

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time C
Be God's Trustworthy Steward

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113:1-2,2-6,7-8; 1 Timothy 2:1-8; Luke 16:1-13

Dear brother and sisters in Christ,

Are you trustworthy stewards?

We may have a different answer to this question. But let us remember that we are meant to be trustworthy stewards. It is by God's grace! We are worthy of trust because our Lord Jesus entrusted His Body and Blood, as well as the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, to us.

But we shall confess that we are not perfectly trustworthy stewards. However, we hope it challenges us to strive to be trustworthy, and it permeates all areas of our lives. It is our constant call to be trustworthy stewards. Being stewards of God's blessings presupposes that we recognize that God is the owner and cause of everything we have and are. As stewards, we are meant to be caretakers, custodians, attendants, or administrators of all that we have and are.

When we truly accept this truth—that we are stewards, not owners—we come to realize that life is less about acquiring and more about giving, less about possessing and more about sharing. The material and spiritual gifts we are entrusted with find their true meaning when they are given freely and shared out of love for the good of our souls. It all starts in small matters, as Jesus our Lord reminds us. "The person who is trustworthy in small matters is also trustworthy in great ones, and the person who is dishonest in small matters is also dishonest in greater ones" (Luke 16:10).

The parable of the dishonest steward in our gospel emphasizes not his dishonesty, for the Lord does not endorse dishonesty, but rather his resourcefulness and cleverness in planning for his future. His dishonest actions have led him to face judgment. Confronted with its sad outcome, he realizes that things can no longer continue as usual; he must find a way to secure his future. Instead of spending his time making false accusations, spreading rumors, complaining to the owner, blaming others, or drowning himself in wine and other vices, he dedicates his remaining days to carefully planning his next steps in life, which is indeed a commendable act.

Here, our Lord leads us to see the importance of being resourceful and clever in regard to our eternal destiny. It is about being wise and prudent. If those who do evil can be so cunning in their actions, why shouldn't those who strive for good be equally creative in their efforts to contribute to God's kingdom? We are to use every opportunity, our time, health, and wealth to serve God and do good on earth in gratitude for his blessings in our lives.

The material blessings are accidental, not our substance. We don't allow material things to define us; otherwise, we would end up corrupted and miserable. They are not the end but the means to heaven if we use them wisely for the good of our souls. Our Lord reminds us, "We cannot serve both God and mammon." Therefore, the care we take for our souls is the best investment we can make since our souls have an eternal destiny and will last forever. When we genuinely care for our souls, we choose to be trustworthy stewards, knowing we are to account to the ultimate giver, God.

First, we care for our souls by living justly. Living justly means acting with fairness, integrity, and impartiality in all areas of life. It involves treating everyone with dignity and respect, ensuring that people receive what they deserve, but upholding truth and moral standards—especially when dealing with others.

Prophet Amos condemned those who engaged in religious practices while simultaneously committing unjust acts, such as manipulating grain and wheat prices, fixing scales to cheat others, and other unfair practices that harmed the poor (cf. Amos 8:5-6). He warns us that God sees these injustices and is angered by them.

Discernibly, if we engage in unjust practices, we declare ourselves enemies of God. There will be severe consequences for those who cause suffering to the poor and vulnerable. The responsorial psalms reiterate this warning that we should not oppress or act unjustly toward the poor, as God uplifts and loves them (cf. Psalm 113).

Second, we care for our souls by dedicating time to praying for others. St. Paul instructs Timothy to be a prayerful steward and to intercede for kings and those in positions of authority, so they do not oppress others (cf. 1 Tim. 2:2). He recognizes that leadership is challenging due to the temptations of power abuse, exploitation, and corruption. We are dealing with these forms or manifestations of evil in our society.

Praying for leaders is not a passive act. It is an act against evil. We stand against evil and those who allow themselves to become its medium. Prayer reflects our faith in God. It demonstrates that our Father in heaven desires all people to repent and receive the salvation offered by our Lord Jesus (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9). St. Paul states, "This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:3). He exhorted us to pray for everyone in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument.

Thirdly, we care for our souls when we use our resources not only to improve our own lives but also to enhance the lives of others, by utilizing what we have to assist those in need and support the Church's ministry in protecting the vulnerable and helping the poor. A Church that does not protect the vulnerable and help the poor is not the Church that Our Lord Jesus established (cf. Matt. 25:31-46). What Jesus is, so is his Church. What the Church is, so are its members.

We ritualized this act of offering our treasure during the offertory. After the invitation of the priest, "Pray dear brothers and sisters that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father," we respond with these words, "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church." These are the words of trustworthy stewards. Our offering is for the benefit of all.

When we care for our souls, we choose to live as trustworthy stewards of God!

May the treasures or wealth we hold lead us to our salvation rather than our condemnation. May the time we wisely spend on earth bring us closer to union with God instead of eternal separation. And may we look back on our lives with gratitude rather than regret about having loved too little or too late.

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