

For Use July 3-4, Fourteenth Sunday Ordinary Time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

This weekend as we recall the celebration of the Independence of our country, we will do well to echo the Psalmist, saying, "Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy." May we always recognize and use wisely the gifts of freedom and abundance. He has showered upon us.

Vocation View

Yes, absolutely, we should stand up for what we believe in. No, positively, we will not always succeed. Yes, certainly, it is more important to try than to succeed. No, Jesus did not look successful on the cross. Yes, you could give it a TRY!

Stewardship Reflections

"As the Lord spoke to me, the spirit entered me and set me on my feet, and I heard the one who was speaking say to me, 'Son of man, I am sending you...'" EZEKIEL 2:2-3

God has a plan for each of us. He calls us to do something for Him. But, He doesn't leave us on our own to figure it out. He gives us the resources we need to do His work. Are you listening for God's call? When you hear it, do you get on your feet and do the work He asks of you? Do not be afraid. God doesn't call the equipped, he equips the called. Answer His call.

Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel is so familiar, it hurts! The home town folks couldn't accept the presence of God in Jesus. After all, they had watched him grow up. We can easily make the same mistake if we don't see God present in the ordinary routines of our family. "The Lord be with you" is a statement of fact. Believe it. Live it.

Prayers for Priests

Saint of the Week-Blessed Mary Teresa Ledochowska-Feast Day July 6

Born in Austria to a Polish count and his Swiss wife, she gave up her position as lady-in-waiting to a Tuscan grand duchess to devote her literary and organizational skills to the African missions and anti-slavery movement. In 1894 she founded the Institute of the Sisters of St. Peter Claver, which was formally approved in 1899. She stressed the importance of lay involvement, promoted literacy among Africans, and produced Bibles, catechisms and periodicals in African languages. She died in Rome at her order's generalate and was beatified in 1975.

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Word of Life

“O God our creator... through the power and working of your Holy Spirit, you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world, bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel to every corner of society.”

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

“Prayer for Religious Liberty”

For Use July 10-11, Fifteenth Sunday Ordinary Time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

Today’s readings are about being chosen and sent. The prophet Amos was chosen by the Lord and sent to use his talents for the people of God. The Gospel recounts the story of the sending of the twelve disciples; and in the second reading, St. Paul reminds us that we, too, are chosen. For what have I been chosen? To whom have I been sent?

Vocation View

In today’s first reading, Amos says he did not choose to be a prophet. God selected him. Maybe God is asking you to reconsider what you are doing at this time and perhaps to do His work instead.

Stewardship Reflections

“He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick – no food, no sack, no money in their belts.” MARK 6:8

Imagine taking nothing but a stick when you go on a trip. The Apostles must have really trusted in God’s providential care. Think of all the material things “we can’t live without” in today’s world. We make our life’s journey more difficult because of all the material baggage that we drag along. Putting God first in everything and putting our money and possessions second gives us freedom because we don’t become “slaves” to wanting to acquire more things.

Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Jesus sent out His apostles without a lot of “things” because THINGS distract. We collect, argue about and protect our “things.” Garage sales only transfer “things.” We even ignore each other because we have “things” to do. What “things” are separating you from your family?

Abuse of Minors or Vulnerable Adults by Priests, Deacons or Others

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Contact local law enforcement and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (855-444-3911). The Michigan Attorney General’s Office has also set up a special phone line for people to

share information that may be of help in their ongoing investigation of sexual misconduct by Catholic clergy. That number is 844-324-3374.

You may also contact the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, Larry LaCross, at 989-705-9010.

In the State of Michigan many professionals, including clergy, teachers, doctors, counselors and named others are mandated reporters. This means such individuals are REQUIRED to make an oral or online report IMMEDIATELY to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services if they suspect a child is being neglected or abused in any way. Individuals may call the state report line at the number above, which is answered 24 hours a day, or submit a report online at https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-73971_7119--00.html.

The Diocese of Gaylord encourages ANYONE who has reason to suspect a child is being abused or neglected in any way to report the matter to local authorities and the Michigan Attorney General Hotline at 844-324-3374.

Saint of the Week-Saint Veronica-Feast Day July 12

Veronica does not appear in the Roman Martyrology, the church's official list of feasts. According to legend, she was the woman who took pity on Jesus as he carried his cross, wiped his face with a cloth and was left with an image of the suffering Christ. Many such images, known as "veronicas" and "vernicles," existed in the Middle Ages. Veronica was sometimes associated with other New Testament women, but there is no evidence that she was real. Her name may come from a combination of Latin ("vera" for true) and Greek ("-eikon" for image) words. Her story was included in the Stations of the Cross in the 19th century.

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For Use July 17-18, Sixteenth Sunday Ordinary Time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

In today's Gospel, Jesus had planned to slip away from the crowds for a few moments of peace and a little rest. When He saw the people gathered, however, He put His needs aside to meet the needs of others. Sometimes, as good stewards, we are called to do the same.

Vocation View

When the apostles were trying to reflect on their ministry Jesus asked them to "Come by yourselves to an out-of-the-way place." Listening to God in quiet prayer is very important in vocation discernment. Listen to God's voice in an out-of-the-way place.

Stewardship Reflections

"He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." MARK 6:31

Do you spend time, every day, alone and in silence listening to how God is calling you? If not, you are missing out on a wonderful opportunity to develop a more personal relationship with Him. Unless we talk and more importantly, listen to God every day, how else will we know how He is calling us? Consider making a retreat this year, spend some “alone” time with God.

Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

In today’s gospel “the apostles gathered around and told Jesus all they had done.” Listening allows the other person to express, understand and appreciate their experiences. Whether it is the excited chatter of a young child or the repetitious stories of an aging grandparent, listening is important. It is not just time well spent, it is sacred time.

Saint of the Week-Saint Christina The Astonishing-Feast Day July 24

Born at Brusthem, Belgium, Christina had a seizure at age 21 that was thought to have killed her. At the Mass being said for her, she suddenly flew to the top of the church, later saying she had been to hell, purgatory and heaven, and was allowed to return to earth to pray for suffering souls. This was one of the incredible events attributed to this poor, likely schizophrenic mystic, called “Christina Mirabilis,” who reportedly flew to treetops and rooftops to avoid smelling other people. She spent her last years in St. Catherine Convent in Saint-Trond, and is a patron saint of psychiatrists, psychologists and those suffering mental illness.

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Word of Life

“Married love differs from any other love in the world. By its nature, the love of husband and wife is so complete, so ordered to a lifetime of communion with God and each other, that it is open to creating a new human being they will love and care for together. ... That power to create a new life with God is at the heart of what spouses share with each other.”

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

“Married Love and the Gift of Life”

For Use July 24-25, Seventeenth Sunday Ordinary Time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

“The hand of the Lord feed us,” says the Psalmist, “he answers all our needs.” Both Elisha’s servant in the first reading and the disciples in the Gospel story who witnessed the feeding of the five thousand saw this happen and knew it to be true.

Vocation View

In the Gospel many people hunger for a small amount of food. In our day, there are too many people for the small number of priests, sisters, brothers and deacons. We, too, must trust in the Lord. Pray for the hungry; pray for vocations.

Stewardship Reflections

“There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many?”
JOHN 6:9

The miracle of the Loaves and Fishes carries two important messages. First, no matter how little we have, we always have enough to share. Second, Christ can take our humble gifts and do great things with them if we are just willing to let Him. Nothing is impossible with God. All of our gifts, big or small, were given to us for a reason. No gift is too small or insignificant!

Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

In today’s gospel Phillip worried about “enough food” for the crowd. What is ENOUGH? When does our ENOUGH deprive another family of their fair share? Jesus performed today’s miracle because one child was willing to share and risk living with less. Can your family live more simply so that other families can simple live?

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Saint of the Week-Saints Joachim and Anne-Feast Day July 26

Not mentioned in the Bible, Joachim and Anne are first named as the parents of Mary in the apocryphal Protoevangelium of James, which may date from the second century. In this story, they are old and childless, like the Old Testament Hannah, mother of Samuel, when angels deliver the news that Anne will conceive a child. Anne was an especially popular saint in medieval England, and her feast was celebrated in the West by 1350; Joachim's feast was authorized or suppressed by various popes, but was joined with Anne's in 1969. They are the patrons of married couples; Anne is also the patron of childless women, expectant mothers, and miners.

"Mary grew up in the home of Joachim and Anne; she was surrounded by their love and faith: in their home she learned to listen to the Lord and to follow his will. Saints Joachim and Anne were part of a long chain of people who had transmitted their faith and love for God, expressed in the warmth and love of family life, down to Mary, who received the Son of God in her womb and who gave him to the world, to us. How precious is the family as the privileged place for transmitting the faith!"—Pope Francis, Angelus, July 26, 2013

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Image: The Meeting at the Golden Gate, unknown artist, the J. Paul Getty Museum

Word of Life

"Because of our belief and hope in the Resurrection, we can face death not with fear, but with preparation.... We prepare for eternal life by choosing to love and follow God now, in our daily lives and decisions." Read more at www.respectlife.org/end-of-life-considerations.

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

"Catholic Considerations for Our Earthly Passing"

For Use July 31-August 1, Eighteenth Sunday Ordinary Time (B)

Stewardship by the Book

The crowd in today's Gospel demanded a sign of Jesus and wanted to know what "work" He did to inspire their faith. May our faithful stewardship be a sign to others that we, like the Ephesians in the second reading, have laid aside our former way of life and acquired a "fresh, spiritual way of thinking" in Christ.

Vocation View

What a promise! Jesus promises: "No one who comes to me shall ever be hungry, no one who believes in me shall thirst again." Just what the world needs. Who will spend a life-time telling others of this promise? (And the many other promises as well.)

Stewardship Reflections

“Each day the people are to go out and gather their daily portion; thus will I test them, to see whether they follow my instructions or not.” EXODUS 16:4

When the Israelites gathered more than their daily portion of manna, the surplus became wormy and rotten. In the same way today, self-reliance, pride and ego leads to hoarding and excessive surplus of goods and money. Living a stewardship lifestyle helps us discern our “wants” from our “needs”. Living a grateful and generous lifestyle reminds us that God will provide all that we need and that we have plenty to share.

Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

In today’s gospel Jesus tells us: “Do not work for what perishes.” Give your life to what endures such as the family history you are creating, the love and mutual respect which bonds you together, the memories you share and the forgiveness generously given. These are the true treasures that are worth working and dying for.

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