

What is a steward? How does that relate to my faith?

In the theological sense, a steward is one whom another, in this case, God, entrusts to manage their property or affairs. This concept is deeply rooted in Scripture and Catholic teaching, emphasizing the profound responsibility of individuals to care for and manage the resources and gifts they have received from God.

The term "steward" is derived from the Greek word "oikonomos," which means "household manager." In the New Testament, particularly in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, the Apostle Paul states, "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy." This duality is the expectation that stewards must be faithful and responsible.

Jesus often spoke of stewardship in His parables, such as the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30); the master entrusts the servants with his wealth, expecting them to use it wisely. This passage illustrates that individuals are not just recipients of these gifts and resources but also accountable for their wise and responsible utilization.

What is the role of a steward?

Stewards manage their time, material resources, spiritual gifts, talents, and the environment. The International Theological Commission emphasizes stewardship involves a moral obligation to care for creation, a divine gift. Our duty as stewards includes responsible use of the environment and resources for the benefit of all, particularly the poor and future generations.

A steward must recognize that they do not own the resources they manage but are caretakers. John Chrysostom elaborates on this by stating that a steward should not claim ownership of their master's goods but administer them with care and integrity⁴. This perspective fosters a sense of humility and accountability.

Stewardship is not merely a practical or financial concept but a profoundly spiritual one. It involves recognizing God's sovereignty over all creation and understanding that everything belongs to Him. This realization calls for a response of gratitude and responsible action in managing what He has entrusted to each individual, thereby deepening our spiritual connection with Him.

The Catholic Church teaches that stewardship is a vocation for all believers. It is a call to live out one's faith through actions that reflect care for others and the world. Our stewardship includes charitable works, environmental responsibility, and the ethical

management of resources. The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development emphasizes that as stewards, business leaders, in particular, must create sustainable wealth and distribute it justly, reflecting the broader call to stewardship in all areas of life.

Stewardship also involves serving the community and contributing to the common good. The Church encourages the faithful to engage in acts of charity and justice, ensuring that we meet the needs of the marginalized and that resources are shared equitably.