

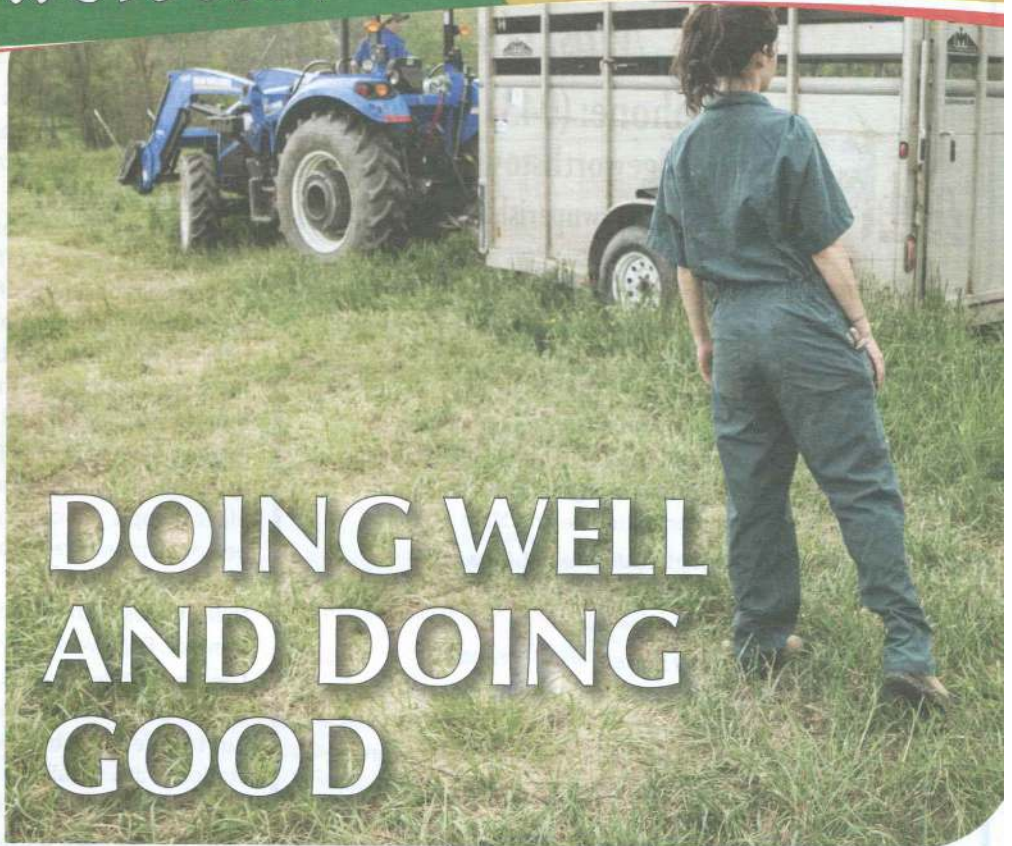
# Parish Newsletter



The man cleaning gutters who scattered grass seed as he did so — ensuring a return visit by the puzzled houseowner. The farmer who always managed every year to have an animal end up in the drain adjoining a neighbouring farmer so that they could access and rescue and exercise the 'right of way' on the neighbours' land. Or how about the returner of a missing large note who helpfully broke it down to maximise the chance of a reward. The job was done; but while some do good for the sake of good there are others who may like to do 'well' for personal gain. This Gospel account of the Dishonest Steward is unique to the Gospel of Luke. It sits there along with the Annunciation/Visitation/Finding in the Temple/Good Samaritan and many others. There's something terribly 'Irish' about this particular Gospel though. If you're the person who likes to play things straight and true, it may not sit well. And who is this steward to think he could adjust bills downward owed to his employer?

Today Jesus praises (or is it the master praises with Jesus just noting it?) the Dishonest Steward who writes off debts so his master's debtors will welcome him after he's fired. The steward is the perfect example of an 'immoral hero.' Why is he praised? Because God's kingdom demands that we use all our wits — it's simply too important for anything less. In a way Jesus is inviting his listeners to look at how clever people were about small things, asking them to be clever and to have a sense of urgency about the big things.

I think that the Dishonest Steward also, in his feverish haste telling them



## DOING WELL AND DOING GOOD

to 'write quickly' with no greeting of 'friend' banks on his knowledge that the Master is a generous person. He uses what he has and figures that the tenants are unlikely to have the Master row back on the reduced debt, as he would appear mean. After all, the tenants all presume the Steward has the owners' approval in reducing the bills. They were probably celebrating how generous he was. So, he goes along with the scam. The Steward was wrong in action but right in judging the owner to be generous.

And so who is God to you? How do you see God? Mean? Vindictive? Loving? Kind? Judgemental?

Because the way you see God determines how you respond to God — out of duty or conviction, or fear, or trust. Which is it to be? ■

- Tom Cox



### Reflection

How do you use your wealth responsibly and in line with the will of God?



### Lesson

In the kingdom of God, all people are equally vulnerable; therefore, everyone should act prudently if he or she hopes to enter the kingdom.



### Prayer

Lord, help us to recognise our common vulnerability. Make us prudent in our use of the goods of this world so that we may come to share the joys of the next world. Amen.



### This Week (19–25 September)

- 19 M St Januarius, bishop and martyr
- 20 T Ss Andrew Kim Taegon & Paul Chong Hasang
- 21 W ST MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST
- 22 T St Maurice, martyr
- 23 F St Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio), priest
- 24 S Our Lady of Walsingham
- 25 S 25th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME