



“\$haring”

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Over the past several weeks, I have shared some thoughts on *Stewardship – A Way of Life* marked by prayer, service and sharing. I used a three-legged stool as an image and during weeks one and two we explored the prayer and service “legs.” This week I offer you some thoughts and ideas on **sharing** - the third and equally important leg of the stewardship stool model.

Without beating around the bush, allow me to be upfront with you and say that when I talk about generous sharing, what indeed I am asking you is to consider a more generous sharing of your material wealth – yes – the financial assets with which you have been blessed. Some of you are probably saying to yourself right now, “I knew this was really about fund-raising and not about living a Catholic lifestyle; all that prayer and service stuff was just a smoke screen.”

If you are one of those folks who still see Stewardship as only a fund-raising program, please reread my previous letters. I pray you will consider my invitation to the possibility of letting God work through you, in prayer and service, in new and wonderful ways. I pray you will consider my invitation to be open to the possibility of conversion – a change of heart that will lead to a new mindset, attitude, and approach to the use of all the gifts God has given you to tend to, care for, and “steward” while you are here on this earth.

We must be honest and admit that one of the most tangible gifts you and I have been blessed with is indeed the gift of money. In the Gospels, Jesus frequently references money. He reminds us, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be.” (Mt 6:21) He also shares the powerful story of the widow whose two small pennies were proportionally greater than the seemingly significant donations of so many others. (Mk 12:41-44)

In some respects, generous sharing is often seen as one of easiest aspects of living *Stewardship as a Way of Life*. It can be relatively easy to write a check out of our excess funds - a simple, single, quick and easy act and we are done with it. This simple, single, quick and easy act however, is not the faith based Stewardship approach to sharing.

This week, consider taking a good, long look at your checkbook through the eyes of faith. What does your register say about where your treasure is, where your heart is? What is it that God wants to do through you to renew your parish and the greater Church through your generous sharing?

The Stewardship approach challenges each and every one of us to a change of heart, a new approach, and new attitude when it comes to stewarding or managing the gift of money with which we have been blessed. We are challenged to prayerfully consider how God wants us to use our money in *Advancing the Mission*, the mission of Jesus. Consider giving, not from excess or extra funds, but giving from the first fruits; giving a proportionate amount and regular percentage in service to the Church and the greater community. We are challenged to go beyond convenient, safe, and conservative giving to sacrificial sharing. We are challenged to be people of faith, hope and trust in a God who will repay us a hundredfold for our generosity.

Grateful for our belief that “Nothing Is Impossible with God” I remain,

Your brother in Christ,



Most Reverend David A. Zubik