

BLD WASINGTON



BURÁS-LOÓB SA DIYÓS

COVENANT COMMUNITY

SERVING THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Counsel

Out From the Desert of Sins

Theme: We spread the Good News of salvation when we confess with our mouths and witness with our lives that Jesus is Lord.

Word: Dt 26:4-10; Ps 91:1-2, 10-15; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13

Order: “You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.” (Lk. 4:8)
“You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.” (Lk 4:12)

(BLD Global Community reflection for February 2010)

REFLECTION:

In the practice of *Lectio Divina*, one way we get deeper into the Word of God is by visualizing ourselves as truly present in, say, a Gospel scene as opposed to just reading it in a superficial way. We can easily slip into the latter case if we fail to really listen from our heart. We will struggle in understanding what the reading is conveying. Its meaning eludes us as we assume familiarity or a rigid mindset in approaching the Word.

Take today's Gospel scene as we mark the first Sunday of Lent. Who has not

heard or read the temptation of Jesus in the desert? What does it really say to us, and why is it situated at this time, so closely after we started this holy season with the feast of Ash Wednesday? Let us try to get closer to the Word and remain close to Jesus throughout the narrative episode. It's all too simple and familiar - but is it? We see Jesus, after His baptism in the Jordan, going into the desert. He fasts, for forty days he does not eat; after which, he feels hungry. The devil senses an opportunity, and launches his first of three temptations. *Command this stone to become bread.* Jesus replied, *One does not live on bread alone.*

Let us now try to see how the devil then showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant, tempting and seducing him: *Worship me, and I shall give you all this.* Jesus answered him, *Worship the Lord, your God, him alone shall you serve.* Watch now the third temptation, high up on the parapet of the temple in Jerusalem. *Throw yourself down, and angels will guard and support you.* Jesus replied, *Do not put God to the test.*

We may need to read the passage again. If we did this right, we would have experienced the heat of the desert, the hunger pangs of the forty-day fast; the vision of all the world's wealth and power and glory would have dazzled us; standing at the top of the temple, high up about 20

stories, we could hardly open our eyes amid the dizzying, spinning sensation. Yet we could hear every word and even imagine the intonation of the two adversaries. We heard every exchange of quoted Scripture (yes, Satan knew the words of the good book!).

Which words in particular touched us, which has meaning to what's happening in our life or who we truly are? As we say in our Word sharing circles, what is our "struck"? Take for instance, Christ's words: *Worship the Lord, your God, him alone shall you serve.* We've been reading in the aftermath of the great tragedy in Haiti, that man to achieve his own ends will make the decision to turn, not to God, but to evil. Making a pact with the devil may bring immediate results and gratification, but the consequences are serious, destructive and long-lasting, if not perpetual.

Do we hold on to our faith when our prayers and petitions seem unanswered, and we see contradictions like evil seemingly rewarded with having the good things in this world. Christ is our example in facing trials and finding the answers to the big, difficult questions in life. He is the Lord Who alone shows us the way to eternal salvation, He is our righteousness and justification.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Let us reflect on these words that they may grow in us. *For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.* (Rom 10:9-10) Like Jesus, may we be *filled with the Holy Spirit*, and be led to His gifts of growing understanding and deeper faith. Thus equipped, we will heed the call to spread the Good News as disciples of Christ.

Only if Jesus lives in us that we truly can be out of the desert of worldly temptations.

Directions:

- 1. Immerse yourself in the Word and be filled with the Holy Spirit to be able to resist temptation.**
- 2. Be ready to defend our faith.**

God's Promise for the Week

“No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” (Romans 10:11)



Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil.



Ashes in the History of the Church

The origin of the custom of using ashes in religious ritual is lost in the mists of pre-history, but we find references to the practice in our own religious tradition in the Old and the New Testaments. Despite all references in Scripture, the use of ashes in the Church left only a few records in the first millennium of Church history. Thomas Talley, an expert on the history of the liturgical year, says that the first clearly datable liturgy for Ash Wednesday that provides for sprinkling ashes is in the Romano-Germanic pontifical of 960. Before that time, ashes had been used as a sign of admission to the Order of Penitents. As early as the sixth century, the Spanish Mozarabic rite calls for signing the forehead with ashes when admitting a gravely ill person to the Order of Penitents. At the beginning of the 11th century, Abbot Aelfric notes that it was customary for all the faithful to take part in a ceremony on the Wednesday before Lent that included the imposition of ashes. Near the end of that century, Pope Urban II called for the general use of ashes on that day.

Only later did this day come to be called Ash Wednesday.

At first, clerics and men had ashes sprinkled on their heads, while women had the sign of the cross made with ashes on their foreheads. Eventually, of course, the ritual used with women came to be used for men as well.

In the 12th century the rule developed that the ashes were to be created by burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. Many parishes today invite parishioners to bring such palms to church before Lent begins and have a ritual burning of the palms after Mass.

A Day of Repentance:

The distribution of ashes reminds us of our own mortality and calls us to repentance. In the early Church, Ash Wednesday was the day on which those who had sinned, and who wished to be readmitted to the Church, would begin their public penance. The ashes that we receive are a reminder of our own sinfulness, and many Catholics leave them on their foreheads all day as a sign of humility.

Taking Stock of Our Spiritual Life:

This fasting and abstinence is not simply a form of penance, however; it is also a call for us to take stock of our spiritual lives. As Lent begins, we should set out specific spiritual goals we would like to reach before Easter and decide how we will pursue them—for instance, by going to daily Mass when we can and receiving the Sacrament of Confession more often.

[Source: http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/CU/ac0204.asp](http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/CU/ac0204.asp)

Reminder

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

Love Offering

Jan. 22, 2010 \$ 896.00
Jan. 29, 2010 \$ 1,069.00
Feb. 05, 2010 No P&W
Feb. 12, 2010 No P&W

Thank you for your generosity!

February Calendar

Feb. 05 First Friday Eucharistic
Celebration-Cancelled
12 P&W Cancelled
19 Praise & Worship
26 Praise & Worship

Comunity Calendar

Feb. 22-25
Medical Mission (w/ BLD Newark)
Mauban, Quezon, Philippines
Mar. 5-7
Youth Life in Spirit Seminar #4 *
May 7-9
Life in Spirit Seminar #10 *
Jun. 12
Agony in the Garden/
Washing of the Feet Retreat *
Jul. 9-12
Aspirants Retreat *
Jul. 31-Aug. 2
Family Encounter #4
Malvern, PA
Sep. 17-19
Solo Parent Encounter #3
Holy Family, MD
Nov. 12-14
Marriage Encounter #11
Dulles Hilton, VA

*Time & Venue – TBD
Please check our website www.bldwashington.com
for 2010 Schedule of Events.

Teaching Schedule

Feb. 19 - **Intro to Commitment**
For commitment candidates
After P&W
OLV auditorium/classroom
Feb. 21 - **4 Basic Truths/Basics of Prayer**
For SE3 – 2:00 - 5:00 PM
Juanitez residence
Feb. 26 - **Basics of Prayer**
For ME10 & make-up for others
After P&W
OLV auditorium/classroom
Feb. 27 - **4 Basic Truths**
For ME10 & make-up for others
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Our Lady of Good Counsel
Vienna, VA
- **Christian Parenting**
ME10 & make-up for other parents
1:00 - 5:00 PM
Our Lady of Good Counsel
Vienna, VA
- **Spiritual Warfare**
LSS7 & make-up for older classes
1:00 - 5:00 PM
Our Lady of Good Counsel
Vienna, VA
Feb. 28 - **Teachings of Christ DVD Series**
For Covenanted Members
Time & Venue TBD
- **Christian Maturity Program 2**
(Part3)
Repairing Wrongdoing/Suffering
LSS 8 & make-up for older classes
1:00 - 4:00 PM
McCarrick Center, Wheaton, MD

