



56th Annual Conference

October 28-31, 2018 | Nashville, Tennessee

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

September 2018 • e-Bulletin



The 56th Annual ICSC Conference: A Transforming Moment

As individual Catholics and parish communities, we are invited by the Gospels to radically re-imagine our life in Jesus Christ. We are called to a complete reversal of our preoccupation with an inward, maintenance-focused church, to an outward, mission-focused church. At its 56th annual conference, the International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC), seeks to do just that.

The theme of this year's ICSC conference, to be held from October 28 to 31 in Nashville, Tennessee, is *Missionary Disciples: Stewards of the Gospel*, in response to the Gospel call to form ourselves, and others, as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. It will be a gathering of Catholic evangelization ministers and stewardship leaders from around the world. The conference has added a number of evangelization formation sessions in order to ignite a new chapter of evangelization and stewardship in the Church.



JOIN US...

For the 56th Annual
ICSC Conference

Missionary Disciples:

Stewards of the Gospel

October 28-31

Gaylord Opryland Hotel
Nashville, Tennessee

To register call our office at
800-352-3452 or visit us at
catholicstewardship.com

Many have called past ICSC conferences transformative moments in their own spiritual lives.

Many past attendees have expressed amazement and sometimes being overwhelmed by the number and variety of sessions offered at the conference in both English and Spanish. Plenty of practical resources are available and speaker contact information is offered for follow up. Moreover, attending the conference has allowed participants to build relationships from like-minded Catholics in other countries and has helped many grow in their understanding of evangelization and stewardship from a global perspective.

Another reason participants return to the conference year after year is for the spiritual nourishment offered by the conference. Many have called past ICSC conferences transformative moments in their own spiritual lives. When over a thousand people eagerly gather for Mass and their voices fill a convention space, one can sense the awe-inspiring presence of Christ.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

To kick off the conference, ICSC is privileged to partner with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and host a “Helping Hands” event. ICSC conference attendees will be invited to spend one hour before the start of the



Helping Hands is a meal-packing program of CRS serving poor and vulnerable people in West Africa.

conference packing meals for the poor of Burkina Faso in one of the hotel ballrooms. Helping Hands is a meal-packing program of CRS serving poor and vulnerable people in West Africa.

This year's conference image is the colorful, inspirational painting of the *Ascension of Christ* by Benvenuto Tisi da Garofalo. This painting calls to mind Jesus ascending to the Father after having given his followers specific instructions to spread the Gospel.

Everyone in the Church should be open to a “missionary conversion” and to learn how to share the Gospel as missionary disciples. Join us for ICSC's 56th annual conference and seize this opportunity to learn more about how to embrace your own baptismal call to live as a missionary disciple.



STEWARDSHIP SAINT *for September*

Saint Vincent de Paul

The feast day of Saint Vincent de Paul is September 27, the date of his passing in 1660. He was the founder of the Vincentians and the Sisters of Charity, and is the patron saint of all charitable organizations.

Born in 1581 to a peasant family in southwestern France, Vincent studied for the priesthood at a local Franciscan college and then at Toulouse University. He was ordained a priest at the age of nineteen.

Little is truly known of Vincent's early life in the priesthood except that he spent a year in Rome, perhaps studying. In 1612 he became a parish priest in a village just north of Paris and the following year became a tutor in the household of the wealthy and politically powerful Gondi family. He remained with the family for the next 12 years and spent some time as a parish priest where he attended to the needs of the sick and the poor in his parish. In 1617 he formed a group of women who ministered to the needs of these families. He established similar groups in other villages.

Around the year 1618 Vincent came to know Saint Francis de Sales, whose writings, especially the *Introduction to the Devout Life*, had a strong influence on him. That same year Vincent established a society of priests, sometimes referred to as “Vincentians,” who with the financial support of Madame Gondi, would go from village to village on the Gondi estates to preach to the peasants and conduct missions. The mission work became so successful that with the approval of the archbishop of Paris and continued financial support of the Gondis, the group established a base in Paris and their community continued to grow along with their ministry.

Meanwhile the women's groups started to multiply. In 1633 Vincent began offering formal religious formation for this new group, called the Daughters of Charity. A new order of women religious was born that ministered in hospitals, orphanages, prisons and many other places. The order was formally approved by the Church in 1668.

Vincent's approach to a devout life of faith was to be simple, practical and to have confidence in God's love and mercy. He would maintain: “When you leave your prayer to care for a sick person, you leave God for God. To care for a sick person is to pray.”

At Vincent's funeral the presiding bishop said that he had “changed the face of the Church.” He was canonized in 1737. In 1833, Blessed Antoine Frederic Ozanam would found the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. In 1885 Pope Leo XIII named St. Vincent de Paul universal patron of all works of charity.



A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER for September

Heavenly Father,
September is a month that offers hope
for things to come:
our daily life has a new rhythm,
there are new beginnings
and new encounters,
and a new energy is seen in the
parish community.

In this month of accelerating activities,
keep us mindful that we live for Christ
and not for ourselves.
Give us the strength and
the wisdom to be
“Doers” of Your Word,
and not just listeners;
to be good stewards of
the Gospel each and every day.

In this month of transition
help us find a deeper spiritual
balance in our lives
that takes time for you,
listens to the promptings of your Spirit
and give us hope that
the body of Christ
has well begun the transformation of
a troubled world.
We ask this through your Son,
Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

Stewardship Fundamentals: A Vision for Your Faith Community

*by Leisa Anslinger, Associate Department Director for Pastoral Life,
Archdiocese of Cincinnati*

As we have noted in previous columns here, stewardship formation requires a continual process of discernment, prayerful consideration of the direction, form, and means through which we will communicate the stewardship message and encourage our people to take it to heart. I find



*Much of leadership is about keeping the vision of what we
hope for in front of ourselves and our people.*

this to be one of the greatest challenges for parish and diocesan leaders. What do our people need to hear at this time? How may we call them to hear Christ’s call to love and serve? How do we challenge them to stretch and grow in giving as a response to the grace of God in their lives? How do we communicate this message in a compelling and consistent manner, and do so in a way that will speak to our people, in the hope that their lives will be transformed as a result? I would like to suggest that there are five steps we may take to discern the shape of stewardship formation for our faith communities. We will explore each of these steps in the coming months. Discerning the shape of stewardship formation requires vision, listening, alignment, challenge, and the call to growth. Let us first consider the importance of vision:

Why do we do what we do? Why is it important to share the message and impact of stewardship? These questions might seem self-evident, but without a clear grasp of our “why,” our efforts will have limited impact. Much of leadership is about keeping the vision of what we hope for in front of ourselves and our people. As stewardship leaders, we hope that all in our community will live as disciples and grow as good and faithful stewards. This is our vision, our “why.” When we seem to be stuck in previous practices or are grasping for what to do in the future, we will do well to keep this vision in mind. What is your vision for your faith community? How might you bring this vision to life, in order for your people to grow as good and faithful stewards?

ICSC

56TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 28-31, 2018 | Nashville, Tennessee

Opportunity for Parish Business Administrators!



ICSC recognizes the vital role of parish business administration professionals in the success of our parishes today. Often, these professionals find their responsibilities expanding into areas that they may have limited training and they look for guidance to help them assist their pastors with the many new challenges facing our parishes.

In addition to more than eighty sessions available to choose from, many attendees enjoy the opportunities to make new contacts and share professional ideas with those in similar positions. Previous attendees have shared that they find the conference inspiring and have developed a greater understanding and appreciation for their own important ministry as a steward of their parish resources.

Another benefit of the ICSC annual conference is the opportunity to engage with the many strategic partners and exhibitors who offer support, products and resources to help business administration professionals meet the needs of their parishes.

Parish leaders from across the country will present topics that are specific to the needs of parish business administrators. This year's topics include:

- Planning for the Mission: Transforming Your Parish
- A New Model of Strategic Planning for Parishes in Transition
- Mastering the Art of Human Resources (Even When It's Not Your Skill Set)
- The Spirituality of Giving: A Primer for Parish Business Managers
- Mission and Money: Partners in Creating a Great Parish
- How a Parish's Digital Presence Enhances Stewardship
- Make Accountability and Transparency Work to Promote Parish Stewardship
- Stewardship & Evangelization for Parish Business Managers (Spanish Language)

In addition to these topics, there are more than seventy other sessions to choose from. Attendees are free to participate in any topic that best suits their needs.



Call 800-352-3452 or visit our website and
REGISTER TODAY HERE

September: New Beginnings In Your Parish



New Year's resolutions are famously made on January 1, and infamously broken by the end of that month. But for many stewards, the real time of renewal and recommitment comes as we turn the calendar page into September, and the resolutions have a longer and greater impact. Why? Because good Catholic stewards realize that the parish is often times the place where people encounter Christ's presence in their lives, and in the fall, everything kicks into high gear at the parish. Opportunities abound for growth, for giving, for community. It's now that we ponder and make our decisions for how we will make a disciple's response during the coming

year through our commitment to the life of our parishes. Here are a few tips for maximizing a grace-filled year:

- Make Mass your top weekend priority, ahead of sports, school activities, or other temptations.
- Consider how best to use your talents in the service of the parish. Pray over the ministry which calls to you the most.
- Make an appointment to introduce yourself to the pastor or any new clergy if you do not know them, visit with them, or invite them to dinner.
- Serve the poor through activities in your parish, in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul. All parishes have some kind of outreach to the poor.
- Consider taking an adult faith formation class.
- Make plans to attend the ICSC annual conference October 28-31 in Nashville, Tennessee. If you can't attend, make sure someone from your parish is going. It's an opportunity to gain a wealth of new ideas, tons of inspiration, and a chance to meet other folks, including the experts, who are dedicated to evangelization and stewardship.
- Visit, or better yet help with, your parish ministry fair. Fun and informative, the fair is a community builder, and a great way to get people to participate.
- Visit your child's faith formation class and introduce yourself to the teacher. Let your children know religious education is a priority to you, and be sure to thank in some way the parishioners who give of their time and talent to this ministry.
- Review your financial giving. Were you a faithful giver during the summer? Find out if your parish has online giving, or automatic withdrawal, and sign up so your year-round support helps provide a stable parish income.

Stewardship in the Gospel of Matthew

By Rev. Joseph Creedon (Part 5 in a series)

In last month's reflection, we looked at stewardship parables of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. For our final Gospel parables we will go to Matthew, chapter 25. The first is the parable of the three servants (stewards). One is given five talents, one is given two talents and the last servant is given one

as gift and failed because if there were a fourth servant I am sure that the master would have said to him, "Here are three more try again." This parable is not about success but about remembering our need to give thanks to God for the gifts he has placed in our lives.

This parable is not about success but about remembering our need to give thanks to God for the gifts he has placed in our lives.

talent. The one with five talents makes five more, the one with two gains two more but the one who is given one talent does nothing with what was given to him. The two servants who use their talents wisely are praised by the master; the one who is fearful of the gift he has been given is stripped of what he was given. I have always wished there was a fourth servant who tried to use what he was given

This parable comes right before Matthew's beautiful and chilling parable of the Last Judgment where we are reminded that when our life is over God will judge us on how we shared our gifts with others. The time will come when we get to ask, as did the folks in Matthew 25: 31-46: "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?" Then



he will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to the least of these, you neglected to do it to me. And they will go away to eternal punishment and the virtuous to eternal life."

God has given each and every one of us the gift of faith in Baptism. At Baptism, we are given both a mission and a ministry. The mission: to become disciples of Jesus and stewards of God's gifts; the ministry is to use our unique gifts and talents in a way that gives glory to God. Stewardship then is a spirituality rooted in the Bible and based on the principle that everything we have is a gift from God.



A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 1/2, 2018

In today's second reading, St. James urges us to be "Doers of the Word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). Being a "Doer of the Word" means being a good steward of the Gospel; meditating on the sacred scriptures and putting the teachings of Jesus Christ into action in our day-to-day lives. Whenever we are uncertain as to what decisions to make or actions to take as good stewards of the Gospel, St. James reminds us: We can never go wrong if we resist popular values that are not compatible with the Gospel and we come to the aid of those who are burdened, distressed or poor. Being a steward of the Gospel is not taking one single action. It means embracing a lifestyle as a follower of Jesus Christ. What can we do this week to be better "Doers of the Word?"

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 8/9, 2018

St. James teaches that those who are perceived to be poor in the eyes of society are the ones who have been chosen to inherit the Kingdom of God. Indeed, we are saved because of our poverty and redeemed out of our need, not because of our material wealth or achievements that the world finds praiseworthy. St. James also suggests that we are stewards of others, especially the poor and it is how we respond to the poor and needy that will define our relationship with the Lord. Can you identify the poverty, whether spiritual or material, that is in your own life? How can that "poverty" be redeemed? As stewards of others, how do we respond to the poverty that exists right in our own parish?

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 15/16, 2018

St. James asks what our love for Jesus Christ can possibly mean if it does not result in action on behalf of, and to benefit, our neighbor. He suggests that faith in Jesus Christ

is demonstrated most profoundly in our care for the needy, the suffering, and the underprivileged. Stewardship includes proclaiming the Good News by putting our faith into action on behalf of others. In what ways have we been willing to make sacrifices and renunciations for the sake of Jesus Christ and our neighbor?

Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 22/23, 2018

In today's Gospel, we learn that the disciples of Jesus had been discussing among themselves who was the greatest. Jesus is about to turn their idea as well as our society's idea of "greatness" upside down. He embraces a child and tries to help the Twelve understand that to be great is to be focused on something other than themselves. Jesus teaches that true "greatness" lies in being a good steward of those who are not great: welcoming one who is not viewed as great by our society's standards, like the child, the innocent, the vulnerable, the suffering, those who are outside our comfortable circle of family, friends, companions and colleagues, those who need a welcome. Jesus redefines our notion of greatness. How do we define greatness? Is our notion of greatness consistent with the teachings of Jesus Christ?

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 29/30, 2018

St. James warns us about accepting the standards of the world and assuming that what is normative in society needs no countercultural challenge. The temptation to hoard riches and make sharp bargains at the expense of the powerless is pervasive because these things are generally done and look respectable enough. St. James points to God's judgment on these attitudes and actions of amassing wealth and comfort at the expense of others. How might we be better stewards of the material blessings we have been given? How might we use our wealth with compassion toward others?