

# Stewardship: A Way of Life

**DEFINITION:** Stewardship is a way of life; a practical form of spirituality. It is a response to the Lord's call to discipleship. Christian stewards:

- 1) **Receive** God's gifts **Gratefully**
- 2) **Cultivate** them **Responsibly**
- 3) **Share** them **Generously** with others
- 4) **Return** to God with **Increase**

**THE CHALLENGE:** The American bishops' pastoral letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, describes the opportunities and challenges facing all. The pastoral letter speaks of three convictions or principles that are at the heart of Christian stewardship.

- 1) **“Mature disciples make a conscious, firm decision, carried out in action, to be followers of Jesus Christ no matter the cost to them (SDR, p 5).**

*Mature discipleship is not impulsive or short-lived. It is carefully considered, deliberately chosen and lived day-in and day-out in the concrete circumstances of our lives. With this first conviction, the bishops make it clear that stewardship is serious business. It is a way of life that is only undertaken by mature men and women who can accept the risks and who are willing to pay the price.*

- 2) **“Beginning in conversion, change of mind and heart, this commitment is expressed not in a single action, nor even a number of actions over a period of time, but in an entire way of life. It means committing one's very self to the Lord” (SDR, p. 5).**

*Stewardship requires a radical change of attitude and lifestyle. It is not something that can be accomplished once and for all, but requires a lifelong commitment. And what is committed is not something incidental or extra. Stewardship demands a total commitment—heart and mind, body and soul, intentions and actions. Indeed, stewardship means committing one's very self to the Lord!*

- 3) **“Stewardship is an expression of Christian discipleship with the power to change how we understand and live our lives” (SDR, p. 5).**

*It is not enough to make a conscious decision to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. It's not enough to make a total commitment of ourselves to a new way of life. We must actually change. We must begin to see things differently. We must change our understanding and awareness of God, of the world around us and of the people we cohabitate with on the planet earth (including our families, our neighbors and friends, our fellow citizens, and even strangers and enemies). Above all, we must live differently and make new choices about developing and sharing all the gifts God has given us.*

## *Living Lives of Stewardship*

At St. Agnes Parish we encourage living lives of prayer, service and sharing. Stewardship is not a *sometime* thing, it is an *everyday* thing.

- ✠ **EVERY** day I pray
- ✠ **EVERY** day I serve
- ✠ **EVERY** day I share

“What gifts have you been given that could be used to bring about God's kingdom? In what ways will you use that gift? How will you extend yourself for God and for others?”

*Father Richard Getchel*

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***What do you ask of me, Lord?  
How do you want me to serve you?***  
*From “The Servant Song”*

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