

SEGMENT NO 6

THEME: *STEWARDS OF THE CHURCH*

“To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.”

1 Cor 12:7

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

FOCUS: *Understanding the call of the Church to Stewardship*

WORD OF REFLECTION

Reflect on the reading of the following words:

1. Community & Stewardship

Because its individual members do collectively make up the Body of Christ, that body's health and well-being are the responsibility of the members—the personal responsibility of each one of us. Stewardship in an ecclesial setting means cherishing and fostering the gifts of all, while using one's own gifts to serve the community of faith. (cf 1 Cor 12:7) The rich tradition of tithing set forth in the Old Testament is an expression of this. (See, for example, Dt 14:22; Lv 27:30.) Those who set their hearts upon spiritual gifts must “seek to have an abundance for building up the church” (1 Cor 14:12).

But how is the Church built up? In a sense there are as many answers to that question as there are individual members with individual vocations. But the overarching answer for all is this: through personal participation in and support of the Church's mission of proclaiming and teaching, serving and sanctifying.

This participation takes different forms according to people's different gifts and offices, but there is a fundamental obligation arising from the sacrament of Baptism that people place their gifts, their resources, their selves at God's service in and through the Church. (SADR p47)

2. Evangelisation & Stewardship

In various ways, then, stewardship of the Church leads people to share in the work of evangelization or proclaiming the Good News, in the work of catechesis or transmitting and strengthening the faith, and in works of justice and mercy on behalf of persons in need. Stewardship requires support for the Church's institutions and programs for these purposes. But, according to their opportunities and circumstances, members of the Church also should engage in such activities personally and on their own initiative.

Parents, for instance, have work of great importance to do in the domestic church, the home. It requires that parents themselves be models of stewardship, especially by their selfless service to one another, to their children, and to church and community needs.

Parishes, too, must be, or become, true communities of faith within which this Christian way of life is learned and practiced. Sound business practice is a fundamental of good stewardship, and stewardship as it relates to church finances must include the most stringent ethical, legal, and fiscal standards. That requires several things: pastors and parish staff must be open, consultative, collegial, and accountable in the conduct of affairs. And parishioners must accept responsibility for their parishes and contribute generously. (SADR p48)

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

WORD OF GOD

Read the following texts aloud slowly and prayerfully



The Word according to the first Letter of Peter 4: 8-10

Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.



The Gospel according to Luke 15:12

“A man may be wealthy but his possessions do not guarantee him life.”



The Gospel according to Mark 10: 43-45

But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”



*For the next five minutes silently read and reflect on all the readings.
Underline what you consider to be key words and/or phrases for you.*

THE SHARING



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

- ❖ Have you had the experience of being ‘served and healed’ when you have set out to serve and heal another?
- ❖ Within the institutional Church, of which you are a member, what do you see as important stewardship priorities?
- ❖ Is there more to stewardship within the Church than donations of time and money?

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.