

For Reflection:

For now, during this time of stewardship renewal, let's examine what active steps we can take to **Belong More Deeply**.

Pray - Acknowledge that God is the Source of every gift when you awake; before meals; before bedtime; in good times and in bad; for family and friends; for peace...

Take-a-step to set aside a little more time each day for prayer and Belong More Deeply.

Celebrate - Embrace the joy of our faith by participating at Mass; attending church activities; discovering something new about yourself; thinking positive; trusting in God; learning more about Jesus and scripture...

Take-a-step to celebrate and discover a little more about our faith and Belong More Deeply.

Commit - Take action to live out our baptismal call to make Jesus' mission our own by becoming aware of your gifts; learning about existing ministries in the parish; participating in ministry; reflecting on and analyzing your finances; prioritizing the use of your time, talent and resources...

Take-a-step and commit to giving a little more of your gifts in service and financial offering and Belong More Deeply.

Belong More Deeply through Stewardship:

Our U.S. Bishops remind us of the joys and challenges of living as a Christian steward in their pastoral letter *Stewardship-A Disciples' Response*.

The Call - Christian discipleship begins with vocation, the call to follow Jesus and imitate his way of life. Discipleship and the practice of stewardship constitute a way of life that is both privileged and challenging.

Jesus' Way - The meaning of stewardship relies on the teaching and life of Jesus. Disciples of Jesus are called to evangelize, to share the Good News with others. Our reward is perfect fulfillment in God's Kingdom - a kingdom already present, real but imperfect, in this world, which Jesus' disciples help bring to its full reality by the practice of stewardship.

Living as a Steward - Two human activities that are fundamental to the Christian vocation are collaborating with God in the work of creation and cooperating with God in the work of redemption. Both lie at the very heart of Christian stewardship in its deepest meaning.

Stewards of the Church - Each member of the Church shares in responsibility for its mission; each is called to practice stewardship of the Church. Christians also are called to look outward and to place themselves at the service of the entire human community, especially those who are most in need. The Eucharist is both the sign and the agent of this expansive communion of charity.

The Christian Steward - Who is a Christian disciple? One who responds to Christ's call, follows Jesus, and shapes his or her life in imitation of Christ's. Who is a Christian steward? One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

Celebrating 20 Years!

For a complete copy of **Stewardship - A Disciple's Response**, please visit www.stewardshipli.org to download a free .pdf version.



Belong More Deeply

...through
Stewardship
A Way of Life



A guide to personal and communal Stewardship Renewal



Belong More Deeply

What does it mean to belong to something, to anything...?

To whom or to what do we belong?

We belong to our family, to our school or work community, to our neighborhood, to clubs and special groups, etc.

Why do we belong?

We belong because we share a common bloodline, interest, belief, cause, goal or mission.

What is expected of us?

If we are a responsible member, we are expected to be present, to learn about the group, to attend activities, to give financial support and to make that group a priority. As our knowledge, time and participation level increases, our relationship with the group deepens and it becomes a seamless part of our life - never stagnant or complete, but ever growing.

Across Long Island, Catholics in our diocese have been invited to **Belong More Deeply** to Jesus Christ and to His Church. Let's ask those questions again...

To whom do we belong?

We belong firstly to God our Father, to Jesus His Son in union with the Holy Spirit. We also belong to a beautiful community of believers - the Body of Christ - the Church.

Why do we belong?

We belong because through our baptism we share a common bond, belief and mission. At our baptism and at various opportunities since, we accept Jesus' mission as our own - to love and serve, to work for justice and establish peace.

What is expected of us?

As a responsible member, we are expected to be present, to learn, to participate, to give financial support and to make Jesus' mission our priority. Our timeless invitation to **Belong More Deeply** is realized as we further make stewardship a way of life - never stagnant or complete, but ever growing. This growth leads us to where our giving is not out of obligation or expectation, but we give because we have been given. We give all things out of love and in profound gratitude to our God, the generous Giver.

...through Stewardship - A Way of Life

How can we Belong More Deeply to Jesus Christ and to His Church?

By embracing stewardship as a way of life - a way of being in the world each and every day. This life journey happens one step at a time.

As Christian stewards we take steps:

- ~ To trust in and make God a priority in our lives,
- ~ To make prayer a regular part of our every day,
- ~ To recognize that God is the Source of all we are and all we have,
- ~ To know that everything around us is pure gift and that God has entrusted us with the care of these gifts,
- ~ To be aware of and grateful for God's generosity in our lives,
- ~ To participate regularly at Mass and draw strength from the Word of God and the Body and Blood of Jesus,
- ~ To be confident that we are uniquely created to fulfill a particular role here on earth - one that no one else can fulfill,
- ~ To share our resources and talents in service to others to help make present the kingdom of God,
- ~ To know, love and become the gifted person God created us to be.

That is quite a bit of work, yes! But with this work comes great joy and satisfaction.

*"To belong more deeply
is Jesus Christ's invitation to
all of us without exception."*

Bishop William Murphy
Pastoral Letter
December 12, 2010



Stewardship
A Way of Life