

For Use February 6-7, 5th Sunday Ordinary time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

Like St. Paul in the second reading, the good steward can say, "I do all that I do for the sake of the gospel in the hope of having a share in it's blessings."

Vocation View

The afflicted Job in the Old Testament thinks that his life is like dust in the wind - - there is nothing to it. Sorrow and sadness strike many people; only those who have been afflicted, who know sorrow themselves, are poor enough to minister to others.

Stewardship Reflections

"Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed...He told them, 'Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.'"

- MARK 1:35, 38

In today's Gospel reading we see a perfect example of stewardship. Jesus gives His time to do all that God wishes - healing the sick and preaching. But before He begins, Jesus makes time to be alone with God in prayer. It is through prayer, spending time with God, that we find the strength to do what He wishes us to do. Be sure to find time every day to be with God.

Family Perspective

In today's gospel Jesus went to the "house of Andrew and Simon" to relax but discovered that "Simon's mother-in-law was very ill. Like Jesus we come home to relax but are confronted with problems. Take a tip from Andrew and Simon who "told Jesus about it at once."

Prayers for Priests

Saint of the Week- Saint Josephine Bakhita-Feast Day February 8

St. Josephine Bakhita was born in Sudan in 1869 and enslaved as a child. Eventually she was sold to an Italian diplomat and taken to Italy, where she was later brought to freedom through the help of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. Through their guidance, she learned about God and served him faithfully until her death in 1947.

Today, the feast day for St. Josephine Bakhita— February 8—is recognized as the annual day of prayer and awareness against human trafficking. Through prayer, we not only reflect on the experiences of those that have suffered through this affront to human dignity but also comfort, strengthen, and help empower survivors.

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For Use February 13-14, 6th Sunday Ordinary time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

In today's second reading, St. Paul urges the Corinthians to "do all for the glory of God." If we follow that advice in everything we do, we cannot help but be good stewards.

Vocation View

Today's Gospel says that: "Jesus was moved with pity," when He saw a leper. Are you moved with love and compassion when you see the outcast of today's society? Who will come forward to minister as Christ did today?

Stewardship Reflections

"Brothers and sisters, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."

- 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

Do a quick check of your priorities. Where does God rank in that list? If He's not first, you have some work to do. Putting God first in everything helps us from putting other "gods" (like our pride, ego, money and possessions) before God. Before making a decision, ask yourself, "I'm I going this for the glory of God or for the glory of me?"

Family Perspective

Family life is about decisions. The leper in today's gospel knew this when he said to Jesus. "If you will, you can make me clean." Jesus knew this when he said, "I do will it." Love is not an emotion. It is a decision to be with and for another person in "good times and bad," even when we don't feel like it.

Saint of the Week- Blessed Fra Angelico-Feast Day February 18

c.1400 – 1445

Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, known as Blessed Fra Angelico, was an early Renaissance painter. After joining the Dominicans in 1420, he began illustrating manuscripts and choir books, beginning each new work with a prayer. His religious altarpieces, paintings and frescoes exploited color for spatial and emotional effect. Fra Angelico, meaning "angelic brother," decorated an entire Florentine monastery and two Roman chapels. Notable works include his "Annunciation" and "Descent from the Cross." He declined an appointment as archbishop of Florence and was officially beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1982. Art students often leave written prayers near his tomb in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome. He is patron of artists.

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Prayer for Married Couples

Almighty and eternal God,
You blessed the union of married couples

so that they might reflect the union of Christ
with his Church:
look with kindness on them.
Renew their marriage covenant,
increase your love in them,
and strengthen their bond of peace
so that, with their children,
they may always rejoice in the gift of
your blessing.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

For Use February 20-21, 1st Sunday of Lent (B)

Stewardship by the Book

The waters of Baptism make us part of the new covenant in Christ. But the bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship reminds us that "there is a fundamental obligation arising from the sacrament of baptism. ... that people place their gifts, their resources – their selves – at God's service in and through the Church."

Vocation View

Lent: the springtime of the soul. A time to make a new covenant with God, develop new signs of our relationship with our Creator. Go into your own desert and discover what God is asking of you.

Stewardship Reflections

"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God...." - MARK 1:14

Do you ever think about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to come into Galilee, knowing that John had just been arrested for teaching the same message that Jesus was proclaiming. It must have taken great love and trust for Jesus to do what the Father had sent Him here on earth to do. In the same way, following a life of stewardship takes great love and trust from us. We must be willing to surrender completely to God, trusting that God will always give us all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.

Family Perspective

Jesus went into the desert to put his life in perspective. This lent, take a fresh look at a difficult relationship in your life. Concentrate on the positive things that person does, not just the negatives. Try to understand why their behaviors "bug" you. Can you honestly share your feelings with them without attacking them? Make Lent a time to MEND and FORGIVE!

Saint of the Week- Saint Margaret of Cortona-Feast Day February 22

1247-1297

This Italian penitent was the daughter of Tuscan peasants and, for nine years, the mistress of a young nobleman near Montepulciano. After her lover died violently, Margaret and her illegitimate child were given a home by the Franciscans in Cortona. She became a Franciscan tertiary and practiced severe self-denial. Until her son grew up, she earned their living and performed works of charity. In one vision, Christ told her she was “the third light” of the order, after Francis and Clare. Her prayers and counsel prompted many conversions, and she was considered a living saint.

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For Use February 27-28, 2nd Sunday of Lent (B)

Stewardship by the Book

Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his only son Isaac. St. Paul reminds us that God Himself “did not spare his own son.” Are *my* gifts to the Lord – of my resources, of my time, of myself – also sacrificial?

Vocation View

If you need examples of persons responding to God’s call, look as Abraham and Sarah - - called in old age to leave their country, and have a child.. Then Abraham was asked to sacrifice the child. What faith! Answering God’s call to be priest, sister, brother or deacon, is taking a great risk!

Stewardship Reflections

“Here I am!” he answered.” - GENESIS 22:11

It is easy to say, “*Here I am, Lord,*” when we are kneeling in church. But how easy is it to say “*Here I am, Lord,*” when a neighbor needs our help, when we are invited to join a parish ministry, or when we are asked to provide financial support? Often times we are called when it’s not convenient for us. Discipleship is not always easy, most of the time it will make us uncomfortable and vulnerable.

Family Perspective

The apostles thought they knew Jesus, but when he changed in front of them at the Transfiguration, they were “afraid.” In families we cannot freeze relationships because change and growth are inevitable. Children grow up, parents grow old and spouses change. Transfigurations are all around us and within us. Relationships can only grow when we embrace the new and let go of the old.