



PART FOUR:

Stewardship Reflections on the Liturgy of the Word

Reading Reflections – Cycle A

PART FOUR: STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS ON THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

CYCLE A (MATTHEW)

The following reflections on the Cycle A readings of the Liturgy of the Word are designed to stimulate your own thoughts and reflections on God's message to us as Christian stewards. Your reflections and thoughts, as well as the reflections presented here can then be the basis for homilies, lay witness testimony, and other guideposts along your stewardship journey.

First Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Isaiah 2:1-5

- A good steward uses God's gifts and guidance to seek peace.

Psalm 122:1-9

- Good stewards show gratitude for the Lord's gifts.
- Christian stewardship begins with developing a deeper prayer life.

Second Reading – Romans 13:11-14

- Do our actions show we are Christ's disciples?

Gospel Reading – Matthew 24:37-44

- The start of Advent reminds us not to put off our stewardship. Be prepared, the Lord is coming! (Used with permission from the Archdiocese of St. Louis, www.archstl/stewardship, Stewardship Bulletin Inserts, December 2007 – March 2008).

Stewardship Thought

Good stewards know that they are accountable to God for what they have and are, and they strive to live in readiness... (Used with permission from Our Sunday Visitor, *Stewardship by the Book: Bulletin Bits Based on the Sunday Readings*, by Sharon Hueckel, Second Edition 2004, page 7).

Immaculate Conception (December 8)

First Reading – Genesis 3:9-15, 20

- Do we try to follow God's will as stewards, or our own in disobedience of His commands?

Psalm 98:1-4

- Good stewards praise God for all of His blessings bestowed upon them.

Second Reading – Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12

- Christian stewards understand that God chooses us to do His will for His praise and glory.



Gospel – Luke 1:26-38

- Mary is the model steward — completely trusting in God. We are truly thankful to God for the gift of His Son.

Stewardship Thought

Mary's Immaculate Conception prepared her for her unique role as the Mother of God. We, too, have been given all the gifts we need to do the work to which God calls us. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us that we may have the courage to say “yes!” when God calls (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 35).

Second Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Isaiah 11:1-10

- Scripture inspires stewards to reflect on God's peace and justice.

Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17

- Christian stewards share their time, talent, and treasure in love and justice with the poor and the needy.

Second Reading – Romans 15:4-9

- As a form of prayer, good stewards seek encouragement and hope from Scripture.
- Stewards welcome others in our parishes and communities.

Gospel – Matthew 3:1-12

- When we repent, we are grateful for God's great gift of reconciliation.

Stewardship Thought

As Christmas approaches, do we do whatever it takes to find that “perfect gift” for a loved one? Do we try to outdo last year's gifts? Do we keep in mind that our weekly sacrificial gift to the parish comes first — not what's left after bills are paid and gifts are purchased?

Do you bear good fruit for Christ? Or do you spend your time, talent, and treasure constantly acquiring more toys, clothes, and junk? (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Isaiah 35:1-6, 10

- God is generous in providing His abundance. We should praise Him at all times.
- Good stewards experience joy and gladness when the Lord comes first in our life.

Psalm 146:6-10

- The Lord is faithful, just, and powerful. He is our source of strength.
- Christian stewards give praise to God for all of our gifts.

Second Reading – James 5:7-10

- Stewardship involves praying for the gift of patience when dealing with life's hardships.

Gospel – Matthew 11:2-11

The good steward recognizes every blessing in life as a miracle from God and strives to use those gifts for God's honor and glory (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Stewardship Thought

Each of us has his or her own role to play in the coming of the Kingdom of God. John the Baptist was called to be herald of the Messiah, preparing the way of the Lord. To what is the Lord calling me? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 7).

Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Isaiah 7:10-14

- Mary is the first disciple of Jesus. She accepted God's will without question. As Christian stewards, do we do the same?

Psalm 24:1-6

- A steward is richly blessed who places God above all things.

Second Reading – Romans 1:1-7

- A good steward, through reading Scripture, seeks the gifts of faith, grace, and peace from God through Jesus Christ.
- God calls all of us to be holy.

Gospel – Matthew 1:18-24

- Stewards joyfully acknowledge Emmanuel — “*God is with us*” — as God's ultimate gift for our salvation.
- Like Joseph, Christian stewards put their complete trust in God.

Stewardship Thought

When he discovered that Mary was with child, Joseph resolved to end their engagement with as little disgrace as possible. But obedient to the voice of God, he changed those plans ... God grant that I may be as open to the leading of the Holy Spirit! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 7).

Christmas (Vigil)

First Reading – Isaiah 62:1-5

- Just as He did for the Israelites returning from captivity, God promised a new day of salvation for us. As good stewards, do we show gratitude and praise Him for this great gift?



Psalm 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29

- Our Lord God makes a covenant with us. We must rejoice in His favor and return to Him our love.

Second Reading – Acts of the Apostles 13:16-17, 22-25

- God brought forth Jesus, our Savior, from the house of David and heralded by John the Baptist. As Christian stewards, what gratitude do we show to our Lord God for this great gift?

Gospel – Matthew 1:1-25

- “Emmanuel” means “God is with us.” Let us as good stewards follow Mary and Joseph’s example by putting our complete trust in God.

Stewardship Thought

All creation rejoices in praise and glory to God that the prophecies are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. As Christian stewards, our gratitude should be unending for this greatest of gifts.

Christmas (Midnight)

First Reading – Isaiah 9:1-6

- Christ is in our midst today. Do we recognize Him?
- The lights of Christmas remind us that Christ is the Light of the World.

Psalm 96:1-3, 11-13

- All praise, honor, and glory to Christ, our Savior.

Second Reading – Titus 2:11-14

- Christian stewards, as disciples of Christ, are eager to do what is good.

Gospel – Luke 2:1-14

- There was “*no room for them in the inn.*” Do we welcome Christ into our hearts?

Stewardship Thought

The birth of Jesus was part of God’s plan for the redemption of mankind. God also has a plan for each of us. Are we open to receive His plan?

Christmas (Dawn)

First Reading – Isaiah 62:11-12

- The joy of Christmas is that we are redeemed by the Lord.

Psalm 97:1, 6, 11-12

- Give thanks to the Lord, our light and our salvation.



Second Reading – Titus 3:4-7

- In Baptism, because of God’s mercy, we are renewed through the Holy Spirit. We must be grateful for this great gift.

Gospel – Luke 2:15-20

- The shepherds answered God’s call proclaimed by the angels to seek Christ and worship Him. Do we make that same effort to seek Him?

Stewardship Thought

Pray that God gives us wisdom to understand His will and the strength and courage to act as His disciples.

Christmas (Day)

First Reading – Isaiah 52:7-10

- Like the Israelites of old, today’s Christian stewards also proclaim, “*God is King!*”
- Jesus Christ brings us His Good News.

Psalm 98:1-6

- Christian stewards use their talents to praise and thank God in prayer, song, and instrument for His great gifts to us.

Second Reading – Hebrews 1:1-6

- Our heavenly Father proclaims Jesus, His Son, and tells the angels to worship Him. Can we do less?

Gospel Reading – John 1:1-18

- The Word becomes flesh; God became man. God gives us the greatest gift of all — His Son, Jesus, Who will open for us the path to eternal salvation.

Stewardship Thought

“For unto us is born this day a Savior!” In response to so great a love, only the gift of my whole self will do. You have given us Yourself, dear Lord; in love and thanksgiving, I commit myself afresh to You (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 7).

Feast of the Holy Family

First Reading – Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

- Good parents are a blessing from God. Good Christian stewards honor and care for their parents whatever the circumstances may be.

Psalm 128:1-5

- As Christian stewards, we realize our spouse and children are true blessings from God and are to be nurtured.



Second Reading – Colossians 3:12-21

- As God's chosen ones, we are to put on compassion, reconciliation, and love for one another.
- A good steward does everything in the name of Jesus and follows His Word.
- The family is called the domestic Church. Love and respect one another.

Gospel – Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

- Stewards realize their faith and God's grace will see their families through hard times.

Stewardship Thought

Parents who practice good stewardship use their time and talents to pass on their faith, and to educate, to nurture, and to protect their children.

New Year's Day – Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God

First Reading – Numbers 6:22-27

- Christian stewards recognize that God blesses us and acknowledge that true peace and happiness come from Him.

Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8

- Stewards give God glory and praise for their bountiful blessings and His mercy.

Second Reading – Galatians 4:4-7

- As Christian stewards, we understand we are children of God through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel – Luke 2:16-21

- The shepherds went to Bethlehem at God's instruction through the angels. Do we as good stewards listen to God's Word and then act on it?
- Mary, Mother of God, teaches us how to be her Son's disciples.

Stewardship Thought

New Year's Day provides a perfect opportunity to ask ourselves the question: Does my life reflect gratitude for all that my loving Father has given me? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 8).

Second Sunday after Christmas

First Reading – Sirach 24:1-2, 8-12

- As good stewards, we gratefully accept God's call to live in Him as our Creator, to do His will, and to follow His commandments.

Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20

- Christian stewards praise and glorify the Lord for His abundant and special blessings to us.

Second Reading – Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18

- Our heavenly Father gives us His Son, Jesus, and every spiritual blessing. As Christian stewards, we show our gratitude by seeking holiness and being filled with love for God and one another through the Church.

Gospel – John 1:1-18

- Jesus is the Incarnated Word — God becoming flesh. He fills us with His redeeming love, which we share in gratitude with others.

Stewardship Thought

During this holy Christmas season, we are filled with joy at the coming of our Savior. As Christian stewards, do we answer His call to follow His Word?

The Epiphany of the Lord

First Reading – Isaiah 60:1-6

- As exhibited by the Magi prophecy, Christian stewards believe God’s gift of salvation is open to all who seek Him.
- Christ is the light that guides us to Him.

Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13

- God exhorts His stewards to share their time, talent, and treasure with the poor and oppressed.

Second Reading – Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

- God, through Christ, gives His gift of grace to all those who seek to be members of the Body of Christ.
- Christian stewards welcome everyone as members of the Body of Christ regardless of their situation in life.

Gospel – Matthew 2:1-12

- By the story of the Magi’s gifts to Jesus, a Christian steward is reminded how much God blesses us with many gifts.
- The Magi journeyed far to pay homage to our King. Do we make time for Him in our lives? Do we trust God in all things?

Stewardship Thought

Today we remember the three wise men from the East who come to pay homage to the infant Jesus, bringing Him rich gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The gifts we bring — our time, service, and some share of what we earn for the work we do — are especially precious in His sight (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 8).



The Baptism of the Lord

First Reading – Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

- A faithful steward accepts God-given talents gratefully and shares them in justice with those in need.

Psalm 29:1-4, 3, 9-10

- In gratitude, Christian stewards give glory and praise to God.

Second Reading – Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38

- Christian stewards acknowledge that God’s gift of faith is attainable by all who seek it.

Gospel – Matthew 3:13-17

- John’s Baptism of Jesus encourages us as Christian stewards to reflect on our own Baptism and continually seek to do God’s will.

Stewardship Thought

Our Baptism, like the Lord’s, is a consecration to service. The Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on stewardship reminds us that “... *there is a fundamental obligation arising from the sacrament of Baptism that people place their gifts, their resources — their selves — at God’s service in and through the Church*” (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

- God calls us as Christian stewards to serve Him and each other using the many gifts He gives us.
- Making Christian stewardship a way of life involves a true conversion of the heart.

Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-10

- Doing God’s will is the delight of a Christian steward.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

- Christian stewards are sanctified in Christ and called to be holy as members of His body.

Gospel – John 1:29-34

- John’s proclamation of Jesus as “*Lamb of God*” recalls for us Christ’s gift of the Eucharist.

Stewardship Thought

Today’s responsorial psalm is the theme song of the good steward: “*Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.*” May I, too, stand ready to offer myself and my gifts in service to God. See Psalm 40 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 7).

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 8:23-9:3

- Being a Christian steward can bring abundant joy to one's life, even in the face of hardship and gloom.

Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14

- A good steward completely trusts in the Lord and wants Him completely in his or her life, even in the face of hardship and gloom.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17

- Christian stewards, through the sacrifice of our Lord, Jesus Christ, avoid divisions but instead seek unity of purpose in service to others.

Gospel – Matthew 4:12-23

- A true disciple of Jesus sacrifices all to answer His call to follow Him.

Stewardship Thought

Peter and Andrew, James and John all respond *immediately* to the call of Christ. May I be open to God's call and as ready to use my talents in His service as those first disciples were! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Presentation of the Lord (February 2)

First Reading – Malachi 3:1-4

- As good stewards, do we allow the Lord to use our talents to do good works?

Psalm 24:7-10

- The Lord is King; we should welcome Him in our hearts.

Second Reading – Hebrews 2:14-18

- Jesus is faithful to the Father and was tested in His suffering. In our quest to be good Christian stewards, can we say the same? Do we ask for His strength when we are tested?

Gospel – Luke 2:22-40

- As the first step in making stewardship a way of life, have we “consecrated” ourselves to the Lord?

Stewardship Thought

When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple, they offered a sacrificial gift “*in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.*” An offering of a specific size or kind is not “dictated” when we bring our gifts to the altar at Mass. Is my gift reflective of the blessings I have received? See Luke 2:24 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 33).



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

- Good stewards humbly acknowledge their gifts from God and their dependence on Him.

Psalm 146:6-10

- Christian stewards acknowledge God as their source of strength.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

- God raises us up through our lives as Christ’s disciples.

Gospel – Matthew 5:1-12

- Christian stewards who profess to be “poor in spirit”, recognize their complete dependence on God. They strive to do good for others.

Stewardship Thought

“Blessed are they who ... do what they do for the sake of the kingdom” (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 58:7-10

- With a sincere heart, good stewards share their blessings from God to feed the hungry, to shelter the homeless, and to provide clothes for those in need.
- The Lord blesses those who bless others.

Psalm 112:4-9

- Good Christian stewards conduct their affairs in a just and honest manner.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

- As stewards, are we humble enough to realize that true wisdom comes from God?

Gospel – Matthew 5:13-16

- Through their good deeds, stewards exhibit true discipleship and thereby glorify God.

Stewardship Thought

The Gospel today reminds us that our lives and our deeds must serve as examples to others, pointing the way to the Father. Not for our own benefit do we labor, but so that others may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Sirach 15:15-20

- We are given free choice. As Christian stewards, will we choose to follow God's will or our own?

Psalm: 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34

- True discipleship entails seeking God with all our hearts and following His laws.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 2:6-10

- As Christian stewards, we should put our faith in God's wisdom and strive to love Him.

Gospel – Matthew 5:17-37

- Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets. As His disciples, Christian stewards follow the law, reconcile with family members, are loyal in marriage, and are true in word and deed.

Stewardship Thought

Christian stewardship involves more than just the gift we bring to the altar. Today's readings say clearly that it is fidelity to God's law that makes our offering acceptable (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18

- Good stewards strive to be holy as the Lord is holy and to help their neighbors.

Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13

- Christian stewards realize all blessings come from God and He is kind and merciful.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 3:16-23

- Are we good stewards of our physical body by realizing it is to be cared for as a "temple of God"?

Gospel – Matthew 5:38-48

- Jesus challenges us to "*love our enemies.*" In our journey as Christian stewards, how are we doing in following this directive?

Stewardship Thought

In today's first reading, the Israelites are urged to love their neighbors as themselves. In the Gospel, Jesus spells out how we are to do that — to give generously to those who ask of us and not turn our backs on those who seek to borrow (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 49:14-15

- Trust in God; He will not forget us.

Psalm 62:2-3, 6-7, 8-9

- Stewards trust in God in all things and at all times. He is our rock that is our hope.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

- Good stewards strive to become “*servants of Christ*,” knowing that the Lord will judge us.

Gospel – Matthew 6:24-34

- Christian stewards know God will provide for us. Which master do we serve — God or money?

Stewardship Thought

“*Stewards of the mysteries of God*” — that’s what St. Paul says we are, in today’s second reading. And the first requirement, he says, is that we be trustworthy. Entrusted with the gifts of faith, do I share it as gratefully and as generously as I do my time, talents, and my treasure? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

Ash Wednesday

First Reading – Joel 2:12-18

- Stewardship means putting God first in our life.
- God is merciful, rich in kindness.

Psalm 51:3-6, 12-14, 17

- As Christian stewards, we acknowledge our sinfulness and the need to draw closer to God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Second Reading – 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2

- True stewards are disciples of Christ whatever the cost may be.
- Are we, as a parish, an “ambassador for Christ”?

Gospel – Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

- Prayer is a fundamental principle of Christian stewardship.
- As good stewards we give back to God our “first fruits.”

Stewardship Thought

Today’s Gospel reminds us that all of our giving — whether of alms or of service — must always be done for love of God alone and not for the applause of our brothers and sisters (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 8).

First Sunday of Lent

First Reading – Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

- Good stewardship involves cultivating wisely God’s gifts of the earth.
- God is our strength to overcome our human weakness.

Psalm 51:3-6, 12-14, 17

- Christian stewards understand we need God’s mercy when we fail to live out His way.

Second Reading – Romans 5:12-19

- A grateful steward acknowledges God’s gifts of grace through His Son, Jesus Christ, Who makes salvation possible to all who seek it.

Gospel – Matthew 4:1-11

- Jesus fasts in the desert and refuses to listen to the devil. In the face of the world’s temptations, do we call on Jesus to help us avoid sin?

Stewardship Thought

What temptations lure us from the path of discipleship? Possessions? Pride? Power? Oh, Lord, create for us a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit within us! See Psalm 51 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 8).

Second Sunday of Lent

First Reading – Genesis 12:1-4

- God calls all of us to leave behind our old ways and to follow Him, placing our complete trust in Him. Some of the old ways that we may have to leave behind might be materialism and selfishness and greed. Yet God promises to show us a new land, a better place ... (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22

- Good stewards put their full faith, hope, and trust in God.

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 1:8-10

- Disciples of Christ are not afraid to suffer for the Gospel because their strength comes from God.

Gospel – Matthew 17:1-9

- Will God be pleased with us when it comes time to account for our stewardship?

Stewardship Thought

“Mature disciples make a conscious decision to follow Jesus, no matter what the cost”
(United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [USCCB], *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, Tenth Anniversary Edition, 2002, page 42).

Third Sunday of Lent

(Use Cycle A readings during Cycle B and C years if your parish has RCIA catechumens and candidates.)

First Reading – Exodus 17:3-7

- Do we, as Christian stewards, show gratitude to the Lord for all of His blessings, or do we complain when life is difficult?

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9

- Good stewards in praise and worship thank God for His gift of our life and salvation.

Second Reading – Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

- Faith, peace, and grace are all gifts from God through His Son, Jesus Christ.
- God's love comes to us through the Holy Spirit and that gives us hope in our Christian stewardship journey.

Gospel – John 4:5-42

- Jesus reminds us that material things, even something as basic as water, can never satisfy us for long. When we build our lives around material possessions we always want more. The satisfaction only comes when we follow Jesus (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Stewardship Thought

When Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, she opened the door for a life changing relationship with Him. Scripture says her testimony drew many others to Him as well. We, too, must be ready to respond whenever and wherever the Lord speaks to us and be prepared for His message to change our lives! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 8).

Fourth Sunday of Lent

(Use Cycle A readings during Cycle B and C years if your parish has RCIA catechumens and candidates.)

First Reading – 1 Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

- How often do we invest our time, talent, and treasure in creating an appearance that does not matter at all to God? We strive to impress with our clothing, home, career, possessions, car, and other marks of distinction. But none of these illusions of greatness will impress God. Instead, He will look into our hearts to see how much we loved Him, how much we loved others, and how we show all that love by the way we used our time, talents, and treasure here on earth (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Psalm 23:1-6

- The Lord's goodness and kindness provides all our needs.

Second Reading – Ephesians 5:8-14

- The Lord is the light that guides us on our journey to Him.
- Christian stewardship requires a conversion of the heart — a new way of life.



Gospel – John 9:1-41

- As Christian stewards, do we see our lives through the eyes of true faith or are we blinded by our quest for material wealth?

Stewardship Thought

The blind man was willing to let Jesus minister to him and willingly did all that Jesus asked of him. The Pharisees were more resistant to His message, spending their time and energy to disprove the miracle. Which am I more like, the man born blind or the Pharisees? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 8).

Fifth Sunday of Lent

(Use Cycle A readings during Cycle B and C years if your parish has RCIA catechumens and candidates.)

First Reading – Ezekiel 37:12-14

- Christian stewards are thankful for God’s precious gift of life.
- Lent is a time for the parish’s spiritual renewal.

Psalm 130:1-8

- Trust in the Lord is important for good stewardship. If we are going to give to God first then we must be willing to trust that God will always provide for us ... Good stewards have found wonderful peace and comfort in this level of trust. How much do you trust in the Lord? (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Second Reading – Romans 8:8-11

- Christian stewards shed their old “self” by accepting the gift of the Holy Spirit and put on a new “self.”

Gospel – John 11:1-45

- As good stewards, we believe all that we are and all that we have, including our lives, are true gifts from God.
- Jesus promises “*everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.*”

Stewardship Thought

When Jesus learned about the illness of His friend, Lazarus, He responded, “*This illness is not to end in death; rather it is for God’s glory, that through it the Son of God may be glorified!*” Every aspect of our lives — our gifts as well as our sufferings — can, if surrendered to Christ, lead to blessings for others and ourselves. See John 11:4 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion

Procession Gospel – Matthew 21:1-11

- The people praise Jesus on His entrance into Jerusalem possibly because they think He will deliver them from the Romans. Yet within a short time, many will be calling to crucify Him. As Christian stewards, is our faith in Jesus steadfast or only caught up in the moment?

First Reading – Isaiah 50:4-7

- What vocation has been God’s blessing to you? Do you develop and cultivate this vocation through His grace and help?

Psalm 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24

- Through Christ’s suffering and humiliation, we are offered the gift of salvation to share in His glory.

Second Reading – Philippians 2:6-11

- Good stewards follow Jesus’ example of being the humble servant.

Gospel – Matthew 26:14-27:66

- Before His passion and death, Jesus gave us the gift of the Eucharist. The very word should cause us to thankfully reflect on all of God’s gifts to us.
- We look upon Judas Iscariot as a traitor. Yet how many times do we ask the world, “*What are you willing to give me if I hand Him over to you*”? Do we trade Jesus for money, for possessions, for power? Or do we make serving Him and working with Him our top priority? (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

Stewardship Thought

“*Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*” shouts the crowd in today’s Gospel. May *we* be always ready to share our blessings when *we* are sent in His name! See Luke 19:38 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord’s Supper

First Reading – Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

- In today’s first reading, the Lord instructs Moses and the Israelites to prepare a year-old lamb without blemish for the Passover sacrifice as an offering back to God of the “first fruits” of their livestock. The Passover meal is a foreshadowing of the Eucharist, Christ’s sacrifice for us. As Christian stewards, what sacrificial gifts of our time, talent, and treasure do we bring to the Eucharistic table?

Psalm 116:12-13, 15-18

- The psalmist, in response to his question, “*How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good He has done for me?*” proclaims, “*I am your servant, the son of your handmaid ...*” As Christian stewards, we realize that we need to use our God-given skills and talents to serve our fellow brothers and sisters in love and gratitude.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- In today’s second reading, St. Paul reminds the Corinthian Church how Jesus totally gives of Himself in the Eucharist. As Christian stewards, it is the foundation of our faith that *we believe* in His *true presence* in this Most Holy Sacrament — and not just a symbolic gesture.

Gospel – John 13:1-15

- In today's Gospel, our humble Lord washes the feet of His disciples, showing them an example of how they are to serve one another. We, too, as Christian stewards strive to follow Jesus' model of service in sharing our God-given talents with our neighbor, especially those less fortunate.

Stewardship Thought

On this awesome and holy night, we must reflect as grateful stewards how much Jesus loves us. He loves us so much that He instituted the Holy Eucharist to continue His life with us in forgiving our sins, healing our brokenness, and strengthening our faith in Him. The very word, Eucharist, means "thanksgiving" and, for His sacrifice, we stand in awe and total gratitude.

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion

First Reading – Isaiah 52:13-53:12

- Given the prophet Isaiah's poetic description of a man's suffering and humiliation, and ultimate justification and triumph, Christians take this reading to refer to Jesus' suffering centuries later. As disciples of Jesus, we, too, know we need to take up our cross daily and follow Him.

Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25

- We take refuge in the Lord, our strength in the face of the world's humiliation and ridicule as we strive to be disciples of Christ by following His way.

Second Reading – Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

- Jesus, our high priest, died once for the sins of all humanity. He sympathizes with us, for He, too, was tempted. Do we, as Christian stewards, gratefully acknowledge the magnitude of His sacrifice, which makes salvation open to all who seek it?

Passion – John 18:1-19:42

- In John's Passion account, when the soldiers and temple guard declare they are seeking "*Jesus the Nazorean,*" Jesus says, "*I AM.*" Even though they came to arrest Him, the power of His response caused them all to fall to the ground. As Christ's disciples, we acknowledge His union with God the Father and Holy Spirit and realize what awesome love He has for us.
- From the cross, Jesus presented His Mother to the world to be our model of Christian stewardship.

Stewardship Thought

We sometimes wonder why this day is called "Good Friday" because it recalls Jesus' trial and brutal scourging and death. Yet, as disciples of Christ, we know that without His suffering and death, we would not have His resurrection and promise of eternal life. By reflecting on this day, we, as Christian stewards, become truly grateful of Christ's ultimate sacrifice for us.

Easter Vigil

First Reading – Genesis 1:1-2:2

- The first and second chapters of the Book of Genesis tell how God created the universe, all creatures, and things. On the sixth day, He created man and woman in His likeness and image. As good stewards of the earth, it is our responsibility to take care of God's creation. As children of God, we are truly thankful for His gift of life and it is our responsibility to protect all human life from conception to natural death. How seriously do we take these responsibilities?

Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35

- Good stewards rejoice in God's creation and His power and wisdom in bringing it all forth.

– or –

Psalm 33:4-7, 12-13, 20-22

- The Lord is the Creator of all things. As good stewards, we put our trust in Him and gratefully pray for His kindness to us.

Second Reading – Genesis 22:1-18

- In the second reading, God tests Abraham's love for Him by asking him to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Abraham does not question God's directive. Out of Abraham's fidelity to Him, God spared Isaac's life and blessed Abraham abundantly. As Christian stewards, do we pray to find and do God's will in our lives?

Psalm 16:5, 8-11

- We gratefully rejoice that God is always with us to guide us on His path to eternal life.

Third Reading – Exodus 14:15-15:1

- In the third reading, God delivers Moses and the ancient Israelite community from Pharaoh and his army by parting the Red Sea. By trusting in God to save them, Moses and his people escape through the parted sea while Pharaoh's army is destroyed when the rushing waters pour over them. What a powerful lesson to trust God in our times of trouble! As Christian stewards, how much do we trust in the Lord?

Psalm – Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18

- As Christian stewards, we gratefully praise the Lord for His power and steadfast protection of His people who strive to follow Him.

Fourth Reading – Isaiah 54:5-14

- The fourth reading takes place during the Babylonian captivity many centuries before Christ. Because of their grave sins against God, the ancient Israelites' homeland, including their sacred temple in Jerusalem, was destroyed, most of them taken captive, and sent to Babylon. Isaiah's imagery of an angry husband taking back his forsaken wife out of mercy and pity symbolizes God's mercy for His people, the captive Israelites, and for us when we turn away from God through sin. God, too, will forgive our sins through Jesus Christ if we, as His disciples, humble ourselves to seek reconciliation with Him.

Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-13

- As Christian stewards, we recognize God's great gift of forgiveness when we fail to be faithful to His commands.

Fifth Reading – Isaiah 55:1-11

- God promises His blessed comfort and nourishment to those who seek Him and do His will. God expects us as Christian stewards, to follow His Word and do His will throughout the world as He intends.

Psalm – Isaiah 12:2-6

- Good stewards give thanks and praise to the Lord for giving us strength and courage to follow Him as His disciples.

Sixth Reading – Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4

- In the sixth reading, Wisdom is depicted as a woman who assists God in His works. She is one we should seek as we try to walk in the way of God in prudence and peace. Wisdom also is included as one of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. In our daily prayer life as Christian stewards, do we ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and guidance?

Psalm 19:8-11

- The law of the Lord is perfect, right, and trustworthy. The hearts of good stewards rejoice in the rewards of following His way.

Seventh Reading – Ezekiel 36:16-28

- In the seventh reading, the prophet Ezekiel blasts the Israelites for profaning God's name and worshipping idols. Because of their sins, they are dispersed among the nations during the Babylonian exile. Yet God forgave them, just as He forgives us for His sake and His love for us. In return, He commands us to follow His law, even in the face of human laws that are contrary to His. As good Christian stewards, let us pray for strength in this modern world to be diligent in our obedience to God's laws as taught by the Church.

Psalm 42:3, 5; 43:3-4

- Good stewards thirst to be with God forever. We give thanks in song and instrument in His house where we worship Him.

– or –

Psalm 51:12-15, 18-19

- God forgives us when we stray from His path. As good stewards, we recognize our failings and ask God to create clean hearts in us.

Epistle – Romans 6:3-11

- St. Paul tells us that through the gift of Baptism, we die to sin and also share in Christ's death. But through Christ's death we also share in His resurrection. We have life anew — a rebirth. Christian stewardship too requires a conversion of heart and mind — a new way of life. Where are we as Christian stewards on our stewardship journey?

Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

- The psalmist says it all for us: “*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, His mercy endures forever.*” We do well to thank and praise Him for His many gifts of grace.

Gospel – Matthew 28:1-10

- In the Gospel reading, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary approach Jesus’ tomb to perform a humble service of anointing His body. They find an angel there who says, “*He has been raised exactly as He promised ... go tell His disciples.*” On their way from the tomb, Jesus appears to them and offers them peace. He promises His disciples will see Him. The women are both fearful and overjoyed with this Resurrection experience. Out of their act of kindness, they are the first to see the risen Jesus. As Christian stewards, let us, too, open our hearts and minds to the risen Lord.

Stewardship Thought

As our RCIA catechumens are Baptized, are Confirmed, and receive their First Holy Communion, may we, as good Christian stewards, welcome them with hospitable hearts into our faith communion. May we also be examples of true Christian stewardship to them by the way we share our time, talent, and treasure with our parish communion in the light of our risen Lord!

Easter Sunday

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 10:34, 37-43

- Jesus’ gifts of forgiveness of sin, salvation, and membership in His Church are open to all who seek Him.

Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

- As good stewards, we are thankful for our many blessings through the Lord’s goodness and power.

Second Reading – Colossians 3:1-4

- We can seek what is above by sharing what we have here on earth. This is what Christian stewardship is all about. We realize that anything we have here on earth is not nearly as important as being with Christ. Once we realize that, sharing what we have is easy (Archdiocese of St. Louis, *ibid.*).

– or –

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

- Through sincerity and truth in the Eucharist, the Christian community is renewed.

Gospel – John 20:1-9

- Very early in the morning after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb to anoint Jesus’ body with precious oils. The reward for this good and conscientious steward was to be among the first to know that Jesus had been raised from the dead! Alleluia! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

Stewardship Thought

Christ is risen! Our heavenly Father gives us the greatest gift of all: an opportunity for salvation through Jesus, His Son.

Second Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47

- Jesus' disciples in the early Church joined in prayer, the Eucharist, and sharing their possessions with the needy. Do we follow that example as Christian stewards?

Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

- As Christian stewards, we understand God is merciful and we should put our complete trust in Him. Rejoice in the Lord's day provided for us.

Second Reading – 1 Peter 1:3-9

- Christian stewards rejoice in Jesus' resurrection that gives faith and hope to share in His glory.

Gospel – John 20:19-31

- As good stewards we find peace through developing a closer relationship with Jesus, Who is our Lord and our God.

Stewardship Thought

- Jesus meets the need of each disciple. To the fearful in the upper room, He speaks words of peace. To doubting Thomas, He provides the tangible proof of His resurrection. What do I have to share that might meet someone else's need? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

Third Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 22-33

- As we practice Christian stewardship as a way of life, we find great joy in following our risen Lord.

Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-11

- As stewards striving to draw closer to God, we find great joy — joy that cannot be found in seeking the material possessions of this world.

Second Reading – 1 Peter 1:17-21

- God's gift of His Son is infinitely more precious than gold or silver, symbols of perishable worldly possessions.

Gospel – Luke 24:13-35

- Jesus' walk with the disciples to Emmaus shows us the way to our own discipleship through reading Scripture and celebrating His Eucharistic feast.



Stewardship Thought

The disciples on the road to Emmaus walked and talked with Jesus all day long, but it was not until they offered Him hospitality and He blessed and broke the bread that they recognized Him. Simple acts of loving kindness *still* reveal the presence of God in our midst (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

Fourth Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 36-41

- Christian stewardship is a conversion of mind and heart, a new way of life in the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 23:1-6

- Do we gratefully accept as stewards, God's gifts of love and goodness in our lives?

Second Reading – 1 Peter 2:20-25

- Through prayer, we ask the Lord to give us special graces to follow in His footsteps as we carry life's crosses.

Gospel – John 10:1-10

- As the Good Shepherd, Jesus offers us an abundant life. As Christian stewards, are we open to His offering?

Stewardship Thought

Jesus says, "*I came that they may have life, and have it to the full.*" Good stewards are grateful for the gifts of life and joyfully share their abundance with others. See John 10:10 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

Fifth Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7

- Do we give back to God, the "first fruits" of our labors and share our material resources with those in need?
- Is our parish a welcoming communion to visitors and newcomers?

Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19

- In various ways, good stewards offer praise to God. He loves those who are just and kind.

Second Reading – 1 Peter 2:4-9

- Our parish should be a spiritual "house," built on the cornerstone of our faith in Jesus, our risen Lord.
- We build our spirituality as good stewards through daily prayer.

Gospel – John 14:1-12

- Christian stewards know Jesus shows us the way to eternal life.

Stewardship Thought

“Those who have faith in me will do the works I do, and far greater than these,” Jesus tells His disciples. That’s quite an assignment for us as Christian stewards! See John 14:12 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 8:5-8, 14-17

- Through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion, we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the full life of discipleship in Jesus. Through the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, we are renewed in that discipleship.
- Good stewards set aside time daily to pray.

Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20

- Stewards sing out joyful praise and thanksgiving for God’s tremendous deeds for us.

Second Reading – 1 Peter 3:15-18

- As Christian stewards, we know Christ is our reason for hope and our model for doing good.

Gospel – John 14:15-21

- The Holy Spirit is a true gift from God and fulfills Jesus’ promise to never leave us as we pursue our journey as Christian stewards.

Stewardship Thought

Those who obey the commandments, Jesus says in today’s Gospel, are the ones who really love Him. Does my stewardship reveal my love for Jesus? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 9).

The Ascension of the Lord

(Celebrated Thursday following the Sixth Sunday of Easter or on the Seventh Sunday of Easter.)

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11

- In gratitude, Christian stewards gladly accept from God, as proclaimed by Jesus, the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 47:2-3, 6-9

- Good stewards live in a spirit of praise and thanksgiving to God for all of our blessings and for His glory.

Second Reading – Ephesians 1:17-23

- Stewards recognize wisdom as a gift from God to better see the riches of His glory.
- We should always strive to be good stewards of the Church, the Body of Christ on earth.

Gospel – Matthew 28:16-20

- In a spirit of stewardship, do we use our gifts to encourage our brothers and sisters in the Lord to be disciples of Jesus?

Stewardship Thought

Jesus ascended into heaven, blessing His disciples and promising that they would soon receive the power of the Holy Spirit. We who have received that promised gift of the Spirit are now empowered to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth — to use our time and talents to spread the Good News of salvation (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 34).

Seventh Sunday of Easter

(When the Ascension is not celebrated on Sunday)

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 1:12-14

- Prayer is a fundamental principle of Christian stewardship, and prayer in a community is powerful.

Psalm 27:1, 4, 7-8

- An excellent way for a good steward to communicate with God is through daily prayer.

Second Reading – 1 Peter 4:13-16

- Christian stewardship is our response to being a disciple of Christ. A good steward is not afraid to suffer for being His follower.

Gospel – John 17:1-11

- Jesus indicates in His prayer to the Father that *“everything You gave Me is from You ...”* Gratitude for God’s gifts of all that we are and we have is the foundation of Christian stewardship.

Stewardship Thought

In today’s Gospel, Jesus prays, *“I have given You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave me to do.”* Good stewards follow His example by using their time and talents for the glory of God. See John 17:4 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Pentecost Sunday

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

- God filled the Apostles with the Holy Spirit to go forth to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. As good stewards, do we call upon the Holy Spirit to inspire our lives?

Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-31, 34

- Christian stewards acknowledge all life is a tremendous gift from God, especially life in the Spirit.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13

- The Body of Christ, the Church, consists of many parts, all gifts from a loving God. Do we share our God-given blessings with our family, parish, and community?

Sequence

- In gratitude, we thank God for His gift of the Holy Spirit, Who pours out His grace upon us and shows us the way to salvation.

Gospel – John 20:19-23

- Peace comes from the Father through the Holy Spirit and our Lord, Jesus Christ. Do we use our talents to create peace among our brothers and sisters in the Lord?

Stewardship Thought

In the second reading today, St. Paul reminds the Corinthians, “*there are different gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different ministries, but the same Lord.*” How am I using my gifts for the common good? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 10).

Most Holy Trinity

First Reading – Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9

- Like Moses, Christian stewards strive to develop a stronger personal and community relationship with God, Who is kind and merciful.

Psalm – Daniel 3:52-55

- Even in time of heavy trials, faithful stewards bless and praise God for He is to be exalted above all.

Second Reading – 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

- Paul encouraged every Christian to encourage one another and to live in peace. Do we heed these inspired words of Scripture by practicing Christian stewardship — striving to live in peace, encouraging one another, and being quick to reconcile any differences, especially in our families and parish communion?

Gospel – John 3:16-18

- God demonstrated His tremendous love for us by sending His Son, Jesus, to show us the path to eternal life. As good stewards, are we grateful to God for this great gift?

Stewardship Thought

The Gospel today is sometimes called “the Gospel in miniature” because it so concisely sums up the Gospel message. In even more condensed form, “God loved ... God gave ...” is the paradigm for Christian stewardship — we give because we love (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 33).

Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*)

First Reading – Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16

- Good stewards strive to live by the Word of God and develop a deeper prayer life through reading and listening to Scripture. Scripture enhances devotion to the Eucharist, which becomes the focal point and strength of our lives.



Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20

- Good stewards thank God for His blessings of children, food, and peace in our families.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

- Christian stewardship promotes unity and fellowship in our parishes by encouraging Mass attendance and the partaking of the Eucharist.

Gospel – John 6:51-58

- Jesus is truly “the bread of life.” As Christian stewards, we are deeply grateful to God for this tremendous gift.

Stewardship Thought

The Scriptures today remind us that, “*we, though many, are one body for we all partake of the one loaf.*” How are we using our gifts of time and talent to build up the Body of Christ? See 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 33).

Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Deuteronomy 11:18, 26-28, 32

- God blesses those who obey His commandments. What false idols do we face as Christian stewards in today’s culture?

Psalm 31:2-4, 17, 25

- As a Christian steward, is God really “*my rock and my fortress,*” or do I put my faith in wealth and worldly possessions?

Second Reading – Romans 3:21-25, 28

- Christian stewards realize that God’s gift of redemption through Jesus Christ is open to all. In this spirit, our parish communion should be a welcoming place for all seeking discipleship with Jesus.

Gospel – Matthew 7:21-27

- Christian stewardship is a way of life, meaning we must not only listen to the Word of God, we must act according to His guidance. We must build our “house” on the rock of prayer and Scripture, and not on the sand of materialism.

Stewardship Thought

Today’s readings call all of us to active discipleship. It is not enough to know the commandments; we must actively obey them. It is not enough to hear the words of Jesus; we must act on them. Good stewards demonstrate their gratitude for the gift of faith by putting it into action (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Hosea 6:3-6

- “*Christian stewards recognize God as the creator of the universe. Stewardship of the world is expressed by jubilant appreciation of nature, whose God-given beauty is to be nurtured, not abused*” (USCCB, *ibid.*, page 26).

Psalm 50:1, 8, 12-15

- Stewards praise God for His beautiful gifts of nature. God entrusts us to use these gifts wisely.

Second Reading – Romans 4:18-25

- Abraham is a model of good stewardship, building his faith by trusting in God and giving glory to Him.

Gospel – Matthew 9:9-13

- Jesus offers us the gifts of love and mercy that we as His disciples are to cultivate within ourselves.

Stewardship Thought

“*It is love that I desire, not sacrifice,*” says Hosea in today’s first reading. But for love of us, Jesus sacrificed everything — even His life. Are my small sacrifices gifts of love and gratitude? See Hosea 6:6 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Exodus 19:2-6

- Like Moses, as Christian stewards we put our complete trust in God, Who calls us to be His special people.

Psalm 100:1-3, 5

- God created us and His love for us is everlasting. As Christian stewards, do we recognize this precious gift?

Second Reading – Romans 5:6-11

- Faithful stewards recognize that God’s gifts of love and reconciliation through Jesus’ innocent suffering and death, and triumphant resurrection, are available to all who seek them.

Gospel – Matthew 9:36-10:8

- As Christian stewards, do we consider the “kingdom of heaven” as out in some cosmic universe or here within us? How do we use our gifts to promote the “kingdom”?
- God calls us to a vocation of laboring for His kingdom, including roles for priests, religious, and lay people.

Stewardship Thought

In today’s Gospel, Jesus sends out the disciples to meet the needs of others. His admonition to them is the same challenge He makes to us: “*the gift you have received, give as a gift.*” See Matthew 10:8 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).



Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Jeremiah 20:10-13

- The Lord is our strength in the face of modern culture that lures us away from Him.
- All we have and all that we are comes from the Lord. Good stewards in turn strive to share their time, talent, and material blessings, especially with the poor.

Psalm 69:8-10, 14, 17, 33-35

- The psalmist warns that following the Lord is not easy. Trust in God strengthens us.
- The psalmist also assures us that “*the Lord hears the poor.*” He answers their need through the generous gifts of good stewards (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

Second Reading – Romans 5:12-15

- Through Jesus, the gift of grace is given to redeem us from our sins. As good stewards, do we gladly accept this gift and seek to live accordingly?

Gospel – Matthew 10:26-33

- Disciples follow Jesus — follow Him at any cost. They are not afraid. Are you willing to lose everything for Christ?
- We are precious in God’s sight. Do we live up to this great gift?

Stewardship Thought

“Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed,” Jesus tells us in the Gospel today, *“and nothing hidden that will not become known.”* May our stewardship of God’s gifts be such that we would not be ashamed if it were seen in the clear light of day. See Matthew 10:26 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 11).

SS. Peter and Paul, Apostles (June 29)

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 12:1-11

- Good stewards know that God hears our prayers and trust the answers will be according to His will and not our own.

Psalm 34:2-9

- Stewards take time to pray daily, to thank God, to praise Him, and to call out to Him when in need.

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

- At the end of our lives, will we, as Christian stewards, be able to show that, through the strength the Lord gives us, we did use our time, talent, and treasure to further God’s kingdom here on earth?

Gospel – Matthew 16:13-19

- Peter recognized Jesus as his Lord and God, and was not afraid to say so. He accepted Christ’s call to be the “Rock” on which the Church is built to carry on Christ’s ministry to the world. As Christ’s disciples, do we accept His call to our vocation in life?

Stewardship Thought

Saints Peter and Paul worked tirelessly to spread the Gospel. Not all can be apostles, but we, too, must be good stewards of *our* vocations, using the gifts we have been given in the service of God's kingdom (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 34).

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16

- A parish that embraces Christian stewardship shows hospitality to visitors and newcomers as well as existing parishioners.
- The Christian steward knows that all things are possible with God.

Psalm 89:2-3, 16-19

- Stewardship is the response to discipleship in Christ. Do we sing out in joy for His goodness and strength?

Second Reading – Romans 6:3-4, 8-11

- Through our Baptism, we died to sin to live in Jesus.
- Do we “live” for God as Christian stewards or follow our own selfish inclinations?

Gospel – Matthew 10:37-42

- As Christian stewards, are we willing to “lose our life” to be disciples of Christ?
- Are we welcoming to others and willing to share our gifts?

Stewardship Thought

Both the first reading and the Gospel today speak of hospitality and welcome. Our ministers of hospitality are a most visible example of using one's time and talents to welcome the people of God. But the Gospel assures us that all who give even just “*a cup of water to one of His lowliest ones will be rewarded.*” See Matthew 10:42 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, pages 11-12).

Fourteen Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Zechariah 9:9-10

- A good steward prays for the joy of God's justice and peace in one's life, family, and community.

Psalm 145:1-2, 8-11, 13-14

- As Christian stewards, we give praise to God for all our blessings, especially His grace and mercy.

Second Reading – Romans 8:9, 11-13

- As good stewards, we are called continually to live in the Spirit, to shed our old ways, and to give our minds and hearts to Jesus.



Gospel – Matthew 11:25-30

- To be good stewards, Jesus asks us to live humble lives and develop child-like faith, and promises us that He will share our burdens.

Stewardship Thought

“Let all your works give you thanks, O Lord, and let your faithful ones bless you,” says the psalmist. Stewardship is this “attitude of gratitude” for the many gifts God has given us. See Psalm 145 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 55:10-11

- Christian stewards know that God’s Word of salvation is a gift freely given that nourishes us to do His will.

Psalm 65:10-14

- Christian stewards show gratitude through prayer to God for the harvest gifts of the earth.

Second Reading – Romans 8:18-23

- As good stewards, we strive to be patient with our current sufferings in light of the greater glory to come, and to be grateful for the first fruits of the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Gospel – Matthew 13:1-23

- Do we, as stewards, accept the “seed of God’s Word” that falls on fertile ground to produce abundant fruit?

Stewardship Thought

May our stewardship of time, talent and treasure show us to be among those who have heard the message of Christ and taken it in, yielding a hundred — or sixty — or thirty-fold! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Wisdom 12:13, 16-19

- *“Those who are just must be kind,”* says today’s first reading. If our words and deeds are kind and selfless, we will be like the good seed in the Gospel parable and gathered as wheat in the Lord’s harvest. See Wisdom 12:19 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Psalm 86:5-6, 9-10, 15-16

- The Lord is kind and forgiving. Do we praise Him for His mercy?

Second Reading – Romans 8:26-27

- As good stewards we call upon the Holy Spirit to strengthen us in our prayer life.

Gospel – Matthew 13:24-43

- In a spirit of Christian stewardship, we strive — through prayer, Scripture, and the Eucharist — to increase our faith like the mustard seed planted in good soil that grows into a huge plant.
- Jesus is the sower of good seed that sustains us against the sower of worldly weeds — the devil.

Stewardship Thought

Good stewards in a parish are like the yeast in today’s Gospel. Their selfless gifts of time and talent help the parish grow and thrive, and their example inspires others to become good stewards, too (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

- As good stewards, like Solomon, we seek God’s gifts of wisdom and understanding to help us make faith-filled decisions in our lives.

Psalm 119:57, 72, 76-77, 127-130

- Do we as stewards, follow God’s precepts or our own “rules”?

Second Reading – Romans 8:28-30

- Our life in Christian stewardship transforms us to a life of spirituality and away from earthly things.

Gospel – Matthew 13:44-52

- In practicing Christian stewardship, what do we sacrifice or give up for the “kingdom of heaven”?

Stewardship Thought

“The law of Your mouth is to me more precious than thousands of gold and silver pieces,” says the psalmist today. Does the amount of our offering suggest that we can honestly say the same? See Psalm 119 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 55:1-3

- Through prayer, reading Scripture, and, above all, regular Mass attendance and reception of the Eucharist, Christian stewards thirst for a closer relationship with God, Who provides us with all good things.

Psalm 145: 8-9, 15-18

- *“The hand of the Lord feeds us,”* sings the psalmist; *“He answers all our needs.”* Often, though, it is with the open hands of generous stewards willing to share His many gifts that God’s people are fed and their needs met. See Psalm 145 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Second Reading – Romans 8:35, 37-39

- In today's culture, Christian stewards need to be very careful that the lure of acquiring material possessions does not separate us from the love of God in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Gospel – Matthew 14:13-21

- The miracle of the loaves and fishes reminds us as good stewards to thank God daily for our blessings of food, but even more for our spiritual food Jesus offers us through the Eucharist.

Stewardship Thought

In today's Gospel, Jesus feeds the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. The message of stewardship is that God's gifts, *shared*, will always be more than enough (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6)

First Reading – Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

- Do we use our talents as good stewards to serve the Lord who has dominion over all creation?

Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 9

- The Lord is King and the Most High. What "idols" in our culture distract us from doing God's work?

Second Reading – 2 Peter 1:16-19

- Our heavenly Father indicates during Jesus' Transfiguration that He is "well pleased" with His Son. Would He also be pleased with how we are using our time, talent, and treasure to embrace His kingdom?

Gospel – Matthew 17:1-9

- As we productively use our time, talent, and treasure to further God's work, we can only hope that through our faithful good deeds as Christ's disciples that we, too, can have a "mountain top" experience with our Lord.

Stewardship Thought

In the Gospel today, Peter yearns to *do* something to make concrete the Transfiguration he had witnessed. But to be a good steward of this spiritual gift, he was instructed to *be still*, to *listen* to Jesus, and to *wait* for His direction. Good advice for us, too! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 34).

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 1 Kings 19:9, 11-13

- Good stewards make daily quiet time to pray and listen to God, Who sometimes answers in the quietest of ways.

Psalm 85:9-14

- Happy are those stewards who trust in the Lord and who praise Him at all times.

Second Reading – Romans 9:1-5

- As stewards, do we accept the Good News of Jesus and the spiritual gifts available to us through the Holy Spirit?

Gospel – Matthew 14:22-33

- Jesus fed the people, then went off to pray. As Christian stewards, we build our faith through prayer and partaking of the Eucharist. Does the quest for material wealth distract us from attending Mass regularly and receiving Holy Communion?

Stewardship Thought

Elijah recognized the voice of God not in the strong and heavy wind, not in the earthquake, and not in the fire, but in a tiny whispering sound. May we find enough quiet in our clamorous world to hear His voice and discern what He is calling us to do and be (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 12).

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15)

First Reading – Revelation 11:19; 12:1-6, 10

- The woman described in the passage from Revelation can be seen as a symbol of Mary, the model Christian steward, or the Church, the Bride of Christ. Either way, as we practice Christian stewardship and draw closer to our Lord, Jesus Christ, the symbolism promises that we are given the gift of grace to resist evil and do good.

Psalm 45:10-12, 16

- As stewards, do we follow Mary's example and honor Christ as Messiah and King or are we preoccupied with the "false" gods in our culture?

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:20-27

- Christ's message to us is one of unity for He is above all nations. At the "*resurrection of the dead*," will we be able to show Christ that we truly used our God-given talents to further His kingdom on earth?

Gospel – Luke 1:39-56

- Mary's canticle is a beautiful expression of her humbleness and praise to God in calling her to be the Mother of Jesus. As Christian stewards, do we follow her example of trusting God always?

Stewardship Thought

*“After Jesus, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who, by her example, most perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship ... She was called and gifted by God; she responded generously, creatively and prudently; she understood her divinely assigned role as ‘handmaid’ in terms of service and fidelity” (USCCB, *ibid.*, page 41).*

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 56:1, 6-7

- As Christian stewards, do we keep holy the Sabbath, beginning with Mass and the Eucharist?
- Do we always do what is right and just as we strive to join ourselves to the Lord?

Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8

- In prayerful gratitude, good stewards acknowledge God’s blessings and praise Him.

Second Reading – Romans 11:13-15, 29-32

- Christian stewardship involves opening our hearts and minds to God’s call and His great mercy in spite of our sinfulness. Do we use His many gifts to spread the Gospel through good example in our lives?

Gospel – Matthew 15:21-28

- Faith is a true gift from God. One should persist through a lifetime in seeking, finding, and building that gift of faith.

Stewardship Thought

In today’s second reading, St. Paul tells the Romans, *“God’s gifts and His will are irrevocable.”* To what is God calling me today? What gifts are mine to share? See Romans 11:29 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 22:15, 19-23

- Political leaders who practice Christian stewardship realize their gifts of leadership are from God. It is their challenge to use these gifts in a just manner.

Psalm 138: 1-3, 6-8

- Good stewards exhibit “an attitude of gratitude” to God for His many blessings.

Second Reading – Romans 11:33-36

- A Christian steward understands how Paul’s teaching applies in our lives: *“For from God and through Him and for Him are all things.”*

Gospel – Matthew 16:13-20

- Peter’s faith in God revealed to him that Jesus was the “Christ,” Peter accepted his role as “head of the Church” even to death. Are we, as stewards, prepared to be disciples of Christ at any cost?

Stewardship Thought

In today’s second reading, St. Paul reminds the Romans — and us — that all things come from God: “*For from Him and through Him and for Him all things are.*” Good stewards understand that *all* is a gift and share generously the gifts of time, talent, and treasure with which they have been blessed. See Romans 11:36 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Jeremiah 20:7-9

- Jeremiah had the gift of prophesy. He would not stop proclaiming God’s Word to his people. As stewards, what is God calling us to do, and are we open to follow His call?

Psalm 63:2-6, 8-9

- Christian stewardship means building a closer relationship with God through prayer and frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist at Mass.

Second Reading – Romans 12:1-2

- Do we, as good stewards, care for our physical bodies in a respectful manner pleasing to God?
- The “body” that St. Paul speaks of is also realized in the unity of the Church, Christ’s Body on earth, which guides us to do God’s will.

Gospel – Matthew 16:21-27

- Jesus asks that we “lose ourselves” for the sake of the kingdom. As stewards, are we willing to accept this challenge to deny ourselves, to take up our cross daily, and to follow Him?

Stewardship Thought

In today’s second reading, St. Paul exhorts the Romans to *total* stewardship. “*Brothers and sisters,*” he urges, “... *offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.*” See Romans 12:1 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Ezekiel 33:7-9

- A prophet is God’s voice proclaiming His word at a given time in history. In today’s world, we still have prophets among us. As Christian stewards, do we acknowledge their gifts and listen to their words to turn away from evil and follow Christ as His disciples?



Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9

- Good stewards joyfully and gratefully praise and worship God for all that we are and for all that we have.

Second Reading – Romans 13:8-10

- Who is our neighbor? Out of love, as Christian stewards, we share our time and financial resources with a neighbor in need.

Gospel – Matthew 18:15-20

- Christian stewardship involves prayer, not only in private, but in groups and in a communion of believers. Jesus states, “*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.*”

Stewardship Thought

Am I my brother’s keeper? All three readings today suggest that for the Christian steward the answer is “Yes!” (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Sirach 27:30-28:7

- As good stewards, we should be quick to forgive our neighbor. In turn, God will show forgiveness and mercy to us.

Psalm 103:1-4, 9-12

- A Christian steward does not forget that all gifts are from our kind and merciful Lord.

Second Reading – Romans 14:7-9

- All that we do, we do in the name of the Lord for we are His Who died for us.

Gospel – Matthew 18:21-35

- Jesus challenges His followers, in the spirit of Christian stewardship, to forgive one another without end, just as God always is merciful to us.

Stewardship Thought

Stewardship is not optional! “*None of us lives as his own master and none of us dies as his own master;*” says St. Paul. “*While we live, we are responsible to the Lord, and when we die, we die as His servants.*” See Romans 14:7-9 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14)

First Reading – Numbers 21:4-9

- The bronze serpent that Moses made to cure his people of snake bites later became a despised idol to Israel. What are some of the modern day idols that good stewards need to avoid to be faithful to God?

Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38

- In the Old Testament, God forgave His people when they sinned against Him. As Christian stewards, what spirit of forgiveness do we show when we are wronged?

Second Reading – Philippians 2:6-11

- Christ gives us the model for placing the needs of others above our individual interests.
- St. Paul was willing to lay down his life for the Gospel. As disciples of Christ, are we willing to do the same?

Gospel – John 3:13-17

- God's love gave His only Son as a gift to all Christians and, through Christ's death and resurrection, a chance of eternal life. As Christian stewards, are we grateful for this great gift?

Stewardship Thought

Even though the Lord led them out of Egypt and provided for their every need, the people in today's first reading were complaining and ungrateful. Does my stewardship of God's gifts show that I know from whom they came and am grateful? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 34).

Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 55:6-9

- A Christian steward knows that God tells us His thoughts are not our thoughts, but still we need to strive to do His will.

Psalm 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18

- Stewardship involves reverent praise to God for all of His blessings of grace and mercy.

Second Reading – Philippians 1:20-24, 27

- As followers of Christ, would we, like Paul, be willing to sacrifice our lives for the Gospel?
- While as Christ's disciples we long to be with Him in His glory, we know we must do His work here on earth.

Gospel – Matthew 20:1-16

- As Christian stewards, are we generous in returning our "first fruits" to the Lord in response to His many blessings and are we just in our dealings with others?

Stewardship Thought

In today's Gospel, the vineyard owner says, "*I am free to do as I please with my money, am I not?*" We are likewise free. Is a generous return to the Lord in thanksgiving for His many blessings among the choices we have made? See Matthew 20:15 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Ezekiel 18:25-28

- God is fair and His gift of forgiveness is available to all of us who seek repentance for our sins.

Psalm 125:4-9

- Christian stewards seek the Lord’s teachings as the pathway from sin.

Second Reading – Philippians 2:1-11

- In imitation of Christ, Christian stewards, united in the Church, humbly serve God and one another.

Gospel – Matthew 21:28-32

- As Christ’s disciples, we should always strive to find and do God’s will. Conversion of our hearts and believing in Christ are fundamentals of Christian stewardship.

Stewardship Thought

The first son in today’s Gospel said he would do his father’s bidding, but did not. The second son balked at first, but then repented and did as he was asked. What service is God calling me to do? Which son am I more like? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 5:1-7

- In the “vineyard of life,” do we follow our Lord’s way to use our time, talent, and treasure to produce good fruit? Or do our “own thing” that provides “wild grapes”?

Psalm 80:9, 12-16, 19-20

- In the “battle of life,” do we try to go at it alone or follow a Christian steward’s path and trust in the Lord?
- Are we good stewards of God’s creation?

Second Reading – Philippians 4:6-9

- Christian stewardship emphasizes prayer to God, not only for our needs, but especially in thanksgiving to the Lord for all our blessings.

Gospel – Matthew 21:33-43

- As tenants of this world, do we accept Jesus and the prophets’ words in a spirit of stewardship, or does our materialistic culture distract us from the truth?

Stewardship Thought

In the Gospel today, the owner of the vineyard sent messengers to collect his share of the harvest from the tenant farmers, but there was not a single good steward on the property! God is the owner, we are the tenants. What sort of stewards are we? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 13).

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 25:6-10

- What joy awaits stewards who follow Christ’s way! Will we as good stewards use our God-given gifts of time, talent, and treasure according to His will here on earth to be able to taste “rich food” and “choice wines” in the kingdom of heaven?

Psalm 23:1-6

- As we strive to embrace Christian stewardship “as a way of life,” is the Lord truly “my Shepherd”?

Second Reading – Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

- St. Paul teaches us that a fundamental principle of Christian stewardship is to accept God’s gifts gratefully.
- As good stewards, are we humble before God for the abundant blessings He shares with us?

Gospel – Matthew 22:1-14

- Do we answer, as faithful stewards, Jesus’ call to follow Him to His eternal feast? Along the way, do we put on the garment of His teaching to clothe us?

Stewardship Thought

In today’s second reading, St. Paul thanks the Philippians for being willing to share in his hardships and promises that God, in turn, will fully supply all their needs. Our God truly cannot be outdone in generosity! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

- Christian stewards acknowledge the Lord as the one, true God. Through prayer and discernment, we should strive to discover what the Lord is calling us to do.

Psalm 96:1, 3-5, 7-10

- As good stewards, what gifts do we have to offer back to God?

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

- Christian stewards pray in thanksgiving to God and also for the intentions of others.
- We are chosen by God to grow in faith and to love one another through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel – Matthew 22:15-21

- Everything comes from God, including civil authority. Jesus guides us on the way to be good stewards of God’s gifts and good citizens.

Stewardship Thought

Each year at tax time, we conscientiously give “*to Caesar what belongs to Caesar.*” Does my stewardship indicate that I am as faithful about giving “*to God what belongs to God*”? See Matthew 22:21 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Exodus 22:20-26

- Faithful stewards show compassion to the poor and oppressed. They joyfully share their abundance with those in need.

Psalm 18:2-4, 47, 51

- As Christian stewards, can we proclaim God as our rock, our strength, and our salvation; do we trust in Him?

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

- In today's second reading, the Thessalonians did a complete conversion away from idols to believe in the true God. In today's society, what "idols" are distracting us from discipleship and making Christian stewardship a way of life?

Gospel – Matthew 22:34-40

- As disciples of Christ, we are called to love God with our entire being and our neighbor as ourselves. Who do we consider our neighbor?

Stewardship Thought

We fulfill the commandment to love our neighbor when we exercise good stewardship — joyfully sharing our gifts of life, abilities, and resources to meet our neighbor's need (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).

Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Malachi 1:14-2:2, 8-10

- God punishes those who turn away from His commandments. Good stewards do not break faith in God, nor in one another in our parish communion.

Psalm 131:1-3

- The good steward puts humble trust in God's faithfulness.

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9, 13

- Christian stewards give thanks for God's Word, and are faithful in their ministry to others.

Gospel – Matthew 23:1-12

- It is not enough to "talk the talk" of Christian stewardship; we must also "walk the walk" by following Christ's example in our effort to serve others.

Stewardship Thought

"The greatest among you will be one who serves the rest," Jesus says in today's Gospel. What wonderful good news for those who give of their time in service to others! See Matthew 23:11 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Wisdom 6:12-16

- Thoughtful and prudent wisdom is a blessed gift from God for which Christian stewards are grateful.

Psalm 63:2-8

- Christian stewards thirst for a close personal relationship with God, the source of our joy and worthy of all praise and blessing.

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- Christian stewards try to follow God's will in order to be prepared at the end of life on earth with the hope of attaining eternal life with our Lord.

Gospel – Matthew 25:1-13

- If the Lord comes tonight, could we provide an accounting of our stewardship of His gifts to us?

Stewardship Thought

Like the sensible bridesmaids in today's parable, good stewards make sure that they, and whatever gifts are theirs to share, are ready to serve when the Master calls (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).

All Saints (November 1)

First Reading – Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

- Good stewards understand the white garment of salvation comes from Christ as symbolized in the Sacrament of Baptism, which washes away the stain of sin.
- Christian stewards strive to build a strong relationship with God through prayer, meditation, and adoration.

Psalm 24:1-4, 5-6

- Can we as faithful stewards say we are "pure of heart" like the saints?

Second Reading – 1 John 3:1-3

- Do we use our time and talents to lead virtuous lives so by our example the world will know we are Christ's disciples?

Gospel – Matthew 5:1-12

- Good Christian stewards strive to live the Beatitudes. As faithful stewards, we profess to follow Christ's teaching to live our lives completely dependent on the Lord our God.

Stewardship Thought

Today's psalm makes clear that we and everything we think we own actually belongs to God instead: "*The Lord's are the earth and its fullness, the world and those who live in it.*" We are *stewards*, not owners, of our own lives and all we possess! See Psalm 24 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, pages 34-35).



The Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (All Souls – November 2)

First Reading – Wisdom 3:1-9

- Good stewards strive to be faithful to God, Who gives us grace and peace, and is merciful to us always.

– or –

First Reading – Daniel 12:1-3

- We, as faithful stewards, strive to live just and holy lives pleasing to God, Who will judge us on our last day according to our actions.

Psalm 23:1-6

- Christian stewardship embraces a spirit of hospitality at home and in our parish.

Second Reading – Romans 5:5-11

- As Christian stewards, we put our hope in God, Who does not disappoint, but instead pours out His love for us, especially through His Son, Jesus Christ, Who has redeemed us.

– or –

Second Reading – Romans 6:3-9

- Christian stewards believe that through our Baptism we live with Christ because He died for our sins.

Gospel – John 6:37-40

- Are we striving to follow God’s will as Christian stewards to believe in His Son, Jesus, or do we follow our own will?

– or –

Gospel – John 11:17-27

- Jesus states, *“I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me, even if he dies, will live ...”* All of us, even those who believe in our Lord, will experience physical death, but our souls will live forever. These are comforting words for us, who, as disciples of Christ, strive to follow His commandments, and do His will.

Stewardship Thought

On the Feast of All Souls, we pray for those who have gone before us and stand in judgment before God. May we share with one another the treasure of love’s memory, and console one another with the assurance of resurrection in Christ Jesus (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 35).

The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome (November 9)

First Reading – Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12

- Good stewards are grateful for water, the source of life and a gift from God, symbolizing His grace flowing throughout the world.

Psalm 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9

- In troubled times, Christian stewards trust in God’s strength and guidance.

– or –

Psalm 84:3-6, 8-11

- As Christian stewards, we yearn to live in the house of God.



Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 3:9-11, 16-17

- As Christian stewards, do we strive to build the Church with Jesus as the foundation of our life?

Gospel – John 2:13-22

- As good stewards, do we deal honestly with others in our financial matters, understanding that every material possession is God's gift to us?
- Jesus described His body as a temple. Are we good stewards of our bodily health?

Stewardship Thought

As we pray today for increase of spiritual gifts, we are reminded by the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on stewardship that good stewardship of the Church "*means cherishing and fostering the gifts of all, while using one's own gifts to serve the community of faith*" (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 34).

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

- Husbands and wives are called by God to their vocation of marriage. Marriages based in faith and love are a beautiful gift from God.

Psalm 128:1-5

- Stewards who put their faith in God will be blessed with a happy home.

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

- Good stewards, guided by the light of Christ, are always alert and prepared for the coming of the Lord.

Gospel – Matthew 25:14-30

- Matthew's account of the talents clearly illustrates Christian stewardship — using God's gifts wisely and prudently.
- As stewards, do we use our time, talent, and treasure to further God's mission here on earth?

Stewardship Thought

Good stewards are like the industrious and reliable servants in today's Gospel, prudently using and multiplying the gifts entrusted to them by God (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).



Christ the King

First Reading – Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17

- God promises to shepherd His sheep, caring for them always. As Christian stewards, are we striving to follow that example by caring for God's many gifts to us, and placing our faith and trust in our "Good Shepherd"?

Psalm 23:1-3, 5-6

- Christian stewardship promotes a spirit of Christ's hospitality in our home and in our parish.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28

- St. Paul teaches us about death and resurrection through Christ. We are blessed to have the opportunity to gain salvation through Christ's resurrection.

Gospel – Matthew 25:31-46

- On our journey to be good and faithful stewards, do we see Christ in the faces of the hungry, the sick, the ill-clothed, strangers, and prisoners among us, and act to relieve their suffering?

Stewardship Thought

When the Son of Man comes in glory, may we be among those who have fed the hungry, welcomed the stranger, and clothed the naked. For Jesus tells us clearly that it is those who have demonstrated good stewardship by sharing their gifts with the less fortunate who will receive God's blessing and inherit the kingdom (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 14).