



BLD WASHINGTON  
**BUKÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS**  
**COVENANT COMMUNITY**

SERVING THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

## *Counsel*

### *A Call To Mission*

**Theme:** We share life with Christ when we serve another through love.

**Word:** 1Kgs 19:16, 19-21; Ps 16:1-2, 5, 7-11; Gal 5:1, 13-18; Lk 9:51-62

**Order:** *Serve one another through love”*  
(Gal 5:13b)

*(BLD Global Community reflection for June 2010)*

### **REFLECTION:**

In today’s Gospel, Jesus “**resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem**” (Lk 9:51). This determination was decisive, fateful and marked the beginning of the end. Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem is a journey towards his death, a difficult destiny and he knew it. Lk 13:33b says that “**it is impossible that a prophet should die outside of Jerusalem.**” Jerusalem therefore is the city of Jesus’ destiny and the goal of his journey. Only when he reaches this holy city will his work of salvation be accomplished. And it is from here “**that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.**”(Lk 24:47) Jesus will not only die in Jerusalem; he will also be raised from the dead thus completing his exodus to God and the Christian mission will travel to the ends of the earth. As he was preparing his disciples to carry out his work, he also passes on to us the

responsibility to make God’s Kingdom a living reality in our world.

The radicalism of Jesus’ call to follow him emphasizes that the journey he took is the way for us to take. It indicates indirectly that following Jesus is a matter of traveling with him toward death and resurrection. His response to the would-be disciples is not likely to be meant literally, but rather indicates how completely we must put everything else behind us and put him first when we become his followers.

In Galatians, Paul describes the demands of following Jesus in a different way; that Christ has set those who follow him free from slavery. That apart from Christ we are slaves to sin; in Christ we are free. However we can use this freedom to return to slavery. Freedom is not independence, but dependence on God and interdependence on others. In order to remain free to follow Jesus, we must take a completely different direction in life than we did formerly and be guided by the Holy Spirit that dwells in us. Then shall we be able to “**serve one another through love**” and not “**biting and devouring one another**”. (Gal 5:13,15) Loving our neighbor as ourselves may be just as difficult and just as much a participation of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

In community, we are like the disciples who never had an easy discipleship; for every time they thought they got it made, our Lord challenged them. Like them, most of us started from completely the wrong places but through the grace of God and the

God's Promise for the Week

*“You will show me the path to life,  
abounding joy in your  
presence, the delights  
at your right hand  
forever.”*

Psalm 16:11



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*Meet the “Stupid Servant”*

By Felix Carroll (May 10, 2010)

He had only one request for this feature story on him. "Please title it "The Stupid Servant," he said. So there it is.

*Stupid?* He wasn't the best student. Yeah, but *stupid?* He wasn't always the most faithful Catholic. But then God lovingly hit him upside the head.

Allow me to introduce you to Fr. Jack Fullen — living proof of the intercessory power of Our Lady of Lourdes, whose feast day we celebrate on Wednesday, Feb. 11. He's not stupid. Maybe thickheaded, in retrospect.

Raised into poverty in Brooklyn, the young Jack Fullen made a brash prediction to his future bride two nights before his wedding in 1962 (yes, Fr. Jack was married; stay with me ... it will all make sense).

"I promised Sandy I would make a million dollars before I was 30 years old," he says. He was 22 at the time.

By the age of 30, he wasn't a millionaire. Instead, he was diagnosed with cancer. God had a different plan for him.

power of the Holy Spirit we might reach the final and blessed destination. We are all engaged on a Spiritual Journey. Just as Christ was heading towards Jerusalem, so too, are we heading towards our own Jerusalem, meaning our goal. We need therefore to realize that following Christ requires Commitment and Faith. It requires commitment because no one ever said that this journey would be easy. Prayer is most important here and being reminded that Christ understands and promises us no less, our commitment is renewed.

Faith is the well-spring which sustains us; the Faith which we give thanks for in communing with Jesus in the Eucharist, which nourishes, guides and helps us through this journey. It is this Faith which we need to nurture both in ourselves and within others, a faith which looks outwards and spreads throughout our community; and a faith which needs to challenge the threats to it from the secular world.

What could be the most important goal of our community? I would say, tending our youth, the militants of tomorrow. It is not too late for the restoration of our families wherein “Fear of the Lord” should be inculcated especially in young children. Maybe, just maybe, the March for Life, being advocated for so many years is not the answer after all but the next generation of evangelizers with a strong moral and spiritual foundation.

We are all called for a mission. If we do not engage in mission then the Gospel message will be lost and countless souls will be lost as well. Here we are talking about the mission of communion, the evangelism of kindness and love and the sharing of a journey. It might mean rejection, it might mean a move out of our comfort zones, but it is what the Gospel calls us to do. Even if we risk it blowing out of our faces, at least we will have died trying to do God's will on earth.

***DIRECTIONS:***

1. To support and attend our upcoming Youth Rally and Inter-district Youth Conference
2. To guide our children in the fear of the Lord.

**'I'm Going to Marry that Girl'** - The first time he laid eyes on Sandy was at college, in Connecticut. It was a Saturday night. He was heading back to his dorm. He saw her, a blond, beautiful girl. She was getting out of a car, and she looked angry.

"I looked at her and thought to myself, 'I'm going to marry that girl,'" he recalls. "I didn't even know who she was."

In a nutshell, this is who she was: Raised Episcopalian, Sandy was decidedly headstrong in all things, including her faith. Physically, she was stunning. She was filled with verve.

In a nutshell, this is who Jack was: Raised Catholic, he had drifted from his faith. He was ambitious. He was friendly and charming and people liked him, particularly Sandy.

Following graduation, following their wedding, he officially became "a man," as he says, as a result of three factors: He joined the U.S. Marine Corps, and he became a husband, and then he became a father.

Pam was their first child. He was smitten. He wept with joy when he held Pam for the first time.

Jack eventually parlayed his military experience as a communications officer into a career in the private sector. The salary was fantastic. Sandy and Jack had a son, Michael. By all accounts — except spiritually — Jack Fullen was a successful man. But by all accounts — except spiritually — things would soon come crashing down.

**It's Cancer** - On Nov. 15, 1969, at the age of 29, he felt a lump on his neck. He was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease, a form of cancer of the lymphatic system. This is what happened next: Sandy panicked. He was fired from his job. They slipped into poverty. Their third child, Jason, was on the way. "When you have a spiritual life, bad things that happen are not devastating," he says. "When you don't have a spiritual life, which I didn't at the time, these things are devastating." He turned 30, a year in which he would *not* become a millionaire. He went into deep depression. Then, Sandy encouraged him to attend a communications trade show. A company from Washington, D.C., hired him. The company, apparently, had misunderstood the term "Hodgkin's Disease." "They must have thought Hodgkin's was heartburn," he says, with a laugh.

This was 1971. He and the family were now living in D.C. He was still undergoing cancer treatment. While his career was back on track, he continually felt death following him around. By 1973, his marriage was a wreck. He hardly gave his children his attention.

Sandy convinced him to attend a marriage encounter weekend. It opened a spiritual door. He went to confession, the first time in at least 12 years. The weekend brought Jack and Sandy to new heights in their relationship with one another *and* with God. At the closing of the weekend, they attended Mass. He was filled with joy that he could receive Holy Communion. When he got back to the pew, Sandy was crying. She wanted to receive Jesus, too, but she wasn't Catholic, and she knew she couldn't. Not yet, anyway.

**She Wants to Talk About God** - After the weekend, she kept pushing Jack to talk about God. Her insistence intimidated him. One night, she came running up the stairs and jumped on him in the bed and pounded on him and called him all kinds of names. "You promised, you promised tonight we would talk," she said. He pushed her off him. He stood up on the bed in just his boxer shorts and started screaming at her.

"Sand, you are a better 'Catholic' than I have ever been!" he yelled. "You've taken the kids to church while I've been in bed. You've taken them to CCD. You've instructed them in Catholicism. Get off of my \*&#@\*! back and call Fr. Brooks and make an appointment to become Catholic and leave me alone!"

He lay back down, pulled the covers up to his eyes, and thought, "Wow, I just made an ass of myself." Sandy came over. She lay down beside him and whispered in his ear, "Thank you. I have been waiting for that invitation for 11 years."

**Doubts About the Blessed Mother** - She made the appointment with Fr. Brooks, who was shocked she *wasn't* Catholic. She certainly *seemed* Catholic. In 1974, she *became* Catholic.

There were three things Sandy had a problem with, like most Protestants:

1. The Sacrament of Reconciliation
2. The Blessed Mother
3. The Holy Father

Her doubts about each would be overcome soon enough.

She went to confession and felt freed. She went to Rome and felt a love for the leader of the worldwide Church. The Blessed Mother was a more complicated matter.

Meanwhile, in 1975, Jack's cancer had spread to below his diaphragm. He was undergoing chemotherapy. While the tumor had shrunk, it was still the size of a large orange. The doctors recommended radiation treatment to be undergone at Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. Jack refused.

It was a jubilee year for the Church. By then, Jack and Sandy had become marriage encounter counselors, and they were organizing a pilgrimage to Rome. Jack knew if he started the treatment, he wouldn't be able to go to Rome. His doctors were upset. Still, he left on a pilgrimage that changed his life.

Instead of going directly to Rome, the group decided to stop first in Lourdes, France, site of the Marian apparitions to St. Bernadette.

Neither Sandy nor Jack was enthused about the Lourdes leg of the pilgrimage. For Sandy, even though she had converted to Catholicism, she didn't want to engage in what she considered "idolatry" of the Blessed Mother. She saw devotion to the Blessed Mother as taking away from God. Jack, himself, viewed devotion to the Blessed Mother as "hokum and a lot of superstition." In Lourdes the plan was that they would remain in the hotel room until it was time to go to Rome. It didn't work out according to plan.

They made their way down to the famous grotto. The place was pandemonium. But after walking through St. Joseph's Gate, they both felt an indescribable serenity.

"I had never felt such peace since I was diagnosed with Hodgkin's," says Jack. "All the pressure, all of the depression, just drained from me."

The next morning, he and Sandy made their way down to the baths, where many healings have been reported since Our Lady appeared to St. Bernadette in 1858. Jack soon noticed something peculiar. Everyone had rosaries, and they didn't. They bought rosaries — just to fit in.

**The Baths Are for You** - Once queued up to enter the baths, Jack asked, "Are you going to go in?"

Sandy said, "No, the baths are not for me, they're for you."

Once inside, Jack undressed down to his skivvies. As he stood in the baths, he looked out and could see Sandy in the distance, and she was praying the Rosary.

"And I remember thinking, 'If there's any miracle that's going to happen, *there it is*. That's a miracle, that my Protestant bride who wanted nothing to do with the Blessed Mother is praying the Rosary!"

After he stepped back out from the baths, he couldn't find Sandy. He waited and waited.

"Then, all the sudden, out of the crowd comes this blond bombshell, screaming, 'You're cured! You're cured!'" recalled Jack. "She jumps on me and hugs me and screams, 'You're cured!' I was devastated because I had no belief I was cured. None whatsoever. I thought, 'She's now going to lose her faith. I'm going to go back to New York, I'll still have the cancer. I'll do the radiation. She's completely flipped out.' I tell her, 'Stop screaming, stop screaming.' So we linked up with our friends, and she's still screaming, 'Jack's cured! Jack's cured! We have to go to Rome and thank Jesus for his cure.'"

**Back to the Doctor** - When they returned to the United States, the first thing Jack had to do was go to George Washington Hospital in Washington for a series of X-rays to determine the extent of the disease. The appointment was supposed to last an hour, and then Jack was to fly to New York for treatment at Sloane Kettering. The appointment lasted *three* hours. He missed his plane. They took so many X-rays that Jack assumed the cancer had spread. He became worried. He demanded to see a doctor.

The radiologist finally came in. He was Jewish. He started putting up the series of X-rays taken of Jack from over a series of years. Jack had no clue what he was looking at. Black is good, white is not good, or is it the other way around? Then the radiologist posted the X-rays of that day and asked, "Mr. Fullen, tell me, what *don't* you see?"

"I don't understand what I'm supposed to be seeing or not seeing," Jack said. "Well, I'll tell you what you *don't* see," the radiologist said. "You don't see the tumor." The radiologist then paused for a moment. "So, where have you been?" he asked Jack. "Nowhere," Jack responded. "Mr. Fullen," the radiologist said, "you should still have the tumor. Besides which, you should have *more* tumors. So, Mr. Fullen, where have you been?"

Saint Peter denied Jesus three times. Jack denied the Blessed Mother twice.

Again Jack said, "Nowhere." The radiologist called him a "mashugana," which is Yiddish for "idiot." "Then, he throws me out of his office. He wouldn't even give me the X-rays," Jack recalls. "You don't need the X-rays," the radiologist said. "I have to go to New York!" Jack protested. "You don't have to go to New York! If you want to go to New York, go to New York, but I am calling Sloan Kettering and canceling the radiation. It's gone. It's a miracle." Jack was infuriated with him. He could not imagine the tumor was *not* there.

"I took the elevator back down and stepped outside and saw the sky," Jack recalls. "There was the most beautiful blue sky you could ever imagine, and the Blessed Mother spoke to my heart and said, 'You're cured.' At that moment, I felt complete exhilaration and joy."

He had to talk to someone. He called home. "Sandy! Sandy!" he said. "They can't find the tumor! They can't find the tumor! The Blessed Mother told me I'm cured!" "I knew that, you idiot!" Sandy said. Then, she proceeded to give him a list of things she needed from the grocery store.

**'You Are to Become a Priest'** - The non-millionaire Jack Fullen's whole drive for success and career stopped. God used him and Sandy to evangelize and bring people to Jesus through weekend marriage encounters.

But that was only the beginning of an extraordinary spiritual journey.

In 1981, Jack attended Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in Washington, D.C. After Mass, he prayed the Rosary, asking the Blessed Mother to lead Sandy and him into the next phase of their lives.

"Then, I had this incredible voice within me say, 'You are to become a priest.' I couldn't believe it," he recalls. "I thought, 'This is stupid. This is crazy. I'm married. I have children!' I thought, 'This is diabolical.'"

He never told Sandy about the experience. But something inside of him changed. He began reading spiritual books. Sometimes he'd even peek at vocation pamphlets.

On a vacation Sandy and Jack made to Germany, Sandy came down with a cold. Her cold got significantly

worse. In the city of Mannheim, she was diagnosed with pneumonia in both lungs. That night was the last time she received Jesus in the Eucharist.

"I remember before she received Jesus, she said the Our Father," he says, "and she was like a little girl sitting on the edge of the bed. She had tubes on her nose for oxygen, and I remember her saying the Protestant doxology, 'For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory ...' It was like she was going back in time."

The next day, her medical team had to induce a coma because she had developed adult respiratory distress syndrome, which is almost always fatal in adults. The ventilator shredded her lungs. Air filled her torso. She was dying.

Jack had a flashback to that day in the Basilica. "God, You were right!" he thought. "God *did* have a plan for me to become a priest."

He went to the hospital chapel. Under a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he sobbed uncontrollably. A priest came to him and held him and comforted him.

Back in Sandy's room, he could hardly recognize her. She was in her last moments. Jack lay in bed with her and held her and began praying the Glorious Mysteries. He wanted to give Sandy to Jesus and the Blessed Mother through the Glorious Mysteries, specifically. But when he finished, she hadn't died yet. So he prayed the Joyful Mysteries, and she didn't die.

He didn't want to pray the Sorrowful Mysteries because her suffering was almost over. But he *had* to pray them because, as he says, "I'm a male, and I have to complete things." Sandy died on the fourth Sorrowful Mystery, the carrying of the Cross.

"I fell on the floor and kept yelling at God internally, saying, 'Why? Why now on the fourth Sorrowful Mystery? Why did you take her on the fourth Sorrowful Mystery?'" he recalls. "And I heard in my heart, 'It's not *her* cross, it's *your* cross.' I felt like a knife was inserted in my torso and I was split in half, that the two that had become one was torn and it was only me." But then by the time Jack was lifted back to his feet, he was filled with joy. "I knew she was OK," he says.

He had a vision of her standing by his side. They were sharing things so intimate, things about God and themselves and about how much love God has for us all. It was a moment "out of time," he says.

"Her soul leaving her body was so profound," he says. "She was standing next to me and sharing, and I couldn't understand why the others in the room were so persistent that she was dead. And I was saying, 'She 's standing here with me!' Through an interpreter, they told me to leave so they could take out the tubes, then I could come back and say goodbye to her. I said, 'Why? She's not there.' I kept pointing to her body. I was dumbfounded."

He brought Sandy's body home. Together with his three kids, he buried her. He became a dad and a mom all together.

Then, when his youngest, Jason was old enough to be on his own, Jack worked and prayed his way into the priesthood.

Father Jack Fullen was ordained in May 27, 1995, the day after Sandy's birthday. Now 69, he's a retired diocesan priest and serves as spiritual director and co-founder of the Missionaries of Our Lady of Divine Mercy, based in Manassas, Va., which is dedicated to serving the poor through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

"The Providence of God is unbelievable," Fr. Jack says.

*Editor's note: The following feature on Fr. Jack Fullen was first published on Jan. 29. We received news that Fr. Jack died on May 7. He prayed the Rosary prior to his passing. "He would have wanted me to tell you all to continue praying the devotions to Divine Mercy," said Kellie Ross, who along with Fr. Jack, founded the Missionaries of Our Lady of Divine Mercy, based in Manassas, Va., which is dedicated to serving the poor. Fr. Jack was also in resident at St. Raymond of Penafort Roman Catholic Church in Springfield, Virginia.*



Fr. Jack, shown ministering to the poor in Wash D.C. in 2006.

Source: <http://thedivinemercy.org/news/story.php?NID=3796>

### Love Offering:

May 28, 2010 \$ 879.65  
June 04, 2010 \$1,023.00  
June 11, 2010 \$ 807.32  
June 18, 2010 \$1,190.00

Thank you for your generosity!

### June Calendar:

June 04 - First Friday Mass  
June 11 - Praise & Worship  
June 18 - Praise & Worship  
June 25 - Eucharistic Celebration  
(25 BLD Anniversary)

### Teaching Schedule:

Aug. 29 - Christian Servanthood  
Sept. 26 - Healing & Deliverance  
Oct. 23 - Spiritual Warfare

### Community Calendar:

July 23-25  
Aspirant's Retreat  
Jul. 30-Aug. 1  
Family Encounter #5  
Malvern, PA  
Sep. 24-26  
Solo Parent Encounter #3  
Holy Family Seminary  
Silver Spring, MD  
Nov. 12-14  
Marriage Encounter #11  
Dulles Hilton, VA

Please check our website [www.bldwashington.com](http://www.bldwashington.com) for 2010 Schedule of Events.

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

