

The Gift Of Time, Talent and Treasure



OUR TIME

God has gifted each of us with 24 hours in each day, and while the number of days each of us has been given will differ, it is important to effectively manage those hours. We should balance the hours we spend at work, with our families, in prayer, in recreation, and in service to God. Each of these commitments is important and we must ask ourselves: Do we work too much? Do we spend meaningful time in prayer each day? Do we spend quality time with our family? Do we spend an appropriate portion of our time utilizing our talents for the good of others in our parish and community?



OUR TALENT

In our daily lives, we experience many people with various talents. Each person's talents are vital to what happens at work, home, the grocery store, wherever. Society relies on each of us contributing our talents in many places and situations. It also relies on our love. Stewardship invites us to use our talents to earn a living and provide for our family and to serve God and others. We must take time to discern what talent we have to offer our parish and other community volunteer organizations. Then after this reflection, we should consciously, lovingly pledge these talents to the mission and ministry of God.



OUR TREASURE



Money and all of the things we possess are gifts from God that we are asked to care for and generously and sacrificially share for our family needs and for the good of others. God has blessed each of us with material possessions and these gifts are intended to be shared. Why? Because each of us has the responsibility and an inherent desire to help others in need and to support the ministry of the church, as well as other worthwhile charitable organizations. If we don't, we become unfulfilled and unhappy. All of us have different levels of material resources, but we are all called to return in thanksgiving a proportionate gift, each in a measure we have been blessed with.

Christian stewardship calls each of us to a proportionate standard of stewardship; even amidst a potential disagreement with certain action or decision within the church that a person may not agree with.



Good stewardship as it relates to church finance must include ethical, legal, and fiscal standards and requires pastors and parish staff to be open, consultative, collegial, and accountable in the conduct of affairs. Parishioners must accept responsibility for their parishes and contribute generously – both money and personal service – to their programs and projects.

- STEWARDSHIP: A DISCIPLE'S RESPONSE

Gifts and graces

Take time to reflect upon and list below some of the many gifts and graces you have received from God.

Service to others

Your list may be long or short, but everything on the list above is a resource entrusted to your care. In what ways do you use your time, talent, and treasure to the service of others in your parish, the diocese, and wider universal church? List the ways you can use these gifts to serve the Lord.

THE CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

... where the *gratitude* in our **HEART** and the work of our **HANDS** shows our *Love* for others ... *receiving, thanking, sharing and praising God for the gifts we have received.*



Reflecting on our Gifts

*As the faithful of the **insert Parish Name** renew their annual stewardship “way of life,” this guide is to assist us in discerning our gifts and how we may use them in service to God and others. In response to His love, it is intended to ask: “How can I repay the Lord for all the good He has done for me?” PSALM 116:12*

STEWARDSHIP A Way of Life The Spirituality of Stewardship

Christian stewardship makes God’s love visible by generously and sacrificially giving of one’s self as Jesus Christ exemplified. To imitate the love of Jesus is not possible in our human nature. Yet, we have not first loved God. God has first loved us. When we open our hearts to receive the gifts of God’s love, we begin to love in a way that transcends our human nature and to love like Jesus. Stewardship enables the Christian to live His commandment to “love one another as I have loved you.” (John 14:34) And the love He asks is a merciful, sacrificial, and life-giving love.



Stewardship is Discipleship!

Stewardship is the loving response of God’s love for us by living the individual and universal call to discipleship, a lifelong “way of life,” whereby one responds to the mission and ministry of the local and universal church, sharing the Gospel of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Stewardship enables Christians to gauge the extent of their faith and love of Jesus by the stewardship they perform. Sometimes stewardship can be misinterpreted as a gimmick, an attempt to get us to write a bigger check to the church or volunteer more time. This myth is dispelled when we simply witness those living as stewards—their action is their charity and their joy is their reward.

We are all at different stages of our understanding of stewardship and our willingness to accept stewardship in our daily lives. But one thing is clear, **each of us can grow closer in our relationship with God by consciously, prayerfully determining what our next stewardship action will be.** God gives us time, talent, and treasure to bring us closer to the living Christ; to enter into deeper communion with Him by extending His mercy to others. By extending His love, we become more and more the person God created us to be.

Through God’s Gifts

All that we are, all that we have, and all that we ever will be is gift from God. Each of us has been given unique gifts and charisms from God. It is often stated or perceived that one who has become successful did it with hard work or through perseverance. While our hard work may be evident, stewardship calls us to acknowledge that this success has been made possible through God’s gifts, given generously, not solely because of one’s efforts. Everything is a grace and gift from God; even our efforts.

“Do we share the gifts God has entrusted to us, or do we hide them under a bushel basket?”

The gifts of time, talent, and treasure are precious resources, not created by us, but given to us by our loving Father, who asks us as stewards, to share them wisely and generously in bringing others to Him. Sharing a portion of our time, talent, and treasure is a way to share Jesus Christ, our ultimate gift, with those who do not know Him. “The stewardship of disciples is not reducible only to one task or another. It involves embracing, cultivating, enjoying, sharing, and sometimes also giving up, the goods of human life.

– STEWARDSHIP: A DISCIPLE’S RESPONSE

God’s Call to Stewardship

Each of us is frequently involved in stewardship. The sharing of our gifts within the parish, school and community often takes place without deliberate and planned action.

There are over ? registered Catholic households in the **Insert Parish Name** and each of us has been called to be God’s steward. We are called to make stewardship decisions that are intentional, planned and proportionate. As we annually renew our commitment to the stewardship way of life, **we are asked to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.** This is a personal call to annually look inward and examine our lives, to take time to recognize our gifts, to discern how those gifts may change from year to year, and reflect on what God wants us to do with these gifts. As Catholics we should be examples for others!

As we renew our stewardship commitment, please take some time to prayerfully discern how God has blessed you and your family with gifts and graces. Then determine how you can generously share these blessings with others in your parish community, the diocese, and the wider universal Church.



A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

*Lord, source of all gifts,
You call us to be disciples of your Son,
to be stewards of all creation.
May the hours and the days you give us
be filled with faith, with hope,
and with love.
May the talents, gifts and graces you
give us be shared for the benefit of
family and community.
May the money and possessions
you give us be spent for growth
of self and of church.
Help us make the choices
that will renew the face of the earth,
and will bring us to see you face to face.
We ask this through Christ the Lord.*