

Stewardship of Prayer



Lives of stewardship begin with an increased focus on prayer. We don't have to schedule prayer into our lives; it becomes more natural to praise God, ask for forgiveness, and ask for God's help and thank God for the daily blessings in our lives. We are not ashamed to bless our food when we are out eating. We pray for the lonely person we see walking down the street that we don't know. We pray for a family we read about in the paper or saw on the news that just had an unfortunate event in their lives and we pray daily for our families and for our deceased relatives. We include God in all

our daily thoughts, actions, and plans.

Living a life of stewardship should be an everyday goal of everyone in the parish and beyond this parish. It starts with prayer which takes us into God's presence and prepares us to obey Him. Prayer softens our hearts and changes us so we desire to give more of our time and talent to others in our lives and parish. As we become more like Christ, we want to give more back to the Church and to God as a "thank you" for the richness in blessings that we have received.

<http://www.saintmarycathedral.org/Stewardship.htm>

Together in Christ for the Greater Glory of God

Stewarding the gift of our Prayer

Giving back time to the Lord begins by spending time with Him each day in prayer. Stewardship of time, according to the U.S. Bishops in their pastoral letter on stewardship, "...should include setting aside periods for family prayer, for reading of Scripture, for visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and for attendance at Mass during the week whenever this is possible."

Giving top priority to God through a daily life of prayer is especially important for Christian stewards, since to many Christians, stewardship means a life of service. And, indeed works of service are the eyes and ears, arms and legs of a stewardship way of life. However, the heart and soul of stewardship is prayer. Through prayer, Christian stewards place themselves in God's hands so that He can direct their hands to serve according to His will.

The Stewardship Prayer

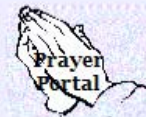
Lord God, you alone are the source of every good gift, of the vast array of our universe, and the mystery of each human life. We praise you and thank you for your great power and tender, faithful love. Everything we are and everything we have are your gifts, and after having created us you have given us into the keeping of your Son, Jesus Christ. Fill our minds with His truth and our hearts with His love, and in His spirit may we be bonded together into a community of faith, a parish family, a caring people. In the name and spirit of Jesus, we commit ourselves to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us, to share our time, our talent and our material and spiritual gifts as an outward sign of the treasure we hold in Jesus.

(The Catholic Way of Life' Instruction on Stewardship)

Amen

*...prayer is a surge of the heart, it is a simple look
towards Heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of
love, embracing both trial and joy.*

(Saint Therese of Lisieux)



Stewards spend time in prayer

Prayer is about listening, communicating and responding to our God

First in a Lenten series on Stewardship -- A Life of Prayer

By Bishop Robert Morneau

The cornerstone of any relationship, be it with God, members of our family, or with ourselves, is communication. Listening and responding are the two ingredients in our attempt to share thoughts and feelings and dreams.

Prayer is communication; prayer is listening and responding; prayer is fostering our relationship with God.

The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. We know the Lord's response: the great prayer of the "Our Father." In that prayer we focus on God's name, God's will, and God's kingdom. We also ask for daily bread, forgiveness of sin, and freedom from evil and temptation.

As disciples and stewards we can do no better than joining our risen Lord in offering this prayer. St. Teresa of Avila, a Doctor of the Church, tells us: "I used to try to think of Jesus Christ, our God and our Lord, as present within me, and it was in this way that I prayed."

Stewardship, which is a disciple's response to God's generosity, involves prayer, service and sharing. Here in the Diocese of Green Bay we begin by focusing our life in Christ. It is in prayer that Jesus speaks to our heart and calls us to serve and to share. Stewards exercise responsible care for all their gifts but always in the context of our relationship with God.

Here are three comments about prayer that might deepen our understanding and appreciation of this dimension of stewardship.

1. "Prayer ... is communication, in which God's word has the initiative, and we, at first are simply listeners" (Hans Urs von Balthasar). God always takes the first step in reaching out to us with divine love and mercy. God speaks through the scriptures, through Tradition, through our daily experiences, and in the movements of our hearts. Our task is to be open and receptive and then to respond in an appropriate way, be it thanksgiving or sorrow, praise or petition. Stewards know that everything is gift and they respond with deep gratitude.

2. "She [St. Therese] understood prayer as essentially a matter of paying loving attention to the smallest detail" (Belden Lane). St. John of the Cross describes contemplation, one of the highest forms of prayer, as "loving attention." If we are truly aware of creation and have love in our hearts, we are going to encounter the living and true God. Stewards pay attention; stewards are people who love.

3. "... a very simple method of prayer ... 'It consists' says M. Olier, 'in having our Savior before our eyes, in our heart, and in our hands.' Thus we look at Jesus, unite ourselves with him, and work in him. It is adoration, communion, and cooperation" (Aerled Squire). Stewards recognize

God as the origin of life and the giver of all that they have and are. More, stewards ground their lives in adoration, communion, and cooperation with the Lord. This is a life of prayer; it is a whole way of life.

On the wall in the second grade class hung a sign listing the four types of prayer: "Thanks! Help! Wow! Oops!" Like stewards in the making. Pray those prayers and our discipleship is well grounded.

<http://www.thecompassnews.org/compass/2003-02-28/03cn0228f3.shtml>

“Teach Me, O Lord, Your Ways.”

Psalms 86:11

PRAYER COVENANT

*M*Y DEAR LORD GOD, CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE, CREATOR OF ME, I AM FILLED WITH HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE FOR YOUR BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS. I WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ALL I HAVE, ALL I AM AND ALL I WILL BE IS A GIFT FROM YOU. I WANT TO THANK YOU BY MANAGING YOUR GIFTS RESPONSIBLY, AS YOU EXPECT ME TO. I WANT TO SHARE THE GIFTS YOU GIVE ME WITH OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE ME DO. I WANT TO FORM A CLOSER, MORE PERFECT RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU BY USING MY GIFTS OF TIME IN PRAYER. I PLEDGE TO PUT ASIDE TIME EACH WEEK THAT WILL BE DEVOTED TO PRAYER FOR YOU, THE CHURCH, MY FAMILY, MY FAITH COMMUNITY AND FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW HOW TO PRAY AND HAVE NO ONE TO PRAY FOR THEM. I DO THIS AS AN OUTWARD EXPRESSION OF THIS COVENANT WITH YOU. AMEN.

STEWARDSHIP Is A DISCIPLE'S RESPONSE.

*A disciple is one who follows
the teachings of Jesus Christ.*



Stewardship

“Teach Me, O Lord, Your Ways.”

Psalms 86:11



WHAT DOES THE WORD OF GOD

TEACH US ABOUT PRAYER?



Matthew 7:7-8

“Ask, and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For every one who asks will receive and anyone who seeks will find and the door will be opened to those who knock.”

Matthew 18:19-20

“Again, I tell you, if two of you join your voices on earth to pray for anything whatever it shall be granted you by my Father in heaven. When two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst.”

Mark 11:17

“My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

Mark 11:24

“I give you my word, if you are ready to believe that you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer, it shall be done for you.”

Romans 12:12

“Rejoice in hope, be patient under trial, persevere in prayer.”

Philippians 1:3-4

“I give thanks to my God every time I think of you, which is constantly, in every prayer I utter—rejoicing as I plead on your behalf.”

Philippians 4:6

“Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of gratitude.”

Colossians 4:2

“Pray perseveringly, be attentive to prayers and pray in a spirit of thanksgiving.”

1 Timothy 2:1-2

“I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be offered for all, ... especially those in authority, that we may be able to lead undisturbed and tranquil lives in perfect piety and dignity.”

James 5:13-16

“If anyone among you is suffering hardship he must pray. If a person is in good spirits he should sing a hymn of praise. ‘Is there anyone sick among you’ he should ask the presbyters of the church. They in turn are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. This prayer uttered in faith will reclaim the one who is ill, and the Lord will restore him to health. If he has committed any sins, forgiveness will be his. Hence, declare your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may find healing.”

REASONS WHY WE SHOULD PRAY:

† **Prayer** is how we spend our time forming a close, more perfect relationship with God.

† **Prayer** opens our hearts, minds and souls to God’s teachings.

† **Prayer** converts us from being self-centered to God-centered.

† **Prayer** helps us to cope with the trials and temptations of life.

† **Prayer** helps us to see others’ sufferings through the eyes of God.

† **Prayer** changes people and people change things.

† **Prayer** unites families.

† **Prayer** unites faith communities.

“The fruit of SILENCE is Prayer,

the fruit of PRAYER is Faith,

the fruit of FAITH is Love,

the fruit of LOVE is Service,

the fruit of SERVICE is Peace.”

Mother Theresa

Clip the prayer covenant on the back and place it in your family Bible as a tangible sign that you are committed to a closer relationship with the Lord through prayer.

PRAYER COMMITMENT CARD

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

PRAYER COMMITMENT FOR ADULTS & TEENAGERS

I, _____
promise to make prayer a serious
part of my life. Therefore, for the
coming year, 20____, I will:

PRAYER COMMITMENT FOR CHILDREN

I, _____
will pray everyday. This means that
I will:

See suggestions on reverse side.

Please complete by checking off or writing down your prayer commitment, and return it according to the parish instructions. Through your prayer commitment, you become a minister of prayer here in our parish.

- ☐ Sunday Mass
 - ☐ Daily Mass
 - ☐ Holy Day Mass
 - ☐ Liturgy of the Hours
 - ☐ Rosary
 - ☐ Shared Prayer
 - ☐ Morning/Night Prayer
 - ☐ Scripture Reading
 - ☐ Stations of the Cross
 - ☐ Visits to the Blessed Sacrament
 - ☐ Prayer Before & After Meals
 - ☐ Fasting
 - ☐ Meditation
 - ☐ Intercessory Prayer
 - ☐ Novena
 - ☐ Retreat
 - ☐ Song
 - ☐ Reconciliation
 - ☐ Your Own Method
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