

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

June 2, 2019

Seventh Sunday of Easter

John 17:20-26

**“Jesus prayed: Holy Father, I pray not only for them,
but for those who will believe in me through their word.”**

Jesus knew that his disciples who witnessed his life, death and resurrection; who learned from his actions; and who listened to his teachings, would one day pass away. Other generations would believe in Him through the word of the eye witnesses. Jesus also knew others would only believe the witnesses if their words matched their actions. Jesus intended that each generation be the custodian and steward of faith in Him, and that each generation has the responsibility to *pass on that faith by word and action, by what they say and do*. To pass on a true faith we must know our faith. To know our faith we must study and learn more each day. That takes time and effort. Do we know and live our faith in such a way that we are passing it on to future generations as Jesus intended? Are we being good stewards of our faith? When is the last time we made an effort to learn more about our faith? If we have to stop and think, its been too long.

Ascension

Lk 24:46-53

The site and circumstances of the Ascension are presented differently in the Gospels. St Matthew says it was in Galilee [Matthew 28:16-20]; St Mark has it in Jerusalem [Mark 16:9-20]; St Luke places it in Bethany [Luke 24:46-53]; St. John does not mention it; and in Acts St. Luke has it “on the mount called Olivet” [Acts 2:11-12]. There is a site on the top Mount of Olives, above the Garden of Gethsemane, that is revered by Christians as the site where Jesus last touched the earth. Do the different accounts of the Ascension mean it did not occur? No. Jesus handed on his mission here on earth to the apostles and left them to return to the Father. He told them of the great things they would do in his name if they had faith in Him. It is likely He told them more than once and in different places. The important thing is that they did believe Him. They did great thing because of their faith in Jesus. They risked their lives and possessions because of their faith in Jesus. That is a strong faith. And we are challenged to do great things because of our faith in Jesus who ascended to His Father.

June 9, 2019
Pentecost Sunday
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

“To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.”

Pentecost [from the Greek word for “fiftieth”] is the day the Apostles discerned and accepted the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim Jesus Christ to people from many nations, cultures, languages and religious beliefs. The people listening to them came from many countries heard the Apostles in their own tongue. Amazing! More amazing is that people with a variety of religious beliefs came to believe in Jesus. Later Paul wrote to Christians in Corinth, a seaport city with people from many nations, cultures, languages and religious beliefs. He told them something so obvious we often forget it: Each of us is a person with a unique array of talents, abilities and gifts that God has given to us to use for ourselves and for others - material wealth, intelligence, artistic talent, athletic ability, the gift of music, and many others. God intends for us to enjoy them ourselves and to share them with others. How are we doing with that?

June 16, 2019
Most Holy Trinity
John 16:12-15

“Everything the Father has is mine . . .”

The spirit of competition in our culture is strong. Some people find it difficult to acknowledge that they are not solely responsible for their achievements. We can be very presumptuous. The the words and phrases we use, our tone and dialect, come from the people who raise us, or from teachers who help us learn another way. People who are successful in business or sports owe much to the parents, teachers, coaches, teammates, supervisors and co-workers who helped them on their journey to success. The intimate, albeit mysterious, union of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity, and our union with Jesus, is reflected in the words of Jesus, “Everything the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.” Do we demonstrate in the way we live that everything we have comes from God, belongs to God and is intended to be used for ourselves and for others? Does our life reflect our gratitude to our Triune God and to all who helped us to be who we are?

June 23, 2019
Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
Luke 9:11b - 17

**“ . . . He said the blessing over them, broke them,
and gave them to the disciples to give to the crowd.”**

None of the Gospels tell the exact details of how four or five thousand men, plus women and children, are fed with a few loaves and fish. The Church teaches us that the miracle of the multiplication of loaves and fishes was a prefiguration of the Body and Blood of Jesus. But let us consider another miracle just as great. Jesus knew the Semitic ethic that required people to share with others. He knew people carried food and wine under their garments, but refrained from taking it out for fear others had brought their own. Note that Jesus blessed the loaves and fish and gave them away. *He did not keep any for himself.* Did people see *his generous act and decide to share what they had with one another?* In the context of God’s gifts to us of *reason and free will* - the ability to choose *to be generous or not to be generous*, what is the greater miracle: multiplication of loaves and fish, or *multiplication of generous hearts?* Which makes us a greater witness to the Real Presence of the

Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist?

June 30, 2019
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Luke 9:51-62

Option 1

“I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home.”

Jesus and his disciples were prevented from entering a Samaritan town because they were on their way to Jerusalem. The Samaritans believed God was in their temple, not the temple in Jerusalem. The disciples asked Jesus if he wanted them to “call down fire from heaven to consume” the town. They had no idea how to do that but they had seen Jesus work many wonders and wanted Him to do it. Jesus knew that God is not constrained to a temple or other building and that such an attitude reveals a belief that we can confine God to a place where we can occasionally go to visit Him, say some prayers, and hope He will stay while we go out and live our life without Him. On the journey several people had the opportunity to follow Jesus, but gave a variety of excuses, including “. . . first let me say farewell to my family at home.” As Catholics we believe our life is from God and in God. We cannot confine God to a place or a religious practice. And, if we are a true disciple of Jesus, we can put no conditions on following and imitating Jesus.

Option 2

**“No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind
is fit for the kingdom of God.”**

When Elijah calls to Elisha, he hesitated, “Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye.” Elijah does not prevent him. Then Elisha kills the team of oxen he was driving, uses the wood of the plow to build a fire to burn their flesh and distributes it to the people and follows Elijah. He detaches himself from everything he previously depended on. Paul tells us, “For freedom Christ set us free.” Christ teaches us to be free from attachment to things of this world. This freedom is not for selfish pursuits, but “to serve one another in love.” Jesus calls us to follow him, but we sometimes hesitate. If we start to follow Jesus but let other attachments distract us, we will never be free to discern God’s will for us and respond in freedom to God for all that he has given to us. What are the attachments in our life that keep us from the true freedom that allows us to follow Christ, without hesitation? Make a list. Use the back of the page and more sheets, if necessary.