



STEWARDSHIP BULLETIN REFLECTIONS SCRIPTURE REFLECTION & ECO-THOUGHT YEAR B -- ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 09

ADVENT SEASON

First Sunday of Advent

Scripture Reflection

It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. (Mark 13:34)
God has left us in charge of His creation on earth. We each have special work that we can do for God. With what has God entrusted you?

Eco-Thought

[There is] no action without consequence to God's creation, the biosphere; no "elsewhere" to dump our garbage that will not, eventually, come floating back to haunt us.
—Daniel Swartz

Waste Not Want Not: Letting your car idle unnecessarily wastes gas and releases more emissions into the atmosphere. Instead of using the drive-through at the bank, restaurant, or coffee stand, park, turn off the car, and go inside. On cold winter days, know that today's cars do not need to warm up before they function well on winter roads. Letting the car run to warm it up only wastes gas and pollutes the air all without helping your engine.

Second Sunday of Advent

Scripture Reflection

Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care. (Isaiah 40:11)
The Lord is gentle and loving in His care for us. He ensures that we have all we truly need. How do you give thanks to God for His care?

Eco-Thought

Irenaeus taught that the majority of creatures after the Fall continue to remain obedient to God's will. Nature, then, retains its goodness.
—summary of St. Irenaeus' teaching by David Kinsley

Christmas Lighting: With Christmas just around the corner you may be considering lighting up your home and yard. If you are in the market for new lighting, this is a good time to choose LED. They are significantly cheaper to run over time and come in all the colors you could want. If your budget is tight, look online to find people giving away older lights as they make the move to LED. This allows you to RE-USE what others replace, and is a great way to reduce what would otherwise end up in our landfills.

Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)

Scripture Reflection

The spirit of the Lord God has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. (Isaiah 61:1)
Gaudete! Rejoice! In baptism the Lord has chosen you. Through your participation in the eucharist God sends you to fulfil His mission on earth.

Eco-Thought

All these lovely but mutable things, who has made them, but Beauty immutable?
—St. Augustine

Coffee is a very popular drink, at home, at the office, and everywhere in between. If you haven't already, you may want to purchase a re-fillable mug to help eliminate all those thrown out coffee cups we find all around us. The same applies to water; purchasing a bisphenol free and phthalate free water bottle allows you to refill from your home or office, will keep you hydrated, and keep the environment free of waste. Remember: it takes more water to produce a re-cycleable water bottle than water that it holds. So buy a re-fillable mug and use it forever.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Scripture Reflection

Mary, do not be afraid. (Luke 1:30)

Are you afraid of being a true disciple of Jesus? To express this discipleship through good stewardship is a radical and counter-cultural life choice. Do not be afraid. The Lord is with you.

Eco-Thought

Every step that we take upon (Earth) should be done in a sacred manner; each step should be as a prayer.
—Black Elk

Books: Everyone loves to read and it's another great area on which to focus our efforts. Don't forget about the library as an excellent resource for your favorite authors. When you do treat yourself to a best seller or 10, remember to pass it on once you are finished with it. If you like to collect books, share them with friends, so that more than one person enjoys the book. Think about the resources that go into printing a novel, and it makes sense to have more than one person benefit from the resources that went into making it. Libraries and used book stores should be on your list of shops in addition to the new book bookstores. Consider

also re-gifting from your own bookshelf for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS SEASON

Christmas During the Night

Scripture Reflection

What we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God. (Tit. 2: 12)
For our salvation God gave us everything He had—He gave us His only Son, Jesus. How do we say 'thank you' for a gift like that? Recognising the magnitude of God's gift this Christmas should change the orientation of our lives. Christmas calls us to make stewardship a way of life.

Christmas Day

Scripture Reflection

And the Word became flesh and lived among us (John 1.14)
On this day we commemorate the stewardship of God the Father in the incarnation of the Son for the salvation of the world. It is through our practice of stewardship that the Word made flesh, Jesus, continues to live among us.

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Scripture Reflection

"God has brought laughter for me." (Genesis 21.6)
Christian discipleship is an adventure. We can never know what God has in mind with the gifts He has given us. Yet, like Abraham, we obey in faith so that we too may laugh like Sarah in the abundant and surprising blessings God bestows upon His faithful.

Eco-Thought

"I shall seek no longer for the burning bush; All bushes are ablaze.
And I will not hasten to depart From daily grief and gladness
To climb a holy mountain; Every mountain now is sacred,
Each marketplace, and every home, All, all are blessed
Since God has pitched a tent among us."
—Veronica Kopersky, poem "Holy Ground."

Movies: A family movie night can be very expensive these days. Consider making a special night at home. Decide on a theme then divide up the tasks and have a meal, music, games, and movie to match. Instead of driving to the theatre or rental store, rent the movie online. Both Telus and Shaw provide movie services for the same cost as renting, and for a family of four it will be a fraction of the cost of going to the theatre. Your contribution makes all the difference, not only in what you do, but in what you don't do as well. If you don't subscribe to cable, borrow a movie from a friend or from the library. Just remember to return it promptly, and enjoy the time with your family.

Mary Mother of God

Scripture Reflection

The shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. (Luke 2:20)

The shepherds proclaimed the good news of the Messiah's birth. What miracles have you seen this Christmas season? How can you proclaim the good news?

Epiphany

Scripture Reflection

Arise, shine out, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you. (Isaiah 60)

The glory of God has been made manifest to us in the birth of a Saviour. How can your discipleship spread the light of Christ upon the dark places of the world?

Eco-Thought

He pours frost over the earth like salt,
and icicles form like pointed thorns.

The cold north wind blows,
and ice freezes on the water.

--Sirach 43, 19-20a

Cut the packaging: Whenever we shop for food or goods, they are typically over packaged, and individually wrapped. We can vote with our money by avoiding over-packaged goods in favor of those more responsibly packaged. With food, you can purchase in bulk to avoid the individually wrapped items. Write to the companies that make use of over packaging, and express your opinion. When shopping, bring re-useable bags to reduce the number of plastic bags that end up in the garbage.

Baptism of Our Lord

Scripture Reflection

"Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread . . . ?" (Isaiah 55.2)

Whether it is our money, our labour, or our time, there are many ways we can spend it. One of the reasons we live in a culture of want is that we squander our resources on things that do not satisfy. Spend your resources on building the Kingdom, your efforts for God's glory, and your time in prayer.

Eco-Thought

...and my right foot says 'Glory', and my left foot says 'Amen'.

--Annie Dillard

Save Energy in the Laundry Room: Only wash full loads but without overloading. If you don't have a full load, adjust the water level to suit the size of the load. Use cold water as 85-90% of the energy used to wash clothes goes into heating the water. When line-drying isn't an option, keep an eye on lint buildup in the dryer and make sure your dryer's exhaust vent is clear and the flapper moves freely.