

# Stewardship Intergenerational Gathering

## Small-group Session Plan 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade

### **Objectives for this lesson with this age group:**

1. To build on the opening experience in which the idea of stewardship was briefly presented, and to further develop their understanding of stewardship in ways that are meaningful to them.
2. To then study some scripture passages that tell us what God expects of us as stewards.
3. And then to identify some ways that we can live that out.

### **Materials needed:**

- ◆ Catechist Background (attached)
- ◆ Stewardship scenarios and pictures (7, attached)
- ◆ book: *The Quiltmaker's Gift* by Jeff Brumbeau
- ◆ handout: "Called to Be Stewards"
- ◆ set of pictures for skits (step #7 in this plan)

### **Before the session:**

- ◆ Go to your assigned room and check to see that everything is there and ready.

You will be called by name to lead the children in your age group to your room.

### **Small-group time: 1 hour**

1. Welcome the children. Tell them your name. Take a couple minutes to get to know them. Ask them to move their nametag to where you can see it, if necessary.
2. Ask the children to recall what they just experienced. [Song - "Grateful." Then an activity in which they drew or wrote things God has given them and for which they are grateful. Then a time to share and hear what others drew or wrote. A brief explanation of stewardship. And then a prayer experience about gratitude.]
3. Review the concept of stewardship. Present some of the key concepts in the background material (attached). Put them in your own words. Don't feel that you have to convey every idea at this time.
4. Use the Stewardship scenarios and pictures to connect those concepts with situations with which the children can identify. Following are thoughts about those scenarios. The children will undoubtedly come up with other ideas.  
#1. (Adam - grandmother's garden)
  - ❖ Adam is being a good steward of his time by giving some to his grandmother and some for his other interests. He is also making good use of his physical health and abilities needed by his grandmother.
  - ❖ Some might argue that he should give more or less time.

#2 (Nathan - raking leaves)

- ❖ Nathan is not being a good steward of his time.
- ❖ Some might argue that he needed to do his homework or practice his guitar, but he knew he wouldn't be able to rake leaves after dark.

#3 (Wilson family - park)

- ❖ The Wilson family are being good stewards of the park, of their time, and of their ability to do the clean-up.
- ❖ The people who have picnics and leave litter are, of course, not good stewards of the park.

#4 (Samantha - babysitting)

- ❖ Samantha is not being a good steward of her job responsibilities. Even though the yard is fenced and she thought the children were safe, the pictures show situations in which the children needed to be supervised.

#5 (Mackenzie - smoke alarms)

- ❖ Mackenzie is being a good steward by taking responsibility and being proactive. Not only did she alert her mother to the need for a new battery in the one alarm, she used her new knowledge and skills to check the others.

#6 (Emily - bike helmet)

- ❖ Although it was good that Emily made sure that Sarah had a helmet, Emily didn't check to see if her sister needed the helmet. Being a steward also means respecting the rights and property of others.

#7 (Lindsey - TV instead of studying)

- ❖ Lindsey is not being a good steward of her time or her abilities. Even though she might be able to get a passing grade without studying, she should use her abilities to their fullest, not just a bare minimum.

5. Introduce the book, *The Quiltmaker's Gift*. (Some children may have seen it before.) Read the book aloud to the group and show them the pictures. [One way of doing this is for you to be seated and invite the children - depending on how many are in the group - to kneel and stand around and behind you and look over your shoulder.]

After reading the book, use these or other questions for discussion.

- ❖ At the beginning of the story, what was the king like?
- ❖ Have you known anyone who acted like the king?
- ❖ How does it feel to be around someone who is greedy?
- ❖ Was the king a good steward at the beginning of the story? Why or why not?
- ❖ What was the quiltmaker's special gift?
- ❖ What was the one thing the quiltmaker refused to do with her quilts? [sell them]
- ❖ What did she do with the quilts she made?
- ❖ How did the quiltmaker use her gifts to help others?
- ❖ Was the quiltmaker a good steward? Why or why not?
- ❖ Do you know anyone like the quiltmaker - someone who uses their gifts and abilities to help others?
- ❖ What abilities do you have which you could use like that?
- ❖ What conditions did the quiltmaker set in order for the king to ever receive one of her

quilts?

- ❖ So what did the king finally do?
- ❖ What surprise did the king discover when he started giving away his treasures?
- ❖ At the end of the story, the king's clothes and shoes are worn out and almost all his possessions have been given away, is he poor? Why or why not?
- ❖ Did the king become a good steward? How?
- ❖ In what way could you become a steward like the king - can you think of real examples?

6. Listening to the Word of God

Introduce this section by saying something like: "We don't just try to be good stewards in order to be 'nice' people. We try to be stewards because that is what God asks of us. The Bible passage we're going to read and study tells us how God wants us to see ourselves as stewards."

Distribute the handout, "Called to Be Stewards." Invite someone to read the scripture passages. Then use the questions in the boxes to the side for discussion.

7. Integrating the concepts and preparing for action

Divide them into small groups of about 3. Show them the pictures (ones without captions) and explain that each small group will choose one picture (as a thought-starter) and make up a story or skit in which people are being good stewards. Give them no more than 5 minutes to prepare, then ask each group to present their story or skit. While they are preparing, move around the room and help them develop their ideas. Encourage them to use realistic situations in which people their age could really do something positive.

8. Thank them for their participation. Ask them to take the handouts with them. Just leave the materials in the room – it is important for you to go with your group and get back to your own family.

**Thanks!!!**

# Catechist Background

## Some General Ideas About Stewardship

- ❖ To be a *steward* is to care, to the best of my ability, for property or talents or other people for whom I am responsible. In secular terms we speak of a “wine steward” in a fine restaurant whose job it is to see that a proper type of wine is served with each course of a meal, in the proper glass, at the correct temperature, etc. to maximize the enjoyment of the wine and the meal. That person is being a good steward of the wine and of the customer. To be a Christian steward is to be the best possible disciple of Christ that I can be, here and now in my daily life.
- ❖ The concept of stewardship as a part of our faith comes from as far back as the Old Testament commands that we make good use of all that God gives us and to share that with others. Stewardship is about recognizing that everything we are and have is gift from God. We do not create our abilities; they are given to us. We do not deserve our jobs, homes and possessions; they are gifts. We do not earn love; it is always a gift.
- ❖ Stewardship is an attitude, a way of life and a way of relating to God and others. When I recognize how blessed I am by God, I respond by sharing with others, trusting that God will continue to bless me (rather than feeling that I have to hoard what I have).
- ❖ The word *stewardship* is challenging for many Catholics. For many, it reminds them of being asked for money or to sign up to do things at church. One of our challenges in this gathering is to respect where people are in their understanding of the term, but also provide a fuller, more balanced vision of stewardship.
- ❖ Stewardship has been described with various words and images. One set that was used for a number of years was *Time, Talent and Treasure*. Those are okay but also have limitations. For example, there is a lot of overlap between time and talent.
- ❖ Bishop Morneau likes to say that, “Stewardship is what I do after I believe.”
- ❖ Another way to describe stewardship is *Prayer, Service and Sharing*. Those are the words that our diocese and our parish are currently using to take the word stewardship and break it down into “do-able” pieces.
- ❖ We speak of our “Stewardship of Prayer,” meaning the ways in which we attend to our responsibility to spend time (and effort) in prayer, upholding our end of our relationship with God.
- ❖ “Stewardship of Service” refers to our responsibility to use our energy, time and abilities to serve others, in our family, our faith community and the wider civic community.
- ❖ “Stewardship of Sharing” includes our responsibility to share with others the vast array of things we have been given by God, to respond with gratitude and then generosity.