

So if we exercise our fundamental option – and choose to walk in the light of Christ – in the light of creative altruism rather than in the darkness of destructive selfishness – our life may be lived somewhat like this:

“All of us understood from the earliest age that we were required to use our talents and gifts for the good of others. There was no option. For the gift of being in the world, we had a responsibility to it. My parents constantly reminded us: take nothing for granted, work hard, be grateful.” -Jean Kennedy Smith.

What Jean’s parents, Joe & Rose Kennedy, were trying to teach their many children – was how to be good stewards: one who receives God’s gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible manner, and shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

And we might think: easy for them to say and do ---- they’re Kennedys: they were loaded, had charisma, were well known. . .

And I think that’s the way a lot of us approach our responsibility as stewards – let someone else do it. Someone else is so much more talented, gifted, better off financially – than me. If I don’t step up, eventually -- someone else will. >>

So we abandon our call to stewardship, turning in on ourselves, rather than outwardly toward others.

So, yes, Jean Smith was a Kennedy – but how she was called by her parents, and ultimately by the Lord, to live her life as a faithful steward --- was not determined by her being a Kennedy – but by her being a Christian. . .

All of us, if we choose to walk in the light of Christ – walk in the light of creative altruism – must then accept our

responsibility to use our gifts and talents for the good of others ---

As Bishop Robert Morneau of Green Bay, Wisconsin, states so succinctly: Stewardship is simply how we live our lives once we say, “ I believe in God the Father almighty. . .”

Lord, help us to die to the darkness of our destructive selfishness, so we can produce abundant fruit.

As faithful stewards we should all take nothing for-granted:

-Never assume you are going to have another opportunity to tell your spouse, your children, or your grandchildren you love them: tell them now.

--We should never put off to tomorrow what we should be doing today: being a blessing, a beatitude, a source of God’s grace --- to all we meet.

--We should never assume that we can give God our praise and thanks tomorrow, just because we happen to think we are too busy today.

Lord, help us to die to the darkness of our destructive selfishness, so we can produce abundant fruit.

As faithful stewards, we should work hard – because all of us have been given gifts and talents, not just for our own benefit, but for the benefit of building the kingdom of God in our midst –

what have you done, or will you do TODAY, to build the kingdom by your compassion, mercy, forgiveness and acceptance? Do it today, don’t wait until tomorrow!

Lord, help us to die to the darkness of our destructive selfishness, so we can produce abundant fruit.

And most of all, faithful stewards live their lives with gratitude – for God has abundantly blessed each and every one of us in so many ways – just think of the good life we are all blessed with by being born in the United States! >>

Anytime we want, we can go to a faucet and get clean water when we turn it on --- most of the world would be absolutely amazed by that – but most of us, just take it for granted. . .

We also should be grateful for our faith and family and friends – and just how are we going to enjoy this wonderful day God has blessed us with today?

Lord, help us to die to the darkness of our destructive selfishness, so we can produce abundant fruit.

You see, my brothers and sisters – we are people of the new covenant – God has placed his law within us – he has written it on our hearts.

Jesus has been the source of our eternal salvation and so now we must serve him by following after him. .

And we must do it – enthusiastically!

Lord, help us to die to the darkness of our destructive selfishness, so we can produce abundant fruit.

So even though we are not a Kennedy – let’s realize that for the gift of being in the world – and in the Church – we have a responsibility to it – **there is no option**: because we will soon say, as we have said many times in our lives, “I believe in God the Father almighty. . .” And so this is how we must live our lives: taking nothing for granted, working hard, and being grateful – all with enthusiasm – for we are on fire with the kingdom of God!