



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

September 2026 • e-Bulletin

A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER *For September*

Loving and Gracious God,
We ask You to open our hearts
to your Son's life and ministry
and to answer the call
to be his disciples.

May our response
be rooted
in the Gospel;

may we be
ever mindful
of the needs
of our communities;

and may our stewardship flow from a
profound sense of gratitude
for Your many blessings.

By the gift of the Holy Spirit,
empower and inspire us
to respond in a way
that brings hope to others
and reveals the love
that comes to us
through Jesus Christ.

We ask this in His Name,
who is Lord
forever and ever.

Amen

*By Monsignor Anthony J. Marcaccio,
(May 5, 1963 - July 19, 2024)
Beloved pastor of Saint Pius X Catholic
Church, Greensboro,
North Carolina and friend of ICSC.*



Gathering Together in Christ: *The Power of Christian Fellowship*

Have you ever contemplated the blessing of being part of a global Church? As we approach the 64th annual conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council in New Orleans to be held from Sunday, September 20 to Wednesday, September 23, many attendees have expressed their excitement and gratitude for the opportunity to gather with other friends and stewards in Christ from all over the world. Yes, we attend to hear inspiring speakers and capture the latest best stewardship practices to take back to our



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diocese or parish. But unlike those attending conferences from the secular world, we have the bond of our identity in Christ and our baptism which draws us into a deeper relationship. No matter how we identify "the ends of the earth" in the 21st century, when we gather together this year, we will come face to face with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The words of Saint Paul in his letter to the Ephesians rings so true (2:19): *So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God.*

This is true not only in parish life but when we encounter each other at the ICSC conference. The Holy Spirit is truly present in the vibrant worship, excellent presenters and is very uniquely connecting participants in a way more meaningful than networking. Yes, we exchange business cards, great ideas and practices but we also share hopes and dreams for our ministries,

Continued from page 1

parishes, dioceses and Church. Through the wonder of technology, we are able to connect immediately when necessary. A rich and inspiring fellowship continues throughout the year until we meet again at next year's conference. It is one of the most impactful aspects of attending the ICSC conference.



In the end, the value of the ICSC conference is beautiful on so many levels but none more important than bringing the Body of Christ together from around the world. Somehow participants who need to find each other connect. If we look to the beginning of our Church, it was being stewarded through a powerful faith and the building up of relationships in Christ Jesus. The early Christians supported each other's ministries and accompanied each other on their faith journey. The fact that these relationships can exist on a global level in our time is pure gift. Make plans to attend the 2026 ICSC conference and be inspired by Christ's presence all around you.

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.

Vincent's approach to a devout life of faith was to be simple, practical and to have confidence in God's love and mercy.

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.



Stewardship and the Daily Miracles of Charity

By Dan Conway, chair, ICSC board of directors

Christ is the bread of life. With him, our needs are abundantly met (Pope Leo XIV).

During the Angelus on Sunday, August 2, Pope Leo XIV reflected on the miracle of the loaves and fish (Mt 14:13–21). This is a stewardship story because Saint Matthew tells us that Jesus commanded his disciples not to hold back but to share their food with the hungry crowd. The disciples protested that all they had were five loaves and two fish—barely enough to feed themselves. Yet they discovered that God’s grace is a source of abundance, not scarcity, and that by sharing the little they had, they produced an excess of “twelve wicker baskets.”

To feed the hungry, even when we think that we lack the necessary resources to make a difference, is an act of Christian charity that can produce miracles. Stewardship is a sign that we recognize that everything we possess has been freely given to us by a generous and loving God whose only request is that we develop and share what God has given us. The resulting miracle begins in us, in the change of heart we experience when we embrace the stewardship virtues of gratitude, responsibility, generosity, and the willingness to give back to God with increase.

Good stewards encounter Jesus in the act of generous sharing. Saint John Paul II taught that it is not possible to fully appreciate the gifts that we receive from God unless we give them away, sharing them generously with others. As long as we cling to our possessions (time, talent, and treasure), we can never experience their true meaning or significance in our lives.

That’s why the stewardship virtues of gratitude, responsibility, and generosity are inseparably linked. Generous people thank God for what they have to share. That’s why Saint Matthew tells us that Jesus performed a eucharistic action—a prayer of thanksgiving to God—before he fed the people.

Jesus was not indifferent to the needs of the people. He refused to let his disciples deny any personal responsibility for feeding the crowd of more than 5,000 men, women, and children. He told them to do the impossible, saying: “There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves.”

Pope Leo recognizes the relationship between stewardship, and the miracles that can happen in our daily lives:

As we savor the grace of the Eucharist, let us commit ourselves to bearing witness to its beauty in our daily actions, beginning with blessing meals at the table with family and friends.

Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts which we have received from your bounty and are commanded to share generously with others. And let us never refuse to take responsibility for the needs of our sisters and brothers. Rather, may we always be thankful, responsible, and generous stewards of all God’s gifts.

Do You Welcome Visitors to Your Parish?

As new energy and activity begin to pick up at the parish in September let us be on the lookout for newcomers to the parish. Welcoming newcomers to your parish is not just the job of the pastoral staff, ushers, ministers of hospitality or greeters. It is everyone’s responsibility. Here are ten things you can do to provide better hospitality toward those who are new to the parish.



1. Cultivate the virtue of hospitality at Mass. Many Mass attendees tend to gather into little cliques and ignore those who are not members of their particular clique. They are not really inhospitable, just heedless to the needs of good hospitality. Make hospitality a new habit when you go to Mass.

2. Come early, leave late. Instead of rushing to Mass to be there on time, and then rushing out at its conclusion, make time to come a little early and linger just a bit later. Make room in your busy life to greet and spend time with others at Mass.

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 4

3. “The Mass has ended,” now go and greet someone! Seek out someone you’ve not met before. Introduce yourself, and take a few moments to welcome them to your parish home, God’s home.

4. Welcome everyone. Not only do visitors need your warm welcome, regular Mass attendees also need a friendly greeting. Develop a good habit of greeting everyone with some enthusiasm. You are Christ’s ambassador and greeting others in his name.

5. Help newcomers connect. While you are getting to know visitors, introduce them to other parishioners as the opportunity presents itself. Feel free to invite newcomers to sit next to you.

6. Say goodbye with genuine warmth. After Mass, bid farewell to visitors, inviting them to return next week. Introduce them to the pastor if the opportunity arises.

7. Avoid Parish business. Avoid conducting parish business with others immediately before or after Mass. Focus on newcomers and visitors.

8. Give visitors information about the parish. Ensure that a visitor has a bulletin and other information about the parish before they leave. If there is a social gathering after Mass, invite them to join you.

9. Be part of a greeting ministry or hospitality team. Parishes are always in need of greeters to serve regularly, and provide ongoing formation to new greeters. Help out, be a greeter. If your parish doesn’t have greeters, now is a good time to start!

10. Greet those who already minister in the area of hospitality. It isn’t necessary to neglect the people who are already ministers of hospitality in order to make newcomers feel at home. A simple wave and a smile go a long way.



Be a Good Steward of Your Faith this Autumn

There’s something wonderfully renewing about autumn, especially as it begins a new school year. It’s all about new beginnings. Maybe it has something to do with new classrooms, new teachers, the great smell of brand new shoes and the smooth touch of that new backpack.

We remember those feelings of starting again even if it’s been years since we walked through the school house door, and even if we don’t have our own children heading off to the classroom this fall. We still get that heady feeling of new possibilities in the crisp autumn air. This is the perfect time to bring a sense of spiritual renewal to your life and to your family – the domestic church.

Think of the autumn season as a way to discover a new rhythm for your prayer life. If new activities can be scheduled into your daily life, start scheduling in more quality time for prayer.

Autumn can truly bring out a new resolve to improve our lives as summer’s freedom gives way to the structure of fall. For adults, faith formation classes and prayer groups are just forming in parishes. Check out the opportunities. With summer ending, many organizations are gearing up for new volunteers. Contact your local Catholic Charities or Habitat for Humanity to see how you might help out.

Think of the autumn season as a way to discover a new rhythm for your prayer life. If new activities can be scheduled into your daily life, start scheduling in more quality time for prayer. Fall is the perfect time to begin a 34-week Ignatian retreat, because if you start in September, the retreat-in-real-life schedule will conform to the liturgical year.

For the children in your house, early to bed and early to rise means there may be more opportunities to be together for short prayer. Say a blessing at breakfast, or a brief morning offering as kids head out for the bus. Try to bring a more regular prayer schedule to your home. Pray with your children as you tuck them in, making the prayer personal and about the day’s events. Make a resolve this fall to bring Christ more prominently into your family’s daily routine. Make the stewardship of your faith and family a commitment as autumn brings a sense of renewal.

Are you ready?

To be inspired, network with others and learn best practices to further the mission of your parish or diocese? Join us September 20-23 in New Orleans for the 64th Annual ICSC conference as we join together to support and encourage each other on our journey as stewards of the Church.

Don't miss this opportunity to renew your mission and expand your vision!

REGISTER TODAY!

Sessions specifically designed for:

- Pastors
- Parish Business Managers and Administrators
- Parish Staff
- Catholic School Advancement Professionals
- Parish Stewardship and Discipleship Leaders (for Beginners and Advanced)
- Learning more about Using AI responsibly and effectively
- Diocesan and Foundation Professionals
- Wednesday Morning Regional Stewardship Networking Gatherings

DON'T FORGET *to secure your hotel*





A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 5/6, 2026

In Saint Paul's letter to the Romans he suggests that God lavishes his love upon us through Jesus Christ, who calls us to the kind of loving relationship, if we so choose it, that demands accountability. It is like, in Saint Paul's vocabulary, a kind of "debt" that we can never "pay-in-full." But we begin to repay by following the direction of one of the most familiar statements in the Bible: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Good stewards realize that God does not call them just to love those who are easy to love, but to love the unloved and the hard-to-love people in this world as well. This week, remind yourself: "I am put here as an ambassador of God's love."

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 12/13, 2026

Today's Gospel reading continues Jesus' instructions on being good stewards of others – the direction that if we love Jesus Christ, we must forgive an individual 77 times. The reading compels us to consider one of the most difficult practices of Christian discipleship. Forgiveness is the way of Jesus, the way of the cross. Vengeance, bitterness and hatred seem so much easier and certainly more desirable. Forgiveness is a hard road to travel, but it is the only road that leads to life in Christ. Consider this week who you need to forgive.

Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 19/20, 2026

From an early age, we tend to distort the concept of "fairness": "I am good. I deserve good things. I am not receiving good things. Something must be wrong. Who's going to fix it?" We also know the age-old expression: "Who ever said life was fair?" Jesus knew this expression when he offered his parable in today's Gospel reading. Christian stewards acknowledge, with humility, that they receive good things from the Lord in abundance; even if these gifts are not the ones they think they need when they need them. Consider which servants you identify with most in the Gospel reading, the ones who demand "fairness", or that final servant who, seemingly, deserves the least.

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of September 26/27, 2026

Saint Augustine, a doctor of the church, once wrote that he first, second, and third most important attitude in Christianity is humility. In today's second reading, Saint Paul is concerned with how we conduct ourselves in our community of faith. He urges us to let our conduct be worthy of the Gospel we say that we believe; and that it all begins with humility. He asks us to consider others better than ourselves, and to serve them by looking out for their best interest, not ours. Consider how Saint Paul's appeal to imitating Christ's humility can enhance your relationships.