

Everyday
STEWARDSHIP

LIVING AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE

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The Stewardship Journey



True Sacrifice

Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever."

-John 6:53-58

When I was a child, I can remember stopping by my parish or another local Catholic church to just spend some time in prayer before the Holy Eucharist. We didn't have exposition and adoration much in those days, but we were keenly aware of the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle. I would sometimes stare at the lighted candle near it and know that Jesus was alive.

I had never heard someone speak about a stewardship way of life back then. If I am honest, the primary message I heard in those days was along the lines of "We need to be as good as we are able." Sacrifice was only at Lent, disciples were people in the Bible, and generosity mostly had to do with the collection basket and the poor box at the church entrance. I even went to Catholic schools!

Maybe the message of stewardship was there somewhere packaged differently and I just missed it. It wasn't until I was an adult, and after acquiring two theology degrees, that I understood both with my head and my heart what a stewardship way of life really meant. But I look back at those days and I realize that the groundwork was laid for me to understand these things. It was those times before the Holy Eucharist that I began to understand true sacrifice. It was at those times that I began to understand how actions and realities that seem so simple to the human eye can be so profound. And it was at those times that I began to see that true love knows no bounds.

IDEA FOR RESPONSE

If you can find the opportunity in a parish near you, set aside 15-30 minutes for Eucharistic Adoration.

TAKE TIME TO REFLECT

Jesus is truly present to us in the Holy Eucharist. Name 3 people you know who show the face of Christ to you by their sacrifice.



ADORATION

The Value of Your Stewardship

Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father."

-John 14:6-12

Too often we can mistakenly assume that what we do, say, or offer can have little effect in the grand scheme of life. We are simply poor sinners in need of salvation, so what could we do anyway?

Jesus speaks very powerfully to what can be done by those who believe in him and follow him. "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father." Greater ones than these? Think about all the miracles of Jesus recorded in sacred Scripture. You and I can do works greater than those?

St. Teresa of Avila said, "Christ has no body now on earth but yours." We are Christ to a world that needs him. It is the Christ in you that responds to the Christ in me. If it were only you alone going about doing good works and deeds, then your stewardship would amount to little.

But if you bear the name Christian, and you approach your discipleship seriously, you can truly do greater things. If you understand your stewardship as a way that Jesus works in our world, then this way of life, cultivating and sharing your gifts at every turn, becomes more valuable than all the gold in the world.

IDEA FOR RESPONSE

Do several small kind deeds for a loved one or someone you don't know. Hold the door for a stranger, make your spouse's favorite meal, bring flowers to a sick friend.

TAKE TIME TO REFLECT

What do you think is the value of your stewardship? Do you believe that through your actions — both great and small — God can touch people, heal them, and change their lives? When have you seen it happen?



ACTIONS