=109>

### August Calendar

August 07 Eucharistic Celebration  
14 Praise & Worship  
21 Praise & Worship  
28 Praise & Worship

Please check our website [www.bldwashington.com](http://www.bldwashington.com) for 2009 Schedule of Events.

### Community Calendar

September 18-20, 2009  
- Singles Encounter No.4  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Dulles - North  
22400 Flagstaff Plaza  
Ashburn, Virginia 20148  
November 13-15, 2009  
- Marriage Encounter No. 10  
Dulles Hilton, Dulles, Virginia

### Love Offering

July 17, 2007 \$1,162.00  
July 24, 2009 \$ 657.00  
July 31, 2009 \$ 830.00  
Aug. 7, 2009 \$1,407.00

*Thank you for your generosity!*

### Reminder

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