



THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP

Receiving God's gifts with gratitude.

It is often more difficult to receive than to give and it is an art to receive graciously. Receiving requires genuine humility and demands that we enter into relationship with the giver. Gratitude comes from humbly recognising the lavishness of God and being open to God's gifts.

Cultivating God's gifts responsibly.

As we read in Genesis, God placed the first human beings in a garden to 'cultivate and care for it', in other words, to practice stewardship there. The world is a garden entrusted to us by God. It is important to ask ourselves what we have done with each of the 'gardens' entrusted to us.

Share God's gifts lovingly and in justice with others.

The self-emptying sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is for us the model of love and justice. God's love, incarnate in Jesus, becomes incarnate in us when we too make a self-emptying sacrifice to benefit especially the most needy and vulnerable in society. In doing so, we continue Jesus' saving work in the world and ourselves become stewards of the mystery of salvation.

Return God's gifts with increase to the Lord.

God's gifts are not meant to be hoarded and greedily protected but rather wisely invested and cultivated. Returning to the Lord with increase is a matter of faith. It is through faith in God's love for us that we recognise how we have been blessed and have the confidence in God's abiding care to give abundantly.