

BLD WASHINGTON



BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS COVENANT COMMUNITY

SERVING THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Counsels

Life in Piety

Theme: Jesus leads us to eternal life when we are one with Him in the Eucharist.

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

Promise: “...*the one who feeds on me will have life because of me.*” (Jn 6:57b)

(BLD Global Community reflection for August 2009)

REFLECTION: Piety is a life in total connection and communion with God. It is a ground work for an evolving process where Christ becomes alive in us and prepares us to become His partners in ministry, where everything that comes from us reveals that Christ lives in and empowers us!

The aim of piety is not only to become pious but to enjoy a full and open relationship with God such that His blessings flow freely and are evident in our lives and in the decisions that we make. It is a natural consequence of doing His will and living as He has instructed. It is trusting God and placing ourselves at His disposal. A life in piety is what we live when we choose a relationship with God as being our life's priority; when we say Jesus is our Lord and Savior; when we are nourished and strengthened by the Body and Blood of Jesus; when our hearts remain united with His in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

St Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians, “*do not continue in ignorance but try to understand what is the will of the Lord*”, should be meaningful to all as most of the problems we encounter emanate from our erroneous understanding of God's will. Our Lord is asking us not to persist in our ignorance, in our lack of courage and our inability to truly pursue His will. When we do not stand for what is right in His eyes

and allow His will to be defiled by human structures and hardened hearts, we continue to be in ignorance.

It is our responsibility to be discerning and obedient to God's will. 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 orders: “*Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.*”

Our task is to understand God's will, accept it and stand by it. The process to arrive at God's will is not by use of power, influence, reasoned discourse, and carefully plotted strategies; not even by sweet talk and moral suasion that soothes one's heart. It is not a tug-of-war within a community but authentic prayerful discernment where everyone eventually comes to a peaceful rest on a course of action. It is where everyone's wisdom and gifts of humility, reason, intuition, tradition, and religious practice are called forth until God's divine presence breaks in and lights the right path, offering guidance to all. Seeking God's will is to the light which guides our path. Seeking and understanding God's will is life-giving and helps our dreams to grow deeper roots. It guides us through delicate and contentious issues and fills our work with the persevering power and imagination of the Holy Spirit.

The greatest gift of understanding God's will leads us to the vision and mission to which we have been called. The voices we experience when we seek God and His will are quite subtle and sometimes we may never recognize the voice of God with absolute clarity. We must be careful of anyone who claims to hear God clearly and insists on it with certainty or tries to sweet talk God's people, because that person may be drunk with the spirit of pride and arrogance as St. Paul said, “*And do not get drunk on wine, in which lies debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit*”.

Building relationships with God while seeking to understand His will can be best achieved when we allow prayer, scripture, meditation, worship, communion and spiritual direction to bring us to God. God emphasizes the importance of spiritual communion and the Holy Eucharist for it is a

celebration which restores us to Him and makes us one Body with Him and His people.

Holy Communion is the truest form of Christian worship. It unites us with God as our spirit and His Spirit bear joint witness that we belong to Him as God's beloved children. Living in communion with God's Spirit will cause one to be a witness because wherever one goes and whomever one meet, God's Spirit will manifest Itself.

Moving forward let us lead prayerful lives, meditate on God's Word and take up Scripture's call to sing psalms and hymns from our hearts. Let us seek to become wise as we welcome Jesus into our hearts, becoming one with God as we come into His Presence and accept the Eucharist as our only source of holiness, wisdom and a life in piety!

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Solemnity August 15th)



'See the beauty of the daughter of Jerusalem, who ascended to heaven like the rising sun at dawn.'

Benedictus antiphon from Daily Office

August 15 is the day that Catholics have long celebrated what is called the Dormition (falling asleep) or Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The Feast of the Assumption celebrates both the happy departure of Mary from this life by her natural death, and her assumption bodily into heaven.

Along with the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception** (December 8) the Assumption is a principal feast of the Blessed Virgin and a Holy Day of Obligation -- one of the most important feasts of the Church year. (In the United States, in 1991, the US bishops amended the Church calendar by removing the obligation to attend Mass whenever January 1, August 15, or November 1 fell on a Saturday or a Monday. Their action was approved by the Holy See in 1992.)

Now at the end of the summer season, the Church celebrates the most glorious "harvest festival" in the Communion of Saints -- Mary, the supremely blessed one among women, Mary, the most precious fruit which has ripened in the fields of God's kingdom, is today taken into heaven.

The idea of the assumption of Mary into heaven after her death is first expressed in narratives of the fifth and sixth centuries. Even though these were never official, they bear witness to the very early belief in a teaching of the Catholic Church which was not formally defined as a dogma (a teaching essential to the Catholic faith) until 50 years ago.

Though it was almost universally believed for more than a thousand years, the Bible contains no mention of the assumption of Mary into heaven. The first Church writer to speak of Mary being taken up into heaven by God is Saint Gregory of Tours (594). Other early sermons on the Feast of Mary's entry into heaven are those of Ps.-Modestus of Jerusalem (ca. 700).

On May 1, 1946, Pope Pius XII, asked all bishops in the world whether they thought this belief in the assumption of Mary into heaven should be defined as a proposition of faith, and whether they with their clergy and people desired the definition. Almost all the bishops replied in the affirmative.

On November 1, 1950, the Feast of All Saints, Pope Pius XII declared as a dogma revealed by God that "Mary, the immaculate perpetually Virgin Mother of God, after the completion of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into the glory of Heaven".

We have no real knowledge of the day, year, and manner of Our Lady's death. The dates which have been assigned to her death vary between three and

fifteen years after Christ's Ascension. Both Jerusalem and Ephesus claim to be the place where she died. (By tradition, Mary lived at Ephesus after the death of Jesus.) Mary's tomb was presumably found in Jerusalem. It is believed that Mary died in the presence of all the Apostles, but that after her burial, her tomb, when opened, was found empty. Therefore, they concluded that her body had been taken up (assumed) into heaven.

Saint Gregory of Tour provided a rationale for the tradition, which is related to her having been preserved from original sin. He said that it is inconceivable to think Mary's sinless body, likened to the Ark of the Covenant which was made of incorruptible wood, should decay in the grave. The text, 'Rise thou and the ark of thy strength' (Ps 132/1:8) was understood to mean that it was God's will that, as Christ had ascended, so too Mary would be received into heaven.

There is an important difference, of course, between the **ascension of Jesus** into Heaven after His Resurrection, and the assumption of Mary. To ascend is to rise up under one's own power; while to be assumed means something that is done to one. Jesus, being the Second Person of the Trinity, had no need of assistance; whereas Mary did not have this power. (A pastor once demonstrated this difference in an unusual way. He asked two children to come to the front of the church. He told one child to walk from one side of the sanctuary to the other; and the other child he carried across.)

According to one tradition, Mary was warned of her approaching end by Saint Michael the Archangel, who conducts souls to Heaven, and was surrounded by the apostles on her death-bed, who were miraculously transported to her bedside from their various mission-fields. It was said that Jesus appeared, bore away her soul, and returned three days after her burial, when angels carried her body to Paradise where it was reunited with her soul under the Tree of Life.

The Feast of the Assumption has always been loved dearly by the faithful who are children of Mary. It is a sign to us that someday, through God's grace and our efforts, we too may join the Blessed Mother in giving glory to God. The Assumption is a source of great hope for us, too, for it points the way for all followers of Christ who imitate her fidelity and obedience to God's will. Where she now is, we are meant eventually to be, and may hope to be through Divine grace. Mary being taken to heaven after her life on earth was ended is the logical outcome of her immaculate nature, uniquely protected -- also by God's grace -- from personal sin. We seek to imitate

her self-sacrificing love, her indestructible faith and her perfect obedience.

Prayer

All-powerful and ever living God, you raised the sinless Virgin Mary, mother of your Son, body and soul to the glory of heaven.

May we see heaven as our final goal and come to share her glory.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Source: <http://www.wf-f.org/Assumption.html>

August Calendar

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

Please check our website 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
September 20, 2009
- Joyous Celebration of Faith, Hope and Love
Concert by Carlos Ibay
4PM, OLV Church
November 13-15, 2009
- Marriage Encounter No. 10
Dulles Hilton, Dulles, Virginia

Love Offering

July 24, 2009 \$ 657.00
July 31, 2009 \$ 830.00
Aug. 7, 2009 \$1,407.00
Aug. 14, 2009 \$ 890.00

Thank you for your generosity!

Reminder

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