

# Forming Good Stewards

*Good stewards are formed by other good stewards!*

*Please make sure this is distributed to the **pastor**, to the other **priest** and **deacons** in the parish,  
and to the **person who produces the bulletin**.*

## Bulletin Bites

**April 7, 2019**  
**Fifth Sunday of Lent**  
**John 8:1-11**

### Option 1

**“Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”**

When the scribes and the Pharisees dragged a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery, before Jesus he challenged them, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” Imagine the look of resentment, disappointment and shame on the faces of the men gathered around the woman as they slowly dropped the handful of stones they had collected in just the right size and shape to throw at the woman to inflict the most pain and eventually kill her. In confronting the self-righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees Jesus is exposing the lack of compassion and forgiveness when we get fixated on the letter of the law rather than the spirit of the law as God intended. He is also challenging us to resist the temptation to judge and condemn others if we are not free of sin ourselves. God gave us the law. But God also gave us a brain and a heart to use when we choose to judge others. He wants us to have the same wisdom and compassion he had for the woman caught in adultery.

### Option 2

**Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery.**

**Now, in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women.**

In the law Moses also commanded that both parties be stoned [Deuteronomy 22:22]. But they only bring the woman before Jesus. Hmmm! Could the man “caught in the very act” have been an influential or high ranking public or religious official? Hmmm! It is not unusual for people to be selective in their decisions, quick to judge and unfair with condemnation. But imagine a world in which we all stopped judging others and were quick to be generous with all that God has given to us - everything we are and have. Jesus does not condemn the men who wanted to stone the woman. They actually condemn themselves. The woman does not deny her sin, but Jesus does not condemn her. He tells her to sin no more. When we are judgmental and selfish Jesus does not condemn us. But we should condemn ourselves and turn to Jesus for to help us, who is ready and anxious to forgive us.

**April 14, 2019**  
**Palm Sunday**  
**Luke 22:14 - 23:56**

**Option 1**

**“Rather, let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant.”**

In the year 2002 Robert Greenleaf caused a stir in management circles when he proposed the concept of “Servant Leadership” in a book by that title. He was in big demand as a motivational speaker. But two thousand years earlier Jesus taught us to lead by serving, to lead by example. It was a concept that was unknown to the people in the time of Jesus. They were looking for a strong and charismatic person to lead them in a military conquest over the Romans. And, after two thousand years of Christianity, the concept leading by serving obviously seemed novel to many people when Greenleaf proposed it. But we Christians should know it. We are disciples of Jesus. We have learned about his life as a servant from Scripture and the teachings of the Church. We have the example of Jesus and the Apostolic Fathers and many saints who were models of leading others to Christ by serving. It was not easy for Jesus or the apostles or the saints. It won’t be easy for us. But it is the “way, the truth and the life” we are called to.

**Option 2**

**“Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me;  
yet, not as I will, but as you will”**

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus teaches us that prayer is not so much about *what we say to* God, but about *what we are willing to hear from* God. When we are in true communion with God to discern his will for us He may ask us to do something difficult or unpleasant; something we have not done before; something that may antagonize our family and friends; something involving financial or physical risk. God understands if our first answer is “No!” But, if we are good stewards of our prayer life, growing constantly in our communion with God to discern his will for us, we must ultimately say “Yes Lord!” Only a fool would want to accept the cup that Jesus knew was in front of him. Jesus was no fool. But Jesus was in full communion with the Father, so he was willing to accept the cup, to do His Father’s will, not his own will. What are we willing to hear from God? Whatever our initial response, what will be our final answer?

**April 21, 2019**  
**Easter Sunday**

**Option 1**

**“They have taken the Lord from the tomb,  
and we don’t know where they have put him” John 20-1-9**

Despite all that Jesus had done and everything he had told his friends and followers to expect, Mary of Magdala did not understand the significance of the empty tomb. Mary, unlike the disciples hiding behind closed doors, summoned up the courage to go to the tomb being guarded by Roman soldiers. When she reported what she observed to the disciples, Peter and John rushed to the tomb to confirm what Mary said, but they “did not yet understand the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead.” Eventually Jesus appears to his disciples in a variety of ways. They come to believe that he is the Risen Lord, the Messiah. They begin to reflect on everything he did and

all that he taught them. They took responsibility for growing in their faith and communicating their faith in Jesus to others by word and example. At Easter we renew our Baptismal promises. We recommit ourselves to learn our faith and to imitate Jesus by what we say and do. That is why Easter is such a joyous celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**April 28, 2019**  
**Second Sunday of Easter**  
**John 20:19-31**

**Option 1**

**“Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”**

When Thomas was told that Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to the other disciples while he was not with them, he has difficulty believing that it could be possible. Thomas did not lack faith in Jesus. But the implications of Jesus rising from the dead were so immense that Thomas wanted to be certain. When Jesus learned that Lazarus had died, the other disciples tried to dissuade Jesus from going near Jerusalem to get to Bethany because the Jewish leaders were seeking to kill him, it was Thomas who said, “Let us go die with him!” When Thomas sees the Risen Jesus and is invited to put his finger and hands into the wounds, he tells Thomas, “Do not be unbelieving, but believe.” It is Thomas who proclaims, “My Lord and my GOD.” Jesus then speaks to us: “Blessed are those who have not seen, and have believed.” In the midst of the challenges and difficulties of our life, do we sometimes have doubts. That is normal. But we can have faith that Jesus is telling us, “Do not be unbelieving, but believe.”

**Option 2**

**“Blessed are those who have not seen and believed.”**

John tells us that the disciples who abandoned Jesus when He was arrested and taken to the cross [John was one of them] were still locked in a room a week after they had seen Him risen from the dead and had appeared to them in that same room. Jesus had good reason to be disappointed with them. But He says to them, “Peace be with you!” He knew it was difficult for them to believe, even though they had seen. And He knew how difficult it would be for us who had not seen, to believe. That is why, at our Baptism, our parents, or we ourselves if we are old enough, promise that our faith will *constantly grow stronger in our hearts* and we are challenged to *bring that faith unstained into heaven*. We renewed our Baptismal Promises on Easter Sunday. What have we done to make our faith *grow stronger in our hearts*? What are we doing? What will we do in the future? Are we being good stewards to *bring that faith unstained into heaven*?