

CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

October 2015 • e-Bulletin

A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER *for October*

Heavenly Father,

As we observe Respect Life Month, we are especially mindful of the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, whose life, ministry, death and resurrection serve to witness Your immeasurable love for us all.

May Christ lead us to be good stewards of our brothers and sisters, and to realize that all lives we bring to Him are sacred and deserve to be looked upon in Your image and likeness.

Strengthen those who devote their lives to nurturing the most vulnerable, including the sick, the aged, children and those yet to be born.

Let their witness give us the courage and resolve to proclaim the Gospel of Life to all whom we encounter.

And send your Holy Spirit upon us to give us the wisdom and resolve to be servants of humankind, living icons of Christ, the servant of us all.

We ask all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

An Opportunity to Deepen Our Lives in Christ

I recently visited with the pastoral council of a local parish. It was the first meeting of the season for the council, and the first meeting for newly appointed members. I was asked to provide a brief introduction to stewardship. After prayer, I asked the group "when I say the word 'stewardship' what first comes to mind?" This particular group's sharing was insightful: God asks us to care for all that we are and all that is; stewardship is about sharing what we have; it is a faith-response to Christ; stewardship is about using well something that is really God's. It was heartening to hear such understanding from this council, and encouraging that I have heard similar responses from many groups in the past few years. No longer, it seems, is "money" the first thing that comes to everyone's mind when they hear the word "stewardship."



This increase in understanding is the result of the hard work, dedication, and leadership of many ICSC members: bishops, clergy and lay leaders. It is borne of consistent efforts to teach stewardship as a way of life. And just as stewardship itself is an expression of discipleship, applied in the daily circumstances of our lives, forming people as stewards requires us to continue to spread the message throughout the year.

I am grateful to know that many of us will gather this month for our annual ICSC conference. This is our yearly opportunity to grow as leaders and as stewards; and most especially, to deepen our lives in Christ. Like the pastoral council with whom I met, we recognize that all we are and all we have truly are God's. Our time together to learn, explore and grow as stewardship leaders is a way of stewarding well our talents, knowledge, time, and friendship, as people who are committed to Christ's sacrificial way. Let us take this moment to re-dedicate ourselves as stewardship leaders, trusting in the providence of our good and gracious God in whose image we are created.

This is the twelfth in a series of stewardship reflections by Leisa Anslinger for parish stewardship leaders. Leisa is an author and co-founder of Catholic Strengths and Engagement Community (CSEC).





Plan now for an inspiring evening with ICSC's special conference guest

Angela Perez Grey



- Catholic educator
- Author and lecturer
- Wife and mother of four children
- Miss America 2001
- Advocate for character education and leadership, especially in our youth and young adults.

At this year's ICSC Conference signature event
The ICSC Awards Gala
 Saturday evening, October 24 at 6:00 pm!

Chicago, Illinois | October 22-25, 2015

2015 ICSC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

As you are planning your conference schedule, make sure you include a Saturday night stay, ensuring your attendance at the **ICSC Awards Gala, on Saturday evening, October 24 at 6:00 pm (and included in your registration fee)**! At the Gala, you will also:

- Help us congratulate our ICSC award recipients.
- Experience a great evening with friends and colleagues.
- Be eligible to win one of our many raffle prizes, including cash. (Must be present to win.)

Made your hotel reservations yet? Be sure to do so soon [HERE](#), including Saturday night to join us at this first-ever Gala you won't want to miss!



Being Good Stewards of Our Food

In the Midwest, October often means one thing: football. But on Sunday, October 4 (the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi when the 4th does not fall on Sunday), the football-mad city of Omaha, Nebraska, will host what is becoming an international celebration: "Feeding the 5000." This event was started in London, England, in 2009 by an organization called Feedback to address the scandal of food waste. Since then, there have been "Feeding the 5000" events all over Europe and increasingly in the United States, led by the cities of Oakland, Chapel Hill, now Omaha and soon New York City.

Local chefs feed the crowd with a delicious meal prepared with food which would otherwise be discarded: misshapen potatoes, wrongly sized carrots, onions with a bruise. And while they're fed, the crowd learns how to counteract food waste in their community. Did you know that food by the tons is thrown out each year because it doesn't live up to the cosmetic standards of food sellers? That arbitrary "sell-by" dates means truckloads of edible food go to the dump? That restaurant portions grow ever larger as over 9% of restaurant food is wasted?

The United Nations maintains that 1.3 billion tons of food is wasted annually – imagine the water it takes to grow this food, the carbon transmissions used in the production and transportation of food that eventually rots

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

in a dump. Pope Francis said that the food which is discarded could “feed all the hungry people of the world.”

As Christian stewards, we are painfully aware that it’s not just industry that wastes food. Estimates reveal that we consumers throw out the most food, food we’ve purchased, some of which our waistlines might not need anyway. How careful are we to buy and use just what we’ll consume, what we actually need? How well do we steward the food in our refrigerators and pantries?



The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the environment, should encourage us to consider anew our relationship to food.

Urged by Pope Francis to practice greater austerity, we should be particularly sensitive to the issue of good stewardship of the fruits of creation. In 2013, Pope Francis said: “Once our grandparents were very careful not to throw away any leftover food. Consumerism has led us to become used to an excess and daily waste of food ... Throwing away food is like stealing from the table of the poor and the hungry.” The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the environment, should encourage us to consider anew our relationship to food.

Stewards of a Missionary Church

The month of October is an ideal time to focus our prayerful reflections on the world and to see its people as a gift from God. The global community is a gift to be received with gratitude and held in stewardship. With the celebration of World Mission Sunday, October is a month that offers Catholics world-wide the opportunity to renew their commitment to proclaim the Gospel and to give



The Church’s work around the world is as important as the work in our own neighborhood.

a greater missionary focus to parish activities. It is time to reflect on the global context of our stewardship, and to express our gratitude to missionaries who bear witness to Christ in the most remote and challenging places of the world, often with their lives.

The month of October can remind us that being witnesses to Jesus Christ is a stewardship responsibility of us all. In a world experiencing increasingly disturbing forms of alienation and indifference, our communion of faith can offer signs of hope and work to make the planet a home for all people.

We are “communion” because of the gift of the Eucharist. And this gift that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with everyone. That is one reason the missionary impulse of our Church has always been a sign of vitality in its unique witness of unity around the world.

There are a number of ways you can focus on the missionary activity of the Church:

- Include petitions for the Church’s missionary work in your daily prayers.
- Increase your awareness of the wider global mission of the Church.
- Discover ways to participate in specific missionary activities taking place in your parish or diocese.
- Give generously on World Mission Sunday, celebrated this year on October 24.

The Church’s work around the world is as important as the work in our own neighborhood. Let us be mindful this month that we are stewards of the Gospel, called to proclaim it to the ends of the earth, bringing hope to a world that hungers for Christ’s peace.

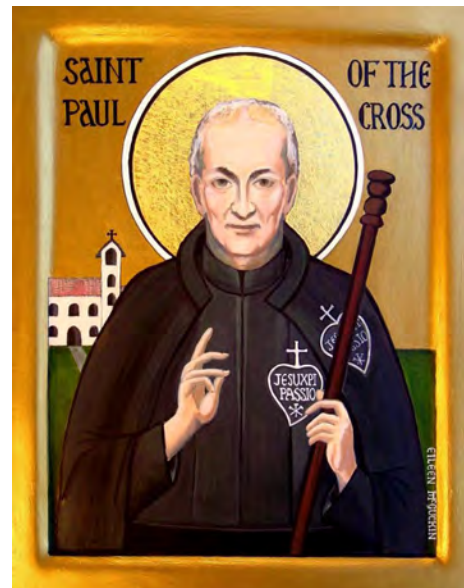
STEWARDSHIP SAINT *for October* | Saint Paul of the Cross

Saint Paul of the Cross was born in 1694 in the town of Oavada, in northern Italy, to a wealthy merchant family, the second of sixteen children. At age 19, after a normal childhood, he experienced a conversion that drew him to a life of prayer.

When he was 26 years old, during a period of intense prayer and solitude, Paul of the Cross had a series of prayer-experiences which made it clear to him that God was inviting him to form a community of men who would live together and dedicate themselves to preaching the Passion of Christ. His main aim in the community was, as he wrote, to form a man totally centered on God, a man of prayer who is detached from possessions so that he may be free to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

His first companion was his own brother, John Baptist, who was ordained to the priesthood with Paul by Pope Benedict XIII in 1727, in St. Peter's Basilica. After ordination they devoted themselves to preaching missions in parishes, particularly in remote country places where there were not enough priests. Their preaching and retreats gained the attention of others and gradually the "Passionist" community began to grow. The Passionist community was in great demand in many areas of Italy, in part because of the community's success in bringing lapsed Catholics back to the Church, and in their ministry to the sick and dying.

During his lifetime, Paul of the Cross was best known for his preaching and spiritual direction. More than two thousand of his letters, most of them letters of spiritual direction, have been preserved. He died in Rome in 1775, at the age of 81. He was canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1867. His feast day is October 20.



At age 19, after a normal childhood, he experienced a conversion that drew him to a life of prayer.

The Gift of Ministerial Relationships

by Mary Ann Otto, Stewardship Director, Diocese of Green Bay, WI

As I was thinking of the upcoming ICSC Conference, I realized that part of my excitement about the event was the opportunity to see ministerial friends from all over the world. Though I have been in ministry a long time, I am still amazed at the global nature of our Church. To encounter so many beautiful sisters and brothers in Christ who are offering their talents to help build a more loving, Christ-like Church through stewardship is inspiring.

Whether we are clergy, religious, lay parish, diocesan professionals or someone who serves on a parish committee, the importance of support, affirmation and the sharing of ideas and resources is essential. I believe that the Holy Spirit offers us this opportunity as a way to enlighten us and motivate us to continue ministering. I believe by taking time to meet with others and allowing them to share their story and receiving their



God calls us to excellence and then provides what we need in the form of each other.

story with an open mind and heart, we resist the potential for burnout and for our parish to become stagnant.

Technology is also such a gift in helping to maintain ministerial relationships. (I cannot imagine some of our early clergy, religious and lay leaders who were not able to find affirmation, support and advice when they

needed it.) Many of those I have met at the Conference over the years are now trusted friends who I am able to connect with and share resources with through email. What a blessing!

The common thread that we share in stewardship ministry is knowing what a fruitful outcome could mean for our Church and world. By seeking out ministerial relationships we open the door for the Holy Spirit to place encouragement and new ideas on our minds and hearts. God calls us to excellence and then provides what we need in the form of each other.

Whether you are attending the Conference this month, or seeking out ministerial relationships regionally or locally, take a moment to thank the Lord for the gift. As for me, I would like to express my gratitude to many trusted friends and colleagues. I will see many of you in Chicago! Safe travels!



A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of October 3-4, 2015

In today's Gospel Jesus teaches us about the sacredness of marriage; a covenant that is a gift from God. Our relationships with our spouses, family, friends, coworkers, and those in our community of faith are all gifts from God. Jesus reminds us today that it is the hardened heart that damages or breaks up relationships. Good stewards understand the holiness of relationships and pray for the love, patience, understanding and kindness necessary to sustain those relationships. Take time out to prayerfully reflect on your relationships this week. Is your stewardship of these relationships as God intended? What relationships need to be healed and reconciled?

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of October 10-11, 2015

Jesus offers a hard lesson regarding wealth and possessions in today's Gospel. The rich man whom he encountered could not part with his possessions as a condition to becoming a disciple of Jesus. Would our response be the same as the rich man? Do we place our trust in our money and possessions instead of trusting in God's generosity? Do we seek security in our possessions? Good stewards realize that their possessions must not possess them, lest those possessions block their relationship with the Lord.

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of October 17-18, 2015

In today's Gospel Jesus teaches his disciples that whoever wishes to be great among them must be a servant, just as he came to be a servant. Today is World Mission Sunday – a reminder of our call to be good stewards of the Gospel and to support those who make evangelization their servant ministry throughout the world. Not to be a servant of the Gospel would be poor stewardship. But how do we serve the Gospel? How do we support others who serve those who have never heard the Gospel?

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of October 24-25, 2015

After healing the blind man in today's Gospel Jesus told him to go, to be on his way. But the man decided to follow Jesus. Being a disciple of Jesus is a choice. The stewardship way of life likewise involves a choice, in fact many choices. We choose to be grateful, we choose to live generously, and we choose to trust that God will always provide for our needs. These are three choices central to the stewardship way of life. What choices will we make this week that give witness to our decision to follow Christ?

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC
STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

(800) 352-3452

ICSC@catholicstewardship.org
www.catholicstewardship.org

We encourage you to check out the ICSC online community at www.catholicstewardship.org under 'members' where members can share ideas and questions. The Parish Stewardship section is reviewed every day by members of the Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee.



STEWARDSHIP

in the Footsteps of Pope Francis

Chicago, Illinois | October 22-25, 2015



“I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.” (John 13:15) The ICSC 2015 conference takes place less than a month from our Holy Father’s visit to the United States. As Jesus demonstrated for the apostles, and us, in the washing of the feet, Pope Francis also leads us by example. As stewards, he inspires us to go forth in the world to both proclaim and live the joy of the Gospel, and to journey with and serve everyone we meet. Pope Francis encourages us to allow ourselves to be surprised by the God of surprises.

The ICSC annual conference is filled with workshops and forums providing us with practical information we can take home and use immediately as we journey, serve, proclaim, and live our faith. The conference exposes us to fundamental topics, as well as new ideas, innovations and strategies. It is a great opportunity to take a break from our hectic schedules to pray, reflect, learn, listen, share, and participate in uplifting liturgies.

Internationally recognized as the most valuable conference for those involved in Christian stewardship, the ICSC annual conference is an opportunity to connect with others sharing the commitment to live and teach stewardship as a way of life. Many of our participants tell us that sharing experiences with peers is the main reason they attend every year. **We invite you to join us in Chicago...in the Footsteps of Pope Francis!**

First-Ever Preconference Workshops!

ICSC conference attendees have an opportunity to receive additional education at little or no extra cost. This year, ICSC has partnered with organizations to provide three separate pre-conference workshops! See brief descriptions below. For detailed information on these workshops and how to register, visit our website at

www.catholicstewardship.org

Strategic Partner Workshops

Thursday, October 22, 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

FREE for ICSC 2015 conference attendees

Twenty workshops for parishes and dioceses from our strategic partners on topics such as parish and diocesan capital campaigns, parish leadership training, ideas for stewardship, offertory increase programs, and new approaches that inspire faithful living and giving, and many more!

Catholic Foundation Forum

Begins Wednesday, October 21, at 4:00 pm

Ends Thursday, October 22, at Noon

\$95 for ICSC 2015 conference attendees

\$150 for non-conference attendees

Calling all Foundation Directors, CEOs, Board Members, etc. Join us for the First Annual Catholic Foundation Pre-Conference Forum. This will be a highly interactive format, addressing challenging and timely topics of discussion facilitated by subject experts. Not to be missed!

Stewards of Our Strengths

Thursday, October 22, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

\$95 – Open ONLY to conference attendees

Led by Leisa Anslinger and Stephanie Moore, from Catholic Life and Faith, the morning session is divided for beginners and those more experienced with the StrengthsFinder® talent-identification tool. In the afternoon session, the group comes together to focus on strengths-based ministerial teams, and leaves with the knowledge and tools they need to quickly and effectively implement the experience when they return to their parish or diocese.

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page



REGISTER TODAY! visit www.catholicstewardship.org

The 2015 ICSC Annual Conference offers something for everyone whether you are a priest, deacon, religious, parish life administrator, stewardship and evangelization coordinator or committee member, parish business manager, youth minister, ministry leader, or a faithful parishioner feeling called to do more. A sample of the conference's many sessions includes:



- Developing Leadership in Our Youth
- Stewardship and Evangelization: Two Sides of the Same Coin
- Best Practices for Successful Grant Writing
- Stewardship of Our Elders
- The Ministry of Parish Management
- Stewardship Success on a Budget
- Parish Strategic Planning
- Theology and Spirituality of Stewardship
- Engaging Parishioners With a Parish Covenant
- Best Practices for Working with Consultants
- Calling Forth Gifts of Time and Talent
- Stewardship and the Family
- Separate Parishes Moving Forward as One
- Numerous how-to workshops in Spanish
- Exclusive sessions and forums for diocesan staff working with stewardship, development and Catholic foundations
- And many, many more!

How does stewardship equip us to go forth in the world to proclaim and live the joy of the Gospel?

Join Catholic stewards from around the world at the annual conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council October 22-25 in Chicago, Illinois, and we will learn together!

More details and online registration available at www.catholicstewardship.org or call 1.800.352.3452, or e-mail us at register@catholicstewardship.org.

The International Catholic Stewardship Council has named the recently renovated Hyatt Regency Chicago at 151 East Wacker Drive as host hotel for the 2015 annual conference. The Hyatt Regency Chicago is conveniently located in downtown Chicago, is connected to the Illinois Center and within minutes of the Magnificent Mile. A block of rooms has been reserved from October 21 to 25, 2015, at the rate of \$229 single or double occupancy, plus taxes. For best availability, please reserve your room early! Reservations must be made through our conference coordinator, Plaza Meetings, at www.plazameetings.com/icsc/

