



Dauid cognovit euam
la femine. sic conuicit

STEWARDSHIP

Part of the Anglican patrimony that St. Luke's brought with them into the Catholic Church is the longstanding tradition of observing October as Stewardship Month. Every year, we spend these weeks reflecting on how we receive and use God's gifts to us. To be a steward is to administer a master or employer's goods for the benefit of his estate and the community in which it exists. All Christians are called to recognize that everything they have and are is a gift from God, which they are required to use wisely and generously. To speak of God as Lord is to acknowledge that we do not belong to ourselves, but to Him. Thus all of our time, talent, and treasure belong to Him as well. How do we use those things? Do we give Him the best that we have or only what is left over after we have satisfied our own wants?

It is instructive to examine what the Bible has to say about what we owe to God. Today we consider a story from the beginning of Holy Scripture.

The very beginning of the story of fallen mankind tells of **Cain and Abel**, the first two sons of Adam and Eve.

Abel became a herder of sheep while Cain was a tiller of the soil. And it happened in the course of time that Cain brought from the fruit of the soil an offering to the Lord. And Abel too had brought from the choice firstlings of his flock, and the Lord regarded Abel and his offering but did not regard Cain and his offering. And Cain was very incensed, and his face fell. And the Lord said to Cain,

"Why are you incensed, and why is your face fallen? For whether you offer well, or whether you do not, at the tent flap sin crouches and for you is its longing, but you will rule over it."

—*Genesis 4: 2b-7*

Why was Cain's offering rejected?

The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us "By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice" (11:4).

St. John Chrysostom [c.349-407] observed that Abel's piety is demonstrated by "the fact that he did not casually offer any one of his sheep but 'one of the firstborn,' that is, from the valuable and special ones," whereas in Cain's case, "nothing of the kind is suggested"; Genesis 4:3's contrasting description of Cain bringing "an offering of the fruit of the ground" suggests something more perfunctory.

In his commentary on the Book of Genesis, Didymus the Blind [c.313–398] agreed: Abel's sincerity is demonstrated by his choice of the firstborn, and "Cain should have done so as well by offering some of the first-fruits," since what is due to God ought to "be apportioned before everything else." Instead, Cain procrastinates, bringing his offering "in the course of time" (Gen. 4:3), "as if remembering God only on second thoughts."

There is a similar example in the New Testament: Ananias and Sapphira, who "sold a piece of property, and . . . kept back some of the proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet," pretending that it was the entire value of the sale (Acts 5:1-2). For their deception, and for their holding back from God, they are struck dead (Acts 5:5, 10).

To Ananias and Sapphira, as to Cain, the message is the same as Christ's message to Laodicea: "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15-16).

Do we seek to give God our first and best, or do we expect Him to settle for less?

Scripture tells us not just to give God whatever fruit we have left over and lying around. Instead, "the first of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God" (Exod. 23:19, 34:26). In other words, do not wait until you are financially comfortable to tithe, do not wait until you have leisure to start making time for prayer. Give to God immediately, give from your necessity, give to him (in time, in money, in skill and labor) when it seems like you can't.

Christ praises the widow who put two mites into the treasury as having given more than the others, because "they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living" (Mark 12:44).

Whether in poverty or in wealth, "Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine" (Prov. 3:9-10).

*All things are Thine, no gift have we,
Lord of all gifts, to offer Thee.
And hence, with grateful hearts, today
Thine own before Thy feet we lay.*

—John Greenleaf Whittier, 1872

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

All who are suffering or sick and all caregivers who minister to the sick: Wesley Jackson, Sister Constance Ward, George Cochran, Mark Anthony Turner, Richard Windsor, Deirdre McQuade, Bill and Evelyn Riley, Rachel Fisher, Isabel Howard, David Hoppe; David, Shannon, and John Miazga; C.A., E.D., E.G., W.B., J.M., and J.G.

Please call or email the office to add a name to the prayer list.

Before calling, please be sure you have spoken to the person [or a member of his family] about adding the name—we do not want to inadvertently disregard someone's desire for privacy.

Names of those who are sick or injured will be kept on the list for one month; to keep a name on the list for longer, you must email the parish office.

MASS READINGS THIS WEEK

6 October [OT 27]

Habakkuk 1: 2-3; 2: 2-4 ; Psalm 95: 1-2, 6-7, 8-9; 2 Timothy 1: 6-8, 13-14; Luke 17: 5-10

7 October *Our Lady of the Rosary*

Jonah 1:1— 2:1-2, 11; Jonah 2:3-5, 8; Luke 10: 25-37

8 October *Feria*

Jonah 3: 1-10; Psalm 130: 1b-4ab, 7-8; Luke 10: 38-42

9 October *Denis, Bishop and Martyr, and Companions, Martyrs; John Leonardi, Priest*

Jonah 4: 1-11; Psalm 86: 3-6, 9-10; Luke 11: 1-4

10 October *Feria*

Malachi 3: 13-20b; Psalm 1: 1-4, 6; Luke 11: 5-13

11 October *John XXIII, Pope*

Joel 1: 13-15, 2: 1-2; Psalm 9: 2-3, 6, 8-9, 16; Luke 11: 15-26

12 October *Feria*

Joel 4: 12-21; Psalm 97: 1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Luke 11: 27-28

13 October [OT 28]

2 Kings 5: 14-17; Psalm 98: 1-4;

2 Timothy 2: 8-13; Luke 17: 11-19

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, 5 October

Vigil of the Sunday

4:30 pm Jane Donovan [Jane Slattery]

Sunday, 6 October

16th Sunday after Trinity [OT 27]

8 am Pro populo

9:30 am Maximino and Eugenia Cacas [Maria Cacas]

11 am Mat and Leann Kennedy [Don and Diana Gritz]

Monday, 7 October

Our Lady of the Rosary

9 am *no public mass*

Tuesday, 8 October

Denis, Bishop and Martyr, and Companions, Martyrs

John Leonardi, Priest

9 am Msgr. Maurice V. O'Connell +

Wednesday, 9 October

Bl. John Henry Newman, Priest

9 am Catherine Kelly [Jane Slattery]

Thursday, 10 October

Feria

9 am Paul Leipold + [Rachel Wolford]

Friday, 11 October

John XXIII, Pope

9 am Robert Brosen +

Saturday, 12 October

Wilfrid, Bishop

Vigil of the Sunday

4:30 pm Edwin P. Smith

Sunday, 13 October

17th Sunday after Trinity [OT 28]

8 am Pro populo

9:30 am Maria Cacas + [Jane Slattery]

11 am Edward Guinivan and Companions [Susan White]

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ST IGNATIUS CHURCH

stlukesdcordinariate@gmail.com
STLUKESORDINARIATE.COM
202-999-9934

office@saint-ig.org
SAINT-IG.ORG
301-567-4740

Rev. John Vidal
Administrator, St. Ignatius
Pastor, St. Luke's

 **Saint Luke's at**
IGNATIUS CHURCH