

A close-up photograph of a traditional stained glass window. The design features a repeating pattern of red, yellow, and green colors. The red areas form large, stylized leaf-like shapes that overlap each other. Between these larger shapes are smaller, yellowish-green diamond-shaped elements. The overall effect is one of intricate, organic geometry.

Kingdom
Stewardship

A Steward's Prayer
and
Reflection Journal

The Gospel of Mark

**Prepared by the Stewardship Office of
The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio**

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GOD'S GIFTS *for* **GOD'S PEOPLE**
time, talent and treasure





Stewardship

Time

Talent

Treasure

Kingdom Stewardship

A Steward's Prayer
and
Reflection Journal

The Gospel of Mark

Name: _____

Date: _____

A Steward's 30 Day Prayer Journal

This Prayer Journal was created specifically and prayerfully for you by the Stewardship Office of The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio. Our hope is that it will assist, inspire, and encourage you as you live out your life of Stewardship. As the U. S. Bishops stated in their letter on stewardship: "A Christian Steward is: One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

Scriptural selections are taken from Proverbs, the seven penitential psalms, and the Gospel of Mark.

Stewardship is a way of life! Stewardship is the sincere profound response we make when God touches our lives. It is the response we make as we imitate Jesus Christ and ponder the Saving Cross and Resurrection. New wonderful spiritual adventures and opportunities are waiting for you.

May you receive gratefully and give generously.

The Stewardship Office
Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio



The Seven Penitential Psalms Psalm 130 (Prayer for Pardon and Mercy)

Out of the depths I call to you, Lord; Lord, hear my cry!
May your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.
If you, Lord, mark our sins, Lord, who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness and so you are revered.

I wait with longing for the Lord, my soul waits for his word.
My soul looks for the Lord more than sentinels for daybreak.
More than sentinels for daybreak, let Israel look for the Lord,
For with the Lord is kindness, with him is full redemption,
And God will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Psalm 143 (A Prayer in Distress)

Lord, hear my prayer; in your faithfulness listen to my pleading;
answer me in your justice.
Do not enter into judgment with your servant;
before you no living being can be just.
The enemy has pursued me; they have crushed my life to the ground.
They have left me in darkness like those long dead.
My spirit is faint within me; my heart is dismayed.
I remember the days of old; I ponder all your deeds; the works of your hands I recall.
I stretch out my hands to you; I thirst for you like a parched land.

Hasten to answer me, Lord; for my spirit fails me.
Do not hide your face from me, lest I become like those descending to the pit.
At dawn let me hear of your kindness, for in you I trust.
Show me the path I should walk, for to you I entrust my life.
Rescue me, Lord, from my foes, for in you I hope.
Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.
May your kind spirit guide me on ground that is level.
For your name's sake, Lord, give me life; in your justice lead me out of distress.
In your kindness put an end to my foes; destroy all who attack me,
for I am your servant.



The Seven Penitential Psalms

Psalm 102 (Prayer in Time of Distress)

Lord, hear my prayer; let my cry come to you.
Do not hide your face from me now that I am in distress.
Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly.
For my days vanish like smoke; my bones burn away as in a furnace.
I am withered, dried up like grass, too wasted to eat my food.
From my loud groaning I become just skin and bones.
I am like a desert owl, like an owl among the ruins.
I lie awake and moan, like a lone sparrow on the roof.
All day long my enemies taunt me; in their rage, they make my name a curse.
I eat ashes like bread, mingle my drink with tears.
Because of your furious wrath, you lifted me up just to cast me down.
My days are like a lengthening shadow; I wither like the grass.

But you, Lord, are enthroned forever; your renown is for all generations.
You will again show mercy to Zion; now is the time for pity;
the appointed time has come.
Its stones are dear to your servants; its dust moves them to pity.
The nations shall revere your name, Lord, all the kings of the earth, your glory,
Once the Lord has rebuilt Zion and appeared in glory.
Heeding the plea of the lowly, not scorning their prayer.
Let this be written for the next generation, for a people not yet born,
that they may praise the Lord:
“The Lord looked down from the holy heights, viewed the earth from heaven,
To attend to the groaning of the prisoners, to release those doomed to die.”
Then the Lord’s name will be declared on Zion, the praise of God in Jerusalem,
When all peoples and kingdoms gather to worship the Lord.

God has shattered my strength in mid-course, has cut short my days.
I plead, O my God, do not take me in the midst of my days.
Your years last through all generations.
Of old you laid the earth’s foundations; the heavens are the work of your hands.
They perish, but you remain; they all wear out like a garment;
Like clothing you change them and they are changed,
but you are the same, your years have no end.
May the children of your servants live on; may their descendants live in
your presence.

How to use this Stewardship Journal

This prayer journal was designed for you. Please make it your own and include it as part of your prayer time. Each day set aside a few minutes to read and reflect on the prayers, scriptures, and questions. Stewardship is a life-long journey of spiritual development and conversion which strives for the perfection of the Children of God. This prayer journal is intended to be one of many small steps along the way.

During Weeks One and Two verses from *The Divine Praises* and the seven penitential psalms are used as a daily prayer. If you would like to include the complete prayer or Psalm as part of your daily prayer or reflection please refer to pages 49 through 53.

As you pray through this Stewardship Prayer Journal may the Holy Spirit inspire and fill you. May you be blessed with peace, love, good health, gifts, talents, and abundant treasures. May God guard and protect you, your family, and your community. May each page bring you closer to God and those you love.

The Kingdom of God is at hand. Reach out, grasp it, and pass it on.



Week 1 Prayer

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of Heaven and Earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son, Our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day, he rose again.
He ascended into Heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

The Seven Penitential Psalms

Psalm 38 (Prayer of an Afflicted Sinner - continued)

But I am like the deaf, hearing nothing, like the dumb, saying nothing,
Like someone who does not hear, who has no answer ready.
Lord, I wait for you; O Lord, my God, answer me.
For I fear they will gloat, exult over me if I stumble.

I am very near to falling; my pain is with me always.
I acknowledge my guilt and grieve over my sin.
But many are my foes without cause, a multitude of enemies without reason,
Repaying me evil for good, harassing me for pursuing good.
Forsake me not, O Lord; my God, be not far from me!
Come quickly to help me, my Lord and my salvation!

Psalm 51 (The Miserere: Prayer of Repentance)

Have mercy on me, God, in your goodness; in your abundant
compassion blot out my offense.
Wash away all my guilt; from my sin cleanse me.
For I know my offense; my sin is always before me.
Against you alone have I sinned; I have done such evil in your sight
That you are just in your sentence, blameless when you condemn.
True, I was born guilty, a sinner, even as my mother conceived me.
Still, you insist on sincerity of heart; in my inmost being teach me wisdom.
Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure; wash me, make me whiter than snow.
Let me hear sounds of joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

Turn away your face from my sins; blot out all my guilt.
A clean heart create for me, God; renew in me a steadfast spirit.
Do not drive me from your presence, nor take from me your holy spirit.
Restore my joy in your salvation; sustain in me a willing spirit.
I will teach the wicked your ways that sinners may return to you.
Rescue me from death, God, my saving God,
that my tongue may praise your healing power.
Lord, open my lips; my mouth will proclaim your praise.
For you do not desire sacrifice; a burnt offering you would not accept.
My sacrifice, God, is a broken spirit; God, do not spurn a broken, humbled heart.

Make Zion prosper in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will be pleased with proper sacrifice, burnt offerings and holocausts;
then bullocks will be offered on your altar.



The Seven Penitential Psalms

Psalm 32 (Remission of Sin)

Happy the sinner whose fault is removed, whose sin is forgiven.

Happy those to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, in whose spirit is no deceit.

As long as I kept silent, my bones wasted away; I groaned all the day.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;

 my strength withered as in dry summer heat.

Then I declared my sin to you; my guilt I did not hide. I said,

“I confess my faults to the Lord,” and you took away the guilt of my sin.

Thus should all your faithful pray in time of distress.

Though flood waters threaten, they will never reach them.

You are my shelter; from distress you keep me; with safety you ring me round.

I will instruct you and show you the way you should walk,

 give you counsel and watch over you.

Do not be senseless like horses or mules; with bit and bridle their temper is curbed,
else they will not come to you.

Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but love surrounds those who trust in the Lord.

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.

Psalm 38 (Prayer of an Afflicted Sinner)

Lord, punish me no more in your anger; in your wrath do not chastise me!

Your arrows have sunk deep in me; your hand has come down upon me.

My flesh is afflicted because of your anger; my frame aches because of my sin.

My iniquities overwhelm me, a burden beyond my strength.

Foul and festering are my sores because of my folly.

I am stooped and deeply bowed; all day I go about mourning.

My loins burn with fever; my flesh is afflicted.

I am numb and utterly crushed; I wail with anguish of heart.

My Lord, my deepest yearning is before you; my groaning is not hidden from you.

My heart shudders, my strength forsakes me; the very light of my eyes has failed.

Friends and companions shun my pain; my neighbors stand far off.

Those who seek my life lay snares for me; they seek my misfortune,

 they speak of ruin; they plot treachery all the day.

(Continued)

Week 1 Reflection

One of the scribes said to Jesus, “You are right in saying, ‘God is One and there is no other than he.’ And ‘to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself’ is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that (he) answered with understanding, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.”

Mark 12:32-34

Unlike the scribes and apostles we cannot speak with Jesus face to face. Yet, we are called by faith to believe in and imitate Jesus. But why do we believe in Jesus? How can we imitate the Jesus Mark so simply and profoundly portrays in his Gospel as God and man if we don’t understand who He is?

This first week we will reflect on who Jesus is. We will strive to know Jesus more intimately so that we can learn to love and respond as Jesus did.

As Good Stewards may we continue to mature and grow in love. May we always and everywhere express His love so completely and passionately that like Jesus we spend the rest of our lives giving our love and ourselves away.

This week may you hear Jesus say to you, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God.”

Jesus increase my faith, fill me with your love and wisdom. Help me know and imitate you!

Week 1 Day 1
Jesus Christ: Son

A wise son makes his father glad.

Proverbs 10:1

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

Mark 1:9-11

How does the phrase, “like father, like son,” hold true for Jesus and His Father? Why was God the Father pleased with Jesus? Why did the Holy Spirit descend upon Jesus? How is God the Father a good steward?

Who is your Beloved? Why is knowing and doing what pleases your Beloved important?

Who has pleased you lately? Tell someone.

“Blessed be God.”

The Divine Praises

Blessed be God

Blessed be his Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be his most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be his most Precious Blood.

Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin, and Mother.

Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in his angels and in his saints.

The Seven Penitential Psalms
Psalm 6 (Prayer in Distress)

Do not reprove me in your anger, Lord, nor punish me in your wrath.
Have pity on me, Lord, for I am weak; heal me, Lord,
for my bones are trembling.

In utter terror is my soul – and you, Lord, how long ...?

Turn, Lord, save my life; in your mercy rescue me.

For who among the dead remembers you? Who praises you in Sheol?

I am wearied with sighing; all night long tears drench my bed;
my couch is soaked with weeping.
My eyes are dimmed with sorrow, worn out because of all my foes.

Away from me, all who do evil! The Lord has heard my weeping.
The Lord has heard my prayer; the Lord takes up my plea.
My foes will be terrified and disgraced; all will fall back in sudden shame.



Week 1 Day 2
Jesus Christ: The Holy One

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the just man runs to it and is safe.

Proverbs 18:10

In their synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!”

Mark 1:23-24

Why do you think the unclean spirits knew Jesus was the “Holy One of God” when the Pharisees and others did not?

Why is Jesus called holy? How does holiness destroy evil? How does it keep us safe and strong? How was (is) Jesus a good steward?

What is holiness? In what ways are you holy?

Prayers

The Divine Praises

The Seven Penitential Psalms

Psalm 6 Prayer in Distress

Psalm 32 Remission of Sin

Psalm 38 Prayer of an Afflicted Sinner

Psalm 51 The Misere: Prayer of Repentance

Psalm 102 Prayer in Time of Distress

Psalm 130 Prayer for Pardon and Mercy

Psalm 143 A Prayer in Distress



Week 1 Day 3

Jesus Christ: A Man with a Purpose

He who finds me finds life, and wins favor from the Lord.
Proverbs 8:35

Jesus rose very early before dawn and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Mark 1:35-39

In the Gospel verse above how is Jesus portrayed as God and man? Why do you think Jesus went off to a deserted place to pray? How and what do you think He prayed?

How does knowing Jesus help define your purpose?
What is your purpose in life?

***"Blessed be Jesus Christ,
true God and true Man."***

My Time, Talent, and Treasure

A deepening sense of identity as the "gifted by God",
leads to an endless "call to be given away."

Six Themes of Stewardship - Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

How do you know you are gifted by God? How do you give your self away?

How can you use your Time, Talent, and Treasure to better give your self away?

Do you need to change the ways you use your Time, Talent, and Treasure to better serve God? How can your faith community help you do this?



My Time, Talent, and Treasure

Our mission is to return our gifts to God with increase and the most effective means of doing so is by participation in the life of the Church.

Six Themes of Stewardship - Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

What does it mean to return our gifts with increase to God?
How is this prudent stewardship?

Time is a gift. How do you return your Time to God?

Talent is a gift. How do you return your Talent to God?

Treasure is a gift. How do you return your Treasure to God?

Week 1 Day 4 Jesus Christ: Son of God

Who has gone up to heaven and come down again – who has cupped the wind in his hands? Who has bound up the waters in a cloak – who has marked out all the ends of the earth? What is his name, what is his son’s name, if you know it?

Proverbs 30:4

At noon darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he breathed his last he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

Mark 15:33, 37-39

Why do you think the centurion called Jesus the “Son of God?”

What does it mean to be a son or daughter? What have you inherited from your family? What have you inherited from God? How are you a good steward of your inheritance?



“Blessed be the Name of Jesus.”





Week 1 Day 5

Jesus Christ: Source of Life

To my words be attentive, to my sayings incline your ear; let them not slip out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them, to man's whole being they are health. With closest custody, guard your heart, for in it are the sources of life.

Proverbs 4:20-23

A cloud came, casting a shadow over Peter, James, and John; then from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."

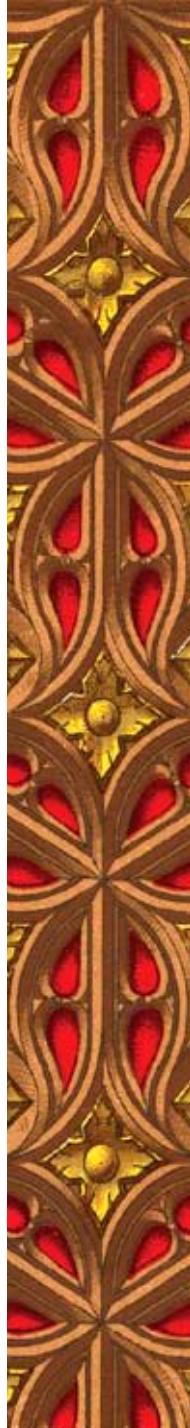
Mark 9:7

What was Jesus' "source of life?" Who or what is your "source of life?"

How do you guard your heart? How do you think Jesus guarded his heart? How is this good stewardship?

Are you attentive to Jesus' words? Which of His sayings do you keep within your heart?

"Blessed be his most Sacred Heart."



Week 4 Stewardship

My Identity – My Calling

Participation in the worship, life, and mission of the Catholic Church is a uniquely powerful means of deepening our union with Jesus Christ, uniting us with the Body of Christ, and conforming us to the likeness of Christ in the world.

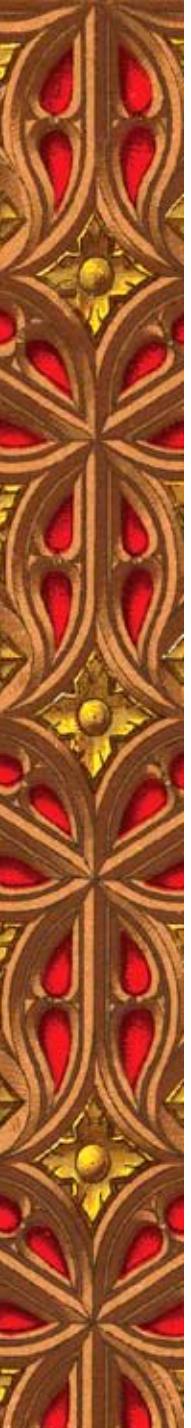
Six Themes of Stewardship - Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

How does your participation in the life of the Church strengthen your faith and your Church?

How do you know you are united to the Body of Christ? What signs give you this confirmation?

How can you use your Time, Talent, and Treasure to deepen your union with Jesus Christ?

What signs accompany good stewardship? How does God work through you to help build up the Kingdom of God?



Week 4 Day 7 Stewards Go Forth

The Lord by wisdom founded the earth, established the heavens by understanding; by his knowledge the depths break open, and the clouds drop down dew... Let not these slip out of your sight: keep advice and counsel in view. So will they be life to your soul, and an adornment for your neck. Then you may securely go your way; your foot will never stumble.

Proverbs 3:19-23

So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.

Mark 16:19-20

How is the Lord working with you today? What signs accompany your work?

How do you keep advice and counsel in view? What does it mean and how does it feel to be filled with life? How does being filled with life influence your stewardship?

Who encourages you to go forth to love and serve the Lord?

Bless the Lord with your Time, Talent, and Treasure.



Week 1 Day 6 Jesus Christ: Servant and Savior

He who obeys me dwells in security, in peace, without fear of harm.

Proverbs 1:33

Jesus said to the Apostles, “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45

How does Jesus bring peace into our lives?

What does the word “ransom” mean? Why do we call Jesus “Savior?” What has Jesus done for you lately?

Has anyone ever saved your life, or saved you from a debt, a poor decision, or a difficult situation? How did you repay their goodness and generosity?

***“Blessed be His most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus
in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.”***



Week 1 Day 7

Jesus Christ: Wise Counselor

The Lord gives wisdom, from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He has counsel in store for the upright, he is the shield of those who walk honestly, guarding the paths of justice, protecting the way of his pious ones.

Proverbs 2:6-8

Jesus came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands!”

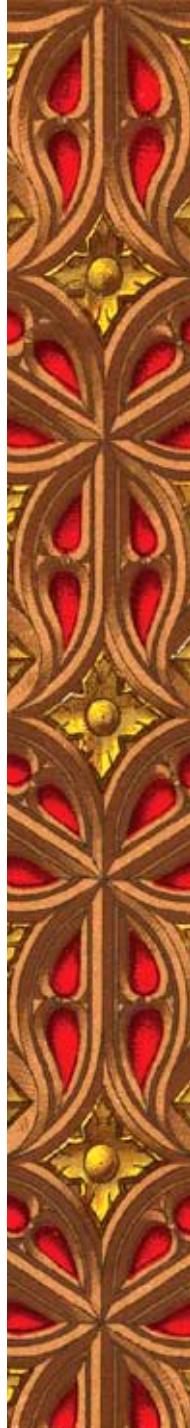
Mark 6:1-2

What kind of wisdom did Jesus have? Where did it come from?

Where does your wisdom come from and how do you use it for the good of others?

Who is the Holy Spirit and why do we refer to the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete? How is the Holy Spirit a good steward?

“Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.”



Week 4 Day 6

Stewards Labor

Entrust your works to the Lord, and your plans will succeed.

Proverbs 16:3

Jesus said to them, “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.”

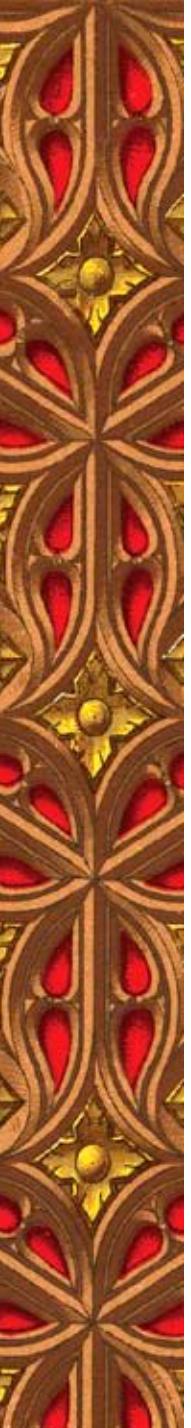
Mark 16:15

Do you proclaim the Gospel? How do you proclaim it to every creature? How does your stewardship proclaim the Gospel message?

Do you entrust your works to the Lord? What is the result?

Do you think God helps your plans succeed? Why? Why not?

Bless God! Entrust your work to God!



Week 4 Day 5 Stewards Witness

The truthful witness saves lives.

Proverbs 14:25

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint Jesus. On entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were utterly amazed. He said to them, “Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. But go and tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you.’”

Mark 16:1, 5-7

What is the Gospel message? What do you tell others about Jesus?

Where do you seek Jesus? Where do you find Him?

Are you a truthful witness of the Good News? How is the life of a Good Steward a truthful witness of the Gospel?

Bless God! Tell someone about Jesus.



Week 1 Stewardship My Identity – My Calling

Human creation has a spousal quality to it a mutuality, a giving and taking.

Six Themes of Stewardship - Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

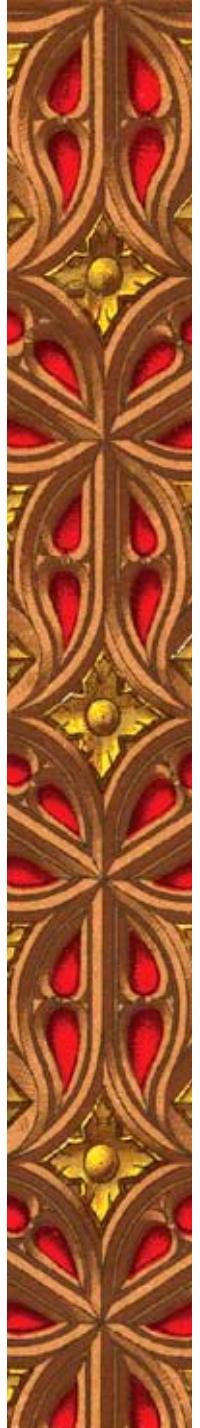
Who is Jesus?

What does it mean to have a spousal relationship with someone? Do you have a spousal relationship with God? Describe the “giving and taking” in your relationship with God.

Can you truly love or have an intimate relationship with someone you don’t know or who doesn’t know you?

How well do you know Jesus?

What do good stewards, good parents, and good spouses have in common?



Week 4 Day 4 Stewards Provide

Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce; then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow.

Proverbs 3:9-10

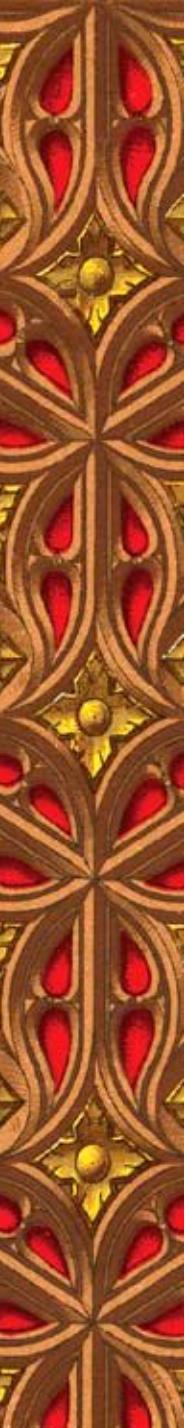
Jesus said, “To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.”

Mark 4:30-32

How does the parable of the mustard seed illustrate God’s providence? How do you provide for your self, your soul, your family, and your church? What was Jesus saying to us in the above parable?

When you gather with family and friends do you bring your leftovers or first fruits? What are your first fruits?

Bless God! Give God your first fruits!



Week 4 Day 3 Stewards Give

He who has compassion on the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his good deed.

Proverbs 19:17

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents. Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, “Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.”

Mark 12:41-44

How are good stewards like the poor widow? How does the Lord repay the compassionate for their good deeds?

Do you give from the heart? Do you give to some and not to others? Why or why not?

Why is it unfair, unjust, and unchristian to judge others by their outer appearance? What does your outer appearance say about you?

Bless God! Give God a treasure!



Week 2 Reflection

Jesus began to teach by the sea, “Hear this! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep. And when the sun rose, it was scorched and it withered for lack of roots. Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it and it produced no grain. And some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit. It came up and grew and yielded thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.” He added, “Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear.”

Mark 4:1, 3-9

As Good Stewards we value rich soil. We know that as the seasons of our lives change we need to be attentive to our grounding. We need to keep the soil in our lives rich, fertile, and ready to receive God’s Holy seeds.

This week we will seek ways to grow in holiness. We will reflect on how sin takes root in our lives, leads to sorrow, separates us from God, others, and ourselves and undermines good stewardship. We will pray using select verses from the seven penitential psalms. Throughout history countless holy men and women have prayed these psalms in repentance and as penance for sins. May we, like these holy men and women who modeled good stewardship, repent, pray without ceasing, strive to hear God’s voice, grow in holiness, and yield a hundredfold!

Bless me, Lord with true contrition, honest sorrow, and deep gratitude. “Show me the path I should walk, for to you I entrust my life.” Psalm 143:8



Week 2 Day 1

Repent

He who loves correction loves knowledge.

Proverbs 12:1

John (the) Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Mark 1:4

Why do John the Baptist and Jesus ask us to repent? How do you repent? Do good stewards repent differently than others?

Have you ever found something out after you sinned that you wish you had known before you sinned? Would it have made a difference? If you could warn others about a particular sin what would that sin be?

How has sin separated you from your friends or those you love?

*"Out of the depths I call to you, Lord;
Lord, hear my cry." Psalm 130:1*

Week 4 Day 2

Stewards Sacrifice

Let your heart hold fast my words. Keep my commands, that you may live! Receive my words, and the years of your life shall be many.

Proverbs 4:4, 10

Jesus summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? What could one give in exchange for his life?"

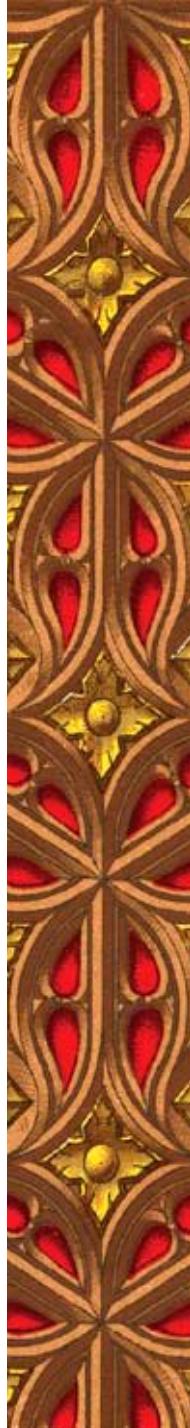
Mark 8:34-37

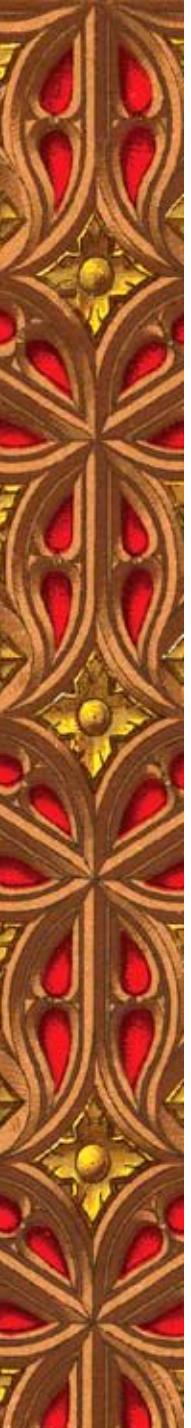
Why does Jesus command us to take up our cross and follow Him? How does keeping this command bring life? Do good stewards take up and carry their cross differently than others?

What is your cross like? Has your cross brought you suffering, blessing, or holiness? Have you ever been tempted to leave your cross along the way? Why? Who has helped you carry your cross?

What sacrifices are you willing to make so others have a better life? So they know Jesus?

Bless God! Take up your cross!





Week 4 Day 1 Stewards Care

The just man has a care for the rights of the poor.

Proverbs 29:7

When Jesus saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. By now it was already late and his disciples approached him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already very late. Dismiss them so that they can go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat." He said to them in reply, "Give them some food yourselves."

Mark 6:34-37

Who are the good stewards in your community who feed the hungry? How well is it working? How do you recognize and care for the poor and the hungry?

How do good stewards care for the rights of others?
How do you care for the rights of others?

Bless God! Show you care!

Week 2 Day 2 Believe

Keep my words, and treasure my commands. Keep my commands and live, my teaching as the apple of your eye; bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 7:1-3

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

Mark 1:14-15

What is written on the tablet of your heart? What commands do you treasure? How can we identify good stewards by their beliefs and actions?

Is this the time of fulfillment? What signs in your life prompt you to believe that the Kingdom of God is at hand?

How does sin rob you of life? How do the sacraments restore life? How does repentance and belief in the gospel affect your daily life?

*"I said, 'I confess my faults to the Lord,'
and you took away the guilt of my sin." Psalm 32:5*

Week 2 Day 3

Come

Come, eat of my food, and drink of the wine I have mixed! Forsake foolishness that you may live; advance in the way of understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied and the years of your life increased.

Proverbs 9:5-6, 11

As Jesus passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Then they abandoned their nets and followed him.

Mark 1:16-18

What was the best invitation you ever received? How do you decide which invitations you accept and which you decline? What is the difference between an invitation to follow Jesus and an invitation to sin?

Does following Jesus set you apart from or unite you with others? How?

What is the consequence of sin? Is sin always foolish? What foolishness do you want or need to forsake?

*"Come quickly to help me,
my Lord and my salvation!" Psalm 38:23*

Week 4 Reflection

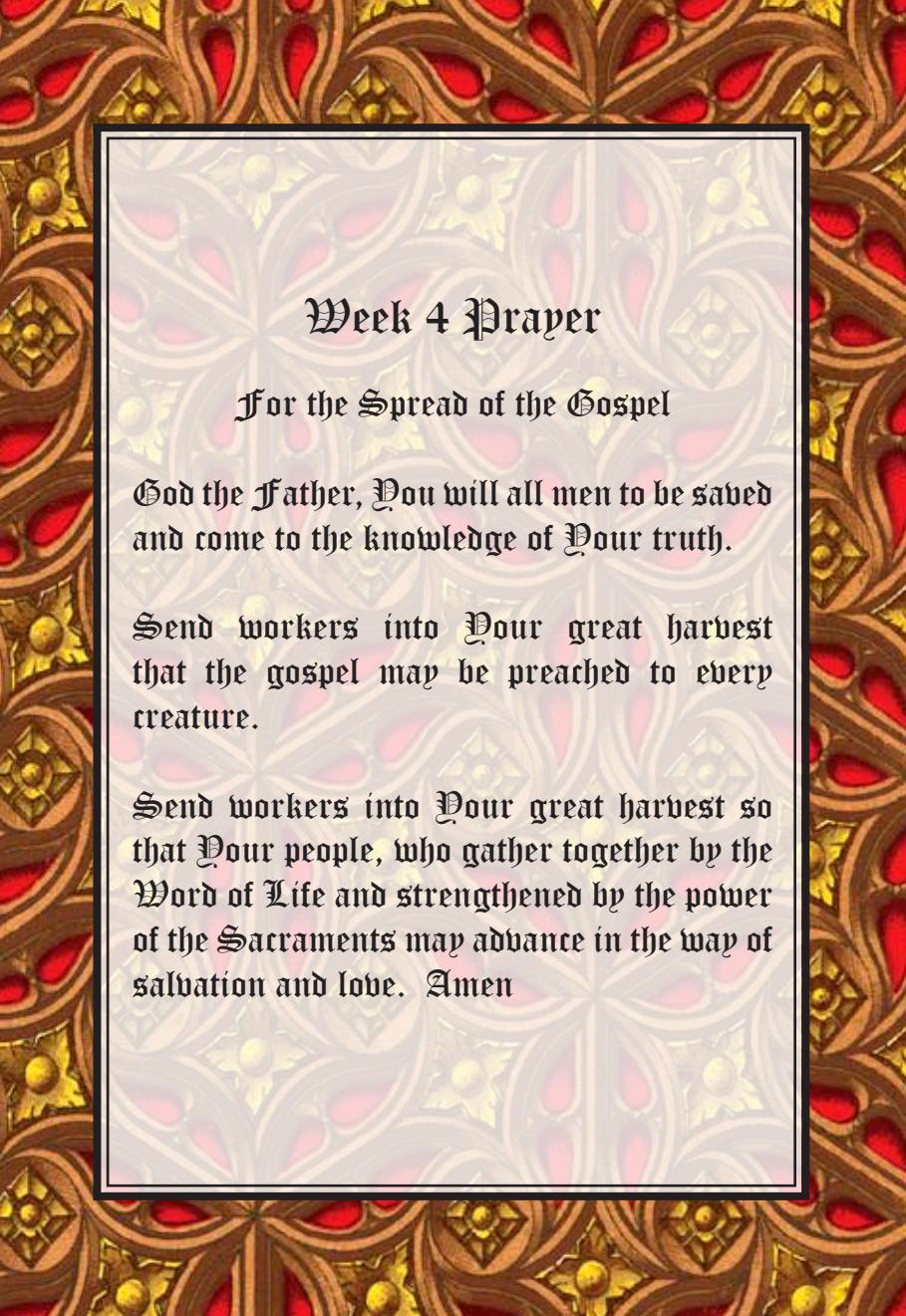
Jesus looked at the rich man, loved him and said to him, "Go, sell what you have, and give to (the) poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

Mark 10:21-23

As Stewards of God's creations, we believe that all creation is good. We trust God and are compelled by love and compassion to go forth to share God's message and make it known. We understand that we are accountable to God. We responsibly provide for and protect our families, our communities, our faith, our planet, and our selves. We respond to the Gospel message with gratitude and willingly commit our Time, Talent, and Treasure to God.

This final week we will reflect on spreading the Good News as we seek ways to share Jesus with others. Good Stewards know Jesus' message of peace, love, and joy can free humanity. We know that imitating and following Jesus is not easy. Yet, we believe that when we do we can transcend our egos and selfishness. We believe that when we live out the Gospel message we can overcome the weariness and darkness of sin and the vanity and materialism of our culture. Our desire and passion is to become like Jesus and to further the Kingdom of God.

Lord Jesus, give me wisdom. Give me the strength and courage to follow you. Bless the work of my hands and the path I follow. Keep me safe. May your Kingdom come. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!



Week 2 Day 4

Rest

Receive my words, and the years of your life shall be many. On the way of wisdom I direct you, I lead you on straightforward paths. When you walk, your step will not be impeded, and should you run, you will not stumble. Hold fast to instruction, never let her go; keep her, for she is your life.

Proverbs 4:10-13

After Herod beheaded John the Baptist the apostles gathered together with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat. So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place.

Mark 6:30-32

Who encourages you to rest when you grow weary? Have you ever been so worn out that you needed rescued?

How does rest lead to holiness and allow us to resist temptation? What instruction do you hold fast? How can following Jesus' instructions bring life?

*“Turn, Lord, save my life;
in your mercy rescue me.” Psalm 6:5*





Week 2 Day 5

Accept

All the ways of a man may be right in his own eyes, but it is the Lord who proves hearts. To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

Proverbs 21:2-3

Jesus said: “Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.”

Mark 10:15

What does it mean to accept the Kingdom of God like a child? Are children or adults more inclined to do what is right and just? Why? Why not? How is acceptance a mark of a good steward?

In the midst of temptation, trials, and sin how do you remind yourself that God is often like a child, faithful and filled with acceptance and forgiveness?

*“Lord, hear my prayer; in your faithfulness
listen to my pleading, answer me in your justice.”*
Psalm 143:1



Week 3 Stewardship

My Identity – My Calling

**We give not because of the many needs of others,
but because of who we are as the gifted and called.**

Six Themes of Stewardship - Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

Why did Jesus heal so many people? Why is good health important? How are you a good steward of your body, heart, and soul? How are you a good steward of your family, faith, community and the earth?

Who are you? How are you gifted and called?

Why and how do you express your gratitude to God?
Why do you give?

What path are you on? Is it straight? Where does it lead? Who travels with you on your path? Are you a good steward of your path?

How has your faith moved mountains, changed circumstances, or brought healing? How are you a good steward of your faith?



Week 3 Day 7 Jesus Heal Me!

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence rely not; in all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes, fear the Lord and turn away from evil. This will mean health for your flesh and vigor for your bones.

Proverbs 3:5-8

After making the crossing, they came to land at Gennesaret and tied up there. As they were leaving the boat, people immediately recognized him. They scurried about the surrounding country and began to bring in the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. Whatever villages or towns or countryside he entered, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak; and as many as touched it were healed.

Mark 6:53-56

What does it mean to trust in the Lord with all your heart? How has the Lord made your path straight?

How do the sacraments keep us on a straight path and lead us to Jesus? Does living a sacramental life affect stewardship? How does Jesus reach out and touch you through the sacraments?

Jesus make me whole and holy!



Week 2 Day 6 Serve

He who confers benefits will be amply enriched, and he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Proverbs 11:25

Jesus told the disciples: “Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward.”

Mark 9:41

When you serve others do you feel refreshed or enriched? When you serve others does your service affect the way you feel about your sins?

Does sin run in families? Does good stewardship?

What can the next generations learn from your service?

“May the children of your servants live on; may their descendants live in your presence.”
Psalm 102:29



Week 2 Day 7

Receive

From the fruit of his words a man has his fill of good things, and the work of his hands comes back to reward him.

Proverbs 12:14

Jesus said, “Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come.”

Mark 10:29-30

What have you given up to follow Jesus? Was it worth it? What have you received in return? How do good stewards prepare themselves to receive all God offers?

Are you willing to receive Jesus' forgiveness and be made whole and holy?

Why did so many people believe that Jesus could heal them? Why did they follow Him?

“God, in your goodness...wash away all my guilt; from my sin cleanse me.” Psalm 51:3-4



Week 3 Day 6

Jesus Cleanse Me!

Each man's ways are plain to the Lord's sight; all their paths he surveys.

Proverbs 5:21

A leper came to Jesus (and kneeling down) begged him and said, “If you wish, you can make me clean.” Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, “I do will it. Be made clean.” The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean.

Mark 1:40-42

Why do you think the leper believed that Jesus could heal him? What does it mean to be made clean?

Does knowing that your ways are plain to the Lord and that God surveys your path give you confidence? Why or why not? How is God a good steward of your path?

Have you ever begged God for something? What happened?

Jesus create in me a clean heart!



Week 3 Day 5 Jesus Teach Me!

Instruct a wise man, and he becomes still wiser; teach a just man, and he advances in learning.

Proverbs 9:9

Jesus said to the paralytic, “That you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth” – he said to the paralytic, “I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home.” He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this.”

Mark 2:10-12

What makes Jesus a good teacher? Why did the paralytic do what Jesus told him to do?

How does Jesus model good stewardship in the above Gospel passage?

What did Jesus teach you this week and what have you learned about yourself?

Jesus teach me to be like you.



Week 2 Stewardship My Identity – My Calling

In community we identify our gifts, grow them, encourage each other as stewards, and are held accountable for the productive use of our gifted lives for the Kingdom.

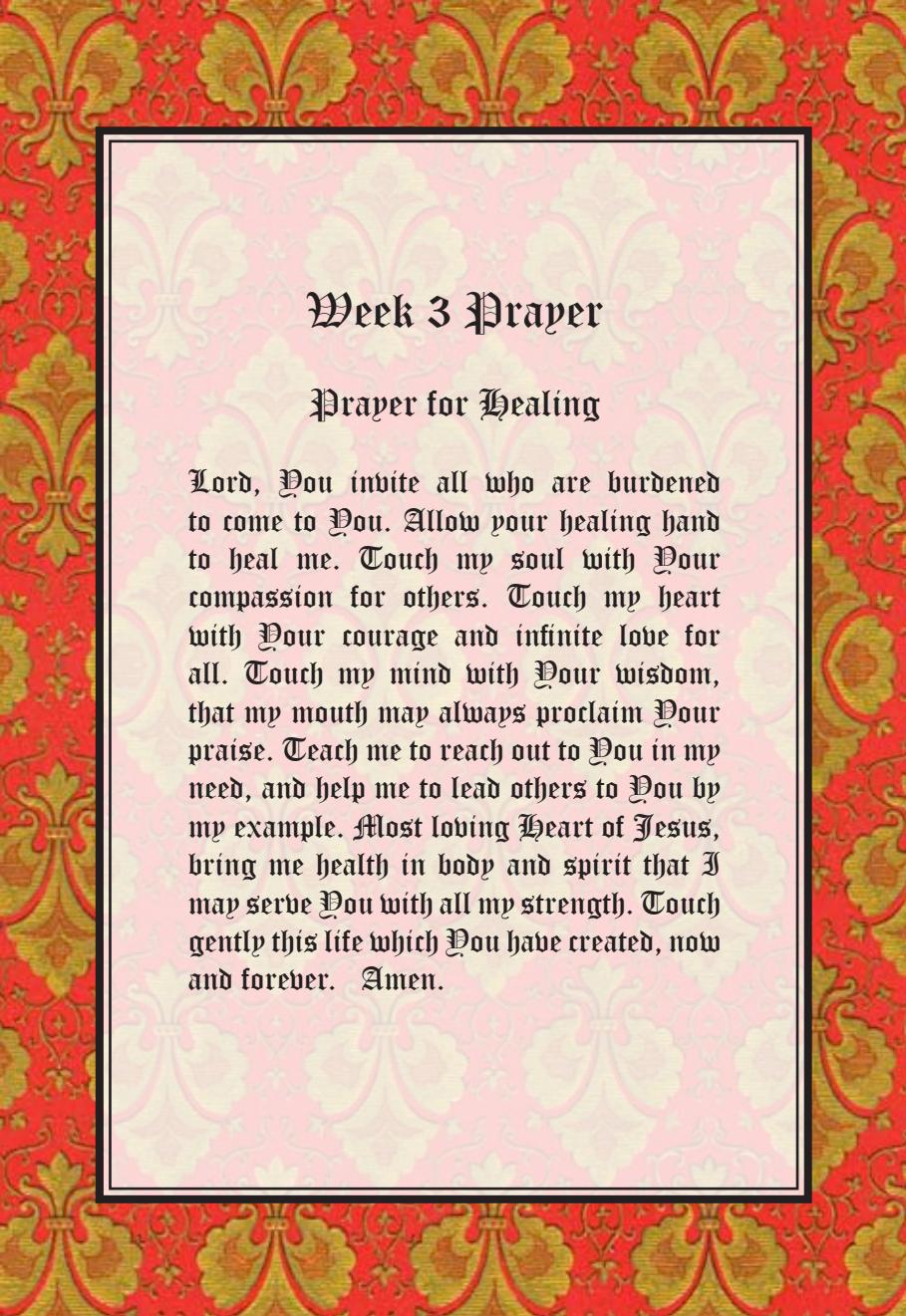
Six Themes of Stewardship - Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio

How do you keep the soil of your soul rich and fertile? What are the thorns that you need to weed out so holy seeds can grow? How are you growing and tending your gifts?

Do we have to wait until we are free of sin before we can or should use our gifts? How does the encouragement to use your gifts strengthen you and help you avoid sin?

How does repentance and understanding the effects of sin exemplify good stewardship and further the Kingdom of God?

Who are you accountable to for the productive use of your gifts and your life?



Week 3 Day 4 Jesus Forgive Me!

Love covers all offenses.

Proverbs 10:12

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Child, your sins are forgiven.”

Mark 2:1-5

Why do you think forgiveness is important to God? Is forgiveness necessary for good stewardship?

Why is forgiveness sometimes easy and sometimes difficult? Has anyone ever refused to forgive you? If so how did that affect you? How has forgiveness touched your life? How do you help others seek forgiveness and receive healing?

Whose love supports and sustains you? How does your love and support sustain others?

Jesus forgive me!



Week 3 Day 3

Jesus Call Me!

Let your eyes look straight ahead and your glance be directly forward. Survey the path for your feet, and let all your ways be sure. Turn neither to right nor to left, keep your foot far from evil.

Proverbs 4:25-27

Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, he is calling you." He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

Mark 10:46-47, 49-52

How do others help you hear Jesus' voice? When and how have others brought you to Jesus? How is this good stewardship? What do you think Bartimaeus and Timaeus said to each other this day?

Is Jesus calling you today? What does Jesus want? How will you respond? How do you survey your path?

Jesus call me! Give me the courage to answer.



Week 3 Reflection

Jesus said to the Apostles, "Have faith in God. Amen, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it shall be done for him. Therefore I tell you, all that you ask for in prayer, believe that you will receive it and it shall be yours. When you stand to pray, forgive anyone against whom you have a grievance, so that your heavenly Father may in turn forgive you your transgressions."

Mark 11:22-25

As Good Stewards we believe in and belong to Jesus our Alpha and Omega. We place our faith and trust in God our Creator who formed each of us in God's Image and Likeness. We belong to God.

This week we will reflect on the many ways Jesus heals and touches us. We know that we need to encourage and support those who are ill. We are also aware that sometimes we need to be healed and may need the help of others. We model good stewardship when we ask God and others for help as we seek healing.

Gently touch me Jesus. Heal my wounded soul and hold me close within your Heart. Jesus make me more like you.



Week 3 Day 1 Jesus Be With Me!

By wisdom is a house built, by understanding is it made firm; and by knowledge are its rooms filled with every precious and pleasing possession.

Proverbs 24:3-4

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons.

Mark 1:29-32

What was precious and pleasing in Simon and Andrew's house this day? How many examples of good stewardship can you identify in the above Gospel passage? Which examples would you like to imitate?

If Jesus visited your house today how would you welcome Him? How do you think he would like to be welcomed and treated? What would you say or ask Him? How is Jesus present in your home? What fills the rooms of your heart and soul?

*With a contrite heart and a humble spirit
I come before you Jesus, be with me today!*



Week 3 Day 2 Jesus Touch Me!

Those who love me I also love, and those who seek me find me.

Proverbs 8:17

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured." Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

Mark 5:25-29

Have you ever sought God's healing touch? Why or why not? Have you touched a holy person? Who? What was that like?

How do you respond to those who need healing? How was the woman with the hemorrhage a good steward of her body? How are you a good steward of your body?

*I follow you with my whole heart and soul!
Touch me Jesus!*