


Christ's Stewards on the Road to Emmaus

Stewardship Week
Diocese of St. Cloud
August 25, 2020



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- The story of the Road to Emmaus is the story of the Church on its pilgrimage through time
 - At its heart, it is a Eucharistic story:
 - St. Luke's outline of the core elements of the Mass to this day
 - Culminates in the Eucharistic celebration – Jesus “took, blessed, broke, gave”
 - Results in the spontaneity of an evangelizing mission

- Hold that narrative in mind as we revisit some key elements of *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response* (USCCB, 1992)
- Stewardship translates “I believe in Jesus” into “I live for Jesus” – it is the personal response of lived discipleship (that is, following the disciplines the Lord teaches)
 - *Do parachutes work?*



- Stewardship: “managing the valued assets that belong to Another”
- Stewardship is not an action or set of actions in certain areas of life, but an embrace of the Gospel in all areas of life



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- *What are those “valued assets” that belong to God?*

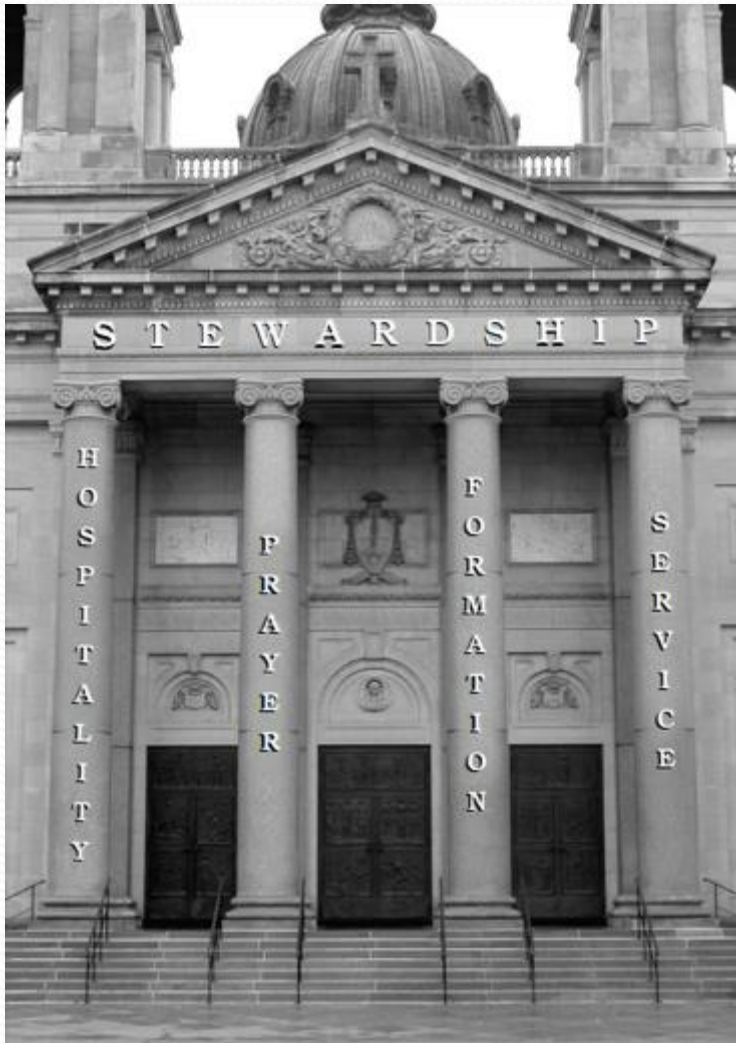
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- Our lives
 - Our health
 - Our memories
 - Our imagination
 - Our family members
 - Our relationships
 - Our employment
 - Our abilities
 - Our experiences

- Our education
- Our material goods
- Our environment
- Our parish communities
- Our Internet connection
- Our spiritual lives
- What would you add?

- Thus “time, talent, and treasure” is a handy reminder of key areas, but not exhaustive of the concept of stewardship
- Think of Communion
 - We receive Jesus into our bodies, but He also receives us into His
 - To receive Jesus in the Eucharist is not to say, “You are now mine” but rather “I am now yours”




- Thus stewardship is always a ***response***, aware of having received a gift (these are not really “my” things), rather than an initiative that deserves a reward
- *“Name something you have that you have not received. If then you have received it, why boast as if it were you own?” (I Cor. 4:7)*
- *“When you have done you have been commanded to do, say, ‘We are useless servants; we have done no more than our duty.’ (Luke 17:10)*





- Four Pillars of Stewardship:
 - Hospitality – we are *welcomed* by God
 - Prayer – we are *met* by God
 - Formation – we are *molded* by God
 - Service – we are *sent* by God
- *Note that these pillars are in accord with the mission of the Church – to continue the mission of Christ – as Priest, Prophet, and King*



- Back to Emmaus ...
 - The tomb is indisputably empty (“the story seemed like nonsense” – Easter begins with the human experience of emptiness)
 - The disciples are walking two by two (only one is named), discussing all that had happened
 - Jesus meets them as they are – invites them to share what’s on their hearts – this is prayer (CCC: “today”)

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- “What were you discussing on the way?”
 - *What would you discuss with Jesus today?*

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- “... but him they did not see”
 - *When is Jesus unrecognized in your life?*
 - Jesus instructs them ... forms them in faith not only in mind but in heart
 - *What has the Lord taught you in the pandemic?*

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- “Stay with us, the day is nearly over”
 - *What do you ask of the Lord in prayer?*
 - *What has hospitality to others revealed to you?*
 - Jesus took, blessed, broke, and gave ...

- “With that their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; but he vanished from their sight”
 - *What was their mood?*
- Luke invites us to see this “vanishing” as the assurance of faith in the Eucharistic Presence of the same Lord
- This is the fruit of prayer and formation: a new vision that looks beyond appearance to recognize and truly to see the Lord even when he is not visible to human eyes
 - *[compare this with the “opening of the eyes” of Adam and Eve to their nakedness, and of the blind man to vision ... to see beyond eyesight is the product of faith]*

- And then to rush to tell the others what they have experienced ... and through this sharing their faith is confirmed
- *Ite, missa est* ... we never just “leave Mass”



• Every Mass is a gathering of stewards

- We are welcomed ... how do we welcome others? I will contribute to what I feel I am part of
- We are met by God ... how open are we to this personal meeting?
- We are molded ... does Christ change me?
- We are sent ... where does Jesus want me to go?



Caravaggio: The Call of Matthew



- **Go back to the four Eucharistic verbs:**
- Jesus **took** (Hospitality - to accept whatever occurs, whoever comes, as gift)
- Jesus **blessed** (Prayer - to bring things into an intentional relationship with God)
- Jesus **broke** (Formation - to divide what we have into portions that will nourish another)
- Jesus **gave** (Service - to bestow a gift on another)

