
THE WORDS OF STEWARDSHIP

Over the course of the stewardship journey, a variety of ways to remember the practice of stewardship have emerged. Most memorable is time, talent, and treasure. Another way is time, ability, and tithe/alms. More recent is hospitality, prayer, formation, and service.

It is not impossible to get lost in vocabulary and forget that:

Stewardship is the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor.

For those with questions on which short hand words may be used, a brief summary is in order.

Time Talent and Treasure ~ The most familiar way to reference stewardship.

Time—each one of us has a finite amount of time in a day and a lifetime. How we use that time is a reflection of our values. From sporting events to religious activities to leisure time; how we manage that time for the Glory of God is our mission.

Talent—The word talent is truly undervalued. It is not uncommon for people to say “I do not have any talents.” Talent can be narrowly defined as a person that can sing, play an instrument or create art. That narrow definition robs us of so much goodness. From creating websites to fixing lawn mower engines, to caring for those hurting, talent is broadly defined and beautiful. A stewardship parish should consider a system to help people uncover hidden talents and find meaning ways to use them.

Treasure—another word that can be misunderstood. Treasure again can be considered a term only for the “wealthy.” Scriptures tell us through the story of the [widow's offering](#) (Mark 12:42-44) that all of us have financial resources and we are all called to be generous like our loving Father.

Time Ability and Tithe/Alms ~ Another way to reference stewardship

Time—see above.

Ability—A keen variation of the word talent. Perhaps a word with less baggage as it may be easier to realize abilities versus talents. Abilities can take the shape of work related skills, hobbies, and other interests. Just as before, it is important that people within a parish have a meaningful place to use abilities.

Tithe/Alms—These two words are very biblical and refer to what we are called to give and how much. Our financial resources are all of the worldly goods we hold in some monetary value. Cash, cars, real estate, securities or life insurance are examples. A tithe is Old Testament for “a tenth” or 10% ([Gen 28:22](#)). And we are instructed by scripture to give a 10% of our gross income to the Lord.

Hospitality Prayer Formation and Service ~ A fresh framework for stewardship

Hospitality—What we do to help our fellow Christians feel welcome and wanted makes a significant difference. Not obvious but desperately important, the best way to serve parishioners is in the pews. [Hospitality](#) is the key to love one another.

Prayer—our connection to Jesus is our [prayer life](#). Communal and private prayer is how we learn what our loving God has in store for us.

Formation—is not an intellectual exercise alone. No, it is a process of learning, accepting, and adding to our abundant life in Christ.

Service—is not the finale but rather the beginning to a stewardship way of life. Hospitality Prayer and Formation are the preparatory steps to ready each of us [to serve others](#), to live out the new evangelization.