 A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

# Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God January 1, 2024

We have become so accustomed to today’s Gospel narrative of the birth of Jesus, this “Hallmark card” moment, that

we may have the tendency to dismiss the sheer scandal of this scene. We have nobody but the despised shepherds coming to visit the couple who have nowhere to go. They find the child in the animals’ feeding trough. Far from being welcomed into ordinary society or even royal company, he is rejected. Eventually, he will turn the social order upside down by his proclamation of the kingdom and his fellowship with the oppressed and marginalized. Good stewards know that, as disciples of our Lord, they must strive to look at the world through his eyes. This week imagine how you might view the world through the eyes of Christ Jesus.

# The Epiphany of the Lord January 6/7, 2024

The Gospel reading reveals the journey, the visit and the gifts of the Magi. They read the stars and inspired by their own wisdom and vision they truly want to find and pay homage to Christ Jesus who they understood would bring about a kingdom of justice and peace. Although they are not astrologers like the Magi, good stewards go about the task of reading the signs of the time as well. Moreover, they help others discover the loving presence of Christ through their own actions, bringing mercy, compassion and hope for a better world. How do you live each day to bring about a

better world, a better life, unity with those who gather around the Eucharistic table and a deeper communion with God?

# Second Sunday in Ordinary Time January 13/14, 2024

In today’s Gospel Jesus asks two of John the Baptist’s followers who now want to follow him, “What are you looking for?” That is, of course, a very practical question. It is a very good question for us to ask ourselves as we begin this new year: What is it that we seek? What is it that we really want in following Jesus? How do we wish to live so

that Christ will know that we have an authentic desire to be his disciples? This is a stewardship question. By our very

human nature we are on a spiritual quest and we have many choices. Is our choice truly to be followers of Jesus Christ? If so, what changes will we make in our lives that will draw us closer to the Lamb of God.

# Third Sunday in Ordinary Time January 20/21, 2024

In today’s letter from Saint Paul to the Corinthians, he calls upon people of faith to disengage from the world’s way of living. He wants the community to step back and see how being entangled with the outside world can be a captivity preventing them from living authentic lives in Christ. Yet, to his way of thinking, disengagement is not an end in itself. Rather, being disengaged and set free, a person can engage the world from the perspective of being one who is “in Christ.” Good stewards recognize that they live in a troubled world. Knowing the certainty, however, of God’s ultimate kingdom beyond human history, how can we work as good stewards of our daily lives to align the present and the future with that kingdom?

# Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time January 27/28, 2024

A central theme in today’s Gospel reading is the nature and extent of Jesus’ authority. The people were astonished, “for he taught them as one having authority and not as

the scribes.” Jesus’ authority brought blessings to people including healing and comfort. His authority possessed an irresistible power that drew people not through manipulation, but simply by the person that he was and

the gifts that he gave. Good stewards reveal the power and authority of Christ through the words they use and deeds they perform every day. At times their stewardship leaves them open to ridicule and scorn. But having the courage to imitate Jesus invites others to imagine a different world. What can we do this week to reveal Christ’s authoritative presence in the world?

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