INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

# CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

November 2026 • e-Bulletin

## A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER
*for November*

Gracious and loving God,

As the autumn season continues its transformation;
and the days become shorter, the earth cooler;
as we anticipate joining family and friends
in joyful celebration on Thanksgiving Day,
we pause to give You thanks and praise
for the abundant blessings You have bestowed upon us:

For life and health, safety and comfort,
food and nourishment, we are sincerely grateful.
Through your Spirit, open our hearts
so that we may be even better stewards
of these rich and unmerited gifts.

Show us how to be a blessing for the poor,
sick, lonely and all who suffer.

And help us nurture the gift of faith,
revealed to us by your Son, Jesus Christ,
our greatest gift,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever.

Amen.



# Transform November into a Month of Thanksgiving

Very soon Americans will celebrate the Thanksgiving holidays; a time where so much is devoted to sumptuous meals highlighted by turkey and pumpkin pie, traveling to and from the ancestral home, enjoying family, feasting on leftovers, seeing a Thanksgiving Day parade and watching football.

For many of us, Thanksgiving Day is so full of activity that there is a tendency to forget what's at the heart of Thanksgiving, offering our thanks to God for the many gifts that have been bestowed upon us. Although sometimes the reason for the holiday is forgotten in our secular culture today, good stewards of their life and faith recognize that Thanksgiving should be directed primarily in God's direction.



Take part of a day and walk or hike down a woodland path. Express your gratitude for the beauty of God's autumn creation.

Because the "busyness" of Thanksgiving Day can easily distract us from slowing down to a pace more suitable to adequately expressing our gratitude to God, perhaps this November we might allow Thanksgiving to permeate our lives for more than just a day. How about the entire month? Expressing gratitude is at the heart of good stewardship.

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So, let's dedicate a little time each day in November to giving thanks for our blessings.

Begin with November 1 and 2, All Saints Day and All Souls Day. Spend a few minutes each of those days thanking God for all the people in your life who have gone before you. Then, each day thereafter, set aside a few minutes to remember all that God has given you and say "Thank you."

Take part of a day and walk or hike down a woodland path. Express your gratitude for the beauty of God's autumn creation.

Take a minute each day to thank the people in your life who matter to you. Tell them you're thankful for them. Drop someone a note, place a short phone call or even text them! Telling people you're thankful for them will enrich your life as well as theirs.

Make a point to attend at least one Mass outside the regular weekend Masses. Going to Mass on Thanksgiving morning is an excellent way to enrich that holiday. As a community of faith, we know that giving glory to God in this way is an important aspect of our communal life of faith.

Transform the month of November into a month of Thanksgiving. If you do, you will find your celebration of Thanksgiving Day a more richer and fuller experience than you could have imagined. In fact, you might just discover that your overall happiness with life improves. May this month of Thanksgiving be a time when we not only say "Thank You" to God, family and neighbor, but a time when our hearts draw us much closer to the Lord.

## STEWARDSHIP SAINT for November

### St. Martin of Tours

St. Martin of Tours was born around 316 in a territory that is now part of Hungary. His father, an officer in the Roman army, conscripted Martin into military service at the age of fifteen.

While Martin was still a soldier, there occurred the famous incident memorialized by many artists. One day while at the gates of the city of Amiens he saw a scantily clad beggar. Martin cut his own military cloak in half and shared it with the beggar. That night Martin dreamed that Jesus was wearing that same half-cloak he had given away. Martin had for some time considered becoming a Christian. He was promptly baptized and made the decision to dedicate his life to Christ.



Martin was well-known for his evangelizing, personal holiness, healing ministry and compassion toward the poor.

Martin became a follower of St. Hilary of Poitiers (January 13) who gave him land where the first monastery in Gaul (present-day France) was established. It is the first monastery known to be established north of the Alps. Christianity was largely confined to urban areas, and Martin saw monasteries as rural spiritual centers from which evangelization in the countryside could take place. He was zealous in bringing people to Christ.

In 371, a time when bishops were chosen by the faithful, Martin was tricked into coming to Tours to be elected bishop. He was well-known for his evangelizing, personal holiness, healing ministry and compassion toward the poor. It was also well-known that Martin would never agree to be a bishop. A man from the city came to Martin and begged him to visit his sick wife. When the kindhearted Martin got to Tours crowds of people came out of hiding and surrounded him. Unable to escape, he was swept into the city and, overwhelmed by the will of the crowds, became their bishop.

Martin maintained his lifestyle as a monk and exercised stewardship of the diocese on foot, horseback and by boat. His profound personal witness met with great success in an area that was largely pagan. Martin died on November 8, 397, and his feast is November 11, the day he was buried in Tours. He is a patron saint of France.



# Exercising Good Stewardship at the Grocery Store

What is your experience of a trip to the grocery store? Is the grocery store a place where you just run to grab what you need, or is it a place where you pause and take time to exercise good stewardship? We've all been there. A long day at work, rush hour traffic, and then the thought: "What am I preparing the family for dinner?" We detour to the supermarket, make a mad dash, grab whatever looks easy and filling. Then, we rush out, preoccupied with what's happening elsewhere in our lives.

Think about a stewardship resolution for the month of November, with its emphasis on food and gratitude. Resolve to go to the grocery store with a steward's grateful heart.

But the experience of shopping at the grocery store can be one where good stewards know the rewards of exercising their stewardship of God's many gifts. Think about a stewardship resolution for the month of November, with its emphasis on food and gratitude. Resolve to go to the grocery store with a steward's grateful heart.

- Visit the grocery store when you are not rushed.
- Lift a prayer of gratitude before you go to the grocery store, gratitude that you are able to meet your loved ones' needs in this way.
- Those who work with refugee populations tell us the thing that amazes the new arrivals most is the opulence and abundance of a First World supermarket. Pray for those who do not have the choices you have today.
- Be aware of your fellow shoppers, the elderly individual slowly taking up the center of the aisle or the mom struggling to control her unruly children. Say a prayer for the people you encounter. Have patience and smile generously.
- Observe the vibrant colors in the produce department, and think of those workers near and far who have labored in the fields and the warehouses, all with the intention of supporting their own families. Say a prayer for them that they may receive wages that are fair, and that they not work in conditions you would not tolerate for a loved one working in similar circumstances.
- Each week, plan to make a sacrifice out of your family's food budget, and buy something for your parish's food drive or a local pantry. Perhaps it means you purchase a less expensive version of your favorite beverage, do without the best ice cream or plan one vegetarian, low-cost meal. Use the savings to share with the hungry.
- Be present to the cashier who rings up your order. Think of the difficulty of a job spent standing all day, greeting customers both cheerful and surly. Thank her with a smile.



- Keep an ongoing grocery list during the week. Plot out your meals, plan your excursion. Experts tell us one trip a week to the grocery is not only economical, but a much better use of time.
- Recite a thanksgiving prayer from the heart at dinner. Be grateful to the God who has given you so much to meet your needs and to share.

# Be a Good Steward of the Thanksgiving Day Weekend

Your Thanksgiving Day weekend can be more than just enjoying great meals, turning on the television to watch football games or renewing your annual Christmas shopping after a year's pandemic-related hiatus. How about expressing your stewardship of this weekend in a more meaningful way? Here are some suggestions for making your Thanksgiving weekend an opportunity for expressing your gratitude to the Lord in creative ways:



- Go to Mass on Thanksgiving Day and count your blessings. Start the day off on a positive note and celebrate the Eucharist. In your prayer reflect on five things you are most grateful for in your life. Then reflect on how you can be an even better steward of these gifts.
- Write "I'm thankful for you" cards and give them out or e-mail them on Thanksgiving (or mail them beforehand).
- Share your Thanksgiving meal with someone who is alone this Thanksgiving. Look for someone, such as a neighbor, co-worker, fellow parishioner, college student or armed services personnel who may be separated from family and ask them to join you for your Thanksgiving dinner.
- Practice ecumenism! Many parishes make Thanksgiving an opportune time to join in ecumenical services with other Christian worshipping communities, or inter-faith activities and programs with non-Christian centers of worship. Find one nearby and experience something new and enriching.
- Make contact with those who are sick or disabled. Although it may not be prudent to attempt to visit them during these uncertain times, try to identify someone who could use a phone call or even an errand run for them.
- Help someone if you can. Extend your generosity and blessings beyond your own family. Be part of an adopt-a-family effort, help distribute food baskets where health and safety protocols permit, or bring canned foods or clothing to St. Vincent de Paul centers.
- Take a walk. Find a place to enjoy God's gift of creation. Head out the door for a refreshing walk. Invite family, friends, a colleague or neighbor to join you and share the experience as well.
- Most important! Take advantage of the Thanksgiving holiday weekend to focus on what you're grateful for and the things you appreciate about yourself and others. It is an ideal time to remember and to celebrate the many blessings in our lives.

# Giving Thanks for Our Parish Communions

For most of us, the ultimate way we experience Christ's active presence is in our parishes. It is there that we hear the Word of God and are nourished by the Eucharist. So, this Thanksgiving let us offer prayers of gratitude for our parishes, pastors, pastoral teams, parish leaders and all the faithful who gather together to give witness to Christ's presence.

What does it mean to be a parish, though, and how is a parish a unique manifestation of the Church? Sixty-four years ago, when Saint John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1962, he urged the Council Fathers to reflect on the mystery of the Church present throughout the world. One of the



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major descriptions employed by the Council Fathers to describe the Church was "communion." The very opening words of the first document of the Council, *the Dogmatic Constitution* on the Church proclaim: "The Church is a kind of sacrament or mystery; a sign and instrument of communion with God and of unity among all people."

Note that the Second Vatican Council made a deliberate choice to refer to the Church as a "communion" rather than simply using the term "community." While the term

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community refers to independent persons working toward a common goal, the term communion conveys a much deeper reality, persons sharing the same sacramental life. Our communion is literally a "sharing of gifts" as sisters and brothers of the one Christ Jesus whose Spirit brings us into unity not only with God but also with each other.

Sacramentally, we manifest the mystery of the divine communion of the Blessed Trinity. Sharing the Trinity's communion in love, as a Church, we have been called to live together in unity for the sake of following the Gospel and proclaiming the Kingdom of God. As a communion of faith, as a Church, we are born out of and live within the Paschal Mystery.



As a communion of faith we experience and celebrate these mysteries of Christ's life in and through its daily and weekly sacramental life. All of this means that a parish is not simply a human creation, it is God's work. The Holy Spirit calls us into being and bonds us together in communion and mission with God and each other.

Jesus assures us that we are not left to our own devices when we walk in his footsteps and gather in his name. He has given us the Holy Spirit, who teaches, guides and protects us. And that is accomplished most uniquely through the sacramental life of our parish. This month, let us give thanks to God for our parish and re-commit ourselves to participating more fervently in its life and mission.



# Celebrating the Stewards of Their Faith: Solemnity of All Saints

On November 1, the Solemnity of All Saints celebrates the triumph of Christ's Gospel in the lives of every person who now enjoys the friendship of God in heaven. This feast embraces not only those who have been officially recognized by the Church as saints, it also includes those who had a reputation for holiness but whose causes for canonization have not yet been completed, as well as those women and men whose lives of sanctity were known only to their family, friends and associates, or to members of their parish, diocese or religious community.

The twenty-second great council of the Catholic Church, the Second Vatican Council, offers an explanation for this solemnity in its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen gentium, "Light of nations"):

*In the lives of those companions of ours who are more perfectly transformed into the image of Christ (see 2 Corinthians 3:18) God shows, vividly, to humanity his presence and his face. He speaks to us through them and offers us a sign of his Kingdom, to which we are powerfully attracted, so great a cloud of witnesses are we given (see Hebrews 12:1) and such an affirmation of the truth of the Gospel … Our communion with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its fountain and head flow all grace and life of the people of God itself" (n. 50).*

The beginnings of this feast can be traced back to the 4th century where the Church in the East had a collective celebration of all the Christian martyrs on the Friday after Easter Sunday. Chaldean-rite Catholics still celebrate the feast on that day. Origins of the feast for the Church in the West are not precisely known.

The first mention of November 1 as the day for observing the feast came from England in the 8th century. A 9th century liturgical calendar from England lists All Saints as a major feast on November 1. Arguably, Rome adopted this day to celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints when Pope Gregory IV (828-844) transferred the feast from May to November 1 because Rome could not accommodate the number of pilgrims who came for the feast in late spring.

In England and Ireland the feast of All Saints was formerly known as "All Hallows." This explains the name for the secular celebration of Halloween, on the "eve" of the feast itself, "Hallowe'en, meaning "Hallow evening."

The Solemnity of All Saints should remind us of our communion with all the saints who have gone before us as well as the universal call to exercise perfect stewardship of our faith through the love of Christ and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray to conduct our lives as Jesus would have it. For he said, "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).



# A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

**Solemnity of All Saints**
**Weekend of October 31/ November 1, 2026**

On this Solemnity of All Saints we turn our attention to Jesus' teachings on what is to be expected of those who choose to follow him. This is the familiar Sermon on the Mount, the most quoted part of the Bible. Jesus' sermon begins with messages of comfort, the Beatitudes. Each of these "blesseds" is a statement about an important aspect in how we exercise stewardship of our lives. Each of them offers us an ideal of how to live and how we find God living within us. Learn the Beatitudes, memorize them, make them part of your daily prayer life, and ask the Lord for the wisdom and strength to follow this stewardship way of life, a path that follows in the footsteps of Jesus.

**Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**
**Weekend of November 7/8, 2026**

Jesus' parable of the ten virgins, some prepared, others unprepared, is directed at those who profess to be believers in Christ and await his return. His teaching is not directed to unbelievers. The stewardship issue turns on spiritual preparedness for the Lord's return. Good stewards prepare for Christ's return daily, in their life of prayer, worship, and acts of compassion and generosity. A stewardship reflection for the week: Are we preparing ourselves for the Lord? Are we open to the Holy Spirit's work within us? Are we ready?

**Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time**
**Weekend of November 14/15, 2026**

In today's Gospel, Jesus delivers the parable of the talents; using the example of money rather than abilities or skills. It is a story about investments, risks and returns. Stewards understand that God has given them an abundance of spiritual gifts. They know God doesn't want them to simply receive these blessings and bury them in fear, but to multiply them; to use these gifts to serve Him and others; to spread Christ's Good News; to go and make disciples of others. Good stewards invest what God has given them in the service of others and are prepared to render an account when the Lord returns.

**Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe**
**Weekend of November 21/22, 2026**

In today's Gospel, Saint Matthew offers a compelling vision of the end-time, when the people of all nations are brought before the Lord to give an account of their lives and actions. Interestingly, the sheep, the righteous ones, are rewarded for having acted with love and compassion without having recognized the face of Christ in others. Good stewards recognize those in need of their care as gifts from God. They know that they are instruments of Christ's active, loving presence in the world. How will we treat others this week: our family members, neighbors, customers, strangers? What accounting will we make to the Lord for their care?

**First Sunday of Advent**
**Weekend of November 28/29, 2026**

The season of Advent is upon us, and in today's Gospel Jesus delivers a simple message through the pen of Saint Mark: "Be watchful! Be alert!" Christian stewards understand what Jesus meant when he said, "It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task." Good stewards realize that to each one a task is assigned by God. They have been set in a particular place and station in life, and have been gifted with unique relationships. How do we respond to the tasks or cultivate our relationships in a way that keeps us alert for the return of Christ?