

*These writing are to help you focus your thoughts for your homily to incorporate a more pronounced stewardship message.*

— *Stewardship Reflections by [Catholic Stewardship Consultants](#)*

# Stewardship Homily Reflections

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## Stewardship Homily Reflection on Lectionary Readings

### Stewardship Reflection on Lectionary Readings — Homily Guide

**March 28, 2021 — Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion**

**IS 50:4-7; PS 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; PHIL 2:6-11; MK 14:1-15:47**

Today we celebrate Palm Sunday — the beginning of our Holy Week. Our liturgy starts with the account of Jesus humbly entering Jerusalem riding a donkey. People put cloaks and palm branches in His pathway crying, “Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” It is with great joy that Christ was being honored as king, still in the same breath, we are filled with sorrow as we reflect on Christ’s passion and death. Thankfully, we know the glorious outcome of this painful journey. Today, as we read about the climax of Christ’s mission here on earth, we are reminded that He is the Perfect Steward, a model for us all on our stewardship journey.

Our First Reading, from the prophet Isaiah, portrays a suffering servant. The suffering servant, in many ways, foreshadows what Jesus endured during His passion — “I gave my back to those who beat me... my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting.” Christ endured such tortures, knowing that He did not deserve them, but still He humbly submitted to them.

We see that throughout Christ’s life, His mission as a steward was to fulfill His Father’s mission. He became man for a reason, and He humbly and obediently submitted to that mission for each one of us. We, too, play a unique role in our Father’s mission by bringing souls to Christ. And it simply begins with the witness of our lives. Let all that we do, including the way we speak and act, reflect our mission in this life.

This message is re-echoed in our Second Reading, from St. Paul to the Philippians. St. Paul says, “Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself... he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” We see again that although our Lord deserved every honor and praise from man while on earth, He chose the path of service and humility, sacrifice and love. He gave us everything in that moment. This truly was an overflowing gift for each one of us. So how can we share our gratitude with the Gracious Giver? We can bring service, humility, sacrifice and love into all areas of our lives — our homes by the way we treat our family members, into our church by the way we welcome and serve our neighbors, and into our workplaces by the way we speak and act.

Our Gospel today shares the account of Jesus’ last days on earth, and how He lives them says a great deal about how we should be living ours as faithful stewards. Jesus does many things in these last days, and they all revolve around prayer and service — two trademark actions of a good and faithful Catholic.

He first hosts a Passover meal in which He gives us His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. He then intensely prays to His Father. Lastly, He submits to humiliation, torture, and death for our sake, calling out to God the Father in His weakest moments. We might not be called to the same type of prayer and service, but we are all called to commit time in daily prayer with our Lord, and to serve our families, churches and neighbors in the various ways God is calling us to do so. No matter our state in life, we are all called to be faithful stewards through prayer and service.

As we embark on this Holy Week, let us take some time to reflect on the life of Christ as He is our model Steward, and may we strive to imitate Him daily.

### **Stewardship Reflection on Lectionary Readings — Homily Guide**

**April 4, 2021 — Easter Sunday/The Resurrection of the Lord**

**ACTS 10:34a, 37-43; PS 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; COL 3:1-4; JN 20:1-9**

Today, we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ! This event is the greatest event in our Catholic faith. It is through the resurrection that Christ defeated sin and death and opened for us the gates to eternal life. All of God's promises are fulfilled through this glorious event. We have been preparing for 40 long days, through prayer and penance, so that we might be better prepared to receive Christ this day, and to better prepare our hearts to one day rise with Christ in eternal life. Today, we do not fast, but rather, celebrate and rejoice because of our great and merciful God!

The meaning and joy of Easter is not just a "one-day" affair but is an essential element of our Catholic faith. We are called to live out the joy of Easter all year long. Our readings today reveal how we can do this here and now in our day-to-day lives.

In our First Reading, St. Luke preaches the Good News to us. He gives a synopsis of Who Christ is and what He did for us. He opens the door for people to partake in all that God wants to give us by saying, "everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name." He radically educates and invites people into a life with Christ.

St. Luke's vocation was to evangelize to the ends of the earth, and as Catholics, that is our vocation, too. If we step back and think about how incredible our faith is, how could we not want to share this goodness with others? Oftentimes, we can focus on life's many hardships, but if we recognize how truly blessed, we are — we have a God who died and rose for us, and we have the most intimate way of receiving Him through Holy Communion — then we can become a people of joy, an Easter people. And if we are living our lives with this joy, then every moment becomes a moment of evangelization — how we greet people on the street or in our parish; how we do chores around the house; how we respond to our spouse. We are blessed with the knowledge of our faith — it is our job to faithfully share it in word and with the witness of our lives.

Our Gospel portrays the third day after Jesus' death when Mary of Magdala visits Jesus' tomb early in the morning. Once she saw the stone removed, she ran to tell Simon Peter and John in fear that someone had taken Jesus' body. Simon Peter and John ran to the tomb as well, and upon seeing, they believed. Each figure in our Gospel today "ran." We can tell the relationship that these disciples had with Jesus because of the way they responded about Him. Mary did not see the empty tomb and think, "someone else will figure it out." Peter and John did not hear the news and think, "I will check on it in a little bit." They each responded with conviction as they "ran" for Jesus.

As we reflect on this Gospel, we must ask ourselves, “Do I have a relationship with Christ to the point where I am running to Him each day?” The way these disciples responded with willingness and eagerness is how we should respond to Christ. We must avoid complacency, and as intentional disciples, we must stop rationalizing our choices by telling ourselves we will someday get around to putting God first — “I am too busy now, but I will pray later” or “I will eventually get around to spending less on material things and increase my gifts to the church.” Every moment throughout our day is an opportunity to respond to God in gratitude, compassion, and eagerness. And although there will be moments when we do not “feel” like responding to Him, it is in those moments when we faithfully respond anyway that matters the most.

Let us celebrate this glorious day with prayer and feasting, for Christ is risen! And let us strive to carry this Easter joy with us all year long by the way we live our lives and how we respond to Christ each day. Happy Easter!

**April 11, 2021 — Second Sunday of Easter, Sunday of Divine Mercy**  
**ACTS 4:32-35; PS 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24; 1 JN 5:1-6; JN 20:19-31**

On this second Sunday of Easter, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. We celebrate this feast today since God’s mercy was shared with us through the resurrection of Jesus. The access to Divine Mercy has been with us since that time. Many centuries later, in 1931, Jesus revealed specific instructions to a nun named Sr. Faustina to help further spread the message of His Divine Mercy. To put it simply, today, we are celebrating Jesus’ merciful love for us and how we can partake in it.

No matter where we are on our journey as a disciple of Christ, we are all in need of God’s merciful love. There are countless times throughout our day when we miss the mark. For instance, we might fail to respond in kind to our spouse or kids, fall into gossip in our workday, or even forget to think positively of others. These shortcomings call us to humble ourselves and receive the unwavering mercy of God.

As we see in our Gospel, even Thomas, one of Jesus’ apostles, falls short as he doubts the resurrection. We can resonate with Thomas in the ways we might have doubts about the presence of Christ in our day-to-day lives — not believing in His power, doubting His presence in times of suffering, or even doubting His love for us. Yet, there is something valuable we can learn from Thomas. Once he realized his weakness, he cried out, “My Lord and my God.” Surely at that moment, Jesus could see the thoughts of Thomas’ heart and extended His merciful love towards him. When we recognize our need for God’s mercy, let us cry out for Him at that moment, saying, “My Lord and my God, have mercy on me.”

Jesus is Mercy itself. He was born into time to save us from sin. And to ensure His Mercy was always available to us, He gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In our Gospel, Jesus encounters the apostles after the resurrection and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” Jesus gave us the gift of this sacrament because He wants to help us reach eternal life. He knows we cannot do it without His merciful love, and a resolve to do better and to follow Him more faithfully. It starts with an awareness of our sins and a humble heart.

In our Second Reading, St. John helps us further understand this message of mercy. He says, “For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments.” We must be careful not to fall under the misconception of a false message of mercy — God’s mercy is abundant and readily available to us; however, we need to do our very best to actively live out our call as disciples of Christ. The times when we fall are the times we must seek God’s mercy, in addition to changing our ways to become a more

faithful disciple. One way to tangibly help us achieve this is by doing a daily examen each night. If we take just a few minutes to reflect on our day with gratitude, acknowledge our sins, and pray for tomorrow's events, surely we will grow on our path of discipleship.

Let us continue to celebrate today, as we are in the midst of our glorious Easter season! As we celebrate, may we recall the precious gift God has given to us through His Son — Mercy itself. May we never forget that, with a contrite heart and a resolution to do better, God is always willing to forgive. And may we never withhold merciful love from anyone we meet.