

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

When the minister and his wife visited their neighbor, her four-year-old daughter answered the door. "Mom!", she yelled toward the living room. "God's here, and he brought his girlfriend."

Dear Friends,

We dedicate this month as 'stewardship Month.' We will be reflecting on this for the whole month in different ways and make ourselves a good steward of the Lord. I got this quote from a pastoral letter on stewardship by USCCB. "Being a disciple is not just something else to do, alongside many other things suitable for Christians, it is a way of life and requires continuing conversion."

Being a Christian is a way of life that we consciously choose to ourselves to be a better person. The readings today help us to be a good steward or disciple of Jesus. The basic thing of stewardship is to understand that everything we have or we are, is God's initiative.

When God initiates things in our life, let us collaborate with him. Let us design a way of life that God wants us to do. Pope Francis quotes, "The church comes to us from the future because it points to destiny. We do not see it coming because the clouds of the present leave us in haze."

All the three readings help us to walk into stewardship. First reading from the Book of Wisdom talks about the prayer that King Solomon wanted from his creator to give him wisdom to rule with holiness and righteousness and to judge fairly. He recognized that God is the provider for our life.

The Gospel explains the real meaning of stewardship in other words discipleship. Jesus talks to us what to do if you want to be a steward. There are three basic things for any stewardship:

- 1) You plan your way of life according to God's will. Recognize your gifts and talents and make use for God. "Discipleship not only means to follow the Master with our 'cross.' It also means to reveal the crucified Christ to others. In other words, through our struggles and in consequence of Faith, Christ is present to us and to those who see us." (CCC #618). Jesus gave two Examples in the Gospel today.

- 2) Preference to follow God: we read in the first part of the Gospel, Jesus talks about our preference to God to father and mother and family relationships. Sometimes we may have a question? Why does Jesus ask us to hate our father or mother? It is a semitic expression in effect and combination of a Hebrew language. It speaks of the preference

of us to focus ourselves totally to God. The best example is Joshua. (Read Joshua 24th chapter: 15) "As for me and my household will serve the Lord."

3) Let us be truthful to the Lord. Sometimes we feel why Jesus asks us to hate our own life, family, and possessions. Here is an example of Thomas More in the history with Henry VIII. I hope we all know the story. As a result, More lost all his possessions. He left his wife and children behind and went to prison. And finally, he went to his death, for love of the Lord. This is the kind of hatred of life and loved ones that the Lord is talking about. More loved his family and his life, but he let go of everything for love of Christ.

Because he maintained his integrity and did not let Henry push him into evil, More was true to the Lord he loved and to himself. He could not have loved himself or his wife or his children or his neighbors better than he did.

Let us pray that we set a way of life to be a good steward of the Lord.