

# The Call to Discipleship

Pastor's Bulletin Article for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the program  
November 14-15, 2009

As we approach the feast of Christ the King, we continue to reflect upon the journey that we have undertaken as a parish, a journey toward authentic Christian Discipleship. This week's Scriptures speak of trials and distress (most of us, at least financially, can relate), followed by the return of the King. We're learning to be good stewards awaiting the Master's return. But rather than being fearful, our lives should be joyful and exciting!

The whole key is to start consciously recognizing the many good gifts with which God has blessed our lives. Then enjoy them! That, in turn, leads us to be grateful. Our gratitude makes us WANT to return something of our joy back to God. Presto. We're on our way to real stewardship, real discipleship.

When an "attitude of gratitude" pervades our lives—in everything we do and are—our lives become happy and balanced. (Need more ideas on how to make this happen? Check out the "**One-Hour Challenge**" that we print in the bulletin every week, usually on page 2.)

**You should have received a commitment form in the mail**, although, at this time, it's a commitment form about only one aspect of stewardship: the financial support of the parish. (We do this every year at this time.) You are being asked to make a decision about growing as "a good and faithful steward". Try stretching a little beyond your "comfort zone", and let your sense of gratitude dictate how you should respond. Focus on what you really "want to do" rather than merely what you think you "should do".

There are some families in these tough economic times that simply might not be able to do as much as they would like. I suggest that you prayerfully talk to God about what you would really **want** to do, and then make your commitment to be at least enough so that you recognize it as a sacrifice.

For some in our Parish, what they are doing already is a serious sacrifice; others may need to challenge themselves to do a bit more. However you fit into that spectrum, remember, we're on a journey, not magically teleporting ourselves to the finish line. What's important is that you DO take some steps on this journey! A good rule of thumb: your decision is probably about right when you no longer find yourself making excuses about it.

One very helpful step, a good technique that can apply to all the aspects of stewardship, is to actually write out what you are planning on doing. Make a commitment that you can track! That's exactly what we're asking all parishioners to do with regard to their giving: write down what you realistically hope to do, sign it, and bring it with you to Mass next weekend and offer it to God. There is something very powerful about "putting it in writing". It might not hurt to write yourself a note about your other discipleship decisions (whether about praying, or spending time with the family, or offering service) and put it where it can remind you occasionally, in the weeks to come, of what you have inwardly decided.

And keep praying for your fellow sojourners, that all our parish members might hear the **CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP**, becoming good stewards of the many blessings God has given us!

In Jesus,  
Fr. Michael



## The "One-Hour Challenge!"

To have a happy, peaceful life, it is important that we have our lives in order, with our grateful response to God for his gifts being our top priority. That is how a disciple responds in the areas of *prayer, family, finance, and service*.

If you need help to put balance in your life, take the "one-hour challenge": Each week, spend at least...

- One hour in prayer and worship. (Mass is about one hour long.)
- One hour, special, focused on your family or other important relationship.
- One hour's wage (if you have a job) for the Lord. No job? Then give what seems right for you.
- One hour in service. (Helping another, or working for some cause.)

It's important to be *specific* in what steps to take in order to ensure that each "hour" actually happens! May God bless you!