

SEGMENT NO 8

THEME: *TO BE A CHRISTIAN STEWARD*

"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: *Consideration of the ways and means to move forward*

WORD OF INTRODUCTION *Read silently*

'Who is a Christian steward?

One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with all, and returns them with increase to the Lord.'

WORD OF REFLECTION *Read aloud by several readers*

1. This comprehensive definition above of Christian stewardship headlines the pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, which has been the basis of this reflection on Stewardship during 2011. The definition, rooted in biblical and church tradition, corresponds with Almighty God's decision to entrust to humanity the universe God had created (Gn 1:26-31) and with Jesus Christ's famous parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-36). For disciples of Christ - everyone who responds to Jesus' invitation, "Come, follow me" - Christian stewardship is an obligation, not an option. Correctly and fully understood, Christian stewardship holds every individual accountable to God for personal care of the universe. At the time of judgment, God will have the right to ask: What did you do with *my* world?" Christian stewardship, therefore, applies to everything - all personal talents, abilities, and wealth; the local, national, and worldwide environment; all human and natural resources wherever they are; the economic order; governmental affairs; and even outer space. This stewardship does not tolerate indifference to anything important in God's world. The pastoral letter describes stewardship as a way of life. It challenges Christians, inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, to try to see the hand of God in all creation. That calls for time - quality time - and extended perseverance. Stewardship is not easy. (SADR p67)

2. What identifies a steward? Safeguarding material and human resources and using them responsibly are one answer; so is generous giving of time, talent, and treasure. But being a Christian steward means more. As Christian stewards, we receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord. (SADR p59)

3. We must ask ourselves: Do we also wish to be disciples of Jesus Christ and Christian stewards of our world and our Church? Central to our human and Christian vocations, as well as to the unique vocation each one of us receives from God, is that we be good stewards of the gifts we possess. God gives us this divine-human workshop, this world and Church of ours. The Spirit shows us the way. Stewardship is a part of that journey. (SADR p62)

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

WORD OF GOD



The Gospel according to Matthew 28: 16-20

The Word of God is now read aloud slowly and prayerfully

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



The Word according to the First Letter to Timothy 6: 11-19

For we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But as for you, man of God, pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.



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)

- ❖ What is the key understanding of Christian Stewardship that you have gained from the 2011 Formation Programme?
- ❖ What are the blessings of Christian Stewardship?
- ❖ What can the Knights of the Southern Cross do to build up the Australian Church through the work of Christian Stewardship?

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.