

### **SEGMENT NO 3**

**THEME: *THE CALL TO STEWARDSHIP***

*“It is better to give than to receive.”* Acts 20:35

**CALL TO PRAYER & OPENING PRAYER:** As for the Order Prayers

**FOCUS:** *Understanding the nature of the call to Stewardship and the cost.*

#### **WORD OF REFLECTION**

**1. In the Preface to the Oceania Edition of “Stewardship - A Disciple’s Response: A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship” (USCCB) Bishop Peter Ingham, Bishop of Wollongong writes:**

“I am convinced that stewardship is a spiritual and pastoral approach to many of the secularising issues that we face as Catholic Christians today. Stewardship embraces all that is held central and essential to our faith and to living as a Catholic Christian. We are all beginning to realise that the face of our planet and the future of people on this earth will be determined ultimately by the quality of how we are stewards of God’s gifts. You and I are called to be stewards of the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death, as well as stewards of the integrity of our created world and stewards of inclusion and harmony among peoples of all races, cultures and faith traditions, because every human being is made in the image and likeness of God.

A good steward is responsible, accountable and grateful for the blessings received from God (even adversity, though not always initially recognised as a ‘blessing’) so that we may then share the gifts received generously, out of a sense of love and justice, knowing “*it is better to give than to receive*” (Acts 20:35). A good steward knows that we give because we want to return to God some of what God has given to us. I endorse being a steward as it is a response to following Jesus as his faithful disciple. It is really emphasising that God is in charge, not me.”

*Brief silence between Readings*

#### **2. Stewards of the Earth**

A steward is someone who handles affairs for someone else. In ancient kingdoms, stewards ran the country in the absence of the king. Upon the king's return, the steward gave a full accounting for his actions.

This concept of stewardship dates from the beginning of time, when God entrusted the earth to Adam and Eve and their offspring. We are all stewards of the earth's resources (cf. Catechism, no. 2402). In a new way, all Christians are stewards of the earth and of the spiritual graces given through Christ's death and Resurrection. We have received not only the earth, but also many spiritual riches to be used to advance the kingdom of God (cf. Lk. 19:11-27). The stewardship expected of Adam and Eve and all of us has three essential characteristics. It is collective; it respects the purpose for which things exist; and it respects the dignity of each person.

God did not expect only one person to be the steward of all creation. This essential truth is embodied in the right to life. Each person born contributes to the well-being of society. Through prayer, work, and discovery, each person allows others to grow in knowledge and holiness. Thus, no one person rules the earth. Collectively, we are stewards of the earth.

Understanding that stewardship is collective requires us to find ways in which we can collaborate with others to make the resources in our possession work for the good of all as intended by God. As explained in Catechism, no. 2402:

*In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labour, and enjoy their fruits. The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race.*

Taken from: Philip C.L. Gray. "Christian Stewardship: What God Expects from Us." *Lay Witness* (September 2001).

*Allow a few moments reflective silence and then proclaim the Word of God*

## WORD OF GOD



### The Gospel according to Matthew 25: 14-25

*The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully*

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’



*For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on the readings.*

*Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.*

## THE SHARING



*Now bring your insights and reflection into discussion of the following: (10 mins)*

- ❖ If you were to be an ideal Christian steward – with the help of God’s grace of course – what would it ask of you?
- ❖ If you were to be a faithful steward, would you have to do it alone or can you count on support from other sources? Which ones?

## CONCLUSION

**Leader:** As we conclude this time of reflection, let us give praise to God as we say:

**All:** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.

*The meeting proceeds*

**CLOSING PRAYERS:** As for the Order Prayers at the Closing of the Meeting.