

## Stewardship Renewal – Definition (Homily #1)

33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in OT, B, Nov 18, 2012.

Dn 12:1-3: “... the wise shall shine brightly.”

Ps 16: “... my heart is glad and my soul rejoices.”

Hebrews 10:11-14, 18: “... [Jesus] offered one sacrifice for sins.”

Mark 13:24-32: “... the Son of Man coming ... with great power and glory. ... Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.” “Know that he [Jesus] is near.”

### A. Introduction.

“My words will not pass away.” Jesus said that our world will come to an end, that “heaven and earth will pass away.” But he promised that His words are lasting, His teachings are *truth*, His commandments are the *way* to happiness, and His *life* is eternal.

How do we live, how do we put into practice, how do we implement Jesus’ words that will not pass away? *Stewardship*. This November and December we are re-committing ourselves to the Lord and His Word in our *Stewardship Renewal* at the COLG.

Two weekends ago, Fr. Ted Skalsky preached about the Four Pillars of Stewardship: Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service. This weekend I will describe the beautiful meaning of Stewardship. December 1 & 2, I will preach about the Stewardship of Tithe/Alms. And December 8 & 9, I will wrap-up with thoughts about our commitment to Jesus and our Catholic Faith, during this Year of Faith. My prayers are with you and your families as you open-wide your hearts to God’s saving message of Stewardship.

### B. What is Stewardship?

Stewardship is the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes and receives God’s gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor. Children, please hand out these notecards [see at the end of this document]. Let’s look at each part of this description of God’s plan for our lives:

#### The Grateful Response:

***Give Thanks***, by Henry Smith, copyright 1978 Integrity’s Hosanna! Music.

Give thanks / with a grateful heart.

Give thanks / to the Holy One.

Give thanks / because He’s given / Jesus Christ, / His Son. (Repeat)

And now / let the weak say, / “I am strong;”

Let the poor say, / “I am rich,”

Because of what / the Lord has done / for us. (Repeat)

We Give Thanks.

Let us put on an attitude of gratitude. Let us be thankful for all God's blessings. Let us show our appreciation for the love God gives us.

Of a Christian Disciple:

Disciple means "student." We are students of our teachers in school, of our boss at work, of our priests. Our best and most important teacher is Jesus Christ. Disciple also means "follower." We follow the instructions of our parents, we follow the laws of our country, and we follow the teachings of the Catholic Church. Jesus Christ is who we follow most importantly and closely.

When did we become a Christian Disciple? – at our Baptism. DEMONSTRATION – children at the baptistery. Let us put into practice our discipleship. Let us follow Jesus always.

Who Recognizes and Receives God's Gifts:

What gifts does God give you? I often ask a group to list 50 gifts from God. The first few come easily: family, friends, food, faith. Then they have to think a bit. I prompt them with gifts that are people, gifts that are things, and gifts that are virtues. Then they begin opening up a large number of blessings, too many to count! Yes, we *receive* countless gifts from our Loving Lord, and we need to often stop to *recognize* these gifts. Daily, we are called to a grateful response to God for these gifts.

DEMONSTRATION–God's gift of grace – Jesus with us always but at times, we turn from Him. Through sacramental confession, we fully turn toward Him.

and Shares These Gifts:

We don't want to hold these gifts in. We don't want to be selfish with these gifts. We want to share. We are called to get out of ourselves and reach out to others. Our parents teach us often to share our food, share our toys, and share our time. This call is to *generously* share. This call is to *sacrificially* share. As Christian Disciples, we wish to share our time, ability, and alms in imitation of Jesus' generous and sacrificial sharing to us.

in Love of God and Neighbor:

We share, we are grateful – WHY? Because we "have to?" Because it is "an obligation?" No. We gratefully share *because we love!* We love God with our whole mind, heart, soul, and strength. We love our neighbor as ourselves. This love is sacrificial, is unconditional, and is giving.

DEMONSTRATION: How much does Jesus love us? (arms in form of a cross).

**C. Conclusion.**

Our Savior's "**words will not pass away.**" Stewardship is the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor. The Word of Jesus, Jesus Himself, is the Word of eternal life. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Let us be grateful as we live out our Christian Discipleship. Let us recognize the many gifts we receive from God. Let us faithfully and generously share these gifts in love. Jesus will help us, He loves us more than we can ask or imagine!

[notecard for the faithful:]

**Stewardship** is the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor.

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace” (1 Peter 4:10)

#### **Four Pillars of Stewardship**

**Hospitality:** “I love you”—promotes the virtue of generosity to counteract the temptation to materialism

**Prayer:** “I love God”—promotes the virtue of truth to counteract the temptation to relativism

**Formation:** “I love our Catholic faith”—promotes the virtue of faith to counteract the temptation to secularism

**Service:** “I love our neighbor”—promotes the virtue of community to counteract the temptation to individualism