

Twenty fourth Sunday

The phone rings and a little boy answers in a whisper: "Hello?" The caller says: "Hi, is your Mommy there?" "Yes!" "Can I talk to her?" "No!" "Why not?" "She's busy." "What about your Daddy, can I talk to him?" "No! He's busy." "Well, is there anyone else there?" "My little sister." "Is there anyone else there? Another adult?" "Uh, huh. The police." "Can I talk to one of them?" "No, they're busy." "Is there anyone else there?" "Yes, the firemen." "Can I talk to one of them?" "No, they're busy, too." Caller: "Good heavens, your whole family's busy, the police and fire departments are there and they're busy! What's everybody doing?" The little boy giggled and whispered: "They're looking for me."

Dear Friends,

As we continue to reflect on stewardship, let us remember those we reflected on the past week. It is a way of life and a commitment. The next point of stewardship is love in action. When we identify our gifts and talents that God has given, we will have to use it lovingly which brings Joy.

Today's readings help us understand how God expresses his love in action in a way of forgiveness that brought joy.

In the first reading, Moses pleaded for people of Israel. God relented his punishment. Though we may think because of Moses, God did show his mercy and love, but that is the nature of God. God is merciful; not hateful. His love provoked his anger and then he heard Moses' plea. Love needs forgiveness if love is to flourish.

In the Gospel, Jesus shows his love in different ways through the parables. Jesus's father bestows consolation on every Christian who repents. The mean-spiritedness and selfishness of the prodigal son are the backgrounds for the beauty of our Father's love. The Father's love cannot be measured by human values. God's ways are not our ways. God's goodness is unlimited. Jesus the good shepherd wants no one to perish. That's why he uses you and me as his instruments.

The life of a Christian steward models the life of Jesus. It is challenging and even difficult, in many respects, yet intense joy comes to those who take the risk to live as Christian stewards. Women and men who seek to live as stewards learn that "all things work for good for those who love God" (Rom 8:28).

After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. As the Mother of Christ, she lived her ministry in a spirit of fidelity and service; she responded generously to the call. We must ask ourselves: Do we also wish to be disciples of Jesus Christ and Christian stewards of

our world and our Church? Central to our human and Christian vocations, as well as to the unique vocation each one of us receives from God, is that we be good stewards of the gifts we possess. God gives us this divine-human workshop, this world and Church of ours.

Mother Theresa is nominated as stewardship saint for the month of September. Mother Theresa said, "Give of your hands to serve and your hearts to love". There are lot of elements to reflect on stewardship. The main thing is to love and serve. The prodigal son parable pinpoints to love the lost ones and bring joy. The other two parables indicate the joy that comes in after finding it.

Mother Theresa received a conversion in 1946 which brings her love in action to serve the poor. God has called you and me to be his steward in small ways. "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love" – Mother Theresa.