

Parish Stewardship Update

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Stewardship: Cooperating With God

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Stewardship – The employment or use of one’s time, talents, and possessions.
Cooperation – A working together toward a common end; joint action.

These two definitions present an interesting combination to living as a disciple of Christ. We have heard the definition of Stewardship and have been promoting the practice of sharing our wealth of time, talent and possessions. Individually, however, have we made the most important connection that we are cooperating with God? Or, perhaps, it has just been a mental exercise in church based philanthropy, making us feel good. What is the common end?

As we continue our Lenten reflections and move rapidly toward the Easter Mystery, the action on the part of God becomes more and more evident.

Jesus was the ultimate steward. He managed the gifts entrusted to Him. He followed His Father’s will even to the cross. He loved others that we might consider unlovable. He willingly died that you and I might have eternal life. How have we worked together with Christ toward that common end?



St Francis de Sales wrote the following description of our Cooperation with God:

“In all you have to do, rely wholly on God’s providence through which your plans will succeed. Nevertheless, strive quietly on your part to cooperate with God’s designs. You may be sure that if you have great trust in God, the success that comes to you will always be that which is most useful for you whether it appears good or bad in your own judgment. Imitate little children who with one hand hold fast to their father while with the other they gather strawberries or blackberries from the hedges. So too if you gather and manage the goods of this world with one hand, you must always hold fast to your heavenly Father’s hand and turn toward him from time to time to see if your actions and occupations are pleasing to him.

Above all, watch that you never let go of his hand and his protection, thinking that in this way you can gather more. If he should forsake you, you will not be able to go a step further without falling to the ground. What I mean is that in ordinary activities and occupations that do not require strict, earnest attention, you should look at God rather than at them. When they are of such importance as to require your whole attention to do them well, then you should look from time to

time at God, like mariners who, in order to arrive at the port they are bound for, look at the sky above them rather than down at the sea on which they sail. Thus God will work with you, in you, and for you, and afterwards your labor will be followed by satisfaction.”

When we challenge ourselves to cooperate with others in many of the tasks of life, whether they are at home, at work, or at play, we begin to realize that all of our actions are in cooperation with God. He is patiently holding on to us awaiting our response to his gentle touch.

“...The success that comes to you will always be that which is most useful for you whether it appears good or bad in your own judgment.”

The Gospel story of the Prodigal Son certainly indicates how God is longing for us to be in his presence. When we are close to God we need to be grateful for his guidance. When we have strayed we need to acknowledge our need to be loved, admit our sinfulness, and return to the Father. At times we have worn both brother's shoes. The hope is that we find the steadfast, rock solid support that God is always offering us, and see his direction for us in all our experiences as we cooperate with Him.

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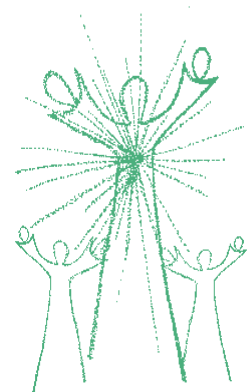
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Come Follow Me, Too!

Children's Stewardship Resource Manual



Most Parish School Principals and Directors of Religious Education now have their copy of this manual. There are still a limited number available for individual purchase for \$20. Contact our office to order.

Parish Stewardship Day

Keynote by: Bishop Morneau

November 2nd and 3rd - Christ the Teacher Parish DeKalb

Mark Your Calendars