



## Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time November 6, 2011 A

### LIVING A STEWARDSHIP WAY OF LIFE

Stewardship is a core belief in the gospel and it is one of my own core beliefs. I believe that as we embrace a stewardship vision of life, we:

- ◇ gradually become the person God created us to be.
- ◇ become a blessing to our own family, co-workers, neighbors, church family and other communities we may belong to.
- ◇ journey on a path that will lead to the wonderful inner feeling that comes with giving of ourselves to God and others. A life of stewardship is a key to happiness.

### Christian stewardship

Stewardship properly understood embraces all of life and sees all of life as *gift*—creation, my body, mind and spirit, food and water, material possessions, friendships, time & talents—all given as gift to be received with gratitude, managed wisely and used to bless our families and the communities we belong to.

We can squander the gift of time, waste water and food, neglect our bodies, misuse our gifts by furthering only our own kingdom, ignore our relationships. When we behave this way, we are being poor stewards of God's blessings. On the contrary, when we care for God's creation, develop and share our talents and material blessings, etc., we become the Lord's good and faithful servants.

So while we do usually speak of stewardship in terms of time, treasure and talent, it is really much more than that—it is *all* aspects of life.

### Stewardship of time

**Time** is a very precious gift. Most of us feel we don't have enough time for all the things we want to do. Everyone is given the same amount of time, 24 hours each day, 168 hours each week. The question is: **How am I choosing to use my time?** Henry David Thoreau once said:

*"It is not enough to be busy, so are ants.  
The question is what are we busy about?"*

This week, I invite you to look at how you spend or use

*God's gift of time.*

- ◇ How much *time* is given to nurturing your relationship with God? How much time do you give to studying the Bible and Catholic beliefs?
- ◇ How much *time* is set aside for exercise and recreation?
- ◇ How much *time* is spent watching TV, surfing the internet, or glued to our iPhone or iPad?
- ◇ How much *time* is devoted to volunteer work inside or outside the parish?

How we spend our time says much about what is important to us. We always make time for what is important to us.

### Stewardship of talent

In his first letter, Peter says "*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace*" (4:10).

In today's Gospel, the master (God) has pretty tough words for the servant who buried his talent and tried to blame the master for his lack of action: "*You wicked lazy servant.*" Obviously, the Lord, the giver of gifts, expects a good return on his investment in us.

I am most grateful for the hundreds of parishioners who generously share with us a portion of their time and talent. Because of their generosity, we have many active ministries in our parish, ministries that touch many lives.

If you are homebound or physically unable to be actively involved in a ministry, please remember that your *daily prayer* for God's blessings on our parish team and volunteers *is itself a very important ministry*. When our Church declared St. Thérèse of Lisieux the patroness of the missions though she never spent a day working in the missions, the Church was communicating the message that prayer for God's blessing on apostolic works is very important.

## Stewardship not an option for a disciple

At the *International Stewardship Conference* I recently attended, speakers said again and again that we need to remind ourselves and our people that stewardship is an essential part of being a disciple or Christian. One speaker said that no mother gets up in the morning and says, "I think I'll volunteer to be a mother today." No, motherhood is part of her DNA. In a similar manner, living the way of a good steward is or should be at the heart and center of every disciple's life. Our baptism calls us to be good stewards of God's blessings.

## Prayer to radiate Christ

Ideally, we seek to be good stewards of God's blessing *all* the time and not just when we are volunteering. Each day allows us to be good stewards in our homes, on the phone, when emailing, texting, talking to. Ideally, I seek to be Christ-like at every moment of every day and at every place and time. To help us to be Christ, we could often say the following prayer.

*Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance  
everywhere I go today;*

*Flood my soul with your spirit and life;  
penetrate and possess my whole being  
so utterly that all my life*

*may only be a radiance of yours.*

*Shine through me and be so in me  
that every soul I come in contact with  
may feel your presence in my soul.*

*Let them look up and see no longer me,  
but only Jesus! Amen.*

Blessed John Henry Newman

## EXAMPLES OF STEWARDSHIP OF TIME & TALENT AT ASCENSION

### LITURGY & WORSHIP

Choirs, cantors & musicians (68), Eucharistic Ministers at Mass (339), Lectors (55), ushers/greeters (65), sacristans (25), Altar servers (89), Deaf Ministry (24)

### EVANGELIZATION & FAITH FORMATION

Rite of Christian Initiation (25), Bible Study (75), Justfaith (35), 2 Women's sharing groups (60), Men's study (15), Small Christian Communities (280), Why Catholic (210), Christ Renews His Parish (each year we host two retreat weekends for men and women (90 retreatants)), Baptismal Seminar (3 COUPLES), Adoration (434), Ignatian Spiritual Exercises(15), Religious Education, grades k-8<sup>th</sup> (45 catechists),

Jr. Hi Youth Ministry (10 adult leaders, 60 youth), High School Teen Ministry (150 teens, 12 adult leaders), Rosary Makers (10), Charismatic Prayer (8), Contemplative Prayer (8), Ministry of Intercessions (60),

### OUTREACH

Thrift store (170), Social Concerns (65), Daily Bread (50), Habitat for Humanity (25), Grief Support (8), Jobs Ministry (15), Caregivers (13), Ministry to Sick & Homebound (46), Bereavement Ministry (7), Hurricane Helpers (60), Knights of Columbus (170), Ladies Auxiliary (30), Funeral Choir/receptions (25), Transportation (3), Community of Hope -Dan Romano

### FAMILY LIFE & FELLOWSHIP

Council of Catholic Women- ACCW (75), Marriage Enrichment (30), Marriage Prep couples (8 couples), FISH (35), Play Ground Pals (12), Coffee & Donuts (6), Welcoming New Parishioners (10), Parish Library (8), Handmade Articles (12), Newsletter (Margaret McDonnough)

### PARISH MAINTENANCE & BUILDING COMMITTEE

Electrical, plumbing, carpentry (Lee Dague, Joe Eisen), Maintenance upkeep projects (Don Foy, Dick Cross), coordinator of new building project (Bill Porzio), Office volunteers (14) Garden Ministry (15),

### FUNDRAISING

Bingo (15 each session), Casino/Gala (40), Festival (100's)

If we omitted your ministry, let us know and we will include it next week.

In addition we have the following communities: Hispanic, Philippine, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Retirees, SAIL (Senior Adventures in Learning)

Have a blessed week,

