

What return shall I
make to the Lord

for all the good He
has done for me?

- Psalm 116

Stewardship at St. Walter Parish

Throughout October we have been reflecting on the meaning of Stewardship and how we are called to be stewards of the gifts God provides. While Stewardship does involve our minds, it is mainly a movement of the heart. Jesus said, "Where your heart is, there also will be your treasure."

The path to becoming a generous giver lies not only in the study of the Scriptures but also in prayer and meditation. Both serve as means to prepare our hearts before our Lord. Scripture helps us to understand God's ways and see His generosity and sacrifice throughout salvation history. Through our prayer and meditation God uniquely speaks to us, teaching us, amongst other things, how to become generous givers today.

Being thankful is not merely a state of mind, but a call to action. God has blessed us so that we can be a blessing to others. He calls us to not only *be thankful* but also to *act thankful* by sharing the abundance that He has shared with us.

In this sharing we experience the real joy of Stewardship, for real joy is found in what we give, not in what we get.

"Seek joy in what
you give not in
what you get."
- Anonymous

"Examples are few
of men ruined by
giving."
- Christian Bovée

Gifted to Serve

a reflection on Stewardship

"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son" (John 3:16). This famous line from John's Gospel reminds us of the ultimate sacrifice God made for us—God's offer of the life of His innocent Son for each of us. Since we deserve nothing in our own right, being sinful by nature, what can we offer God in return for this total gift of Himself? No gift, including the totality of our respective lives, can compensate God for His gift. Still, the Bible gives us several instances where we might reflect on our response to God for the many blessings He has given us.

Genesis 4:4 reminds us that Abel gave the firstborn (the very best) of his flocks to God. From this earliest instance of man thanking God for all His goodness to us, down to Matthew, who reminds us to give to whomever asks us (Mt 5:42), we are called to give joyfully. Still later in Matthew 10:8, we read that the gift we have received should, in turn, be freely given to another, reminding us that giving ought to spring naturally as a condition of human existence, not as a grudging act of compulsion.

1 Peter 4:10 teaches that as distributors of God's manifold grace, each of us should put our gifts at the service of one another, each in the measure he has received. This teaching is amplified still further by Acts 20:35, where we read the famous line that "there is more happiness in giving than receiving." Paul underscores the importance of these words when he reminds us that they are the very words of the Lord Jesus, Himself. With these admonitions in mind, let us give thanks to the Lord for what He has bestowed on us, recognize that we have done nothing to deserve these gifts. We are merely the good stewards of what He has given us and resolve to lay our gifts at the feet of each other.

With this and other Biblical calls to give, and with the example of our Lord giving of himself, it seems obvious that we can never give back enough to the Lord. We can never outdo God in His generosity. Fortunately we do not have to. God takes our response, whether the riches of Zacchaeus the tax collector or the two small coins of the widow, and multiplies them for His purposes. If God can change the world with eleven frightened Apostles blockaded in a small room, what can He do with what we give Him freely and cheerfully from the many blessings He has showered upon us?

by Tom Parker (St. Walter Parishioner)

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SHE CLAIMS IT'S BECAUSE OF LAST WEEK'S
"CHEERFUL GIVER" SERMON, BUT I THINK SHE
JUST MISSES HIGH SCHOOL

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