A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

# Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of February 3/4, 2024

In today’s Gospel we encounter a great number of suffering people who seek the healing touch of Jesus: “The whole town was gathered at the door.” Jesus could not possibly respond to them all. But the Gospel also reveals Jesus,

after praying in solitude, sensing an urgency to proclaim the Good News of his Father’s love to those who suffer in the nearby villages and towns and being present to them. Stewards are called to follow in Jesus’ footsteps, to respond to those who suffer with compassion. How are

we responding to the suffering in our world? How are we using our gifts to continue the work of Christ’s redemptive healing?

# Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of February 10/11, 2024

The fate of a leper is a great tragedy at any time and place. In Jesus’ time, lepers were considered condemned, part of the plagues God sent as punishment. They were cast out of society and abandoned. Saint Mark’s Gospel reveals the unthinkable. Jesus reaches out and touches a leper. He

risks catching the contagious disease and heals the man. As the Gospel story teaches, no one is abandoned by Christ.

Are there those in our society or in our personal lives for whom we ascribe no hope, who we have abandoned, treated like lepers? Or as Christ’s stewards of our sisters and brothers, do we risk reaching out and touching those who may seem to us to be “unclean” or not worthy of our time or attention?

# Ash Wednesday February 14, 2024

The Gospel reading for Ash Wednesday concerns itself with what has become a traditional three-part Lenten exercise:

prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Jesus instructs his followers to turn to God, to turn from self-interest and to deepen their relationship with the Lord in secret. He tells them in effect that a humble and quiet disposition toward prayer, self-denial and reaching out to others is transforming and leads to a favorable outcome. What is our plan to turn ever closer to God in this Lenten season? Are we prepared to treat this season as a sacred time, a time to deepen our own relationship with the one who redeemed us?

# First Sunday of Lent

**Weekend of February 17/18, 2024**

In today’s Gospel, Jesus urges his listeners to do two things: to believe in the Good News and to repent. Stewards are called to repent, to be humble enough to open their hearts so they may begin anew, to change existing attitudes and habits, and to act with faith in the Gospel. In this season of Lent, now is the time to ask ourselves whether or not we truly believe in the Gospel; and if we do, to what extent are we willing to change our prevailing habits and be more faithful to the Gospel?

# Second Sunday of Lent

**Weekend of February 24/25, 2024**

The Gospel story of the transfiguration of Jesus holds many lessons; the most prominent being the transformation

of Jesus from simply being perceived as a wise and gifted prophet to the one who has fulfilled the sacred

traditions of the Mosaic law and the hope of the prophets, the Messiah, the Christ. The Lord calls his stewards to participate in His redemptive activity. Heeding this call requires transformation, being willing to renounce patterns of behavior that draw us away from God. In this coming week of Lent, let us pray for the grace to be transformed, so that by our goodness and generosity, we may walk more authentically in the footsteps of Jesus.

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