

Stewardship Bulletin Inserts Winter 2010

From the Archdiocese of St. Louis

Thoughts on Giving

December 27, 2009 – March 28, 2010

December 27, 2009

Feast of the Holy Family

"Beloved, see what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God." - 1 John 3:1

During this season of giving, let's also remember the gifts that God has given to us, including the gift of making us His children. Are we as grateful for that wonderful gift as we are for all the material gifts we have received? How do we show our gratitude to God for the gifts He gives to us all year?

January 3, 2010

Epiphany of Our Lord

"...the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel." - Ephesians 3:6

Today we celebrate the fact that Christ came to all of us, not just the Hebrews. He made us all one body with Him. Because God has given us different gifts we all have different yet equally valuable roles to play in the Body of Christ? If one of us does not play his or her role the whole body suffers. How will you play your role this year?

January 10, 2010

Baptism of the Lord

"John tried to prevent him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?'" - Matthew 3:14

Each of us has received the Baptism that John sought – a Baptism into the Church of Jesus. The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults 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 simple gift that we need to give to Jesus. The only gift God wants is a complete offering of ourselves. Once we surrender ourselves to God in this way, we will know in our hearts what else God might call us to do.

January 17, 2010

2nd Sunday in 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, helping to do His work here on earth? Remember that if you don't do the work God planned for you, no one else can do it.

January 24, 2010

3rd Sunday in 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. However, He expects us to share our blessings with those who are in need.

January 31, 2010

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it is not pompous." - 1 Corinthians 13:4

Are you jealous? Do you focus more on the things that other people have than on the gifts that God has given to you? Are you pompous? Do you seek to acquire more possessions to impress others? At times we are all guilty of these human weaknesses. Yet as stewards we are called to love God above all other things – striving always to be less jealous, less pompous and more giving.

February 7, 2010

5th Sunday in 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 or just someone to open a door for an overburdened stranger, God constantly looks to see if we are willing to respond with the eagerness that Isaiah showed when he answered, "Here I am, send me!"

February 14, 2010

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation." - Luke 6:24

Jesus' words to the crowd can seem harsh to all of us who enjoy the many blessings of living in one of the richest countries of the world. Yet, in reality the sin is not in being rich. The sin is in failing to share our blessings. When was the last time you looked at your income and determined what percentage you were giving to those who had less than you? Remember the Bible teaches us to give 10%. How close are you to that level of giving?

February 21, 2010

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 simple line from the Old Testament presents us with two challenges. First, do we bring God our first fruits – the best that we have to offer? Second, do we remember that everything we have has been given to us by God? We brought nothing into this world and we can take nothing from it. So why not share what we have while we are here?

February 28, 2010

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 our 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 we show our gratitude to God for the home He has given us? Do we make a sacrifice of any kind? Do we return any of our finances to God, investing equally in our eternal home just as we invest in our current abode?

March 7, 2010

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

Are we like the barren fig tree? What does God find when He searches for the fruits which we have given back?

March 14, 2010

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

Throughout 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.

March 21, 2010

5th Sunday of Lent

"For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ..." - Philippians 3:8

Learning to see our material possessions as just so much rubbish is an important step in growing closer to Jesus Christ. Then we are able to give more freely and joyfully.

March 28, 2010

Palm Sunday

"I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows this day, you will deny three times that you know me." - Luke 22:34

This Holy Week let us reflect upon how often we deny that we know Jesus by the ways that we decide to use our time, our talent and our treasure.

*"Christmas is a good
time to get a little crazy.
After all, God did. God
became a human being.
That's pretty crazy."*

Jim Auer