

## SESSION NO 1

THEME: *AN INTRODUCTION TO STEWARDSHIP*

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

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

**FOCUS:** *What is Christian Stewardship and on what is it based?*

### WORDS OF REFLECTION

*The following words should be read aloud by several readers.*

The word "stewardship" refers to the Christian and Catholic approach to the gifts that God has bestowed upon us.

Stewardship is living out a commitment to be Christ-centered rather than self-centered. Profound gratitude, justice and love become the fundamental motives for giving back to God. Everything that God has given to us is intended to serve the divine plan. Therefore, our life is to be lived in gratitude toward God. In a variety of ways, we as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, share our time, talent and treasure to build up the Church and make our world a better place.

Three convictions in particular underlie our understanding of stewardship.

1. Mature disciples make a conscious, firm decision, carried out in action, to be followers of Jesus Christ no matter the cost to themselves.
2. Beginning in conversion, change of mind and heart, this commitment is expressed not in a single action, nor even in a number of actions over a period of time, but in an entire way of life. It means committing one's very self to the Lord.
3. Stewardship is an expression of discipleship, with the power to change how we understand and live out our lives. Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be. They are deeply aware of the truth that *"The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it"* (Psalm 24:1). They know themselves to be recipients and caretakers of God's many gifts. They are grateful for what they have received and eager to cultivate their gifts out of love for God and one another.

The Church needs you and God has chosen you to go out into the entire world. Every Christian is to take an active part in the life of the Church and to share the gifts of salvation. God's generosity will never be outdone by our own.

*Note:* Further information on Christian stewardship in Australia can be found on page 4 at the beginning of the Formation Programme.

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

## WORD OF GOD



### From the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 4: 1-2

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

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God.

I have applied all this ... so that you may learn through us the meaning of the saying, "Nothing beyond what is written," so that none of you will be puffed up in favour of one against another. For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?

Already you have all you want!

The Word of the Lord.



*For the next five minutes silently re-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 around the theme into discussion of the following:  
(10 mins)*

- ❖ What does the Word of God say to you regarding discipleship and stewardship?
- ❖ Would you add or subtract anything to the three basic convictions that underlie the notion of Christian Stewardship?
- ❖ What is one new insight you take away with you from this time of reflection and prayer?

## 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.