

## **FAUX FAITH OR CONCRETE COMMITMENT**

### *A Reflection on Stewardship as a Disciple's Response*

It has now been six years since our parish formally adopted the stewardship way of life. During that time we have been incredibly graced by an understanding of the spirituality of stewardship. We have come to understand that all that we are and all that we have are gifts from God. In gratitude for these gifts, we have come to experience profound happiness in giving back to God the first portion of our time, talent and treasure to help build the Kingdom.

The desire for God is intrinsic in the human heart, since we were created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw us to himself. Faith is our response to God, who has revealed himself and given himself to us. Only in God will we find truth and happiness as we search for meaning and purpose in our lives. Our faith is strengthened through prayer, reading Sacred Scripture, attendance at Mass, and reception of the Sacraments.

We who claim to be disciples must live out in our everyday actions what we profess of our faith so that we may be for others a light that leads to Jesus Christ. Enlightened discipleship involves hearing, understanding and implementing the Word of God.

Jesus' words on action and commitment are clear. We read in the Gospel: "Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rains fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined." (Matthew 7: 24-27)

The true measure of a successful stewardship parish must be viewed one parishioner at a time. As each parishioner embraces stewardship, his or her actions result in positive changes in the lives of the members of their family, neighborhood, parish community, workplace, and beyond to further advance the Kingdom of God.

A few examples: A father turns off the television and invests his time with his children and wife, the family prays together at the evening meal and talks about their day, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ becomes more important than who won the football game, a husband hears the heart of his wife and defends it rather than crushes it, attendance at Mass as a family becomes something to look forward to rather than an obligation.

Meaningful discipleship requires both real faith and concrete commitment to action. Through stewardship we are living our lives God-centered rather than self-centered.

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