

## ***Stewardship Bulletin Reflections – June 9<sup>th</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup> 2013***

### ***Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

Stewardship is more than sharing your time, talent and treasure with the church. Stewardship is a lifestyle that benefits not just the parish but also the person. Bishop Robert Morneau has said that “*Stewardship is to walk the road of Joy*”. People’s gifts will joyfully and freely flow by cultivating the virtues of prayer, humility, trust, patience, responsibility, gratitude, generosity, simplicity, mercy, and perseverance in their lives. These ten virtues and their relationship to stewardship will be the focus of the bulletin reflections for the summer months.

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### ***Sunday June 16<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

#### ***The Virtue of Prayer and Stewardship***

We are what we repeatedly do. Virtue then is developed through our habits. What is your habit of daily prayer? This is a stewardship of time question. If you don’t already, before you do anything else each morning, try spending the first 20 minutes of every day in prayer. You may have to get up a little earlier, but it is well worth it. This is where you can discern how God wants us to use and share your gifts each day. After all every day is a gift, why not start off by saying thanks and asking, “God, what do you want me to do this day?”

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### ***Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

#### ***The Virtue of Humility and Stewardship***

Humility does not mean that you think less of yourself; that serves no purpose. God wants you to use your gifts well, for your own needs, and at least as well for the good of others. Acknowledging that life itself, and all the good things in life, are God’s gift, is an expression of humility. Knowing that God gives you your talents and abilities for the greater good, as well as your own needs, should give you a ‘healthy humility’ and the God-grounded confidence to boldly and generously share your gifts in ways that give glory to Him.

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### ***Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

#### ***The Virtue of Trust and Stewardship***

When we put our trust in at-risk things like, jobs, possessions and bank accounts and not in God, we are extremely vulnerable to anxiety and fear. Trusting in the things of this world causes us to cling too tightly to our gifts. When we place our trust exclusively in our good and gracious God who knows our needs, (Matthew 6:32) we discover the freedom to joyfully share our gifts. Go ahead, let go and trust God. He will not be outdone in generosity.

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## **Sunday July 7<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

### ***The Virtue of Simplicity and Stewardship***

*“Live simply so that others may simply live”* – Blessed Mother Teresa. So many people in our society are being weighed down under the heavy burden of busyness and the ‘ism’s’ – excessive consumerism, materialism, and hedonism. What is really needed is simplicity. The truth is that less really is more. Less busyness means more time to spend doing what is really important. Reduced consumption creates more disposable income to be shared with those who really need it. Good stewards reduce the clutter in their lives and enjoy a much less stressful walk through life.

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## **Sunday July 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

### ***The Virtue of Gratitude and Stewardship***

*“The greatest saint in the world is not he who prays most or fasts most; it is not he who gives most alms, or is most eminent in temperance, chastity or justice. It is he who is most thankful to God. This is the perfection of all virtues”* – William Law. We do well to give thanks to God always and everywhere. The truth is that everything that we possess, or are able to accomplish is only because of our good and gracious God. The Holy Spirit, and an attitude of gratitude, is what move the Christian steward and disciple into action.

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## **Sunday July 21<sup>st</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

### ***The Virtue of Generosity and Stewardship***

Sacrificial and joyful generosity is born out of the virtue of gratitude. When we are grateful to God for the many blessings in our lives we are motivated to give, not out of a sense of obligation or duty, but because giving is one way we can say thank you to God. Stewardship is all about **‘needing to give’**, more than **‘giving to a need’**. Gratitude should also create in us the recognition of our abundance which gives us the confidence to be generous.

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## **Sunday July 28<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

### ***The Virtue of Patience and Stewardship***

Anyone who has embraced the stewardship lifestyle will tell you that it is not easy. Every day we are presented with so many conflicting lifestyle choices. Through the media we are told to seek power, prestige and possessions, or that affluence and accumulation is the road to joy. Is it any wonder that to live the stewardship lifestyle you must be patient and persistent? Patience with self is hope, patience with others is love, and patience with God is faith.

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## **Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

### ***The Virtue of Perseverance and Stewardship***

Perseverance is all in the attitude. Getting your own thinking under control is part of developing this virtue. This is called stewardship of your thoughts. Making stewardship a way of life can be frustrating; you may not be happy at first with the initial changes required of you to be a good steward. It is difficult to separate yourself from the demands and possessions of our culture. Persevere, and make stewardship a way of life, the rewards may surprise you! *“Stewardship is the right thing to do; its rewards can’t be kept out”* – Bishop Eugene Gerber.

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## ***Sunday August 11<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

### ***The Virtue of Mercy and Stewardship***

*The Corporal Acts of Mercy* – feed the hungry; give drink to the thirsty; clothe the naked; shelter the homeless; visit those in prison; comfort the sick; and bury the dead, are all obvious expressions of stewardship. No other institution in the world is more engaged in works of mercy than the Catholic Church. We do well to remember, and be grateful for our stewardship as a church, yet millions remain hungry and thirsty. Imagine if all people in the developed world were truly grateful for their abundant blessings and generously shared a tithe of all they are given; extreme poverty would be eliminated.

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## ***Sunday August 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

### ***The Virtue of Responsibility and Stewardship***

Stewardship says that every gift comes with four responsibilities. Do you receive the gift gratefully? Do you nurture and develop the gift? Do you share it with others, especially those in most need? Do you return your gift to God with increase? Stewardship is that simple really.

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## ***Sunday August 25<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

### ***The Fruits of Stewardship***

The fruits of stewardship to the parish are obvious. Things like enhanced liturgies and outreach ministries are just two examples. The truth is that stewardship is a lifestyle that benefits, not just the parish, but the person. Stewardship’s full potential will only be realized when leaders in stewardship are willing to take the focus off the needs of the parish and place it on the day-to-day real life benefits to the person. People who embrace stewardship as a lifestyle will enjoy many rewards. The two primary benefits are a peace of mind that can only come from trusting in our good and gracious God, and balance amid our culture’s rampant consumerism and materialism.

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## ***Sunday September 1<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time***

### ***A Road Block to Stewardship – The Media War***

*“Whoever controls the images controls the culture!”* – Bishop Robert Morneau. Every day we are bombarded with hundreds of images in the media designed to make us anything but grateful or good stewards. Our secular world is controlling the images, and look at our culture. The average Canadian is watching two months of television every year, i.e. seven to eight years of their lifetime in front of the TV. That is a lot of images! Being mindful of what we watch, hear, and read will greatly impact our ability to live a life of stewardship and discipleship, the full life that Christ promised.

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