

ORDINARY SUNDAY XVII "A"
OCTOBER 4/5, 2014
(Stewardship Speaker # 2)

The Preface we will use in today's Mass at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer proclaims our vocation as stewards of God's gift of human life and creation, symbolized in the image of the vineyard in today's Scripture readings from the prophet Isaiah and Jesus' parable: ***"You [God] laid the foundations of the world and have arranged the changing of times and seasons; you formed man in your own image and set humanity over the whole world in all its wonder, to rule in your name over all you have made."***

Currently we are engaged in the third part of our annual re-commitment individually and as a parish to living a spirituality and practice of stewardship—that of financial treasure. Earlier we renewed our commitments to stewardship of time in prayer as well as through the gifts of time and talent through service.

This weekend's celebration opens the annual observance by the Church in our country of "Respect Life" month. Each October we are called to reflect on our stewardship of the gift of human life, our own, and as the stewards of the life of each human being as our brothers and sisters. The news daily brings home the urgent call to continue our efforts to guard and promote human life and dignity at every stage, from conception to natural death in the face of continued legal access to abortion, as well as graphically depicted in the news media in acts of brutality and terrorism committed by individuals and groups. As noted in my reflection in today's Bulletin, as Catholics we are called to a comprehensive defense of human life as God's stewards across the whole spectrum of issues that affect human life. The harsh judgment meted out by God the owner of the vineyard in both the reading from Isaiah and the Gospel parable should prompt each of us to ask: to what use am I putting the gifts of my life? How do my attitudes, values, actions, parish, community and political involvement promote the right and dignity of the life of others? What kind of "harvest for God" am I, are we, bearing?