



Stewardship: Living Christianity [Radically]

Homily Help...With a Stewardship Twist

In an effort to share the stewardship message more intentionally from the pulpit, volunteers from the Archdiocesan Stewardship Steering Committee have prepared stewardship reflections beginning November 21st. These reflections are offered as a guide in your homily preparations. The Advent reflections can be found on the Stewardship and Development web page at http://www.archchicago.org/departments/stewardship_dev/stewardship.shtm. You can also contact Anne Marie Tirpak at 312/655-7713 or atirpak@archchicago.org for copies. Below please find the reflections for November 21st and 28th, compiled by Mary Foley, development consultant to the Office of Catholic Schools and president of Foley Consulting.

November 21, 2004- *The Feast of Christ the King* Luke 23: 35-43

Today's Gospel prompts us to wonder who we're most like – the good thief or the bad. One focuses on the present – save us and save yourself. The other on the future – the Kingdom to come.

- How do we live with this tension between the world in which we live and the Kingdom?
- How do we reconcile the call to not just wait in this world but to use our time here to bring about the Kingdom on earth?
- St. Paul's letter reminds us that God our Father has created us so that we may share the Kingdom.
- Furthermore, He has created all things. Everything. The vastness of our entire world. They all belong to him yet are shared with us out of love, generosity, compassion.
- Perhaps also shared out of optimism and hopefulness that given the vastness of creation, we will be able to do great things in this world, in our day. This is a very special King, to have such faith in those whom He shepherds.
- But where to begin?
- Perhaps with the first line of St. Paul's letter, "Let us give thanks to the Father..."
- Do we thank God each day for the multitude of blessings we receive?
- Are we aware of not only the "biggies" but also the everyday miracles of family, friendship, home, health, career, etc.?
- Do we realize that, as stewards of God's many gifts, we are accountable for their proper use and for sharing them not only with those we love but with others whom we may never know?
- With Thanksgiving just around the corner, we have a natural "counting your blessings" moment. With prayer and commitment, it can shift from a short-lived thought to a daily practice offering untold rewards.
- And with the beginning of Advent coinciding with the most aggressive part of the holiday shopping season, our choices, priorities and decisions can be market-driven or Maker-driven.
- Each time we schedule to attend yet another Christmas party, we can *remember* to save time to visit at least one nursing home, shelter, hospital or prison.
- Each time we bake for the annual cookie exchange, we can *remember* to make a few extra dozen for the food pantry.
- As we buy gifts for the young loved ones in our lives, we *remember* to pick up additional toys and presents for children whose Christmases may be far from merry this year due to poverty, neglect or abuse.
- And with each of these activities and the many others we undertake as we share the gifts God has given us with those less blessed than we, let us *remember* to teach our children why we do this.
- Jesus, remember me...

November 28, 2004- *1st Sunday of Advent* Matthew 24: 36-44

- Advent candles and wreaths and calendars. For many these are long-held rituals that remind us daily or weekly that this is our time of waiting, of expecting.
- It is also a time to take stock. In the first reading, the Prophet describes the transformation, or some would say, conversion that occurs as we more and more walk in Christ's paths.
- What does it mean for us, practically, to "live in the light of the Lord!"?
- The reading focuses on the end of violence – not only that in society but also that which is in our hearts. We needn't be planning a military offensive to be guilty of the hatred, fear and prejudice that prompts violence and is so contrary to God's will and way.
- Take stock, make changes, stay awake! We've all played the "what would you do if you only had six months to live" game. And we usually hear great ideas – reconnect with old friends and loved ones, do something "meaningful", say thank you and I'm sorry.
- Why must we wait for a terminal illness to do this, which is simply following the example of Christ? We may not get six months notice, we may not get six days notice. We need to act now.
- What are we waiting for?
- And this Advent season, for what do we wait? Baby Jesus? Santa Claus? Or celebrating the Incarnation, Emmanuel – "God with us" not only on Christmas but everyday, and every hour?
- If God is with me every hour, how does that affect my daily activities?

**"THIS IS WHAT THE LORD ASKS OF YOU:
TO LIVE JUSTLY, TO LOVE TENDERLY, TO
WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD." MICAH 6:8**

**DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP AND
DEVELOPMENT
721 NORTH LASALLE
CHICAGO, IL 60610**

*The parish stewardship office of the
Archdiocese of Chicago's Stewardship
and Development Department exists to
support and educate our priests and
people to enable them to realize the joy
that is theirs by boldly reclaiming their
role as baptized disciples of Jesus
Christ, recognizing and embracing God
as the Source of all, and
gratefully responding to God's
abundance by sharing our gifts.*

We're on-line at
[http://www.archchicago.org/
departments/stewardship_dev/
stewardship.shtm](http://www.archchicago.org/departments/stewardship_dev/stewardship.shtm)

Upcoming Stewardship Education and Prayer

November 5, 2004	Up Close with Mr. Bob Voboril, the Diocese of Wichita 4-6 p.m., Pastoral Center
November 6, 2004	Leadership Day, Maria High School Bishop Robert Morneau, Key- note
January 8, 2005	An Introduction to the Bishop's Pastoral "How Am I a Stew- ard?"
February 12, 2005	Bishop's Pastoral Discussion II- Stewardship of Vocation Host location: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Facilitators: Lea Dacanay- The Catholic New World, Anne Marie Tirpak- Stewardship and Development
March 5, 2005	Stewardship and the Church Pastoral--"Communities of Salt and Light" Host location: St. James'- Arlington Heights Facilitator: Sr. Kathy Brazda, CSJ, Pastoral Associate
April 16, 2005	Catholic Social Teaching and Stewardship Host location: St. Stephen Deacon and Martyr Facilitator: Bill Purcell, Office for Peace and Justice
May 21, 2005	Stewardship in the Parish and School Stewardship Stan- dards

Sunday Stewardship Reflections and Prayers of the Faithful

Communicating the importance of stewardship in all areas of liturgy and parish life underscores the gospel call to this way of living.

The reflections and petitions below, adapted from the Archdiocese of St. Louis, are offered to support your parish's stewardship efforts.

November 7, 2004: 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

*"It was from Heaven that I received these; for the sake of his laws
I disdain them; from him I hope to receive them again."*

2 Maccabees 7:11

We are reminded in Maccabees that everything we have is a gift from God. We are to return those gifts to God so that ultimately we may have the greatest of gifts in our eternal reward.

Petition: That we may willingly return a portion of our many gifts to God, recognizing that everything we have comes from God.

November 14, 2004: 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

*"All that you see here - the days will come when there will not be
left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down."*

Luke 21:6

Because of the billion dollar advertising industry, our material expectations continue to rise. Yet, today, speaking about the end of time, Jesus reminds us that all the material possessions we spend our time and energy accumulating will ultimately mean nothing. What really matters is our relationship with God.

Petition: For all those who need the help and support this parish community can give through our combined gifts of time, talent and treasure.

November 21, 2004: Feast of Christ the King

*"Brothers and sisters: Let us give thanks to the Father, who has
made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light."*

Colossians 1:12

How do you thank God for making you an heir to the kingdom of Heaven? How do you care for and support that kingdom that you

will inherit some day? These are the questions that every good steward must answer both here on earth in our daily lives and when we meet God.

Petition: That, as children of God, we may accept the responsibility Our Father has given us to care for His earth and the people who live upon it.

November 28, 2004: 1st Sunday of Advent

"Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." Romans 13:12

For anyone striving to live a life of stewardship, jealousy may well be the most difficult vice to overcome. We see the good things that our neighbors have and it becomes quite inconvenient to remember that Christ calls us to give the first share of all we have to God. Yet giving into our jealousy can begin an addictive yearning for more that will never be satisfied. Only God can satisfy us.

Petition: That we may strive to overcome our addiction to material possessions and seek instead to keep God always first in our lives.

December 5, 2004: 2nd Sunday of Advent

*"Therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut
down and thrown into the fire." Matthew 3:10*

Do you bear good fruit for Christ? Or do you spend your time, talent and treasure constantly acquiring more things? As we are immersed in the holiday shopping season, now might be a good time to evaluate what gifts do we give to God?

Petition: That, as we prepare for Christmas, we may also find time to reach out to those who are lonely, needy or sorrowful.