



# EPHPHATHA BLD NEW YORK ROCKLAND

BLD Covenant Community, Archdiocese of New York, Volume VI Issue 12, December 4, 2015

## COUNSELS

**Community Word:** God gave us Jesus Christ to be our way to salvation.

**Theme:** We believe Jesus Christ is our way to salvation when we remain vigilant as we await His coming.

**Promise:** "I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah." (Jer 33:13b)

### Reflection:

The words of Jesus at the start of Luke's gospel are not meant to instill fear. Rather, they are meant to assure us that no matter what difficulties we face or encounter in life, God is in control. In the end, Jesus will come in power and glory and all will be well for those who are faithful.

Advent signals a new beginning, a chance for a fresh start in our physical life and in our spiritual life. As we open a new liturgical year, we are reminded that we should not lose sight of the bigger picture of our faith, especially spiritual realities. We should not allow the smaller view of our present concerns and difficulties to blind us to the many blessings, grace and joys we receive that far outweigh our disappointments.

God's promises are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. In Jeremiah's time, things were disheartening for the people of Judah. They saw a string of failures except for the reign of King David, whom they loved, but whose time was over and long past. David's line and days of greatness were gone, and God's promises were also in the past and today and the now



## First Sunday in Advent

seemed unreal. Like Jeremiah, Paul addresses his exhortation to a people who were going through a difficult period of persecution and conflict, so he encourages them to abound in love that they may find the strength to endure, for the Lord, he assures them "is with us".

Our world today is worlds apart from that in which Jeremiah and St Paul were writing. Technology has brought changes undreamed of in the past. We need to find new ways of relating to others, of showing faith, strengthening family bonds, bonds of friendship and community, and more importantly, to do what is right and just.

Advent should be a quiet, gentle time, yet the gospel describes global anguish and the end of the world. What Jesus is saying is that, when everything seems to have collapsed, people will see the Son of Man coming with great power and glo-

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**COUNSELS** (continued from page 1)

ry. Before the new world comes, the old has to be cleared away - *“when these things begin to happen, stand up straight and raise your head because your ransom, your redemption is near at hand,”* (Lk 21:28). Advent is not just a time to wait for Christmas, but a time to prepare for the coming of Christ into our life with new power. It is a time, not only for traditional Christmas celebrations, but for decisions to recommit our life to God, to make time to respond to those deep stirrings of the soul to Christ’s grace that we may to grow with whatever has changed in our life.

To apply the words of the gospel to our circumstances, this Advent, when we hear God’s whispered call to forgive, to pray, to renew the commitments we have made, we should look up, lift our head because those are the inspirations inviting us to deeper life, deeper truth, deeper love that can ours. When these things begin to happen for us, the Son of David and the King of Glory, is ready to come to be in our life. We may have to clear away debris - questionable behavior - that obstructs the way. Great moments of grace are not lost in the past, but a stronger life of grace, a new life and brighter new future is possible for us. Advent reminds us that what is at hand for the watchful and prayerful follower of Christ is not disaster but redemption, a new day and new life in Christ not just for the world but for each of us in the BLD community. *“They will stand up straight and raise their heads...”*

Such is the glorious destiny awaiting us if we accept the thousand small opportunities offered by our family, neighbors, workmates, brothers and sisters in Christ to overcome our inborn selfishness and stretch our hearts to include those around us.

**TITHES & LOVE OFFERINGS**

November	6	\$ 608
	13	531
	20	<u>684</u>
Total		\$1,823

*Thank you for your generosity!*

**BIRTHDAYS**

Froilan Quirante	Dec. 4
Vince Mirasol	Dec. 10
Caroline Jorolan	Dec. 10
Hermie Paderon	Dec. 12
Susan Berman	Dec. 12
Lucille Ermita	Dec. 13
Angeli Miane	Dec. 16
Angelly Miane	Dec. 18
Victoria Gatchalian	Dec. 23
Mary Sunga	Dec. 24
Luisa Mendoza	Dec. 25
Christian Fourcade	Dec. 26
Lourdes Alas	Dec. 26
Grenico Mutia	Dec. 27
Penny Kiraly	Dec. 28

**ANNIVERSARIES**

Sean & Patricia Sparrow	Dec. 6
Leni & Tita Tiongson	Dec. 6
Art & Aileen Del Prado	Dec. 17
Crisanto Jr. & Hyde Amano	Dec. 19
Victor & Mila Malantic	Dec. 19
Ralph & Lucy Almonte	Dec. 21
Emil & Thelma De Guzman	Dec. 21
Eric & Claire Macalintal	Dec. 22
Lou & Gayle Alejandro	Dec. 26

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

Dec. 5	<b>COMMUNITY TEACHING</b> For LSS 1-10 Christian Discipline Christian Community Christian Servanthood
	For LSS 1-11 New Creation Reality Growth in Prayer Classroom 5 or 7 11:30 to 4:00 pm
Dec. 11	Christmas Party St. Augustine’s Church Mass starts at 7:30 pm
Dec. 18	Simbang Gabi 8:00 pm St. Francis de Assissi Church West Nyack, NY