



Stewardship

The principal of stewardship recognizes that for the Christian believer the work of creation is on-going and each are called to be co-creators. As disciples, this call is realized when gifts and talents are used to promote and enliven the Reign of God.

The U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship defines stewardship as it relates to Christian faith in these terms:

"As Christian stewards, we receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord."¹

This definition outlines the four key components of stewardship. Firstly it is always grounded in gratitude, a recognition that what one is called to steward is a gift given freely from God. Secondly, with the gift comes responsibility. Whether one is called to steward their own talents, money, resources or creation, it must be cared for, nurtured and not disregarded. Thirdly, these gifts are not given for the sole use or purpose of the one to whom they are given but should be shared generously and justly with others. For example, if someone is gifted with musical talent, then the principle of stewardship would suggest that this talent is nurtured, practised and grown and then shared with others in a manner in which many can benefit from the beauty of this gift. Lastly, in terms of faith, it is recognized that the gift being given is ultimately returned to the Lord, reflective of the care and nurturing it has received and the benefit it has had for the common good.

These components of Christian stewardship can be applied to a range of areas, whether it be the way in which care of the earth is addressed, student leadership is fostered, or the ways in which students approach their study habits and application to learning.

¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (1992) *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response: A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*.