Stewardship Reflection Series Sunday, October 28, 2012 Proper 25B ♦ Mark 10:46-52 Take heart; get up; he is calling you…. When my husband and I moved to Texas in 2001, we were seeking guidance to establish our new lives after living in Mexico for five years. Having almost nothing of our own, we turned to God in prayer and were blessed with a community that helped welcome and nurture us. Gustavo found a job after a couple of months. I actually started praying on a regular basis, helped out at church, and soon began to ask God for guidance before making big decisions. My husband started to do the same thing, and as we included God more into our lives, we started to see the abundance of blessing that God had given us. As we were able to see more blessings in our lives as abundance, the more we felt compelled to share. The tough call for us was when we were at a point of deciding whether or not to commit to tithing our economic resources. Living on one income and expecting our third child, we just didn't know how we were going to manage. As I continued to pray about our uncertainties, God's call on my own life became even stronger and clearer. I realized that the moment of truth had come to show whether or not I was willing to answer God's call to follow. To truly follow God from this moment meant that it was time to let go of all of my expectations for myself and my future in both my personal and professional life. Letting go meant letting go of EVERYTHING and allowing God to be God of every aspect of my life. Sharing this insight with my husband, he soon agreed. We delivered our first financial pledge with a full tithe even as he was warned almost daily that his job was uncertain. In addition to that, we committed to respond to appeals for help from those around us or instances of great need. Once we committed to this focus, it transformed our lives. Repeating this commitment to God and teaching our children how we respond to God's love has helped to strengthen our marriage and family life, ground us professionally (he's still in the same job after 10 years!), and bring healing and wholeness in our personal lives. We allow ourselves to be constantly reminded of our neighbors that face hardship in their daily lives and how responding to God allowed us to transform the hardships into blessings. We live in and work for God's kingdom here on earth, in our household, our neighborhood, our church, and our world.