

What makes a person wealthy? In the words of the late Archbishop Thomas Murphy, “*What do you own, and what owns you?*”

Jesus often teaches about the good use of financial and material resources, and he illustrates the negative impact of hoarding and being weighed down by money. The biblical principle of tithing, of offering at least 10 percent of one’s treasure to church and charity helps us to use our money in a way that keeps God first, as a sign of our gratitude to God for all we’ve been given. Tithing means to give not what is leftover, but rather to give to God first, as a sign of our love and trust. Those who have made this commitment will tell you that such a promise has made a wonderful impact in their lives; their priorities are clearer, their lives richer in ways that truly matter.



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Being a good steward of one’s financial and material resources is about more than 10 percent, however. What do you do with the other 90 percent? Are you a good steward of *all* you have?

Growing in Your Stewardship of Treasure

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart be also” (Matthew 6:19-21).

What difference can you make in the life of another by being a good steward of treasure?



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Jesus’ Call

“Jesus’ call is urgent. He does not tell people to follow him at some time in the future but here and now – at this moment, in these circumstances. There can be no delay.”

(“Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response,” page 14)



WITTMAN



Generous and loving God,

*You give us all good gifts, more than we can ask or imagine!
Teach us to embrace your way of caring and sharing.
Show us that to be one with you is to be one with each other,
especially the poor and vulnerable.
Help us to be good stewards of all we are and have and will be.*

*Give us wisdom to perceive your call,
so that our stewardship may be witnesses to your love for all.*

*We ask this in the name of the One who shows us your way
and who is our way, truth and life, Jesus Christ our Lord,
Who is one with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.*

Amen.



Resources

Gregory S. Jeffrey, *Why Enough Is Never Enough: Overcoming Worries About Money, A Catholic Perspective*

Andrew Kemberling and Mila Glodava, *Making Stewardship a Way of Life*

Colleen Smith, *Catholic Stewardship: Sharing God’s Gifts*

U.S. bishops, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*

www.usccb.org/stewardship

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Our Sunday Visitor

Bringing Your Catholic Faith to Life

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By Leisa Anslinger

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Inventory No. P1275

Nihil Obstat: Msgr. Michael Heintz, Ph.D.
Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: ✠ Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend

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US \$14.95



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Stewardship: A Way of Life



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“Well done, my good and faithful servant . . . enter into the joy of your master.”

— Matthew 25:21

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What Is Stewardship Really All About?

People sometimes speak of stewardship in the context of “the three t’s”: time, talent, and treasure. Many of us grew up only hearing the word when someone was asking for money, so a wall of defense appears any time we hear the word “stewardship.” Perhaps it is time to consider this again, or for the first time, for what it really is, since stewardship is a deeply meaningful way of life.

When the word “steward” is used in the Bible, it refers to one who cares for the vineyard, livestock, or property of another, nurturing it to yield with increase. When Jesus uses the word, he is helping his disciples (those who are learning his ways) to understand that our lives, our talents and abilities, our financial resources, everything we value, all is given to us by God in trust. God trusts that we will care for these gifts, but also something more: Jesus tells us that God’s way of caring is sharing. God’s way of sharing is in sacrifice. To “sacrifice” is to offer something of value to God, making it holy. We are called to take our talents and multiply them, to shine Christ’s light brightly and to use our resources to care for one another. Jesus himself is the model of such stewardship. He sacrifices himself wholly and freely, never holding back.

At the heart of it all is our relationship with Christ

Living as disciples, our very lives become a reflection of that relationship. Living life as a steward isn’t always easy. Being a steward of so much requires us to think about how we are using all we have been given, to grow in gratitude for these abundant blessings, and to challenge ourselves to stretch beyond what is comfortable, to sacrifice. The Gospels tell us that that is the way Jesus lived his life. When we share our presence, our prayers, our gifts, and our service, we continue Christ’s mission, transforming the world one person at a time.



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Sharing Time

Our Time Is a Gift from God

After a long, stressful week, Liz received a call from her godmother who needed assistance in her yard. All Liz really wanted was to curl up on the sofa with a good book to ease her mind. Dutifully, Liz gathered her gardening gloves and went to help. After several hours of yard work and conversation, Liz recognized that by giving, she received, which eased her stress more than any book could have done.



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How we use our time says much about what we value and where our priorities are. Time for God, family, for others, for ourselves: when all are balanced well, we feel our lives are in order. If one element of our use of time falls out of balance, life seems unmanageable and out of sorts. Are you being a good steward of the minutes, hours, days, months and years that God is giving you?

Growing in Your Stewardship of Time

“And which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest?”

(Luke 12:25-26)

What difference can you make in the life of another by being a good steward of time?



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Sharing Talent

Our Talents Are Gifts from God

If you asked Pat if she sacrificed as she spent her life teaching young children, she would probably have said, “Yes, however, it was all worth it.” Now retired, Pat continues to serve as an active volunteer and catechist, recognizing she is continuing to do what she always loved to do: engaging young people and helping them grow.



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A talent is an innate way of interacting with the people and situations in our lives. Each of us has skills that come easy, gifts that we recognize or that others see in us. In using our talents, we find ourselves filled with energy and joy. In fact, some of our greatest talents may be so much a part of us that we take these gifts for granted. We can develop our talents and abilities throughout our lives, using and offering them as a sign of Christ’s presence with and for others.

We all have talents! Take time to reflect on yours. Recognizing and offering those talents rather than hiding them is a sign of our trust in God. Without sharing our talents, we limit the ways in which Christ’s work is done. Our talents have been entrusted to us to develop, grow, and share.



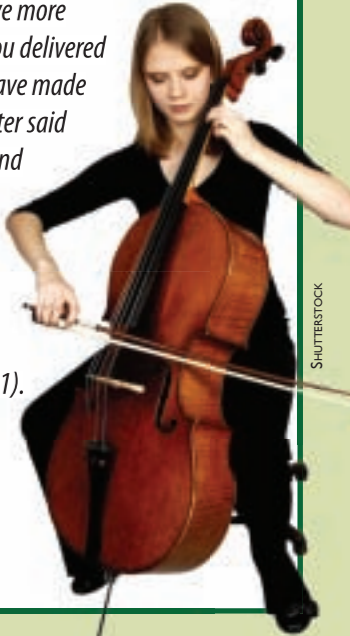
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Growing in Your Stewardship of Talent

“He who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master’”

(Matthew 25:20-21).

As a sign of your love of God and others, how will you commit to be a good steward of your talent(s)?



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Sharing Treasure

Our Treasure Is a Gift from God

Carolina was a baby when her parents moved to a new city where they knew no one and had few worldly possessions. What they did have, though, was faith in God’s providential care, faith that all would be well. Decades later, this same sense of gratitude shaped Carolina’s life as she prepared for a move of her own following graduation and a new job. She recognized her parents must have made some very tough choices raising their family, but they always held firm in trust that God would provide no matter what.



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