



**Homily of His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto
Stewardship Sunday - 21 September 2025**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Praised be Jesus Christ.

On this 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time, across the Archdiocese of Toronto, we are taking time to reflect on stewardship. More than just the giving of time, treasure and talent, stewardship is profoundly spiritual, deeply biblical, and eminently practical in daily living. In this Jubilee Year, stewardship takes on special significance. The call to reset, restore, and renew, reminds us that everything belongs to God and we are guardians and custodians. The Jubilee demands justice and release; stewardship recommends responsibility and reverence. Together, these challenge us to live with generosity, balance, and in service of God and one another.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that all of creation belongs to God (cf. Deut 10:14; Ps 24:1) which he generously bestows upon us (cf. CCC, 299). The loving gift of the Father invites us to enter into relationship with him, to respond in a manner that is pleasing, and which is modelled for us by his Son, who “came not to be served but to serve” (cf. Matt 20:28; Mk 10:45; cf. Jn 13:1-17).

As responsible stewards of God’s blessings we are loving caretakers who manage and celebrate God’s gifts with reverence, gratitude, humility, and love. If we cannot be trusted with the passing things of this world to be used for the glory of God and in service of our brothers and sisters, how can we be trusted with the eternal blessedness that awaits us in heaven? The “true riches” (Lk 16:11) mentioned in our Gospel reading this weekend are understood as spiritual riches—things of eternal value, including eternal life itself. I am not suggesting that we earn or buy our way into heaven, this view is false and condemned by the Church; nevertheless, our fidelity in earthly matters reveals our readiness for heaven (cf. CCC, 1996-1997, 2027, 2008, 1815).

Jesus’ parable underscores the judicious use of worldly things in service of God and others, and ultimately life with him (cf. Matt 6:19-21). The reference to “eternal homes” (Lk 16:9), at the end of the parable reminds us to focus on what really and truly matters. The urgency of the manager is also noteworthy (Lk 16:6), prompting us not to wait for a tomorrow that may never come. Finally, the manager’s use of the rich man’s property to secure his personal future provides an important imperative; namely, if people use worldly things to secure an earthly future which is fleeting, how much more should we do likewise for eternal life which will endure forever (Lk 16:9). We are called to offer the things of this world, which belong to God, to give glory to him and merit eternal life—albeit as faithful servants and not dishonest managers (Lk 16:12; cf. Str. Augustine, *Serm.* 359A,10).



Even the smallest acts of faithfulness have eternal significance. Living in the presence of God with an awareness of his gifts and blessings, results in living and acting with purpose, meaning and hope. Spiritual masters such as Jean-Pierre Caussade and Brother Lawrence call this: **The Sacrament of the Present Moment**. All our decisions and actions become sacred when made with the awareness that we are servants of God, his beloved children, who offer ourselves, our very lives to him in union with Jesus Christ.

While the gifts and blessings we have received are many and incredible, these cannot compare with the divine life offered to us in the most Blessed Eucharist. The Eucharist not only reminds us of Jesus' total gift of himself—his body, blood, soul, and divinity, offered for us and for the salvation of the world—it is also an invitation to imitate his sacrificial love (cf. Jn 13:34-35). True stewardship recognizes the gifts and blessings we have received and with gratitude offers these to God in loving service. Just as Jesus offered himself to the Father, we offer all that we have and all that we are, heeding the call to “take up our Cross” and follow him without counting the cost (Matt 16:24-26; Mk 8:34-36).

During this Jubilee Year, we recall its deep biblical meaning—a sacred time of spiritual renewal. The Hebrew Scriptures remind us that everything we possess, our very existence and living, are, ultimately belongs to God (cf. Lev 25:23). The Old Testament Jubilee saw land returned, debts forgiven, and captives set free; it was a radical summons to trust in God's providence—to live not with clenched fists, but with open hearts and hands, ready to receive and to give. Our stewardship flows from this same disposition and dedication. We are not owners, but custodians of God's gifts (cf. CCC, 952).

In a world marked by division, consumption, and fear, true stewardship becomes an act of hope: a visible sign that we trust in something greater than ourselves. People who live in hope, live differently (cf. *Spe Salvi*, 2), they have an eternal perspective that is informed by faith and love. Faith, hope and love, find their greatest expression and fulfilment in the Eucharist, the sacramental foretaste of God's divine life which is fully realised in heaven (cf. CCC, 1402-1405; 1003). In receiving this sacred gift, we are invited to respond with our whole lives, offering ourselves to God and in service to our brothers and sisters. Our self-offering mirrors God's love and in so doing reflects true stewardship.

I conclude with an inspiring saying from St. John of the Cross (*Sayings of Light and Love*, 27) by which he understands and conveys that all things belong to us because all things belong to God and, in Christ, we belong to God:

“Mine are the heavens and mine is the earth. Mine are the nations, the just are mine, and mine the sinners. The angels are mine, and the Mother of God, and all things are mine; and God himself is mine and for me, because Christ is mine and all for me. What do you ask, then, and seek, my soul? Yours is all of this, and all is for you. Do not engage yourself in something less or pay heed to the crumbs that fall from your Father's table. Go forth and exult in your Glory! Hide yourself in it and rejoice, and you will obtain the supplications of your heart.”

My brothers and sisters, may the Lord bless you and keep you and your loved ones and communities in his abundant grace.