



The Good Steward

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Published to help stimulate a better understanding of our need to give

I want to wish a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of my readers. I also want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have been so kind as to let me know how much you have enjoyed an article or two. I really appreciate your kind words and look forward to serving you in the future.

Jean LaJesse, Stewardship Manager

Excerpt from "Deus Caritas Est" or "God is Love," the first encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI: "*the Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* explored more specifically (than the Code of Canon Law) the duty of charity as a responsibility incumbent upon the whole Church and upon each bishop in his Diocese, (33) and it emphasized that the exercise of charity is an action of the Church as such, and

that like the ministry of Word and Sacrament, it too has been an essential part of her mission from the very beginning."

An Attitude About Life

Think of life as something God has given us to manage or take care of. Everything comes from God. We may use our talent or ability to achieve material goods, but the talent or ability is a gift from God to begin with. Once you look at life this way, as a steward, it becomes clear that we just give of what we are as well as what we have. It means cultivating an attitude of generous giving and getting into the habit of thinking of others. **Used with permission from Parish Publishing, LLC, New Canaan, CT 06840**

Consider This About Sharing –

If we give what's left over, the church neither feeds us spiritually, or anyone else.

If we give "dues," the church will not be more than a "club" to us.

If sentimental preservation of the past is our reason, then the church will be like a museum.

If we give out of obligation, we will always resent what we have to do.

BUT...

If we give out of compassion for those whose needs are greater than ours, our needs will seem so much smaller.

If we are thankful, the church will reflect the measure of our gratitude.

If love leads us to selfless giving, the church will become the place where we discover the joy of Christ's presence. Anonymous. Used with permission from Parish Publishing, LLC, New Canaan CT 06840

Tiny Sweet Midgets

In the grand scheme of things, a pickle doesn't seem like much. After all, it's just a cucumber all "doctored" up. Some are flat, round, crinkled, dill, sweet, garlic, tiny, large homemade and store-bought. There are probably a lot more types too, but what I'm interested in are the tiny sweet store-bought midgets. Just tiny little cucumbers all packed into a jar to make some expensive little pickles. No big deal!

I used to measure my success as to whether I had "tiny sweets" in the fridge or not. Let me tell you there were times when I thought I was very unsuccessful. I considered the tiny pickles to be a luxury item since they were expensive; at least they were to me. In my "younger" years many times I found myself working several jobs, which paid like one good job. It seemed I was always on the road going from one job to another with no time of my own. But the house payment had to be made and all the other bills as well. But there were always dog food, Diet Coke and sweet midgets in the fridge...in that order, I might add. I looked at the pickles and knew I was successful, even though I didn't eat them. I had them.

So, you can imagine the magnitude of delight when I finally got **one** well paying job. I was able to buy "tiny sweets" and actually eat them! I was a grand success. Ahhh, nothing but glorious days were sure to follow.

I lost my job. The company I worked for moved out of Kentucky, leaving me pickle-less. I told my sister, Gayle, about my predicament and, as usual, she listened with understanding and total agreement with my description of the "Higher Ups" at the company. Tearfully I exploded, "I'll never be able to buy pickles again!"

I was without a job for quite sometime. I couldn't even find several low-paying jobs. But, I was never without pickles again.

Never questioning me about why the pickles were so important to me, my sister just brought them to me. She would often check the fridge on her way out after a visit to see how my supply was holding up.

Later, I told my husband-to-be, Ed, about the pickles and he thought it was a wonderful story. So when we decided to get married, Ed bought a jar of pickles for me, assuring my sister and me that I would always have "sweet tiny midgets in our fridge.

Now when I see pickles in my fridge, I no longer see success because of a job or an accomplishment. I see success because I know I'm loved, and always have been, and always will be because God has a way of making sure I have "tiny sweets" in my fridge. By Ginny Knight-Simon

(Borrowed from Wisdom, a publication by the Diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky)