January 5, 2014

Epiphany of Our Lord

“Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” MATTHEW 2:11

The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their treasure chests for Him is an image that we should all try to follow. Each of us is called to open our gifts before Jesus, offering Him what He needs. If you have trouble with this idea, keep one of the Magi from your Nativity set on your desk all year as a reminder to bring your gifts to Jesus.

January 12, 2014

Baptism of the Lord

“And a voice came from the heavens, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’” MATTHEW 3:17

At the Baptism of Jesus, God made it clear that He was giving us the greatest gift He could give. He was giving us His only Son. When you really think about the magnitude of that gift of Jesus sent to save us, plus all of the many other blessings that God has entrusted into our hands, it is very humbling. God has given us so much. What do we give in return?

January 19, 2014

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

“Now the Lord has spoken who formed me as his servant from the womb…” ISAIAH 49:5

God has formed each of us as His servants from the womb. He blessed us with unique gifts and He provided us with the talents and skills we would need to do His work. If we do not fulfill the unique vision that God had for us alone, who will do it?

January 26, 2014

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

“He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed Him.” MATTHEW 4:22

Just as He called the first apostles, Jesus calls each of us to follow Him, too. We are not expected to leave our businesses and our families behind, but we are expected to put our service to Jesus before worldly endeavors.
February 2, 2014

**The Presentation of the Lord**

“...they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.” *LUKE 2:22*

Do we give the Lord the first fruits of our time every week by attending Mass? Do we set an example for our children and grandchildren by attending Mass and joyously participating in the celebration of Mass each week? How do we know what God wants us to do unless we communicate with Him?

February 9, 2014

**5th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” *MATTHEW 5:16*

The generosity of being a good steward of your gifts has a positive effect on people and it is contagious! Good works encourages more good works. Let your light shine! Be careful to recognize that God is working through you and don’t put yourself above the people you have been called to help.

February 16, 2014

**6th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” *MATTHEW 5:20*

The scribes and Pharisees lived according to the letter of the law and they used this to elevate themselves above the other people. Jesus is clear – it’s the love that you have in your heart that will get you to heaven. Simply following church rules out of obligation, not love, does not put you on the path to heaven. Attending Mass on Sunday and then gossiping about a fellow parishioner on the parking lot is an example of a modern day Pharisee.

February 23, 2014

**7th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...” *MATTHEW 5:44*

Love your enemies, easier said than done, no doubt. But, remember, the foundation of stewardship is prayer. When we are in close communication with God, it opens our heart and it turns our attention away from “me” and moves it towards God and others. It allows us to have a little more empathy for “our enemy”. When we pray for others, even “our enemies”, maybe it softens their hearts as well.
March 2, 2014

8th Sunday in Ordinary Time

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (material wealth).” MATTHEW 6:24

Do you have other “gods” in your life (job, money, power, ego, possessions)? Do you put them before the Lord? A stewardship lifestyle means putting God first, in all things! It means living stewardship 7 days a weeks, 24 hours a day and not just the time that I go to Church or participate in my parish ministry. It means re-prioritizing and putting God first.

March 9, 2014

1st Sunday of Lent

“It is written: The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.” MATTHEW 4:10

Tempted between the riches and power of this world and service to God, Jesus chose service to His Father. If we wish to truly follow Jesus, we, too, must decide to turn away from power and riches and put God at the center of our lives.

March 16, 2014

2nd Sunday of Lent

“Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you.” GENESIS 12:1

God calls all of us to leave behind our old ways and to follow Him, placing our complete trust in Him. Some of the old ways that we may have to struggle to leave behind might be materialism, selfishness and greed. Yet God promises to show us a new land, a better place than the rat race we often live in now.

March 23, 2014

3rd Sunday of Lent

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again.” JOHN 4:13

Jesus reminds us that material things, even material something as basic as water, can never satisfy us for long. When we build our lives around possessions we always want more. True satisfaction only comes when we follow Jesus.
March 30, 2014

4th Sunday of Lent

“Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart.” 1Samuel 16:7

How often do we invest our time, talent and treasure in creating an appearance that does not matter at all to God? We strive to impress with our clothing, home, career, possessions, car and other marks of distinction. But none of these illusions of greatness will impress God. Instead, He will look into our hearts to see how much we loved Him, how much we loved others and how we showed that love by the way we used our time, talents and treasure here on earth.

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“The world tells us to seek success, power and money. God tells us to seek humility, service and love”

.... Pope Francis