



Bulletin Stewardship Reflections March & April 2009

March 1st - 1st Sunday of Lent

For forty days, Jesus took stock of his life, whose he was and what God wanted him to do. We call this forty-day period Lent. Christians are called in Lent to a special period of taking stock, of setting priorities, of encountering God, and rethinking what it means to be a steward of God's gifts. A good question to ask ourselves during Lent is, "***What do I own, and what owns me?***" May this holy season be a time for you to contemplate anew the many blessings you have received from our good and gracious God, and to respond in gratitude by generously giving of your very self. Generous giving always brings rewards. And while generous giving does not protect us from the difficulties of life, it does assure us a deeper life. As surely as Lent leads to Easter, being a good steward is a lifestyle of giving that leads to a greater sense of satisfaction, purpose and meaning.

"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give". Martin Luther King

March 8th - 2nd Sunday of Lent

Today's readings invite us to reflect on just how much hope and trust we are willing to place in God, our God who richly blesses us with all that is needed. Abraham trusted in God so much that he did not withhold even his only son. St. Paul reminds us that God himself '*did not withhold his own son.*' We too, as disciples and stewards are called to hold nothing back in our walk with Jesus. Being a disciple is not easy in today's culture of consumerism, materialism, and individualism. However, in 'holding nothing back' the Christian steward discovers a life that leads to *endless hope*... hope in a good and generous God who blesses us even when all hope seems lost. Placing our trust in the things of this world only leads to a *hopeless end*.

March 15th - 3rd Sunday of Lent

In reflecting upon today's Gospel one might ask, "What would you allow Jesus to *drive out of, or turn over* in the temple of your life?" These 40 days of Lent we are challenged to ask Jesus to enter into our lives more deeply and cleanse us of, pride, envy, anger, selfishness, and greed. And in this cleansing we pray that we may be filled with humility, charity, faith, hope, patience, surrender and gratitude. There are 28 days until Easter. How do you plan to be a good steward of these days?

March 22nd - 4th Sunday of Lent

All that we have and all that we are comes from God. "*For we are what he has made us,*" St. Paul reminds us in today's second reading, "*created in Christ Jesus for good works.*" What are the gifts that you have been given to be used in a life of good works? A life that has already been planned for you...

“Which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.” A stewardship way of life! Good stewardship means that we receive God’s gifts with gratitude, cherish and develop these gifts, and share them in justice and love with one another. This is the cycle of the stewardship way of life. In living this way we return our gifts to the Lord with increase thus enabling the cycle to begin again and again

March 29th – 5th Sunday of Lent

In today’s Gospel Jesus tells us that the person who loves their life will lose it, but the person who is willing to set aside their own life in this world will keep it for eternal life. This teaching is found in the other Gospels (Matthew 16:25, Mark 8:35, Luke 9:24), and is obviously an important criteria for those who claim to be disciples. What is Jesus telling us here? For the Christian Disciple stewardship is not optional. Being a steward simply means that we live a life that is Christ-centered not self-centered. The steward puts Christ and the will of God first when it comes to using and sharing their gifts.

April 5th – Passion Sunday

On hearing the Passion narrative today we are given a stark contrast to the triumphant entrance Jesus made into Jerusalem on a road covered with palm branches. What feelings of abandonment and loneliness Jesus would feel just days after the people cheered his arrival? We too can find ourselves in the depths of loneliness from time to time.

April 12th – Easter Sunday

Alleluia, Christ is risen today! “*Stewardship always starts with a personal experience of the Risen Christ in our midst and in our hearts.*” (Bishop Sylvester Ryan, 1992 USCCB Pastoral Letter, Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response) Being a disciple of Jesus invites us to a personal response. How are you being a steward of Christ’s call in your life? What will you do this Easter season to grow in your relationship with Jesus?

April 19th – Second Sunday of Easter