



## Stewardship: God's Call and Our Response

### *What the Small Communities Need to Know*

1. As a result of our baptism, we are called to be followers of Jesus Christ, leading Christ-centered lives, lives of discipleship. Each of us is both called and gifted. Our lives as disciples revolve around four interrelated calls that characterize the Christian life: holiness, community, maturity in faith, and mission. Answering these calls is a matter of cooperating with the Holy Spirit in order to use the unique gifts God has given us for the sake of our sisters and brothers.
2. We can find models of discipleship and stewardship in the gospels, in the lives of the saints who exercised heroic virtues, and in the witness of contemporary men and women of faith, like Mother Teresa of Calcutta. We can also inspire and support one another in using our gifts and talents for bringing about the reign of God.
3. Stewardship is a way of thanking God for the gifts we have received. It flows from both a sense of gratitude for what we have been given and a sobering realization that our gifts are perishable. We need one another. Stewardship is grounded in a compassionate desire to share gifts of time, talent, and physical resources with all of our sisters and brothers. In doing so, we grow to appreciate the interplay of all the gifts in the Body of Christ.
4. Stewardship is not an additional set of chores or responsibilities. It is a way of life. Stewardship is a way of surrendering to God who challenges us to redefine and prioritize what we need, who we are, and what we are capable of doing. It involves ongoing conversion in the ways we use our time, talents, and physical resources. We are invited to be instruments of God at work, at home, in faith communities, and in society at large.
5. Stewardship, at its best, is a way to respond to the gospel. It encompasses a variety of action responses that are tailored to our vocations, the circumstances of our daily lives, and the personal abilities that we bring to a life of discipleship. Our responses are most fruitful when they are concrete, measurable ways of following Jesus in his mercy and compassion for all people.