
BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF DISCOVERY

You are beginning a journey that will challenge you to grow in many wonderful ways. If this journey is faithfully and properly conducted, it will enable you to make a number of spiritual and practical decisions. The following self-discovery guide and worksheet is designed to help you work toward that destination.

How can being a disciple of Jesus make an impact on stewardship and giving in this campaign? According to the U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter on Stewardship, *Stewardship a Disciple's Response*, living as good stewards of God's gifts flows from the fact that we are disciples of Jesus. The beginning of the letter states, "A disciple is a learner and companion of Jesus. As one open to the movement of the Holy Spirit towards a gracious generosity of heart, the authentic disciple regards all he or she is and possesses as gifts and blessings from God . . ."

1. **How can you go to God in prayer to discern His will for your personal life and parish?** For some scriptural suggestions, please read Luke 11:9-10, John 17, and Matthew 6:5-13.
2. **How can you apply Mary's response to God's call to stewardship in your own life?** Scripture is full of references to those who were good stewards. These role models can help us develop our own way of living out our call as disciples. According to the pastoral, "After Jesus, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who by her example most perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship in their fullest sense. All of their essential elements are found in her life: she was called and gifted by God; she responded generously, creatively and prudently; she understood her divinely assigned role as 'handmaiden' in terms of service and fidelity." (see Luke 1:26-56)

Our Catholic Faith teaches us that we are part of something greater than ourselves. The community of faith offers us the support and nourishment of the Sacraments for our life's journey. We are also aware that we are part of that great Christian Family, the Communion of Saints, all the wonderful people who have gone before us in the faith, and who will come after us.

Every age in Christian history teaches us great lessons of faith and trust and sacrifice. When God's messenger told Joseph not to be afraid to take Mary into his home as his wife, he put aside his fear of the future and made a generous commitment of his very life to Jesus and Mary – because of his faith.

Mother Theresa left a life of teaching in a private academy to care for the poorest of the poor as they lay dying. She sacrificed in order to witness to the love and presence of Jesus.

The pioneer Catholics of our arch/diocese and parish are heroes for us because of their sacrifices. What are we being called upon to do in our time?

FIRST . . . How might I give back to God by serving others?

1 Peter 4:10 ...As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. (Also see 2 Corinthians 9:8)

SECOND . . . What are some reasons that should motivate you to give toward this project?

Sirach 35:10 – Give to the Most High as He has given to you, for the Lord is one who always repay and He will give back to you sevenfold.”(See also: 1 Kings 5:19; Mark 8:2-3; Luke 12:48; Romans 13:7-8; 2 Corinthians 8:11-12)

THIRD . . .What attitudes does God like to see demonstrated in your giving?

*2 Corinthians 9:7 – Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
(See also: Exodus 25:1-2, 35:4-5, 20-24, 29; 2 Chronicles 29:17; 2 Corinthians 13:3)*

FOURTH . . . What does it mean to share sacrificially?

*Mark 12:43b-44 – Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more into than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.
(See also: 2 Samuel 24:24; 2 Chronicles 21:24)*

FIFTH . . .What does a “sacrificial” commitment require of the giver and what would you be willing to do in order to contribute sacrificially?

2 Corinthians 8:3-5 – For according to their means, I can testify, and beyond their means, spontaneously, they begged us insistently for the favor of taking part in the service to the holy ones, and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us through the will of God. (See also: 1 Chronicles 29:1-3; Acts2:44-45, 4:32-37)

<p>FINALLY . . . before determining your commitment, consider praying: “Lord, what do You want to do, through me, to accomplish Your will for our parish and the arch/diocese ?”</p>

DISCOVERING WAYS TO GIVE

As you consider your commitment, consider these things:

- SACRIFICE . . .** What does “SACRIFICE” mean to me?
Your commitment should be built on the theme “**Not Equal Gifts, but Equal Sacrifice.**” Your three-year commitment should be a demonstration of your personal definition of sacrifice.
- PROCESS . . .** What am I willing to do or do without?
Seek to translate “SACRIFICE” into a plan of action.
- AMOUNT . . .** What kind of commitment will my sacrificial efforts generate during the next three years?

Remember, you will be setting a standard of sacrifice for others to follow. At certain times in our lives we are made more aware of our ministry of good example. What lessons of faith and sacrifice will your offering teach your children, grandchildren and your circle of extended family and friends.

Take a personal inventory — Consider investing from *as many areas* as possible.

- PRAYER...** What time and energy can I commit to strengthening my prayer life?
- SERVICE ...** How will I use my Gifts and Talents in the next 3 years?
- INCOME . . .** How will I share my Income?
- ASSETS . . .** What item(s) of value do I own that I can give to my parish (real estate, stocks, bonds, personal possessions, etc.)?
- INCOME PRODUCING:** What income could I dedicate from rental properties, stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, interest bearing accounts, etc.?
- SACRIFICE . . .** What can I give up, do without, postpone, or alter in order to give to my Parish?

POSSIBILITY PLANNING WORKSHEET

How much time to Prayer do I give?

Weekly	Monthly
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How much time to Service do I give?

Weekly	Monthly
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From the monthly budget I could give ...

Weekly	Monthly
Bi-Monthly	Other

Total

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Asset Possibilities

√	ASSET	VALUE
	Real Estate	
	Stocks	
	Bonds	
	Other Assets	
	Total	

Income Producing Assets

√	ASSET	INCOME
	Rental Properties	
	Stocks	
	Bonds	
	CDs	
	Interest Bearing Accounts	
	Total	

Sacrifice
 I could do without
 Postpone
 Alter

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Total

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POSSIBLE 3-YEAR TOTAL

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