

Stewardship link

Stewardship invites us to look at all the gifts that God has given us and to give thanks for them. It encourages us to see them as ways to Him, rather than barriers and distractions.

To do

Over the coming weeks, you might find it helpful to have a notebook in which to jot down your reflections in response to these sessions.

God gives us many gifts. Some are easy to recognise and some feel more like burdens than gifts. In coming to know His gifts to us, it is easiest to begin with those things that mean most to us. However, we need to take care that we cherish them and use them for good purposes, rather than worshipping them.

List the five most important things in your life:

Why are they important?

Do any of them sometimes come before God in your life? When is this most likely to happen?

Do you neglect any of these important things in your life, even for other things that also seem good?

Are you able to share your most important things, or do you hold onto them jealously, afraid that you will lose them?

Take some time to note your responses in your notebook.

Diocese of Portsmouth Stewardship Reflection 1st Sunday of Lent Year C

‘You must worship the Lord your God,
and serve him alone.’

(Luke 4:8)

Opening prayer

Leader:

Let us pray

that this Lent will help us reproduce in our lives
the self-sacrificing love of Christ.

Response:

**Father,
through our observance of Lent,
help us to understand the meaning
of your Son’s death and resurrection,
and teach us to reflect it in our lives.**

(Opening Prayer for First Sunday of Lent)

To share

How would you describe the season of
Lent?

What opportunities and challenges
might Lent hold for you this year?



To listen

Luke 4:1-3

To think about

Jesus enters the wilderness for a period of reflection lasting forty days, a period known as *quarantine*. In this period of self denial, he is tempted by the devil who offers many worldly comforts.

It would be nice to think that we were only tempted by worldly things when we were in a state of hardship or poverty. This is, after all, understandable. But, the more we have, the more we seem to get distracted. We fall in love with things. We enjoy them. We want more.

This is not to say that such worldly things are bad. Christ does not condemn food, or even worldly power. Rather, he puts them in context as God's gifts and reminds us to worship the One who gives the gift and not the gift itself. Gifts are not to be held selfishly: they are to be cherished and shared with those who need them. Everything that we are and everything that we have are gifts from God. They are entrusted to us by God, not as possessions, but for use in the service of the Kingdom.

It is no accident that the devil is often shown in Scripture as a dragon, a creature which in legend hoards treasure in darkness and jealously guards it.

To reflect on

What are the greatest gifts in your life?

What has stirred a genuine sense of gratitude towards God in you? You might like to think in terms of people, events, special moments...

To what extent are you inclined to take God's gifts for granted?

To discuss

Sometimes we yearn for worldly things like money, fame, success, health, youth, family.

How might we use these positively as stepping stones so that they help the growth of our relationship with God and others?

When do money, success, health etc become stumbling blocks and obstacles in our relationship with God and others?

How might we strike a balance in the way we use the many gifts God has given us, to ensure that they are stepping stones and not stumbling blocks?

Closing prayer

Together:

The Father of mercies has given us an example of unselfish love in the sufferings of his only Son. Through our service of God and neighbour may we receive his countless blessings. Amen.

(Adapted from Solemn Blessing for First Sunday of Lent)

