



Renew Your Commitment to Stewardship

The Christian steward knows that stewardship is steeped in the season of harvest. Jesus was deeply attuned to the rhythm of the fields. He observed the seed that fell on rocky soil and the seed that fell on fertile land. He told us the hard truth that unless a grain of wheat dies, it remains but a single grain. It's good, no matter how old we are, to yield to the lessons of this passing season. How do we approach the harvest? Have we prepared our soil well? What will be harvested from our lives? Where are our first fruits going? Are we comfortable acknowledging that the summers of our lives lead inevitably to their autumns, that all of this is God's plan, that faith tells us another spring is promised somewhere in our future? Don't let this year slip away without embracing its opportunity for growth. Make a personal pastoral plan that will deepen the stewardship of your faith life this year. Here are some questions to guide you in the Holy Father's three-fold areas of concern.

Faith seeks truth. What am I to learn about my faith in the God of Jesus Christ?

- Read the Bible. One simple plan is to prayerfully read each day's lectionary readings, which can be found online at www.usccb.org/bible/readings.
- Study the Catholic Catechism and have it on hand to answer questions. The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults is an adaptation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and is a handy reference as well as a good learning tool.
- Intentionally choose several books on Catholic life and spirituality this year. These could range from books on centering prayer to the lives of the saints or perhaps a book on the Second Vatican Council. Immerse yourself in Catholic reading.

Faith leads to Action. What action will witness to my commitment to Christ?

- Pray – We live our faith more fully by cultivating a more disciplined prayer life. The most important time of your day is the time you set aside for prayer.
- Give more generously to the Church, its ministries and related charities. Consider tithing.
- Exchange one hour of time spent in front of the TV or computer each week with an hour spent with others who are in need of your unique gifts.

Faith is not a private affair. With whom should I share my faith in Christ?

- Attend Mass more often, and bring someone with you.
- Join or form a bible study group.
- Talk to a family member, friend or coworker about your faith.