

Stewardship: What Does it Look Like?

What are you looking for? (John 1:38)

One's life is defined by one's commitments. The focus/purpose of one's commitments will determine the course of one's life. The effort spent in living out such focused commitments will determine the quality of one's life. A committed person emerges clearly from the chaos. Unless we say "yes" too easily and too often. That is, our commitments do not have a focus, a driving principle. When we fall into this whirlwind of commitments, it becomes harder to differentiate between one commitment and another; and then they all become fragile. So whether we are uncommitted or over-committed we need a true focus. Drawing from the practices and teachings of our Catholic faith, here are a number of examples of what focused commitment can look like.

Come and you will see. (John 1:39)

Commitment to prayer: Resolve to strengthen your relationship with the Lord. Notice how often you pray and what hinders you from praying. Commit to short, daily prayer times.

Commitment to family: Resolve to set aside more time to stay connected with your family. Eat dinner together, schedule regular dates with your spouse, plan family outings, and go to Mass together.

Commitment to Health: Resolve to get those medical and dental checkups. Adopt healthier eating habits. Add exercise and other physical activity to your daily routine.

Commitment to possessions: Resolve to possess a little more "lightly" this year. Consider ways you can reduce the amount of all that stuff you own. Distinguish between those items that are necessary and those that are considered luxurious and unnecessary.

Commitment to the parish family: Resolve to serve your faith community in some way this year such as at liturgy, in the parish's outreach or education and formation efforts.

Commitment to financial responsibility: Resolve to render sacred your annual budget. Reprioritize your financial goals to ensure that the Lord comes first in your spending. Take positive steps to improve your financial health.

Commitment to work: Resolve to be faithful to your daily, work-related tasks and offer them up to the Lord. Cultivate your skills. Deepen your knowledge. Be mindful of how you are building the Kingdom of God.

Commitment to your mind: Resolve to keep your mind active. Commit to being more informed on the issues of the day. Read your Bible. In this year of presidential elections in the United States, familiarize yourself with the Church's social teachings.

Commitment to neighbor: Resolve to be a person of hospitality; to make time and space for others who enter your life. Be more aware of those times when a neighbor, co-worker, fellow parishioner or stranger, needs a moment of kindness, a little attention or an affirming gesture on your part.

Commitment to the poor: Resolve to live with more compassion and in solidarity with those less fortunate. Remember the poor in prayer, and commit to helping relieve in some way the plight of those who are impoverished or marginalized.