

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, Intermediate

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Sun, 09/28/2014 - 20:00

Intermediate Session

Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

Matthew 25:14-30]

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Thank you, God, for the gift of creation.

Help us to treat all of your creation with care.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The topic for today is stewardship. To begin write a list of talents such as; Friendly, Smart, Funny, Athletic and Caring, on the left side of a chalkboard or sheet of poster paper. On the right side write situations such as: Someone who has trouble with homework; someone sitting alone at lunchtime; someone who wants to be part of a team; someone who is sick; someone who needs a laugh. Invite the children to match the talents to the needs. Discuss:

- What gifts and talents has God blessed you with?
- How can you use your gifts to help others?
- How do others use their gifts and talents to help you?

Allow time for discussion. God blesses us with many gifts and talents. We are called to use our gifts and abilities to care for all of God's creation.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading listen to find out how a woman uses her gifts to serve others.

Read Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- How is the wife described?
- Why is the wife praiseworthy?
- How does the woman use her gifts to serve others?

In the gospel reading listen to the parable of the three servants.

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

Allow for silence.

- What gifts are the three servants given?
- How do they use their gifts?
- Which servant does not use his gift wisely?
- What does Jesus teach about using gifts with this story?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the **Catechist Background** section.

In today's Old Testament reading, God's people are given guidance on how to care for all of God's creation. The hard-working wife described in this passage is mindful of the poor and she helps her husband. The woman is strong in faith and she lives that faith by serving others. She is an example of wise stewardship of one's God-given gifts.

In the gospel, Jesus tells a story to teach about wise stewardship of our God-given gifts. In the parable of the three servants, each servant is entrusted with a different sum of money from their master who is leaving on a journey. Two of them invest wisely and double their money. The last one buries his money in the ground. When the master returns he is disappointed in the servant who

does not invest wisely. He takes the money from him and he throws the servant out of the house.

In this parable, the master is like Christ, away for a time in heaven, until he returns to settle things with his followers. The settling of accounts is the final judgement and the servants' rewards and punishments are meant to remind listeners of the importance of using God's gifts wisely and well.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- Why is the woman an example of how to use one's God-given gifts wisely?
- Why is it important to use our gifts wisely and well?
- What are some examples of using one's gifts wisely?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the **Gospel in Life**.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Stewardship

The concept of Christian stewardship is to care for all that God gives us in creation. All of creation belongs to God. We are stewards of God's household, sharing in the responsibility of caring for creation. Good stewardship involves caring for the poor and working for the common good.

Jesus is a model of good stewardship because he shows us how to serve God and humanity. Catholics understand that we have a responsibility for others. We have been commanded to love God and our neighbor. Loving our neighbor is inseparable from loving God. Good stewards work on behalf of the poor and suffering in the world. In Catholic teaching these activities are called the corporal works of mercy. We serve Christ when we share our blessings with people in need. Being a good steward means that the way we use our personal gifts and the resources of this world assist in building the kingdom of God.

- What is Christian stewardship?
- Why is Jesus a model for good stewardship?
- How does using our gifts help to build the kingdom of God?

Sacrament Connection

In the Sacrament of Baptism we celebrate becoming members of God's family, the Church. Being part of a family includes having some responsibility for one another. Membership in God's family means that we are stewards of God's household, sharing in the responsibility of caring for creation.

The Gospel in Life

How can you be a good steward of God's creation this week?

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