



Stewardship

"The promotion of the practice of stewardship is important for the mission of the Church and for the spiritual well-being of each individual Christian.

Everyone benefits from the sacrificial gift one makes of his time, talent, and treasure."

Pope Benedict XVI

"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."

(1 Peter 4:10)

What is Stewardship?

It is a lifestyle, a life of total accountability and responsibility. It is the acknowledging of God as the Creator and Owner of all. Christian Stewards see themselves as the caretakers of all Gods' gifts. Gratitude for these many gifts is expressed in prayer, worship, offering and action. Stewardship is a way of life. It is a way of thanking God for all our blessings by returning to God a portion of the many gifts (everything we have, for instance, our time, talent and treasure) that we have been given. It involves the intentional, planned and proportionate giving of all we have.

Finally, stewardship encourages everyone to participate in the task of building the Kingdom of God. When we explain that God has given each of us certain things, that these gifts are our responsibility to care for, and that we are accountable for what we do with these gifts, then there is no doubt that everyone should be involved.

Stewardship rejects the notion that we must "have it all" and instead, demonstrates the value of giving in love, in service and in justice.

Stewardship is based on the spiritual principles of the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

"Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, yours are the eyes through which he is go about doing good, yours are the hands with which he is to bless people now..." (St. Teresa of Avila)

Stewardship provides a spiritual way of living for all of us – a way of being in the world, particularly as we continue to embrace the New Millennium and respond to the Gospel call to renew the face of the Earth.

Stewardship is about the many gifts our gracious God has given us. It helps us to reflect upon our giftedness; all that we have which constitutes our treasure: Our families, friends, time, talents, skills, material possessions, finances.

Stewardship is about reflecting on our faith and on the way we live and act as disciples of Jesus.

Stewardship is about caring for all of God's creation.

As Christians Stewards, we:

- receive God's gifts gratefully;
- cultivate them responsibly;
- share them in love and justice with others; and
- stand before the Lord in a spirit of accountability.

What difference will Stewardship make in my life?

The difference is the motivation for giving. It is so easy to put our lives on hold and with it all of our good intentions. "Someday when I have more time" or "When I've reached my goals" or "I'll give my share of time, talent and treasure but not right now." What will we tell those in need of prayer, in need of a kind ear or the hundreds of other acts of stewardship that will go undone and the gifts that the Lord has given us that will go unshared if we all were to think that way? Stewardship acknowledges that God is the source of all of our gifts and talents, and we are the caretakers of these gifts. Effective stewardship education and formation relies on leadership by example.

Stewardship encourages us to make a difference and to become involved.

- Challenges individuals and families to re-examine their relationship with God, each other, the workplace, the community, and the parish.
- Increases awareness and appreciation of the presence of the Lord in our lives.

Where stewardship has been implemented, both givers' and receivers' lives have been changed. True conversion has taken place in the hearts and minds of many who embrace Stewardship as a way of life.

"Boast not of tomorrow, for you know not what any day may bring forth."

(Proverbs 27:1)