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Taking Care of and  
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Response: A Pastoral  
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r Sunday Visitor, Inc.  
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## What Catholics Do:



*"Stewardship is not about  
the need of your parish,*

Stewardship is a way of life deeply rooted in Jesus Christ, who by His example has taught us how to live. He came not to do His own will, but the will of the One who sent Him. He came not to be served, but to serve.

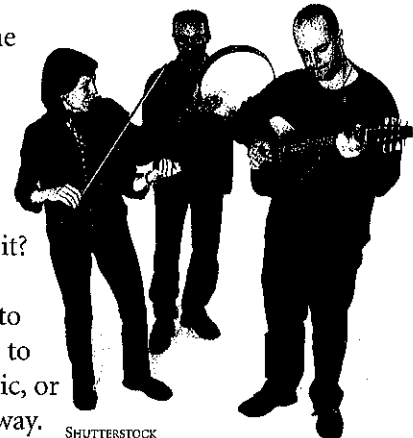
*God has given each of us something to do that no one else on earth can do.*

No one can be the parent, the grandparent, or the one that you are called to be. Jesus makes clear to each of us in the Church, giving us stewardship as a way of life, a way of living.

## Steward?

Bishops wrote their 1992 document on stewardship, they defined stewardship to embody four specific principles:

1) *Prayer.* Pray to God daily for the blessing of His grace. A good steward never



It's that way with every gift, especially the gift of faith. Parents are good stewards when they care for, protect, and nurture their children's natural aptitude for faith, beginning in the tender years of early childhood.

3) **Sharing.** A good steward knows that it is better to give than to receive, for in giving we receive far more than we could ever have imagined.

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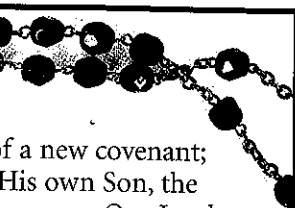
## Where is God?

There once were two fish who lived in a small pond. The older fish spent his days swimming serenely, while the younger fish darted around, peeking under fallen branches and behind rocks. Finally, the older fish asked, "What are you doing? I'm getting tired just looking at you." The younger one explained, "I'm looking for water! I've heard that it's really good for us fish. We can't live without it." The older fish retorted, "You dummy! You're swimming in it! Above you, below you, around you — it's all over." But the younger fish said, "You mean this water that's supposed to be so good for us is *just right here*? It can't be that simple." And he swam away, continuing his search for water.

*Where do we look for God? Do we search hither and yon? Do we think that we have to scale a high peak and seek out a guru? Or do we recognize the presence of God in His creation?*

*Do we recognize God in history? Our God is not one who keeps His distance, but rather enters into the human experience: sending a way of freedom to His enslaved chosen people; sending prophets to*

**untable.** Remember the stewards to whom the Lord entrusted the silver. They had to render an account of their stewardship. One day I will have to stand in judgment before the judgment seat of God. And God will ask: "What did you do with all the time I gave you? What did you do with the talent that I gave you? What did you do with your life?"



of a new covenant; His own Son, the Son of Man, among us. Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the cross, suffering, and opened the



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for people to recognize their lives: in their relationships, in their associations with others, in their participation of the sacraments, and in the building up of

Hopefully, we will be able to say, "Lord, I tried to thank you every day. I tried to be responsible with those gifts. And I tried to share those gifts with others." Please God, may He respond, "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter into the joy of your master" (cf. Mt. 25:21).

## Time, Talent, and Treasure

**A**s we recognize the presence of God in our lives, we set out to live the spirituality of stewardship in terms of *time, talent, and treasure.*

### Stewardship of Time

**S**ome people say "time is money," but that's not quite right. Time is much *more* valuable than money! We've all had the experience of wasting money on poor purchases or bad decisions. We recover from that, but not so with time. Time once spent can never be recovered. Every day, every hour is precious. *We make sure that we take care of the things that matter.*



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Stewardship of time requires us to look at our lives, twenty-four hours each day, as an opportunity to serve the Lord and to build up His Kingdom.

### Stewardship of Talent

**W**e can't think of stewardship of talent only in terms of what we can do to help out around the parish. *Talent is the passion that people have for doing what is good.* Think of people that you know who are passionate about the cause of the poor, who are passionate about pro-life issues. In bringing their passion to all that they do, they make a difference. That's great stewardship of talent.

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oney we have in the  
worth. It's just too per-

Jesus knows this. About  
half of the parables of  
Jesus have to do with  
money or with material  
possessions. Remember  
the lost coin, the widow's  
buried treasure in the  
Samaritan who gives  
ces to the innkeeper,

money because He  
knows that sometimes  
d can actually keep us  
n Him. Remember the  
o see Jesus? That  
der to have eternal life  
dments, but then he



that day, the young  
portunity of a lifetime  
e Master — all because

Stewardship of treasure is not about the need of  
your parish, but of your need to give. No matter  
what windfall a parish might experience — strik-  
ing oil in the parking lot, coming upon a winning  
lottery ticket, inheriting a sizeable bequest — the  
parish must still emphasize stewardship of trea-  
sure. Why? *Because stewardship of treasure is not  
about giving to a need; rather, it is about the need to  
give, a need to make sure that material possessions  
do not dominate our lives.*

### **What Catholics Do: Stewardship**

Catholics respond to Jesus' message positively  
because they know that *this is the way* that the  
Church has been built up spiritually throughout  
the years. It is how the Catholic faith has been  
lived out vibrantly in every age, in every place, in  
every generation.



W.P. WITTMAN

*When the history of our generation of Catholics is  
written, may it be said of us, "What good stewards  
they were! They faced economic uncertainty and  
shifting demographics. They faced threats to the  
Church from without and scandal from within.  
And yet they kept investing themselves in the life  
of the Church. They kept praying. They kept com-  
ing to Mass. They kept participating. They kept  
giving their life's blood for the sake of God and  
His Church, and through their efforts and the  
grace of God, the world around them started to  
change. Ever gradually, the culture of death  
became a culture of life."*