**Active Stewardship of Time and Energy: Laziness vs. Enthusiasm**

**Laziness** on the surface is apathy, boredom, procrastination, and lethargy. It is a lifestyle of reluctance to work, and addiction to rest and play. The lazy person may be deceived, and say “I can’t” instead of “I won’t.” By always trying to avoid the ridicule of failure, and the rejection which comes from hurting others’ feelings, one can become caught up in habitual sins of omission.

The antidote to this is **Enthusiasm**, which is the inspired dedication to work hard in service to God and others. It requires an appreciation of the precious scarcity of our time and energy. We must recognize our talents and opportunities, and see that God’s giving them to us grants us both responsibility and a source of self-respect.

**Laziness** is an insidious attitude, growing on us suddenly without our awareness. Before we know it, it has come upon us, and is taking us into financial or spiritual poverty (**Pr 24: 30-34**). Separated from God, work begins to seem like a curse (**Gen 3: 17-19**). We may even want to mooch off others (**2 Thess 3: 7-13**), or expect believers to take care of our family for us (**1Tim 5:8**). We rationalize our laziness as due to fear (**Pr 26:13**), fatigue (**vv. 14-15**), and cleverness (**v. 16**), but none of these are valid excuses. Here are some ways to overcome our lethargy and apathy, and live with **Enthusiasm**:

Celebrate (as Jews historically have) both work and play as gifts from God meant to be enjoyed. (**Eccl 3: 9-13, 5: 18-20; and 9: 9-10**). See your occupation as a loving service to your Heavenly Father, not to your earthly boss (**Col 3:17, 23-24**).

Believe that with indwelling Holy Spirit, we have the very enthusiastic life of God coming through us. Read about God’s enthusiasm in **Isaiah 40: 25-31**, where we learn that those who wait and hope in God can “renew their strength . . . can run and not grow weary.”

Learn from the ants that there’s a time to work and a time to play (**Prov 6: 6-11**), so that our hunger and poverty, or our potential for it, or the needs of others, can motivate our work (**Prov 16:26, 2 Thess 3:10**).

Realize that time is short, so make every moment count (**Psalm 90:12**). Jesus warns us that he may come back and we may die at any time (**Matt 24: 37-51**). Surrounding that teaching, Jesus told us three poignant stories to illustrate the urgency of life, teaching us to consider our talents and opportunities as gifts from God, comparing our accomplishments not to others’ but to what we could be doing (**Matt 24: 14-30**); to serve other people unselfishly in the faith that as we bless others, we are blessing the Lord Himself (**Matt 24: 31-46**); and always to be ready for death (**Matt 25: 1-13**).

Finally, we can look away from what we used to be (our sinful past), and focus our attention on the future, on how we are becoming more like Christ (**Philippians 3: 10-14**).