STEWARDSHIP BULLETIN REFLECTIONS

January 2025 – March 2025

**January 5, 2025**

**The Epiphany of the Lord**

*“…They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” - Matthew 2:11*

What gifts do you give to the Lord? Pope St. Gregory said that these three gifts represent what we should give God every day. Gold – we should reflect Christ’s wisdom in all our relationships. Frankincense – represents our daily prayer and adoration to God. Myrrh – is a symbol of our daily sacrifices that we unite with Jesus for the sake of others.

**January 12, 2025**

**The Baptism of Our Lord**

*“John answered them all, ‘I baptize you with water; but he who is mightier than I is coming…he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit... ’” - Luke 3:16*

The Catholic Catechism states that *“Jesus’ immersion in the water is a sign for all human beings of the need to die to themselves to do God’s will.”* In other words, as baptized Catholics there is only one gift that we need to give to Jesus – the gift of ourselves. Surrender yourself to God, place your trust in Him and allow the Holy Spirit to work through you for the greater glory of God.

**January 19, 2025**

**2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time**

*“To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.” - 1 Corinthians 12:7*

St. Paul tells us that God has blessed each of us for a reason. How has God blessed you? Are you using your gifts according to God’s plan? How are you helping to build God’s kingdom here on earth? Remember that if you don’t do the work God planned for you, no one else can do it. Live the life God has intended for you. Take time to discern your charisms (gifts from the Holy Spirit). Experience the supernatural Peace and Joy God desires for each of us.

**January 26, 2025**

**3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time**

*“Go, eat rich foods and drink sweet drinks, and allot portions to those who had nothing prepared…” - Nehemiah 8:10*

Ezra’s instructions to the people show us that God does not forbid us from enjoying the good things in life. He wants us to be happy! However, God expects us to be grateful for all that He has given us and to generously share our blessings with those who are in need. Now here’s the hard part – to share all we have without expecting anything in return.

**February 2, 2025**

**The Presentation of the Lord**

*“Because he himself was tested through what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.” – Hebrews 2:18*

When we join a support group, there is comfort is sharing our pain with people who have experienced the same thing; they understand what we are going through. The next time you experience suffering, talk to Jesus. He has experienced more suffering than most of us, He understands. Plus, Jesus knows us better than we know ourselves. Only He can fill the hole you feel in your heart.

**February 9, 2025**

**5th Sunday of Ordinary Time**

*“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?’ ‘Here I am,’ I said, ‘send me!’” - Isaiah 6:8*

Every day, in little ways and in big ways, God asks, *“Whom shall I send?”* Whether it is someone to take on a new ministry, to give a friendly smile to a stranger or to say a word of encouragement to a friend, God constantly provides opportunities to help someone in need. God is always talking to us; we just need to pay more attention. When you hear God calling have the courage to walk through the door and say, “Here I am, Lord.”

**February 16, 2025**

**6th Sunday of Ordinary Time**

*“Blessed are you when people hate you…exclude and insult you, and denounce your name…on account of the Son of Man.” - LUKE 6:22*

All of us have been in situations when someone has made a negative comment or joke about God or our Catholic faith. How did you respond? Did you stay silent or pretend to go along with the crowd because you didn’t want to cause waves and then, later, you felt bad? Know that God is with you all the time; the Holy Spirit will put the right words in your mouth. Pray for the strength and courage to proclaim our faith to others, especially during uncomfortable situations.

**February 23, 2025**

**7th Sunday of Ordinary Time**

*“But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend without expecting anything back…” - LUKE 6:35*

Easier said than done, right? But, if we are to imitate Christ, most of us need to practice mercy and compassion more frequently. Start with the little daily annoyances that we experience, the unkind word or hateful glance we receive. Instead of plotting revenge on that person, try saying a quick prayer for that person. Praying for our enemies doesn’t change them, it changes us. Mercy and compassion will keep us on the path to holiness.

**March 2, 2025**

**8th Sunday of Ordinary Time**

*“A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit.” - LUKE 6:43*

Are you using your gifts in the way God intended? Have you asked God how He would like you to use them? Do you compare yourself to others and complain about what you don’t have instead of being thankful for what you do have? God gives each of us unique gifts and a unique plan. Listen to how God is calling you to use your gifts, to bear good fruit, for the glory of His name.

**March 9, 2025**

**1st Sunday of Lent**

*“I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O Lord, have given to me.” - Deuteronomy 26:10*

This line from the Old Testament offers two challenges. First, do you give to God from your “first fruits” - the first and best that you have to offer? Or do you give from what you have leftover? Second, do you realize that everything you have and that everything you are has been given to you by God? We aren’t owners of anything, we are merely stewards of God’s gifts. Pray for a grateful and generous heart, every day, in all circumstances.

**March 16, 2025**

**2nd Sunday of Lent**

*“I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession.” - Genesis 15:7*

Just as the Lord gave Abraham, Moses, and the Israelites a land to possess, He has also given each of us a home. Whether your home is grand or humble, it is a gift from God. Abraham prepared a great sacrifice to the Lord in gratitude for the home God gave him. How do you show your gratitude to God for the home He has given you? Do you make a sacrifice of any kind? Do you return any of your finances to God, investing in your eternal home just as you invest in your earthly home?

**March 23, 2025**

**3rd Sunday of Lent**

*“He said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none.’” - Luke 13:7*

We can all be like the barren fig tree at times. Do you cling to what you have, or do you generously share with others? How will you respond when God asks you what you have done with all the gifts He has given you? Remember, not only are we called to be generous; we are called to develop and nurture our gifts; and return them with increase. We are called to be generous with all of gifts; especially the one that means the most to you.

**March 30, 2025**

**4th Sunday of Lent**

*“No longer was there manna for the Israelites, who that year ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.” - Joshua 5:12*

Over the forty years that the Israelites journeyed through the desert, God provided them with manna to eat. As soon as they were able to enjoy the fruits of the Promised Land the manna ceased. Likewise, God’s blessings to us may change over the years but it is important to trust that God will always provide us with all that we need.