

Brother Steward

Lay Reader Message

Christ's Ambassadors

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Some people find it difficult to believe in God because they cannot reconcile the evil and hurt in the world with a good and loving God. One person said, "If God were really good, all this misery would just break his heart."

It is then that we faithfully point to Christ, our crucified Savior, and answer, "It did." The story of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ is truly the story of the breaking of God's heart. It is broken because the same sin that brings evil and misery into this world has also estranged us from our heavenly Father.

Thanks be to Christ! He has paid the price for our sins. He has bridged the chasm that lay between us and our Father. By his resurrection from the dead, he has triumphed over sin, death, and the devil. He has reconciled us to the Father.

In 2 Corinthians 5:15, we read, "*And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*"

Listen again to the words of the Apostle Paul: "*[We] should no longer live for [ourselves] but for him who died for [us].*" In light of what Christ has done for us, we stewards respond with a desire to serve and glorify him. Paul says that God, who has reconciled us to himself in Christ, has now given us this ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:8). "*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors,*" writes Paul, "*as though God were making his appeal through us*" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

We are Christ's ambassadors. Every day he places opportunities before us to speak of the great love of God that gave his Son for the sins of the world. He has equipped and enabled us through his Word and Sacraments (2 Timothy 3:16-17) to be his representatives. Let us, with broken and contrite hearts, seek his forgiveness when we fail to represent him as we should and ask for his continued strength and presence to help us to carry out this task.

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Rate Anxiety!

Tax rates, interest rates, inflation rates; are they causing you to lose money and sleep?

How about your Spiritual Rates? How are they doing? Is your time spent in prayer and worship up or down versus last year? Are you using more or less of your talents in helping others and doing good works? Is your percentage of giving to the offertory collection up or down from last year?

Maybe if we concentrate more on spiritual rates instead of financial rates we might be less anxious and more relaxed. When we invest in the Lord, our rate-of-return is unlimited, guaranteed, and comforting. And it starts with a prayer.

God Bless!



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What's Your Batting Average?

This is the time of the year we are flooded with baseball statistics and measurements: RBIs, ERAs, BBs, W/Ls, ABs, Hs, AVGs.

So, when it comes to our Spiritual Statistics how do we measure up? Here are the three main categories of performance: Time, Talent, And Treasure.

- 1. Is our Time spent in prayer and worship better this year than last?*
- 2. Are we using our Talents to serve our parish and ministries? More or less?*
- 3. Are we supporting the offertory collection to the best of our financial capability? Up or down?*

Yes, today's world is a tough major league to play in. Are we 1% better than last year? 5% or 10% better? Even if we make some errors on the Lord's team, there is no fear of being traded. God loves us all and says keep trying and just do your best. In his eyes we are all MVPs. Batter Up!

God Bless!

