

# *Spirituality of Stewardship*

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*Jerry Iles' pulpit talk on the Stewardship of Time and Talent*

Good morning (evening), my name is Jerry Iles. First, thank you to Msgr. Kihneman and Father Julian for allowing me to talk about the Spirituality of Stewardship of time and talent. In May last year a group from Sacred Heart attended a workshop with about 150 others from our diocese. We were privileged to hear Father Andrew Kemberling of Saint Thomas More Church in Centennial, Colorado.

Father Kemberling and his stewardship director, Mila, overwhelmed us as he told about the stewardship ministries pioneered by his parish. We came back motivated for Sacred Heart parish to adopt his program. You responded to our presentations in January with “prayer for religious vocations”, and then in March for the altar call of “Stewardship of faith and prayer”, and again in April for the stewardship of the earth. We thank you for your positive responses to these stewardship programs.

As Father Kemberling explained to us, before we can understand the stewardship of time, talent, or treasure, we must first understand the core value that

EVERYTHING WE ARE-- AND ALL THAT WE HAVE-- IS  
FOUNDED ON THE BASIC IDEA OF GOD AS  
CREATOR.....WE ARE CREATED BY GOD AND  
FOR GOD.

In a very real way, we are not our own, we belong to God. The air we breathe, our heartbeat, our very existence, and all that sustains our life is from God. Scriptures say this well. St. Peter wrote in his first book, chapter 4, verse 10 :

“AS EACH ONE HAS RECEIVED A GIFT, USE IT TO  
SERVE ONE ANOTHER AS GOOD STEWARDS OF GOD’S  
VARIED GRACE.”

So, once we understand that core value, we then know that returning these gifts to God is our primary calling. Giving back to God is our duty

because we need to give, not giving to a need.

But as Father Kemberling explained, God wants us to allow Him take the lead in our stewardship instead of having earthly limitations. It was a new concept for us that we grabbed with open minds.

God has given to each of us some special gift that makes us unique. Some of us are talented as carpenters, or seamstresses, mechanics or gardeners, organizers or

leaders, electricians or artists. But, even if we have no specialized recognized trade, there are talents still to be returned to God--for example, if we have a special concern for the poor or the unborn or the homeless, then we are called to use our time to work for these issues. Like all God's gifts, our time and talents are meant to be used – not just for ourselves –but for God and His people.

Our first gift is time and we primarily give our time to God in prayer—as reflected in over 1100 answers the call to prayer in March. Thus, prayer is meeting our obligation to give back to God. But giving our talents must go together with giving time – we need the two together for complete stewardship.

I know that giving of ourselves is sometimes difficult, but my wife and I believe that to be involved in our faith; we have to live that faith by active participation in the parish. Giving of time and talent is a sacrifice worth as much as a monetary contribution. In fact there have been times in our marriage when time and talent was all we had to give because money was tight.

A 1970 songwriter, Jim Croce, wrote his classic “Time in a Bottle” song with the following lyrics:

“THERE NEVER SEEMS TO BE ENOUGH TIME TO DO THE THINGS YOU WANT TO DO, ONCE YOU FIND THEM. I’VE LOOKED AROUND ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT YOU’RE THE ONE I WANT TO GO THROUGH TIME WITH.”

We all want to go with God through time eternally. As a parish, we have a common purpose – to go beyond our life here on earth to be with Him for eternity.

Truly, as the song says, there is not enough time to do everything, but as members of this parish, it is important that we recognize a way to re-commit to God what is His. Yes, everyone has a family, personal life and obligations outside our parish. But commitment to God’s work here at Sacred Heart will secure our future generation an opportunity to continue God’s plan.

Over the past 46 years of our marriage, my wife and I have been involved in many ministries. We learned that everything we do for God is a ministry. Whether we worked Bingo, attended an ACTS retreat, or talk to you today about volunteering our time and talents **EVERYTHING WE DO FOR GOD IS A MINISTRY.** There is no

task too small, if it is all for God and his church, it is a ministry.

Sacred Heart is a very active parish. To find out about our many stewardship opportunities, our newly compiled time and talent brochure is available today with the bulletin to help you make your choices. To help you fill out a commitment card next week, read over the brochure for reference and study the different volunteer opportunities. If you want more information, call the contact person listed for each ministry. We need men, women, youth, children, old, and young to do God's work. For children and youth, your volunteer place is in the liturgy commission such as altar server, choir, usher, and so forth.

Next week you will be asked to complete a commitment form; one for each individual, not one for the whole family will be done. On the Commitment form you will

First, check the ministries that you are already actively involved with

Second, check what you are interested in joining or learning more about

Third, you will have an opportunity to write about any special talents you have, and, finally, a contact for the ministry will contact you very soon.

Here are a few of the outstanding accomplishments of our ministries this year.

\*\*The St. Vincent de Paul Society served over 1400 families in the past year and they visit 10 to 20 people in the jail each week.

\*\*The Gregory Ladies have donated over \$60,000 to support of our parish school to keep tuition affordable.

\*\*As recommended by our finance committee, we expanded funding to our youth Life Teen ministry and sponsored 70 students on retreat this summer in Steubenville, La.

\*\*This year, 22 people were received into Sacred Heart parish after completing the RCIA program for adults or children.

\*\*Each Sunday and on the First Friday of the month, Eucharistic ministers bring communion to over 70 people at home or in the nursing home. Also on the first Friday, the homebound are visited by a priest, or deacon

These are only a few examples of spirituality of stewardship in time and talent as Sacred Heart parish reaches out to expand and grow.

You might wonder where you can fit in with our different commissions, and you might think “Our people are already doing a good job so why would I be needed?” We need you because there are not enough individuals involved in the ministries at this time and often the same people are involved in multiple ministries. We so appreciate the dedication of our people, but, we urge you to get involved and give back to God to spread His Love. May God continue to bless each of you and all members of our community. Thank you for your interest and attention. We have some examples of the Commitment form available with the bulletin, and members of the stewardship committee will be available after mass to help answer your questions.