



Pastor's Column

St. Peter Catholic Church

September 9, 2018, Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Stewardship: A Theology of Discipleship

My friends in Christ, as our Parochial Year For Evangelization continues, the time of year is upon us once again where we reflect upon the Theology of Stewardship, and we are mindful that Stewardship is not something *in addition to* being a faithful and joyful disciple of Jesus Christ; rather, Stewardship is in very fact *part of* and *integral to* discipleship.

Of course, at the same time, we are painfully aware of the ongoing scandal that continues to devastate the Church. How in the world can we be expected to be faithful, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ...*and* be faithful, joyful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us...when the very highest levels of Church hierarchy clearly do not seem to take any of this seriously? If *they* will not rise up and be stewards of *their* Time, Talent, and Treasure, then why in the world should *I* be a steward of *my* Time, Talent, and Treasure?

I wish I had a good answer for these very challenging and reasonable questions...but sadly, I do not. I can only speak for what I myself intend to do with regard to discipleship and stewardship: for my own faith, for my own commitment to Jesus Christ, for my own commitment to His Church (which He gave us pure and immaculate but which so many of us, myself included, keep finding new ways to stain and injure)...and frankly, for my own *sanity*...I *need* to give. I need to keep moving forward, keep up with the ministry and mission that has been entrusted to me by God, and I refuse to let up or fail in my duty.

Not many of us feel like we want to give our Time to the parish and to the diocese. We do not feel like volunteering for a Church that continues to let us down.... Not many of us feel like sharing our Talents. If the Church does not appreciate my Talents, then why should I bother?

And I would venture a guess that very few of us feel like giving our hard-earned money, our Treasure, to the Church. Because evidently, *my* money just goes to keep on paying for the terrifying and disgusting exploits and cover-up of *those* bishops! Maybe that is how many of us feel about the matter of tithing; anyway, it is how *I* feel. And I blame no one for feeling this way right now in this time of scandal, this crisis of faith for many of us. All I can say is that I, personally, *must* keep giving of my Time, Talent, *and* Treasure. Because I whole-heartedly believe in the mission of our St. Peter parish and All Saints school, and I also believe whole-heartedly in the ministry and mission of the Diocese of Spokane and Bishop Thomas Daly.

Because in the end, though my faith in certain *persons* has been shattered, though my faith in certain Church *leaders* has been shattered...my faith in *Jesus* actually has never been so strong as it is right now. And I believe also in His Father, in His Holy Spirit, and in His Bride, the Mystical Body of Christ which is the Church.

And the Church is severely wounded right now. Rather than *leave*, we must *lead*. And rather than slither away, we sock it to 'em! We rise up, not cower down. We are persecuted but we are not abandoned; struck down, we are not destroyed. Saint Paul himself said that two thousand years ago, and oh how true those words ring true today! I myself *must* and *will* remain a disciple of Jesus Christ, and therefore I *must* and *will* remain a faithful, joyful steward of His many gifts and blessings given to me. And it is my sincere hope and prayer that all of you will join me as faithful, joyful disciples and stewards of Jesus Christ.

- Fr. Lewis