

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 7, 2020

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

John 3:16-18

Option 1

**“God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.”**

Our images of God are often formed early in life. Sadly, those images are of a severe, vengeful God like a policeman waiting to pounce on us for doing something wrong or a judge who takes things away from us as a punishment. Jesus taught of about a God who loves us unconditionally and wants us to discover, accept, develop and use all of the talents, abilities and gifts he gave us for our own benefit and enjoyment, and the benefit and enjoyment of others. God created us to share eternal life with him after a life of being all that he created us to be. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, who came to Jesus in the night so as not to be seen as one of his followers. He had a image of a severe God, but he respected Jesus as a teacher who had come from God. Jesus, speaking of himself in the third person, tells Nicodemus, and through Nicodemus, tells us, of a God who sent his Son into the world to save it, not condemn it. Jesus would leave us to return to the Father, but he left his Spirit to lead us to be all that God created us to be.

Option 2

2 Cor 13:11-13

**“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!”**

At the beginning of our celebration of the Eucharist, and whenever we sign ourselves in the name of our Triune God, we proclaim our belief in Three Persons in One God, Father Son and Holy Spirit. Their eternal and mutual relationship of Giver, Given and Gift is a witness and a challenge to us to share in that relationship with them and with each other and with all others. The Mystery of the Trinity invites us to acknowledge that we are gift from God. All that we are and have has been given to us for our own benefit and enjoyment, and for us to share with others. As gift, given, and giver we share in the life of the Trinity and we make present to others the Mystery of the Trinity. Being a cheerful and joy filled giver begins with being grateful for what we have been given. And so we sign ourselves with a cross as we say, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ” as a constant reminder that we are gift, given and giver.

June 14, 2020
Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
John 6:51-58

Option 1

**“I am the living bread that came down from heaven;
whoever eats this bread will live forever;
and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”**

Those words should not disturb Catholics who grow up believing in the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Jesus under the appearance of bread and wine after the words of Consecration of the priest, in *Persona Christi*. But for the multitude of people who were fed by Jesus after he prayed over a few loaves and fish, and who sought him out for more such food, the response of Jesus that his flesh is bread for the life of the world must have been disturbing, maybe even repulsive. They did not understand Jesus that his “flesh” is who he is, what he does, what he says; that becoming his “flesh” in the world is the way to eternal life. St. John reports that, “As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.” When we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus we have the responsibility to be the “flesh” of Jesus in the world, if we hope to live forever. Do we fully understand that? Do we do that? Or do we “return to our former way of life”?

Option 2

“The bread I will give you is my flesh for the life of the world.”

These were very disturbing words for the Jews, who asked, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Before we judge them too harshly, we should remember that we have the witness of two thousand years of Christians who had great devotion and sacrificed much, often their lives, for their faith in the Real Presence of Jesus. For the Jews listening to Jesus this was a strange concept that produced grotesque images. Today, many Jews, non-Catholic Christians, and non-Christians no longer question our belief in Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Some wish to share in our Communion. They appreciate the privilege we have of receiving Christ in His Body and in His Blood, so that we may be strengthened *to be* His Body and Blood for others in our world. Do we truly appreciate that privilege and are we good stewards of the Body and Blood of Jesus that we receive?

June 12, 2020
Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Matt 10:26-33

Option 1

“Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known.”

That cannot be good news for anybody. We all have skeletons in our closets that we hope will stay there. But Jesus was not speaking about our faults and failures being exposed. He was talking about the responsibility that comes with our Baptism: *to know* and *to proclaim* the Good News about God’s unconditional love for us by what we *say and do*; by our *words and actions*. If what we do is not reflective and consistent with what we say, others will know that we are a

hypocrite. That skeleton will be out of the closet. Happily, we have the assurance of Jesus that everyone who acknowledges and imitates Him *by what we say and do*, He will acknowledge before His heavenly Father. Imagine standing with Jesus and hearing Him say, “Father, this is my friend, [*insert your name*], who acknowledged me before others by word and deed.” And the Father says, “Come, enter into my Kingdom!” *WOW!*

Option 2

**And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul;
rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.**

“Only two things are certain, Death and Taxes” is often the response to people who ask, “Are you certain?” And that is very true. We can try to reduce or avoid taxes, but rarely with success. Death of our human body will eventually come to all of us. We can try to postpone the date, but we cannot prevent it. Jesus tried to assure his disciples, and through them he assures us, that we should not fear the death of our human body, but rather fear the death of our soul. We may have encountered people who do not believe in a God who loves them; who have lost all hope; who do not care about others; who commit evil without remorse. Without judging them, it is fair to wonder if their spirit is dead. We can feel sorrow for them; offer them help; try to show them by our deeds and words about God’s love for them, whatever their situation. But we can learn from them to pray that we continually grow in our faith and live our faith by what we say and do. Then someone may be able to kill our body, but no one can kill our soul.

June 28, 2020

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Matthew 10:37-42

Option 1

“Whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.”

Jesus was caring, kind and loving. But he was not subtle. He spoke bluntly about his mission and message to the people of his day and to all who would come to believe in him. He clearly stated the conditions to be his disciple and the consequences for those who did not accept those conditions. That caused many people to choose not to follow him. He did not chase after them and beg them to stay or offer them an easier path. We do not know their names. Those who chose to remain as disciples of Jesus would eventually learn and understand the consequences of their decision. They followed Jesus because they had faith in him; because he told them about a loving God; because he demonstrated that love to them; because he was unequivocal and honest. We know the names of many of them. There are streets, cities, churches and children named after them. That is not why they risked all to follow Jesus. They were happy to live another day to tell others about Jesus. But that is why they are remembered, loved and honored.

Option 2

**“And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink
because the little one is a disciple; amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.”**

In contrast to the harsh sounding statements about those who do not leave father and mother, sister and brother, to be his follower and friend, Jesus offers a simple act to be his disciple - give a child a cup of cold water. Attachment to anything or any one that prevents us from choosing

the will of God; from loving others as Jesus loves us; from doing simple acts of kindness; and from accepting the consequences of imitating Him. Jesus frequently taught that being his follower is not complicated, but it is not be easy. The challenge is to not prefer anything to loving like Jesus and teaching others by word and example to do likewise. Certainly we are to love our father and mother, brother and sister, spouse and children, and neighbor, as we love ourselves. Love frees us to do what is right and good for ourselves. Attachments make us slaves to the demands of the person or thing that we cannot do without. Paraphrasing G. K. Chesterton, "The things we cannot do without we do not possess, they posses us."