

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT #1

WHAT IS STEWARDSHIP?

Stewardship can be a confusing term for Catholics. For many years, “stewardship” has been seen as a predominately Protestant term that was synonymous with raising money. When the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop’s Pastoral Letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response* was published in 1992, a new concept was introduced to most Catholics. Stewardship was no longer simply a way to raise money. Stewardship is now understood as *a way of life*, the faithful response of a Christian disciple to the Lord’s invitation to follow Him “without counting the cost.”

In *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops offers four essential characteristics of a Christian steward:

Who is a Christian Steward? One who receives God’s gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

If one is to grow as a steward, one must give attention to these four areas. Stewardship is not a program. It is a way of life, an *attitude of the mind and heart that is expressed in action*. Christian stewards are women and men who acknowledge God as the owner and giver of all things. We are called to be stewards of all God’s blessings – both material and spiritual.

Generous sharing is one of the concrete actions that results from a stewardship attitude that affects the way we think and the way we live. When we think like stewards we want to share *all* the blessings that God has given us. The Church provides many opportunities for Christian disciples to develop and share God’s gifts as we give to God through the parish, diocesan ministries, and through the Church’s missionary outreach – at home and in far away lands.