

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL  
**CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP**

July 2019 • e-Bulletin

**A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER**  
*for July*

Heavenly Father,

You are the source of wisdom and grace,  
the author of human freedom and creativity.  
We thank you for these gifts, and ask that you  
teach us to be good stewards of our creative spirits.  
As we immerse ourselves in this summer season,  
show us how to slow down a bit, quiet ourselves,  
and learn the art of re-creation,  
reflection and relaxation.

Encourage us to “power down” so that we might  
recharge and re-energize our minds, bodies and spirits  
for the journey ahead of us.

Help us never to be too busy to pause  
and realize your gracious presence all around us:  
in nature, in other people, in ourselves.

Slow us down and teach us to be better stewards  
of our time of recreation.

We pray this in Jesus’ name.

Amen

## Missionary Disciples: Stewards of the Church



How does God’s Spirit work to uplift us, guide us, transform us and show us the way to be better stewards of the Church? How does the Holy Spirit empower us and give us the strength to be ambassadors of Christ and missionary disciples? What are the gifts we possess that allow God to be actively present in the world through us? Understanding Christian stewardship helps us answer these fundamental questions.

The theme of the 57th annual conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) is “Missionary Disciples: Stewards of the Church.” Christian stewards understand that they are entrusted with the missionary call to proclaim the Gospel and sustain the Body of Christ. The ICSC conference offers a host of opportunities to learn how Christian stewardship enhances our lives as missionary disciples and prepares us to minister to our communities of faith and a world hungry for Christ’s loving and healing presence.

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The men and women depicted in El Greco’s masterpiece are the first stewards of Christ’s new Church, a legacy we have inherited.

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The 2019 ICSC conference begins with a Eucharistic Adoration and Liturgy of Light on Sunday evening, October 6, 2019 at 8:00 pm. It concludes with a closing Eucharistic celebration on Wednesday, October 9 at 10:00 am. All conference sessions are held at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in downtown Chicago, just blocks from the Navy Pier.

The image adopted this year is the classical painting “**The Pentecost**” by El Greco. It reveals the familiar scene in the New Testament’s Acts of the Apostles (2:1-4) of the outpouring

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of the Holy Spirit on those in the 'upper room' at Pentecost. We see Mary, our Blessed Mother dressed in red and blue, seated at the center of the painting with the apostles gathered around her. We also see Mary Magdalene, at Mary's left shoulder, and Martha.



The ICSC conference offers a host of opportunities to learn how Christian stewardship enhances our lives as missionary disciples and prepares us to minister to our communities of faith

The men and women depicted in El Greco's masterpiece are the first stewards of Christ's new Church, a legacy we have inherited. We believe today that the Holy Spirit empowers us to be stewards of the Church as well. It is through this stewardship, that we offer a profound spirit-filled witness to Jesus Christ and it is our prayer that the 57th annual ICSC conference will inspire its participants to discover how we all can be better "Missionary Disciples" and stewards of the Church. For more information about the 2019 ICSC conference, see the information inside this e-bulletin.

## STEWARDSHIP SAINT for July

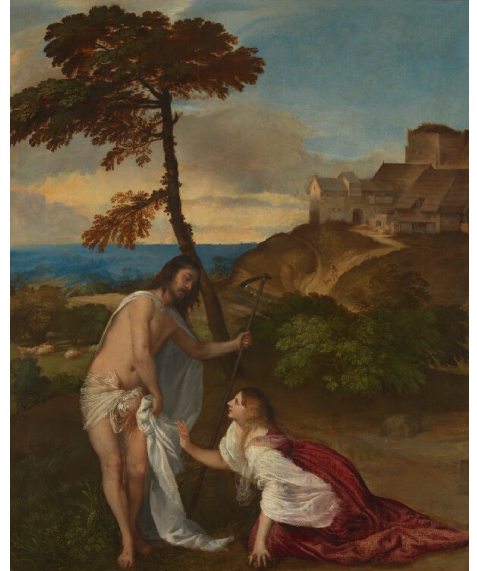
### Saint Mary Magdalene, Steward of Christ's Ministry

Saint Mary Magdalene is one of the most revered saints in the history of the Church and her discipleship emphasizes the complementary roles of women, Saint Peter and the other disciples as witnesses to the Risen Christ.

From the New Testament, one can conclude that Mary came from Magdala, a village on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. She was a friend of Jesus of Nazareth and a leading figure among those who were his disciples.

She was one of the women who accompanied and financially supported Jesus and the twelve apostles which suggests that the women were respectable, well-to-do members of the community.

At the time Jesus was executed on Golgotha, when the men in his company had already run away and abandoned him, Mary Magdalene is specifically identified in the Gospels as one of the women who refused to leave him. She was present at the Crucifixion and burial.



What is by far the most important affirmation about Mary Magdalene, however, is that she is mentioned in all five of the Resurrection narratives of the Gospel tradition.

What is by far the most important affirmation about Mary Magdalene, however, is that she is mentioned in all five of the Resurrection narratives of the Gospel tradition (Mark 16:1-8, Matthew 28:1-10, Luke 23:55-24:12, John 20:1-18, and Mark 16:9-20). In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John, she is the primary witness to Christ's Resurrection. All four Gospels explicitly name her as being present at the tomb and she was the first person to preach the "Good News" of that miracle. From other texts of the early Christian era, Mary Magdalene's status as a disciple in the years after Jesus' death is as prominent as the twelve apostles.

For many centuries Mary Magdalene was the symbol of Christian devotion, especially that of repentance. However, Christian traditions that came after the New Testament era erroneously equated Mary Magdalene with both the sinful woman in Luke 7 who anointed Jesus and with Mary of Bethany in John 11 and Luke 10 who also anointed Jesus. The tradition that Mary Magdalene was a repentant prostitute has been dismissed by modern biblical scholarship as almost certainly untrue.

Saint Mary Magdalene has been celebrated throughout Christian history in art and literature. There are many famous depictions of her in art such as Rembrandt's *Christ and St. Mary Magdalene at the Tomb* and Titian's *Noli Me Tangere* (Latin: "Do not touch me"). Her feast day is July 22.





# HURRY!

Only a short time left...  
to receive the 2019 ICSC  
Conference Early Bird discount.

**\$549!** *This special rate ends on July 31*

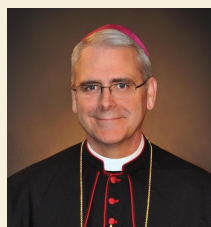
## MISSIONARY DISCIPLES: *Stewards of the Church*



### 57th Annual Conference

October 6-9, 2019 | Chicago, Illinois

*You won't want to miss these special guests* and 80-plus sessions vital to teaching and practicing Christian stewardship in parishes and dioceses the world over!



**Monday  
Plenary  
Speaker**

Most Reverend  
Paul Coakley, S.T.L., D.D.  
Archbishop of Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma



**Tuesday  
Plenary  
Speaker**

Dr. Carolyn Woo  
Distinguished President's Fellow  
for Global Development at  
Purdue University  
President emeritus, Catholic  
Relief Services



**Wednesday  
Plenary  
Speaker**

Dr. Thomas Jones  
Planetary scientist, author and  
veteran NASA astronaut. Among  
the first Catholic astronauts to  
receive Holy Communion in space

**CLICK HERE** to register!

# Be a Good Steward of Your Leisure Time

The air in July seems to be filled with the music of birds and the hum of insects. We hear the happy sounds of picnickers, boaters, golfers, fireworks, kids splashing in the pool, and concerts in the park. It's a celebratory time, a time when many people take vacation or welcome visitors from afar or young adults home from college. We think of July as a fun time, a time for rest and relaxation, a time for leisure.

It's important to be a good steward of the wonders of summer, a good steward of our time of rest and renewal, a good steward of leisure. A time to recharge our batteries is all part of leading a healthy, balanced life. After all, we recall that Jesus directed his disciples to “. . . go off to a secluded place and rest” (Mark 6:31).

Stewardship calls us to nurture and care for God's gifts which include taking care of the gift that is ourselves. So, make leisure a priority this July. Simplify your activities and focus on relationships, resting, recreating, and enjoying the beauty of God's world. Ease up on planning the perfect party or barbecue and instead focus on the fun of everyone chipping in to spend time together. Give yourself space to be alone in the midst of summer's fun.

Be healthy in eating and drinking. Long walks at dawn or dusk and plenty of exercise will aid both your body and your spirit, as will enjoying the wealth of summer's bounty and the produce of our gardens and farmers' markets. Consider activities that add variety to our lives and relationships. Make time for those books piling up on the bookshelf. Do something out



of the ordinary. Plan a long lunch with an old friend, or enjoy jazz “on the green.” But don't add heavy burdens of preparation and commitment.

Scale down. Relax. Let go. Be spontaneous. Be a good steward of your leisure time. Bask in the glory of summer's long days. This will not only prove restorative but will reveal more acutely the blessings of God's creation and help us discover in new ways the wonder of our loved ones and ourselves.



## Veteran NASA Astronaut Thomas Jones, PhD, to Address the 57th Annual Conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council

Veteran NASA astronaut Dr. Thomas D. Jones, among the first three Catholic astronauts to receive Holy Communion in space, will address the 57th annual conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) on Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Chicago, Illinois.

Dr. Jones is the author of four books. One of them, *Sky Walking: An Astronaut's Memoir*, is replete with stewardship themes. In his book, Dr. Jones reflects on the special gift of each day God has given him. The sights of the universe he was privileged to witness while living and working in space is his belief in “God's gentle affirmation of our union with Him.”

Dr. Jones flew on four space shuttle missions and spent 53 days in space, orbiting the earth 800 times. His many awards include the NASA Distinguished Service Medal, four NASA Space Flight Medals, the NASA Exceptional Service Award, the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, the NASA Exceptional Public Service Award and the Air Force Commendation Medal. The Main Belt asteroid 1082 TomJones is named in his honor.

After graduation from the Air Force Academy, Dr. Jones piloted B-52D strategic bombers, earned a doctorate in planetary sciences from the University of Arizona, studied asteroids for NASA, engineered intelligence-gathering systems for the CIA, and helped NASA develop advanced mission concepts to explore the solar system.

A planetary scientist, Dr. Jones served on the NASA Advisory Council, and is a board member of the Association of Space Explorers and the Astronauts Memorial Foundation. He appears frequently on TV and radio with expert commentary on science and space flight. His Catholic faith is revealed in his reflections on the importance of prayer, having faith in the gifts God has given us and being blessed by recognizing in the cosmos “a most caring and generous God.”





## A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

### **Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 6/7, 2019**

In today's Gospel, we hear Jesus inviting his disciples to be evangelizers. "The harvest is abundant," Jesus says. But those who are willing to invite others to a deeper relationship with the Lord are few. Good stewards who are willing to witness their Catholic faith to others know they are "like lambs among wolves." They are encouraged to be gentle, patient and loving, knowing they may face rejection and even fierce opposition. Jesus invites us to be better stewards of our faith, to give positive, courageous, joyful witness to others who have turned away from their relationship with him. Is there someone we should be reaching out to this week?

### **Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 13/14, 2019**

Today's Gospel turns our attention to one of Jesus' most familiar stories, the Parable of the Good Samaritan. It is about living how God intended us to live: to acknowledge God's divine love and compassion lavished upon us, and to extend that love and compassion upon others without reservation. We can find a lot of reasons for not stopping to help someone. We can talk ourselves out of being Good Samaritans. Strangers are not our responsibility, or are they? Good stewards understand that God's mercy is a gift that must be shared, and that doing the right thing, acting as Jesus would act toward others, is the only course of action for one who lives according to the demands of the Gospel. How might you be a Good Samaritan this week?

### **Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 20/21, 2019**

Martha and Mary are the focus of this weekend's Gospel, which abounds with rich themes about hospitality, service, and finding the right balance between action and prayerful attention to the Lord. Christians who are good stewards of their faith life realize that if they are too busy to enjoy peaceful, private time with the Lord, then something is out of balance in their spiritual lives. If we make time for Mass, but then carry on with our busy schedules without prayer, meditation and reflection, we are missing out. If we find ourselves anxious and harried by life's routines, could it be a sign that something in our spiritual life needs some serious attention?

### **Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 27/28, 2019**

A prominent theme in today's Gospel parable is generosity. Late at night, a sleepy friend responds to his neighbor's request for food for an unexpected guest. Jesus suggests that it would be unthinkable for a friend to deny a friend in need. A friend would most certainly give what is asked and more. Through this story, Jesus illustrates God's generosity. Good stewards realize the extraordinary love and graciousness with which God showers us. We need never convince God to be generous. God is already that generous friend. His abundant love bathes us in goodness. This week, prayerfully reflect on God's generosity to us. What should our response be to that generosity?