

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL
CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

July 2022 • 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

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 advised his disciples to “. . . go off to a secluded place and rest” (Mark 6:31).



**Simplify your activities and focus on relationships,
resting, recreating, and enjoying the beauty of
God’s world.**

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

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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



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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.

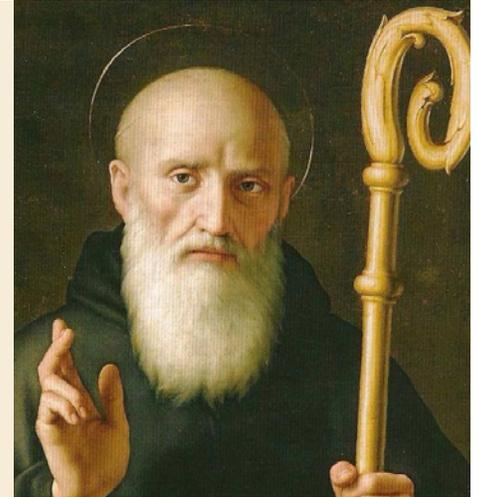
STEWARDSHIP SAINT *for July*

Saint Benedict

Saint Benedict, the father of Western monasticism, is considered a model of Christian stewardship. He authored the famous Rule of St. Benedict, a handbook of daily Christian living that emphasizes exercising stewardship over prayer, work, and community.

Born in central Italy in the town of Nursia around 480, Benedict studied in Rome as a young man. He was so distressed by the chaos and incivility he found there that he left the city and traveled to Subiaco, Italy to become a hermit. He soon attracted followers who wanted to join him in his simple way of living; imitating his style of prayer and work while respecting the rhythms of the day. Benedict stayed there for 25 years before taking a small group of his monks to Monte Cassino, near Naples, where he wrote the final version of his Rule.

The Rule of St. Benedict started a simple, spiritual tradition that exists to this day. It was meant to "...establish a school for the Lord's service." It is a set of Christian principles around which the members of the community were to organize their daily lives, focusing on the most



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important Christian values that would direct their daily actions and help them cultivate habits that would ensure good stewardship of their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

A hallmark of Christian stewardship is hospitality, making room for others. St. Benedict found this aspect of the Christian life especially important for his communities. In his Rule, St. Benedict writes:

"Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ, for he is going to say: 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me (Mt. 25:35).' 'And to all let due honor be shown, especially to those who share our faith' (Gal. 6:10) and to pilgrims...In welcoming the poor and pilgrims the greatest care and solicitude should be shown, because it is especially in them that Christ is received" (Rule of St. Benedict 53:1-2, 15).

The Rule of St. Benedict was meant to stand on the shoulders of the Gospels and many spiritual writers throughout the ages attest to its transforming power to change lives. It teaches the principles of stewardship, shows one how to live in a way that is uniquely countercultural and invites its adherents to enter into a deeper and more joyful relationship with the Lord.

St. Benedict died in approximately 550. He is the patron saint of monks and farm workers. In 1964 Pope Paul VI declared him to be the patron saint of Europe. His feast day is July 11.



60 YEARS

THE 2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Stewardship: A Disciple's Response

Anaheim, California
October 2-5, 2022

60th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council | 60th Anniversary of the International Catholic Stewardship Council
30th Anniversary of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops' pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*

SUPER EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT! \$549



Join ICSC special guest, **Most Rev. José H. Gomez**, archbishop of Los Angeles and president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as he opens the 60th anniversary ICSC conference.

REGISTER TODAY!
Offer good through July 4, 2022.



Stewards of Our Neighbors: Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan

After many centuries of recounting Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) the story seems to have lost the "sting" Jesus intended for it. At the weekend Masses of July 9 and 10, we will once again hear the proclamation of this Gospel story which reveals Jesus' encounter with the legal scholar and his response to the question: Who is my neighbor? Perhaps now is a good time to reflect more deeply on Jesus' teaching and its practical implications for our lives today.



The Samaritan in Jesus' story did not see a stranger, alien or foreigner. He simply saw a suffering human being who needed help.

In the Gospel story Jesus affirms the legal scholar: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." But the lawyer asks:

Enrich Your Spiritual Life

Join Us at the 60th Anniversary International Catholic Stewardship Conference

To be spiritually enriched, we encourage you to join us at the 60th annual International Catholic Stewardship Conference in Anaheim, California, October 2-5. There's nothing like an ICSC conference to build and renew your enthusiasm for your faith. And need we mention that along with the spiritual depth of this year, you will also experience fun, friendship, and fresh ideas!

ICSC has something for everyone on their journey of faith, as well as a chance to enlarge your network of fellow stewards as you meet new friends from all over the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Australia, and points between.

Would you like to explore your faith at an even deeper level? Would you like to understand how the Eucharist moves us to be better stewards? Do you want to make parish life more engaging?

From beautiful liturgies to fascinating speakers, this year's ICSC promises to be a great opportunity to enhance your own journey of faith and deepen your life in Christ.

Come listen to speakers explain the sacraments, stewardship and the spiritual life; how to build a welcoming parish, how to enlarge your base of active parish stewards, and much more. If you are more comfortable conversing and praying in Spanish, we have a number of Spanish-language sessions and a Spanish-language group as well.

There is something for nearly everyone: If you want to spend time chatting with those evangelizing through social media, parish professionals, young adult ministers, or Catholic writers, just visit our extensive exhibitor hall where they and many others are eager to learn your needs.

Enjoy impromptu sessions with other like-minded Catholics on the spiritual journey; and old friends and new are guaranteed to provide you with inspiration and memorable camaraderie. From beautiful liturgies to fascinating speakers, this year's ICSC promises to be a great opportunity to enhance your own journey of faith and deepen your life in Christ. Check out our online brochure [HERE](#) and register before July 4 to take advantage of the lowest rate.



“And who is my neighbor?” This is the question that prompts Jesus to offer a story revealing the vastness of God’s mercy, and of course, Jesus’ expectation of his followers.

It is significant that Jesus offers a Samaritan as the ideal model of God’s mercy. Jews despised Samaritans as a lower form of humanity. So, of

course, it provoked his audience when Jesus told of the priest, then the Levite, walking thoughtlessly by the half-dead robbery victim lying at the side of the road. It is the third man, the Samaritan, who

their race, religion, gender, culture, ethnicity or social standing.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, uses the Parable of the Good Samaritan to urge us not only to imitate the mercy of Jesus in our

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stops, renders the victim first aid and generously pays the innkeeper in advance for taking care of the brutally beaten victim.

Jesus’ parable teaches us that the neighbor is the person we encounter in our daily lives who is in dire need of our help. We are called to be good stewards of our fellow human beings, God’s precious children who we meet on our own journey in life. Our love and mercy are not confined to our families, friends, co-workers or fellow parishioners. The “sting” to the parable is that Jesus Christ expects us, his followers, to extend his love and mercy to others regardless of

personal lives, but to have the courage and compassion to promote a culture of Christ’s mercy in our society as well.

To be a disciple of Jesus Christ obliges us to love and show mercy to those we don’t know nor recognize as “one of us.” The Samaritan in Jesus’ story did not see a stranger, alien or foreigner. He simply saw a suffering human being who needed help. Jesus asks: “So who was the neighbor to the robbers’ victim?” The legal scholar replied: “The one who treated him with mercy.” Jesus said to the scholar as he would say to us today: “Go and do likewise.”

Involving Young People in Sacred Liturgy is Good Stewardship

Now that your teen or college age young adult has received the sacrament of Confirmation, isn’t it time to get them more deeply involved in the Mass? It is no secret that one of the best ways for a young person to nurture a greater love for the Eucharist is by a more active participation in the liturgy.

As good stewards of the faith life of teenagers and young adults, let’s identify their gifts and invite them to a fuller participation at the table of the Lord.

The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has sought for many years to encourage greater participation by young people in the Mass. A publication from the Federation, *From Age to Age: The Challenge of Worship with Adolescents* (1997), started a national dialogue on how to get teenagers more involved in the Church’s celebration of the Eucharist.





Involvement by young people can include such liturgical activities as:

- Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist
- Ushers
- Ministers of Hospitality
- Lectors/Readers
- Altar servers
- Gift bearers
- Cantors
- Musicians
- Choir members
- Leaders for Children's Liturgy of the Word

As good stewards of the faith life of teenagers and young adults, let's identify their gifts and invite them to a fuller participation at the table of the Lord. Get them involved. Make them feel as though they are welcome as mature, responsible stewards of the life of the parish family. They will be enriched by the experience, and so will the faith community.



Fifteen Random Stewardship Ideas for the Month of July

1. Invite a single friend over for a meal.
2. Turn off the TV, phone, and computer, and spend an hour devoted to someone you love.
3. Attend an extra Mass on a weekday this month.
4. Abstain from something you like – meat, a latte, a cold drink – on Fridays and save the money for a charity.
5. Take your rosary with you for an early morning walk.
6. Recycle more.
7. Think of a charity which is amply blessed at Christmas. Remember it with a gift mid-year.
8. Each day, say a prayer for one of the world's trouble spots.
9. Surprise an old friend with a phone call.
10. Buy or pick a flower for someone without a "reason".
11. Take your family to a farmer's market if in season.



12. Stop for a moment during your busy day and enjoy an ice cream cone or other favorite treat.
13. If you hear a great homily, tell the homilist.
14. Splurge on some produce and buy enough to share with someone in need.
15. On occasion, try turning your prayer before meals into a spontaneous prayer of thanks, using your own words.



A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 2/3, 2022

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 9/10, 2022

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 16/17, 2022

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 23/24, 2022

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?

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 30/31, 2022

In today's Gospel, Jesus offers a warning to those who pursue leisure and pleasure as their goal in life without concern for the poor and less fortunate. He tells the parable of the wealthy landowner who, upon yielding an exceptionally profitable harvest one year, determines that he will live the rest of his days in relaxation; to eat, drink and be merry. God calls the miser a "fool" and lets him know that his greed and self-indulgence will not bring him the security he seeks.

Good stewards acknowledge that the money and possessions entrusted to them are to be used to further the mission of Jesus Christ. This week let us reflect on our own daily consumption habits. Do we spend money on articles that make us better ambassadors of Christ? Does our personal lifestyle bring "good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18)?