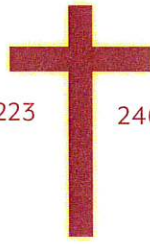


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“How can I repay the Lord for all of the great good He has done for me.” This passage from Psalm 116 is one of my favorite Scripture verses, it is the one that immediately comes to my mind when I reflect on the Stewardship Way of Life and what it means to be a good steward of the gifts God has blessed me with. In fact, this is what stewardship is all about, recognizing our gifts, talents, spiritual and material blessings and putting them at the service of God, His Church and one’s neighbor. When I recognize my gifts and use them to serve God and others, there is a joy, a peace and a fulfillment that cannot often be put into words, but is very real indeed.

My Dear Friends in Christ, everything we have is a gift from God, and with grateful hearts we share God’s love with others by making appropriate use of those gifts; this is what it means to be a “Stewardship Parish.”

Time, talent and treasure are the three areas of giving we consider in a Stewardship Way of Life. What does it mean to put God first in our life? It means making time for God, utilizing our unique skills and abilities, to give of what is most precious to us. Of course, we must learn how to appropriately balance our time to family, work, parish community, and relaxation. It is a challenge in a busy world, but there is much in the spiritual tradition of the Church and in the lives of the Saints, to help us center on the present moment and the person in front of us, rather than to be paralyzed by the past.

There are various ways to share our talents with our faith community. Our Stewardship Committee is preparing for the Catholic Stewardship Renewal to be conducted this Fall. A listing of the various ministries and volunteer opportunities our parish currently offers will be used, so we can reflect on and renew, how we are living as active members of our Parish. We are also open to new ideas of ministries and volunteer opportunities that can be explored to better serve those in our community. No one should be on the journey of faith alone, but able to walk hand-in-hand with fellow disciples of the Lord, that is a beautiful fruit of the Stewardship Way of Life.

If our simple acts of prayer, hospitality, and community outreach lead someone’s soul to heaven, we have served God well. Christ gave everything, out of love, to save us, and hopes we will be inspired to go and do likewise.

One of the most frequently asked questions in regard to stewardship is “How much do I have to give?” This is actually not the correct question, because the answer is actually, “nothing.” We don’t have to give anything. “How much do I want to give?” is the question that stewardship asks. That means giving proportionately, as we are able, sacrificially and generously, with the goal being the Biblical Tithe of ten percent; goal, not “requirement.” Saint Paul says in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, “Whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will reap bountifully. Each one must give what he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:6-7).

The challenge and deep invitation in living a Stewardship Way of Life is to become more like Christ. To be generous of heart because God has been so generous with us, and to share the many gifts and talents we individually have from God, to be used to build up His Kingdom on earth for His glory and the good of my neighbor.

Therefore my friends, as you read the pages of this Parish Stewardship Guide, prayerfully consider how you can deepen and express your faith and participate in the mission of your Catholic family by using your time, talent and financial offerings in being good stewards of your many gifts.

“How can I repay the Lord for all of the great good He has done for me?” By living a generous and genuine stewardship way of life, from which you will reap joy! May God bless each of you, your families and our Parishes.

To Jesus, through Mary,

~Father Aubuchon