



*Stewardship Reflections
on the Liturgy of the Word*

Reading Reflections – Cycle C

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS ON THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

CYCLE C (Luke)

The following reflections on the Cycle C 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 – Jeremiah 33:14-16

- God remained faithful to Israel, promising that a “*just shoot*” would be raised from the line of David. As Christian stewards, how faithful are we to the Lord and His commands?

Psalm 25:4-5, 8-10, 14

- As practicing stewards, we draw closer to the Lord by asking Him to show us the humble path to truth and justice.

Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

- In today's second reading, St. Paul calls the Thessalonians and us, too, to a life of holiness in the Lord. Are we, as Christian stewards, conducting ourselves in a way that pleases God?

Gospel – Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

- If the Lord Jesus returned today, could we, as Christian stewards, render an account of how we used His gifts in this life to further His kingdom?

Stewardship Thought

“Be on guard,” Jesus warns in today's Gospel, *“lest your spirits become bloated with indulgence.”* Let us heed His warning and follow the advice of St. Paul, conducting ourselves in a way pleasing to God, overflowing with love for one another. See Luke 21:34 (Used with permission from Our Sunday Visitor, *Stewardship by the Book: Bulletin Bits Based on the Sunday Readings*, by Sharon Hueckel, 2004 edition, page 24).

Second Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Baruch 5:1-9

- In today's first reading, Baruch proclaims similar words as does John the Baptist. The prophet rejoices in God's promise of His justice and glory, and *“... that every lofty mountain be made low, and that the age-old depths and gorges be filled to level ground ...”* As Christian stewards, are we preparing our hearts and minds for Christ's coming?

Psalm 126:1-6

- The ancient Israelites exclaim their joy to the Lord for His great deeds on their return from exile to the holy city, Jerusalem. As Christian stewards, we, too, rejoice that God fills our needs, and we praise Him in gratitude for His many blessings.



Second Reading – Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

- St. Paul, in today's second reading, prays in gratitude for the way the people promote the Gospel and understand the things that really matter. Are we, as Christian stewards, as eager to accept Jesus' teachings in order to become His disciples?

Gospel – Luke 3:1-6

- Through our Baptism, we are called to be Christ's disciples. John the Baptist, heralding the coming of Jesus, proclaimed the importance of repentance, leading to forgiveness of sin. Advent is a good time to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Stewardship Thought

Good stewards believe that God, who has begun this good work in them, will carry it through to completion. In words and deeds, they can sing with the psalmist, "*The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!*" See Psalm 126 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 24).

Immaculate Conception (December 8)

First Reading – Genesis 3:9-15, 20

- With Mary Immaculate as our stewardship model, we strive to follow God's will as faithful stewards, and not yield to temptation in disobedience of His commands.

Psalm 98:1-4

- Good stewards give praise and thanksgiving to God in joyful song for His gift of our salvation.

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

- Faithful stewards realize that God chooses us, through Christ, to do His will for His praise and glory.

Gospel – Luke 1:26-38

- Mary, the model steward, put her complete faith and trust in God in answering the call to do His will. We are in complete gratitude to our heavenly Father for the great gift of His Son, Jesus.

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).

Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Zephaniah 3:14-18

- The prophet proclaims the joy of the Lord's deliverance. As Christian stewards, do we rejoice in our Lord's love for us?



Psalm – Isaiah 12:2-6

- “*God indeed is my Savior; I am confident and unafraid.*” We thank and praise our Lord for His goodness to us.

Second Reading – Philippians 4:4-7

- As good Christian stewards, we strive to make grateful prayer a priority and daily habit. We know that from persistent prayer and thanksgiving offered to God, we can attain much peace in our daily lives.

Gospel – Luke 3:10-18

- In today’s Gospel, John the Baptist preaches that we, as Christian stewards, are to share our abundant blessings with the less fortunate, and be content with what we have.

Stewardship Thought

- Today’s Gospel provides a blueprint for good stewardship: “*Let the man who has two coats give to him who has none. The man who has food should do the same.*” See Luke 3:11 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 24).

Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Reading – Micah 5:1-4

- From the humble town of Bethlehem will be born a ruler, great, yet peaceful. What a simple but powerful message. At this time of year, can we, as Christian stewards, quiet our lives enough to truly appreciate this prophecy?

Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

- Do we, as Christian stewards, call upon the Lord to be our strength?

Second Reading – Hebrews 10:5-10

- We acknowledge, as faithful stewards, that Jesus sacrificed Himself for our sins and our salvation. Do we in turn sacrifice our time, talent, and treasure to build up His kingdom here on earth?

Gospel – Luke 1:39-45

- In today’s Gospel, the Holy Spirit inspires Elizabeth to proclaim to Mary, “... *Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.*” As Christian stewards, do we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives to further the work of the kingdom?

Stewardship Thought

The Gospel today tells of the Virgin Mary, pregnant herself, hurrying off to help her cousin Elizabeth. The model of good stewardship, she who had given herself to bear the Savior, gave her time and love to others as well (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 24).



Christmas (Vigil)

First Reading – Isaiah 62:1-5

- God promised a new day of salvation for us. For this great gift, we must always praise Him and rejoice in His goodness.

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

- Our Lord God is our Rock and our Savior. We gratefully rejoice in His kindness and faithfulness to us.

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

- Our heavenly Father brought forth, from the line of David, Jesus to be our Savior, as He had promised. As Christian stewards, we repent for the times we take this great gift for granted.

Gospel – Matthew 1:1-25

- “Emmanuel” means “God is with us.” As faithful stewards, let us follow Mary and Joseph’s example by putting our total trust in the Lord.

Stewardship Thought

Heaven and earth rejoice with praise and glory to God that the prophecies of old are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, our Savior. As faithful Christian stewards, our gratitude should be endless for this greatest of gifts.

Christmas (Midnight)

First Reading – Isaiah 9:1-6

- Our Lord, Jesus Christ, is among us this and every day. Do we recognize Him?
- The lights of Christmas symbolize Christ as the Light of the World.

Psalm 96:1-3, 11-13

- Along with all creation, let us rejoice by giving praise, honor, and glory to Christ, our Savior.

Second Reading – Titus 2:11-14

- As Christian stewards, disciples of Christ, do we accept God’s redeeming grace that helps us live virtuous lives?

Gospel – Luke 2:1-14

- There was “*no room for them in the inn.*” Is there room in our hearts for Christ this day?
- The glory of God was proclaimed to lowly and humble shepherds living in fields, tending their flock. Like the shepherds, are we humble and open to hear God’s message of peace and redemption?

Stewardship Thought

The birth of Jesus was part of God’s plan for our salvation. How do we, as Christian stewards, gratefully accept this special gift?



Christmas (Dawn)

First Reading – Isaiah 62:11-12

- The gift of redemption by our Lord, Jesus Christ, as foretold by Isaiah, brings us true joy at Christmas.

Psalm 97:1, 6, 11-12

- Faithful stewards, who are just and honest of heart, give thanks to the Lord, our light and our salvation.

Second Reading – Titus 3:4-7

- In Baptism, through God's mercy, we are fully renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Are we, as Christian stewards, grateful for the great gift of hope of eternal life?

Gospel – Luke 2:15-20

- The shepherds accepted God's call, proclaimed by the multitude of angels, to seek Christ and pay Him homage. Do we, as faithful stewards, make the same effort to seek and praise Him?

Stewardship Thought

We pray that God gives us wisdom to do His will, and the courage and strength to act as His disciples.

Christmas (Day)

First Reading – Isaiah 52:7-10

- Like the ancient Israelites, today's Christian stewards also proclaim, "*God is King!*"
- Jesus Christ offers us His Good News of salvation.

Psalm 98:1-6

- As Christian stewards, we are encouraged to use our talents to praise and thank the Lord, our God, in prayer, song, and instrument for His abundant blessings bestowed upon us.

Second Reading – Hebrews 1:1-6

- God proclaims Jesus His Son, and tells the angels to praise and worship Him as a reflection of the Father's glory. Can we, as faithful stewards, do less?

Gospel Reading – John 1:1-18

- The Word becomes flesh; God became man. Our heavenly Father's love for us comes through the greatest gift of all — His Son, Jesus, Who is the Light of the World and path to eternal life.

Stewardship Thought

Rejoice! The Word became flesh and dwells among us! Oh, come, let us adore him! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 24).



Feast of the Holy Family

First Reading – Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14

- God blesses us through our parents. He commands us, as Christian stewards, to respect, honor, and care for our parents, whatever the circumstances may be.

Psalm 128:1-5

- As faithful stewards, we realize our spouse and children are 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 as members of the Body of Christ.
- A good steward does everything in the name of Jesus, follows His Word, prays, and sings gratefully to God.
- The family is called the domestic Church — love and respect one another.

Gospel – Luke 2:41-52

- After frantically looking for Jesus for three days, Mary and Joseph find Him in the Temple in Jerusalem, in the midst of the teachers. God's great gift of faith reveals Christ's divinity to us. Are we, as Christian stewards, open to this gift?

Stewardship Thought

Parents who practice good stewardship draw upon their time and talents to pass on their gift of faith, to educate, to nurture, and to protect their children.

New Year's Day – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

First Reading – Numbers 6:22-27

- Christian stewards gratefully recognize that God blesses us abundantly, and acknowledge that true joy, peace, and happiness comes from God through His grace.

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

- We gratefully give God glory and praise for His mercy and blessing.

Second Reading – Galatians 4:4-7

- As Christian stewards, we understand that our heavenly Father has made us His heirs through His Son, Jesus.

Gospel – Luke 2:16-21

- The humble shepherds went to Bethlehem at God's instruction through His angels. They praised and glorified God for all they saw and heard of the Christ Child. Do we, as good stewards, make time to listen to God's call, and then act promptly on it in our lives?
- Mary, Mother of God, shows us the way to become your Son's disciples.

Stewardship Thought

The Gospel today says that, having found the infant Jesus, the shepherds returned to their work, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. We, too, have seen and celebrated the mystery of the Word made flesh. Will we follow their example when we return to work tomorrow? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 24).

Second Sunday after Christmas

First Reading – Sirach 24:1-2, 8-12

- Faithful stewards accept God's call to live in Him and follow His commands.

Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20

- Christian stewards praise and glorify the Lord in all we do and say in gratitude for His peace and many blessings.

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

- God gives us His Son, Jesus Christ, as every spiritual blessing. As faithful stewards, we demonstrate our gratitude by striving to be holy, and filled with love for God and one another.

Gospel – John 1:1-18

- In Jesus, God's Word is incarnated — became flesh. He is filled with redeeming love for us, which we share in praise and thanksgiving with others.

Stewardship Thought

During this season of Christmas, we rejoice that our Savior has come to dwell among us. As Christian stewards, do we answer His call to follow His Word?

The Epiphany of the Lord

First Reading – Isaiah 60:1-6

- The prophet Isaiah paints a radiant picture of God's abundant gifts to us, which should inspire us, as Christian stewards, to gratefully proclaim His praise and glory.

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

- God, in His mercy and justice, exhorts us, as His stewards, to praise and glorify Him by sharing our time, talent, and treasure with the poor and oppressed.

Second Reading – Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

- Our heavenly Father, in His goodness through Jesus Christ, offers His gift of grace to all people and welcomes everyone as members of the Body of Christ and His heirs, regardless of who they are.

Gospel – Matthew 2:1-12

- The story of the Magi's gifts to Jesus reminds us how much God blesses us, and how, as Christian stewards, we must use and return these gifts gratefully to the Lord in His service.



- The Magi journeyed far, with great effort, to pay homage to our King. Do we respect, honor, and make time for Him in our lives? Do we trust God in all things?

Stewardship Thought

The three kings in today's Gospel traveled a great distance at considerable cost to offer their richest gifts to the Infant Jesus. How far will *I* go, and what will *I* offer to do homage to this newborn King and Savior? (Our Sunday, Visitor, *ibid.*, page 25).

The Baptism of the Lord

First Reading – Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

- In service to others, a faithful steward gratefully accepts God's gifts, and willingly shares them in love and justice with those in need.

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

- With praise and thanksgiving, Christian stewards give glory to God as Lord of all.

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

- Through His Son, Jesus Christ, God's gifts of faith and peace are within reach of all who follow His commandments.

Gospel – Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

- John's Baptism of Jesus encourages us, as Christian stewards, to fulfill our Baptismal promises to believe in the Gospel, to reject evil, and use our God-given gifts in His service throughout the world.

Stewardship Thought

Jesus, whom God called "*my beloved Son,*" is also "*servant*" of whom Isaiah speaks in the first reading. We, who are baptized in Christ, must follow His example and use our time and resources in the service of God and neighbor. See Luke 3:22 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 62:1-5

- In today's first reading, Isaiah tells the people, "*You shall be called by a new name.*" They will shed their old desolate image, and become like a jewel in a crown. As Christian stewards, we, too, are called, as disciples of Christ, to shed our sinful ways and renew our lives in His image.

Psalm 96:1-3, 7-10

- We, as Christian stewards, enthusiastically sing a new song of worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God for His abundant blessings bestowed upon us.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

- St. Paul explains in this reading that God gives each of us unique gifts to be used for the common good. How are we, as Christian stewards, using these gifts to further His kingdom?



Gospel – John 2:1-11

- Jesus, at the urging of His Mother, performs a miracle at the wedding feast at Cana by turning water into fine wine. This miracle reveals His glory to encourage His disciples to believe in Him. As Christian stewards, what signs or miracles do we seek to believe in Him?

Stewardship Thought

In today's second reading, St. Paul tells the Corinthians (and us) that all of our gifts are from God and that they are given, not for ourselves alone, but for the common good. But the generosity of God knows no limits — the miracle at Cana reminds us that whenever we faithfully do as God asks, He can change our gifts of water into wine! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10

- In today's first reading, the ancient Israelites are asked to rejoice in the Lord for his abundant food, and to give a portion to those who had nothing. As Christian stewards, we are called to do the same.

Psalm 19:8-10, 15

- The psalmist proclaims that God's laws are perfect, trustworthy, right, clear, pure and just. As Christian stewards, we see the wisdom of His commands and strive to follow His precepts faithfully.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 12:12-30

- In this reading, St. Paul teaches that all disciples with their various gifts are part of the same body — the Body of Christ, the Church. We can apply this metaphor to our parish communion. What steps are we taking as Christian stewards to build up our parish to fulfill its mission of doing Christ's work?

Gospel – Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

- By reciting a passage from the prophet Isaiah, Jesus proclaims His own ministry of service. As Luke continues in his Gospel, we find Jesus is not accepted in His hometown. As disciples of Jesus, we should not be afraid to proclaim the Gospel, even in the face of opposition.

Stewardship Thought

The U. S. Bishops' Pastoral on stewardship reinforces today's reading from 1 Corinthians: *"Because its individual members do collectively make up the Body of Christ, that body's health and well-being are the responsibility of the members — the personal responsibility of each one of us. We all are stewards of the Church"* (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).



Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19

- God states that He knew Jeremiah even before He formed him in the womb, and dedicated him as a prophet before his birth. What a beautiful message for us, as faithful stewards, to use in defense of the Church's position on the sanctity of life.
- God strengthens the prophet to profess His Word to the leaders and people of his time. As Christian stewards, do we pray for God to give us the same courage to profess His Word today?

Psalm 71:1-6, 15, 17

- What comforting words from the psalmist that God's strength is our rock and our refuge at all times.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13

- Love is the binding force that unifies us as mature Christian stewards. Out of this love, our Lord calls us to serve those in need.

Gospel – Luke 4:21-30

- Jesus reminds the people how the message proclaimed by the prophets is often rejected by those who should heed it. As faithful disciples of Christ, we believe that Jesus came so all may believe in Him.

Stewardship Thought

Jeremiah declares that the Lord knew him before he was born, and dedicated and appointed him to his role as prophet even before he drew breath. We, too, are known and sent by the Lord. What deeds of love and service are mine to perform? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Presentation of the Lord (February 2)

First Reading – Malachi 3:1-4

- As Christian stewards, do we cultivate our God-given gifts to the fullest to do good works in His name?

Psalm 24:7-10

- Our Lord God is the King of glory; let us welcome Him with open hearts.

Second Reading – Hebrews 2:14-18

- Jesus is always faithful to His heavenly Father, even enduring great trials and severe suffering. Do we, as Christian stewards, truly understand that His trials and suffering were for our salvation?

Gospel – Luke 2:22-40

- Like Simeon and Anna, do we strive to make Christian stewardship a way of life by our longing for the Messiah? Have we consecrated our lives to the Lord?

Stewardship Thought

When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple, they offered a sacrificial gift “*in accord 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).

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 6:1-8

- As faithful stewards, we may feel unworthy, like Isaiah in today’s reading, to answer God’s call to do His work. May we humbly approach our Lord through the Sacrament of Reconciliation that frees us from our sins and opens the path to do His will.

Psalm 138:1-5, 7-8

- Good and faithful stewards praise and thank the Lord daily for His kindness and truth that strengthens us.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- St. Paul, through the Holy Spirit, knew his mission, his call — to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Have we, as Christian stewards, discerned God’s call in our lives?

Gospel – Luke 5:1-11

- In today’s Gospel, Peter feels unworthy to follow the Lord, and yet does so when Jesus encourages him. On our journey to make stewardship a way of life, drawing closer to Jesus as His disciples, we, too, encounter fear and feelings of unworthiness. Let us pray to the Lord that fear and sin do not distract us from fulfilling the vocation God has given us.

Stewardship Thought

In today’s readings, both Isaiah and Peter hear the call of God and feel themselves unworthy. But, reassured by the Lord, both answer and follow. Do *I* hear the Lord asking, “*Whom shall I send?*” Am *I* prepared to answer, “*Here I am. Send me!*”? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Jeremiah 17:5-8

- In good as well as difficult times, Christian stewards put their full trust in the Lord, not in human beings and things.

Psalm 1:1-4, 6

- We know, as wise stewards, that following God’s law will lead us to eternal happiness.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20

- We, as faithful stewards, believe in Christ’s resurrection, and, therefore, our own.



Gospel – Luke 6:17, 20-26

- Our Lord calls us, who strive to be His disciples, to feed the hungry and comfort the mourning. How are we using our God-given gifts to accomplish this mission?

Stewardship Thought

The words of the psalmist echo the theme of all of today's readings. "*Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.*" As good stewards, firmly grounded in that hope, may we bear fruit in due season — assisting the poor, feeding the hungry, and consoling the sorrowful whenever we have the chance. See Psalm 1 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

- To please God, good Christian stewards always strive to do what is right, and seek justice in our world.

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

- Christian stewards give praise and glory to God for His kindness and mercy.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

- We, too, are like the first Adam, born to this world. But as Christian stewards, we strive to be disciples of the second Adam, our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Gospel – Luke 6:27-38

- Today's Gospel contains some of the most difficult teachings that Jesus professed during His ministry on earth — love your enemies; give without expecting repayment. Yet, if we are to be His disciples, we need to follow His teaching.

Stewardship Thought

Today's Gospel has encouraging words for good stewards — "*Give, and it shall be given to you. For the measure you measure with will be measured back to you.*" What encouragement to give generously of the resources entrusted to our care! See Luke 6:38 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Sirach 27:4-7

- Our words and deeds tell who we are and what we value.

Psalm 92:2-3, 13-16

- As Christian stewards, it is good to give thanks and praise to the Lord, Most High for His kindness and faithfulness. Planting our life in the Lord will produce good fruit.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

- St. Paul encourages us that through Christ's victory over death, we, as His disciples, are to be "*... steadfast and preserving ... fully engaged in the work of the Lord. We are confident that our toil is not in vain when it is done in the Lord.*" These are indeed encouraging words for Christian stewards who are striving to be disciples of Jesus.

Gospel – Luke 6:39-45

- A faithful steward produces good fruit when doing God’s work here on earth.
- Jesus warns His disciples, and us, not to focus on others’ faults until sin has been removed in our own lives.

Stewardship Thought

All of today’s readings remind us that our works reflect what is in our hearts. Do my words and actions reveal a heart that is grateful for — and generous in sharing — the abundance God has poured into my life? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Ash Wednesday

First Reading – Joel 2:12-18

- Our Lord God is gracious and merciful, rich in kindness. As good stewards, we acknowledge our failings in appreciating God’s gifts and ask for His forgiveness and mercy.

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

- As good Christian stewards, we recognize our sinfulness, and, through God’s grace, ask for His forgiveness.

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

- Understanding stewardship calls us to be reconciled with our Lord, and to gratefully receive His grace.
- Are we, as a parish communion, “ambassadors for Christ”?

Gospel – Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

- Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are principles that we embrace as Christian stewards. We do these in gratitude to our Lord, and not to impress others.

Stewardship Thought

Ash Wednesday’s emphasis on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving is an invitation to take a closer look at our stewardship. It is a time to reassess how we are using the gifts God has entrusted to us, and to resolve anew to use our time and resources in the service of His kingdom (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 25).

First Sunday of Lent

First Reading – Deuteronomy 26:4-10

- For the ancient Israelites, agricultural production was the lifeblood of the community. In gratitude for the Lord’s gifts, they returned to Him the first fruits of their harvest. As faithful Christian stewards, we, too, in gratitude, can follow this practice by making a weekly sacrificial gift — the first fruits of our labor — to the Lord.

Psalm 91:1-2, 10-15

- In difficult times, do we, as Christian stewards, put our full trust in God, our heavenly Father?



Second Reading – Romans 10:8-13

- Our Lord, Jesus, died for our sins, and by His resurrection, offers the gift of salvation to all who seek it.

Gospel – Luke 4:1-13

- In today's Gospel, Jesus, is led by the Holy Spirit into the desert for forty days, and is tempted there by the devil. The devil tempted Him in every way, but Jesus, supported by Scripture, did not fall. As stewards of our lives, are we wise and humble enough in times of temptation to call on Jesus' grace and strength to avoid sin?

Stewardship Thought

Today's first reading describes the offering of first fruits the people of Israel were to present to the Lord in thanksgiving for their deliverance from Egypt and the gift of the promised land. Is my offering at today's Mass an appropriate response to the many blessings the Lord has given me? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 25).

Second Sunday of Lent

First Reading – Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

- In today's first reading, Abram, later named Abraham, puts his full faith and trust in the Lord. God in turn makes a sacred covenant with Abram, promising him prosperity. As Christian stewards, do we put that same trust in our heavenly Father?

Psalm 27:1, 7-9, 13-14

- The psalmist proclaims, "*The Lord is my light and salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid?*" For the Christian steward, these are comforting words in troubled times.

Second Reading – Philippians 3:17-4:1

- St. Paul asks his followers to model their behavior after him, who, in turn, models his behavior after Christ. St. Paul warns the faithful to avoid the destructive behavior of the world, and to focus on heaven. As we grow in making stewardship a way of life, let us avoid worldly temptations that may block our relationship with Christ.

Gospel – Luke 9:28-36

- In today's Gospel, Peter, James, and John have a "mountain top" experience at Jesus' Transfiguration. Our heavenly Father asks them to "*Listen to Him.*" As Christian stewards, are we listening to Jesus and His teachings, or are we following the popular culture of our time?

Stewardship Thought

Peter, James, and John wanted to build a "booth" for Jesus and just stay on the mountain where His Transfiguration took place. But the Son of God, the Chosen One, knew that He must instead keep moving toward His crucifixion. We, too, must rise from worship and do what we can to hasten the coming of the kingdom (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 25).

Third Sunday of Lent

(Use Cycle A readings if your parish has RCIA catechumens and candidates.)

First Reading – Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15

- In this first reading, Moses encounters God on the mountain, and answers His call to rescue the Israelites enslaved in Egypt. How do we, as Christian stewards, respond to God's call to serve Him?

Psalm 103:1-4, 6-8, 11

- Good stewards praise and thank God for His gifts of mercy and kindness.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12

- St. Paul reminds us that God provided the Israelites of Moses' time spiritual food and drink. And yet, they grumbled and were ungrateful. As faithful Christian stewards, He warns us to avoid "wicked desires," and follow Jesus Christ as the rock of our faith and source of our salvation.

Gospel – Luke 13:1-9

- In today's Gospel, Jesus warns His followers to repent of their sins, or they will perish. Lent is an excellent time to examine our lives, and seek God's gift of forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Stewardship Thought

The parable in today's Gospel clearly warns that we, like the fig tree, will be judged by our fruit. While God mercifully provides us with time and opportunity, let us give witness to our faith with deeds of kindness and generosity! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 25).

Fourth Sunday of Lent

(Use Cycle A readings if your parish has RCIA catechumens and candidates.)

First Reading – Joshua 5:9-12

- In today's first reading, God's gift of manna ceases for the ancient Israelites forcing them to rely totally on God to find their daily food. As Christian stewards, are we thankful for God's daily gifts of food and shelter, or do we take these gifts for granted?

Psalm 34:2-7

- At all times, both good and bad, a faithful steward finds strength in the Lord.

Second Reading – 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

- In this second reading, St. Paul asks the Corinthians to be a new creation, reconciled with God through Christ. We, as Christian stewards, should follow this advice, and strive during Lent to be reconciled with God and our neighbor.

Gospel – Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

- Like the father and son in today's parable, our heavenly Father has no end of love and mercy for us. How do we, as Christian stewards, show the Lord our gratitude for these tremendous gifts.



Stewardship Thought

The stewardship message in the parable of the prodigal son is that it is never too late to become a good steward. Blessed is the elder brother who had been a good steward all along, but blessed, too, is the prodigal son, who had to lose all he had in order to understand the value of what he'd been given (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 25).

Fifth Sunday of Lent

(Use Cycle A readings if your parish has RCIA catechumens and candidates.)

First Reading – Isaiah 43:16-21

- Our heavenly Father gave the ancient Israelites new life through water as they returned from captivity. He, too, offers us life anew. As Christian stewards, are our hearts and minds open to this great gift?

Psalm 126:1-6

- As Christian stewards, we pray that our lives be fruitful in doing our Lord's work to build up His kingdom, in gratitude for the great things He does for us.

Second Reading – Philippians 3:8-14

- St. Paul writes this letter in prison. He is willing to sacrifice his life to profess Christ to all in order that we might rise with Him. As disciples of Christ, are we willing to do the same?

Gospel – John 8:1-11

- In today's Gospel, Jesus shows great mercy and compassion to the woman accused of adultery. As followers of Christ, do we, too, practice mercy and compassion in our lives?

Stewardship Thought

In today's second reading, St. Paul says, "*For His sake I have forfeited everything; I have accounted all else rubbish so that Christ may be my wealth.*" Does my stewardship suggest that I could say the same? See Philippians 3:8 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 26).

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Procession Gospel – Luke 19:28-40

- Those in Jerusalem praise Jesus, and bless His Holy Name. Yet, we know soon many will shout that He be crucified. As Christian stewards, is our belief in Jesus unwavering, or only caught up in moments of fervor?

First Reading – Isaiah 50:4-7

- Isaiah knows he has received the gifts of speech and prophecy from God. What gifts has our heavenly Father granted us? Through His grace and help, how do we develop these gifts to further His kingdom?

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

- The psalmist foretells Christ's suffering and death for us. As disciples of Christ, we know in times of our own suffering, we are encouraged to give Him thanks and praise for the strength, peace, and comfort He gives to us.

Second Reading – Philippians 2:6-11

- Good stewards strive to follow Christ's example on the cross by humbly putting others first.

Gospel – Luke 22:14-23:56

- In today's Gospel, Jesus suffers betrayal and denial by His disciples. Some people made false accusations against Him to Pilate, which ultimately led to His humiliating death on the cross. Jesus' suffering and death is done out of His love for us so that we may attain eternal salvation. Are we willing, as Christian stewards, to pay the cost of discipleship and take up our cross daily to become followers of Jesus?

Stewardship Thought

In the Gospel story of the first Palm Sunday, we hear that the owners of the ass had only to be told, "*The Master has need of it,*" to give the animal gladly. Do I give as readily to the Lord's work? See Luke 19:34 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 26).

Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper

First Reading – Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

- In this evening's first reading, the Lord instructs His servant, Moses, and the ancient Israelites to prepare a year-old lamb without blemish for the first Passover sacrifice, as an offering back to God of the first fruits of their flock. The Passover meal is a foretelling of the Eucharist, Jesus' sacrifice that He instituted for us. As Christian stewards, what sacrificial gifts of our time, talent, and treasure do we bring weekly 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, "*The cup of salvation I will take up, and ... call upon the name of the Lord.*" As faithful stewards, we realize that we, too, need to use our God-given gifts to offer ourselves in love and gratitude in service to our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- In this evening's second reading, St. Paul reminds us how Jesus totally gives of Himself in the Eucharist. As practicing 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 this evening's Gospel, our humble Lord, Jesus Christ, washes the feet of the apostles, to give 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 gifts with those less fortunate.



Stewardship Thought

On this holy night, as grateful Christian stewards, we reflect on how much Jesus loves us. He instituted the Holy Eucharist to continue His life with us and strengthen our faith in Him. The very word, “Eucharist,” means “thanksgiving.” 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 moving description of a man’s suffering, humiliation, and ultimate justification and triumph, Christians take this reading to refer to Jesus’ suffering centuries later. To be Christ’s disciples, we, too, know we must take up our cross daily and follow Him.

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

- We find our strength, and take refuge, in the Lord, in the face of the world’s ridicule and humiliation 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 for the sins of all humanity. He sympathizes with us for He, too, was tempted in every way. Do we, as Christian stewards, gratefully acknowledge the magnitude of His sacrifice, which opens salvation 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 John, His faithful disciple, and to the world as our model of Christian stewardship.

Stewardship Thought

We sometimes ponder 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, our heavenly Father, 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 Christian stewards rejoice in God's beautiful creation and marvel at His power and wisdom in bringing it all forth.

– or –

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

- The Lord, our God, is the Creator of all things. As faithful 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, who was born to Sarah and Abraham in their old age. Abraham never questions God's directive. Out of Abraham's fidelity to Him, God spared Isaac's life and blessed Abraham abundantly. As Christian stewards, are we willing to trust in God's wisdom when He asks us to carry out a difficult task to further His kingdom?

Psalm 16:5, 8-11

- In gratitude, we gratefully rejoice that God is always with us to guide us on our 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 God to save them, Moses and his people escape through the parted Red Sea, while Pharaoh's army is destroyed when the sea closes and rushing waters pour over them. What a powerful lesson to trust God in our times of trouble! As Christian stewards, how much trust do we put in the Lord?

Psalm – Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18

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

Fourth Reading – Isaiah 54:5-14

- The setting of the fourth reading is 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 captured, and sent to Babylon. The prophet Isaiah's imagery of an enraged husband taking back his forsaken wife out of mercy and pity symbolizes God's kindness and mercy for His people, the captive Israelites, and for us when we turn away from God because of sin. Our heavenly Father, too, will forgive our sins through Jesus Christ if we, as His disciples, humble ourselves to seek His reconciliation.

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

- As Christian stewards, we have God's great gift of forgiveness when we fail to follow His commands.

Fifth Reading – Isaiah 55:1-11

- Our heavenly Father promises His comfort and nourishment to those who seek Him. God expects us, as faithful stewards, to follow His Word and do His will throughout the world.

Psalm – Isaiah 12:2-6

- In gratitude, we, as good stewards, give praise and thanking to the Lord for giving us courage and strength 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 is also 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, our God, is perfect, right, and trustworthy. May the hearts of good stewards rejoice in the blessings received by following His way.

Seventh Reading – Ezekiel 36:16-28

- In the seventh reading, the prophet Ezekiel blasts the ancient Israelite community for profaning God’s name and worshipping false idols. Because of their sins, they are dispersed among the nations during the Babylonian exile. Yet, our heavenly Father forgave them, just as He forgives us out of His love for us. In return, God 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 desire to be with God forever. We praise and thank Him in song and instrument in His sacred house where we worship Him.

– or –

Psalm 51:12-15, 18-19

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

Epistle – Romans 6:3-11

- St. Paul tells us that through our gift of Baptism, we die to sin and share in Christ’s 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 – Luke 24:1-12

- Two angels tell Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, “*Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here; He has been raised up.*” They left the tomb and proclaimed this great news to the apostles and other followers of Jesus. As Christian stewards, do our lives show witness to our belief in the Good News of the risen Christ?

Stewardship Thought

As our RCIA catechumens are Baptized, are Confirmed, and receive their First Holy Communion, may we, as good and faithful Christian stewards, welcome them with hospitable hearts to our faith communion. May we 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’ life culminated in His triumphant resurrection and victory over the cross. His gifts of forgiveness, salvation, and membership in His Church are open to all who believe in Him.

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

- As Christian stewards, we are grateful for our many blessings received through the Lord’s goodness, mercy, and power that endure forever.

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 (Used with permission from the Archdiocese of St. Louis, www.archstl.org/Stewardship, Stewardship Bulletin Inserts, December 2007 – March 2008).

– or –

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

- Through the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we as a Christian community are renewed in sincerity and truth.

Gospel – John 20:1-9

- Christ is risen! The disciples saw His wrappings in the tomb and believed in Him. God, our heavenly Father, gives us the greatest gift of all — salvation through His Son, Jesus.

Stewardship Thought

In the second reading today, St. Paul reminds the Colossians that they have been raised with Christ, exhorting them to “*think about the things above rather than things of earth.*” We, too, have been raised with Christ. Let us rejoice and be glad! See Colossians 3:2 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 26).



Second Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16

- Out of faith and humble service, St. Peter and the other apostles performed many signs and miracles for the people in the early days of the Church. As a result, many joined. As Christian stewards, does our daily example of discipleship in Christ help draw people of today to the faith?

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

- In troubled times, faithful stewards gratefully rejoice in the day the Lord has made, and the strength and courage He gives us. His mercy and love is everlasting.

Second Reading – Book of Revelation 1:9-13, 17-19

- In the second reading, Jesus tells John in his vision, “*There is nothing to fear.*” He has overcome death. During difficult times, these are comforting words to faithful stewards.

Gospel – John 20:19-31

- How many times along our stewardship journey do we find ourselves being a “doubting Thomas” before we humbly profess, “*my Lord and my God*”?

Stewardship Thought

“*Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believe,*” Jesus says in today’s Gospel. For those who have not seen to believe, however, we must be good stewards of our faith, living it joyfully and sharing it generously. Then, in our time too, “*men and women in great numbers*” will be “*added to the Lord.*” See John 20:29; Acts 5:14 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 26).

Third Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Act of the Apostles 5:27-32, 40-41

- In this first reading, Peter and the apostles are brought before the Sanhedrin because they have been fearlessly teaching in the name of Jesus. As Christian stewards and disciples of Christ, are we as bold when ill-treated for proclaiming His name?

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

- Good Christian stewards give praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for His strength, protection, and good will.

Second Reading – Book of Revelation 5:11-14

- The Lamb of God that was slain for our salvation is praised and glorified for all eternity.

Gospel – John 21:1-19

- Sometimes in our lives, we fail to recognize what our Lord calls us to do until an event occurs that leads us to understand. As stewards on a journey, we trust in the patience of the Lord.



Stewardship Thought

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells Peter again and again, "*If you love Me, feed my sheep.*" He says the same to each of us, "If you love Me, use the gifts I have given you to serve your brothers and sisters." See John 21:15 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

Fourth Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 13:14, 43-52

- In this first reading, Paul and Barnabas make it clear that salvation through Jesus Christ, our Lord, is open to all who believe in the Word of God and follow His teaching. Are we, as Christian stewards, open to the Word of God?

Psalm 100: 1-3, 5

- As Christian stewards, we strive to serve the Lord gratefully. We praise and worship Him as our Creator for His endless gifts of kindness and love.

Second Reading – Book of Revelation 7:9, 14-17

- Faithful stewards, willing to go through trials for the Lord's sake, will be refreshed and purified in the blood of the Lamb of God.

Gospel – John 10:27-30

- As Christian stewards, we know we can put our faith and trust in Jesus, the Good Shepherd. His ultimate gift to us is eternal salvation for those who listen to and follow Him.

Stewardship Thought

Paul and Barnabas encountered both violent rejection and joyful acceptance of the message that they preached. We, too, may meet with mixed reactions when we use our gifts in the service of God. But, the Gospel assures us, the reward for those who follow faithfully is eternal life (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

Fifth Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 14:21-27

- Do we, as Christian stewards, have the courage to persevere in the face of difficulties that arise because we are disciples of Christ?

Psalm 145:8-13

- In thanksgiving, good Christian stewards praise and glorify God, our heavenly Father, for His mighty works, His mercy and kindness.

Second Reading – Book of Revelation 21:1-5

- God's promise to the good and faithful steward is eternal life — His promise of eternal peace.

Gospel – John 13:31-35

- To be faithful disciples, we are called by Christ to love one another as He has loved us. Do we show the world we are His disciples by our love for one another?



Stewardship Thought

In today's Gospel, Jesus gives His disciples — and us — a new commandment: "*Love one another.*" Good stewards who spend their time and talents in service to others are well on their way to fulfilling this commandment. See John 13:34 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Reading – Acts of the Apostles 15:1-2, 22-29

- Leaders of the early Church resolved differences through prayer and the Holy Spirit. When tensions occur between members of our parish communion, do we, as Christian stewards, ask the Holy Spirit to guide us as peacemakers with our brothers and sisters?

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

- Christian stewards give thanks and praise to the Lord for His justice and mercy.

Second Reading – Book of Revelation 21:10-14, 22-23

- The imagery of the Lord, God the Almighty, Light of the new Jerusalem, and the Lamb as the lamp, is profound, as is the Church, the Bride of Christ. Are we good stewards of the Church through our gifts of time, talent, and treasure?

Gospel – John 14:23-29

- Faithful stewards give praise and thanksgiving to God, our heavenly Father, through His Son, Jesus Christ, for His gifts of love, peace, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Stewardship Thought

Today's reading from Revelation offers a vision of the City of God, the new Jerusalem. "But," the Bishops' Pastoral on stewardship reminds us, "*that 'life to come' is in continuity with this present life through the human goods, the worthy human purposes, which people foster now*" (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

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 acknowledge God's gift of the Holy Spirit as proclaimed by Jesus, our risen Lord.

Psalm 47:2-3, 6-9

- Christian stewards praise God in song and instrument for His glory and rule in our lives.

Second Reading – Ephesians 1:17-23

- Stewards thank our heavenly Father for the gift of wisdom, which reveals His glory to us.
- We should always strive to be good stewards of His Church — the Body of Christ on earth.

Gospel – Luke 24:46-53

- Before His ascension, Jesus reminded the apostles what they had witnessed — His suffering, death, and resurrection. He fulfilled His Father’s promise of the Holy Spirit. As Christian stewards, do we call upon this great sacrifice and gift to guide us in truth and wisdom as we continue our stewardship journey?

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 7:55-60

- Like Stephen, is our faith, as disciples of Christ, strong enough to be willing to give our life for the Gospel?

Psalm 97:1-2, 6-7, 9

- As faithful stewards, we acknowledge the justice and judgment of the Lord in His rule over all the earth.

Second Reading – Book of Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20

- Stewardship is a conversion of mind and heart to be a disciple of the Lord, and accept Him as the Alpha and Omega — the Beginning and the End. Let us boldly proclaim, “*Come, Lord Jesus!*”

Gospel – John 17:20-26

- We, as Christian stewards, seek unity throughout the world through the love of our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus.

Stewardship Thought

The second reading today contains the somber warning that Jesus is coming soon and will bring to each person the reward that his or her conduct deserves. Has my stewardship of the blessings entrusted to me been such that I could respond joyfully, “*Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!*”? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

Pentecost Sunday

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

- Our heavenly Father sent His gift of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, giving them the courage and strength 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

- Good Christian stewards strive to please God, and are thankful for His many gifts, especially His tremendous gift of life in the Holy Spirit.



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

- The Body of Christ, the Church, consists of many parts, all gifts from our heavenly Father. What do we, as faithful stewards, bring to the Eucharistic table each weekend? How do we share our unique God-given gifts with our parish communion?

Sequence

- We thank our heavenly Father for His gift of the Holy Spirit, Who gives us comfort, healing, and forgiveness. He shows us the way to eternal salvation.

Gospel – John 20:19-23

- Peace is a gift generated from God the Father, through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. How do we use our God-given talents to create peace among our parish communion?
- The power of the priest to forgive sins is also a gift from our Triune God. Do we, as Christian stewards, seek God's forgiveness by participating regularly in the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Stewardship Thought

One miracle of Pentecost was that, despite their diversity, each listener heard God's word in his or her own language. The meaning for stewardship is that, by sharing the gifts poured out on us by the Holy Spirit, we will be empowered to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters, whatever they may be (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 27).

Most Holy Trinity

First Reading – Proverbs 8:22-31

- Father, Son, and Spirit are present before and after the creation of the earth. God is very pleased with His work. Are we responsible stewards of God's creation?

Psalm 8:4-9

- Christian stewards marvel at God's creation, and our place in His divine plan.

Second Reading – Romans 5:1-5

- Like St. Paul, we, as disciples of Christ, endure trials in our lives that, through our faith, will draw us closer to the Lord. When challenges arise, our hope is the strength we have in the love of God, through the Holy Spirit, which we gain by faith.

Gospel – John 16:12-15

- The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one in the same God. If, as Christian stewards, our hearts and minds are open, He will guide us to the truth.

Stewardship Thought

Today's psalm reminds us that we have been crowned with glory and honor and given rule over the works of God's hands. But we must be good stewards, for the Lord will surely hold us accountable for the use of those gifts! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 33).

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

First Reading – Genesis 14:18-20

- In this first reading, the king and high priest Melchizedek brought out bread and wine, and offered a blessing to God for Abram, later named Abraham. As Christian stewards, do we understand the high priest's actions as a precursor of Christ's Eucharistic gift for us?

Psalm 110: 1-4

- Our heavenly Father promised to be with the king and high priest Melchizedek in the midst of his enemies. He, too, makes that promise to us.

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- At the Last Supper, Jesus left us Himself — His true presence in the Eucharist. In thanksgiving, do we, as His disciples, show our reverence and respect for this awesome gift?

Gospel – Luke 9:11-17

- Our Lord, Jesus Christ, with only five loaves and two fish, miraculously fed over 5,000 followers. This miracle foreshadows His institution of the Eucharist on the night before He died. For us, the Eucharist is the foundation of our faith. This tremendous gift sustains us spiritually in this life as we work toward our goal of eternal life with God, our heavenly Father.

Stewardship Thought

In today's Gospel, the disciples suggest that Jesus disperse the crowd so that they might *individually* seek food and lodging. The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand is Jesus' powerful reminder that when we *share* our gifts in His name there is always more than enough! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 34).

Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Kings 8:41-43

- God is in His temple, and all who come to this sacred place, including strangers, acknowledge it was built in His honor. As Christian stewards, how do we welcome the stranger who attends our parish church?

Psalm 117:1-2

- The Lord, our heavenly Father, is always faithful to us. As Christian stewards, are we always faithful to His teachings and commands?

Second Reading – Galatians 1:1-2, 6-10

- St. Paul warns of those who preach false gospels contrary to the Gospel of Christ. He condemns their actions. As we continue to strive to be disciples of Christ, we, too, must avoid the false teachings of moral relativism today, including abortion, embryonic stem-cell research, euthanasia, and other threats against human life. Christian stewards embrace the Church's teachings on the sanctity of all life to be protected from conception to natural death.



Gospel – Luke 7:1-10

- The centurion in today’s Gospel put his complete faith in Jesus, and his servant was healed. Can we, as stewards, claim the same faith in our Lord?

Stewardship Thought

We cannot “give to get.” Jesus cured the centurion’s servant in today’s Gospel, not because the centurion deserved God’s favor because of his kindness and generosity to the Jewish people, but because of his great faith. Good stewards know that “*steadfast is God’s kindness toward us*” and trust Him to supply what they need. See Psalm 117 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 28).

Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Kings 17:17-24

- In this first reading, Elijah knows how precious the life of the widow’s son is to her, and, in faith, calls on God to bring him back to life. God answers his prayer. As faithful stewards, we, too, know all life is a gift from our heavenly Father, and must strive to protect the sanctity of life from conception to natural death.

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

- Christian stewards give thanks and praise to God for His gift of faith to us, and for His mercy and goodness.

Second Reading – Galatians 1:11-19

- St. Paul relates how the Lord turned his life around through the revelation of Jesus. May our daily journey in Christian stewardship make us zealous followers of the Gospel message.

Gospel – Luke 7:11-17

- Out of Jesus’ pity for the poor widow, He brings her only son back to life. As disciples of Christ, how do we show our compassion to those who have lost loved ones?

Stewardship Thought

Both the first reading and the Gospel remind us powerfully that every breath we take is a gift from God. How conscious am I of this first and most precious gift? Am I a good steward of the life and time which I have been blessed? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 2 Samuel 12:7-10, 13

- King David repented of his sin, and the Lord forgave him. We, as Christian stewards, also know of God’s unending mercy, and realize that with contrite hearts and our participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, God will forgive any sin.

Psalm 32:1-2, 5, 7, 11

- In gratitude, we, as faithful disciples, humbly thank our God, through Christ, His Son, for His gift of forgiveness of sin.

Second Reading – Galatians 2:16, 19-21

- As faithful stewards, we live, not by merely following rules, but by our faith in Jesus Christ, Who, out of His tremendous love, gave Himself up for our salvation.

Gospel – Luke 7:36-8:3

- In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches us a profound lesson of love, contrition, and forgiveness. Jesus' lesson also teaches that we, as Christian stewards, must be hospitable and welcoming to visitors and newcomers in our parish.

Stewardship Thought

Like David in today's first reading, we sin when we begin to feel entitled and act as if what we have is ours by right, when we forget that everything we have is an unmerited gift from God. But God is gracious and forgiving — even when we use His gifts wrongly or squander them thoughtlessly — if, like David, we confess our guilt and ask His pardon (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Zechariah 12:10-11

- In today's first reading, the prophet Zechariah prophesies many years before Christ's time on earth the mourning of His death on the cross. As disciples of Christ, we must be sensitive and give comfort to those who mourn the loss of loved ones.

Psalm 63:2-6, 8-9

- Good Christian stewards thirst for the Lord, marvel at His power and glory, and are grateful for the abundance He gives us.

Second Reading – Galatians 3:26-29

- Through our faith in Jesus, we are children of God. All who are baptized in Christ, regardless of status, are one in the Lord.

Gospel – Luke 9:18-24

- To become disciples of Christ, we must recognize Him, and be willing to pay the price of denying ourselves, taking up our cross daily to further God's kingdom here on earth in service to others.

Stewardship Thought

"*Who do you say that I am?*" Jesus asks Peter in today's Gospel. Does my use of the gifts and talents entrusted to me accurately reflect my answer to that same question? How willing am I to deny myself, take up my cross, and follow in His steps? See Luke 9:20 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Kings 19:16, 19-21

- In this first reading, Elijah, through God's intervention, calls Elisha to be his attendant. Elisha, too, will become a prophet, and in doing so, sacrifices everything to accept Elijah's invitation. Are we, as we continue our stewardship journey, open to hear God's call in our lives?



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

- Day or night, we, as faithful stewards, rejoice in confidence that the Lord is always with us.

Second Reading – Galatians 5:1, 13-18

- In this second reading, St. Paul echoes Christ's commandment and states, "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" As Christian stewards, how are we fulfilling this commandment in service to those in need?

Gospel – Luke 9:51-62

- On Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, He calls many to follow Him. Most gave reasons to delay answering His call. Do we, as we strive to embrace Christian stewardship as a way of life, answer His call unconditionally?

Stewardship Thought

In today's second reading, St. Paul provides a wonderful one-sentence summary of Christian stewardship: Out of love, place yourselves at one another's service (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

SS. Peter and Paul, Apostles (June 29)

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

- As good stewards, we know that our heavenly Father hears our prayers and we gratefully trust His guidance to follow His will, and not our own.

Psalm 34:2-9

- Faithful stewards make time daily to pray, to thank God for His abundant blessings, 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 here on earth, will we, as Christian stewards, be able to show that, through the Lord's strength and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we did use our time, talent, and treasure to further God's kingdom?

Gospel – Matthew 16:13-19

- Peter recognized Jesus as his Lord and God, and was not afraid to say so. He boldly accepted Christ's call to be the "Rock" on which the Church is built to carry on Christ's ministry to the world. As faithful 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).

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 66:10-14

- As Christian stewards, we gratefully trust and rejoice that the Lord’s peace and comfort will flow to us like a river.

Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20

- As faithful stewards, we sing praise to the Lord, our God, for His wondrous deeds, and His kindness and mercy to us.

Second Reading – Galatians 6:14-18

- St. Paul reminds us that all who strive to become disciples of Christ will become a new creation, and be rewarded with the Lord’s gifts of peace and mercy.

Gospel – Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

- In today’s Gospel, Jesus commissions the seventy-two to go out and spread the Good News about God’s kingdom. Interestingly enough, He asks them to accept the generosity of others for food and housing. The Church today still relies on our generosity to carry out its mission. Are we, as Christian stewards, making a prayerful and well thought out sacrificial gift to the Lord of the first fruits of our labors, or do we give only what is left of our funds?

Stewardship Thought

“The harvest is rich,” Jesus tells the seventy-two in today’s Gospel, *“but the workers are few.”* The situation is the same today. How can *I* help with God’s harvest? Am *I* called into the field? Am *I* one who could provide food or shelter or wages to those who toil in the fields of the Lord? See Luke 10:2 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Deuteronomy 30:10-14

- Moses encouraged the ancient Israelites to believe whole-heartedly in the Lord God, and follow His commandments. Their faith was not somewhere up in the sky, but already in their hearts. As Christian stewards on our journey, we understand God is always near us.

Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36-37

- We, as faithful stewards, rejoice in knowing that whatever the need, our Lord is there to provide strength, comfort, and healing.

Second Reading – Colossians 1:15-20

- St. Paul teaches that Christ *“... is the head of the body, the Church.”* All was created through Him and for Him, and in Him everything continues in being. What awesome truths for us as we strive to embrace Christian stewardship as a way of life.

Gospel – Luke 10:25-37

- In today’s Gospel, Jesus gives us the parable of the good Samaritan. “Good Samaritan” even in our times means one that helps others in need. As Christian stewards, are we Good Samaritans towards others?



Stewardship Thought

The good Samaritan was also a good steward, giving his time and treasure to meet his neighbor's need. At the end of this familiar story, Jesus urges His hearer — and us — to go and do the same! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Genesis 18:1-10

- In today's first reading, Abraham was a gracious host to his three guests, and welcomed them into his house. Creating an atmosphere of hospitality in Abraham's example is a hallmark of a successful stewardship parish. As Christian stewards, do we create a welcoming environment in our parish communion?
- The Lord, through His angels, tells Abraham that he and Sarah, though aged, would have a son within a year. As faithful stewards, do we believe that, through prayer, anything is possible with God?

Psalm 15:2-5

- The faithful steward who lives a just life will live in the peace of the Lord.

Second Reading – Colossians 1:24-28

- St. Paul knows that in being a disciple of Christ, he will suffer for the Gospel, which he preached so all would believe in Christ. To be faithful stewards, we likewise must take up our cross daily and follow the Lord.

Gospel – Luke 10:38-42

- In our hectic world, there are many distractions that impact our pursuit of discipleship with our Lord, Jesus Christ. In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches Martha that her sister Mary has put aside these distractions to focus on the Lord's teachings. As Christian stewards on our journey, do we focus on the Word of the Lord?

Stewardship Thought

Today's readings speak of hospitality. Abraham, who cheerfully did for his guests all that desert hospitality required, was rewarded with his heart's desire — a son. Martha also busied herself with all the details of hospitality, but grudgingly and with complaint. Am I a cheerful or a grudging giver? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 29).

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Genesis 18:20-32

- Abraham challenges the Lord to show His mercy, even to grave sinners. God, our heavenly Father, is kind and merciful, even when we fail as stewards of His blessings.

Psalm 138:1-3, 6-8

- We, as Christian stewards, praise God, knowing that in times of distress, He will strengthen us and answer our prayers.

Second Reading – Colossians 2:12-14

- In this second reading, St. Paul reminds us that Christ, through His death and resurrection, freed us from all sin. How do we, as Christian stewards, respond to new life in Christ through this tremendous gift of forgiveness and reconciliation?

Gospel – Luke 11:1-13

- In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches His disciples — and us — how to pray, and to be persistent in prayer. Christian stewardship begins with grateful prayer to God for all His blessings to us. Prayer is how we communicate with God. As we continue our journey in stewardship, do we make time for daily prayer?

Stewardship Thought

Jesus is describing God's immeasurable generosity when He says in today's Gospel, "*Whoever asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; whoever knocks, is admitted.*" But it should also be the description of us as Christian stewards — those seeking to follow Christ by using our gifts in service to others. See Luke 11:10 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 30).

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23

- This first reading warns that the quest for wealth and property is all done in vain. As Christian stewards, God's wisdom reveals to us that material riches are only temporary. Instead, we should seek what is lasting in Him.

Psalm 90:3-6, 12-14, 17

- We, as faithful stewards, gratefully sing praise to the Lord for the love and care He gives us.

Second Reading – Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

- In today's second reading, St. Paul encourages all peoples to take off the old self of worldly desires and put on a new self in Christ. Christian stewardship also requires a conversion of mind and heart to become a disciple of Christ Jesus.

Gospel – Luke 12:13-21

- Jesus warns in today's Gospel against greed and storing up of earthly possessions. We, as Christian stewards, know that at the end of our lives, God will ask an accounting of how we used our God-given gifts of time, talent, and treasure to further His kingdom and help the needy. If the Lord called us today, how would we answer?

Stewardship Thought

Jesus urges us to be rich in what matters to God. The psalmist warns us against hardening our hearts. Are our hearts open to what really matters? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 30).

Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6)

First Reading – Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

- We, as good Christian stewards, recognize God as Lord and King of our lives. How do we use our God-given talents to praise and serve Him?

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

- The Lord is King and the Most High. His justice reigns in heaven and on earth. In gratitude, how do we glorify His Holy Name?

Second Reading – 2 Peter 1:16-19

- Peter witnessed our heavenly Father proclaiming to the world 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?
- Peter and the other apostles were prophets. As faithful stewards, are we listening to the prophets of the Church today?

Gospel – Luke 9:28-36

- As we use God's gifts to further His work, we are confident that through His gift of faith and our good deeds, as His faithful disciples, we, too, can have a "mountain top" experience with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

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 – Wisdom 18:6-9

- For the ancient Israelites, the first Passover must have been a frightening experience. Yet, they placed their faith and put their courage in the Lord to deliver them and save them from their enemies. In frightening and difficult times, do we, as Christian stewards, put our trust in the Lord for strength and courage, or do we seek other sources?

Psalm 33:1, 12, 18-22

- The Lord responds to stewards who put their total faith and trust in Him. We praise and glorify Him at all times for His kindness to us.

Second Reading – Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

- St. Paul relates the deep faith Abraham, Sarah, and their descendants had in the Lord's goodness. As faithful stewards on our own journey, we do not know where God's plan will take us, but we do know that we must place our faith and trust in Him.

Gospel – Luke 12:32-48

- In today's Gospel, Jesus says, "*Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.*" This a strong message to us, as Christian stewards, that we indeed need to use at all times all of our God-given gifts of time, skills, and material resources to do God's work here on earth.

Stewardship Thought

Today's Gospel urges us to give generously, and thus build up treasure in heaven. For "*wherever your treasure lies, there your heart will be.*" See Luke 12:34 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 30).

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15)

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

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

Psalm 45:10-12, 16

- As stewards, do we strive to follow Mary's example, and honor the Lord as our King?

Second Reading – 1 Corinthians 15:20-27

- Christ's message to us is one of unity because His kingdom is above all nations. At the "*resurrection of the dead,*" will we be able to show Jesus that we used our God-given talents and shared our "first fruits" 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 our Lord, Jesus Christ. As Christian stewards, do we follow her example of trusting God completely and 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" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [USCCB], *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, Tenth Anniversary Edition, 2002, page 41).

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

- God gave Jeremiah the gift of prophecy. Jeremiah's proclamations to the people were not well received, but it did not deter him from speaking the truth. As Christian stewards, how faithful are we in listening to the truth proclaimed by the teachings of the Church?

Psalm 40:2-4, 18

- We, as faithful Christian stewards, gratefully bless and praise God, knowing that, in times of trouble, we can put our full trust in the Lord.

Second Reading – Hebrews 12:1-4

- In this second reading, St. Paul encourages us, who strive for discipleship with Christ, to focus on Jesus and persevere through the inspiration of our Lord's endurance of the cross. Do we, trusting in the strength of our Lord, continue to seek His grace with our struggle against sin?

Gospel – Luke 12:49-53

- Practicing our discipleship with the Lord, may cause divisions in our families. As faithful stewards through our Baptism, are we strong enough to follow Jesus regardless of the consequences?

Stewardship Thought

In today's second reading, St. Paul encourages us not to grow weary or lose heart, but to persevere in following Jesus. Our willingness to give of ourselves, even in the face of conflict and division, is one way to measure our discipleship (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 30).

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Isaiah 66:18-21

- God, our heavenly Father, sent out His messengers throughout the world so that all may know His glory, and come to worship Him on His holy mountain, Jerusalem. Do we accept His invitation?

Psalm 117:1-2

- In gratitude, we, as Christian stewards, praise and glorify the Lord for His enduring kindness and fidelity to us.

Second Reading – Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

- In this second reading, St. Paul encourages faithful stewards to endure trials that may cause great pain and suffering, because this "*discipline*" produces the "*fruit of peace and justice*".

Gospel – Luke 13:22-30

- Our heavenly Father desires that all be saved through His Son, Jesus Christ. The Church teaches that we all have free will to choose between good and evil. Are we, on our journey as disciples, making good choices?
- Jesus proclaims, "*Some who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last.*" In God's kingdom, it does not matter who you are, where you live, or what you have gained here on earth. You will be held accountable only for how you used God's gifts of time, talent, and material resources to serve the Lord and your neighbor.

Stewardship Thought

Today's reading from Isaiah describes the Israelites bringing their offering to the Lord "*in clean vessels.*" The gift of myself — my patient endurance and fidelity to the will of God — is as important as the monetary gift I offer. See Isaiah 66:20 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.* page 30).

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29

- As Christian stewards, we strive to conduct our lives, not in arrogance, but in humility with our Lord.

Psalm 68:4-7, 10-11

- Faithful stewards are glad and rejoice before God, our heavenly Father, for His care of those in need.

Second Reading – Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24

- As Christian stewards, we are drawn to God, in festal joy, through Jesus and the new covenant.

Gospel – Luke 14:1, 7-14

- In today's Gospel, Jesus invites us to be humble, and to take care of the poor, the sick, the crippled, and the blind — those who cannot repay us. The faithful steward's efforts will surely be blessed.

Stewardship Thought

In the Gospel today, Jesus warns us not to give in to hopes of repayment, but to give openhandedly to the poor and needy. That sort of giving mirrors the bountiful giving of God, and Jesus assures us it is blessed indeed! (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 30).

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Wisdom 9:13-18

- The Holy Spirit guides us, as Christian stewards, away from the burdens of earth and on the straight path to gain our eternal salvation.

Psalm 90:3-6, 12-17

- The psalmist says, "... *prosper the work of our hands for us! Prosper the work of our hands.*" Christian stewards rejoice in the glad understanding that our prosperity comes from God's kindness.

Second Reading – Philemon 9-10, 12-17

- In this letter, St. Paul teaches us about the oneness of mankind in Christ, regardless of status. Do we, as Christian stewards, welcome everyone as our brother or sister in the Lord?

Gospel – Luke 14:25-33

- In today's Gospel, Jesus asks us to give up our possessions to be His disciples, a counter-cultural statement in today's society. On our continuing journey to make Christian stewardship our way of life, do we let go of possessions that have mastered us, or are we still mastered by them?

Stewardship Thought

Jesus tells the crowd that only those who renounce all of their possessions can be His disciples. Is He truly asking us to give up *everything*? Perhaps instead, He is trying to help us see that everything we think we own is really a gift from God. Good stewards know that and strive to use those gifts accountably (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 30).

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14)

First Reading – Numbers 21:4-9

- Do we complain against God when life is not going well, or do we follow the route of the faithful steward, and put our faith and trust in our heavenly Father, Who will deliver us from our plight?

Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38

- God, our heavenly Father, in His infinite mercy, forgives us when we sin against Him. As Christian stewards, do we show forgiveness to those who wrong us?

Second Reading – Philippians 2:6-11

- Christ's example gives us the model for placing the needs of others above our own interests — by humbling Himself, God rewarded and glorified Him.

Gospel – John 3:13-17

- Because of God's love, He gave us His only Son as a gift to all people and, through Christ's death and resurrection, eternal life for all who believe in Him. As Christian stewards, how do we show our gratitude for this great gift of our salvation?

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-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14

- As stewards on a journey, what modern day idols must we avoid that prevent us from discipleship with our Lord, and from making stewardship a way of life?
- Christian stewards are grateful for God's faithfulness and kindness.

Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 17, 19

- As faithful stewards, we take comfort in God's mercy, love, and forgiveness in His dealings with us in spite of our sins.

Second Reading – 1 Timothy 1:12-17

- In gratitude, practicing Christian stewards give praise and glory to God, our heavenly Father, through His Son, Jesus Christ, for His abundant gifts of mercy and forgiveness of our sins.

Gospel – Luke 15:1-32

- In today's Gospel, Jesus tells a parable in three parts: the shepherd who loses one of a hundred sheep; the woman who loses one coin out of ten; and one of the most familiar stories in the Gospels: the prodigal son. In each case, great rejoicing occurs at the finding of the lost sheep, the missing coin, and the lost son. We, as faithful stewards, take comfort in knowing that if we stray from our heavenly Father's love and mercy, we can be welcomed back to the parish communion, and reconciled with God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Stewardship Thought

We can hear God speaking to us today in the words of the father to his elder son: "*You are with me always and everything I have is yours.*" What is my response to such remarkable generosity? Do I give joyfully and generously as God gives to me? See Luke 15:31 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Amos 8:4-7

- In dealing with others, the good and faithful steward is fair and does not cheat his neighbor.

Psalm 113:1-2, 4-8

- God, our heavenly Father, is deserving of glory and praise, for He lifts up the poor and lowly.

Second Reading – 1 Timothy 2:1-8

- As faithful disciples to Christ's teaching, we pray for our national, state, and local civic leaders that they seek justice for all, and their minds and hearts be converted to the truth of God's directive to protect all life from conception to natural death.

Gospel – Luke 16:1-13

- In today's Gospel, Jesus tells His disciples, "*You cannot serve both God and money.*" As Christian stewards, we know we are to use our material blessings to further God's work here on earth. But the question is: where do our hearts lie?

Stewardship Thought

The dishonest manager in today's parable knew how to manipulate money to his advantage. But the Gospel warns that no one can serve both God and money. Which do I serve? Is my stewardship such that anyone can tell? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Amos 6:1, 4-7

- In this first reading, the prophet Amos is critical of the elite that live the “good life” while others suffer greatly. As Christian stewards, how compassionate are we to those suffering and in need? How do we use our resources from God to help the less fortunate?

Psalm 146:7-10

- Our heavenly Father blesses the faithful steward who keeps the faith, secures justice for the oppressed, and gives food to those in need.

Second Reading – 1 Timothy 6:11-16

- In today’s second reading, St. Paul encourages those loyal to God to, “... *pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness*” and “*to keep God’s commands.*” Are we, as stewards on a journey, heeding his advice?

Gospel – Luke 16:19-31

- In today’s Gospel, Jesus warns the Pharisees — and us — through the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, that the rich man committed very serious sin by ignoring the needs of the poor and hungry. To faithful Christian stewards, the task of relieving hunger throughout the world seems overwhelming. Yet, our faith in the Lord gives us hope that we can make a difference by sharing our blessings with our neighbor in need.

Stewardship Thought

The sin of the rich man in today’s parable was not that he was rich, but that he failed to share his wealth with the beggar at his gate. He knew Lazarus, perhaps walked by him every time he came in or out, but did nothing to relieve his suffering. Is there a Lazarus in my life? What am I doing to help? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

- In today’s first reading, the prophet Habakkuk reminds us that in spite of misery and strife around us, “*the just one, because of his faith, shall live.*” Are we as Christian stewards, true to this vision?

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9

- As Christian stewards, we give praise and glory to God, our heavenly Father, Who created us, leads us, and gifts us with His abundant blessings.

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

- In this second reading, St. Paul reminds us of the strength God gives us through the Holy Spirit in order to defend our faith. This strength enables lay witnesses to proclaim their personal stewardship journey.

Gospel – Luke 17:5-10

- Jesus asks us, as His servants, to do His will through our complete faith in Him, there is no minimum.

Stewardship Thought

When will I have given enough — of my income, of my time, of my talents? Today's Gospel suggests that only *total* stewardship will do: "*When you have done all you have been commanded to do, say, 'We are useless servants. We have done no more than our duty.'*" See Luke 17:10 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 2 Kings 5:14-17

- Through Elisha, God healed Naaman. In gratitude, Naaman offered back to Elisha a gift and asserted that he would now worship the true God. As Christian stewards, what gratitude do we show the Lord, our God, for His abundant blessings?

Psalm 98:1-4

- As faithful Christian stewards, we praise our heavenly Father in word and song for His wondrous deeds and our salvation.

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 2:8-13

- To be disciples of Christ, we, like St. Paul, must be willing to endure much for His sake, confident in the strength given us through the Gospel.

Gospel – Luke 17:11-19

- In today's Gospel, Jesus healed ten lepers. Yet, only one came back to thank Him; the rest only followed the directions under the law. As we embrace stewardship, are we sincere in thanking our Lord for everything in our lives?

Stewardship Thought

Jesus healed ten lepers in today's Gospel. Only one (ten percent) came back to say thank you. I, too, have received many blessings from the Lord — indeed, all I am and all I have is a gift! How and how often have I remembered to thank Him? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Exodus 17:8-13

- Faithful stewards know that in our life battles, through our faith communion, God will deliver us.

Psalm 121:1-8

- Christian stewards know God, our heavenly Father, watches over us as our protector and guardian against all evil. Are we persistent in calling on His name?



Second Reading – 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

- In this second reading, St. Paul encourages us to keep faithful to what we have learned from Scripture, and to use it as a learning tool in drawing closer to Jesus Christ, and through Him, to our salvation. The Church, through our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, encourages all the faithful to read and understand the Bible.
- As we continue our stewardship journey, do we make it a habit to pray and find inspiration daily from reading the Sacred Scripture?

Gospel – Luke 18:1-8

- In today's Gospel, Jesus encouraged His disciples to pray always and, through the parable of the widow and the judge, to be persistent in their prayer. Our journey into stewardship begins with the fundamental principle of grateful prayer. It is our direct communication with God that draws us closer to Him. Do we, as Christian stewards, make time for daily prayer?

Stewardship Thought

Today's theme is perseverance — Moses keeping his hands upraised throughout the battle, Paul urging Timothy to stay with the task of preaching and teaching, and the widow appealing to the corrupt judge. To be faithful stewards of God's gifts, we, too, must persevere in the roles to which we are called (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18

- Our God is a God of justice. He hears the cry of the poor and blesses those who willingly serve Him. How do we, as faithful stewards, use our resources to help the poor and oppressed?

Psalm 34:2-3, 17-19, 23

- We, as Christian stewards, bless and praise the Lord for His strength in helping us confront evil and His encouragement in difficult times.

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

- As Christian stewards, are we faithful in following Christ's way? Do we continue to trust our Lord when others abandon us?

Gospel – Luke 18:9-14

- In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches us about prayerful humility in His story of the Pharisee and the tax collector. How humble and grateful is our approach to God for His infinite mercy and kindness?

Stewardship Thought

Both the first reading and today's psalm say clearly that the Lord hears the cry of the poor. Have I been given the gifts — of time or money or abilities — to be the means by which God answers their need? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 31).

All Saints (November 1)

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

- Faithful stewards know the white garment of salvation comes from and through Christ as symbolized in the Sacrament of Baptism, which washes away the stain of sin.
- As disciples of Christ, we strive to build our relationship with God through prayer, meditation, and adoration.

Psalm – 24:1-6

- Do we strive, like the saints, to be Christ's faithful stewards with sinless hands and clean hearts?

Second Reading – 1 John 3:1-3

- God's great love calls us to be His faithful children. Are we using our time and talents to lead virtuous lives, so that by our example, the world will know we are Christ's disciples?

Gospel – Matthew 5:1-12

- To be good Christian stewards, we must make every effort to live the Beatitudes. As faithful stewards, we profess to follow Christ's example by losing our lives completely in His service to others.

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

- God grants peace in death to faithful stewards who strive to live holy lives, faithful to Him.
- Our heavenly Father 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

- Just as the Lord, our Shepherd, refreshes our souls, we, as good Christian stewards, should extend a spirit of hospitality in our home and in our parish communion.

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, even though we are sinners.

– or –

Second Reading – Romans 6:3-9

- We, as Christian stewards, believe that through our Baptism we receive grace to live with Christ. He died for our sins, and, if we die to sin, we, too, will unite with Him in our resurrection.

Gospel – John 6:37-40

- Are we, as faithful stewards, striving to follow our Lord's will, and, by truly believing in His Son, seeking to be raised with Him on the last day?

– 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).

Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – Wisdom 11:22-12:2

- Wisdom teaches us that God loves His creation, and that all things are His.
- In gratitude, faithful stewards give thanks and praise to God, our heavenly Father, for His mercy and love.

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

- In a spirit of gratitude, we, as good Christian stewards, praise God for His mercy and kindness, faithfulness, and support in challenging times.

Second Reading – 2 Thessalonians 1:11-2:2

- If our Lord came today, would we, as Christian stewards, be prepared to render an account of how we have answered His call by using our God-given gifts of time, talent, and treasure to build His kingdom for His glory?

Gospel – Luke 19:1-10

- Through Zacchaeus' faith, and his generosity to the poor and anyone he wronged, Jesus states that salvation has come to his house. How generous are we, as Christian stewards, in giving back to God a portion of our financial gifts — especially in difficult economic times?

Stewardship Thought

We are called to be good stewards of our personal vocations. St. Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians is therefore ours, too — "*that our God may make us worthy of his calling and powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every effort of faith.*" See 2 Thessalonians 1:11 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 32).



Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading – 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14

- In this first reading, seven brothers and their mother exhibit faith and courage by dying as martyrs for not violating God’s law. They were strengthened in their belief that they would be returned to life in God. As Christian disciples, is our faith as strong as theirs?

Psalm 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15

- A faithful steward seeks the Lord’s strength and protection in following His path.

Second Reading – 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

- As Christian stewards, we pray confidently for our heavenly Father to give us strength to do good works and to protect us against evil.

Gospel – Luke 20:27-38

- In today’s Gospel, the Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection after life, try to trick Jesus by presenting the story of seven brothers, who under Mosaic Law, should marry the same widow after the death of each preceding brother. The Sadducees asked who will be married to her in the next world. Jesus responded that earthly marriage as such does not exist in heaven where all are alive in God, and are like angels. As faithful stewards, our salvation is a tremendous gift to us who strive to use our God-given talents to do His will here on earth.

Stewardship Thought

In today’s second reading, St. Paul prays that the Thessalonians may be strengthened “*in every good deed and word.*” May, we, too, be strengthened and empowered to use our time and talents for the good of others. See 2 Thessalonians 2:17 (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 32).

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

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

- Christian stewards are grateful for the gift of water as the source of life on earth that sustains our existence and, as a gift from God, symbolizes His grace flowing throughout the world.

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

- In times of economic challenges, faithful stewards trust in God’s strength and guidance; He is with us always.

– 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

- St. Paul states, “*Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*” Are we good stewards of our spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical health?



Gospel – John 2:13-22

- As Christian stewards, are we dealing honestly with others in our financial matters, understanding that every material resource is God’s gift to us?

Stewardship Thought

As we pray today for an 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 – Malachi 3:19-20

- In today’s first reading, Malachi prophesies about the end times, contrasting the fate of evildoers with that of His faithful ones. If the Lord called us home today, would He find that we have been wise and just in how we used our time, our gifts, and our treasure to do His will here on earth?

Psalm 98:5-9

- We, as grateful stewards, give glory and praise to the Lord by instrument and in song for He rules the earth with justice and equity.

Second Reading – 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

- We, as Christian stewards, know God provides us the gift of employment. How are we using this gift to further His kingdom?

Gospel – Luke 21:5-19

- Jesus warns us to be prepared, for we know not when the end time will occur, nor even our own death. But Jesus also promises to protect us if we are faithful to Him. Are we faithful to His teachings and practicing the fundamentals of Christian stewardship in a way that would be pleasing to Him?

Stewardship Thought

Today’s readings paint a somewhat frightening picture of the end of time. But the Gospel ends with the assurance to faithful stewards that those who persevere will be saved (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 32).

Christ the King

First Reading – 2 Samuel 5:1-3

- In today’s first reading, David accepts his calling to be anointed king of Israel. Centuries later, Christ is born from this royal line of David. He, too, accepts His calling to do His Father’s will — even to die on a cross for our salvation. Do we, as disciples of Christ, accept our calling to further His kingdom, regardless of cost?

Psalm 122:1-5

- Like the ancient Israelites, we, too, as Christian stewards, honor the Lord’s house and give thanks and praise to His Holy Name.

Second Reading – Colossians 1:12-20

- In today's second reading, referring to Christ, St. Paul says, "... *all things were created through Him, and for Him.*" All creation gives Him honor; He is the head of the Body, the Church. Do we, as faithful stewards, strive to give God, our heavenly Father, through His Son, Jesus Christ, that same reverence and honor?

Gospel – Luke 23:35-43

- Jesus extends to us, as His disciples, the gifts of love and path to eternal salvation by His death on a cross and triumphant resurrection. We are reconciled with God in the example of the repentant thief. What gratitude do we show our Lord for these tremendous gifts?

Stewardship Thought

Today we celebrate Christ the King and are reminded that all was created through Him and for Him. Does my stewardship of the blessings entrusted to me give evidence that Christ is Lord of *my* life? (Our Sunday Visitor, *ibid.*, page 32).