

## Core Value of Faith – Stewardship 2



### VIRTUE CORNER

As announced at the start of 2020 the chaplains propose to you, men of the Lumen Institute to take a deeper dive into the Core Value of Faith and it's supporting virtues. We will spend two circles on each of the four core virtues that are found under Faith. Faith in Jesus and in what God has revealed is the bedrock of all that you aspire to – the ultimate success of getting you and your family to heaven, as well as the earthly success of living a life worthy of that faith.

This is our second month on the supporting virtue of Stewardship which, simply put, is the managing of someone else's goods. If you manage them well, in accordance with the owner's desires and instructions, you are a good steward, and most likely you will be rewarded. If you don't, you are a bad steward, and if the owner finds out, you will probably be punished.

A good steward believes that all he has is a gift from the one who entrusted it to him and should be used only in so much as it helps him get to Heaven. In Ignatian spirituality, this principal is called in Latin, *tantum quantum*, or "...in so much as". The text of Ignatius goes like this...

Man is created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord, and by this means save his soul. All other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him fulfill the end for which he is created. From this it follows that man is to use these things in so much as (*tantum quantum*) that they will help him attain this end. Likewise he must rid himself of them in so far as they prevent him from attaining it.

Therefore we must make ourselves indifferent (detached) to all created things, in so far as it is left to the choice of our free will and is not forbidden. Acting accordingly, for our part, we should not prefer health to sickness, sickness to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short one, and so in all things we should desire and choose only those things which will best help attain the end for which we are created.

So a good steward is one who is detached from all the gifts he has and attached to God who is his true end. He uses all his gifts and treasure to serve and love God and to get himself and his children to heaven. For men in particular, detachment from money and material things is a sure path to spiritual growth. We express our faith in real and concrete actions which give life to our soul. When we give time, talent and treasure to the Lord, when we tithe to him a meaningful portion of what he in his goodness has allowed us to have, we show him worship and recognition that it all comes from Him and belongs to Him. Would your weekly schedule and credit card statement show that you are attached to Him and his things firstly and to everything else according to Him?

**No matter how hard you hug your money, it never hugs back.**

**(Author unknown)**



## GOSPEL REFLECTION (30 MIN)

### Jesus instructions on what to value...

**Luke 12: 33-34**

Sell your possessions and give to those in need. Get yourselves purses that do not wear out, treasure that will not fail you, in heaven where no thief can reach it and no moth destroy it. For wherever your treasure is, that is where your heart will be too.

According to your ability, be merciful. If you have much, give abundantly; if you have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little. (Tobit 4:8)

Instruct those who are rich in this world's goods that they should not be proud and should set their hopes not on money, which is untrustworthy, but on God who gives us richly all that we need for our happiness. They are to do good and be rich in good works, generous in giving and always ready to share – this is the way they can amass a good capital sum for the future if they want to possess the only life that is real. (St Paul, 1 Timothy 6:17-19)

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. (St Paul, 1 Timothy 6:9-10)

### Questions for Discussion:

Context: St Paul, Timothy his disciple and the early Church see money the way Jesus taught them: not to be overly attached to it, but use it like all things for God's glory and the good of one's soul. The passage from Luke summarizes Jesus' view of money, not that it is bad, it is actually very good, but only in as much as it's relative to our ultimate goal in life: heaven.

1. Jesus invites us to use our treasure to care for those in need and thus, gain a purse that doesn't wear out. Again, it is the call to invest in the eternal, and use wealth and material things in function of heaven and others – where should we lay up treasure and how do we do that?
2. Paul's instruction to Timothy as regards dealing with people of wealth is that they not be proud and set their hope on God. How can I show my hope in God in my use of the material success he has given me?
3. St Paul wants to free Christians from the evil that he sees love of money produces. We all have seen how greed has ruined lives and families. How important is it to show our kids detachment from material things? How important is it for our own heart?
4. What do you do practically with your children to help them learn that lesson? How do you involve them in your stewardship and your charitable giving of time or treasure?





## CASE DISCUSSION (30 MIN)

**2 ways to go about it.** Read the Case and discuss afterwards how it can apply to your leadership, parenting style. Or ask a member to voluntarily offer their challenges this virtue at home, in the work place or in their lumen action (volunteer work). The circle can offer some personal experiences on how they have confronted and resolved similar difficulties.

This month we take a pause from Leadership theories to discuss some numbers of the Catechism on Stewardship. Please read the following numbers and discuss them.

Christ's faithful have the obligation to provide for the needs of the Church, so that the Church has available to it those things which are necessary for divine worship, for apostolic and charitable work and for the worthy support of its ministers. They are also obliged to promote social justice and, mindful of the Lord's precept, to help the poor from their own resources. (Code of Canon Law #222)

The development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. Economic activity, conducted according to its own proper methods, is to be exercised within the limits of the moral order, in keeping with social justice so as to correspond to God's plan for man. ((Catechism of the Catholic Church #2426)

In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labor, and enjoy their fruits. The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race. However, the earth is divided up among men to assure the security of their lives, endangered by poverty and threatened by violence. The appropriation of property is legitimate for guaranteeing the freedom and dignity of persons and for helping each of them to meet his basic needs and the needs of those in his charge. It should allow for a natural solidarity to develop between men. (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2402)

Those Christians who have leisure should be mindful of their brethren who have the same needs and the same rights, yet cannot rest from work because of poverty and misery. Sunday is traditionally consecrated by Christian piety to good works and humble service of the sick, the infirm, and the elderly. Christians will also sanctify Sunday by devoting time and care to their families and relatives, often difficult to do on other days of the week. Sunday is a time for reflection, silence, cultivation of the mind, and meditation which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life. (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2186)

### Questions:

1. What are the specific areas canon law says the faithful have the obligation to give towards?
2. Economic life is not only to multiply goods and profit but also to serve people? How does your work "serve people" in a significant way. Does that motivate you?
3. Private property is given to us to care for ourselves and all humanity as well as express our freedom. What ways do you use your "private property" or all the things you own to "develop natural solidarity" with others?
4. What recommendations do the catechism have for how to spend your Sundays?



## The Wisdom of the Church on Stewardship

When we neglect nothing, and are careful to store up the little gains we can make, we shall insensibly increase our riches; it is nearly the same with spiritual riches. Since our Divine Lord and Judge will keep an account of a glass of water, there is no good action we ought to despise, however small it may appear and we must not be grieved if we cannot do great things; little things naturally are the forerunners of great actions. Neglect the former, and you will not be capable to do the latter... It was to prevent this misfortune that Jesus Christ has promised to reward us for little things. There is nothing more easy than visiting a sick person, nevertheless, God has fixed a great reward for this good work, however easy it may appear. (St John Chrysostom, Doctor of the Church)

God, when He deigned to become Incarnate, was so united to poverty, with such an inexpressible union, that the poor is a tabernacle where God is hidden, in the same way as He is veiled in our ciboriums... So that it is the poor who beg, but it is God who receives the alms; God is our debtor, and it is the Almighty who wishes to repay us. By this means, although He is invisible, He is still with us in the person of His poor. He receives the alms, and, in return, He loads us with His graces and blessings. (St John Chrysostom, Doctor of the Church)

### Self-Assessment and Key Takeaways (10 min)

**Core Values Assessment.** Spend 10 minutes in silence assessing positive and negative examples of how you live this lumen virtue in your relationship with others and God. What times work best for you to prayer and what essential elements do you include in your prayer. The below quadrant can help in jotting down some of your assessment as well as a tool to jot notes down during this Lumen Circle.

**What struck me in this circle and how I might apply these inspirations to my THINKING. What CRITICAL ISSUES am I facing? What are the biggest CHALLENGES with these issues I face and what OPPORTINITIES does it present.**

Prayer:

Family:

Business:

Lumen Action:

[lumeninstitute.org](http://lumeninstitute.org)



Character



Faith



Leadership

*What ACTION STEPS can I take now or long term?* Develop a concrete resolution for how you can improve in your efforts to exercise Influence in your interactions with others during the next month. Your resolution should be a specific action or activity that is easily measured.

