

Brother Steward

Lay Reader Message

Disciples of the Cross

In Ephesians 2:1 and 4, the Apostle Paul writes, “*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins . . . but because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ . . .*” Before Christ, we were dead in sin. Through no effort of our own, we have been made alive “with Christ”!

Now what? Now what, indeed! Yes, Christ has saved us for eternity, but that eternity begins at Baptism. Some of us will spend only a short portion of eternity on earth, others much longer, but all of us are called to make these days count. In the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19, Jesus calls us to “*go and make disciples of all nations.*” He asks us, empowered by Word and Sacrament, to carry on his work.

There are many facets to the work of the Church. Not all of us are preachers and teachers of the Word, but we read in 1 Peter 4:10 that each of us has a gift and each of us is to use this gift to serve others. Peter speaks of offering hospitality and serving as gifts which God has given to edify the Church. The Apostle Paul writes about spiritual gifts to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Ephesians, each time stressing the point that we are to use what gifts we’ve been given for the good of the Body of Christ and according to the grace we’ve been given.

Jesus said:

“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.” (Matthew 16:24-25).

This is the challenge Jesus issues to each of us individually and to the Church collectively. Alive in Christ, we pick up the cross and, joyfully, just as Jesus, “*who for the joy set before him endured the cross*” (Hebrews 12:2), carry it wherever Jesus leads us. There is no life apart from Christ. As disciples of the cross who have found this to be true, let us carry this message to the world.

to Jesus. When needs arise, Jesus opens our eyes and hearts so we can respond to those needs. However, our primary reason for giving is a desire to express our gratitude and thanksgiving for our Lord and the love that he shows us every day.

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Send a Valentine to Jesus!

Our Brother Britannica in charge of legend and lore says that in 270 AD a Roman Priest Valentine dared to marry young Christians, which was against Emperor Claudius' law. He was jailed and martyred for the offense and for not giving up his faith. Before he died, he wrote to a jailer's daughter, thanked her for her faith in him and signed it "From Your Valentine."



So, this week, after sending cards to our loved ones; how about a short prayer to Jesus? Thank him for his gifts of faith, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. How about showing your love for Jesus by spending a few more hours a month in helping others over hard times? And, how about an extra dollar in the offertory basket in support of our ministries?

Showing your love of Jesus is being a good steward. A budding grade school poet suggested this prayer-mail: "*Roses are red, violets are blue, your steward thanks you, and loves you too.*"

God Bless!



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Texting While Praying?

Centuries ago we already had Tweets. It was when the carrier pigeon arrived at the Monastery with news from Rome.

Today, news travels in nanoseconds. Our Brother in charge of Tweeting says we have great new ways in communicating with the Lord and doing his work. You can say a lot in 140 characters! It's up to you.

Translate the following into your own text message:

Pray for me...

Meet me at church...

Let's volunteer...

Call Grandma...

Thank you Jesus...

The Lord is just a keystroke away. And spending time with God is good stewardship. So, texting while praying? It's ok to text a prayer as long as you're not driving.

God Bless!

