



**Day 2, Session 2**

# **Storytelling and Testimony: Didache and Kerygma**

**Living the Gift: Stewardship in Word and  
Practice**

**Diocese of Huron**



## After Lunch Check-In

This is the dangerous hour.  
Lunch has been eaten.  
The room is warm.  
The coffee may or may not be enough.

So we are going to do something active:

*We are going to find our stories.*



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# The Barrier

Many faithful people think:

- ▶ *"I do not have a story worth telling."*
- ▶ *"Someone else would be better at this."*
- ▶ *"I'm not spiritual enough to give a testimony."*
- ▶ *"I don't want to sound pushy."*

These are common fears.  
They are not the final word.



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# The Reframe

- If you have **seen grace**, you have a story.
- If you have **received generosity**, you have a story.
- If you have **offered your gifts**, you have a story.
- If you have been **changed by a community**, you have a story.
- If you have **watched love multiply**, you have a story.



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# Why Stories Matter in Stewardship

Stories help people:

- ▶ recognize abundance
- ▶ connect giving to meaning
- ▶ trust that their gifts matter
- ▶ imagine their own participation
- ▶ see generosity in ordinary life
- ▶ remember that stewardship is discipleship

**Stories make stewardship human.**



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## From Session 1 to Session 2

In Session 1, we learned that a budget can tell a ministry story.

A narrative budget helps a parish say:

*"Here is what our shared resources make possible."*

Now we turn to personal testimony:

*"Here is where I have seen God moving."*



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# Two Ancient Words

## Didache

- ▶ *Teaching*
- ▶ The Church has always **communicated** faith through both Didache and Kerygma.

## Kerygma

- ▶ *Proclamation*
- ▶ These words may be ancient. But the **practice is alive.**



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# Didache

Didache means teaching.  
It helps people understand:

- ▶ what we **believe**
- ▶ how we **practice**
- ▶ what generosity **looks** like
- ▶ why stewardship **matters**
- ▶ how faith **shapes** daily life
- ▶ Shares **facts**

*A stewardship story can teach  
without sounding like a lecture.*



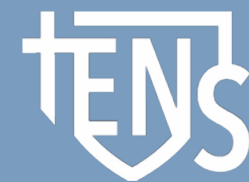
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# Kerygma

Kerygma means proclamation.  
It announces good news.  
It says:

- ▶ God is **active** here.
- ▶ Grace is **real**.
- ▶ Abundance is **possible**.
- ▶ We are invited to **respond**.
- ▶ I have a **vision** to share

A stewardship story proclaims without turning into a sales pitch.



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# Teaching and Proclamation Together

A good stewardship story does both.

It teaches:

*"This is what generosity looks like."*

And it proclaims:

*"God is moving here."*

That is why testimony matters.  
It helps people understand and believe.



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# Jesus the Storyteller

Jesus often teaches through stories.  
He tells parables about:

- ▶ seeds
- ▶ soil
- ▶ lamps
- ▶ coins
- ▶ sheep
- ▶ bread
- ▶ vineyards
- ▶ banquets
- ▶ labourers
- ▶ lost children
- ▶ persistent widows

Ordinary images.  
**Extraordinary truth.**



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# Why Parables Work

Parables invite rather than coerce.

They:

- ▶ open imagination
- ▶ use familiar images
- ▶ create curiosity
- ▶ make room for discovery
- ▶ ask listeners to participate
- ▶ stay with people after the teaching ends

**Jesus does not only explain the kingdom.  
He helps people picture it.**



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# Parables and Stewardship

Stewardship also needs imagination.

People need to picture:

- ▶ what generosity makes **possible**
- ▶ how small gifts can **bear fruit**
- ▶ why their **participation** matters
- ▶ how **God works** through ordinary lives
- ▶ what **abundance** looks like in community

**Stories help people see.**



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# The Parable of the Sower

Jesus tells of a sower who went out to sow.

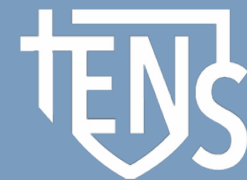
Some seed fell on the path.

Some fell on rocky ground.

Some fell among thorns.

Some fell on good soil and brought forth grain.

The seed grew and yielded fruit  
Some a hundredfold. Some sixty. Some thirty.



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# What Kind of Story Is This?

- ▶ What does this story say about trust?
- ▶ What does this story say about the sower?
- ▶ What does this story say about seeds?
- ▶ What does this story say about who is in control?
- ▶ What does this story say about patience?
- ▶ What does this story say about expectations?



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# The Sower's Generosity

By efficiency standards, the sower seems almost reckless.

Seed goes everywhere.

Not only in the perfect places.

Not only where success is guaranteed.

Not only where the return can be measured in advance.

**The sower scatters generously.**



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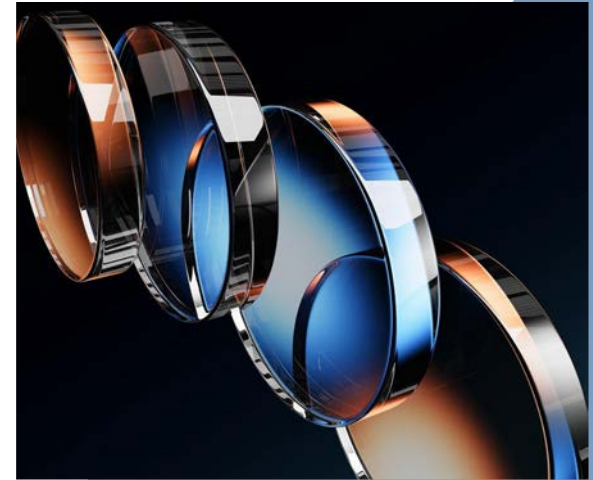
# A Stewardship Lens

stewardship leaders know this tension.

- ▶ We want good plans.
- ▶ We need responsible budgets.
- ▶ We track numbers carefully.
- ▶ We teach generosity.

And still, much of ministry requires trust.

*We scatter. We cultivate. We water. We wait.  
We watch for fruit.*



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# Seed, Soil, and Fruit

In stewardship ministry, we might ask:

## Seed

*What gifts, practices, and invitations are being scattered?*

## Soil

*What conditions help generosity take root?*

## Fruit

*What signs of growth, response, and abundance are emerging?*



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# Where Have You Seen Seed Take Root?

Think of a moment when:

- ▶ someone **invited you** into ministry
- ▶ you **learned** to give differently
- ▶ you **saw generosity** multiply
- ▶ a small gift made a large **impact**
- ▶ a parish ministry **changed someone**
- ▶ you realized your **participation** mattered

That may be the beginning of your story.



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# Personal Testimony as Ministry

A testimony is not a performance.

- ▶ It is not a commercial.
- ▶ It is not a perfect speech.
- ▶ It is a witness to grace.

It says:

*"Here is something I have seen, received, learned, or practiced."*

*"Here is why it matters."*



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# Your Story Does Not Need to Be Dramatic

A faithful story may be quiet.

It may begin with:

- ▶ a casserole
- ▶ a pledge card
- ▶ a hospital visit
- ▶ a choir rehearsal
- ▶ a parish workday
- ▶ a conversation at coffee hour
- ▶ a child's question
- ▶ a newcomer being welcomed
- ▶ an envelope quietly placed in the plate



**Ordinary faithfulness counts.**



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# The Storytelling Framework

## **Moment**

*What happened?*

## **Meaning**

*Why did it matter?*

## **Invitation**

*What does it invite?*

*Moment. Meaning. Invitation.*

Simple enough to remember.

Strong enough to teach.



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# Moment

Start with something concrete.

Not:

*"Our parish is very generous."*

Rather:

*"Last winter, when the furnace failed during a cold week, three people showed up with space heaters before anyone asked."*

**Specific moments help people enter the story.**



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# Meaning

Name why it mattered.

What did the moment reveal?

- ▶ trust
- ▶ care
- ▶ abundance
- ▶ courage
- ▶ neighbourliness
- ▶ belonging
- ▶ God's provision
- ▶ shared responsibility
- ▶ the Body of Christ at work



**Meaning turns an anecdote into testimony.**



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# Invitation

Finally, name the invitation.

What might this story invite others to:

- ▶ give?
- ▶ repair?
- ▶ share?
- ▶ celebrate?
- ▶ pray for?
- ▶ continue?
- ▶ notice?
- ▶ trust?
- ▶ practice?
- ▶ join?



**Invitation turns testimony into stewardship.**



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# Example Story

## Moment

*"When I first helped with our community meal, I thought I was just filling a volunteer slot."*

## Meaning

*"Over time, I realized the meal was not only about food. It was about dignity, friendship, and recognizing Christ in our neighbours."*

## Invitation

*"That experience changed how I think about giving. I give because I want our parish to keep becoming a place where people are fed, known, and welcomed."*



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# Another Example

## Moment

*"The first time I made a pledge, it was not large. I was almost embarrassed by it."*

## Meaning

*"But I realized the pledge was not only about the amount. It was a way of saying: this community matters to me, and I want to be part of its future."*

## Invitation

*"That small first pledge helped me practice trust. I wonder what step of trust God may be inviting each of us to take."*



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# What Makes a Story Strong?

A good stewardship story is:

- ▶ specific
- ▶ honest
- ▶ brief
- ▶ embodied
- ▶ grateful
- ▶ connected to grace
- ▶ free of manipulation
- ▶ invitational

*People do not need perfect speakers.  
They need truthful witnesses.*



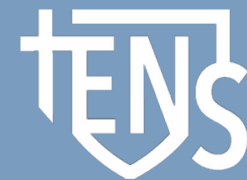
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# What to Avoid

- ▶ guilt
- ▶ panic
- ▶ jargon
- ▶ oversharing
- ▶ vague generalities
- ▶ making yourself the hero
- ▶ turning testimony into an announcement
- ▶ implying that faithful giving looks the same for everyone

*The goal is not pressure.*

*The goal is invitation.*



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# A 60-Second Story

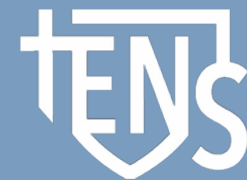
A strong stewardship story can often be told in one minute.

That means:

- ▶ one moment
- ▶ one meaning
- ▶ one invitation

Not the whole history. Not every detail.

**Just enough truth to open a door.**



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# Taking This Home

At home, invite others to practice:

## **Moment**

*What happened?*

## **Meaning**

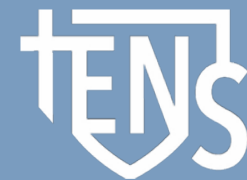
*Why did it matter?*

## **Invitation**

*What does it invite?*

This can become a parish practice.

Not only for stewardship season; For year-round **discipleship**.



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# Closing Reflection

Your story may be the doorway through which someone else recognizes grace.

- ▶ You do not need to be dramatic.
- ▶ You do not need to be perfect.
- ▶ You only need to be truthful.

**Tell what you have seen.**



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Thank you!

For more information, resources, and videos, find us at [www.tens.org](http://www.tens.org)

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