



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL
CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP
July 2026 • e-Bulletin

A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER
for July

Good and Gracious God,

We thank You for this gift of summer;
of being able to pause, relax
and enjoy the abundant gifts
You have given us.

At this time of year,
our thoughts may turn to vacations
and outings. We may experience
seashores, mountains or lakesides.
We may enjoy fishing, swimming and
barbecues.

But whatever our summer opportunities,
we realize they are ultimately gifts from You
and these gifts, Lord,
are ultimately meant to be shared.

Show us the joys of generosity,
keep us mindful of others and open our hearts
to our parish, neighborhood and world.
They need the generous spirit of good stewards.

As we enjoy the leisure that summer brings,
we thank You for Your many gifts,
and ask that You make us a gift to others as well.

In Jesus name we pray.

Amen



A Stewardship Parish Is More than Stewards in a Parish

(Part I of a two-part series)

By Rev. Jarrod Lies, Vicar for Evangelization, Discipleship and Stewardship, Diocese of Wichita



If a parish desires to grow into a stewardship parish, the starting point is not a plan, a program, or a pledge card. It is an interior posture. It is **peace**.

From the beginning, one truth must be firmly held: there is no parish that does not already have stewards. No parish anywhere is without faithful lay men and women who, in communion with their pastor, quietly carry the daily responsibilities of parish family life. In every parish there are those who pray, serve, give, sacrifice, and remain steadfast. No community begins from absence. What already exists is giftedness.

And yet, simply having stewards in a parish does not, by itself, make a stewardship parish. A stewardship parish is more than a gathering of generous individuals. It is more than isolated acts of service or personal devotion. Stewardship concerns not only who is doing the work, but how the parish as a whole **recognizes, invites, forms, and coordinates the giftedness God has already entrusted to His people.**

So what, then, is a stewardship parish?

A stewardship parish is one with **intentional structures, clear leadership, and a coherent articulation of mission that creates genuine pathways of invitation and participation for all its members.** These pathways allow parishioners to do what St. Paul describes so beautifully: to **“carry one another’s burdens” (Gal 6:2).**

We will explore this unique ecclesiology of a stewardship parish more in-depth in next month’s e-bulletin.

STEWARDSHIP SAINT *for July*

Saint Paul's Friends and Fellow Missionaries: Saints Prisca and Aquila



Prisca and Aquila were a prominent married couple who were missionaries, established churches and played an active role in the evangelizing ministry of Saint Paul. They are mentioned six times in four different texts of the New Testament.

Prisca and Aquila were of Jewish heritage and two of the earliest known Christian converts who lived in Rome. They were forced to leave Italy for a short time because of Emperor Claudius' edict in the year 49 C.E., prohibiting Jews from living in Rome.

Paul visited Prisca and Aquila in Corinth and discovered they were tentmakers like himself, so he stayed with them and they worked together (Acts 18:1-3). When Paul left Corinth, Prisca and Aquila left with him but stopped at Ephesus while he traveled on to Syria.

In Ephesus the couple gave catechetical instruction to Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria (Acts 18:18-19, 24-26). They returned to Rome when the expulsion was eventually lifted and Paul sent them greetings there, referring to them with great affection: "My greetings to Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks to save my life; to them, thanks not only from me, but from all the churches among the gentiles ..." (Rom.16:3-4).

Paul then added: "...and my greeting to the church at their house" (Rom.16:4), a reminder that Christians in the New Testament era gathered for the Eucharistic celebration in private homes and not in separate church buildings.

At some point, the couple left Rome again and moved to Ephesus. When Paul wrote from there to the church at Corinth in the year 57, he included "many greetings" from Prisca and Aquila and from the church that met at their house (1 Cor. 16:19). Paul's inclusion of them in his greetings implies that Prisca and Aquila were also involved in the establishment of that church along with Paul. And when Paul wrote to Timothy from prison, he sent Prisca and Aquila his greetings as well (2 Tim. 4:19).

The Roman Martyrology states that Prisca and Aquila died in Asia Minor, but some church historians believe the tradition that the couple were martyred in Rome, in part, because of the existence of the Church of St. Prisca on Aventine Hill, the southernmost of Rome's seven hills. The church is believed by many archeologists to be the site of the house of Prisca and Aquila.

Their feast day is July 8.

Be Good Stewards of Your Family This Summer

July is the heart of summer, and summer is an exciting and challenging time for stewardship of the family.

Everything turns a little upside down for the family in summer. Kids out of school, grandparents visiting, teens with a first job, road trips and those big family reunions: Sometimes it seems summer dashes by in a flurry of wet bathing suits and backyard barbecues. How does the Christian steward make summer a special time for "the domestic church" of family?



Be truly present. On one occasion, when Pope Francis addressed a homily to families, one word he used often was "simplicity."

Relax!... No, really!... Relax! ... Slow down! The world often spins around us and we are caught up in work, social media, activity. Gift yourself and your family with time this summer. Be truly present. On one occasion, when Pope Francis addressed a homily to families, one word he used often was "simplicity." Make time for family meals, but

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make them simple and nutritious. “We need simplicity to pray as a family,” the Holy Father said. Let each family member take a turn praying a simple grace at family meals. Linger over good food and good conversation. Make family your focus. Listen to your children. Take time for a night out with your spouse. Make a commitment to fun and presence.



The Holy Father also asked families, “How do we keep our faith as a family?” We don’t keep it for ourselves, he said, “as a personal treasure like a bank account.” No, we share it. We witness it. How can we witness faith during the summer months? “Christian families are missionary families,” Pope Francis said. Summer is a good time to plan a field trip to a shelter or a food bank. Call ahead and ask what you can bring and how your family can help. Many agencies plan summer picnics and presentations by refugees during the season. Let your kids experience this diversity. Attend a vacation bible school or help with one. Invite a priest from your parish, or perhaps a lonely neighbor, to dinner. Spread your family joy.

The summer readers in your family might benefit from finding Catholic periodicals or books on heroes of our faith. Visit new parishes during the summer. If you are on a road trip, never miss Sunday Mass and take advantage of a side trip to a shrine or an historic Catholic church. Most of all, relax and enjoy. Pope Francis says, “The family which experiences the joy of faith communicates it naturally.”

Why should YOU attend the 64th Annual Stewardship Conference?

1. Enhance your knowledge of stewardship no matter how far your parish has traveled on the stewardship journey.
2. Learn from some of the most renowned stewardship leaders in the world.
3. Discern new techniques for increasing the financial resources you need to sustain your parish.
4. Uncover proven approaches to enrich your parish’s life of faith.
5. Discover how to build up the commitment to discipleship in your parish.
6. Experience the hospitality and joy of dedicated stewards from around the globe.
7. Participate in beautiful and inspiring liturgies.
8. Interact with parish leaders in a spiritual and welcoming environment.
9. Compare notes with experienced and flourishing stewardship parishes.
10. Immerse yourself in the spirituality and fundamentals of Christian stewardship in the Catholic tradition.



September 20-23, 2026

Hyatt Regency | New Orleans, Louisiana

REGISTER TODAY!

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Stewardship:

Shining the Light of Christ
for All to See (Mt 5:16)

September 20-23, 2026 | Hyatt Regency | New Orleans, Louisiana

ICSC 2026 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Sunday, September 20, 2026

- 8:00 am - 7:00 pm.....Registration/Information Desk Open
- 2:00 pm - 2:45 pmOrientation for First Time Attendees
- 3:00 pm - 5:30 pmConference begins with Mass of the 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time and Opening Plenary Session
- 6:00 pm - 7:00 pmMeet the Exhibitors! Reception in Exhibit Hall

Monday, September 21, 2026

- 7:45 am - 9:15 am.....Breakfast and Plenary session
- 9:30 am - 12:00 pm....Morning conference sessions
- 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm ...Lunch with the Exhibitors in Exhibit Hall
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pmAfternoon conference sessions
- 4:00 pm - 5:30 pmConcelebrated Liturgy

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

- 7:30 am - 8:30 am.....Continental Breakfast with Exhibitors in Exhibit Hall
- 8:30 am - 11:00 am....Morning conference sessions
- 11:30 am - 1:00 pm....Lunch with Exhibitors in Exhibit Hall
- 1:00 pm - 3:30 pmAfternoon conference sessions
- 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm.....Buses to St. Louis Cathedral
- 4:30 pm - 6:00 pmSt. Louis Cathedral Concelebrated Liturgy
- 6:00 pm – 6:45 pm.....Buses back to Hotel

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

- 8:30 am – 9:30 amMorning conference sessions
- 10:00 am – 11:00 am...Regional Meetings

Stewardship of Leisure Time: Refreshing Our Spirits

In a 2016 newspaper essay titled *In Defense of the Three-Week Vacation*, the writer makes the case for longer American respites from work. Jynne Dilling argues for trips that take us away from cell phone coverage and internet, and urges relaxation that includes reflective walks at dawn and time to get lost in a foreign habitat (New York Times, 9 June 2016). Many of us have neither the time nor the resources for long overseas sojourns, but all of us can resonate with the need to really “get away” from work or the daily grind or the constant demands of social media. Good stewardship of our bodies, minds and souls obliges us to get away on a regular basis (see Luke 5:16).



**Leisure is necessary for human wholeness.
Leisure reconnects us to the wider mysteries of our world
and our God. It helps us daydream, imagine, pray.
It refreshes our spirit.**

As Christian stewards, we aren't just encouraged but obligated to consider how we approach our stewardship of leisure time. Stewards are aware of their need to be busy doing God's work, but often forget that downtime is equally important to spiritual growth. Leisure time, whether it's our evenings, our weekends, or our vacation, provides

spiritual, physical, mental and emotional recharging. Leisure is necessary for human wholeness. Leisure reconnects us to the wider mysteries of our world and our God. It helps us daydream, imagine, pray. It refreshes our spirit.

Today, connectivity has become almost an obsession. People check their emails, their messages and

calls with alarming repetitiveness. Accidents, both pedestrian and automobile, happen because people can't put down their phones. Employers expect their workers to be available for evening emails. The lines between work and free time increasingly blur, as do the lines between solitude and always being present “online.” We can't imagine putting aside screens for a two-week vacation. But we must give ourselves time to renew and recharge, not just two weeks of the year, but each day and each week.

July offers an opportunity to reconnect with the rhythms of God and nature. We need to take time off from screens and phones, and practice giving undivided attention to the things before us. When we pray, we commit time and silence. When we enjoy time with our friends and family, we practice being totally present. When we sit on the patio or at the beach, we give ourselves wholly to the wind or the waves. Be a good steward of your body, mind and soul. Don't overschedule your time off. Listen to the quiet whisper of God encouraging you to relax.



Leading Others to Christ With Our Steward's Response



by Leisa Anslinger

In what ways does Christ's love touch others through your life of stewardship? How do you lead people in your community to discern how each is called to minister and serve? Do people in your community recognize that stewardship is about more than giving money to the parish or diocese? Our responses to questions such as these are at the heart of the way we approach stewardship leadership. We may say "stewardship is a way of life,"

yet the message we share with people in our community may sound more like, "stewardship is about giving money to the Church." The reality is, the path of discipleship, lived through stewardship, leads each of us to grow in holiness. We may struggle to put this call into words, yet we know that living and growing as good stewards is a meaningful way to connect faith with daily life. This is a gift we must give one another. It is gift that is sure to have lasting impact in the lives of individuals and the life of the faith community. The following excerpt from the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship is worth your reflection:

Stewardship is about sharing one's gifts and blessings with the Church, and much more.

Christians must be stewards of their personal vocations, for it is these that show how, according to the circumstances of their individuals lives, God wants them to cherish and serve a broad range of interests and concerns: life and health, along with their own intellectual and spiritual well-being and that of others; material goods and resources; the natural environment; the cultural heritage of humankind — indeed, the whole rich panoply of human goods, both those already realized and those whose realization depends upon the present generation or upon generations yet to come. Catholics have a duty, too, to be stewards of their Church: that community of disciples, that Body of Christ, of which they, individually and together, are the members, and in which "...if one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy" (1 Cor 12:26).

Stewardship includes sharing one's gifts and blessings with the Church, and much more. The more we share this great call to live and grow as stewards in all aspects of our lives, the greater the likelihood that people of all ages and stages of life and faith will hear the call and enthusiastically respond to it.



Ten Random Stewardship Ideas for the Month of July

1. Invite a single friend over for a meal.
2. Turn off the TV, phone, and computer, and spend an hour devoted to someone you love.
3. Attend an extra Mass on a weekday this month.
4. Take your rosary with you for an early morning walk.
5. Think of a charity which is amply blessed at Christmas. Remember it with a gift mid-year.
6. Each day, say a prayer for one of the world's trouble spots.
7. Buy or pick a flower for someone without a "reason".
8. Take your family to a farmer's market if in season.



9. Stop for a moment during your busy day and enjoy an ice cream cone or other favorite treat.
10. Splurge on some produce and buy enough to share with someone in need.



A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 4/5, 2026

One of the most well-known and beloved passages in scripture is the gentle invitation of our Lord in today's Gospel reading: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." When we need physical rest, we sleep or take a nap. When we need emotional rest, we take a break, go for a walk, or when the opportunity presents itself, take a few days off. But how do we find spiritual rest? How do we discover Christ's peace as we grapple with this time of uncertainty and its complex issues deep in our hearts? Good stewards find their rest in the Lord. Reflect this week on what you do to welcome the peace of Christ into your heart.

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 11/12, 2026

In today's second reading, Saint Paul gives us reason to hope for a wondrous future beyond our imagination. He preaches this hope amidst the suffering of the early Christian communities. "Brothers and sisters: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us" (Romans 8:18). Good stewards realize that by remaining faithful to the Gospel with persistence, fervor and endurance, our hope in the promises of Christ Jesus will be rewarded. Reflect this week on concrete ways you can remain faithful to the Gospel during these challenging times.

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 18/19, 2026

In today's second reading, Saint Paul bids us to take comfort in knowing that when God invites us to pray to him, he knows our true needs, even if we do not. The Holy Spirit intercedes and prays for us even if we can't come up with appropriate words; even when we don't have a clue what to ask for. We are not left alone. Good stewards know that prayer is an important part of living a life in Christ. The important thing is to make space for God. Do we let God into our hearts? Do we make room for the Holy Spirit to pray within us?

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of July 25/26, 2026

A profound stewardship prayer is offered by the young King Solomon in today's first reading. He asks the Lord to give him an understanding heart, compassion towards God's people and the insight to distinguish right from wrong. An understanding heart, or wisdom, is a gift from God. It is a gift that enables us to make good decisions and prudent choices. Cultivating and sharing this gift is essential, especially when poor decisions and lack of compassion have consequences that affect the lives of others. During these disquieting times, are we asking God for an understanding heart? Are we exercising good stewardship over the gift of wisdom? Are we sharing our compassionate hearts with others?