



Approaching Jerusalem

Second Sunday in Lent

Scripture - Luke 13:31-35

February 21, 2016

Thoughts for the Week

Clay Balls

A man was exploring caves by the seashore. In one of the caves he found a canvas bag with a bunch of hardened clay balls.
It was like someone had rolled clay balls and left them out in the sun to bake.

They didn't look like much, but they intrigued the man, so he took the bag out of the cave with him. As he strolled along the beach, he would throw the clay balls one at a time out into the ocean as far as he could.

He thought little about it, until he dropped one of the clay balls and it cracked open on a rock.

Inside was a beautiful, precious stone!

Excited, the man started breaking open the remaining clay balls. Each contained a similar treasure. He found thousands of dollars worth of jewels in the 20 or so clay balls he had left.

Then it struck him. He had been on the beach a long time. He had thrown maybe 50 or 60 of the clay balls
with their hidden treasure into the ocean waves.

Instead of thousands of dollars in treasure, he could have taken home tens of thousands, but he had just thrown it away!

It's like that with people. We look at someone, maybe even ourselves, and we see the external clay vessel.

It doesn't look like much from the outside. It isn't always beautiful or sparkling, so we discount it.

We see that person as less important than someone more beautiful or stylish or well known or wealthy.

But we have not taken the time to find the treasure hidden inside that person.

There is a treasure in each and every one of us. If we take the time to get to know that person,

and if we ask God to show us that person the way He sees them,

then the clay begins to peel away and the brilliant gem begins to shine forth.

I pray that we not come to the end of our lives and find out that we have thrown away a fortune in friendships

because the gems were hidden in bits of clay.

May we see the people in our world as God sees them.

Don't ask the Lord to "Guide your Footsteps" if you're not willing to "Move your Feet"!

Happy Birthday- Ashley (2/24)

Prayer Thought – Spain

Creating and loving God, we thank you for the blessings of life—the beauty of your creation and all places made sacred by your presence of peace. Guide us as we strive to embody your love for all the creation.

We come aware of times when our actions, or our complacency, contribute in some way to others' suffering. In your compassion, forgive us, and guide us in promoting the well being of all people.

This day we hold to the light of your grace and healing, the people of Spain. Hear our prayer, Merciful God, as we pray for those who are victims of abuse, neglect, oppression and illness. We pray for those who suffer from war's destruction and the desolation of human selfishness.

We seek a deeper awareness of your presence in our lives. Help us be open to the blessings of your love and grace as we seek new ways of sharing your love with others.

In the name of the Prince of Peace we pray. Amen.

Stewardship Thought

“I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession.” (Genesis 15:7)

Just as the Lord gave Abraham, Moses and the Israelites a land to possess, He has also given each of us a home. Whether our home is grand or humble, it is a gift from God. Abraham prepared a great sacrifice to the Lord in gratitude for the home God gave him. How do we show our gratitude to God for the home He has given us? Do we make a sacrifice of any kind? Do we return any of our finances to God, investing equally in our eternal home just as we invest in our earthly home?

Quote for the Week

Christian stewardship begins with God at the center. When stewardship revolves around any other center, it is misconceived. The institution of the church is an inadequate substitute for the incarnate body of Christ. The church as institution is a means to the end of the church as the fellowship of all believers. Stewardship is servanthood to God through the church, not to the church institution.

Dan R. Dickson-Revolutionizing Stewardship in the 21st Century: Lessons from Copernicus