

Diocesan Stewardship News



If Only "It" Were the Christmas Craze

The Christmas season has passed.

All the hustle and bustle of limited shopping days; over.

Did you get the latest fabulous "doodad?"

The one that everyone wanted but the stores could not keep in stock?

Did you camp out overnight in the cold to be the first in the door?

Were you the first to arrive the day after Thanksgiving to get the best bargain?

Did you run-over and trample the other shoppers in order to get there first?

Did you? Huh? Huh?

Is it as fabulous as you thought it would be?

Ponder this....
THE EUCHARIST!
It is the BEST gift we have!

We have an opportunity to receive "It" every day.
Yet, is there standing room only in Mass?

Are you willing to get up in the middle of the night, in the cold winter, to spend an hour with our Lord?
Do you go out and tell other

"shoppers" about "It?"
Where they can find one too?

Are you telling them the bargain price you paid for "It?"

The **Eucharist** is the "doodad" we can stand in line for; get up in the middle of the night in the cold of winter for; receive for a bargain; tell everyone we know about it;
...and NEVER be disappointed!



Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

Reflection

Questions

- If you were to be an ideal Christian Steward—with the help of God's grace, of course— what would it cost you in terms of personal sacrifice?
- What are the differences between needs and wants? How can we help people become more aware of these differences? What can be the results when people understand this difference?

What Is The Cost?

"Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in God's commands!" (Psalm 112:1)

When Jesus called us to be his disciples he asked us to give up **EVERYTHING** and follow him.

Seem a little demanding?

Ever wonder why so much?

Because of the tremendous love that Christ has for us he doesn't just want part of us — he wants it all! By giving up everything—

letting go of the control over our lives— we allow Jesus to "move-in" to our hearts, and take up residence. We allow him to lead our lives in the direction he intends. So instead of a rigid restriction, this command of his is an invitation to joy in this world, and eternal happiness in the next one.

PRAY: "Lord Jesus, you know that I desire only to follow you. Help me to abandon all self-concern and to put my life completely into your hands!"
(taken from *Word Among Us*, November 2007, pg. 27.)

Tidbits on the Pastoral...

The Cost of Discipleship

"If you wish to come after me, you must deny yourself and take up your cross daily and follow me.

For if you wish to save your life you will lose it, but if you lose your life for my sake you will save it."

(Luke 9:23-24)

Jesus commands us to be his disciples and tells us of the great rewards/privileges that we will receive for doing so. But he also warns us of the cost of doing this. The life of a disciple is not an easy one. We are to live life differently than the general popula-

tion; putting aside our craving for worldly desires such as domination, control and possessions. In the world today this causes great discomfort and uneasiness. But in this discomfort our focus may gravitate toward the person and teachings of Jesus. We look to individuals who model this same behavior. Individuals who show us how to live this difficult lifestyle—whom we can imitate. In short, the cost of discipleship is putting aside the craving of worldly things in exchange for the

desire of heavenly things.

To Learn More... Your stewardship committee and yourself are encouraged to form a study group to read and discuss the Pastoral over a 6 month to 1 year timeframe. If you need additional copies of the document, please contact Jody at:

(402)488-0921

or

jody-paulsen@cdolinc.net.

Gratitude: The "Christian" Kind

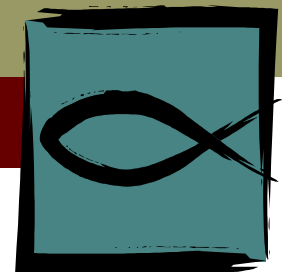
Christian gratitude is not the same thing as manners. Proper manners dictate that out of gratitude we send thank-you notes and repay kindnesses. Christian gratitude, rather, is a way of living. It is a way of living like the Samaritan who acknowledged that God is the source of all good things—particularly grace and salvation—and that there is nothing we can do to repay God, except to offer praise.

Quite often we live as if we deserve more from an employer than we've received. We tend to think that all that we have we've earned by our own hard work. The gratitude of the Samaritan in Luke is that of one who lives entirely different way. Luke's message is that the gift of God is that we are never left alone, that God is source of all good things and that our only possible response is to give praise.

(excerpt taken from *Our Sunday Visitor's The Priest*, September 2007, pg 25)

And keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Acts 20:35



"A Flash of Insight!"

If you've heard about Stewardship, you've heard the following phrases describing stewardship...

...[It] is a way of life.

...[It] comes about through the process of conversion.

...[It] requires a flash of insight.

...[It] is a call to discipleship.

...[It] is a journey.

What does it all mean?

Stewardship is about leaving behind what society says that we must have to be important, or to be a "somebody." It means going

against the grain of society. It means knowing the difference between a "need" and a "want." It means not succumbing to the pressures of "keeping up with the Joneses."

Stewardship means simplifying life; emptying ourselves and filling up with the EUCHARIST!