

A thief comes only to steal
and kill and destroy. I came that
they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

John 10:10



What does abundance **REALLY** mean?

There are volumes of books about the struggles that we as human beings face. We know that when Adam and Eve listened and acted upon the temptation the enemy presented to them in Eden, things changed. They went from living in perfect harmony with God to separation from God because they succumbed to fear and doubt. The enemy seeks to steal our joy, kill our hopes and destroy our peace. The enemy wants to interfere with our relationship with Christ and separate us from God. Fear, doubt, lack and anxiety are the complete opposite of abundance.

Christ Jesus came to make all things new and to bring us life in abundance. Dictionaries tell us abundance means an “extremely plentiful or over sufficient quantity or supply, an overflowing fullness, plenty, ampleness, copiousness” – in short it means thriving.

The world we live in may try to point to money and material things as the measure of abundance when we as Catholics need to always be mindful that Christ is the one true treasure. With the true presence of Christ in our midst in the Eucharist and always in our tabernacle we indeed have more than we need. We have Jesus always available and ready to hear what is on our hearts and to bring us back to Him. We have plenty.

We need to return our time to God in prayer, worship and study as no relationship grows if it is not given time. None of us travel this road alone and Jesus told us to first love God with our whole self and all our strength and then to love one another. These are the greatest commandments. (Mark 12:30-31). Other people need the gift of our smile, our love, our special talent so we are to make our light shine on others. The gift of our treasure advances the mission of the Church and helps others take a step on their spiritual journey.

The earth and everything in it will some day pass away but what remains is everlasting life with God. God gave us life as a gift and how we spend that life can either lead to fear, anxiety and restlessness or can lead us to joy and peace. God’s outpouring of abundance means that His grace, peace, love and mercy are new each and every moment of every day.

God told us He alone should be first in our lives. We struggle when we try to find peace and satisfaction in all the wrong places. What is at the center of our lives? Our calendars and our checkbook offer a sobering glimpse into the things on which we place a high priority in our lives.

Each year our parish conducts a renewal period to help us to check our progress and set our goals. It is easy to lose focus. So we are reminded to check ourselves regularly – how are we doing? Are we *FULLY* participating in the life that God offers? Are we attending Mass regularly, are we participating in reaching others and nourishing our faith through ministry participation and are we supporting the mission of the Church through our financial gifts?

With Christ at the center and realizing all we have is a gift from God, we can more clearly see the many blessings in our life.

There are hard times in this life. But we need to remember that life in the kingdom of God is forever – the highest and most true way of defining abundance. Jesus said there will be challenges in this world but He has overcome the world (John 16:33). Believe the Good News of Jesus Christ. Live for Christ and as Christ teaches us. Trust Jesus and live as a good steward. Not perfect, but always pressing on toward the goal of life in abundance with Christ in the kingdom. (Philippians 3:12)

*I can do all things through Christ
who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13*