

What would be the grade or score of your stewardship? The time of reckoning is coming

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Jeremiah 23:1-6; Ephesians 2:13-18; Mark 6:34)

The uniqueness of everyone lies in the uniqueness of the responsibility assigned to him or her from creation. This tells of the importance assigned to every individual with a corresponding special mission. Given this, it is imperative to know that everyone would receive a grade or score that will be commensurate to the level of effort and input he or she made in the assigned responsibility, the same way we receive a grade or score in academic work, when we work closely with our academic syllabus.

At times we might presume or suspect what our grade or score might be, and some other time we might not know, only to be waiting for the time of reckoning which must come.

The first reading and the gospel present us with two different/ similar groups with similar assignments entrusted with them that never received the same grade or score given the tone of their masters. Their mission was to shepherd the sheep. In the first reading, we observed that the shepherds failed in their responsibility. Thus, they misled and scattered the sheep, which revealed their carelessness and nonchalance. Against this, God vowed to punish them for such evil deeds (Jeremiah 23:1-2).

On the contrary, the master/ Jesus in the gospel was elated at the report of the stewardship of His Apostles. Beckoning them to come and rest in a desert place speaks of Jesus's happiness over the input His Apostles made in the responsibility assigned to them. The evidence of this was quite visible, given how the people were going to meet with them to the point that they never had the time to eat (Mk 6: 30-31)

Going beyond what the common concept of shepherding implies, I would want us to know that everyone is a shepherd and a steward at one time or another: parents are shepherds, teachers are shepherds, president, governors and leaders are shepherds. By this, I mean that shepherds or stewards are not limited to the ones discussed in both first reading and the gospel, as we are all created and entrusted with different responsibilities.

Leaning on the above, I make bold to ask: Can we as any of the aforementioned – teachers, presidents, parents, etc. – convincingly say that we are on top of the assignments entrusted to us? What do you think will be the master's approach towards us on the day of reckoning? Can the attitude of those entrusted to us, towards us indict or vindicate us? Would you think of demotion or promotion, given what the outcome will be on the day of reckoning? (Jeremiah 23:4-5)

Our meditative and reflective response to these questions might give us an idea of grade or score of our stewardship.

May God's grace be sufficient for us to be a shepherd like Him. May our stewardship attract us God's blessings rather than curses, good grades or scores rather than failure. May we never be taken unaware. You're created for a special mission. May God be your strength. You're precious. Have a blessed Sunday and week ahead. Fada Colman cares about you and your family. He is praying for you.