

# *Stewardship Parish Planning Guide*



*Prayer*



*Participation*



*Generosity*



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS  
Office of Parish Stewardship &  
Leadership Formation

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ANNUAL  
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APPEAL

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# Stewardship



*“Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few.” Matthew 9:37*

## **How to Effectively Use the Stewardship Parish Planning Guide**

Thanks to everyone who has offered suggestions on how to organize this information, it is greatly appreciated!

Just as many of us are at different points on the path of Faith, so to it is for many parishes on their stewardship journey. Some parishes are just beginning, some are at an “intermediate” point and some are farther down the path in the “advanced” area.

This book is meant to be a reference guide for all parishes, regardless of what stage of stewardship formation your parish is in.

Here’s how the information is broken out:

### ***Stewardship Marketing and Educational Material***

- This information highlights this year’s theme, stewardship training dates, marketing material ordering information and Archdiocesan resources.

### ***Reference Material***

- This is the bulk of the Stewardship Planning Guide.
- There are sections listed as Prayer, Participation, and Generosity. The information in those sections pertains to that specific “gift.”
- There is also information that doesn’t fit neatly into one of the sections mentioned above but is an important Stewardship concept. These are listed in alphabetical order after the sections on Prayer, Participation, and Generosity.



# Stewardship



***“Living a stewardship lifestyle means placing our complete trust in God and sharing all of our gifts, especially the one that means the most to us.”***

## **Special Thanks to the Stewardship Education Council**

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Fr. Paul Niemann  
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### **Please Note:**

The entire Stewardship Parish Planning Manual for stewardship can be found on the Archdiocese of St. Louis Stewardship website @ [www.archstl.org/stewardship](http://www.archstl.org/stewardship) under *Annual Stewardship Education and Marketing Materials*.

A printed version of the entire manual is available upon request. Please contact Dave Baranowski.

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# Stewardship



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## **Welcome to Stewardship Awareness Sunday**

*On Sunday, September 28, 2025, parishes throughout the Archdiocese of St. Louis will celebrate our **25th Stewardship Awareness Sunday!***

### **Stewardship Awareness Sunday Highlights include:**

- All participating parishes are united in teaching a central stewardship message: **A Steward Is the Servant of All.**
- Parishes can distribute stewardship brochures, letters, covenant cards, and annual reports highlighting the Stewardship theme.
- Stewardship brochures, covenant cards, annual reports, posters, and bulletin covers are provided at no cost.
- Coordinated graphics are available for parishes to create custom catalogs, invitations, and other materials to compliment the stewardship theme.
- Parishes are encouraged to place stewardship messages on their parish outdoor signs so that Catholics see the stewardship message wherever they travel that weekend.
- Parish efforts will be supported by Archdiocesan wide marketing in the **St. Louis Review** and **Catholic St. Louis Magazine.**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

***Begin your planning now!***

### **JULY 18**

**Deadline for ordering all parish stewardship materials: brochures and covenant cards**

### **Parish Stewardship Training:**

**July 14 – Our Lady (Festus) 7:00 pm**

**July 15 – St. Gabriel the Archangel 7:00 pm**

**July 16 – Immaculate Conception (Dardenne) 7:00pm**

### **Lay Witness Speaker Training:**

**August 11 – Our Lady (Festus) 7:00 pm**

**August 12 – St. Gabriel the Archangel 7:00 pm**

**August 13 – Immaculate Conception (Dardenne) 7:00 pm**

### **SEPTEMBER 28**

**Stewardship Awareness Sunday**

**Contact Dave Baranowski @ [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org) to schedule parish meeting.**

Dave Baranowski – 314.792.7215 – [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org)







# Stewardship



## Stewardship Marketing Materials

Consistent messaging is critical to converting parishioners to a stewardship way of life. The Archdiocese of St. Louis has developed marketing materials highlighting the stewardship theme.

ITEM	COST	SIZE	BENEFIT/DESCRIPTION
<b>1. Brochure*</b>	FREE	3.5" x 8.5"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides inspirational material for reflection</li> <li>• Provides "giving" guidelines</li> <li>• Available in English and Spanish</li> <li>• Free Pdf document also available on Stewardship website</li> <li>• 3 Panel fold</li> </ul>
<b>2. Annual Report*</b>	(Depends on Quantity) \$0.25 - \$0.57 each Plus Postage	8.5" x 11"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produced by Our Sunday Visitor</li> <li>• 4 page, full-color template</li> <li>• Parish provides statistics and pictures</li> <li>• Customized, easy-to-use report</li> <li>• Free Word document available to parishes who want to produce internally on Stewardship website</li> </ul>
<b>3. Pastor Letter*</b>	No Cost	8.5" x 11"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available in English and Spanish at <a href="http://archstl.org/stewardship">archstl.org/stewardship</a></li> </ul>
<b>4. Stewardship Covenant Card*</b>	(Depends on Quantity) \$0.14 - \$0.39 each Plus \$100.00 Set-Up Cost	3.5" x 8.75" (3-panel fold)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produced by Modern Litho</li> <li>• Compliments the brochure</li> <li>• 3-panel fold</li> <li>• Customizable to list parish time, talent, and treasure renewal opportunities</li> <li>• Family financial pledge section</li> <li>• Room for 4 family members pledges</li> <li>• Free Word document available to parishes who want to produce internally on Stewardship website</li> <li>• Available in English and Spanish</li> </ul>
<b>5. Bulletin Cover</b>	No Cost	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parishes are encouraged to use the Stewardship Bulletin cover on Stewardship Sunday</li> <li>• Art files will be provided to bulletin companies</li> </ul>
<b>6. Stewardship Posters*</b>	No Cost	17" x 22"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two large Posters will be mailed to each parish in August</li> </ul>
<b>7. Foreign Language Stewardship Hand-Out*</b>	No Cost	8.5" x 11"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewardship message available in the following languages: Croatian, English, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Polish, Spanish and Vietnamese</li> <li>• Free Word document available on Stewardship website</li> </ul>
<b>8. Parish Ministry Leader Stewardship Hand-Out*</b>	No Cost	8.5" x 11"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewardship hand-out available for parish ministry leaders to use at individual parish meetings</li> <li>• Free Word document available on Stewardship website</li> </ul>
<b>9. Stewardship Graphics*</b>	No Cost	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available on stewardship website</li> </ul>

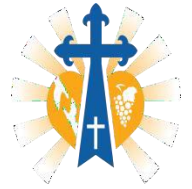
\* Available on stewardship website – Annual Stewardship Educational & Marketing Materials

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# Stewardship



## Parish Stewardship Renewal Timeline

The following timeline is a proven effective way of communicating the annual stewardship renewal:

- **Pray** - Pray together as a parish for a successful parish stewardship renewal. Remember, the first thing Jesus did before a big event was pray. Pray your parish Stewardship Prayer each Sunday Mass during your parish stewardship renewal.
- **Announce Coming Stewardship Events – September 13-14**  
Let everyone know what is going to take place over the coming weeks using pulpit announcements, bulletin articles, website updates, and announcements at individual parish ministry meetings, letters to grade school and PSR parents and on the parish marquee sign.
- **Parish Stewardship Mailing – September 15-19**  
Send each parishioner a cover letter from the pastor, a stewardship one-page reflection, a stewardship covenant card, and the annual parish stewardship report.
- **Review the Annual Parish Stewardship Report – September 20-21**  
Before you ask parishioners to consider a greater stewardship commitment, you need to demonstrate to your parishioners that the parish is a good steward of the gifts that are given. Parish priests should refer to the report during Mass.
- **Stewardship Awareness Sunday– September 27-28**  
Your parish priest(s) give a Stewardship homily.
- **Lay Witness Talks – October 4-5**  
A member of the parish family should speak at all Masses (and possibly at other parish meetings and events) about his or her own personal stewardship journey.
- **Showcase Parish Ministry Opportunities – October 11-12**  
Highlight the many ways that parishioners can generously participate in the parish. Consider a Festival of Ministries, Ministry Catalog, Procession of Ministries or other activity.
- **Time For Reflection – October 13-17**  
Parishioners should be asked to spend time in prayer, reflection, and discussion with their family members regarding their stewardship covenant.
- **Stewardship Covenant Sunday – October 18-19**  
Encourage parishioners to complete and return covenant cards that indicate how they will participate more generously in the life of the parish. This should include prayer, ministry opportunities, and a financial giving covenant. The most effective way to collect covenant cards is allowing time at Mass to complete the cards with a special collection ceremony during Mass.
- **Follow-Up – October 20-24**  
If a parishioner does not return a covenant card, the parish should make an effort to follow up and ask the parishioner to please return the card. Follow-up can be done with a phone call, letter, email or invitation to an informational meeting.
- **Appreciation and Accountability – October 20 and ongoing**  
All parishioners who return covenant cards should receive a letter, email or phone call thanking and welcoming them. The entire parish should see the results of the stewardship effort in the bulletin.

**NOTE:** *If your parish cannot celebrate Stewardship Awareness Sunday on September 28th, that's okay.*

*For best results, schedule your Stewardship Awareness Sunday events into the "natural flow" of your parish calendar. Stewardship activities should "compliment," not compete with other parish activities.*

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# Stewardship



***“Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. God loves a cheerful giver.”  
2 Corinthians 9:6-7***

## **Stewardship Resources**

### ***Stewardship Website***

- <https://www.archstl.org/about/offices-and-agencies/stewardship-office/>
- All information is easily accessible on the website

### ***Stewardship Education Calendar***

- See page 6

### ***Monthly Stewardship e-Newsletter***

- Send Dave Baranowski your email address at [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org)

### ***Quarterly Stewardship Bulletin Reflections and Prayers of the Faithful***

- Available on the website in English and Spanish:
  - <https://resources.archstl.org/article/717499/weekly-bible-reflections>
- Or, send your email address to Dave Baranowski to be added to quarterly distribution list

### ***Parish Meetings with Dave Baranowski***

- Available day or night: 314.792.7215 or [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org)

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# Stewardship



## Archdiocese of St. Louis Resources

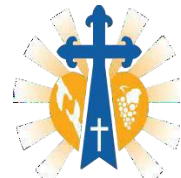
DEPARTMENT	CONTACT	EMAIL	PHONE
Archives	Hotline	<a href="mailto:archives@archstl.org">archives@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7020
Benefits	Hotline	<a href="mailto:benefits@archstl.org">benefits@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7546
Building & Real Estate	Cheryl Harness	<a href="mailto:cherylharness@archstl.org">cherylharness@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7087
Central Purchasing	Mary Marx	<a href="mailto:marymarx@archstl.org">marymarx@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7068
Communications & Planning	Hotline	<a href="mailto:communications@archstl.org">communications@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7500
Evangelization and Discipleship	Brian Miller	<a href="mailto:brianmiller@archstl.org">brianmiller@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7083
Finance	Marilisa Heiderscheid	<a href="mailto:mheiders@archstl.org">mheiders@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7127
Human Resources	Hotline	<a href="mailto:humanresources@archstl.org">humanresources@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7540
Information Technology	Help Desk	<a href="mailto:adchelp@archstl.org">adchelp@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7593
Internal Audit	Dave Mattox	<a href="mailto:davemattox@archstl.org">davemattox@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7241
Legal	Tom Buckley	<a href="mailto:tombuckley@archstl.org">tombuckley@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7076
Parish Support	Sally Serbus	<a href="mailto:sallyserbus@archstl.org">sallyserbus@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7716
Sacred Worship	Hotline	<a href="mailto:worship@archstl.org">worship@archstl.org</a>	314.792.7231
The Roman Catholic Foundation of Eastern Missouri (rcfstl.org) - Planned Giving & Legacy Planning Seminars	Michael Weisbrod	<a href="mailto:michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org">michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org</a>	314.918.2893

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# Stewardship



## 2025 Stewardship Education Calendar

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
January 6	Receive Annual Parish Stewardship Survey	Your Parish	
March 3	Parish Stewardship Survey Due to Stewardship Office	Stewardship Office	
June 2	Parish Mailing (Electronic): Order Form, Manual & Pastor Letter	Your Parish	
June 2 – July 18	Order Window for Parish Stewardship Material		
July 14	Parish Stewardship Training Night – South Vicariate	Our Lady (Festus)	7:00 pm
July 15	Parish Stewardship Training Night – North Vicariate	St. Gabriel the Archangel	7:00 pm
July 16	Parish Stewardship Training Night – West Vicariate	Immaculate Conception (Dardenne)	7:00 pm
July 18	Parish Stewardship Material Orders Due	Stewardship Office	
August 7	Poster Mailing & Stewardship Bulletin Cover Art Available	LPI Website	
August 11	Lay Witness Speaker Training – South Vicariate	Our Lady (Festus)	7:00 pm
August 12	Lay Witness Speaker Training – North Vicariate	St. Gabriel the Archangel	7:00 pm
August 13	Lay Witness Speaker Training – West Vicariate	Immaculate Conception (Dardenne)	7:00 pm
August 7 - 12	Parish Stewardship Order Delivered	Your Parish	
September 3	Our Sunday Visitor Stewardship Reports Mailed	Your Parish	
September 21 - 24	International Catholic Stewardship Conference	Chicago, IL	
September 28	Stewardship Awareness Sunday	Your Parish	
September 29	St. Louis Review Ad	Your Mailbox	
December	Catholic St. Louis Magazine – My Catholic Giving Guide	Your Mailbox	

### Notes:

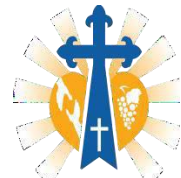
- Contact Dave Baranowski, Director of Parish Stewardship and Leadership Formation, at (314) 792-7215 or [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org) to schedule a parish meeting.
- Visit [archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship) for more stewardship information and parish resources.
- Contact Dave Baranowski to be added to the monthly “Stewardship Alive!” e-newsletter or to the quarterly Stewardship Weekly Bible Reflections and corresponding Prayers of the Faithful in English and Spanish distribution lists.

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# Stewardship



## **Engraining a Parish Stewardship Culture/Starting a Parish Stewardship Committee**

The following process is the typical way that parishes begin the process of engraining a stewardship culture in their parish and/or forming a new parish stewardship committee or re-booting their existing stewardship efforts.

1a) Pastor or Parish Lay Leader contacts Dave Baranowski (314-792-7215) or [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org):

- Start parish stewardship formation.
- Re-boot current parish stewardship formation.
- Discuss parish best practices with current parish stewardship committee.
- If parish lay leader contacts Dave, he follows up with pastor to make sure OK to meet. 1b)

Ensuring Parish Viability Grants:

- Since 2013, parish stewardship formation is a requirement for a parish to receive an EPV Grant.
- If parish has stewardship formation, parish sends Dave a stewardship formation plan.
- If not, Dave schedules meeting with pastor and lay leadership to discuss stewardship formation.

2) Dave meets with pastor and/or parish lay leadership to discuss stewardship formation (usually for one hour).

3) Pastor selects a weekend to speak about Stewardship at all Masses

4) The following weekend Dave speaks at all masses about stewardship (7-minute talk):

- Parish promotes in all forms of parish communication several weeks prior.
- Pastor incorporates stewardship into homily the week before and announces Dave coming the next weekend.
- Dave speaks at all Masses and talks with parishioners between masses.

5) Meeting scheduled the week after Dave's weekend stewardship talk to discuss parish stewardship in more detail:

- Pastor personally invites lay leadership to attend.
- All parishioners invited to attend through various modes of contact.
- Typically, a group of parishioners will come forward after the meeting to form a stewardship committee (ranges from 2 – 20 people depending on the size of the parish).

6) Dave meets with new stewardship committee and pastor for monthly stewardship meetings:

- Make sure we have the right people on the committee – all of the parish is represented.
- Develop annual stewardship formation plan depending on parish needs:
  - 1) Conduct Annual Parish Ministry Leader Meeting (provide stewardship formation).
  - 2) Incorporate Annual Parish Stewardship Renewal (usually in the fall - "Stewardship Sunday").
  - 3) Recommends Spiritual Gifts Inventory for parish (Jane Guenther).
  - 4) Concentrate on Prayer, Participation, and/or Generosity best practices depending on parish needs.
  - 5) Dave meets with committee from 3 months to one year depending on pastor's request.
  - 6) Parish follows up with Dave as needed over the coming years.
  - 7) Dave suggests other Archdiocesan resources as parish needs dictate.



# Stewardship



## Gift of PRAYER (TIME)

The gift of prayer is the time we spend in prayer with God every day.

*“The real success of stewardship in our parish is found in the hearts of the people. Without a conversion of heart, no one is able to give of themselves as Christ has asked us to do.”*

- Msgr. Thomas McGread

### **Assist Parishioners in Developing a Daily Prayer Process**

- Most Catholics have never been taught how to develop a daily routine of prayer.
- There are many daily prayer processes, three are listed on the following pages:

#### **The Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

- Encourage parishioners to pray the rosary often, especially as a family.
- For information on how to recite the rosary, visit the “How To Recite the Rosary” website at <https://www.newadvent.org/images/rosary.pdf>

#### **The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius**

- The following is from St. Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises and is entitled the “*Awareness Examen.*” This short prayer exercise is intended to help increase one’s sensitivity to God working in one’s life.

##### **1. Thanksgiving**

Begin by looking over the day and see where you need to be thankful. Allow gratitude to take hold of you and express this to the Lord.

##### **2. Ask for Light**

Ask the Spirit to show you what God wants you to see.

##### **3. Finding God in All Things**

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where God’s presence has been in your life, either in you or in others, and in the events of public life.

##### **4. Respond to God in Dialogue**

Is there any one area on which you are being nudged to focus your attention, to pray more seriously, to take action? Discuss this with Jesus.

##### **5. Help and Guidance for Tomorrow**

Ask God for your needs for tomorrow.

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# Stewardship



The information has been reprinted with permission from *The White House Retreat*.  
For more information about the White House Retreat, visit [www.whretreat.org](http://www.whretreat.org).

## Prayer Process Suggested by Matthew Kelly

- The following is from Matthew Kelly's *The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic*.
- Prayer
  - The most dominant quality among Dynamic Catholics is a daily routine of prayer.
  - A daily routine refers to a specific time and place set aside for prayer. Dynamic Catholics make this time a priority each day.
  - Dynamic Catholics tend to begin their time of prayer in very specific ways: by reading the Bible, praying the morning prayers of the Church, reading from a favorite spiritual book, etc.
  - Dynamic Catholics universally begin their day with some type of prayer, even if the main time they set aside for prayer is later in the day.
  - God speaks to us in the silence. Spending time in silence is indispensable in our quest for spiritual growth.
  - Prayerlessness is one of the great torments of modern times.
  - Most Catholics have never been taught how to develop a daily routine of prayer.
- The Prayer Process
  1. **Gratitude:** Begin by thanking God in a personal dialogue for whatever you are most grateful for today.
  2. **Awareness:** Revisit the times in the past twenty-four hours when you were and were not the best version of yourself. Talk with God about these situations and what you learned from them.
  3. **Significant Moments:** Identify something you experienced today and explore what God might be trying to say to you through that event (or person).
  4. **Peace:** Ask God to forgive you for any wrong you have committed (against yourself, another person, or Him) and to fill you with a deep and abiding peace.
  5. **Freedom:** Speak with God about how He is inviting you to change your life, so that you can experience the freedom to be the best version of yourself.

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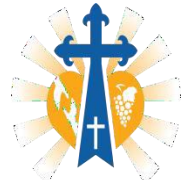
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## Stewardship



6. **Others:** Lift up to God anyone you feel called to pray for today, asking God to bless and guide them.
7. Finish by praying the **OurFather**.

*The information has been reprinted with permission from The Dynamic Catholic Institute. For more information, visit the website at [www.dynamiccatholic.com](http://www.dynamiccatholic.com).*

### **Encourage Greater Mass Attendance**

There is a direct correlation between Mass attendance and Stewardship (the greater the attendance, the greater the Stewardship and vice versa). Spending time with God empowers us! On the practical side, studies show that people that regularly attend Mass participate in parish ministry more and contribute more financially.

#### **Encouraging Greater Mass Attendance:**

- When you plan special Masses, be sure the individuals you want to invite receive the invitation! Don't just make an announcement at Mass or put an article in the bulletin. Contact the people individually.
- Have a "Special" Mass once a month:
  - January – invite those who had a child baptized within the last year.
  - February – near St. Valentine's Day, invite newly married couples over the past year.
  - March/April – invite newly registered families over the past year.
  - May/June – invite all recent high school graduates from a year ago.
  - November – near All Souls' Day, invite those who lost a loved one within the last year.
  - Throughout the year – ask sports coaches to plan team Masses during each sports season. Also, ask each parish ministry to plan an annual Mass for their members.
  - Appreciation Mass for all parish volunteers.
  - Annual Outdoor Mass – "Mass in the Grass"
  - Scouting Mass
  - Use your imagination!

#### **When children come to Mass, the parents come to Mass:**

- Involve children more in the Liturgy and make weekend Masses a family event.
- Include children to bring up gifts, be readers or greeters.
- Schedule a quarterly Family or Children's Mass. Let the children help plan the Mass.
- Have religion teachers have a discussion on the Sunday homily.

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## Stewardship



- Ask the principal or pastor to write school families encouraging better Mass attendance.

### **Other Suggestions:**

- Pastor writes a letter after Labor Day to school families inviting them back to Mass.
- Pastor talks at all parish ministry meetings about the importance of Mass attendance.
- Encourage parishioners to include Mass in their special family celebrations. Include in the weekly bulletin.

### **Reflection on Prayer**

Here are some thoughts from **Matthew Kelly's** book *Rediscover Catholicism*:

- One of the greatest gifts we can give anybody is to help them develop a sustainable prayer life.
- Prayer is perhaps the most difficult thing we will ever do. To hear God's voice we need the discipline of prayer. Prayer requires daily commitment.
- Prayer and contemplation are integral to Christian life because thought determines action. The actions of your life are determined by your most dominant thoughts.
- What you allow to occupy your mind forms the reality of your life, good or bad. Things happen in your mind before they occur in time and space.
- Whatever you place your mental attention on will increase in your life.
- You cannot grow a good life with bad thoughts.
- In this modern time, it is not that God has stopped speaking to us but rather we have stopped listening.
- Our world has been filled with noise and we can no longer hear the voice of God in our lives. We need to enter the classroom of silence.
- We need to create opportunities for solitude and silence in our lives to listen to God.
- Prayer doesn't change God, prayer changes us.

**(Taken from: 8 Ways to Jump-Start Your Prayer Life by Matthew Leonard)**

[www.MatthewSLeonard.com](http://www.MatthewSLeonard.com)

Prayer isn't optional. It's the way we relate to God. We are created to be in union with Him for all eternity, but that union doesn't start later. It starts now through prayer and the sacraments.

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# Stewardship



1. **Make Prayer a Non-Negotiable**: One thing is for certain, if you don't make prayer a priority it will be the first thing crossed off of your "to do" list when things get busy. This means you have to make it part of your daily schedule.

Because we're so busy, we often feel like there's no time to pray. But I've learned that if you make time for God, He'll make time for you. He'll multiply your time so that you can get everything finished that He wants you to get finished. In fact, the busier I get, the more I know I need to pray.

2. **Set the Stage**: When entering the presence of God, environment is key. That means trying to pray at a bar during Happy Hour or during a bridal shower isn't going to cut it.

Given all the roadblocks that Original Sin already throws up when we try to pray, it's crazy to allow more distraction to compete for our attention.

Most people pray best in the morning, because it's when we're most fresh. It doesn't do any good to try to enter into God's presence when we're falling over tired.

3. **Silence**: In today's world, we're constantly assaulted by images and sound. We need quiet.

I think the absolute best place to pray is an adoration chapel. But there are plenty of other quiet places to pray.

Even so, sometimes it's really hard to quiet my mind even when I've achieved exterior silence. One "trick" I use to help calm things down is repeating the name of "Jesus" over and over. Repetition is a great tool to help our minds slow down and focus. Another option is to read a Gospel passage about Our Lord's Passion.

4. **Quality Not Quantity**: The spiritual life isn't a sprint. It's a marathon. Regardless of the manner in which we're praying, quality is always better than quantity.

What's the point of racing? Imagine if we tried to converse with our spouse or friends by racing through the conversation without even thinking about what we're saying? Not only would they not appreciate it very much, but our relationship with them wouldn't deepen. It's the same with God. Don't rush through your prayers.

St. Francis de Sales said that one fervent Our Father or Hail Mary is worth more than hundreds you say without focus. The goal isn't to finish. The goal is God.

5. **Don't Be Afraid of Change**: One reason we often get into a prayer rut is because we keep doing the same things over and over. If you find yourself having trouble making progress, change things up.

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## Stewardship



Remember that prayer is a movement of the heart toward God. The tools we use to help that movement are simply that – tools. Take a break from your normal routine. Oftentimes this will help you “jump start” a conversation with the Lord.

6. **Resolve to Act:** At the end of the day, prayer is meant to bring about change. There are no plateaus in the spiritual life. We’re either moving toward God, or away from Him.

This means that movement must be the end result of praying. Resolve to act on whatever it is the Lord is telling you, so as to draw closer to Him.

7. **Practice Ejaculatory Prayer:** Simply thanking or praising God as we go about the day is one of the most powerful weapons in our prayer arsenal. It keeps us in the presence of God. As St. Philip Neri says, “It is an old custom of the saints of God to have some little prayers ready and to be frequently darting them up to Heaven during the day...He who adopts this plan will obtain great fruits with little pain.”
8. **Ask for Prayer:** One of the first things we do when we’re in trouble is to ask others to pray for us. Why not when we’re having trouble praying?

Of course, we don’t only ask people alive on earth. We’re Catholics! We’re part of the Communion of Saints. Anyone and everyone who is in Christ-no matter in what epoch-is available to help.

Revelation 5:8 says our family members in Heaven are interceding for us by offering up “golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”

So instead of being cut off, they’re actively engaged in helping us grow closer to our family in Heaven. You could say that one of their jobs is to pray for us. The saints “constantly care for those whom they have left on earth,” says the Catechism (n. 2683). Your brothers and sisters *want* to help you. Let them!

### **Retreats**

In my travels over the past ten years, I have met many people who are “on fire” for Christ. Many times when I ask them how it started for them the answer is “someone invited me to go on a retreat.”

When I dig further about what was it about the retreat that changed their life, the answer is “I spent time in silence listening to God.”

Spending time in silence is the common denominator! It really wasn’t the type of retreat, it was the silent time with our Lord.

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Personally invite people to attend retreats and be persistent year after year. Many people will say “no” out of reflex. Many times you need to plant the seed before someone says “yes.”

Also, help people create this “sacred silence” in their life by encouraging them to intentionally devote time, in silence, every day to listen to God. For many people this is in the early morning before the hustle and bustle of the day begins.

Pope Francis said, “In this age, when people are so busy they do not have enough time to listen to God’s voice. Retreats become like oases where they can discover the beauty of silence.”

## Thoughts on Prayer

- If anyone asks you for a section of the Bible that highlights what stewardship is all about, refer them to Matthew 5 – 7, “The Sermon on the Mount”:
  - These 3 chapters have been referred to as “The Constitution for the Kingdom.”
  - This is required reading for all!
- Develop and incorporate a parish stewardship prayer into Sunday Mass and all parish ministry meetings and parish events.
- Many parishes have begun forming Men’s Faith-Sharing Groups:
  - Usually start with small numbers but grow over time.
  - Personally invite men to attend.
  - They have great names like “Defenders of St. Michael” or “Gideon’s Army.”
- Pray for other people. The simple statement of “I will pray for you.” has a profound effect on people and encourages them to pray for others.
- Holy Mass – We need to help people understand that we go to Mass to praise and worship God; to see what we can do for Him, not what He is going to do for us. We need to change this perception that God is a genie who grants wishes to us.
- When attending Mass keep your head “on a swivel.” As you walk from your car and sit down in Church, be on the look-out for people that look lost, lonely or unwelcomed. See how you can help someone. This is the model Jesus gave us. Too many times when we enter Church we are consumed with our own issues. Become “other-centered” and “God-centered” (instead of “self-centered”) before Mass starts.
- Start parish-based prayer groups. Many parishes are specifically forming men’s groups.

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# Stewardship



- Pentecost had another name in the time of Jesus. It was also called “the day of first fruits.” (People brought the first and best of their crops to give to God.) Maybe Pentecost would be another opportunity to discuss the concept of stewardship with the parish.

## **Parish Prayer Activities**

- Develop a Parish Stewardship Prayer. Examples available at [archstl.org/stewardship/prayers](http://archstl.org/stewardship/prayers).
- “Teaching” Mass – held annually, priest explains the different parts of the Mass. Parishioners ask questions throughout the session. This does not take the place of a traditional Mass.
- Grade school children attending Sunday Mass receive a “dress down day” pass.
- Designate a grade from parish school/PSR to host a designated Sunday Mass once a month. Each grade has an opportunity to host (i.e. greeters, ushers, offertory, lectors, cantors, songs, etc.)
- Stewardship Awareness Sunday – building blocks available for smaller children to build a church during stewardship events.
- Develop parish specific prayer cards based on statues in your local church. The back of the card has parish stewardship prayer or other stewardship message.
- Develop a Remembrance Garden at your parish.
- Schedule an annual Parish Ministry Leader Night of Reflection.
- Organize small-faith groups that meet monthly for breakfast. Invite new parishioners to join.
- Lent – some parishes give away blessed nails as reminders of Christ’s suffering.
- Easter/Christmas – some parishes give away prayer books or other Catholic books to parishioners as a gift.
- From the book *Rebuilt* develop a 6-week homily series throughout the year. Allows parishioners to “connect the dots” and build on previous week’s teaching. Parishioners remember the homilies more easily.
- Adult Formation – Dr. Edward Sri’s *A Biblical Walk Through the Mass* series.
- Parishes contact local businesses to offer noon Mass for people working in your area.
- Ask your employer to designate a quiet place at work for prayer/reflection.

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# Stewardship



## CATHOLIC PRAYER GUIDE

*(The Offices of Worship and Stewardship collaborated to develop this prayer guide for all to use. It is available at [archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship) under the “Stewardship Overview” tab.)*

Prayer is our response to God and creates a stronger relationship between us and the Father. We cannot be a friend of God and truly know Him unless we spend time in conversation with Him through prayer.

“Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.”

*Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 2559*

“Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts.”

*Saint Mother Teresa*

The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer, it is “the pure offering” of the whole Body of Christ to the glory of God’s name (CCC 2643). It is in the Eucharist that we are able to offer our full response to God’s call here on earth.

### FORMS OF PRAYER

#### BLESSING & ADORATION

(CCC 2626-28)

- Expresses the basic movement of Christian prayer
- It is an encounter between God & man
- In blessing, God’s gift and man’s acceptance of this gift are united in dialogue to one another
- Prayer of blessing is man’s response to God’s gifts
- God gives us the grace of the Holy Spirit to continue to bless us
- Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging he is a creature standing before his Creator
- Our way to show homage to our Creator and King in respectful silence

#### PRAYER OF PETITION OR SUPPLICATION

(CCC 2629-33)

- Form of prayer many of us are most familiar and comfortable with
- By prayer of petition we express awareness of our relationship with God
- We are sinners and prayer of petition is already a turning back to Him and away from sin
- Asking God to hear and answer our prayer
- Begin by asking forgiveness
- Petition is centered on a desire and search for the Kingdom to come
- We understand that every need can become the object of petition when we share in God’s saving love

#### PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

(CCC 2634-36)

- “Leads us to pray as Jesus did”—we learn to pray as Christ did; praying for those most in need
- Christ interceded with the Father for all men, especially for sinners, we too can intercede for others to draw them closer to Christ

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- Asking for the needs of others, even those who may have done us harm

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

(CCC 2637-38)

- Gratitude for all circumstances we have been given
- The prayer of the Church that we celebrate in the Eucharist
- Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving
- In thanksgiving we offer our thanks to God, as our response to God for all He has given each of us

## PRAYER OF PRAISE

(CCC 2639-43)

- This form recognizes that God is God, and acknowledges that God is who He is. We praise God because He is
- Gives us a chance to share in the blessed happiness with all those who love God for who He is in faith before seeing Him in glory
- Embraces all the other forms of prayer and leads our prayers to our source and goal: “the one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist”
- First, we must praise and acknowledge there is one, true God, before we can ever speak to Him in prayer

## LITURGICAL YEAR AND EXAMPLES OF PRAYER

Shaping our prayer around the various seasons of the liturgical prayer can create a more meaningful and deeper prayer life. We can use any prayers at any time during the year, but the following provides prayers to use during the various liturgical seasons that may prove to have a more meaningful impact.

**Advent:** Time for spiritual growth and reflection to prepare our hearts before the celebration of Christ’s birth.

*Examples of prayer during this season*

- Advent reflection booklet to give us a daily reflection and scripture
- Advent Stations of the Cross: <http://www.liturgies.net/Advent/adventstations.htm>.
- Novena: devotional praying, consisting of private or public prayers repeated for nine successive days or weeks. [Praymorenovenas.com](http://Praymorenovenas.com) or for a more immediate need: [Flying-Novena-Mother-Teresa](http://Flying-Novena-Mother-Teresa).
- Ignatian Prayer: Imaginative, reflective, and personal prayer that includes a daily examen: [IgnatianSpirituality.com](http://IgnatianSpirituality.com).

**Christmas:** Time for rejoicing in the birth of Christ and the importance of the Incarnation in our salvation.

*Examples of prayer during this season*

- Prayers of gratitude for all we have, even amidst suffering: <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=836>
- Rosary: carry a pocket rosary or finger rosary to pray throughout the day
- Liturgy of the Hours: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgy-of-the-hours/>; apps to use: <https://catholicapptitude.org/2017/01/03/best-liturgy-of-the-hours-apps-for-your-phone-or-tablet/>

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## Stewardship



**Lent:** Time for spiritual renewal and reflection; interior renewal; a period of penance leading up to Easter.

*Examples of prayer during this season*

- Fasting: making sacrifices to focus on what is truly important, such as giving up one thing each day that we desire in order to draw closer to union with Christ in His suffering. We can also use our sacrifices as a type of intercessory prayer and offer something up for another person who is in need of grace or healing.
- Stations of the Cross: many versions available
- Chaplet of Divine Mercy (recited or sung): <https://youtu.be/oUtqwdaSzx0>.

**Sacred Paschal Triduum:** The holiest “Three Days” of the Church’s year when we recall the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

*Examples of prayer during this season*

- Attend Sacred Triduum services
- Perform acts of service
- Reflection on the Passion of Jesus Christ in the Gospels
- Intercessory Prayer: Praying for those by name who most need our prayers: [Intercessory-prayers-for-life.cfm](#)

**Easter:** 50 days of joyful celebration of the Lord’s resurrection and His sending forth of the Holy Spirit. Time to praise, adore, and be thankful to God.

*Examples of prayer during this season*

- Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament: Spending quiet time before the Lord and simply being in His presence
- Visio Divina or divine seeing, reflection on art: Saint John’s Bible provides a great tool ([Seeingtheword.org](#))

**Ordinary Time:** Time to fully live out the Paschal Mystery—the life, death, and Resurrection of Christ; to bring prayer into all the ordinary settings of our lives, parishes, families, schools, and communities.

*Examples of prayer during this season*

- Prayers of gratitude
- Shorter Christian Prayer: a condensed version of the Liturgy of the Hours: <http://laydominicans.org/modules/novitiate/LOTH.pdf>.
- Daily Saint devotional, reading a biography of a saint, or turning to a saint for intercession
- Lectio Divina: ([Wrap-yourself-in-scripture-a-guide-for-Lectio-Divina](#); [BustedHalo/Lectio-Divina-beginners-guide](#)).

© These materials have been created and provided by the Office of Sacred Worship. The materials are mainly pulled from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, © 1997. We encourage anyone to read further about Prayer and the Christian Life in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church, Part Four*. This provides more detail and explanation than could be expressed in this document.

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## Stewardship



### Stewardship – “The Parish as a School of Prayer”

I recently read a power-packed book on prayer called *The Parish as a School of Prayer* written by Fr. Scott Traynor.

There are four essential habits of growing in intimacy with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. They are: Acknowledge, Relate, Receive, and Respond. I’ll describe each habit as defined in the book and add comments from my own experience and in talking with others.

Acknowledge – “notice, see, name, attend to, become aware of the thoughts, feelings, and desires that are moving in my heart.”

I think that when many people start developing a regular prayer life they are unsure of how to do it, what to say or what to expect in return. Much of our prayer is superficial, and we really don’t tell God anything too personal or specific. There is a level of mistrust in God and a lack of humility and vulnerability on our part. Just like our human relationships, when friendships are superficial and lack depth, they do not become important to us. We don’t take time to nurture and develop them and they ultimately wither and die. I think this happens for some of us in our relationship with the Holy Trinity. We lack trust and humility which leads to a lukewarm prayer life or worse, no prayer life. The first step in growing in relationship is to be specific, humble, and vulnerable – this leads to trust.

Relate – “gather what is on my heart and honestly talk to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit what is found on my heart.”

I think many people believe “God knows what’s bothering me, why do I need to tell Him?” This is true, God already knows what’s in our heart and on our mind. But by talking to God in specific detail, we become aware of our own brokenness. Our self-awareness is the first step in recognizing that we were not designed by God to do it on our own and that we need His love, mercy, and forgiveness. Talking in specific detail to God moves us from “self-centered” to “God-centered.” It helps us determine God’s will in our lives. Moving to “God-centered” also helps us become “other-centered” in what we pray for. We pray less for ourselves and pray more for others’ needs. It helps us to be more loving, merciful and forgiving to family, friends, and enemies.

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## Stewardship



Receive – “to generously receive and stay with the grace of God.”

I think when our prayer is not humble and lacking in trust and our hearts have a wall around them, we are unable to hear or see God’s response. A key insight by Fr. Traynor is this – “When we share our thoughts, feelings and desires with the Holy Trinity, it actually opens our hearts to receive everything that God desires for us.” God wants a personal relationship with each of us. We were designed to be a two-way street of sharing our brokenness with Him and then receiving His grace. Unfortunately, many of us are only using the outgoing lane and have not opened up the incoming lane for God’s love, mercy, and forgiveness. God wants us to be happy. His grace opens us to the giftedness of our future, of all that is possible in our lives with Him.

Respond – “when we say ‘yes’ to God’s love that very grace will inspire, direct, and sustain a concrete and particular response of love.”

I think that many people believe that miracles only happened long ago and they do not happen today; they think that God is not responding to their prayers. But when we accept the Holy Trinity’s invitation into relationship, we begin to see the small, daily miracles that occur in our lives. When we experience God’s love, mercy, and forgiveness in a profound way, we want more of it. Our prayer life isn’t just something we do in the morning when we wake up or before we go to bed, it becomes a relationship that becomes the center of our life throughout the day, in all circumstances, good and bad. When most people receive a gift, they want to share it with others. They are generous with what they have been given. This is true with our relationship with the Holy Trinity. It is a gift waiting for each of us to accept and to share with others.

Teaching another person how to pray is the best gift we can give someone. Please read Fr. Traynor’s book and share it with others.

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# Stewardship



## The Parish as a School of Prayer – Fr. Scott Traynor

### Introduction

- “I can tell people in that parish really pray. I want to learn how to do that.”
- The parish as a school of prayer could be every parish’s mission statement.
- The parish is the school, the pastor is the teacher and the encounter between man and God, the prayer, is the subject.
- “Our Christian communities must become genuine ‘schools of prayer’...opening our hearts to the love of God will open our hearts to the love of our brothers and sisters.” St. John Paul II

### The Urgent Need

- Secularism, relativism, materialism, narcissism, and a culture of distraction all hinder a deep and growing intimacy in faith with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Our hearts were made for God, these other things become empty substitutes for the human heart.
- Leading the parish to become a school of prayer should become a key-point in all pastoral planning.
- The parish priest is the master teacher in every parish.
- “Your first duty (priests) is not projects and organizations, but to lead your people to a deep intimacy with the Trinity.” St. John Paul II
- “Believe in the power of your priesthood! Christ took you under his special protection.” Pope Benedict XVI
- Parishioners will never put forth the effort to engage in the “battle of prayer” if their desire is not awakened.
- The priest must be a Christian witness of prayer.
- In prayer, God’s initiative of love always comes first; our own first step is always a response.
- Generous self-giving for others is impossible without discipline and constant true faith-filled prayer. The Curriculum of the School of Prayer
- Prayer is a relationship; a growing intimacy with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Relational commitment of self-revelation is only possible if I am self-aware.
- Institute of Priestly Formation: essential dynamics of Trinitarian intimacy are Acknowledge, Relate, Receive, Respond (ARRR):

#### 1) Acknowledge

- Become aware of what is transpiring on your heart.
- Name the thoughts, feelings, and desires that are moving in your heart; the good, the bad and the ugly.
- Not always easy because we live in a culture of distraction.
- What is on our heart is important because our thoughts, feelings, and desires shape our actions.

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# Stewardship



- The Christian who fails to cultivate habitual awareness of the movement of his heart is a Christian at risk.
- 2) Relate
- Gather what is on my heart and honestly relate it to God, tell God about it, talk to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; entrust what is on your heart to God.
  - This may seem like a small thing but it is a huge interior leap.
  - In order to relate what is on my heart to God, I must be aware, in faith, that God is present and that He listens.
  - Entrusting what I have on my heart is an act of faith in His love, disposes my heart to receive a greater lived experience of that love.
  - God invites us to intimacy; He does not force us.
  - He invites us to relate our thoughts, feelings, and desires to Him because, as our Creator, He knows this disposes our hearts to receive everything He desires for us.
- 3) Receive
- We depend completely on God for every good thing. This dependence is a source of wisdom, freedom, joy, and confidence.
  - The most fruitful activity of the human person is to be able to receive God.
  - The opposite of dependence on God is self-sufficiency.
  - The “receiving” takes tangible form: words of scripture, counsel of a trusted friend, a beautiful sunset.
  - God’s love for us is infinite and eternal; but our hearts are finite and limited.
  - This is why God gives us life each day, that we may grow in capacity to receive His love.
- 4) Respond
- The response that God asks of us is inspired, directed and sustained by His very grace.
  - If a sailboat is not receiving wind, it is just drifting, it has no power to do anything.
  - We are sailboats, our hearts are sails and God’s love is the wind.

## Interdependence of ARRR

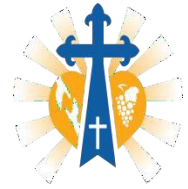
- ARRR is not a method of prayer, but essential habits to deepen our relationship with the Holy Trinity in prayer throughout the day.
- To grow in intimacy with God, we need to cultivate this honest transparency before God on a consistent basis.
- Before talking to family and friends about what is happening in your life, start with God first.

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- If we do not share what is on our heart with God, our intimacy with Him will not grow, we will have a superficial relationship with Him.
- Growing in the habit of noticing what is on my heart and telling God about it in prayer will dispose my heart to be receptive of God's love.

## Supplements to the Core Curriculum

### 1) Silence:

- Be intentional to cultivate silence in your life.
- Amplifies our interior movements. (Stress, gratitude, confusion, etc.)
- Helps me experience more directly what is really happening within me.
- Many retreatants will attribute this to the location of the retreat, however, God's desire for us is unchanged (He always wants us), it is our desire for God that has grown (at the retreat location).

### 2) Dealing with Spiritual Desolation:

- Main stumbling block for cultivating deeper intimacy with the Holy Trinity.
- One way to resist it is to acknowledge it and relate it to God.
- Prayers of thanksgiving are not easy when in the midst of suffering.

### 3) Dealing with Distractions:

- Everyone experiences distractions while in prayer.
- Distractions reveal to us what we are attached to.
- When you realize you are distracted, gently return to whatever you planned on paying attention to.
- When distracted again, tell God about the distraction.
- If distracted again, pray with the distraction.

### 4) Is This Real or Made-Up?

- The spiritual senses are attuned to spiritual reality.
- Unlike fantasy, the effect of spiritual realities continues on after we are no longer engaged in prayer.
- A fantasy masquerading as a prayer will lead to spiritual desolation.
- The enemy's aim at making us desolate is to keep us from deeper intimacy with God.

## Classrooms for Prayer

### 1) Mass

- The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer.
- The priest can help by being generous with liturgical silence after the homily and after Communion.

### 2) Confession

- The evil spirit attacks us at our weakest point.



# Stewardship



- Spiritual desolation is the first wave of attack.
- 3) Committee Meetings
  - Start meetings with 15 minutes of Lectio Divina.
  - Members share faith stories before meeting.
- 4) Home
  - The parish is a family of families.
  - Help married couples prayer together – each spouse reveals what is on their heart that day and the other person offers a prayer, then they reverse roles.
  - Pray with children – same way as married couples.
- 5) Parish Religious Education
  - Teach ARRR and lead people through the experience.

## Simple Plans for Prayer

- Preparation
  - Where will I go to pray? (Chapel, bedroom)
  - At what time and for how long? (Every morning, 30 minutes daily)
  - What do I pay attention to or pray with? (Scripture, Rosary)
  - What grace do I ask for? (Ask God for a specific gift you want from Him to carry out His will).
- When the Time for Prayer Arrives
  - Call to mind the presence of God.
  - Begin with the Sign of the Cross and invite the Holy Spirit to assist.
  - Ask for the grace you desire.
  - Turn your attention to whatever desire or thought with which you decide to pray.
  - When your heart is moved, talk to God.
  - When the movement subsides, return to Scripture or the Rosary until your heart is moved again.
  - If nothing is happening, tell God about the “nothing.”
  - Pray a 3-5 minute conversation with the Holy Trinity or particular Saint. Imagine being with God, Jesus, & the Holy Spirit.
  - Take a small break and journal your experience.

Permission was given by the publisher, IPF Publications (The Institute for Priestly Formation), to share the summary of this book.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship: Focus on the “Why” and Not the “What”

In the Gospel of Matthew Jesus gives us direction on prayer, fasting and almsgiving. “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corner so others may see them...but when you pray, go to your inner room...and pray to your Father in secret. When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites...but when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to others to be fasting. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do...but when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so your almsgiving may be secret.”

Many of us “give up” certain things (i.e. chocolate, beer) and/or “do something special” during Lent. Many parishes also provide extra community faith activities and events as well during this time of year. Whatever it is that you are giving up or doing special, remember to focus on the “why” you are doing it versus the “what” you are doing. Too many times in our own individual faith journey and in our parish community we get caught up in the “what” (the activity) and we forget about the “why” (our relationship with God). If the “what” doesn’t lead us to God, then we should reconsider the “why” we are doing it. If the “what” is more important than the “why”, maybe we are the hypocrites that Jesus is referring to.

Many times the planning, organizing and busyness of the “what” can lead to anxiety, frustration and anger that may actually move us away from God, not closer to Him. This is especially true at the parish community level. The pressure to maintain parish schedules may in some cases, provide more opportunity to sin rather than repent; the exact opposite reason why we are doing the “what” in the first place.

Individually, many times when a person forgets their Lenten observance and accidentally eats that candy bar that we were going to give up, they “throw in the towel” and figure that they “blew it” and decide not to continue with the Lenten observance they committed to. When we do this, we are too focused on the “what” and not on the “why.” The devil will try anything he can to derail us from our path to holiness, especially during our holiest season of the liturgical year. The devil wants us to become obsessed with the “what” so that when we fail, we will forget the “why.”

Remember, God calls us to be obedient and faithful, not perfect. When we offer our “mistake” to God, it shows Him that we want to be with Him, we need Him, we are dependent on Him, we crave His love, mercy and forgiveness – this is the “why” of Lent.

Focusing on the “why” and not the “what” is something that should do beyond the 40 days of Lent. It should also apply to the other 325 days of the year as well. Lent is time to build our spiritual muscles; to be persistent and make gradual changes that will grow into long term habits. Lent is our time to prune our vices and grow in virtues.

What we put in our mind, heart and soul determines our actions. But, it’s not all about the things that we do on the outside, it’s what is on the inside that matters most. Of all the gifts that God has given us, the one He wants the most is our heart. Pray for the wisdom and fortitude to focus on the “why” and not the “what” on your path to holiness.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship: Freedom

Freedom and discipleship sound like contradictory terms to many people. Today, freedom is seen as the lack of obeying any laws; the ability to do what you want, when you want. Discipleship is seen as a very restrictive lifestyle filled with laws. When, in fact, the opposite is true. Discipleship leads to freedom. Jesus said, "If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

The "Decalogue" of the Ten Commandments means "ten words". These "ten words" were written by "the finger of God." Do you want to know the truth? Do you want to be set free? Then follow the Ten Commandments. That's right, include the Ten Commandments in your daily prayers.

Meditate over them – think deeply about how you may or may not be following them. Contemplate them – listen in silence how God may be talking to you and responding to your prayers. Spend time praying over the Ten Commandments and go beyond the obvious.

For example:

- First Commandment – You shall not have other Gods before Me. It's true that you don't have idols of Roman gods in the backyard that you make sacrifices to, but has the pursuit of power, money and prestige become your prime objective?
- Third Commandment – Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day. Sure, you go to church every Sunday, but do you take a little nap during the homily and deliberately fail to pay attention?
- Fifth Commandment – You shall not kill. You have not actually committed murder, but have you ever gossiped about someone?
- Seventh Commandment – You shall not steal. You have never stolen a car, but do you spend money beyond your means and deprive others by spending too little?
- Ninth Commandment – You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You've never committed adultery, but do you tell dirty jokes or start impure conversations with your friend's spouses?

The Catechism says the Ten Commandments are a gift from God himself and his holy will (CCC 2059). They are the covenant between God and his people (CCC2058). The Ten Commandments free us from becoming slaves to our own sin, pride and ego. They open our hearts for relationship with God and each other. They provide the foundation to become the person that God intended each of us to be.

Pope Francis says this, "Some people think they are free if they can avoid God; they fail to see that they remain orphaned, helpless and homeless. They cease being pilgrims and become drifters, flitting around themselves and never getting anywhere."

Dr. Edward Sri adds, "When I train myself in the name of my personal freedom to pursue what I want, when I want it, how I want it, as often as I want it, I'm actually not free. I'm a slave. I become a slave to my interests. In the end, the modern notion of freedom trains us to become slaves to our own selfishness."

So, start today, begin incorporating the Ten Commandments into your daily prayers. Discover the freedom they provide you on your path to holiness.

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# Stewardship



## Rose, Rose, Thorn, Bud

Over the Christmas holiday I was introduced to this game by my daughter Jill. Everyone present shares something personal about themselves. Here's how it works:

- Rose – everyone briefly talks about something they are grateful for.
- Rose – a second time, everyone briefly talks about something else they are grateful for.
- Thorn – everyone briefly talks about something that is bothering them.
- Bud – everyone briefly talks about something they would like to grow or develop within themselves.

When we finished, it actually seemed like a prayer to me. It was a great way to start conversations about God and prayer with people that aren't necessarily used to doing so.

In Evangelization terms, it was a great way "to meet people where they are at." To talk to them about their human needs and hopefully, open their hearts to receive God.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship: Balance Health, Happiness & Holiness

When you get an ear ache, you may feel off kilter or out-of-balance. When the tires on your car aren't properly inflated, you may experience a rough ride, your car is out-of-balance. When you spend more money than what you have in your checking account, your account is overdrawn, your finances are out-of-balance. When something is out-of-balance it usually doesn't work right.

You exercise regularly and watch what you eat - you try to maintain your health. You are socially active, relatively free of worry, you buy some "creature comforts" - you try to maintain your happiness. Yet, in spite of your efforts to maintain health and happiness, you still feel like something is missing. You are out-of-balance, something isn't right.

Why? Because we are more than just our physical bodies and our possessions. We have souls. We have a supernatural, spiritual component to our entire being. Most of us neglect our holiness. We forget to feed our souls. We take our relationship with God for granted or worse, we don't think about it at all. We are out-of-balance.

Most people probably don't think of Lent as a gift. But, it is! It's our opportunity to put our lives back into balance – to recalibrate our holiness. Lent is our time be more intentional with our prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It is time to detach ourselves from worldly pleasures and develop our spiritual muscles. It is time to empty ourselves of our self-interests and allow room for the Holy Spirit to operate in our lives.

How do we do this? By reducing "vice" and increasing "virtue." For each of the seven deadly sins (vices) there is a corresponding virtue to overcome them.

Chastity overcomes lust – our bodies are temples for the Holy Spirit. In our highly sexualized culture, develop chastity to overcome lustful desires and our wandering eyes.

Temperance overcomes gluttony – many people "give up" eating or drinking certain foods or beverages during Lent. Temperance or moderation helps control our appetite.

Charity overcomes greed – More things doesn't equate to more happiness. In fact, it's the opposite. The most joyful people are also the most generous. Charity exhibits selflessness, greed exhibits selfishness.

Diligence overcomes sloth – as stewards, we are called to nurture, develop and share our gifts. Cultivate diligence or a strong work ethic to overcome laziness or sloth.

Patience overcomes wrath – St. James tells us to "be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God." Do you want to develop patience? Start by praying for people that make you angry.

Kindness overcomes envy – good stewards are grateful for all the gifts they have been given. Kindness means that I am happy for the gifts that God has given other people. Stop comparing yourself to others and be thankful for what you have been given.

Humility overcomes pride – this is the big one. Most of our sins are based in pride. Pride is called the "devil's sin" because Satan wanted to make himself a god before God. Humility is central to being a disciple of Jesus; putting God's will before my own self-interests.

We are made in God's image. We are sons and daughters of God. We were made to be in union with Him, not separated from Him.

Just like maintaining your health and happiness, holiness requires an intentional, daily commitment; it requires me to change. Let's use this Lent to get our lives back into balance – health, happiness and holiness! Exercise virtue and eliminate vice. Experience the peace and joy that God desires for you here on earth.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship: Obligation vs. Love

I am sixty-one years old. For forty-seven years I went to church because our first grade teacher at St. Andrew grade school, Sister Josephita, told us that if we didn't go to Sunday Mass every week we would end up going to "H-E-double toothpicks." Years later, I went on a White House Jesuit Retreat and met Jesus. Now, I attend Sunday Mass because I love spending time with Him. I love Him.

I think many people attend Sunday Mass out of obligation versus out of love. Attending Sunday Mass out of obligation is a good start, but you really don't get to experience the full Love, Joy and Peace of our Catholic faith. Think of anything you do out of obligation versus out of love. Obligation is more of a legal requirement. Love is something I really want to do. When obligated, my needs are usually the center of my attention. When in love, the other person (or God in this case) is the center of my attention.

Obligation implies that we do the minimum required. We do just enough to pass. It's like taking a class and shooting for a "C" grade instead of trying for an "A". Obligation suggests that we count the minutes until it's over because our heart really isn't in it. We really don't want to be there. Obligation suggests that we don't like talking about it, unless it is to complain, and we may even feel embarrassed being part of it.

Love, on the other hand is different. With love, there are no limits. You want to spend as much time as you can with the other person. You try to stay in constant communication. You can't wait to see the other person again. You plan for the next time you will be together. When you are in love, you are willing to give everything you have for the other person. When you are in love, you want to tell the whole world about it!

Now, I am not blaming St. Josephita for my immature faith life, that's on me. God was always there talking to me, I was just too self-centered to listen. When I think of her now, I am grateful that she cared enough for the welfare of my soul! I am glad that she talked to me in a way that I could understand as a first grade student.

Just like our human relationships, our relationship with God will take time to grow and deepen. And, just like our human relationships, if we want to become friends with someone, we have to take time to talk with them to get to know them. This is the same for God. To grow in love and friendship requires patience and humility on our part. (And, more than one hour a week at Sunday Mass).

The question in many parishes is how do we encourage people to return to Sunday Mass? Let's focus on helping people mature in their love and friendship with God. Let's encourage people to attend Sunday Mass because they want to be there and not out of obligation. How? Let's build a path of discipleship for everyone. From the person in our parish community that is barely hanging on to their belief to the person that is one breath from sainthood. Let's help people move from obligation to living out their faith through love.

Pick a couple of family members, friends or neighbors who may have stalled in the obligation phase of their faith life and share your God story with them. You'll help each grow in friendship with God and with each other. In our parish communities, maybe it's time to reorganize our structures, processes and ministries to help people take those small, incremental steps on their path to holiness.

Let's help everyone take one step closer to God. Let's make disciples. Let's make disciples into disciple-makers. Let's help people move from obligation to love for God.

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# Stewardship



## Gift of PARTICIPATION (TALENT)

The gift of TALENT is our opportunity to volunteer and participate in our local parish ministries and other charitable organizations.

We must understand to be a disciple of Christ requires not just conversion but action - doing something to serve others.

### **Barriers to Parish Participation**

- Sometimes it's easy for a parish to develop an "in-crowd" where others feel excluded.
- Be careful of using acronyms. Not everyone understands what they mean and are embarrassed to ask or feel excluded.
- Current parish ministry leadership – Unknowingly, when a person leads a ministry too long, the ministry can become the "agenda of Joe" and may discourage people from joining. (Develop term limits for leaders and rotate leaders to other ministries.)
- Parishioners don't always know what their gifts or talents are (See more under Gift Discernment).

### **Gift Discernment**

God has given each of us unique gifts, and we are all called to use those gifts to fulfill His plan. The problem is that many people have a hard time determining or discerning what those talents, skills, and abilities are. As a result, many people are reluctant to participate in parish ministries.

God asks that we use our gifts, our charisms, to build the Church. It's important that we use our gifts in the appropriate ministry and in the correct role in the ministry, otherwise people can become tired or burnt-out.

Avoid adding someone to a ministry leadership role just because they volunteered or worst of all, because nobody else volunteered! Evaluate people's strengths and talents and match to ministries and roles within the ministry, otherwise your parish could suffer the negative effects for many years.

Here are some tools to help people discern what their gifts are, what ministry is the best fit for them, and to determine their role in that ministry. Help your parishioners discern their gifts and schedule a parish workshop.

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# Stewardship



## Spiritual Gifts Inventory Workshop

- Presented by the Archdiocesan Catholic Renewal Center.
- Contact Jane Guenther ([janeguenther@archstl.org](mailto:janeguenther@archstl.org) or 314.792.7734) for more information.

## Gallup Strengthsfinder

- See their website at [www.gallupstrengthscenter.com](http://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com).
  - Or, contact Michelle Foster, Strengths Finder Facilitator, for more information. Michelle is happy to provide any information and can be reached at [crazy4abba@gmail.com](mailto:crazy4abba@gmail.com) or 636-399-9309.
- Many people are either too quick to say “yes” to volunteer or too quick to say “no.” In either case, before responding, pray and ask God for direction. Most people find joy when they align their actions and service to God’s will, not their own.
  - Be sure to say “yes” to the right opportunity. Jesus said “no” many times, but he knew what his mission was. We should do the same – focus on a ministry that best utilizes your gifts and strengths to fulfill God’s plan.
  - Many people overcommit and say “yes” to too many of the wrong ministries.
  - Give the Holy Spirit room to work in your life.

## Ministry Versus Job

The following was found by Fr. Gary Faust, former Pastor of St. Bernadette. The author is “unknown.” Some people have a job in the Church and others are invited into a ministry.

What is the difference?

If you’re doing it just because no one else will, it’s a job.

If you’re doing it to serve the Lord, it’s a ministry.

If you quit because someone criticizes you, it’s a job.

If you keep serving, it’s a ministry.

If you’ll do it as long as it doesn’t interfere with your other activities, it’s a job.

If you are committed to staying, even if it means letting go of other things, it’s a ministry.

If you quit because no one thanked you or praised you, it’s a job.

If you stick with it, even though no one recognized your efforts, it’s a ministry.

It’s hard to get excited about a job.

It’s almost impossible NOT to get excited about a ministry.

If your concern is success, it’s a job.

If your concern is faithfulness and service, it’s a ministry.

If God calls you to a ministry, don’t treat it like a job.

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# Stewardship



## Reaching Young Adults

Engaging young adults is critical for the growth of the Church.

- Engaging parishioners in their 20's and 30's is a difficulty many parishes face. It is critical that we continue to invite them to participate in Mass, parish ministry, and the financial well-being of the parish.
- There is an opportunity for parishes to develop new ministries and parish events to keep young adults engaged spiritually and socially.

Below are some Archdiocesan events sponsored by the Young Adult Ministry that may be of interest to your parish's young adults:

- **Theology on Tap**- Young adults 21-35 are invited to join us the second Tuesday of each month for an inspirational talk and discussion.
- **Emmaus Groups**- Young adults are encouraged to sign up for small faith-sharing groups to help take their faith deeper and challenge them to be a light to our community! Sign-ups are ongoing at <https://stlyoungadults.com/emmaus-groups/>
- **Parish Consulting** – The Office of Young Adult Ministry would love to meet with representatives at your parish to help you create and execute a strategy to engage more young adults. Contact them at [STLYA@archstl.org](mailto:STLYA@archstl.org).
- More details on these and all young adult events at [archstl.org/youngadults](http://archstl.org/youngadults).

## Parish Participation Activities

- At the annual parish picnic, workers receive a special t-shirt (which they wear with pride).
- Conduct Spiritual Gifts Workshops or Gallup Strengthsfinder questionnaire to help parishioners discern their gifts.
- Determine what gifts are needed for specific ministry roles and select parishioners with those specific gifts.
- Hold annual parish ministry leader meetings.
- Communicate parish volunteer opportunities via parish apps or parish socialmedia.
- Hold an appreciation event for all parish ministry members.
- Continuously, publicly thank parish volunteers after each parish event.
- Review with your parish all the “good works” that occur in your parish on a monthly basis through all forms of parish communication.
- Incorporate your parish Festival of Ministries into a social event where people have fun.
- Contact a local real estate agent for list of people that have moved into your area.

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# Stewardship



## Eat, Sleep, Innovate – How to Make Creativity an Everyday Habit (2020)

The title is the name of a book by Scott Anthony, Paul Cobban, Natalie Painchaud and Andy Parker.

Here are some excerpts:

- Culture change starts by getting granular and defining the specific behaviors that enable innovation success.
- Your organization has to allocate resources to innovate; if you want big impact, you need to allocate big resources.
- Innovation is defined as “something different that creates value.”
- Celebrate failure (and success); failure is an opportunity to learn.
- Change the organizational structure to get desired behavior.
- Communicate widely and regularly.
- Use language everyone understands; clear and concise.
- Create low barriers to participate; increases confidence.
- “Shrink the challenge” – make many small changes instead of onebig one.
- Nothing will change unless the behavior of the people changes.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship and Random Acts of Kindness

Random acts of kindness are a good start on your path to holiness. But, Stewardship is next level! Why? Because Stewardship is a lifestyle based on gratitude and generosity. Stewardship is intentional and rooted in love, not random with no strings attached. The whole point is strengthening our relationship with God and each other.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

### Prayer

- Don't have time for daily prayer? Say a quick prayer for people that annoy you. You'll be praying more than you imagined and your attitude towards them will change.
- Don't have time to read the Bible? There's an app for that. Start with daily scripture readings. Remember, scripture is one of the ways God talks to us.
- Don't have time to pray the Rosary? Start with three Holy Mary's each day. You'll be looking for your Rosary in no time.
- Is everything falling into place for you, no major issues? Attend Mass on a day other than Sunday and receive the Holy Eucharist. Thank God for all He has given you. Remember, the word "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving".
- Have you been hurt by what someone said recently? Go to Confession – receive God's mercy and forgiveness. Then, go and forgive the person that hurt you. We can't give what we don't have.
- Are you easily angered? Make a list of the top five things you are grateful to God for. When you feel your temperature rising offer the gratitude list as a prayer to God. It is impossible to be angry and joyful at the same time.

### Participation

- Are you lonely, bored or unsatisfied? Give away what you want to receive. If you want love, mercy, forgiveness, fellowship – give it away and it will come back to you many times over.
- Are you overbooked, too busy, feel out of control? Then stop and rest. Even God took a day off. Has "being busy" become a "god" in your life that keeps you from things that are really important?
- When someone offers to help you with something, gladly accept it. You may not need the help but it may help the other person. You may be the answer to their prayer.
- Can't figure out what you would like to get involved with at your parish? Instead, ask God what He would like you to do. If we want God's help, we have to invite Him into our life.

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## Stewardship



- Do you enjoy working in parish ministry or performing other charitable works? If so, don't keep it to yourself. Share your joyful stories with others and invite them to join you. Your story may open the door for someone to meet Jesus.
- Do you spend a lot of time on social media, live streaming or cable tv? Then do a fast from media. Think "garbage in, garbage out". Use the extra time doing charitable works in your parish or your community.

### Generosity

- Do you think "I work hard, I earn my money on my own, God had nothing to do with it?" If so, remember who created you. Who gave you the talent and skill needed to get a job to provide for your family? God did. If you think about it, all of "our" money is His.
- God and money run neck and neck as the top priority for many people. Where does God fall on your list? If not number one, you need to put the other "gods" behind God. The first commandment is the first commandment for a reason.
- Have you been employed for years, received an annual raise, given a promotion or seen your family income increase over the years? Then why do you still only give \$20 a week in the Sunday offertory? Our giving should be proportional - when given more, we are called to give more.
- Don't have enough money to give to your parish or other charity? Make a budget. You'll be surprised how much you spend eating out all the time. Most of us have more than we need and have plenty to share.
- Do you leave a bigger tip when going out to eat on Saturday night than what you put in the offertory basket on Sunday morning? We are called to give from our "first fruits" – our first and best, not our "leftovers". Try putting charitable giving at the top of your expenses on your household budget.

Do you have a good job, make good money, have all the toys you need but still feel empty? Give more money away. Archbishop Fulton Sheen said you measure your generosity by what you have left, not by what you give.

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# Stewardship



## **Stewardship: The Harvest is Abundant but the Laborers are Few**

“Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.” (Matthew 9:35 – 38)

We have heard this scripture passage many times before, but I think most of us only remember the part that states “the harvest is abundant but the laborers are few...” Would you be surprised to know that this passage is titled “The Compassion of Jesus”. This passage is about relationships, our relationship with God and each other, not about achieving goals or objectives. It is about fulfilling God’s plan and not our own plans.

“The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few” is a common stewardship theme for many parishes, but maybe for the wrong reasons. Most parishes experience the “80/20 rule”, that is, 80% of the work (the harvest) is done by 20% of the parishioners (the laborers). (In many cases, it’s probably closer to 90/10). If the goal of your parish harvest is to increase mass attendance, increase the number of volunteers or increase the amount of money collected, you, my friend, are about achieving goals and not saving souls. If you see your fellow parishioners as statistics and not individuals, your parish stewardship efforts are probably not bearing good fruit from your harvest.

The goal of stewardship is to bring people to Jesus and ultimately, help each other get to Heaven. If we are not doing that, we are not fulfilling God’s plan. Our goal is to help people encounter the Lord, grow in love and friendship with Him and share their witness with others. All good gifts are meant to be shared, and through our generous sharing of our gifts we imitate Christ, and with God’s grace, inspire others to be followers of Jesus. The stewardship of our gifts has the ability to build disciples and transform disciples into disciple-makers, this is the harvest that Jesus is referring to.

But, before the harvest can become abundant, the seed of each individual plant must break so that it can transform and grow. So to it is with our heart, it must break open to grow and transform. If we are truly interested in reaping the abundant harvest that God has planned, let’s focus on developing our relationship with each other and not group our fellow parishioners together as a statistic to be measured.

This isn’t easy. It may require us to be in some uncomfortable situations. It may require us to listen, not to respond, but to understand. It may require us to go beyond the minimum required and place our complete trust in God. Let’s pray for the strength and courage to become the laborers God designed us to be.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship: Volunteer or Disciple?

Words matter. When you hear the word “volunteer” what do you think of? When you hear the word “disciple” what do you think of? Being a volunteer is a good start, however, becoming a disciple is the next step on the path of holiness.

In the second last line of Matthew’s Gospel Jesus tells us “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations....” Disciples make other disciples. Jesus is very clear, he is not looking for volunteers. In John’s Gospel Jesus says “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” If you are a follower of Jesus you are a disciple. If you call yourself a disciple are you reflecting the light of Jesus with your words and actions to others?

Unknowingly, I think many of us are operating at the “volunteer” level and not at the “disciple” level. Why? Because I think many of us don’t really trust God all the time. We like control. We like comfort. When I volunteer, I usually do it when it fits into “my” schedule and when it is convenient for me. When I disciple, it’s according to God’s timeline, His plan, not mine. Discipleship recognizes that time is a gift from God. All of time is His. By using time according to God’s plan, that becomes our gift back to God.

Do you want to grow as a disciple? Then let’s change the words we use to help change our perspective.

Volunteer implies giving some of my time. Disciple implies a way of life. It’s not something that I do, it’s how I live.

Volunteer brings a little pride and ego into the picture. People like being recognized for their accomplishments. Disciple is based in humility, becoming more God-centered and other-centered, and less self-centered.

Volunteer sometimes puts the focus on me. “Look what I did!” Disciple puts others’ needs first. It puts the focus on Jesus, not on me.

Volunteer usually involves short intervals in other people’s lives; still remaining strangers to each other. Disciple means walking with each person one at a time, through their ups and downs, and developing a personal relationship.

Volunteer is usually temporary happiness. I complain about it most of the time, happy when I do it, but then the feeling fades. Disciple usually grows in inner peace and joy, regardless of the circumstances.

Volunteer implies I make a choice to participate or not. Disciple implies I have already made the choice. I choose God.

Fr. Chris Martin, in a recent reflection, said “Jesus didn’t come to earth to become more human. He came to earth to make us more divine.” Something to keep in mind as we move from volunteer to disciple.

Let us pray. Lord, fill us with faith, fill us with grace, grant us humility and preserve us from evil that we may all become better disciples and point people to You. We pray that all we do be for the greater glory and honor of your name!

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# Stewardship



## Gift of GENEROSITY (TREASURE)

This is the hardest aspect of stewardship. Most people in our culture have difficulty detaching themselves from money. The theory that if we concentrate on time and talent, treasure will follow doesn't always hold true today.

### Thoughts regarding faith and money:

- People are absolutely craving God, but are unsure or tentative on how to start the relationship with Him.
- People are looking for guidance in handling their money, both charitable giving and daily & long-term management.
- A person's attitude towards money has a direct influence on their relationship with God.
- For many people, God and money run "neck and neck" as their top priority.
- We need to handle our money in a way that will draw us to God.
- God calls us to be generous with all of our gifts, especially our money.
- The average Catholic only gives 1% of their gross income to Church and charity (this puts us last if you are keeping score).
- The hard truth – many Catholics are generous, however, many Catholics are not generous in proportion to the gifts they have been given.
- We need to help fellow Catholics to be better stewards of all their money; how they give to Church and charity and how they spend and use their money in their daily decisions.
- The Bible is a good source on financial guidance.
- Once people gain a degree of financial peace, it opens them to live life more fully and abundantly as God intended, which ultimately leads to a richer, stronger relationship with God.
- You cannot "out-give" God! Once you open yourself to receive His gifts, they will flow through you to others, who in turn, will do the same.
- The first commandment is "I am the Lord Your God. You shall have no other gods before me."
- By helping people to be better stewards of their money, they keep God first and money second.
- People want joy and peace. It all starts by putting God first in all things, especially with their money.
- "Giving" is actually a gift from God because it helps us from putting other gods before God.
- We have a need to give! Why? Because we are made in God's image and likeness!

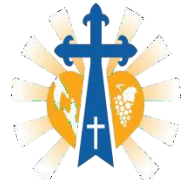
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# Stewardship



## **Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University**

- Dave is a Christian financial planner whose teaching is based on Bible scripture.
- He emphasizes the need to give to Church and charity while providing practical and proven methods to manage money.
- It is a nine-week program meeting 2 hours per week covering household budgeting to retirement planning and everything in between.
- Visit his website at [DaveRamsey.com](http://DaveRamsey.com) to order class material or to look for classes in the St. Louis area.
- More Catholic parishes are conducting the classes on a regular basis.

## **Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University Information Guide (Catholic Edition)**

Help your parish:

- Teach financial stewardship as a way of life.
- Ingrain a culture of generosity
- Embrace God's way of handling money
- Learn basic financial techniques to develop a family budget, reduce/eliminate debt, and save money.

For more information, go to:

- [DaveRamsey.com](http://DaveRamsey.com)
- <https://www.archstl.org/about-stewardship/generosity>

## **Legacy Planning Seminar**

- Free to all parishes, covering Planned Giving options and Will & Trust overview.
- Each parish should schedule this seminar every three years.
- Contact Michael Weisbrod, Planned Giving Officer – Roman Catholic Foundation of Eastern Missouri, at 314-918-2893 or [michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org](mailto:michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org).

## **Quotes on Generosity**

- “When faith does not reach the pocket, it is not genuine faith.” Pope Francis
- “The measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.” Luke 6:38

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## Stewardship



- When it comes to giving money there is “not equal giving, but equal sacrifice.” Bishop Michael Jackels of the Diocese of Wichita, KS, refers to the Offertory at SundayMass as the “holy exchange of gifts.” “If parishioners do not have any money to put in the offertory basket, encourage them to put their empty hand in the basket as a sign of a ‘gift of self’ to the Lord.”
- “The money I take out of my wallet and place in the collection basket belongs to God, but so does the rest of the money that goes back into my pocket.” Tracy Earl Welliver
- “What do you own and what owns you?” Archbishop Thomas Murphy

### **Tithing**

- Tithing means “one tenth” or 10%.
- As recommended by the Archdiocese, anyone interested in tithing, give 5% of gross income to their local parish and 5% to other Church needs and charity.
- Many people are not in a position to start out tithing, however, over time, by adding a 1% increase each year, they can reach 10%.
- For many people that tithe, 10% is the starting point (not the end point) and they give beyond 10%.
- Is a concept we should continue to talk about and encourage people to do with joy.
- Several parishes have developed tithing committees and give a portion of their offertory to other ministries or charities, eliminating second collections.
- Why don’t people tithe anymore? Because we don’t ask them!
- We need to talk about tithing more in our parishes.
- Only 5% of people nationally tithe (which means gives 10%).

### **My Catholic Giving Guide**

- Catholics have many opportunities to be generous.
- Each giving request goes to a different ministry, organization or cause.
- We are called to support all or as many of the giving opportunities as we can.
- We shouldn’t pick one over the other, but plan the best we can to support as many as we can.
- The Church recognizes that people have a finite amount of money.
- Instead of getting angry or frustrated, know that each of these giving opportunities will come every year, so plan accordingly.

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## Stewardship



- How do we respond to “donor fatigue”? Help parishioners plan their giving on an annual basis by using the My Catholic Giving Guide.
- When we plan our giving on an annual basis, we are giving from our “first fruits” and not from our “leftovers.” We are giving our first and best to God.
- It is a tool designed to help you determine the amount you can give on an annual basis and then designate money for each area until you reach your pre-determined annual giving amount. (You determine the annual amount.) Use your parish on-line giving tool to load your giving in for the year.
- Review the worksheet each year as your income changes or to change your level of giving.
- Many parishes add the My Catholic Giving Guide as an insert into their weekly bulletin.
- See an example of the My Catholic Giving Guide on the next two pages.
- Also, available on-line at [archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship).
- A “customizable” version of the My Catholic Giving Guide is also available on the Stewardship web page.

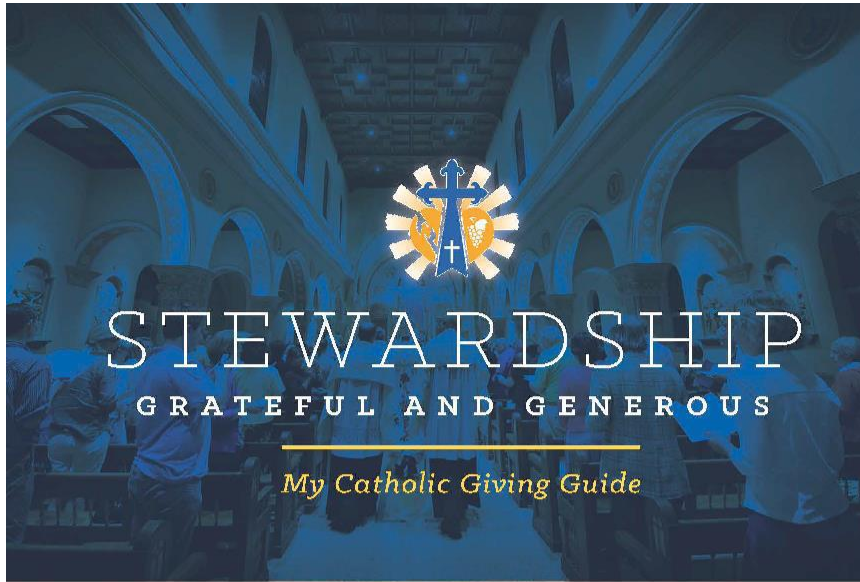
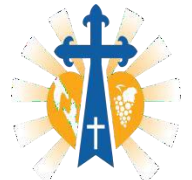
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# Stewardship



## ANNUAL GIVING OPPORTUNITIES



### Offertory

Whether giving weekly, monthly or yearly, the offertory supports the parish's mission and ministries.



### Annual Catholic Appeal

Supports the immediate and urgent mission of the local Church, including ministries, parishes and schools.



### Second Collections

Supports the priorities of the pope and bishops through specific national and worldwide ministries.



### Parish Capital Campaign

Provides the means for parishes to carry out specific projects.



### Community Charities

Opportunities to support the mission of nonprofit organizations and other needs.

## A GUIDE TO GIVING IN STEWARDSHIP

God calls us to be generous with all of our gifts, including our treasure. Our faith teaches us this through the Scriptures:

*"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits ..." (Proverbs 3:9)*

*"How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good He has done for me?" (Psalm 116:12)*

In gratitude, we are called to give to God from our first fruits. That means creating a plan for giving to His Church. Throwing a last-minute donation into the collection basket time and again only leaves us frustrated. Having a plan, we can better do our part to share the gifts that God has given us.

## BEST PRACTICES

- Create and maintain a household budget
  - Plan your giving annually
  - Use your parish's electronic offering (if applicable)
- Understand that tithing literally means to give 10 percent of your income. Suggested amounts: 5 percent to the local parish and 5 percent to other Church needs and charities that serve the greater community.

*"Whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly and whoever sows bountifully will reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

— 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

USE THE WORKSHEET ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE TO PLAN YOUR GIVING

Contact David Baranowski, Stewardship Education Director | (314) 792-7215 | davidbaranowski@archstl.org | [www.archstl.org/stewardship](http://www.archstl.org/stewardship)

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# Stewardship



## MY CATHOLIC GIVING GUIDE WORKSHEET

TEAR OUT AND KEEP WORKSHEET

### 1. CALCULATE ANNUAL GROSS FAMILY INCOME:

My income	\$ _____
My spouse's income	\$ _____
Other income	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

### 2. DETERMINE ANNUAL PERCENTAGE TO GIVE:

Tithing (10%)	_____ %
(or)	
Other	_____ %

### 3. CALCULATE ANNUAL DOLLAR GIVING AMOUNT:

Total Annual Gross Family Income X Annual Giving Percentage = Annual Dollar Giving Amount

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_ % = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. DETERMINE DOLLAR AMOUNT FOR EACH GIVING OPPORTUNITY:

#### OFFERTORY

Weekly \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (or) Monthly \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

Annual \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### PARISH CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Annual \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECOND COLLECTIONS / MINISTRY SUPPORT

Annual Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal	\$ _____
Annual Seminary Collection	\$ _____
Black & Indian Missions	\$ _____
Campaign for Human Development	\$ _____
Catholic Communications Campaign	\$ _____
Catholic Home Missions Appeal	\$ _____
Catholic Relief Services	\$ _____
Catholic University of America	\$ _____
Church in Central & Eastern Europe	\$ _____
Formation of Permanent Deacons	\$ _____
Glennon Sunday	\$ _____
Holy Land	\$ _____
Latin America Apostolate	\$ _____
Peter's Pence (for the Pope)	\$ _____
Regina Cleri	\$ _____
Respect Life Apostolate	\$ _____
Retirement Fund for Religious	\$ _____
St. Louis Review Subscription	\$ _____
St. Vincent de Paul Society	\$ _____
World Mission Sunday	\$ _____

#### COMMUNITY CHARITIES & UNEXPECTED NEEDS

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

#### TOTAL ANNUAL GIVING

AMOUNT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_



### GIVING EXAMPLE

#### 1. Calculate annual gross income:

My income	\$45,000
Spouse's income	\$10,000
Other income	\$5,000
Total	\$60,000

#### 2. Determine annual percentage to give:

3% OR 10%

#### 3. Calculate annual giving amount:

\$60,000	\$60,000
x 3%	x 10%
\$1,800	\$6,000

#### 4. Determine dollar amount for each giving opportunity:

\$1,800	Parish offertory	\$6,000
x 50%		x 50%
\$900		\$3,000

\$900	Weekly offertory	\$3,000
÷ 52		÷ 52
\$17.3		\$57.7

\$900	Monthly offertory	\$3,000
÷ 12		÷ 12
\$75		\$250

\$70	Annual second collections (20)	\$50
x 20		x 20
\$400		\$1,000

\$200	Annual Catholic Appeal	\$600
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#### OTHER CHARITIES

\$75	Grade school fundraiser	\$300
\$75	High school fundraiser	\$300
\$50	Charity 1	\$250
\$40	Charity 2	\$200
\$60	Parish Capital Campaign	\$350
\$300	OTHER TOTALS	\$1,400

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# Stewardship



## **Parish Strategic Offertory Review Checklist**

### **Increased Offertory Programs**

- What Is It?
  - A program designed to increase your parish's weekly offertory.
  - The weekly offertory increase is sustainable over time, increasing the weekly base offertory for the parish.
- How Does It Work?
  - Parish hires a third party company to contact your parish households through a series of letters encouraging them to increase their offertory gift. Usually over 4 – 6 weeks.
  - The letters are segmented based on each parish family's giving habits (i.e. regular givers, occasional givers, and non-givers) and receive different letters based on their segment.
  - The third party company is responsible for all parishioner contact, follow-up, and thank you letters.
  - The parish pays an upfront fee usually based on parish size.
- Results
  - Many parishes throughout the Archdiocese have successfully used these programs for many years.
  - Parishes have experienced a sustainable increase in offertory – 10% and higher.
  - Many parishes incorporate this program into their annual Stewardship Sunday activity. They seek TIME and TALENT commitments first, then seek an increased TREASURE commitment through an increased offertory program.

### **Recommended Suppliers**

#### **CATHEDRAL CORPORATION**

Contact: Jim Messa

800.698.0299 ext. 233

[mail to: jmessa@cathedralcorporation.com](mailto:jmessa@cathedralcorporation.com)

#### **OUR SUNDAY VISITOR**

Contact: Joanie Lewis

800.348.2886, ext. 2137

[joanielewis@osv.com](mailto:joanielewis@osv.com)

- Action Steps
  - Contact suppliers and make appointment to discuss.
  - Evaluate cost and benefit of each program.
  - Select supplier and determine start date.
  - Schedule in coordination with annual Stewardship Sunday TREASURE commitment.

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# Stewardship



## Electronic Offertory Program

- Electronic offertory allows convenience and security for parishioners who want to be generous with their gift of treasure.
- *Benefit for the parish*
  - Parishes experience an increase in giving by parishioners using electronic offertory (“good Catholics” attend Mass at home parish only 40 times per year, putting at least 12 weeks of offertory at risk simply because the family is not at your parish.)
  - Gifts are given consistently, creating a steady and predictable cash flow.
  - Special one-time donations and second collections are incorporated into these programs
- *Benefits for the parishioner*
  - More efficient – most financial transactions are handled electronically, instead of through a check
  - Can use credit cards
  - Able to manage all their giving at onetime
- *Risks*
  - Each supplier offers a different service. Review each supplier carefully and decide which best meets your needs.
  - The Archdiocese has made every attempt to limit risks through review of business practices, audit reports, insurance programs, and security compliance of the selected suppliers.
- *Recommended Suppliers*

### Church Budget

Contact: Doug English  
1-800-661-4538x517

[denglish@churchbudget.com](mailto:denglish@churchbudget.com)

### Ministry Brands

Contact: David Lauritsen  
972-962-9239

[davidlauritsen@ministrybrands.com](mailto:davidlauritsen@ministrybrands.com)

### Pushpay

Contact: Jeff Mullin  
720.782.2055

[Jeff.Mullin@Pushpay.com](mailto:Jeff.Mullin@Pushpay.com)

### Faith Direct

Contact: David Lauritsen  
972-962-9239

[davidlauritsen@ministrybrands.com](mailto:davidlauritsen@ministrybrands.com)

### Our Sunday Visitor

Contact: Ben Williams  
260-2242643

[bwilliams@osv.com](mailto:bwilliams@osv.com)

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# Stewardship



## Action Steps:

- If parish does not currently use, contact suppliers and evaluate program benefits and costs.
- If parish currently uses one of the suppliers, promote use more frequently through:
  - Pulpit announcements (monthly at a minimum)
  - Reminders in bulletin, website, newsletter (monthly at a minimum)
  - Posters throughout parish facility
  - “Sign-up” drives at parish functions (i.e. Donut Sunday, parish ministry meetings, etc.)
  - Having a laptop computer available to sign-up on the spot after Mass
  - Having a parishioner talk at Mass
  - Making a video on how to sign-up or written instructions to hand-out
  - Use your imagination!
- List the number of electronic givers in offertory updates in the bulletin and annual stewardship report.
- If electronic offertory users still receive envelopes, encourage them to check “gave electronically” on the envelope and drop into the offertory basket.
- If electronic offertory users do not receive envelopes, make re-usable, laminated cards they can drop in the offertory basket. (Ushers replace in pews after Mass)
- New parishioners’ registration – have new parishioners sign-up for electronic offertory.

## **Envelope Usage**

- Contact your envelope supplier to see what custom graphic options are available at no or low cost:
  - Custom parish pictures
  - Custom parish graphics
  - Custom parish copy, taglines, inspirational messages
  - Check dollar categories on envelopes and revise if needed.
  - Ask supplier what best practices other parishes have successfully used.
  - Ask supplier if other types of envelopes can be added to mailing (i.e. include self-addressed “catch all” envelopes).
  - Ask supplier if inspirational letters can be added to mailing.

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# Stewardship



## Children's Envelopes

- Start a Children's Envelope Program to train future generousgivers.
- Select a person to "champion" this effort. Discuss with PSR and Grade School representatives prior to implementation.
- Obtain parents' permission before children receive envelopes.
- Promote and encourage its use. Prior to implementation, discuss importance of giving to children and parents.
- Discuss tithing.
- Give children some say in how the money collected will be used (i.e. let them start a special charity or mission).
- Do not use money to pay bills!
- Provide periodic parish updates on amount of money collected and how it was used.

## Visitor Envelopes

- Keep envelopes in pews for parishioners or visitors who forgot or do not have envelopes. Be sure to include a place for the donor to put their contact information.
- If not available year-round, put visitor envelopes in pews for highly-attended Masses or celebrations (Easter, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Mission Week, etc.)
- Let people know they are available during weekly announcements or highly-attended Masses.

## Pass Large Baskets at Offertory

- Replace long-pole baskets used by ushers with baskets to pass around.
- Seek big baskets to pass from person to person at offertory. People are more likely to fill a big basket because it looks empty.
- Small baskets fill too quickly.

## Schedule a Legacy Planning Seminar

- Offered by the Roman Catholic Foundation of Eastern Missouri, these seminars give an overview of wills and trusts and planned giving options. Many attendees consider giving their parish a legacy gift.
- Contact Michael Weisbrod (314.918.2893/ [michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org](mailto:michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org)) to schedule.
- Add "Remember to Keep Your Parish in Your Will or Trust" to parish communications (i.e. bulletin, website)
- Visit the Roman Catholic Foundation's website at <https://rcfstl.org/>

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# Stewardship



## **Spirituality of Giving Money**

- God and money are top priorities for many people. God knows this.
- Fortunately, we are given direction in the Old Testament and the New Testament on giving money.
- Many of Jesus' parables and teachings were on the topic of money:
  - "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits..." Proverbs 3:9
  - "How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good He has done for me?" Psalm 116:12
  - "No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other... You cannot serve God and mammon (wealth)." Matthew 6:24
- In gratitude, we are called to give from our "first fruits"; we are called to give our "best" to God, not what is "left-over."
- Giving money is a pillar of our Faith, just like celebrating Mass on Sunday and participating in parish ministry.
- Being generous with our money actually frees us from being a slave to money; from making money a "god" before God.
- God doesn't need our money, rather we have a need to give.
- Stress the need to give before giving to a need. People give to people, not to things.
- Do not apologize for asking for money. Treasure is one of the gifts we were given.
- Giving money is sacrificial, we deny ourselves for the benefit of someone else; maybe someone we don't like, someone we don't know or someone that doesn't look like us.
- The invitation to give money is another opportunity to participate in the vision and mission of our parish.
- Ask parishioners for a commitment. When people write things down on a piece of paper, there is a psychological bond to be committed.
- The pastor must ask for money. People are giving to God, not the parish.
- Until the needy are clothed, the hungry are fed and the Gospel is spread to the ends of the earth, the Church will need financial resources to support its mission.
- We will always be called to give, that is constant. How we respond (gratitude, joy, or anger) is the fruit of our faith. Plan for it and take the stress out of giving.

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## Stewardship



- As Catholics in St. Louis, we have many opportunities to show our gratitude for all that God has given us: parish offertory, second collections, Annual Catholic Appeal, capital campaigns, and other charities.
- Remember that all these opportunities to give money “live together,” they are not “mutually exclusive” events. We should not choose one over the other, but rather plan how we can support all of them.
- One way to do this is to plan your giving on an annual basis; give from your “first fruits” instead of what is “leftover.”
- Use the *My Catholic Giving Guide* to help plan your giving on an annual basis.
- Greater generosity occurs in “mission-based” parishes, rather than parishes that are in “self-maintenance” mode.

### **Talk More Frequently About Giving As a Matter of Faith**

- Priests should talk to parishioners much more frequently about giving in terms of “advancing the mission of the Church” or giving “as an act of Faith.” Giving from our “treasure,” giving money, is a matter of our faith. Priests need to talk at least once a month about it.
- Priests should frequently tell parishioners what great things are happening at their parish and thank the parishioners for their generosity with their offertory gifts. Draw a correlation between parish activities that “advance the mission” and the parish’s generous offertory gifts. Don’t expect that the parishioners will connect their offertory gifts with other inspirational programs. (For example, “Thanks to the generosity of the parish, our 8<sup>th</sup> graders attended the Summer Youth Camp, and we were able to send 15 people to the Pro-Life March.”)
- Priests should avoid talking about parish offertory as a way to “pay the bills.”
- Many parishioners falsely think that “all father does is talk about money” when in fact most priests rarely talk about giving money as a matter of faith. Parishioners confuse announcements about specific parish fund-raising events with their weekly offertory. The two are totally separate – the first one is to raise money, the second is part of our faith, our opportunity to show gratitude to God for all the gifts He has given us.

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# Stewardship



## **Practical Tools to Assist Parishioners**

- Most people do not plan their charitable giving, most give on impulse.
- Most people give what is “left-over” and not from their “firstfruits.”
- Many households do not make a household budget.
- Most people do not understand the difference between offertory, second collections, Annual Catholic Appeal, capital campaigns, and school tuition.
- Offer parishioners practical information to help with the stewardship of their financial resources. (i.e. equal sacrifice, but not equal gifts)
- Help parishioners be better stewards of all their money, not just the money they give to the Church and charities.
- Personal Finance Parish Ministry – start a new ministry with finance professionals in your parish: household budgeting, basic personal finance, taxes, etc.

## **Parish Generosity Activities**

- During Mass, the priest is the first person to put his envelope into the offertory basket.
- Conduct a Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University Seminar for parishioners.
- Send each parishioner a year-end contribution statement for taxes.
- Parish tithing – Some parishes eliminate second collections and tithe a portion of their weekly offering. Additionally, some parishes have tithing committees to designate where money will go on an annual basis.
- Add personal tithing information to weekly bulletin ([archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship))
- Annual Catholic Appeal – Mass held in gym, as parishioners exit they walk right to ACA commitment card tables.
- Contact Michael Weisbrod, Planned Giving Officer at the Roman Catholic Foundation of Eastern Missouri, at 314.918.2893 or [michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org](mailto:michael.weisbrod@rcfstl.org) to schedule a Legacy Planning Seminar.
- Annual review of parish offertory envelope: graphics update, dollar grid update, annual usage, and number of envelopes sent annually
- Promote tithing and sacrificial giving – equal sacrifice, not equal gifts.
- Send a monthly statement as a reminder for parishioners of their giving relative to their covenant.

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## Stewardship



- Pass the collection basket to each individual, do not use long-pole baskets.
- Start a children's envelope giving program to help train future generous givers.
- Stewardship covenant cards – use a stair-step level of giving to show the number of people at each level within your parish. Encourage people to increase their percentage of giving each year.
- Help parishioners be better stewards of all their money, not just the money they give to the Church and charities.
- Catholic Values Investing – investing money in companies that adhere to Catholic values. In August 2015 the Dow Jones announced the start of the S&P 500 Catholic Values Index. The index excludes companies not consistent with Catholic values. This is the link to the USCCB's Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines: <https://www.catholicinvestments.com/catholic-investing/usccb-socially-responsible-guidelines/>
- Parish grade school "Tithing Friday" – school Mass held once a month. A collection is taken at Mass and each grade has the opportunity to collect and bring the offering to the altar. The dollar amount isn't important, rather it's a lesson in developing a routine of giving.
- Encourage parishioners to plan their giving on an annual basis by using the My Catholic Giving Guide (see pages 62-65).
- Send year-end statements to all parishioners and have the pastor add a personal note for contributors above a certain level.

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# Stewardship



## **Jesus and Money**

The following is from a presentation by Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran (authors of the book

*Rebuilt*) on the stewardship of money:

- 1) Begin in prayer – the Holy Spirit is needed to help change hearts.
- 2) Lead yourself – parish leaders must be good examples of generous giving.
- 3) Teach people what God says about money – use parables and scripture; develop a series of weekly messages.
- 4) Ask people to give and thank them; people give to a vision, not neediness.
- 5) Put rungs on a ladder – most people will not automatically go to a 10% tithe. Take steps to get there: help people plan their giving annually, emphasize it's a priority, give a percentage of income and progress (increase) the percentage annually.
- 6) Set people up for success – the electronic giving option is a must for all parishes.
- 7) Celebrate giving – what is celebrated is repeated.
- 8) Eliminate competing systems – this requires courage and discipline, encourage giving to weekly offertory and eliminate parish fundraisers.
- 9) Persevere – be patient and obedient, need three to five years to see a change.

### **Compass Catholic Ministries**

- Dedicated to help you discover smarter ways to manage your money.
- Teaches Biblical financial principles from an authentically Catholic viewpoint.
- Resources include training classes, podcasts, newsletters and website.
- Website is [compasscatholic.org](http://compasscatholic.org)

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# Stewardship



## Spirituality of Giving Money/Offertory

*“For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.” (Matthew 6:21)*

### Introduction

- It’s recommended that parishes and pastors be more intentional and more consistent in talking about the spirituality of giving money to support the parish mission and ministries, as well as, the greater Church.
- Just as attending Holy Mass and performing charitable works are tenets of our Catholic faith, so is generously sharing our money.
- Giving money – this is typically the hardest aspect of stewardship for most people.
- Most people have difficulty detaching themselves from their money.
- For many people, God and money run “neck and neck” as their top priority.
- People are looking for guidance from the Church in handling their money, both charitable giving and daily and long-term management.
- We need to inspire and encourage people to use their money in a way that draws them closer to God.
- A person’s attitude towards money has a direct influence on their relationship with God.
- The hard truth – many Catholics are generous, however, they are not generous in proportion to the gifts they have been given.

### Bible – “First Fruits” and Parables

- The Bible is a great source of financial management as it pertains to our spiritual life.
- The term “first fruits” is mentioned repeatedly throughout the Bible.
- First fruits simply means giving our first and best to God.
- “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits...” (Proverbs 3:9)
- Many of Jesus’ parables relate to money.
- For example: parables on Talents, Rich Man & Lazarus, Mustard Seed, Unfruitful Fig Tree, Good Samaritan, Widow’s mite and more.
- This is because Jesus knows that money represents our own self-sufficiency and our lack of dependence on God.

### Catechism of the Catholic Church

- CCC 1351 says this about Offertory at Mass...
- “From the very beginning Christians have brought, along with the bread and wine for the Eucharist, gifts to share with those in need. This custom of *collection*, ever appropriate, is inspired by the example of Christ who became poor to make us rich.”
- We are called to imitate Jesus!

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# Stewardship



- We are called to give ourselves as a gift without expecting anything in return. Sunday Offertory – The Gift of Self
- The Offertory collection at Holy Mass is our invitation to imitate Jesus; to give the gift of our whole self without expecting anything in return.
- Unfortunately, today, I suspect the collection is just seen as a financial transaction with God.
- But God doesn't need our money; rather we have a need to give. Why? Because we were created in God's image and likeness.
- Just as some family members may look and sound alike or even have similar body gestures because of traits they inherited from their earthly parents, we too, have inherited the generosity trait from our Heavenly Father, the most generous giver of all.
- When most people go to a family member or friend's house for a party or celebration, they typically bring a gift – a bottle of wine or some food to share. Maybe they order out for pizza and share in the cost.
- But it's not just the visible material things we bring, more importantly, it's the invisible things we bring to the party like love, friendship, joy, hospitality, gratitude, and generosity.
- It is the combination of visible and invisible gifts that makes the gathering a celebration.
- Don't you think this is an interesting parallel to the Sunday celebration of Mass?
- How come we are so eager to share with each other when invited to a party, but not so eager when we are invited to the Lord's house for a celebration?
- At Mass, the bread and wine are already provided, how come many of us come empty-handed?
- Do we bring the gift of our whole self to share with God and each other?
- Do we bring our individual visible and invisible gifts to Mass?

## Relationship

- In any good, loving relationship, trust is a key factor.
- Trust allows me to be myself, admit to my faults, not put on a false front, to be held accountable, to hold others accountable and to share what is in my heart and on my mind.
- This is what our offertory is to God – a covenant relationship with Him based on love, not out of obligation.
- Do you trust God will provide all that you need?
- If so, know that God may be using you as the answer to someone else's prayer.
- You may be the key to someone starting a loving relationship with Him through your generous sharing of your visible and invisible gifts.

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# Stewardship



## Today

- Whatever our circumstance, we are all being called in this present moment into a loving relationship with God and each other.
- God will use our current situation for good but we have to do our part and make room for the Holy Spirit to operate in our hearts.
- The Sunday collection, the Offertory, is the gift of our whole self – the visible and the invisible.

## How to Give

- Spend time in prayer, ask God how He is calling you to be the person He created you to be – grateful and generous.
- Electronic Offertory:
  - If your parish has it - promote it vigorously.
  - If your parish doesn't have it – get it.
- The Archdiocese has five approved electronic suppliers.
- See [archstl.org/about-stewardship/generosity](http://archstl.org/about-stewardship/generosity) for the approved supplier list or contact Dave Baranowski at [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org) or 314-792-7215 for help.
- Envelopes:
  - Use them weekly, if that is your preferred method of giving.

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# Stewardship



## **Stewardship - Don't Confuse with Fund-Raising**

Stewardship sometimes gets confused with the word “fund-raising.” But, the two are very different.

Stewardship is living a grateful and generous lifestyle in gratitude for all that God has given us. Fund- raising is a very specific set of activities designed to support diocesan, parish or other church-related organizations.

- Stewardship = a way of life
- Fund-raising = an activity to raise money

Fund-raising in the stewardship sense should:

- Strengthen relationships – our relationship with God and with each other
- Be other-centered – help those in our local, national, and international communities
- Not take the place of our weekly offertory/charitable giving – fund-raising should be “in addition” to and not “instead of” our weekly offertory/charitable giving

One of the key concepts of stewardship is giving without expecting anything in return. This means giving should be:

- From our “first fruits”- giving our first and best of everything, not simply what we have “leftover”
- Sacrificial - trusting that God will provide all that we need (not what we want)
- Proportionate to everything God has given us - those with more are called to give more
- Nurturing and developing our gifts - generously giving with an increase, not just giving the minimum required

Unfortunately, in some cases, parish “fund-raisers” have taken on a self-centered (what’s in it for me) and consumerist (I pay for something, I receive something) mentality. Fund-raisers in this sense have no spiritual component and actually discourage discipleship/stewardship because people become cynical, experience donor fatigue, and feel like they are being manipulated. This is the opposite of a stewardship way of life – trust in God, joyful giving, transparency, and accountability.

If your parish is using fund-raisers as a financial crutch with no spiritual component, it’s time to stop! If we are truly interested in moving our parish environment from maintenance to mission mode, we have to be intentional in formation of what it means to be a disciple and to be a good steward of everything we have been given. This includes talking about the spirituality of giving money and using our financial resources in a way that brings us closer to God and each other.

Each week at Sunday Mass we receive the greatest gift of all – the Holy Eucharist. The translation for the word “Eucharist” is thanksgiving. When we give our weekly offertory, are we truly thankful for everything that we’ve been given? Or, is our offertory just a “transaction” with God, and we expect something in return for our contribution?

Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen has a great perspective on giving, “Never measure generosity by what you give, but rather, by what you have left.”



# Stewardship



## **Annual Stewardship Renewal – “Renewing Our Covenant with God”**

### **Annual Parish Stewardship Renewal**

Just like the 40 days of Lent are a time of transformation, we can also look at our annual parish stewardship renewal in a similar way.

“Stewardship Sunday” is more than one day. For many parishes, the annual renewal can cover 5-6 weeks or more (roughly 40 days).

Similar to Lent, as we try to prune ourselves of bad vices and detach ourselves from earthly materials to grow closer to Jesus, we should try to ingrain that same disposition in our personal and parish stewardship formation.

During our annual parish stewardship renewal, it’s a good time to:

- 1) Look back at all the gifts we have been given, individually and collectively, and thank God.
- 2) Look forward to discern how God is calling us to use all of our gifts to help build His Kingdom on Earth.

In the past, we’ve referred to Stewardship Sunday as another unofficial season of the Church. For parishes that celebrate Stewardship Sunday in the fall, think of it as an enhancement to the beginning of Advent.

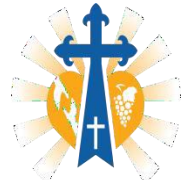
### **Renew Our Covenant with God**

- Our Annual Stewardship Renewal is another season of the Church.
- Throughout the Old and New Testaments, God and mankind have been making and renewing covenants.
- We should consider the annual parish stewardship process as “renewing our covenant with God.”
- This phrasing reinforces that the annual parish stewardship renewal is a “holy and sacred” action to give back to God in gratitude for all that He has given us.
- The word “commitment” has a negative connotation while the word “covenant” reinforces the “holy and sacred” aspect of stewardship.
- “Covenant” implies a sacred bond with God and encourages a personal relationship with Him, not something I am forced, coerced or obligated to do.





# Stewardship



- It's something I want to do and not something I have to do – placing my covenant card at the foot of the altar.
- Develop a parish stewardship logo.
- Completing our annual stewardship covenant card with our gift of prayer, participation and generosity, signing our name to it and placing it on the altar is our version of making a covenant with God, we shouldn't take this so lightly.

## Prayer

- Many parishes schedule an annual outdoor Mass (i.e. "Mass in the Grass") as part of their stewardship renewal.
- Pray for the success of your annual parish renewal prior to starting the event.
- Develop a parish stewardship prayer and pray it often.

## Participation

- Stewardship Covenant Cards
  - Along those lines, parishes are encouraged to change the name of the Stewardship Commitment Card to the "Stewardship CovenantCard"
  - Develop a special ceremony to collect, don't just throw into offertory basket
  - Call people to the altar to place cards in the basket
  - Collect cards pew by pew
  - Allow time for parishioners to complete at Mass prior to collecting and provide blank cards in pews
  - Have grade school and PSR student hand-out cards and collect them during Mass
  - Keep reminding parishioners to return and have a box in back of Church for later returns
  - Hand-out at individual parish ministry meetings
  - Develop separate covenant card for parish Youth (different from the Adult version).
  - Follow-up with non-respondents – attend parish ministry meetings and give them time to complete and collect.
  - Some parishes have developed on-line covenant cards and that's OK. However, there are studies that show there is positive reinforcement when people are asked to physically write or sign their name on a document versus just clicking on a keyboard.



# Stewardship



There is a more personal commitment when asked to sign a document versus “click” on a keyboard.

- Festival of Ministries
  - Don't call it a Festival of Ministries
  - Combine with another parish social event
  - Include food, adult beverages, and/or kid's activities
  - Make it a social event instead of a recruitment drive
  - When parishioners see other people in ministry having fun, they are more inclined to join
  - Fall Festivals, Chili Dinners, Taste of “Your Parish”
  - Develop old newspaper boy/girl day to promote ministries
- Develop “props” to promote your stewardship renewal
  - Rowboat – “Get In and Row”
  - Fishing Net – “We are Fishers of Men”
- Lay Witness Talks
  - Make a DVD of several speakers to show at all Masses
  - Make a video of your speakers and post on parish website
  - Send video links through social media

## Generosity

- Consider adding an Increased Offertory Program as part of your annual stewardship renewal – they work!
- Some parishes add the Increased Offertory Program every second or third year, some do it every year.
- Avoid conducting Increased Offertory Program during the Annual Catholic Appeal or any capital campaign because of donor fatigue.
- Add Electronic Offertory as an offertory giving option and promote it every month.



# Stewardship



## **Books for Reference**

In addition to the pastoral letter “Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response,” the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, there are other good stewardship-related books to read:

- A Grateful Response to God’s Abundant Gifts – Fr. Jarrod Lies
- American Church – Russell Shaw
- Barstool Theology – Trever Gundlach
- Be a Man! Becoming the Man God Created You to Be – Fr. Larry Richards
- Becoming a Parish of Intentional Disciples – Sherry Weddell
- Benedictus A Book of Blessings – John O’Donohue
- Best Practices in Parish Stewardship – Charles Zech
- Blessed Among Us – Robert Ellsberg
- Blessings for Leaders – Dan Ebener
- Clear and Simple: How to Have Conversations That Lead to Conversion – Andre Regnier
- Coming Down the Mountain – Thomas Hart
- Complete Guide to Money – Dave Ramsey
- Divine Renovation – Fr. James Mallon
- Door to Silence – Fr. John Main
- Eat, Sleep, Innovate – How to Make Creativity an Everyday Habit – Scott Anthony
- Embracing a Generous Life – Bishop Robert Morneau (Diocese of Green Bay, WI)
- Everybody Always – Bob Goff
- Everyday Stewardship: Reflections for the Journey – Tracy Earl Welliver
- Forming Intentional Disciples – Sherry Weddell
- From Christendom to Apostolic Mission – University of Mary
- Fruitful Discipleship – Sherry Weddell
- Growing an Engaged Church – Albert Winseman
- His Angels at Our Side – Fr. John Hogan
- How to Read the Apocalypse – Jean Pierre Prévost
- If You Want to Walk on Water You’ve Got to Get Out of the Boat – John Ortberg
- It’s Not Your Money – Joseph Galloway
- Life’s Greatest Lesson – Allen Hunt
- Little Burgundy Books: Stewardship Reflections on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke – Little Burgundy Books
- Lives of Saints – Fr. Alban Butler
- Living as Missionary Disciples – USCCB
- Made for Mission: Renewing Your Parish Culture – Tim Glemkowski
- Making Missionary Disciples – Curtis Martin
- Making Stewardship a Way of Life – Fr. Andrew Kemberling and Mila Glodava
- Not Your Parents’ Offering Plate – J. Clif Christopher
- Nudging Conversions: A Practical Guide to Bringing Those You Love Back to the Church – Carrie Gress

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## Stewardship



- On Fire – John O’Leary
- Rebuilt – Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran
- Rediscover the Saints – Matthew Kelly
- Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life – Archbishop Charles Chaput (Archdiocese of Philadelphia, PA)
- Resisting Happiness – Matthew Kelly
- Rich Church, Poor Church – J. Clif Christopher
- Seven Steps to Becoming Financially Free – Phil Lenahan
- Signs of Life – Scott Hahn
- Stewardship Success – Eric & Lisa McArdle
- Strangers in a Strange Land: Living the Catholic Faith in a Post-Christian World – Archbishop Charles Chaput (Archdiocese of Philadelphia, PA)
- Tattoos on the Heart – Fr. Greg Boyle
- The Better Pastor – Patrick Lencioni
- The Biggest Lie in the History of Christianity – Matthew Kelly
- The Case for Jesus – Brant Pitre
- The Discernment of Spirits: An Ignatian Guide For Everyday Living – Fr. Timothy Gallagher
- The First Society – Dr. Scott Hahn
- The Five Signs of a Dysfunctional Team – Patrick Lencioni
- The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic – Matthew Kelly
- The Generosity Habit – Matthew Kelly
- The Ideal Team Player – Patrick Lencioni
- The Joy of the Gospel – Pope Francis
- The Lamb’s Supper – Scott Hahn
- The Parish as a School of Prayer – Fr. Scott Traynor
- The Prodigal You Love: Inviting Loved Ones Back the Church- Sr. Theresa Aletheia Noble
- The Return of the Prodigal Son – Fr. Henri Nouwen
- The Servant Leader – Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges
- The True Meaning of Christmas – Michael Patrick Barber
- The Truth About Clergy Sexual Abuse – Bill Donohue
- Theology for Beginners – Frank Sheed
- Three Moments of the Day – Fr. Chris Collins, S.J.
- Tools for Rebuilding – Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran
- Transforming Parish Communications – Scot Landry
- Virtuous Leadership – Alexandre Havard
- Why I Am Catholic (and You Should Be Too) – Brandon Vogt
- Why I Love Being Catholic – Matthew Kelly

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# Stewardship



## **Bridge Bread Bakery**

Bridge Bread Bakery is a 501(c)(3) non-profit social enterprise dedicated to providing stable and long-term employment to homeless individuals by offering job skills training in the art of baking bread, as well as life skills training to empower our workers to break the cycle of homelessness and secure permanent housing. Bridge Bread operates principally in Saint Louis City guiding homeless individuals towards self-sufficiency and instilling in each of our bakers the confidence and skills needed to become successful contributors to our community.

Another facet of the work of Bridge Bread is serving as a vehicle for community engagement on issues of poverty, homelessness, and social enterprise. Through speaking engagements, presentations, participation in panel discussions, forums and lectures, Bridge Bread has become a leading voice advocating for change through social enterprise to eliminate homelessness and reduce poverty. In large part through the work of its founder and president (volunteer), Fred Domke, its board members, bakers and other volunteers have reshaped the views of many in the community. The story of Bridge Bread Bakery has appeared extensively in local news media, including radio, TV, print, and extensively in social media (<https://www.facebook.com/bridgebread/>) which has allowed Bridge Bread the ability to reach tens of thousands of people with the message of 'Hope in the Baking.'

### **How does Bridge Bread work?**

Participating churches order bread and rolls by placing their orders via email by Tuesday of the week that will be selling bread. Volunteers from the churches pick up the bread and rolls on Saturday and offer it for sale between weekend masses. Churches remit the sales receipts (no payment expected for unsold product). Seventy (70) cents out of every dollar of product sold goes to pay the wages of the bakers. Twenty dollars of sold product supports one hour of wages. All other workers are volunteers. Donations and grants from corporations, foundations, individuals, and churches have covered the purchase of equipment and overhead expenses (rent, utilities, insurance, etc.).

### **How has Bridge Bread made a difference?**

Since its inception in 2011, Bridge Bread Bakery has provided employment to over three dozen Bridge Bread workers teaching these individuals a trade and providing a source of income to help move our bakers off the street and into safe, affordable housing.

### **What Catholic Churches in the Archdiocese of St. Louis are selling Bridge Bread?**

Bridge Bread Bakery has been most fortunate in attracting more and more Catholic churches to become strong supporters of our social enterprise. The following is a current list of parishes supporting Bridge Bread and our bakers.

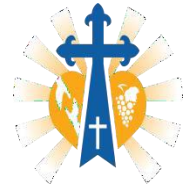
- Mary Queen of Peace, Webster Groves
- Mary, Mother of the Church, Mehlville
- Our Lady of the Pillar, Frontenac
- Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Valley Park
- St. Alban Roe Catholic Church, Wildwood
- St. Cletus Catholic Church, St. Charles
- St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. Louis
- St. Jude Catholic Church, St. Louis
- St. Peter Catholic Church, Kirkwood

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## Building a Path of Discipleship



### Pre-Evangelization (meeting human needs)

- Friendship – build trust
- Spiritual Curiosity – asking questions
- Spiritual Openness – ready to learn more
- Spiritual Seeking – actively seeking God

### Discipleship (“learner”/follower of Jesus)

- Encounter – open to discipleship
- Beginning Disciple – committed to Jesus

### Stewardship (recognizing everything is a gift from God; grateful & generous lifestyle)

- Growing Disciple – observable changes in behavior
- Commissioned Disciple – take part in the mission of the Church

### Evangelization (seeking to convert individuals & society by the divine power of the Gospel/Missionary Discipleship)

- Disciple Maker – lead someone to Jesus
- Spiritual Multiplier – train and equip others to evangelize

### Apostleship (one who is “sent”)

- Evangelization
- Social Justice

### Notes:

- This is not a linear process.
- Steps can happen at the same time, happen very quickly or backslide.
- Focus on the “why” and not the “what”.
- God reveals Himself gradually to man. (Old Testament – God, New Testament – Jesus, Jesus’s Ascension – Holy Spirit)
- God’s method of teaching (similar process to any good coach):
  - 1) He meets us where we are at.
  - 2) He challenges us to the next level.
  - 3) He helps us to the next level.
- St. Paul 1 Corinthians 3:2 “I fed you milk, not solid food, because you were unable to take it.”
- A disciple should develop a divine mindset – mind controlled by God to be able to understand the things of God.
- Two crucial aspects of discipleship:
  - 1) Self-denial: make God the center of your life, not yourself.
  - 2) Take up your cross: forsake all to follow Jesus.



# Stewardship



For more information regarding Bridge Bread and how your parish can begin supporting its mission, please contact Fred Domke at [fdomke@bridgebread.org](mailto:fdomke@bridgebread.org) or Maurice 'Moe' Parisien at [mparisien@bridgebread.org](mailto:mparisien@bridgebread.org). You are also invited to visit our website at [bridgebread.org](http://bridgebread.org).

## **Children's Stewardship**

### **Why Teach Stewardship to Children**

- The Lord calls all of us (adults and children) to be grateful and generous with all our gifts.
- Stewardship is a lifestyle not only for adults, but for children!
- Children have gifts. Being grateful and generous with their time, talent, and treasure should start early in their Christian lives.
- Stewardship encourages an attitude of gratitude. It teaches the difference between "wants" and "needs."
- We have a responsibility to care for every gift God has given us: family, friends, health, home, pets, school, church, and environment.
- Stewardship can help children find peace and joy in a fast-moving world.
- Experts say that children start forming their attitude about sharing between the ages of 6 – 10.
- Children are continuously bombarded with "materialistic" messages. Stewardship helps develop the attitude of "I've been blessed and have plenty to share." versus "I don't have enough and the world owes me."
- Today, adults learn many things from their children. Teaching stewardship to our children will help spread the stewardship concept to many adults.

### **Stewardship Concepts to Teach Children**

- *Help children realize that God has given them many gifts*

#### ***Reinforces self-esteem among children***

- Have a discussion about the gifts God has given them. Write the responses on a blackboard.
- Let children design posters or write essays about the gifts they have been given.
- Compliment children on their special gifts.
- Begin each week with children sharing what they are grateful for from the pastweek.

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# Stewardship

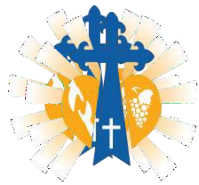


- *Teach children to be grateful for the gifts God has given them*  
***Reinforces a positive outlook on life***
  - Write a thanksgiving prayer. Read a different one each day.
  - Write a letter to God telling Him how they will use the special gifts He gave them.
  - Make pledges of how they will show their gratitude to God. Collect at school Mass. Put on bulletin board.
  - Write thank you notes to people that they are grateful for.
- *Teach children how stewardship built our Church*  
***Recognizes appreciation and future responsibility for our Church***
  - Teach the history of your parish to children. Older students talk to younger students.
  - Tour parish facilities looking for signs of stewardship.
  - Read stories about saints and discuss how they gave their gifts to the Church.
  - Adult parish stewardship committee members talk to children about their stewardship.
  - Include children in adult parish stewardship activities.
  - Create a children's stewardship newsletter or add a children's stewardship column in the parish stewardship newsletter. Or, add a stewardship column in the school newspaper and in the weekly Mass bulletin.
- *Help children understand that God has given them particular gifts for a reason*  
***Helps them realize that God may have a different plan for them***
  - Have a discussion about the poor and needy. The point being we are called to help the poor and needy.
  - Read the Beatitudes and discuss all the ways people are in need.
  - Just as we thank family and friends for gifts they give us, we should also thank God the same way for the gifts He has given us.
  - Talk about gifts that people and saints in the Bible were given and how those people used their gifts.
- Develop service projects to assist someone in need at your parish.
- *Teach children that Stewardship is something we do all the time (not just on Sunday)*  
***Reinforces that Stewardship is how we live our lives with every decision we make***

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# Stewardship



- Talk about stewardship in all classes, not just religion class.
  - Have students keep a journal of how they spend their time and use their talents. How much do they spend in prayer (time) and helping others (talent).
  - Talk about shopping decisions. How do they “waste” money?
  - Discuss the concept of tithing – giving from our “first fruits” versus from what they have “leftover.”
  - Talk about the difference between “needs” and “wants.”
- Help children recognize the joy that comes from good stewardship
- Real happiness doesn't come from the clothes we wear or the “things” we own***
- Talk about how children feel when they help someone.
  - Have older children give their witness of the joy of stewardship to younger children.
  - Have older children (with adult supervision) work in local soup kitchens and food pantries.

## More Ideas/Projects for Teaching Stewardship

- Conduct an annual stewardship renewal campaign for children
- Similar to the parish annual stewardship renewal campaign, include the children or run one separately for the children.
- Discuss Stewardship Gospel stories
- Designate a time each week or month.
  - Assign a group of children to present a stewardship parable to the class.
  - Break into small groups and discuss. Each group presents their thoughts.
  - Ask children to relate the Bible story to a modern day story or event.
  - See below list of Stewardship Gospel stories:
    - *The Birds in the Sky and Flowers in the Field - Matthew 6:25-34*
    - *The Hidden Treasure - Matthew 13:44*
    - *The Costly Pearl - Matthew 13:45-46*
    - *The Feeding of the Multitude –Matthew 14:13-21; Matthew 15:32-39; Mark 6:34-44; Mark 8:1-10; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15*
    - *The Unmerciful Servant - Matthew 18:23-35*
    - *The Rich Young Man - Matthew 19:16-24*
    - *The Generous Employer - Matthew 20:1-16*
    - *The Wicked Tenants - Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19*



## Stewardship



- *The Servant Entrusted with Supervision - Matthew 24:45-51; Luke 12:42-46*
- *The Talents - Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27*
- *Sheep and Goats – Matthew 25:31-46*
- *The Two Debtors – Luke 7:41-43*
- *The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:25-37*
- *The Friend at Midnight - Luke 11:5-8*
- *The Rich Fool - Luke 12:16-21*
- *The Vigilant and Faithful Servants - Luke 12:35-48*
- *The Barren Fig Tree - Luke 13:6-9*
- *The King Contemplating a Campaign - Luke 14:31-33*
- *The Tower Builder - Luke 14:28-33*
- *The Lost Sheep – Luke 15:3-7*
- *The Lost Coin - Luke 15:8-10*
- *The Prodigal Son - Luke 15:11-32*
- *The Unjust Steward - Luke 16:1-7*
- *The Rich Man and Lazarus - Luke 16:19-31*
- *The Pharisee and the Tax Collector – Luke 18:9-14*
- *Washing the Feet of the Disciples – John 13:1-16*
- *Ideas for Bulletin Boards*
  - “Talent gives us gifts to share.” (good for music or art room)
  - “The smallest deed is better than the grandest intention.”
  - “Each day is God’s gift to you. Make it blossom and grow.”
  - “Great occasions for serving God come along rarely, but little ones happen every day.”
  - “Building the city of God takes many hands.” (possible art project)
  - “I am the vine, and you are the branches.” (possible artproject)
  - “How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good He has done for me?” Psalm 116:12



# Stewardship



## - Stewardship Research Projects

- Lives of Saints: St. Barnabas, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Martin de Porres, St. Vincent de Paul, Apostles
- Famous Stewards: Katherine Drexel, St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Dorothy Day
- Report on local Catholic charities

## - Essay Topics

- What is the greatest gift God has given you?
- What do you think God wants you to do when you grow up?
- Name three things you are thankful for and why?
- How does our school do God's work on earth?
- How can we show thanks to God for what He has given us?

## - Stewardship of the Earth

- Earth Day projects
- Reduce/Recycle/Reuse projects
- Clean up Church grounds
- Planting flowers or plants

## - Children's Envelopes

- Start a formal children's envelope program in your parish.
- The goal is to train future generous givers.
- Let the children have input on how the money will be used.
- Need to have an adult lead this effort and be responsible for it.
- Get parents' permission to participate before giving envelopes to children.



# Stewardship



## **Communicating a Major Change at Your Parish**

- Explain why you are considering making the change.
- Allow parishioners' input into the process.
- Communicate the changes well ahead of the change in all forms of parish communications.
- Over-communicate – continue to promote the change every week prior to implementation. Most people don't like change, but when you explain why, allow input and over-communicate the change well in advance of the implementation, it will be better received by parishioners.

## **Develop an Annual Stewardship Plan**

- Lay out an annual calendar of current religious and parish events.
- List your parish stewardship activities month by month.
- When possible, use stewardship activities to enhance current religious events and parish activities.
- Do not "force in" stewardship events that do not make sense. If forced, they will be unsuccessful.
- Put your plan in writing and update each year. Many parishes do not write their plan down. This leads to poor communication, poor planning, poor execution and an uninspired stewardship effort. ("Proper planning prevents poor performance.")
- Concentrate on doing one or two stewardship activities very well each year. Once you have them down, add one or two new activities the following year.
- Stick to the plan! Determine beforehand what success looks like for your parish.
- Remember, stewardship takes years to become ingrained in the parish culture, do not get discouraged if you don't see results after the first year.
- Be patient, persistent, and creative with your plan.
- An example of a parish annual stewardship plan (i.e. Mary Queen of the Universe Stewardship Calendar) is contained later in this manual.
- To develop an annual parish plan, overlay your individual parish ministry calendars on top of the stewardship calendar. (You will easily see which months have too much activity and which months you could add to.)



# Stewardship



## **Develop a Stewardship Culture**

- Generally speaking, 30% of registered parishioners attend Mass regularly, 20 % attend occasionally, and 50% do not attend at all.
- So, 50 – 70% of a parish does not hear the Stewardship messages at Sunday Mass.
- However, many of the 50 – 70% who do not attend Mass regularly, are active in other parish ministries. (The good news is we have a lot of up-side potential!)
- So, we need to “fish where the fish are.”
- **Conduct a Parish Ministry Leader Meeting at least once a year** (preferably twice):
  - April meeting to educate parish leaders on stewardship education and communicate Fall Stewardship plans and their role in those plans.
  - November meeting to analyze results of recent Fall Stewardship Renewal process and adjust as necessary.
  - Meeting should include opening prayer, introductions, brief stewardship education, other parish objectives, brainstorming session, time for suggestions/ new ideas and end with prayer.
  - Consider a “staff meeting” with all the parish ministry leaders.
- **Benefits of Parish Ministry Leader Meetings:**
  - Educates leaders on stewardship and other parish goals/objectives.
  - Parish information is communicated at monthly parish ministry meetings to parishioners who may not attend Mass regularly or not at all.
  - Opportunity for parish leaders to meet each other and develop a relationship.
  - Ministry leaders will support each other and not compete with each other.
  - Source of new ideas (discontinue ministries that have run their course and start new ministries).
- Encourage parish ministry leaders to weave stewardship education into their individual monthly ministry meetings (people that don’t attend Mass now hear what Stewardship is about).
- Stewardship message should be communicated every month, not just once a year in September.
- Parish ministry leaders should constantly invite their ministry members to join them at Mass.
- **Stewardship Committee Members:**



# Stewardship



- Consists of “seasoned” parishioners (known to others, approachable, will express their own opinion).
  - Should be a composite of your parish so that all voices are represented (elderly, middle age, young adult, male, female, ethnic backgrounds, school parents, PSR parents, etc.)
  - Do not pick 6 – 8 people with the same point of view. Healthy debate is good, however, need to eventually come to a consensus.
  - Give each member a specific role. See “Committee Member Roles” for an example.
  - Succession planning – target particular demographics needed to round out committee (i.e. grade school parent, PSR parent, male/female, young/elderly, married/single).
  - Have term limits for committee members (minimum of 3 years).
  - Stagger terms so a portion of committee goes off every year and new members are added.
  - Stewardship Committee is on the same level as Parish Council and Finance Committee. (Rotate parish leaders to other committees).
  - Smaller parishes will typically combine Parish Council and Stewardship Committee together.
- Publish agenda and meeting minutes.
  - Many parishes have ministries that work together to support the parish mission. Sadly, some parishes have ministries that operate independently of the parish mission and the pastor’s goals and objectives.
  - If you are in a situation where there is not cohesion among the parish ministry leaders, it may be time to review the ministry leadership and politely ask a ministry leader to step down and provide an opportunity for someone else to lead, but invite that person to join another ministry. (If you lead a ministry for a long time, you only see the parish from a narrow point of view.)
  - Review your current parish ministries. Are they still active? Is participation dwindling? Does the ministry support the parish mission? If not, it may be time to “sunset” or discontinue that particular ministry.
  - Do you have parishioners that have brought new gifts to the parish? Do you have changing parish demographics? It may be time to add a new ministry.

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# Stewardship



- Don't take the summer off! Many ministries don't meet during the summer months because of vacations. Not everyone goes on vacation at the same time!
- When ministries "close down for the summer" it just reinforces that our parish is also "closed for the summer" (and we wonder why Mass attendance drops). We are not a 9-month church, we are a 12-month church.

## **Discipleship, Stewardship, Evangelization**

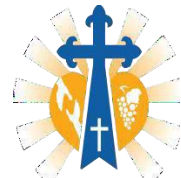
- There is a "relationship" between Discipleship, Stewardship, and Evangelization.
- There is overlap between these three phases of our Catholic life – they are connected.
- Discipleship is being a follower of Jesus.
- Stewardship is being grateful for all that we have been given by God and generously sharing what we have been given.
- In 1992, the U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote a pastoral letter called Stewardship: A Disciple's Response."
- So, Stewardship only makes sense to people if they are true disciples of Jesus.
- If not disciples, Stewardship will look like a recruitment drive to boost Mass attendance or it will look like begging for more parish volunteers or it will look like endless fund-raising requests.
- If there is no relationship with Jesus, there's no discipleship and no stewardship.
- Fr. Jarrod Lies, a diocesan priest from the Diocese of Wichita, says this about the relationship between Discipleship and Stewardship:
  - "Discipleship precedes stewardship."
  - "The 'cost' is central to the life of the disciple; one must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Jesus."
  - "The soul of Stewardship is imitating Jesus in his own self-emptying."
  - "Stewardship and Discipleship are two sides of the same reality but are exercised with two distinct loves."
  - "Discipleship determines one's identity in Christ while Stewardship describes one's mission to fellow disciples."
- The third phase – Evangelization.
- Evangelization is going out and proclaiming the Good News by our words and actions.
- Here's how Stewardship and Evangelization are connected.
- When I have encountered Jesus and experiencing ongoing conversion, I am grateful and generous with my gifts.
- My love for the Holy Trinity is something I want to share with others because I want them to have the same Love, Joy, and Peace that I have.
- So, when I am a good steward of my gifts, my life is filled with many opportunities to not only share my faith with others but more importantly, to live my faith on a daily basis.

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# Stewardship



- Fr. Jarrod says this about the relationship between Stewardship and Evangelization:
  - “The practice of Stewardship inevitably leads to Evangelization.”
  - “Stewardship depends immediately on its fidelity to Discipleship and commitment to Evangelization.”
  - “They are, so to speak, the front and back end of Stewardship.”
  - “Just as a long train can have engines pulling from the front and pushing from the back, so Stewardship will lose momentum if it is not situated between the two engines of Discipleship and Evangelization.”

## Summary

- As we go forth in our Evangelization efforts, it’s important that we determine where people are at in their faith journey.
- If people have accepted their Discipleship out of obligation, and not out of love, we have to spend more time with them to encounter Jesus and strengthen their relationship with Him – we have to build their Discipleship.
- If people have accepted their Discipleship out of love, we need to help them to “go out” beyond their parish boundaries and become intentional in their Evangelization of others.





# Stewardship



## **Entrepreneurial Spirit in Mission-Driven Churches**

The following comments are from Matt Manion, Director of the Center for Church Management at Villanova University. The focus is growing our church through entrepreneurship, more risk-taking, creativity, and imaginative thinking:

- Look for entrepreneurs in your parish and tap into their skill set to help you develop your parish mission.
- Celebrate failures – failure is not the opposite of success, it is part of the process of becoming successful. Change the mindset to “what did we learn” instead of “we failed.” If you don’t make mistakes, you are not stretching yourself.
- Allocate resources for people not in church. Spend money and resources on bringing people back. Spend a third of your parish budget on evangelization, a typical parish spends 1%. “You can’t drive into the future looking in therearview mirror.”
- Cultivate “restlessness” in your parish – strive for a constant hunger to make things better. St. Augustine – “Our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

## **Evangelization**

Think about this - we all are evangelizers of our Faith, whether we know it or not.

The problem is many of us may be evangelizing the wrong way. If we say we are Catholic, but our family and friends don’t see that in the way we live, we could actually be “de-evangelizing.” We may be moving people away from the Church!

One of the best ways to evangelize is to use our gifts in the way that God intended. Unfortunately, many people don’t know what their gifts are to help build the Church.

When we can help people align their thoughts and actions with God’s plan for them, the result is Joy. And not just regular Joy, but Supernatural Joy – Joy that is infused by God!

People are attracted to Joyful people! Let’s discern what our spiritual gifts are to find the right ministry and become the Joyful people that God planned for us!

There are a couple of tools that are available: Spiritual Gifts Inventory (contact Jane Guenther at [JaneGuenther@archstl.org](mailto:JaneGuenther@archstl.org)) and the Gallup Strengths Finder (Catholic version called “Living Your Strengths”).

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# Stewardship



## “Everyday Stewardship” – by Tracy Welliver

The following is a summary of Tracy Welliver’s presentation on “Everyday Stewardship.”

### Stewardship

- Stewardship is about “everything,” not just time, talent, and treasure.
- When we limit our stewardship conversation to just time, talent and treasure, we put limits on people.

### Stewardship Parables

- 1) Talents – we should nurture and develop our talents and give back with increase; not bury our talents. What talents are you burying?
- 2) Widow’s Mite – she gave everything, most people give from their excess. What is preventing you from sacrificing?
- 3) Sower – planting in rich soil allows God’s word to take root, grow, and multiply. How is God calling you to use your gifts where they will do the most good?
- 4) Mustard Seed – no gift is too small or insignificant. What is a small thing you can do that will make a big impact in someone’s life?
- 5) Pearl of Great Price – the pearl is the kingdom of Heaven. What are you willing to give to get to Heaven – sharing, service, sowing or surrender?
- 6) Good Samaritan – it is not just extraordinary talents that matter, all things are a gift and matter; we are called to use all of our gifts, not just the ones we pick and choose.

### Six Characteristics to Cultivate Stewardship

- 1) Mindful – live in the present without baggage of the past or fear of the future.
- 2) Prayerful – sometimes it’s only about being with God, not only talking and listening with God, but just being in His presence.
- 3) Grateful – give thanks for everything, not just the things that are so obvious; keep a “Grateful Journal.”
- 4) Gracious – giving the gift of self to others, giving you a piece of myself.
- 5) Committed – stay the course, persevere, “run the race”; we must train for the race.
- 6) Accountable – help each other be the Body of Christ.



# Stewardship



## **Faith Sharing Tips**

- Don't be afraid that you can't quote Scripture or you don't have the Catechism memorized in order to share your faith.
- Most people have a wonderful, beautiful story to share about their faith.
- No one knows about your relationship with God better than you.
- Whether you are introverted or extroverted, we all have relationships with people, we all talk to other people. Don't let being introverted be an excuse for you not to share your faith.
- Remember, Jesus spoke to thousands of people on occasions, He spoke to hundreds of people on more occasions, but the vast majority of His ministry was talking to very small groups or to people one-on-one. We should follow Jesus' example!
- Jesus said this in the Gospel of Matthew, "Everyone who acknowledges me before others, I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father."

### **1) Pray**

- Talk and most importantly, listen, to how God is calling you to use your gifts.
- The emphasis is on listening, not talking.
- Listening in silence, every day.
- How else will you know how God wants you to use your gifts unless you seek His counsel and advice every day?

### **2) Discern What Your Gifts Are**

- When we use our God-given gifts in the way that God intended, God will give us Peace & Joy and not just regular joy, but Supernatural Joy – Joy that is infused by God!
- When we align our thoughts and actions with God's plan for us, we are taking an active role in God's Salvation plan - this brings Joy to God!
- People are attracted to joyful people.
- People are attracted to people giving their authentic, joyful witness.
- To become joyful, use your gifts in the way God planned for you, not necessarily the way you planned for yourself.
- Discern what your gifts are and use them in the way God intended.
- Using your gifts in the way God intended is the best way to share your faith and to evangelize.
- Gift Discernment Tools– Spiritual Gifts Inventory (by Jane Guenther from the Catholic Renewal Center) and the Gallup "Living Your Strengths" Program.



# Stewardship



## 3) Share Your Faith Story

- Everyone loves a good story.
- No one knows your faith story, your relationship with God, better than you do.
- When people ask you about your relationship with God, it's easy to talk about because it's the truth; it is something that you are experiencing.
- By sharing your own story, people can relate to it because we all have similar issues and questions.
- By sharing your own story, it can "disarm" the hardest critic because it's your story, you are not debating interpretation on Catholic Church teaching.
- St. Augustine said, "The truth is like a lion; you don't have to defend it. Let it loose; it will defend itself."
- The truth, this is the power behind your story.
- Develop a five-minute version of your story in case you are asked to speak to your parish.
- Also, develop a thirty-second version so that when you are standing in line at the grocery store and the opportunity arises, you are prepared.

## 4) Start With Those People Closest To You

- Many people think that to evangelize you have to go out and knock on strangers' doors.
- Quite frankly, this is a scary proposition for most people and will scare them away.
- Instead, start with the people you know.
- Start with the people registered in your parish that don't attend Mass.
- To narrow it down even further, start with your own family and friends.
- Talk to your spouse, your children, and your neighbors.
- Start with the people who are closest to you.
- Start with the people in your circle of influence.
- Just think if all regular Church-goers could bring just one more person to Mass.

## 5) Personally Invite People to Participate

- Don't assume people don't want to participate; many times we forget to ask them.
- A personal, one-on-one invitation is the best way to ask someone to participate; avoid the general announcement "cattle call."
- Personally invite people back to Mass, to participate in a parish ministry and to give generously to support the parish mission.
- We need to change the mind-set for many parish ministry leaders.
- We need to remind them that their primary role is to bring people to God, regardless of what ministry they are in.



# Stewardship



- We need to train parish ministry leaders to be better at faith-sharing and make this a standard part of ministry meetings.
- Regardless of what ministry we are involved in, “sharing your faith” is the absolute “best practice” any of us can do.

## 6) Learn the Catholic Faith

- Join a prayer group or faith formation group with people that know more than you.
- Read the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Holy Bible every day.
- Read about the lives of saints, they are great examples for us to follow.
- Learn from someone who knows the social, economic, and physical landscape in the Scripture Readings; it will give you more clarity and understanding of the Bible.
- As you grow in faith, your desire to learn more about the faith will grow.
- Be sure you are giving glory to God and not to yourself.
- If asked to speak, be careful not to list your résumé of ministry experience, it may scare people off or come across as bragging.
- People are looking for someone to talk to about God. Here are some “ice-breakers” that may make someone more comfortable approaching you:
  - When talking about faith, include personal details like what parish you belong to, what grade school or high school you attended, where you work, places you have gone on retreat. This helps develop a common bond with someone, if they have those same things.
  - Wear your Catholic shirts and apparel when out in the public (not just at parish events or CYC games). You’ll be surprised what a conversation starter these are for people.
  - Put a statue of Mary or another saint in your front yard. Again, you’ll be surprised at the conversations this will start.
  - When traveling on a plane, carry a Catholic book with you and read on the plane. This is another great conversation starter.
  - Bottom-line: be proactive in starting conversations with people that are willing.

## Summary

Clearly, concisely with authenticity and joy explain:

- What was my life like before conversion of heart?
- What happened that changed my life?
- What is my life like now?



# Stewardship



## **Lay Witness Talk Introduction**

The lay witness talk is the best stewardship “best practice” anyone can do. Sharing your faith in a joyful, sincere, humble, courageous manner is the most inspiring thing each of us can do to bring others to our Catholic faith.

Whether it is a planned speaking event in front of your fellow parishioners or a spontaneous conversation with family, friends or strangers, giving joyful witness inspires and encourages others to do the same.

Public speaking is the number one fear for most people. So, plan your talking points in advance and practice. Develop a five-minute version and a 30-second version.

Having talking points already in mind will help you be courageous when the opportunity arises. (How many of us have wished we would have spoken up when someone said something that wasn’t accurate about our Catholic faith.)

## **Components of a Lay Witness Talk**

Effective stewardship includes public witnessing by people who are already practicing stewardship in their own lives. The Lay Witness Talk has two purposes: to inspire people to become good stewards and to share “daily life” examples of stewardship. The talk should be between 5 – 7 minutes, no longer than that.

### **1. Introduction**

Tell people who you are, how long you have been in the parish and maybe a little bit about your other family members:

- ✦ Giving a definition of stewardship. (Stewardship is recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God, taking time to be grateful for those gifts, and returning a portion of those gifts to God – understanding that what God gave us He expected us to share.)
- ✦ Asking a question:
  - ▶ Do you give from your “first fruits” or from what is leftover?
  - ▶ When God asks you “what have you done with the gifts I have given you?” How will you respond?
  - ▶ Do you put other “gods” (money, power, ego) before God?

### **2. Personalization**

People love to hear a story. A story brings an idea down to earth and makes it real. Thus it is important that the stewardship talk include a personal story about how stewardship is real in your life:

- ✦ When and how you first realized the importance of stewardship.
- ✦ How stewardship impacts your daily life at home, at work, or in the parish.



# Stewardship



- ✦ What joys you have experienced as a result of your stewardship.
- ✦ How you have overcome a challenge to your stewardship. (It's okay to say that sometimes stewardship is difficult!)

### **3. Scriptural Reference**

Stewardship is a concept that is as old as Sacred Scripture. Throughout the Old and New Testament God has clearly asked us to live as stewards, giving back to him a grateful portion of all the blessings that He has given to us.

It is important that your lay witness talk include a reference to Sacred Scripture in order that parishioners understand that stewardship is not your idea. It is God's request.

### **4. Detail**

It is critical that your talk gives parishioners the details of what your parish wants them to do. Compelling stories and beautiful scripture quotes are wasted if we do not encourage parishioners to take some action.

### **5. Invitation**

Personally invite your fellow parishioners to commit to a life of stewardship:

- ✦ Invite them to reflect on their own blessings and personal gifts and to consider if their giving reflects their blessings.
- ✦ Stress that every parishioner has some gift to offer, some role to play in the parish community. Invite them to give that gift...to play the role God has planned for them.
- ✦ Invite them to try something new – a new parish ministry or a new level of giving. Remind them that they will never know what can give them joy until they try it.
- ✦ Ask them to go home and figure out what percentage of their income they are giving back to God. Remind them that God asks us to give as He has given to us and that throughout sacred scripture 10% has been set up as the guideline of how much we should return to God.
- ✦ Invite them to begin the journey to greater stewardship by increasing their financial giving by even as little as a ½ of a percentage point.
- ✦ Invite them to know the joy that comes from sharing their gifts.
- ✦ Invite them to be a part of all the wonderful work that happens in your parish.



# Stewardship



## **Mary Queen of Peace Grade School Stewardship Formation**

### Grade School Stewardship Formation

- Started in 2009
- Started and overseen by grade school parents in coordination with school administration
- Each grade level has a specific stewardship focus that is constant from year to year
- Each student learns new aspect of stewardship as they graduate from year to year
- Stewardship Mass to start (September) and end (May) each school year
- Several Stewardship Activity Days (October, January, April) and Stewardship Rally (May) held throughout the school year

### Areas of Concentration

- Pre-K: Loving All of God's Creatures
- Kindergarten: Caring for God's Children
- 1<sup>st</sup>: Protecting God's Children
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Cherishing Our Elders
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Feeding God's People
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Celebrating Our Differences
- 5<sup>th</sup>: Honoring Our Armed Forces
- 6<sup>th</sup>: Sheltering God's People
- 7<sup>th</sup>: Respecting Human Life
- 8<sup>th</sup>: Working for Social Justice

### Student Feedback

- "Stewardship is one of the most important aspects of my faith at Mary Queen of Peace." Abby S.
- "Over the years, I have learned how to take care of the world, community, and society. It is our job as followers of Jesus Christ to help the poor and serve our community." Olivia C.
- "These acts of service not only helped me grow as a person, but also helped me believe in myself and muster the courage to lead others." Annabelle L.
- "Stewardship has taught me a valuable lesson, much more valuable than anything I could learn from books." Sarah G.

### Contact Information

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# Stewardship



## Missionary Discipleship

### Authentic Renewal

Building a Culture of Evangelization & Discipleship in Your Parish – by Brian Miller (2020)

#### Why Are We Here?

- “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” Matthew 28:19
- “Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church.” Pope Paul VI

#### What Is Evangelization?

- “Bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society...” Go and Make Disciples, 1992USCCB

#### New Evangelization

- “Missionary impulse capable of transforming everything so that the Church’s customs, language, and structures are suitably channeled for evangelization in today’s world rather than for her self-preservation.” Pope Francis
- “Commit all of the Church’s energies...to proclaim Christ to all peoples.” Pope St. John Paul II

#### Missionary Discipleship

- The ongoing process of **encountering** Jesus, **growing** in love and knowledge of him, and **witnessing** him to others constantly.

#### Missionary Discipleship in the Archdiocese of St. Louis (2018 Statistics)

<u>Groups</u>	<u>Archdiocese</u>	<u>% of Catholics</u>
Total Population	2,250,000	23%
Number of Registered Catholics	509,280	100%
Attending Weekly Mass	139,542	27.4%
Living As Intentional Disciples	35,650	7%
Disciples Equipped to Evangelize	3,055	0.6%
Evangelizers Per Parish	17	N/A
Total Priests	314	N/A

- Priest to Catholic Ratio: 1:1,621
- Evangelizer to Catholic Ratio: 1:166
- Priest to Evangelizer Ratio: 1:10



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## Spiritual Multiplication

- Each Evangelizer be intentional and develop two more missionary disciples each generation (1 – 2 years).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation – Evangelizer to Catholic:1:55
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation – Evangelizer to Catholic:1:18

## Where to Start?

- “Only from a personal relationship with Jesus can an effective evangelization develop.” Pope St. John Paul II

## Pre-Evangelization

- “First listeners are prepared for the first proclamation of the Gospel or pre-evangelization.”
- “Pre-evangelization builds on basic human needs (security, love, acceptance) and shows how these needs include a desire for God and his word.” National Directory of Catechesis

## Encounter

- “I invite all Christians to a renewed personal relationship with Jesus or at least an openness to letting him encounter them...” Pope Francis

## Grow

- “So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.”  
Revelation 3:16

## Witness

- “We are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves.”  
1 Thessalonians 2:8
- “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than teachers, and if he listens to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” Pope Paul VI



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## Go and Make Disciples

### Written By

- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

### Scripture

- “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 19:28)
- “I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!” (Luke 12:49)

### Introduction

- A plan and strategy of evangelization is needed because the fire of Jesus burns even today.
- We all have, and are, stories of faith, for through the Spirit, the Gospel of Jesus Christ takes hold of us in the proclamation of his Word.
- We understand evangelization in the light of these stories; namely, how we have been changed by the power of Christ’s word and sacraments and how we have an essential role in sharing the faith through our daily lives as believers.
- Evangelization is what we are all about.
- Evangelization is the essential mission of the Church.
- We turn in prayer to the Holy Spirit that we may receive the guidance needed to set hearts on fire.

### What is Evangelization?

- Bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself.
- Evangelization must be connected to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Conversion - the change in our lives that comes through the power of the Holy Spirit. Unless we undergo conversion, we have not truly accepted the Gospel.
- Conversion occurs many ways: suddenly, gradually, RCIA, through relationships, Catholic schools and religious education, retreats, missions, etc.
- If our faith is alive, it will be aroused again and again as we mature as disciples.
- If faith is not transforming each heart and life, it is dead.
- The Gospel speaks to us individually and to society, it transforms human existence.
- The fruits of evangelization are changed lives and a changed world – holiness, justice, spirituality, and peace.
- People will freely accept the “good news.”
- A different vision of what life is about – an intimate relationship with God.
- We do not see a world of blind forces ruled by chance.

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- We do not view life's purpose as the gathering of power & riches, but as a gracious invitation to live for God & others in love.
- Inwardly we are called to continually receive the Gospel, our ongoing conversion.
- Outwardly evangelization addresses those who have not heard the Gospel or who, having heard it, stopped practicing.
- Three objectives of the mission:
  - 1) To proclaim the Gospel to all people
  - 2) To help bring about the reconversion of those who have received the Gospel but live it nominally
  - 3) To deepen the lives of the believers
- Evangelization root meaning is "good news."

## Why We Evangelize?

- The Lord gave us a message that is unique. All faiths are not merely different versions of the same thing.
- The Church believes that God has established Christ as the one mediator and that she herself has been established as the universal sacrament of salvation.
- Pope St. John Paul II – "Two truths together, namely, the real possibility of salvation in Christ for all humankind and the necessity of the Church for salvation."
- The Lord gave us another reason – our love for every person.

## How Evangelization Happens?

- The Spirit, the first gift of the risen Christ to this people, gives us both the ability to receive the Gospel of Jesus and in response, the power to proclaim it.
- Without the Holy Spirit, evangelization cannot occur.
- People evangelize each other by the simple lives of faith they lead.
- Two elements at work:
  - 1) Witness – simple living of the faith
  - 2) Sharing – spreading the Good News of Jesus in an explicit way
- Invite people to the riches the Catholic Church can bring into their lives.
- Ecumenical movement – deeper communication and dialogue with other Christian communities.
- People of non-Christian religions also have the right to hear the Gospel, but not as a cover of proselytizing.



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## Goals

- 1) To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for the faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others.
  - Unless we continue to be evangelized, with renewed enthusiasm, we cannot evangelize.
  - Many Catholics tend to keep their faith to themselves or manifest it only around other Catholics.
  - No reason to be shy about the heritage of our Catholic faith.
  - A call to an enthusiasm for all that God has given us in our Catholic faith and fostering ongoing conversion.
- 2) To invite all people in the U.S., whatever their social or cultural background, to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic faith.
- 3) To foster gospel values in our society, promoting the dignity of the human person, the importance of family, and the common good of our society, so that our nation may continue to be transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ.
  - Our country can be faulted for its materialism, sexism, racism, consumerism, individualism, and selfishness.

## Why Issue the Plan Now?

- In 1983, Pope St. John Paul II called for the “new evangelization” – the lay people to be involved in evangelization.
- We have all received this Spirit. This is not a spirit of timidity or fear, but a bold spirit of life, truth, joy, and grace.

## Goals and Strategies

- Mary is the true model of discipleship and evangelization.
- The ministry of evangelization does not consist in following a recipe but letting the Spirit open our hearts to God’s Word so that we can live and proclaim God’s Word to others.
- Without prayer, the Good News of Jesus Christ cannot be understood, spread or accepted.
- These goals must bear upon everyday life.
- These goals assume that an evangelizing spirit will touch every dimension of Catholic parish life. Welcome, acceptance, the invitation to conversion, and renewal must characterize the whole tenor of parishes.
- A collaborative effort between the clergy and laity.
- Carried out in the midst of a culture that will make them difficult to receive.

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## Presentation of the Goals

- 1) To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others:
  - To foster an experience of conversion and renewal in the heart of every believer, leading to a more active living of the Catholic faith.
  - To foster an experience of conversion and renewal in every parish.
  - To foster an appreciation of God's Word in the lives of all Catholics.
  - To make the evangelizing dimension of Sunday Eucharist more explicit.
  - To foster an appreciation of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and of all the sacraments, the sacred signs of our Catholic life.
  - To foster a greater appreciation of the power of God's Word in our worship.
  - To foster an even deeper sense of prayer among our Catholic people.
  - To foster a renewed understanding of the faith among Catholics.
  - To foster a sense of discipleship among Catholic adults and children.
  - To foster an active and personal religious experience through participation in the small-group and other communal experiences in which the Good News is shared, experienced, and applied to daily life.
  - To foster a sense of domestic church within the households in which families, individuals, and groups reside.
  - To promote and develop a spirituality of the workplace.
  - To foster greater appreciation of cultural and ethnic spirituality.
- 2) To invite all people in the United States, whatever their social or cultural backgrounds, to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic faith:
  - To make every Catholic institution, especially our parishes, more welcoming.
  - To help every Catholic feel comfortable about sharing his or her faith and inviting people to discover Christ in our Catholic family of believers.
  - To develop within families and households the capacity to share the Gospel.
  - To equip and empower our active Catholic members to exercise their baptismal call to evangelize.
  - To use special times in parish and family life to invite people to faith.
  - To cultivate an active core of the baptized to serve as ministers of evangelization in their parishes, dioceses, neighborhoods, workplaces, and homes.
  - To effectively invite people to our Church.
  - To design programs of outreach for those who have ceased being active in the Church.
  
  - To design programs that reach out in particular ways to those who do not participate in a church community or who seek the fullness of faith.

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- To foster cultural diversity within the unity of the Church.
  - To deepen the ecumenical involvement.
- 3) To foster gospel values in our society, promoting the dignity of the human person, the importance of the family, and the common good of our society, so that our nation may continue to be transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ.
- To involve parishes and local service groups in the needs of their neighborhood.
  - To foster the importance of family.
  - To develop groups to explore issues of the workplace and lay spirituality.
  - To encourage Catholic witness in the arts and in the American intellectual community.
  - To involve every Catholic, on different levels, in areas of public policy.
  - To involve the Catholic Church, on every level, in the media.
  - To involve Catholics, at every level, in the questions of economic systems.



# Stewardship



## Living as Missionary Disciples – A Resource for Evangelization

### Written By

- Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis, USCCB in 2017

### Introduction

- “The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.”
- We are called to be missionary disciples who know and live the faith and confidently share the Gospel.
- Pope Francis’ call to move our church and parishes from *maintenance* to *mission*.
- The focus must be outward directed, not on the parish as it is, but on how the parish can better and more fruitfully lead, minister, and engage people to the call to witness and discipleship.
- Depends on pastoral leaders:
  - Ongoing conversion and daily personal encounter with Christ.
  - Allowing the Holy Spirit to inspire.
  - Lead all ministries toward witness and discipleship.
- Effective leadership focused on missionary discipleship:
  - Discern the state and life of the parish (maintenance, self-preservation, mission or evangelization).
  - Reevaluate parish ministries, programs, and activities to assess effectiveness in missionary discipleship.
  - Evaluate how human and financial resources are prioritized and managed.
  - Integrate evangelization principles into existing pastoral plans.
  - Identify the rich inventory of pastoral and theological resources.
  - Employ resources in multiple areas.

### Theological Summary of the New Evangelization

- Evangelization:
  - The Church’s *ad gentes* (“to the world”) mission given to her by Christ is the proclamation of the Good News to those who do not know him.
  - “Propose anew” the Good News to all of the Christian faithful, especially those absent from the Lord’s table.
  - Pope Francis (Evangeliium Gaudium):
    - 1) “The primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus, which we have received, the experience of salvation, which urges us to even greater love of him.”
    - 2) “The proclamation (kerygma) of the life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and of the Kingdom of God is at the core of evangelization.”





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3) “To evangelize, one who bears witness to God’s Revelation in Jesus through the Holy Spirit by living a life imbued with Christian virtues, by proclaiming unceasingly that salvation is offered to all people through the Pascal Mystery of Christ, and by preaching hope in God’s love for us.”

- Who Is Called to Evangelize?
  - All are called, frequent participation in sacraments, proclaim with word and a life transfigured by God’s presence.
- What is the New Evangelization?
  - Not new in content, but in “ardor, methods, and expression”; new in its inner thrust and in its methods.
  - “A new chapter of evangelization full of fervor, joy, generosity, courage, boundless love, and attraction.”
- Renewal and Conversion
  - Invites the baptized to renew their own faith in a way the leads to the evangelization of others.
  - The New Evangelization is geared toward others through the work of the Holy Spirit.
  - The New Evangelization is done through the witness by the baptized in their everyday life lived in faith and charity. We cannot give what we don’t have. Cultivating a life of faith is essential to helping others to do so.
- A Deeper Encounter with Christ: Formation for Discipleship
  - 1) Encounter – the purpose of Evangelization is to lead people to encounter Christ.
    - + Evangelizers need to have had a personal encounter experience to share with others.
    - + An “encounter” can take many forms in which the Holy Spirit leads: prayer, sacraments, adoration, Scripture, works of mercy, the Eucharist, acts of charity, service, retreats, talks, Bible study, and reflections.
    - + Encounter constantly renewed through personal testimony, proclamation of kerygma, and missionary action.
    - + Without the kerygma (the message of salvation of the paschal mystery), the other aspects are sterile.
    - + A moment of conversion (metanoia) that reorients a person’s life to Jesus.
    - + First impulse after encounter is to share with others.
    - + Faith involves a profound change of mind and heart.
    - + Conversion is not a one-time event, but a series of events over a lifetime.
    - + Encounter Jesus Within the Family – our first community and most basic way God gathers and forms us to act in the world. The family is the domestic church. In family, we learn to pray and seek God’s will for us:
      - \* The Church is a family of families.
      - \* Sacrament of Marriage – marriage is the plan of God.



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- \* Parents are the first educators of their children.
- \* Society is built on the foundation of healthy families.
- + Encounter Jesus in and Through the Church – the Church is universal – diverse, international and multicultural, consists of both clergy and laity. Evangelization is rooted in the parish.
- + Encounter Jesus in Others – how often do we reach out to missing brothers and sisters and invite them to Mass?
- 2) Accompany – the response to this encounter with Christ needs accompaniment.
  - + We must live explicit lives of discipleship.
  - + Missionary outreach is at the heart of discipleship.
  - + You cannot live discipleship alone, we need others to model and accompany us as we grow.
- 3) Community – evangelization invites people to the Body of Christ, which is the Catholic Church.
  - + Our hearts are transformed by the Holy Spirit to enter into communion with the Holy Trinity.
  - + When liturgy is celebrated well, the community is strengthened, a door for evangelization.
- 4) Send – evangelization leads disciples to accept God’s desire to send them on mission.
  - + Mission is inseparable from discipleship.
  - + As missionary disciples, we take our encounter with Jesus out into the world.
  - + Evangelization does not always require formal education or lengthy training.
  - + The Mass is essential to nourish and form missionary disciples.

## Developing a Pastoral Plan for Missionary Discipleship

- 1) Planning for Ministry Is Permeated with Prayer
  - Each parish has unique charisms and manifests the Holy Spirit in different ways.
  - Parish leadership interacts on a regular basis to pray, reflect, and discern to foster a missionary discipleship culture.
  - Prayer before, during, and after is critical. Without prayer our efforts are fruitless.
  - Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance.
- 2) Effective Planning for Ministry is Focused on Fruitfulness
  - Focus on bearing fruit throughout the discipleship process; prune what is ineffective.
  - Pruning allows new growth to begin.
  - Discern what will be fruitful; align programs and ministries to achieve desired result, be flexible.
- 3) Effective Planning for Ministry Requires Leaders
  - Not just managers and administrators but spiritual leaders with planning skills.
  - Grounded in personal, pastoral, and spiritual formation:
    - + Pastoral – Inspire others through vision, personal witness, and commitment
    - + Spiritual – Kerygma is the foundation, know it and proclaim it; daily prayer, Mass and sacraments
  - + Human Formation – put other’s first, show empathy, active listening skills, collaborate, sustain relationships



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- + Intellectual Formation – study Scripture, the Catechism, and important Church documents; business administration, sociology, leadership, technology
- + Interculturally Competent – multicultural parishes

4) Effective Planning Is Rooted in the Teachings of Our Faith and Supported by Foundational Pastoral Practices

- Based on the Church's teaching and tradition.

5) Effective Planning for Ministry Engages and Inspires People Through a Culture of Encounter and Accompaniment, Building Strong and Trusting Relationships

- Engaging others through Christian witness of everyday life.
- Creating an atmosphere of invitation, hospitality, and trust.
- Building collaborative relationships, teamwork, and commitment.
- Welcoming and embracing ethnically diverse communities.
- Engagement in current pastoral practice.

6) Planning for Ministry Requires Intentional Stewardship

- Managing, supervising, and developing people.
- Sound business practices and ethical standards.



# Stewardship



## **Making Missionary Disciples**

How to Live the Method Modeled by the Master – Curtis Martin

The following is a brief overview of Curtis Martin's book – *Making Missionary Disciples: How to Live the Method Modeled by the Master*. This book is recommended reading for all Catholics.

### Introduction

- Evangelizing and disciple-making are like farming – ultimately, God controls the harvest, but there are principles and activities good farmers utilize and lesser farmers do not.
- Three foundational habits in fostering effective evangelization: Divine Intimacy, Authentic Friendship, and Spiritual Multiplication.

### The Three Habits

#### 1) Divine Intimacy:

- The habit upon which everything else rests.
- Evangelization is first and foremost the work of God; we will be fruitful in the mission if we are abiding in deep union with Him. (He is the vine; we are the branches.)
- Jesus defines eternal life in light of relationship – not knowing things about God but being in relationship with the living God. (Inviting people to be in friendship with Jesus.)
- God Transforming Us – through regular, personal encounters we become changed. If you place a cold rod in a hot fire, the rod takes on the properties of the fire – warm and glows.
- Growing in Divine Intimacy – read the Apostles' teachings, participate in sacraments, fellowship, and prayer.

#### 2) Authentic Friendship:

- We must genuinely love the people we are serving, accompanying them in life and personally investing ourselves in them, truly becoming a friend.
- Jesus met people in their particular circumstance, he did not passively wait for people to come to him; he went out to the people. (Incarnational Evangelization)
- The personal time outside of formal faith formation is often where lives are changed the most and are more fruitful.

#### 3) Spiritual Multiplication:

- This is impossible without the first two habits.
- To invest in a few people so as to form them as followers of Jesus and equip them to go out and do the same for others; not just disciples, but missionary disciples.

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## The Method

### 1) Win

- Lead people to a life-shaping encounter with Jesus – facilitating moments of encounter with Jesus.
- God wants more from us than merely following rules; He wants a relationship with each of us.
- Sharing the Gospel:
  - + The joy of Christian life stands out – our witness, hospitality, and example attracts others.
  - + We must share the Gospel but also our very lives; we need to invest personally in people.
  - + We need to share the heart of the Gospel message – the Kerygma.

### 2) Build

- The influence of friendship cannot be overstated. (Saints came in clusters because they were friends.)
- Commit to building personal relationships with others.
- Things that are most natural in life are learned by modeling, not mere instruction (i.e. learning how to walk). Holiness is the same way; instruction is needed, but demonstration is more effective.
- Intentionally select a few people. Jesus only chose 12 men. Key moments were with only Peter, James, & John.

### 3) Send

- On Pentecost, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. They boldly went out and used their training.
- They changed from disciples to disciple-makers.
- “Make disciples of all nations.” (Matthew 28:19)
- Becoming a disciple-maker requires deeper unity with Jesus.



# Stewardship



## Kerygma – The Core Message

### What Is It?

- The word “kerygma” is a Greek word meaning “herald, proclaim or preach.”
- Christian Kerygma is the effective proclamation of salvation: what God has done in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
- The Kerygma is the center of all evangelizing efforts.

### The Power of Conversion

- The “first” (most qualitative, the core, the heart) proclamation of Jesus Christ which always appeals to conversion.
- An introduction that leads someone to the love of God, personal repentance, conversion of heart, and a decision in faith to follow Jesus.
- It is the power of God when Christ is proclaimed to awaken faith and lead someone to accept Jesus as Lord, deciding to entrust herself/himself to Jesus Christ.

### The Kerygma – Everyday Terms

#### The Good News of Jesus Christ:

- 1) God created you for a relationship with Him.
- 2) Our relationship is broken through sin.
- 3) Jesus restores our relationship.
- 4) We are invited to repent and follow Jesus.

Pope Francis – “Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen, and free you.”

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# Stewardship



## Made For Mission: Renewing Your Parish Culture – Tim Glemkowski (2019)

The question on everyone's mind these days is "what are we going to do to encourage people back to Church?" And, maybe the more important question is "what are we encouraging them back to?"

There has been a lot of talk about parishes evolving from "maintenance" to "mission" mode. But, how do we do this? Fortunately, there is a resource.

Tim Glemkowski, founder/president of [L'Alto Catholic Institute](#) and cofounder/president of [Revive Parishes](#), has written a book called "Made For Mission – Renewing Your Parish Culture". This book should be mandatory reading for all pastors, priests and parish lay leaders that are interested in transforming their parish culture.

Tim points out that it's no accident that God has chosen us for these times. God has put us here for a reason. The crisis the Church is faced with today is one of discipleship and this crisis extends to almost every layer of Church leadership.

The template suggested centering on four points to renew your parish culture:

1. Have a clear vision based on God's vision for your parish.
2. Craft a clear path to discipleship.
3. Mobilize every level of parish leadership.
4. Align every parish initiative (sacraments, education, communication) to your parish vision.

Tim has graciously allowed us to post a summary of his book on the stewardship webpage. Please go to: <https://www.archstl.org/about-stewardship/stewardship-overview/book-summaries> to review the summary.

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# Stewardship



## **Spiritual Renewal of the American Parish – Earnest Larsen (1975)**

Here are highlights from a small book by Earnest Larsen printed in 1975. Similar issues today as in 1975.

- Parishes think of renewal as a project; renewal is a life-long process.
- Renewal is not a matter of “how” but “why” (sound familiar?)
- Have a vision – do programs support people growing in relationship with Jesus?
- The purpose of a parish is to let Christ become operative in and through the parishioners.
- Avoid “do-ism” – stop doing many things that are not centered on Jesus.
- Look at parish purpose and structure – does the structure support the purpose?
- Without personal spirituality there is no parish spirituality; dependent on priestleadership.
- Contact Dave Baranowski if you would like an executive summary of this book since it is out of publication.

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# Stewardship



## Nurturing Gratitude

The following information was written by Mark Mogilka (one of the Our Sunday Visitor Stewardship Webinar Presenters) and he has given us permission to reprint. (Thanks, Mark.)

- Gratitude starts when you recognize you received a gift.
- Many people are presented gifts, but they don't open their hearts to receive them.
- Cicero (Roman lawyer and orator) said this about gratitude – “Gratitude is not only the greatest virtue, but is the parent of all other virtues.”
- Gratitude is a choice:
  - Grateful people see the blessings and give thanks.
  - Ungrateful people take things for granted.
- Lack of gratitude:
  - Leads to unhappiness.
  - “If not grateful, then no matter how much we have, we will always want something else or something more.” Brother David Steindl-Rast
- Gratefulness does not mean to be a “Pollyanna” (everything will be OK):
  - In the face of difficulty, what can I learn?
  - What is God trying to teach me through this?
  - There are people that would love to have your bad days.
  - We are grateful for the trials and tribulations as well as the successes.
- According to Dr. Robert Emmons, leading scientific expert on gratitude, practicing this virtue improves:
  - Personality
  - Health
  - Emotional
  - Social
  - Career
  - Overall Joy & Happiness
- Grateful people:
  - Sleep better
  - Lower blood pressure
  - Less fat intake
  - Strengthen immune system
  - Healthier hearts

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- Slower aging of brain
- Exercise more
- Higher energy level
- Grateful people have more confidence in relationships – helps see the goodness in people, not just the bad, helps us grow.
- Grateful people share.
- Cultivating gratitude:
  - Keep a Gratitude Journal
  - Express Gratitude: write notes and random acts of kindness
  - Develop Daily Prayer Process

## **On-Line Giving Benefits**

### **Why Give?**

- Think of all the gifts God has given you: faith, family, friends, talents, skills, money, and possessions.
- All that we are and all that we have really belongs to God.
- We aren't "owners" of anything, we are merely "stewards" of the gifts God gave each of us.
- In return, God asks us to generously share what He has given to us.
- Your financial support helps our parish build God's kingdom on Earth through our various ministries and organizations.
- We help each other strengthen our Faith which puts us on the path to Heaven!

### **What is Online Giving?**

- Your financial offering to the parish is made electronically through the parish website instead of putting an envelope in the basket each week at Mass.
- You specify the amount of money to give and it is automatically transferred from your checking or savings account or credit card to the parish account.
- You have access to your account 24 hours a day and have flexibility to change your financial offering at any time.

### **Benefits to You**

- Simplifies the giving process – select your weekly offertory amount and second collections amount at one time and the amount is transferred automatically on the days you specify.
- No more worrying about bringing (or forgetting) your envelope or check to Mass.
- Your offertory is given electronically whether or not you are able to attend Mass at our parish. (Great during vacations and bad weather).
- Your online parish giving history and related tax information is available.
- The process is safe, secure, and can be updated at any time.
- If needed, a technical support hotline is available.

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## Stewardship



### Benefits to Parish

- Helps the parish fund its ministries and other expenses by having a predictable income they can count on.
- Simplifies the record-keeping process.
- Saves money with less processing costs.

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# Stewardship



## Parish Communication

- Many parishes only talk about Stewardship during their annual Stewardship Renewal initiative (usually in September or October).
- Stewardship should be communicated every month to your parish.
- Stewardship Renewal is another “season” of the Church (i.e. Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Times).
- The means of communication you use is often the only window people have into their world of faith.
- 4 C’s of communication: constant, consistent, concrete, and creative.
- **Marketing Rule of 7** – People need to hear something 7 times and 7 different ways before they actually take any action.
- **Website:** your parish must have a great one. This is typically the first contact for new parishioners who are “shopping” for a parish:
  - Should invite people to be part of the Church
  - Show joyful, mission-driven articles and pictures
  - Should be “mobile-friendly”
  - Google “mobile-friendly test” to see if your parish website is mobile-friendly
  - Mobile phones are outselling computers. If your website isn’t mobile-friendly, it’s almost like not having one.
  - Develop weekly Stewardship column
  - Add Stewardship Reflections
  - Use a drone to shoot video
  - Make sure your Mass time schedule, address, and parish contact information is easy to identify and access. (These are the main reasons people visit your website).
- **Annual Stewardship Report:** Your parish should provide this report annually to all parishioners. (Contact Dave Baranowski for in-house support or third party contact to assist with your annual stewardship report).
  - Add personal stories
  - Use parishioner quotes
  - Info-graphics make it easy to scan the report
  - Share accomplishments
  - Avoid data overload
  - Include a call to action – attend Mass, volunteer or donate

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# Stewardship



- **Monthly Lay Witness Talks:** Lay witness stewardship talks are a “best practice” during your parish stewardship renewal initiative. Consider expanding these talks each month and let different ministry representatives give their witness. (Tie in with your monthly Donut Sunday). Or, find other parishioners who are willing to share their stewardship story with your parish.
- **Social Media:** Develop a plan on how to use the various social media outlets and incorporate into your overall parish communication plan. Without a plan, your Facebook, Twitter, etc. attempts will be a failure. You should spend the same amount of time every week on your digital presence as you do on your bulletin.
- **[MyParishApp.com](http://MyParishApp.com)** - Call 1.800.997.8805 to develop a parish phone app. Allow’s for direct communication with parishioners.
- **Advent/Lent postcards** – Invite and inform parishioners of upcoming events, include pictures of priests and key parish staff members.
- **Develop a Parish Communication Strategy:**
  - Conduct an audit of all the different methods you use to communicate to parishioners.
  - Develop a parish leader “cross-functional” team to uncover all communication methods. (Some are not so obvious).
  - The parish website and bulletin are not the only way people receive communication.
  - Develop procedures for each communication method when sending information.
  - Refer to “Parish Communications Audit” on page 101.
- **Parish Logo Assistance:** if your parish needs help redesigning a logo, please contact the Office of Communications and Planning for consultation to determine if your request can be handled in-house or requires third party assistance.
- **Bulletin:** Still one of the primary communication tools, but not the only one!
  - Develop weekly stewardship column and spotlight a ministry or parishioner.
  - Add Stewardship Reflections ([archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship)).
  - Many parishes just provide a weekly update on offertory received under the heading of “Stewardship.” This has the effect of reinforcing the common myth that stewardship is only about money.
  - Use your parish bulletin to provide a broader scope of your parish stewardship efforts. (See page 99 for an example).
  - Provide weekly updates on Prayer, Participation and Generosity, along with stewardship education information.

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# Stewardship



- **Bulletin – Ministry Spotlight Form**

- A great way to highlight each parish ministry.
- Add to weekly bulletin, website or other parish communication.
- See page 100 for example

- **Covenant Radio Network (EWTN)**

- Located at 4423 Hampton Ave., St. Louis MO, 63109
- In St. Louis: 1080 AM or 1460 AM
- Media Missionaries: St. Louis parishes are encouraged to have parish representatives as “media missionaries”:
  1. Encourage people to listen to Catholic radio
  2. Access to free faith-related resources for your parish
- Contact Tony Holman (Covenant Radio Network): [tony@covenantnet.net](mailto:tony@covenantnet.net)

(Or)

- Contact Christine Schicker (EWTN): [cschicker@ewtn.com](mailto:cschicker@ewtn.com)

- **Local Business Marquees/Signs**

Check with local businesses (especially banks) to advertise parish events on their marquees or electronic signs. Many are glad to do it and it’s usually free!

- **Other Ideas:** email blasts, robo-calls, trifold parish ministry brochures in cart rolled out after Mass or parish events, weekly stewardship articles in bulletins and on website.

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## Steward's corner

*"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce; then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow."*

- Proverbs 3:9-10



### Spending Time with God in Prayer.

Reading the Bible just 10 minutes a day, every day, can change the rest of your days.



### Using Talent to Participate in Building His Kingdom.

Take part in the Mass by becoming a lector, usher, or extraordinary minister. Visit <http://sfastl.org/113> for contact information on these and more ministries.



### Being Generous with Treasure.

Recap for week of 4/2/17

#### • Offertory Collection

318 online registrations. 427 envelopes received.

Weekly Total: \$23,390.17

Year-to-Date Total: \$696,612.10

#### • Collection vs. Overall Budget

Weekly Total: \$3,447.71

Year-to-Date Total: \$(21,316.54)

#### • School Deficit Funded by Parish

Weekly Total: \$6,920.34

Year-to-Date Total: \$249,132.23

#### • The Francis Fund

Keeping Catholic Education Affordable

Weekly Total: \$2,086.00

Year-to-Date Total: \$65,347.00

**YOU make the DIFFERENCE!** Gifts of your treasure help provide a location and/or materials for:

- Spring Landscaping Materials
- New Phone System
- Easter Flowers

*"It brought me to a better understanding about how the Mass and the book of Revelation relate. This study also made me realize the need to read God's word and study it and try to apply it to my life."*

-Quote from parishioner who participated in the Lamb's Supper Book Study.

### WEEKLY REFLECTION:

*"Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'" - JOHN 20:19*

Are you good at making people feel welcome? When you meet someone new, a new neighbor, a new work colleague, a new parishioner, do you make them feel at home? Many of us can probably do a much better job at this. When we make people feel welcome, we make them feel like they are included instead of being excluded. A simple "hello" and a smile goes a long way.

### FAQ ABOUT TITHING #8

#### WHEN I DECIDE TO WORK TOWARDS A TITHE, SHOULD I BE CALCULATING IT BASED ON MY GROSS OR NET INCOME?

When striving to give a full tithe, you should calculate the amount you give back to God based on your gross income. The reason for this is that stewardship calls us to give back to God first, before we take care of any of our own wants, needs or obligations – including our obligation to our government. After all, God should come before Uncle Sam, shouldn't He? By placing God first – above all other financial obligations – we show how much we love and trust Him. Some people may never be able to reach a full tithe. Others reach that goal and keep giving, knowing that in reality it all belongs to God.

#### DYNAMIC CATHOLIC, ALIVE! SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER (DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY) – MERCY

In the Gospel, Jesus institutes the Sacrament of Reconciliation, authorizing the Apostles to forgive sins in the name of Jesus. It is no coincidence that Jesus says, "Peace be with you" more than one time to them as he greets them. When was the last time you went to the Sacrament of Reconciliation? What beautiful peace in our hearts is found in this sacrament! Through the priest, Jesus forgives us of our sins when we are truly contrite. We receive sanctifying grace and actual graces that will help us to overcome sin in the future. Although sometimes we may still be restless and doubt God's forgiveness, we must remember the words of Christ to St. Faustina: *"I am love and Mercy Itself. There is no misery that could be a match for My mercy, neither will misery exhaust it, because as it is being granted – it increases. The soul that trusts in My mercy is most fortunate, because I Myself take care of it."* God's mercy is always greater than our sins. Let us approach the throne of grace and mercy trusting in the goodness of the Lord. [archstl.org/dynamic](http://archstl.org/dynamic)



## Online Giving

Fast. Secure. Easy.

Please consider switching from paper envelopes to giving online. It helps our parish plan and budget, while ensuring continued support when parishioners travel. Visit [www.sfastl.org](http://www.sfastl.org) and click on the logo. Thank you!



## Stewardship



### **Bulletin: Parish Ministry Spotlight**

**Parish Ministry Name:**

**Purpose:**

**Ministry Activities:**

**Meeting Time/Location:**

**Contact Information:**

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# Stewardship



## **Parish Communications Audit**

### **Know your audience (audience evaluation)**

- Internal vs. External audiences
- Who are they?
- How do they spend their time?
- What value can you offer them? Make yourself relevant.
- How can you best reach them?

### **Prioritize your message**

- Create a planning calendar so you are planning ahead and not reacting
- Reallocate resources
- Integrate priorities – “culture of stewardship”
- Don’t say too much (KISS)
- Define purpose, call to action
- At the conclusion of this communication, my audience should know/understand “\_\_\_\_\_.”

### **Identify your medium**

- Audit the current communication best practices of the parish
- Repetition (effective frequency, level of repetition needed to trigger a response – 3x, 5x or 7x)
- Create a checklist
  - Print: bulletins, flyers, brochures
  - Marketing: mailings, yard signs
  - Email (Flocknote):
    - Database management
    - Collect email addresses at parish events (text to join)
    - Newsletters
  - Website (OSV):
    - Homepage: clear goals, submit email, online giving, sm widgets, news headlines, regular updates, contact info, Gospel msg
    - Online giving (CARA)
  - Social media: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram: *Be human*
  - News media: SLR, Catholic St. Louis, secular: *What’s a good pitch?*
  - Face-to-face: weekends, various ministries

### **Evaluate success**

- Assess – establish success criteria in the beginning; were your goals achieved?
- If you don’t get what you expected, try something different (Action-Observe-Modify-Follow up)



## Stewardship



### **Parish Marketing**

- Most parishes could do a better job at “marketing” all of the good works that happen at their parish.
- The parish staff and lay leaders are usually aware of the different parish ministries and their activities. However, the average parishioner isn’t aware of everything happening at the parish and all the people your parish touches through your ministries.
- Look at your parish calendar and summarize the parish activity and ministry results for the prior month and thank your parishioners publicly and privately for their generosity of prayer, participation and financial support at least once a month.
- Here’s an example – “Thank you for your continued generosity of prayer, ministry participation, and financial support. Last month 1,000 people celebrated Mass on Sunday and 400 people celebrated Mass during the week. We had over 800 people visit our parish with soccer games we hosted on our fields, 245 children attended school every day and 125 children attended PSR each week. 22 families were provided food and 13 families were provided rent and utility assistance. Each month over 500 parishioners participate in our 37 active parish ministries. Additionally, 27 youth and 5 adults participated in the Pro-Life Rally in Washington DC. Thank you, thank you, thank you for sharing your gifts. Your active engagement keeps our parish truly Alive in Christ!”
- Each week, many parishes show a recap of the previous week’s offertory in their bulletin. Be sure to include the number of families that give through the parish electronic offertory system and the corresponding dollar amount. Also, use this opportunity to thank the parish for their financial support and list some ways the money was used to “advance the mission of the parish” (do not list bills that were paid).
- Electronic Offertory – promote monthly and encourage parishioners to use. Develop a Benefits and Sign-Up Guide for frequently asked questions. An example is on page 95 (i.e. On-Line Giving Benefits), as well as, supplier information (Please see pages 67 & 68) (University of Notre Dame Study – parishioners that use are 2 X more generous).
- “Word of Mouth” advertising is still the most effective. The more people you can get talking positively about your parish and personally recommending it, the better impact it will have regarding your parish faith life, ministry participation, and financial support.



# Stewardship



## Parish Ministry Leadership

### The Precepts of the Church

As Parish Ministry Leaders, we should be examples of prayer, ministry participation, and generous giving to our parish family. Each of us should be adhering to the Precepts of the Church and holding our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to these minimum requirements.

According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (ccc 2041 – 2043), “The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life.” They are “the very minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor.”

1. “You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor.”
2. “You shall confess your sins at least once a year.”
3. “You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.”
4. “You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.”
5. “You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.”

Most parishes have many different ministries and organizations. Regardless of which ministry you lead, the **primary role** for all is the same – **bring people to God!**

Here are some points to keep in mind:

- Generally speaking, 30% of parishioners attend Mass regularly, 20% occasionally and 50% never.
- However, the 50 – 70% that attend Mass sometimes or never may be active in a parish ministry.
- Those 50 – 70% are not hearing the stewardship message at Mass and in the homilies.
- Encourage parish ministry leaders to incorporate stewardship education into their monthly ministry meetings.
- Avoid the general “cattle call” when looking for new volunteers. Personal invitation is the best method.

Do you live your life for the glory of God’s name or do you do it for the glory of your name?

One of the major reasons why people don’t participate in parish ministry is because of the attitude of certain parish ministry leaders.

### Parish Ministry Leadership

- Sometimes, if a person is a ministry lead for too long of a time, unknowingly, over time, the ministry starts to become the agenda of the person leading the ministry and not the agenda of the parish.
- People bring new ideas to the leader but they are rejected:
  - “That’s not how we do things around here.”
  - “We did that ten years ago and it didn’t work.”

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# Stewardship



- Or, do you know parish ministry leaders like this...
  - You lead the Parish Athletic Association and think your main goal is to teach the kids sportsmanship, how to play the game and to win championships.
  - You lead the Parish Fish Fry and you think your main goal is to sell as many plates of fish as you can to raise as much money as you can.
- Well, unfortunately, if you think this way, you've missed the point of ministry.

## **Change the Perception of Parish Ministry Leadership**

- The main goal of all parish ministry is to bring people to God, whether it's through athletics or selling fish.
- We need to change the perspective of what parish ministry leadership is about!
- We need to focus on bringing people back to God.

## **Change the Culture of Parish Ministry Meetings**

- How are your monthly parish ministry meetings run?
- Do you start your meeting by praying the "ten second" Our Father that you speed through?
- Are you rushing through the agenda because you're worried about the "busyness" of whatever the ministry does and you have to cover everything in one hour?
- We need to remember that part of the people we are bringing to God are the people at the ministry meeting!
- We need to spiritually feed the people that are part of the ministry as well.

## **Suggestions on Changing the Culture**

- 1) Make faith formation a priority. At the start of each meeting:
  - Try a different prayer or a different style of prayer like Lectio Divina (Divine Reading), the Rosary or Scripture Readings.
  - Try doing faith-sharing opportunities to give people examples of how to do it.
  - For example, say "Since our last meeting, has anyone had a faith-sharing experience they would like to share?"
  - When we invite the Holy Spirit to be part of our meeting, He will make sure everything that needs to get done gets done.
- 2) Invite the members of the ministry to attend Sunday Mass.
  - This is one of the most important things we can do.
  - For example, say something like, "My wife and I go to 9 o'clock Mass every week. Please join us and we'll grab some breakfast afterwards."
  - Make sure we are giving a personal invitation to go to Mass.



# Stewardship



## Parish Ministry Leadership Summary

- We need to be examples of faithful prayer – if we pray, others will pray.
- We need to be examples of joyful ministry – joy attracts others.
- We need to be examples of generous giving – for our parish and other Church and charitable needs.
- Don't assume people do not want to participate, many times they are waiting to be asked! Personal invitation is the bestway.
- Prayer is the key to being good stewards of our gifts - talking and listening to how God wants us to use our gifts.
- We have to reverse the thinking that we go to Mass in order to see what God can do for us. It's the other way around, we go to Mass to see what we can do for God!

## Parish Ministry Participation

- We know when we are using our God-given gifts in the way God intended because we feel Peace and Joy. We are the happiest at those times.
- If you are unhappy in a parish ministry, maybe you are in the wrong ministry. You should not be worried, bored or obligated, you should feel excited and energized!
- Sometimes saying “no” to participate in parish ministry leads to better “yes's.”

## Ministry Participation Follow-Up Opportunities

- After you collect Covenant Cards during your annual parish Stewardship Renewal, immediately contact any potential new volunteers. The sooner the better (within one week of receiving the Covenant Cards). This makes people feel like you value them and want them to join the ministry. Not following up immediately after Covenant Card week-end is one of the biggest problems most parishes do (and then wonder why no one wants to participate).
- After RCIA candidates have been brought into the Church, people are excited about their faith and are looking to see how they can become active in their parish. Be sure to invite them; it makes them feel welcomed to the parish.
- After a retreat many people are “on fire” for Christ and are thinking about how they can do more, follow-up with them on parish ministry opportunities.

## Expectations

- When fellow parishioners join a ministry let them know that there are expectations on them to be a vital, contributing member of the ministry.
- Our faith grows and matures when we keep our covenant with God, and with each other. We need to hold each other accountable.
- “Iron is sharpened by iron; one person sharpens another.” Proverbs 28:17

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# Stewardship



## Quotes (Tracy Earl Welliver)

- “Too often we forget that the activities of parish stewardship exist only to lead us into a way of living. Every Sunday is Commitment Sunday.”
- “The call of Jesus Christ often disrupts our routines, changes our expectations, and pulls us out of our comfort zone.”

## Parish Mission Statement

- Most parishes have a mission statement that probably needs to be re-examined.
- Parishes and communication change over time, make sure your mission statement is still relevant.
- A mission statement is usually a one-sentence statement defining your reason for existing and provides overall direction and the purpose of the parish.
- A mission statement should be clear, concise, understandable, memorable, and easy to explain.
- There are many ways to develop a mission statement.
- Some parishes develop a shorter tagline to use in parish marketing, communication, and fundraising.
- A strong mission statement can inspire a closer personal connection with the organization.
- The parish mission statement should be woven into the parish culture (everyone should know it by heart).
- Read prayers that honor your parish patron saint for inspirational phrases that can be incorporated into your parish mission statement.
- Parishes that are clear about their mission, identity, and purpose tend to have a healthier stewardship culture.
- You need to understand who you are (and who you are not).

## Mission Statement Tips

### **Purpose:**

- Mission statement defines the reason your parish exists - core objectives and values.
- It identifies the belief and attitude you live on a daily basis.
- Focuses your energy and clarifies your purpose.
- Motivates people.

### **Tips:**

- Keep the mission statement short and simple; use as few words as possible.
- Remember – Clear, Concise, and Memorable.
- It should be clear to you, parishioners, and visitors.
- It should be something you are proud of.



# Stewardship



- Do not use slang, jargon or expressions others are not familiar with.
- It should resonate with the parishioners.
- It should reflect your long-term goals and strategies.
- It should be actionable.
- It shouldn't be too broad.
- Avoid overanalyzing the mission statement.
- Don't confuse mission statement (why you exist) with vision statement (desired end state).
- Post the mission statement in high-visibility areas.

## How to Write:

- Define your parish:
  - What is the purpose (describe the work)?
  - Who do you help?
  - Where do you do the work?
- Collect ideas from many people
- Be open to new ideas
- What are you dedicated to?
- Use surveys, questionnaires, interviews to poll parishioners
- Have a committee sort through all the information
- Look at other mission statement examples
- Don't rush the process
- Get help from a professional writer
- Avoid generalities (i.e. "saving the world")
- Use an "active" voice versus "passive" voice (i.e. "helps educate children" vs. "an organization that helps educate children")
- Avoid jargon
- Avoid "internal focus," focus on people served
- Keep it short, use only the words needed
- Get feedback and revise if necessary

## Quick Test

- Say the mission statement out loud, does it roll off the tongue?
- Ask someone to repeat it after a period of time, is it memorable?
- Ask people who are not part of the organization to evaluate it, does it make sense to them?



# Stewardship



## **St. Louis Parish Examples**

**Assumption (O'Fallon)**: May You Find Christ Here...May You Bring Christ to the World.

**Assumption (South County)**: Worship God. Share the Good News of Jesus. Serve Christ in Others.

**Blessed Teresa of Calcutta**: We are Carriers of God's Love to One Another and the Greater Community.

**Christ, Prince of Peace**: "For a Child is Born to us, a Son is Given to us...He Shall be Called the Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

**Immacolata**: Bringing People Together in Jesus Christ.

**Immaculate Conception (Arnold)**: Guiding People to Jesus Through the Sacraments

**Our Lady of Lourdes (University City)**: Pray, Teach, Serve

**St. Alphonsus Liguori "Rock"**: To Joyfully Preach, Teach, and Live the Word of God.

**St. Ann (Clover Bottom)**: Nurturing Disciples Through Hospitality, Prayer, and Service.

**St. Anselm**: Our Mission is to Imitate Jesus Christ by Loving and Serving All People in and Outside of Our Community.

**St. Francis of Assisi (South County)**: Our Parish Exists to Give Glory to God.

**St. Gertrude**: Welcoming Disciples Home, Forming Future Saints.

**St. Joseph (Manchester)**: A Christ-Centered Family Engaging, Connecting, and Empowering God's people.

**St. Justin Martyr**: Love God. Love Others. Make Disciples.

**Sts. Peter & Paul**: Opening Our Hearts to Christ Through Prayer, Fellowship, and Service.

**St. Richard**: Know Him More Clearly, Love Him More Dearly and Follow Him More Nearly, Day by Day

**Sts. Teresa & Bridget**: Our Mission of Faith Development, Parish & Community Outreach, and Living the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ.





# Stewardship



## **Parish Stewardship**

- No two parishes are alike, one approach does not fit all. Use stewardship “best practices” that fit your parish. Be creative and try new things. (It’s OK to fail once in awhile.)
- We have “stewardship” priests and not necessarily “stewardship” parishes.
- If your pastor does not support stewardship, it will not be successful.
- If you are starting a stewardship effort within your parish, be sure to include your pastor in the beginning stages for his buy-in and support.
- If you have a new pastor, be sure to inform him of your parish stewardship plan to get his support.
- Stewardship activities should fit the “natural rhythm” of your parish. They should not be forced events, they should complement, not compete with current parish events and activities.
- Network with other parishes and the Stewardship Office to find out what works in other parishes.

## **Parish Stewardship Best Practices**

Many parishes have developed “best practices” over time. Instead of “reinventing the wheel,” it’s recommended to try things that already work!

We have developed a new section on the Archdiocesan Stewardship website listing many parish best practices. The list is always being updated with new ideas. Please forward your parish best practices to Dave Baranowski to add to the list.

To access the list, go to [archstl.org/about-stewardship/stewardship-overview/best-practices](http://archstl.org/about-stewardship/stewardship-overview/best-practices).

Here is the list of topics:

- Advent & Christmas Invitations
- Annual Parish Ministry Leadership Meeting
- Annual Parish Stewardship Plan
- Annual Parish Stewardship Report
- Appreciation Events
- Appreciation T-Shirts
- Back to School Mass
- Black History Month
- Bookmarks
- Bring a Friend to Mass
- Catholic School Week
- Children’s Offertory Envelopes
- Children’s Stewardship Activities
- Children’s Stewardship Grade School Formation
- Children’s “Tithing” Mass

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## Stewardship



- Christmas Generosity
- Christmas Gifts
- Community Service
- Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University
- Electronic Offertory
- Encourage Greater Mass Attendance
- Festival of Ministries
- Free Lessons
- Gift Discernment
- Grade School Parent Covenant Card
- High School Participation
- Home Visits
- Lay Witness Speakers
- Lenten Gifts
- Lenten Practice
- Mass in the Grass
- Mission Statement
- Mortgage Burning Party
- My Catholic Giving Guide
- Newsletter
- Offertory
- On-line Covenant Cards
- Parish Communication
- Parish Graduating High School Senior Letter
- Parish Marketing
- Parish Ministry Leader Handbook
- Parish Ministry Leader Time of Reflection
- Parish Ministry Promotion
- Parish Prayer Cards
- Parish Resource Guide
- Parish Service Day
- Parish Sports Team Mass
- Parish Stewardship Prayer
- Parish Tithing Committee
- Planned Giving
- Prayer
- Prayer Books
- Prayer Cards

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## Stewardship



- Prayer Groups
- Promote Vocations
- Remembrance Garden
- Retreats
- Sister Parish Relationships
- Stations of the Cross
- Stewardship Bulletin Updates
- Stewardship Committee
- Stewardship Committee Charter
- Stewardship Covenant Card Collection
- Stewardship Homily
- Stewardship Logo
- Stewardship Mass Intentions
- Stewardship Props
- Stewardship Scripture Reflections
- Stewardship of Treasure Covenant Card
- Stewardship Video
- Strategic Offertory Review
- Tithing
- Welcoming
- Will & Trust Seminars
- Yard Signs
- Year-End Contribution Statements
- Youth Stewardship Covenant Cards



# Stewardship



## **“Personal” Stewardship – Best Practices**

Stewardship can be divided into two areas - “parish” and “personal.”

Parish stewardship focuses on the events and activities our parish takes part in as a community. Personal stewardship starts with our own conversion of heart. It is grounded in our own gratitude and generosity.

In order for parish stewardship to become ingrained in our parish culture, our own personal stewardship must become internalized in each of us.

The late Msgr. Thomas McGread said, “The real success of stewardship in our parish is found in the hearts of people. Without conversion of heart, no one is able to give themselves as Christ asked us to do.”

How we live our lives says more about us than what we say. This is expressed in a couple of universal quotes we have all probably heard:

- “Faith is caught more than taught.”
- “People believe more in a homily they can see rather than one they can hear.”

Just as there are parish stewardship “best practices,” there are personal stewardship “best practices”:

- Prayer – develop a daily prayer process.
- Participation – share your faith story with others, especially those that are closest to you like family and friends.
- Generosity – plan your charitable giving on an annual basis (don’t just give whatever you have “leftover” in your wallet or checkbook. Give from your “first fruits.”) Use the My Catholic Giving Guide in this planning guide.



# Stewardship



## **Recruiting/Forming a Stewardship Committee**

- Priests give stewardship homilies two weeks in a row at all Masses.
- Dave Baranowski speaks at all Masses the next weekend. (Lay witness talk on stewardship.)
- Parish meeting the following week for those parishioners interested in learning more about stewardship. Dave Baranowski shares parish stewardship “best practices.”
- Usually a group of parishioners will step forward to start the committee.
- Dave Baranowski comes to first stewardship committee meeting to organize roles and stewardship calendar.

Here are several more points to keep in mind when selecting stewardship committee members:

- Your stewardship committee should be like what the U.S. Congress is supposed to be – it should represent all the people in your parish.
- Identify all the different groups of people in your parish and make sure each of them are represented on the stewardship committee.
- For example, include a grade school parent, a PSR parent, different ethnic backgrounds in your parish, elderly person, widowed person, and young adult just to name a few. Also, be sure to have an appropriate split of men and women.
- The more “rounded” your committee, the more your stewardship efforts will reach more people.
- In each of the parish groups identified, invite “influential” people in each of those groups to join the committee.
- Avoid having an “open casting call” for anyone interested. The best advice is to personally invite influential leaders in specific segments of your parish community.



# Stewardship



## **Roman Catholic Foundation** (314.918.2890 ~ [rcfstl.org](http://rcfstl.org) ~ [info@rcfstl.org](mailto:info@rcfstl.org))

- A 501(c)(3) public charity, independent from the Archdiocese of St. Louis and governed by a board of trustees, allowing for independent operating and asset protection.
- Mission: Inspiring giving and connecting donors to Catholic ministries, sustaining the local Church for future generations.
- The Foundation builds and manages endowment funds that provide **permanent annual income** to the parishes, schools and ministries of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.
- Funds are invested in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, per USCCB guidelines.

### **How the Foundation Serves the Catholic Community**

#### **Endowment Funds**

Endowment funds provide the parishes, schools, and ministries they benefit with income each year, now and in perpetuity.

- Endowment funds are invested for the long-term according to Catholic values.
- A percentage of each endowment fund (from investment gains) is distributed annually to the benefiting parish, school or ministry, supporting the organization while protecting the fund's perpetual nature.
- Donors can establish endowment funds to benefit their favorite ministries or add to any existing fund in any amount at any time, increasing the organization's annual distribution.

#### **Planned Giving**

Donors of all ages and income levels can make a lasting impact on the Church with a planned gift. The Foundation's experts offer free, confidential assistance to guide donors through the giving process.

- Planned gifts are made from assets (e.g., IRA, life insurance, real estate, etc.) rather than income and often cost donors nothing during their lifetimes.
- Donors decide which Catholic organization(s) their gifts will support and direct how they will be used.

#### **Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs)**

A DAF at the Foundation serves as a donor's charitable checkbook. Donors give to their fund at any time and receive a tax deduction, then they recommend grants (gifts) from the fund to Catholic ministries on their own schedule.

- DAFs are invested in accordance with Church teaching and grow tax-free, allowing donors to give more.
- The Foundation sends checks from DAFs based on donor recommendations to Catholic organizations and other charities that do not operate in opposition to the teachings of the Church.
- By consolidating charitable giving through a DAF, donors receive just one tax receipt per year regardless of the number of charities they support, simplifying the tax process.
- Donors can reduce capital gains taxes by contributing to a DAF with appreciated assets.

#### **End-of-Life Planning**

The Foundation presents **The Conversation: A Catholic Perspective on End-of-Life Issues**, a free seminar to help Catholics plan for the future according to their faith, throughout the archdiocese each year.

- Topics include:
  - Principles of Catholic Bioethics (guidance for making end-of-life medical decisions)
    - Ordinary & Extraordinary Means of Preserving Human Life
    - Quality of Life & the Dignity of the Human Person
  - Estate Planning & Advance Directives
  - Charitable Gift Planning
  - Funeral & Cemetery Planning
    - Pastoral Care of the Sick & Dying
    - Anatomical Donation & Cremation

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# Stewardship



## Servant Leadership

“For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.”  
~ Mark 10:45

The following “Ten Characteristics of a Servant Leader” were presented by Faith Perceptions:

1. **Listening:** Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. Although these are also important skills for the servant-leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to clarify that will. He or she listens receptively to what is being said and unsaid. Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one’s own inner voice. Listening, coupled with periods of reflection, are essential to the growth and well-being of the servant-leader.
2. **Empathy:** The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even when one may be forced to refuse to accept certain behaviors or performance. The most successful servant-leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners.
3. **Healing:** The healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one’s self and one’s relationship to others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity *to help make whole* those with whom they come in contact. In his essay, *The Servant as Leader*, Greenleaf writes, “There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share.”
4. **Awareness:** General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Awareness helps one in understanding issues involving ethics, power, and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As Greenleaf observed, “Awareness is not a giver of solace – it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity.”
5. **Persuasion:** Another characteristic of servant-leaders is a reliance on persuasion in making decisions within an organization, rather than on one’s positional authority. The servant-leader seeks to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. This particular element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant-leadership. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups. This emphasis on persuasion over coercion finds its roots in the beliefs of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)—the denominational body to which Robert Greenleaf belonged.
6. **Conceptualization:** Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to *dream great dreams*. The ability to look at a problem or an organization from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many leaders, this is a characteristic that requires



# Stewardship



discipline and practice. The traditional leader is consumed by the need to achieve short-term operational goals. The leader who wishes to also be a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broad-based conceptual thinking. Within organizations, conceptualization is, by its very nature, the proper role of boards of trustees or directors. Unfortunately, boards can sometimes become involved in the day-to-day operations—something that should always be discouraged—and, thus, fail to provide the visionary concept for an institution. Trustees need to be mostly conceptual in their orientation, staffs need to be mostly operational in their perspective, and the most effective executive leaders probably need to develop both perspectives within themselves. Servant-leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day operational approach.

7. **Foresight:** Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easier to identify. One knows foresight when one experiences it. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. Foresight remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies, but one most deserving of careful attention.
8. **Stewardship:** Peter Block (author of *Stewardship* and *The Empowered Manager*) has defined stewardship as “holding something in trust for another.” Robert Greenleaf’s view of all institutions was one in which CEO’s, staffs, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society. Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion, rather than control.
9. **Commitment to the growth of people:** Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her organization. The servant-leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything in his or her power to nurture the personal and professional growth of employees and colleagues. In practice, this can include (but is not limited to) concrete actions such as making funds available for personal and professional development, taking a personal interest in the ideas and suggestions from everyone, encouraging worker involvement in decision-making, and actively assisting laid-off employees to find other positions.
10. **Building community:** As a result of the shift from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives, the servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history. This awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution. Servant-leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions. Greenleaf said, “All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life-form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his or her unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group.”

These ten characteristics of servant-leadership are by no means exhaustive. However, they do serve to communicate the power and promise that this concept offers to those who are open to its invitation and challenge.





# Stewardship



## **Stewardship: A Disciple's Response Summary**

### **Written By**

- The Ad Hoc Committee on Stewardship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in November 1992.

### **Preface**

- When we accept our lives as gifts, the Holy Spirit can use us as instruments to spread the Gospel.
- Reflects the Easter message – stewardship always starts with a personal experience of the Risen Christ.
- Good stewards live with joy and gratitude for the blessings they have received and return those gifts with increase.
- The Eucharist is the center and source of strength to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

### **Introduction**

- Pastoral letter stresses:
  1. Mature disciples make a conscious decision to follow Jesus no matter the cost to themselves.
  2. Conversion of heart and mind is not a single action, but a number of actions over a lifetime.
  3. Stewardship is an expression of discipleship – grateful and generous out of love for God and others.
- Our culture often contradicts our Christian values: materialism, relativism, hedonism, individualism, consumerism.
- Many Catholics are generous, but not always in proportion to what they possess, including money.
- Living as a steward involves collaborating with God in the work of creation and cooperating with God in the work of redemption.

### **The Call**

- Each of us must discern, accept and live joyfully in the role that God calls us to live.
- Every human life is a unique, personal vocation.
- Jesus' call is urgent. He does not tell us to follow Him in the future, but in the here and now, in the current moment and in our current circumstances.
- Discipleship is both a privilege and a challenge, it is not a comfortable way of life, putting aside our craving for domination, possession, and control.

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# Stewardship



## Jesus' Way

- The Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount prescribe the disciple lifestyle (Mt. 5:3 – 7:27).
- Stewardship involves trust and accountability, not only for our own lives, but the lives of others.
- Each person will be measured by his or her portion of gifts entrusted to them. You will be judged according to what you did with what you were given.
- Stewards are happy people who have found the meaning and purpose of living – “praise, revere and serve God.”
- Stewardship also involves the “earthly service” to others.

## Living as a Steward

- God wants us to be his collaborators in the work of creation, in collaboration with the Holy Spirit.
- Work is a fundamental aspect of the human vocation, it is required for responsible stewardship of the world.
- Profound reverence for the gift of life, our own life, and the lives of others.
- Active stewardship of the ecology – cultivating a heightened sense of human interdependence and solidarity.
- Set aside time for prayer, reading Scripture, Sacraments, and attending Mass.

## Stewards of the Church

- Use our gifts to serve our community of Faith.
- Share in the work of Evangelization.
- Parents must be models of stewardship within their homes.
- Parishes must use sound business practices, including church finances.
- Parishioners must accept responsibility for their parishes and contribute generously.
- Stewardship should extend to other local churches and to the universal Church.
- The Eucharist is the great sign and agent of expansive communion of charity.

## The Christian Steward

- The first requirement is to be trustworthy.
- Christian stewards are generous out of love as well as duty.
- After Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship.

## Appendix I

- Stewardship – gratefully receiving God’s gifts, cultivating them responsibly, and returning with increase.

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# Stewardship



- Disciple As Steward - conscious lifestyle, experiencing conversion of heart, recognizing God as the source for all things.
- Steward of Vocation – each one of us is called to carry out a role in the divine plan.
- Steward of the Church – we are not passive beneficiaries, we are “God’s co-workers.”
- Obstacles to Stewardship – secular culture contradicts religious conviction; selfishness and greed.
- A Steward’s Way – the life of a Christian steward models Jesus. After Jesus, we look to Mary.

## Appendix II

- God has entrusted humanity with the universe He created.
- This applies to everything: personal talents/abilities, the environment, natural resources, economic order, government affairs, and outer space.
- Successful parish stewardship involves the personal stewardship of many people, stewardship education, and trust that it will work.
- Stewardship Education:
  - 1) Should be a major priority for every parish and diocese.
  - 2) Should be a life-long process of study, prayer, reflection, and action.
  - 3) Should be supported by the local bishop.
  - 4) Involves collaborative leadership with the bishop; stewardship committees should be developed.
  - 5) No single approach fits all parishes. Education should include adults, youth, and children.
- Stewardship and Development:
  - 1) Basic elements of the development program: spiritually-based plan with mission statements, goals and priorities; communication plan on how to communicate; fund-raising plan based on stewardship education.
  - 2) Principles for Giving – how much one gives is based on prayerful discernment of the gifts they have been given; giving from one’s “first fruits” and not from what is “left-over” without counting the cost. Voluntary contribution of time, talent, and treasure.
  - 3) Annual Giving – annual giving through “covenant Sundays” (in conjunction with annual parish stewardship renewal process).
  - 4) Capital campaign – carefully planned, well-organized, needs-based program designed to raise a substantial amount of money in a specific time frame. Families invited to make multi-year financial commitments.



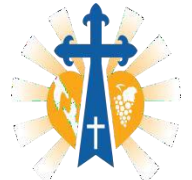
# Stewardship



- 5) Planned Giving – donors transfer capital assets to a qualified religious, educational or charitable organization, typically through a bequest provision in a will.
- Stewardship Promotion:
    - 1) Personal Witness – individuals tell their own personal conversion stories.
    - 2) Commitment of Leadership – bishop and pastor support is required.
    - 3) Hospitality, Evangelization, and Outreach – inspire others to participate in parish ministries.
    - 4) Communication and Education – use all mediums available, seek assistance of qualified professionals.
    - 5) Recruiting and Training – recruit parish volunteers to participate in parish ministries.
    - 6) Stewardship of Treasure – ask Catholics to make financial contributions that are planned, proportionate, and sacrificial.
    - 7) Accountability – prepare annual parish stewardship report and communicate to all parishioners.
  - Key Concepts:
    - 1) Fund Raising – a very specific set of activities designed to raise money to support a goal, unlike stewardship which includes all aspects of a person’s life.
    - 2) Philanthropy – similar to the concept of stewardship (actions to benefit society) less the prayer component of stewardship.
    - 3) Treasure – stewardship is based on maximum giving. Challenges us to be good stewards not only in how much we give away, but what we do with all our resources.



# Stewardship



## Stewardship Annual Planning Calendar Example

### Mary Queen of the Universe Stewardship Calendar

#### January

- 1/7 & 1/8: Insert My Catholic Giving Guide in Bulletin with Pastor Letter comments
- 1/10: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 1/13: New Parishioner Dinner with Fr. Smith and Fr. Jones
- 1/21 & 1/22: Monthly Lay Witness Talk – Tom Brown

#### February

- 2/4: Parish Volunteer Appreciation Mass & Breakfast
- 2/7: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 2/13 – 16: Parish Mission
- 2/25 & 2/26: Monthly Lay Witness Talk - Sally White
- Schedule Annual Parish Ministry Leader Meeting in May
- Will Increased Offertory Program will be part of annual Fall parish stewardship renewal?

#### March

- 3/14: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 3/25 & 3/26: Monthly Lay Witness Talk – Luis Hernandez
- Plan End of Life Issue Seminar (Bioethics, Estate Planning, Charitable Gifts, Funeral Planning) in 2023

#### April

- 4/11: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 4/22 & 4/23: Monthly Lay Witness Speaker Talk – Annual Catholic Appeal Speaker
- Schedule August – December Monthly Lay Witness Speakers

#### May

- 5/6: Parish Picnic
- 5/9: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 5/13: Annual Parish Ministry Leader Meeting

#### June

- 6/1 – 7/21: Order Parish Stewardship Marketing Material
- 6/13: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- Receive Parish Stewardship Planning Manual
- Update Stewardship Covenant Card used in the Fall
- Recruit new stewardship committee members
- Schedule Family Day (start of new school year in August)
- Identify Stewardship Sunday Lay Witness Speaker(s)

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# Stewardship



## July

- 7/11: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 7/21: Parish Stewardship Marketing Materials Order is due
- Watch Parish Stewardship Training Video on Stewardship Website
- Contact Parish Ministry Leaders for updated ministry information for annual stewardship report
- Schedule Fall Festival Planning Meeting for early August

## August

- 8/8: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- Watch Lay Witness Speaker Training Video on Stewardship Website
- 8/11: Stewardship Marketing Materials delivered
- 8/26 & 8/27: Monthly Lay Witness Speaker – Sean O’Malloy
- Receive Parish Stewardship Posters

## September

- Incorporate MQU Stewardship Prayer during Mass throughout Stewardship Awareness Month Masses
- 9/9 & 9/10: Announce Upcoming Stewardship Events at all Masses and in bulletin
- 9/11: Parish receives Stewardship brochure, cover letter, covenant card and annual stewardship report in mail
- 9/12: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 9/16 & 9/17: Frs. Smith & Jones review Annual Parish Stewardship Report in homily
- 9/23 & 9/24: Stewardship Awareness Sunday – Frs. Smith & Jones give Stewardship homily

## October

- 9/30 & 10/1 – Stewardship Lay Witness Speaker – Silvia Martinez
- 10/7: Annual Stewardship “Mass in the Grass”
- 10/7: Annual Fall Festival/Ministry Fair (after Mass in the Grass)
- 10/16: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 10/14 & 10/15: Stewardship Covenant Card Weekend
- 10/17: Contact Parish Ministry Leaders with new volunteer information
- 10/21 & 10/22: Monthly Lay Witness Speaker – Bob Anderson
- Schedule Parish Ministry Leader Meeting in November (or follow up with e-mail to Parish Ministry Leaders on comments regarding the annual parish stewardship renewal)



# Stewardship



## November

- 11/4 & 11/5 – Stewardship Summary communicated to Parish
- 11/14: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- 11/25 & 11/26: Monthly Lay Witness Talk – Gloria Haner
- Schedule January – April 2023 Monthly Lay Witness Speakers

## December

- 12/12: Monthly Stewardship Committee Meeting
- Review offertory envelope graphics & copy for upcoming year
- Set goal for number of families participating in electronic offertory for upcoming year

## Notes

- Weekly Stewardship Reflections in Bulletin
- Weekly Stewardship Prayers of the Faithful said at Mass
- Monthly Electronic Offertory Bulletin Reminder and Announcement at all Masses
- Review Archdiocesan Stewardship website ([archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship)) for stewardship information and parish resources

## **Stewardship “Beyond Your Parish Borders”**

- Looking for a way to expand your parish stewardship effort? Several parishes have developed “sister” parish relationships with parishes that don’t look like them.
- The goal of this sister parish relationship is to develop a two-way, parish-to-parish relationship.
- Includes attending Mass at each other’s parish, attending parish/social events at each other’s parish, parish ministries working with each other and school children and teens interacting with each other.
- There are no rules on developing this relationship. It may happen based on the priest’s relationships with other priests or parishioner relationships with other parishes. If you are interested and need help finding a sister parish, contact Dave Baranowski.
- Generally speaking, the goal is to develop a parish-to-parish relationship with a parish that is dissimilar to your own parish. However, if you want to start with a neighboring parish, that’s fine also.

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship Committee Charter (St. Joseph Stewardship Committee)

### Mission

To cultivate a culture of stewardship that highlights prayer, participation, and generosity in St. Joseph Parish.

### Vision

To support the mission of St. Joseph Parish ("A Christ-centered family engaging, connecting, and empowering God's people") in ways that promote stewardship.

### Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs)

- Provide ongoing formation and instruction to committee members and other parishioners to grow a sustainable culture of stewardship in the parish.
- Collaborate with other parishes and the Archdiocese Office of Stewardship to identify and implement best practices in stewardship.
- Establish committee goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve the mission of the committee.
- Monitor and measure programs and activities in the parish that support a culture of stewardship.
- Coordinate the distribution of an annual Stewardship Report to parishioners that highlights parish prayer, participation, and generosity for the year.

### Year-One Focus

1. Identify what the parish is currently doing to promote "personal stewardship" and "parish stewardship" that transforms the life of the parish.
2. Identify areas of growth for stewardship in the parish and recommend goals and objectives for the parish to implement.
3. Develop a written Stewardship Plan to guide the work of the Stewardship Committee.
4. Plan and coordinate an annual Stewardship Weekend (beginning September 2019) during which parishioners will be encouraged to re-dedicate their personal commitment to stewardship.

5. Sponsor an annual Parish Ministry

Leadership Meeting to:

- a. Provide stewardship formation to leaders of parish ministries;
- b. Discuss parish objectives and priorities; and
- c. Provide opportunities for ministries to collaborate and support one another.

### Committee Members

The Committee will consist of 8 - 12 parishioners, approved by the Pastor.

- The Pastor will designate one of the Committee Members as Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will be responsible for planning and facilitating Committee meetings and activities.
- One of the Committee Members (selected by the Committee Chair) will serve as Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair will be responsible for securing meeting space for the Committee and will facilitate Committee Meetings in the absence of the Committee Chair.
- One of the Committee Members (selected by the Committee Chair) will serve as Recording Secretary to record the minutes of each Committee meeting.

All Committee Members serve at the pleasure of the Pastor for one-year terms, renewable annually upon approval by the Pastor.

### Committee Liaison

The Committee will be supported by a clergy representative appointed by the Pastor to provide formation and guidance to the Committee and the Committee Chair, and to serve as a liaison between the Committee and the Pastor.

### Meeting Schedule and Reporting

The Stewardship Committee will meet monthly to:

- Provide ongoing formation and training of committee members in the areas of stewardship and parishioner engagement.
  - Establish goals and strategies for achieving parish stewardship objectives.
  - Plan strategies to reach stewardship goals and objectives.
  - Report progress made by the committee.
- Notes and minutes of each Committee Meeting shall be shared with the Pastor and the Committee Liaison within seven days of each meeting.

• Rev. 12/03/18





# Stewardship



## **Stewardship Committee Member Roles**

- 1) **Pastor** – “CEO” of the parish and final decision-making authority.
- 2) **Chairperson** – contact point for parish, Archdiocese, other parishes, and community.
- 3) **Secretary** – administrative needs, meeting agenda and meeting notes. Keeper of parish Stewardship documentation.
- 4) **Communications** – incorporate stewardship message in all parish communication. Draft letters as needed and manage newsletter process. Look for stewardship communication opportunities.
- 5) **Appreciation** – oversee welcoming and thanking activities and opportunities.
- 6) **Finance** – Finance committee liaison. Liaison to parish ACA, capital campaigns, fund-raising activities, planned giving, and endowments.
- 7) **Education** – oversee annual Stewardship Sunday activity: order material, schedule Lay Witness speakers, Festival of Ministries/alternate activity, and intention cards. Explore educational opportunities with other parish ministries.
- 8) **Children’s Stewardship** – develop opportunities for parish school and PSR. (Children’s envelopes, Festival of Ministries, and Intention Cards.)

## **Committee Member Start Dates:**

1. Father Anthony Hill – 6/25
2. Dave Huelsing – 6/24
3. Brett Newby – 4/26
4. Tammy Smith – 6/25
5. Jim Handyman – 4/26
6. Abby McCoy – 7/27
7. Laurie Jones – 6/24
8. Megan Holcomb – 7/27



# Stewardship



## **Stewardship for the Hispanic Culture**

As the number of parishioners with Hispanic background increases, we need to find ways to welcome them into our local parishes and invite them to be good stewards of their gifts of time, talent, and treasure. This section will provide some ideas on how to do that. In Spanish, the word for “Stewardship” does not carry the same connotation as in English. The Spanish word “Corresponsabilidad” (Co-responsibility) has been used in parts of the U.S. where there are larger Hispanic populations.

When communicating the Stewardship message, it is important to

- Invite
- Educate
- Integrate

### **Invite**

- As it is with any new parishioner, it is critical to have a “Welcoming” parish environment! (atmósfera acogedora)
- Invite new parishioners to attend Mass, participate in parish ministries, and provide their financial support
- Bi-lingual or Spanish-only Masses make people feel welcome. English proficiency is an intellectual matter; worship is not only intellectual but also emotional. Foreign speakers may be able to “function” in an English environment, but will not feel truly welcome until the emotional connection during worship is made. As a result of this connection taking place, Hispanic parishioners will take the step of registering at the parish and taking ownership of assisting financially to support the parish.
  - Bi-lingual parish staff and priests; or at the very least, culturally competent staff.
  - Bi-lingual parish communications.
  - Bi-lingual parish ministries.
  - Bi-lingual financial updates.
  - Be aware of cultural celebrations:
    - Quinceañeras classes
    - Virgen de Guadalupe
    - Posadas
    - Rosary and other devotions (Our Lady of Guadalupe, novenas, etc.)
- Bi-lingual or Spanish-only welcoming events
- Bi-lingual or Spanish-only welcome packets



# Stewardship



## Educate

- Be aware of first generation immigrants; they are likely to speak little to no English.
- Be specific with fund drives – explain exactly what it is you are asking for, what will be achieved with the funds and how much is needed.
- Stories – critical to communicate for comprehension. Use stories to educate.
- Explain how will this affect them and their family?
- Bi-lingual or Spanish materials

## Integrate

- Use local parishioners, other parishes and/or Archdiocesan resources
- Bi-lingual or Spanish-only ministry workshops
- Look at parish Mission Statement
- Look at individual parish ministry mission statements
- Make sure parish procedural information is available in Spanish
- Use Spanish speaking and bi-lingual Lay Witness Speakers
- Ministry fair combined with cultural (social) parish events
- Spanish covenant cards (time, talent, and treasure)

## Challenges

- Communication – it's obvious you need Spanish-speaking parishioners as witnesses, priests and parish staff, but that is not always available.
- Parish Registration – encourage parish registration, but understand this may be difficult to get. In Latin America there is no such thing as “registering” at your local parish. Immigrants will not take this big step until they have ownership and a sense of belonging in the community.
- Envelope usage – encourage on-going financial support for the parish but this may be difficult. Consider requesting for “specific” needs versus “general” on-going support. Once again, in Latin America there is no such thing as “envelopes” being used for the collection. Immigrants will not take this big step until they have ownership and a sense of belonging in the community.
- Participation – be welcoming and explore Hispanic cultural ministry opportunities and parish events.



# Stewardship



## Resources

- Archdiocese of St. Louis:

- F. Javier Orozco – Executive Director of Intercultural and Interreligious Affairs  
[javierorozco@archstl.org](mailto:javierorozco@archstl.org) or 314.792.7890

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship Reflection

### Prophets of a Future Not Our Own Archbishop Oscar Romero

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.  
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.  
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.  
No statement says all that could be said.  
No prayer fully expresses our faith.  
No confession brings perfection.  
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.  
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.  
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.  
This is what we are about.  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.  
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.  
We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.  
We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future not our own.

~ ~ ~

“God does not require that we be successful only that we be faithful.” ~ St. Teresa of Calcutta



# Stewardship



## **Stewardship Reflection Questions**

When talking about stewardship to family, friends, fellow parishioners or ministries within your parish, it is sometimes helpful to give them a “reflection question” to think about.

The reflection question helps “drive home” a particular aspect about stewardship that you may be trying to emphasize.

You can make up your own question, but here are some reflection questions that have been effective:

- What if you woke up today with only the things you thanked God for yesterday?
- When you are standing before God and He asks you, “What have you done with the gifts I have given you?” How will you respond?
- How do we know what God expects of us if we are not in close communication with Him, every day, in prayer?
- Lord, how would you like me to become more fully involved in the life of the Church?
- Lord, what do You want me to do with the gifts You have given me?



# Stewardship



## **Stewardship Scriptural Quotes Introduction**

At the annual Lay Witness Speaker Training a training guide is provided that includes stewardship scriptural quotes for people to use in their lay witness talks. We decided to add those to this planning guide as well.

On the following pages are scripture quotes sorted by Stewardship “topics.”

Note: this is not the “exclusive” list of stewardship scripture. There are other scripture quotes that also highlight the concept of stewardship that can be used as well.

## **Scriptural Texts Relating to Stewardship**

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### ***On Responsible Stewardship:***

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*All tithes of the land, whether in grain from the fields or in fruit from the trees, belong to the Lord, as sacred to Him...The tithes of the herd and the flock shall be determined by ceding to the Lord as sacred every tenth animal as they are counted by the herdsman’s rod.*      Leviticus 27:30, 32

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*Son, give alms in proportion to what you own. If you have great wealth, give alms out of your abundance; if you have but little, distribute even some of that. But do not hesitate to give alms; you will be storing up a goodly treasure for yourself against the day of adversity.*      Tobit 4:8-9

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*Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce; then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow.*      Proverbs 3:9-10

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*The just man’s sacrifice is most pleasing, nor will it ever be forgotten. In generous spirit pay homage to the Lord, be not sparing of freewill gifts. With each contribution show a cheerful countenance and pay your tithes in a spirit of joy. Give to the Most High as he has given to you, generously according to your means. For the Lord is one who always repays, and he will give back to you seven-fold.*      Sirach 35:6-10

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*Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruits.*      Matthew 21:43

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*He said, “Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.” His master said to him, “Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master’s joy.”*      Matthew 25:20-21

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# Stewardship



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*Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.*

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

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*If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech but indeed and truth.*

1 John 3:17-18

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*"He must increase; I must decrease."*

John 3:30

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*"Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing."*

Luke 6:38

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## **On Gratitude:**

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*No one shall appear before the Lord empty-handed, but each of you with as much as he can give, in proportion to the blessings which the Lord, your God, has bestowed on you.*

Deuteronomy 16:16-17

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*What the Lord has given us to live on is certainly enough for us.*

Tobit 5:20

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*The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it.*

Psalms 24:1

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*Know that the Lord is God, he made us, his we are; his people, the flock that he tends. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name for he is good.*

Psalms 100:3-5

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*How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good he has done for me?*

Psalms 116:12

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*"All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God."*

2 Corinthians 4:15

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## **On Prayer:**

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*Take care to keep my sabbaths, for that it is to be the token between you and me throughout the generations, to show that it is I, the Lord, who make you holy.*

Exodus 31:13





# Stewardship



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*For six days work may be done; but the seventh day is the sabbath rest, a day for sacred assembly on which you shall do no work. The sabbath shall belong to the Lord wherever you dwell.*

Leviticus 23:3

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*For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope. When you call me, when you go to pray to me I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart you will find me with you.*

Jeremiah 29:11-14

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*This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done...*

Matthew 6:9-10

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*Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.*

Matthew 11:28

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*Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test.*

Mark 14:37-38

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## **On Participation:**

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*The word of the Lord came to me thus: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations, I appointed you...To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.*

Jeremiah 4-5,7-8

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*"Why do you stand here idle?...You too go into my vineyard."*

Matthew 20:6, 7

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*But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as ransom for many.*

Matthew 20:26-28

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*Amen, I say to you. Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.*

Matthew 25:40

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*"Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" He said to them in reply, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise."*

Luke 3:9-11

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*Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do.*

John 14:12

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*Jesus said to them, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."*

John 20:21

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# Stewardship



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*Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does.*

James 1:22-25

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*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well," but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

James 2:14-17

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*So we, though many, are one Body of Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them.*

Romans 12:5-6

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*As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever.*

1 Peter 4:10-11

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*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" "Here I am," I said; "send me!"*

Isaiah 6:8

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## **On Generosity:**

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*This is what the Lord then said to Moses: "Tell the Israelites to take up a collection for me. From every man you shall accept the contribution that his heart prompts him to give me."*

Exodus 25:1-2

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*From all the gifts that you receive, and from the best parts, you are to consecrate to the Lord your own full contribution.*

Numbers 18:29

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*Each year you shall tithe all the produce that grows in the field you have sown...so that the Levite who has no share in the heritage with you and also the alien, the orphan and the widow who belong to your community, may come and eat their fill so that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you undertake.*

Deuteronomy 14:22 & 29

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*The measure of your own freewill offering shall be in proportion to the blessings the Lord, your God, has bestowed on you...*

Deuteronomy 16:10

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*It is the Lord's blessing that brings wealth and no effort can substitute for it.*

Proverbs 10:22

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# Stewardship



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*One man is lavish yet grows still richer; another is too sparing, yet is the poorer. He who confers benefits will be amply enriched, and he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.*

Proverbs 11:24-25

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*Let not your hand be open to receive and clenched when it is time to give.*

Sirach 4:31

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*Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.*

Matthew 10:8

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*Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.*

Luke 12:48

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## **On Trust:**

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*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, That there may be food in my house and try me in this way, says the Lord of hosts; Shall I not open for you the floodgates of heaven to pour down blessings upon you without measure?*

Malachi 3:8-10

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*So do not worry and say "What are we to eat?" or "What are we to drink?" or "What are we to wear?" All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom (of God) and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.*

Matthew 6:31-33

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*Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?*

Mark 4:40

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*Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.*

Luke 6:38

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*He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?*

Romans 8:32

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## **On Materialism:**

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*No one can serve two masters. He will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*

Matthew 6:24

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*Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it... This is the meaning of the parable. The seed is the Word of God... As for the seed that fell among thorns, they are the ones who have heard but as they go along, they are choked by the anxieties and riches and pleasures of life and they fail to produce mature fruit.*

Luke 8:7,11,14

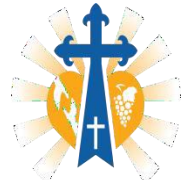
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*What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?*

Luke 9:25



## Stewardship



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*Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions*

Luke 12:15

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*Every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 14:33

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*For we brought nothing into the world, just as we shall not be able to take anything out of it. If we have food and clothing, we shall be content with that. Those who want to be rich are falling into temptation and into a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils and some people in their desire for it have strayed from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.*

1 Timothy 6:7-10

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### **On True Treasure:**

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*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.*

Matthew 6:19-21

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*The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field which a person finds and hides again and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

Matthew 13:44

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*If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.*

Matthew 19:21

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*But God said to him, "You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?" Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God.*

Luke 12:20-21

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*Tell the rich in the present age not to be proud and not to rely on so uncertain a thing as wealth but rather on God, who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, thus accumulating as treasure a good foundation for the future, so as to win the life that is true life.*

1 Timothy 6:17-19



# Stewardship



## **Stewardship Terminology People Respond To**

- The word “stewardship” can be very polarizing because the term is misused and misunderstood. (It’s about more than money, it starts with prayer.)
- Look for other words to use besides time, talent, and treasure. Many people “tune-out” when they hear these words.
- The Archbishop started using other terms – prayer (time), participation (talent), and generosity (treasure).
- Stewardship is not something new the Church just made up. Stewardship is talked about all through the Old and New Testaments – giving from our “first fruits” and “tithing.”
- The U.S. Council of Bishops developed *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response* back in 1992 as a resource guide for parish stewardship.
- Recognizing everything is a gift from God and being grateful and generous with our gifts.
- Everything we are and everything we have comes from God. We aren’t “owners,” we are “stewards” of our God-given gifts.
- It is a conscious choice to live a grateful and generous lifestyle.
- We are called to be generous with all of our gifts – our time, talent, and treasure. Not just one or two, not just the gifts we pick and choose, but all of our gifts.
- Stewardship is a lifestyle, something we live 24/7, not just something I do on Sunday or whenever I am participating in my parish ministry.
- Focus on our “personal stewardship” as well as our “parish stewardship.” Be good stewards of the 10% we give to the Church, but also the 90% when not at Church. (We naturally choose the “path of least resistance” and give the one gift that causes the least discomfort.)
- We are all stewards! Stewardship is the thread that links all the parish ministries together.
- Stewardship is about helping each other increase our Faith, better our relationship with Jesus Christ, and help each other get to Heaven!
- God gives us gifts; what we do with those gifts is our gift back to God.
- We can’t do everything but we can do something.
- “Every decision you make either moves you towards God or moves you away from God.” Deacon Jim Russell



# Stewardship



- If we keep looking up to God in gratitude, we'll rarely look down on others in judgment.
- When we are thankful in all situations, when we develop an "attitude of gratitude," we begin to see all the little miracles that happen every day in our lives.
- Stewardship is definitely a way of life. The way we act at Sunday Mass is the same way we should act when we are out in the world.
- Developing an "attitude of gratitude" leads us to live "God-centered" lives and not "self-centered lives."
- We talk a lot about the gifts of time, talent and treasure, but what God wants the most is the gift of our hearts. Not out of obligation, but out of love for Him and others.

## **Stewardship Thoughts**

"Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire." ~ St. Catherine of Siena

Stewardship is recognizing that everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God and then living a grateful and generous lifestyle.

It's easy to understand the "grateful and generous" part of that definition; the hard part is the "recognition" side – realizing that everything is a gift!

Unfortunately, this is where we lose most people. Many people take time for granted or they convince themselves that they are "too busy," they don't really see time as a gift. ("Busyness" has become one of the modern day gods). Many people don't realize that the talents, skills, and abilities that God gave them are gifts. They don't realize that the money and possessions they earned from their talents, skills and abilities, that God gave them, are gifts. They don't realize that the people God has put into their lives are gifts.

Instead, some people think that they do all this on their own or better yet, they think they "deserve" it; they don't recognize God's active presence in their daily lives.

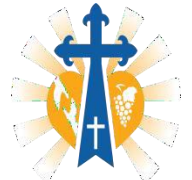
This lack of recognition is why many people aren't generous with all their gifts: their time in prayer, their talent in charitable works or their financial resources to support the Church. They don't "recognize" everything is a gift. When we don't recognize something as a gift, it's hard to make the connection to gratitude and generosity. This is especially true when it comes to money. Many of us think we "earn" money on our own and therefore don't see the religious aspect of giving money. (Many Catholics are generous, however, the hard truth is that most Catholics are not generous in proportion to the gifts they have been given.)

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# Stewardship



Stewardship is about living a God-centered life, not a self-centered life. Remember the Gospel of John – “He must increase; I must decrease.”

Archbishop Carlson said that the root cause of most sin can be boiled down to pride and ego. Every day we are faced with many decisions. Before deciding on a course of action, ask yourself this question, “Am I doing this for the glory of God or am I doing this for the glory of me?” Being a good steward, being a good disciple, means recognizing that all we have is a gift and doing it for the glory of God.

Pray for the vision and wisdom to recognize all of the blessings that we receive on a daily basis and for the strength and courage to make decisions that move us closer to God.

## **The Amazing Parish**

The Amazing Parish is a Catholic apostolate that is the catalyst for the revitalization of the Church through the revitalization of its parishes.

Based in Denver, CO, The Amazing Parish holds national conferences where parishes receive world-class training on improving the organizational health of the parish. Pastors and parish leadership teams learn techniques to help the parish strategically, operationally, and interpersonally. Since 2014, The Amazing Parish has helped more than 6,000 pastors and parish leaders from over 1,200 parishes.

The Amazing Parish is the brain-child of CEO and best-selling author, Patrick Lencioni and businessman John Martin. Their goal at their conferences is to help parishes more effectively fulfill Christ’s Great Commission by initially focusing on three characteristics of an amazing parish:

- Total reliance on prayer and the sacraments
- Commitment to a healthy organization
- Passion for evangelization and discipleship

Consulting services are provided at no additional cost to all pastors and parish leadership teams that attend a conference. Once a highly functioning leadership team is created and in place, the consultants work to develop with the parishes broadly in the areas of evangelization and discipleship.

To learn more...

- Call 303.481.4320
- [Team@AmazingParish.org](mailto:Team@AmazingParish.org)
- The Amazing Parish, 6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 220, Greenwood Village, CO 80111

In the Archdiocese of St. Louis, several parishes have already begun receiving training.





# Stewardship



## **The Spirituality of Stewardship**

- The Diocese of Wichita, KS has a wonderful DVD series on the *The Spirituality of Stewardship* that is highly recommended to view.
- It is a four-part DVD series that is designed to be given in a group setting on stewardship formation. Each DVD is about 30 minutes in length.
- Fr. John Lanzrath provides the training and is featured on the videos.
- To order a set of DVDs and corresponding training information visit the Diocese of Wichita's website at <https://catholicdioceseofwichita.org/stewardship-resources/>.

## **Welcoming/Engagement**

- Most parishes are “friendly,” but very few are “welcoming.” This is the number one priority for many parishes.
- If you were a newcomer to your parish would you feel welcome?
- Does your parish have a welcoming environment for current/new parishioners and visitors?
- Engagement begins with personal contact and continues with follow through.
- People have a desire to be wanted, needed, and engaged.
- An emotional connection is stronger than a rational one.
- Archbishop Thomas Murphy – “Belonging leads to believing.”
- When attending Mass or parish events, be on the look-out for people that look “new,” “lost,” or “need help.” Approach them and ask how you can help. Take the little extra step to introduce yourself.
- Sit in different areas of church when attending Mass. You will probably notice people you haven't seen before. Are these people welcomed?
- When attending Mass or other church activities, move to the middle of the pew and leave the end open so others can join you.
- Don't assume all of the regular parishioners feel welcome. Remember the elderly of your parish that built the church.
- Try this exercise: Look at Mass and other parish events through the eyes of a new parishioner. Welcoming opportunities will magically appear. Compare notes and discuss with your spouse. Or, ask a friend to attend and offer their thoughts.
- Constantly invite family, friends, and people you meet to join you at Mass.
- Make sure your weekend Mass is a welcoming event:
  - Greeters before and after Mass.
  - Ushers walk people to their pews (especially people they don't recognize)
  - Parishioners introduce each other at beginning of Mass
  - Priest greets people as they are leaving





## Stewardship



- Do you have a parish “welcome” committee? Encourage all parish ministries to have a welcoming procedure.
- “Mentoring” Families – match new parishioners with a current mentor family (by demographics) to attend Mass and parish events together throughout the year and develop a personal relationship.
- Registration process – encourage all new parishioners to register. Make sure new parishioners are visited by parish priest, deacon or staff during the registration process. Does the pastor/priest call or visit new parishioners?
- Welcome Packets:
  - Facts/figures about the parish (annual stewardship report)
  - Schedule of Masses, other sacraments and parish activities
  - List of parish ministries
  - Contact information for parish staff and lay leaders
  - Copy of parish mission statement
  - Stewardship brochures and prayer cards
  - Parish newsletter
  - Any parish trinkets to give away
- Welcome letter from the pastor – within a week or two after they are registered.
- Welcome letter to new school parents.
- Welcome letter to new PSR families (in most parishes, PSR families feel like “second-class” citizens).
- Welcome visit – from priest, deacon or welcome committee. Keep the visit short and no more than a couple of people.
- Welcome Event – schedule a periodic event to get to know people better. Schedule after Mass or during the evening. Each new parishioner should receive an invitation. Have nametags, have a couple of parish ministry leaders give brief talks, allow for questions and answers, take pictures and post on website. (i.e. New Parishioner Dinners, Meet the Priest, schedule home parties, and invite new parishioners and new priests).
- List new parishioners in bulletin, on the website, and in the annual stewardship report.
- Does your parish provide for cultural diversity?
- Does your parish reach out beyond its parish borders? Invite the local community to attend events?
- Easter and Christmas postcard or hand-out with pictures of parish staff and calendar of upcoming events.
- Prior to Mass, the priest asks everyone to introduce themselves to those around them.
- Train parish ministry leaders and current parishioners to look for new parishioners and introduce themselves and invite them to activities.
- Before Mass, the priest asks parishioners for things to pray for and incorporate into Prayers of the Faithful.



# Stewardship



- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast
- Annual Stewardship Renewal Process – call new volunteers within first week of sign-up.
- Lobby of church has information desk like a concierge at a hotel.
- Funerals, weddings, events with many non-Catholics: have the priest explain what is happening during the ceremony and what it means for Catholics.
- “Instructional” Mass – better formation of all Catholics.
- Catholic Schools Week – have school children hand-out “thank you” cards to all parishioners at all Masses.
- Stewardship Committee Member – oversees welcoming activities of all ministries.
- From the book *Rebuilt*:
  - Look at things from an “unchurched” person’s point of view
  - Provide a wonderful weekend experience
  - Get church-goers to be active
  - Give homilies in a 5 – 6 week series throughout the year. Helps “connect the dots” and reinforce messages each week by building upon it.
- Name tags for all parishioners to wear at Mass and temporary tags for visitors.
- Website information in different languages.
- At beginning of Mass, the priest leaves the altar and walks up to new people and welcomes them and introduces them. Or, from the altar, the priest welcomes new parishioners and visitors by name.
- Sign of Peace
  - Eucharistic Ministers shake hands and hug when they come to the altar (include priest and servers)
  - Smile, shake everyone’s hand around you, introduce yourself to people you do not know, including children
- Monthly Ministry Appreciation – first Monday of each month, guest speaker, and attendance prize (gift certificate).
- Invite new and current parishioners to join small faith sharing groups.
- Bulletins – when writing articles, pretend the reader is new to the parish. Many regular parishioners feel like “outsiders” in their own parish.
  - Spell out acronyms
  - Give directions to meeting rooms
  - List contact name and information
- Have suggestion boxes in multiple locations (i.e. Church, gym, meeting rooms).
- Have a guest book for visitors to sign.
- Display photographs of current parish activities.



## Stewardship



- Bulletin Boards – remove “old” information.
- Follow-up with people celebrating sacraments to see if there is anything they need.
- Welcoming information booths at parish events and all Masses.
- Visit other churches and see how they welcome people.
- After Prayers of the Faithful, ask newcomers and visitors to stand and thank them for coming.
- Add a “Family Spotlight” section to the bulletin (new and current families).
- If you see a family “struggling” at Mass with children, talk to them after Mass and reassure them that it’s OK. Remind them that their children are welcome at Mass and encourage them to keep bringing their children (“We’ve all been through it.”)
- Usher Training – look to make personal connections with parishioners. For example, help parishioners with their kids or help people to their cars.
- Have “Greeters” at Mass that are separate from the ushers. Greeters make personal connections with Mass attendees – more than just saying “welcome.”
- As Parish Ministry Leaders, we lead by example. If we sing, it will encourage others to sing. If we pray, others will be encouraged to pray.
- Get to know people around you at Mass – say hello and introduce yourself.
- Make additional handicap parking available.
- Designate a “Grandma and Grandpa” to watch kids during Mass.
- Weekly Mass Announcements – we encourage families to keep their kids in Church during Mass and not take them to the cry room.
- Welcoming has a direct impact on your parish stewardship efforts.

### Tips to Improving Your Parish Hospitality & Welcoming (from the Office of Marriage and Family Life):

- Your website is often the place people visit first so try to make it welcoming and user-friendly. Mass times, Reconciliation times, bulletin, and other items most often accessed should be very easy to find. Avoid “churchy” language, and acronyms, because visitors may not understand them.
- Make sure your parish staff **especially** the secretary is kind, compassionate, courteous, and welcoming. The secretary is usually the first point of contact for new parishioners.
- Make sure signage inside and outside of the Church is easy to follow.
- Are your grounds and building exterior maintained well?
- Make sure your nursery, cry room are easy to find. Make sure the cry room is stocked well with supplies and is clean and safe for children.
- Have someone stationed at every door that people use to open the door for them and greet them with a smile and brief conversation.



## Stewardship



- Have someone who is easy to find, stationed at a prominent place, to answer questions or provide resources.
- Make sure your restrooms are well marked, clean, and easy to find. They should be checked regularly especially during a busy weekend. Do you have baby changing stations?
- Suggest to your parishioners that they should allow handicapped or those with small children to sit closest to the end of the pew.
- Encourage parishioners to move to the middle of the pews because it encourages others to sit by them.
- Suggest to your parishioners that they be patient and encouraging to parents with small children.
- Ushers should hold doors, help find seats, straighten up between Masses, help keep things safe, provide assistance to those with children and the disabled and hand out bulletins. People on the hospitality team should handle everything else. Consider having name tags. Offer brief trainings and reminders for your ushers and hospitality teams. You could also offer trainings on how to start conversations with new people, so they grow more comfortable with it.
- Treat every person attending Mass or any event as an honored guest.
- Pay attention to the details and try to exceed people's expectations.
- Consider putting welcome cards in the pews.
- Consider putting worship aids in the pews for those that aren't Catholic. The Breaking Bread or missals are difficult to follow for those that aren't Catholic. This is a great resource for that: <https://store.faithcatholic.com/>
- Consider putting some kind of welcome to parents with small children in the pews.
- Make sure your registration includes an age range question, and a question regarding ministries that appeal to them.
- When someone registers in your parish, have someone call and welcome them personally and send out a welcome letter from the pastor. It is really nice to have the pastor offer to bless their home if the pastor is willing. If your registration form asks about what ministries people are attracted to, then have someone from those ministries contact them as well.
- Host a welcoming event for new parishioners other than Donut Sunday. For example, a pot luck brunch right after Mass. Make sure you have someone from various age groups available during the welcoming event.
- Make sure each new parishioner receives a picture directory of the parish and a ministry list.
- Pray for new parishioners and visitors.



# Stewardship



## More information on developing a “welcoming” environment.

“...it is to open ourselves, our hearts to the needs of others. Hospitality is not just shelter, but the quality of welcome behind it.” ~ Dorothy Day

### Hospitality Checklist for a Parish

#### **SUNDAYS**

1. Are there greeters at the entrances, welcoming people and perhaps giving them a worship aid?
2. Is there a place set aside for people with special needs, e.g. wheelchairs, etc.?
3. Are listening devices provided for the hearing impaired? Is the sound system adequate so that everyone can hear the readings, homily, and Eucharistic Prayer wherever they sit?
4. Are people encouraged to greet one another before the liturgy begins?
5. Do the homilies emphasize community, the Lord's welcome and forgiveness, and compassion?
6. Is the liturgy sensitive to the various ethnic communities in the parish?
7. Do the priests greet the people after Mass as long as people are around?
8. Are there opportunities after Mass for people to gather for a time and greet one another? Are they encouraged to say hello to someone they don't know? Do priests and other staff members stay around and encounter people who seem to be alone or uneasy?
9. Are there cards in the pews that newcomers and visitors can fill out and place in the collection basket? Are they assured of a follow-up contact?
10. Is there an Inquiry Process for the RCIA that is quick and easy to begin?

#### **SURROUNDINGS**

1. Is there clear signage as to where the parish is located, along with the other facilities of the parish?
2. Are the grounds well kept? Is the landscaping attractive and well-tended?
3. Is the night lighting adequate for safety around the building and in the parking lot?
4. Is the vestibule of the Church welcoming, with up-to-date information, with no out-of-date fliers or left-over envelopes and fliers hanging on the board?
5. Are the restrooms clean, well-stocked, and functioning properly? Is there a changing table in the restrooms? Are the restrooms handicapped accessible?

#### **THE PARISH OFFICE/MEETING PLACES**

1. Is the office person/secretary welcoming, warmly greeting the person coming in?
2. Are the poor who come to the office/rectory door treated with care and respect?
3. Is parish information readily available that the office person can provide, such as a list of the staff, their positions, and direct phone numbers?
4. What happens when a person asks to speak to a priest? If a priest is unavailable, does the office manager graciously take steps to set up a future appointment with a priest or offer other helpful options?



## Stewardship



5. Is a priest contactable for sick calls and hospital needs?

### THE TELEPHONE

1. Is the telephone answered by a live person, not an answering machine? When an answering machine is used, does it include messages in English and Spanish when the demographics of the parish require it? Do all employees check their messages regularly?
2. Is information given for contacting a priest in emergencies afterhours?

### THE WEBSITE

1. Is the parish website attractive and user-friendly? Are the Mass times easy to find? Does the parish use social communication media?
2. Is it welcoming, easy to get around to find contacts and information one needs? Is there too much information? Is it accurate and kept up to date?

### FOR PARISHIONERS

1. Are parishioners encouraged to be welcoming, warm, open, and compassionate at Mass and at other occasions?
2. Are parishioners encouraged to invite others – Catholic or not – to come with them to all types of parish events?
3. Is there a follow-up visit to the homes of new parishioners by a member of a welcoming committee of the parish? Is printed parish information provided that includes the name and number of that visiting parishioner who can serve as a contact person with the parish?
4. Is the Church open frequently so that parishioners and others may visit the Blessed Sacrament? Are these times known in the parish?

## Welcoming the Lord

The topic of welcoming typically centers on what parishes can do to welcome visitors, new parishioners and current parishioners to the parish. This relates to our “parish” stewardship.

What about our own personal stewardship?

Do we think about how each of us can “welcome” Jesus into our own hearts, minds, and bodies?

Each of us is a home for Jesus. Do we welcome Him home on a daily basis?

Or, are we too busy with our own activities and distractions to take the time to welcome Jesus into our own lives?

The first thing we should do each day is welcome the Lord into our hearts.

We can't give what we don't have.

If we don't take time to welcome Jesus into our lives every day, how do we expect to welcome others into our parish community?

Remember, try to stay “God-centered” and not “self-centered” throughout the day.



## Parish Planning Guide

(Website Version @ [archstl.org/stewardship](http://archstl.org/stewardship))

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# Stewardship



## Stewardship Best Practices

Below is a list of “Best Practices” developed by Dr. Charles Zech in his book, *Best Practices in Parish Stewardship*:

- 1. Be a Welcoming Parish That Takes Community-Building Seriously**
  - Try a variety of approaches; most successful used 4 or more welcoming activities
  - Examples: Greeters at Mass, parish picnics, potluck dinners
- 2. Appoint a Stewardship Council**
  - A pastor cannot do it by himself
  - Leadership should be living a life of stewardship
  - Have a parish stewardship vision, be comfortable talking about money and recognize the importance of accountability
- 3. Include Stewardship as a Vital Component of the Parish Plan**
  - Stewardship must permeate the parish plan
  - Stewardship should be in the parish mission statement
- 4. Emphasize Stewardship in All Parish Formation and Education Programs**
  - For both youth and adult programs
- 5. Provide the Opportunity for Lay Witness Presentations**
  - Powerful impact on changing people’s hearts and minds
  - Should occur more than once per year
  - Stewardship is not just about treasure (money)
  - Lay witness speakers need to be credible
- 6. Encourage parishioners to Make a Commitment to the Parish by Pledging**
  - Encompass all three components: time, talent, and treasure
- 7. Communicate With Parishioners on Stewardship**
  - Inform of past and future needs
  - Use multiple tools: annual report, periodic newsletters, website
- 8. Good Stewardship Starts in the Parish House**
  - If we want parishioners to be good stewards, leadership must be a model for them
  - Accountable and transparent in all financial dealings





# Stewardship



## **Why Is Stewardship Sunday Held Annually?**

One of the questions that parish leaders and parishioners often ask about Stewardship Sunday is, “Didn’t we just do this?”

Stewardship is not a “one-time” thing. It is not a program, but an ongoing spiritual process. During the annual renewal process we should take time to determine where we are on our journey, how far we have come, and where God is still calling us to follow Him:

- Just like Christmas, Easter, Advent, or Lent, stewardship is part of the life cycle of the parish. Stewardship should be an ongoing aspect of our religious traditions.
- As with all matters of faith, there are times when we respond positively, negatively, or not at all. We cannot let those who fail to respond, or who respond negatively, to discourage us from teaching stewardship.
- An annual renewal process is important for new members of the parish community.
- Through the annual renewal process, we show that stewardship is a way of life, not a one- time program.
- When parishioners begin to see that the parish is making a serious commitment to stewardship, gradually more and more parishioners begin to take stewardship seriously.
- Parishes that commit to annual renewal see a gradual increase in parishioner involvement and investment in the parish.
- Stewardship is an ongoing journey into a deeper faith and relationship with God.
- The annual renewal process regularly invites people to take one step closer to God.



# Stewardship



## **Parish Leadership Involvement**

If a stewardship effort is to be successful, every leader of a parish ministry or activity must make sure that all new volunteers who express interest in participating are:

- 1. Contacted**
- 2. Welcomed**
- 3. Involved**

- Increasing participation takes all three steps and they must be done as soon as possible.
- Not responding immediately can lead to rejection and hurt feelings.
- Contact the new volunteers **immediately** even if you will not need their help for several months.
- Determine a deadline for all follow-up calls – possibly within two weeks after the lists have been distributed.
- Consider a commissioning service or Mass for all new volunteers sometime after the first of the year.

### ***Contact New Volunteers***

- Immediately call every person who has expressed an interest in participating in your group. If you have trouble reaching the person, leave a message on an answering machine. Make sure you leave a phone number where you can be reached.
- If the person does not call within two days, presume the message was lost and try again.
  - ▶ Always follow up with a written note which thanks new volunteers for their interest and tells them again what the next step will be – date, time and place, etc.

### ***Welcome New Volunteers***

- Always use nametags for everybody at meetings where newcomers are present.
- Make sure no one ever sits alone.
- Try to use tables rather than just chairs whenever possible. Tables are more welcoming. It is easier to see who is alone and easier to meet and talk to everyone at the table.
- Consider planning special refreshments or decorations to let new members know you consider it a real celebration that they have joined you.



## Stewardship



### ***Involve New Volunteers***

- When recruiting members for committees or additional activities don't just ask the same people or pass around sign-up sheets. Have someone walk around after the meeting and personally ask newcomers if they are willing to sign up for something more.
- Make sure you let new volunteers do something worthwhile. No one wants to waste time sitting or standing around while experienced members do all the talking or all the work.
- Allow new volunteers to share their new ideas and suggestions. Every organization can benefit from new insights.
- If you are blessed with too many volunteers, add a new project or activity. Brainstorm with new and/or current members about what else your organization can do. Realize that if God sent the gifts to you, then God probably has some more work that He is calling you to do.



# Stewardship



## **PRAYER IS THE CORNERSTONE OF STEWARDSHIP**

In 2010, the stewardship focus was prayer. We should never stop having prayer as a cornerstone for any stewardship effort. When we pray, we are living as God's stewards by following His direction.

When encouraging parishioners to pray about their stewardship, invite them to spend time with God in the following ways: daily prayer, private prayer before the Eucharist, communal prayer at daily/weekly Mass and or reflective Scripture reading.

### ***Highlight Opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration***

- Introduce your PSR and day students to Eucharistic Adoration. Young people can be extremely receptive to the power of the Eucharist.
- If your parish has Perpetual Adoration, make this the "centerpiece" of all your ministries.
- If your parish does not have Perpetual Adoration, consider offering Eucharistic Adoration as some part of your stewardship effort – possibly every day from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. during the week that parishioners are supposed to be reflecting about their stewardship commitment.

### ***Work to Increase Mass Attendance***

- Be creative in encouraging Mass attendance and attendance at school parent meetings or other parish organization meetings. Reminders about Mass times on outdoor signs and at sporting events are also effective.
- Those who are faithful to Sunday Mass attendance might now be ready to consider daily Mass attendance.
- Send a letter right after Labor Day to all families to encourage them to return to greater Mass attendance (now that the "lazy" days of summer are over).
- Look for more ways to involve children in your Masses: scout masses, sport team masses, youth choir, family gift bearers, greeters, etc.
- Design children's stewardship pledge cards for greater Mass attendance.



# Stewardship



## **OVERCOME BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION**

It's hard for people that frequently participate to understand why others don't feel the same joy. Be careful not to slip into an "us and them" attitude.

### **Consider the following roadblocks to participation:**

- 52% of all Americans say they would rather give money than time
- 58% of those who work full-time say they would rather give money than time
- 54% of those who are retired say they would rather give money than time
- 94% of people say they feel shy in an unfamiliar situation
- Technology allows us to entertain and socialize without leaving our home. The desire to turn to our parish community for social needs has greatly diminished.
- Longer commutes and more demanding work schedules leave people with little time or energy for parish participation
- Americans between the ages of 35-54 are more likely to volunteer
- 23% of people over 45 would like to volunteer more, but donot

### ***Here are a few actions which encourage participation***

- ***Strive for Excellence in Everything You Do***
  - ▶ Be respectful of everyone's time
  - ▶ Do not waste time with poorly planned meetings
  - ▶ One hour of volunteer time equals \$22.14
- ***Always Be Welcoming!***
  - ▶ 94% of people are shy in new situations – make everyone feel welcome
  - ▶ Show extra encouragement, kindness, friendliness
  - ▶ Welcome everyone – new and current parishioners
- ***Promote the Benefits of Community***
  - ▶ Explain the benefits received by those who participate
  - ▶ Active participants know they get more than they give. Talk to newcomers about the personal joy you feel from your involvement.



## Stewardship



- ***Engage Parishioners in a Vision***
  - ▶ It's important that all parishioners feel they have a voice in the matter
  - ▶ Listening sessions, surveys, and visioning processes lead to better participation
- ***Target Those Looking for Involvement***
  - ▶ People 35-54 are more likely to volunteer
  - ▶ 23% of people over 45 want to volunteer more



# Stewardship



## **EXPAND PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Before you invite someone to dinner, you have to make sure there is a place at the table for them:

- Are you offering activities that match parishioner needs?
- Survey the parish – ask what needs are being met and which are not being met
- Are things being run the same way as 30 years ago?
- Do all activities revolve around the school only?
  
- ***Is There Something For Everyone? Are There Opportunities For?***
  - ▶ Homebound
  - ▶ Young adults
  - ▶ Older parishioners
  - ▶ Those without children
  - ▶ Those who want more social service type of activities
  - ▶ Those who want more faith enrichment activities
  
- ***Are There Fresh New Offerings on Your Ministry List?***
  - ▶ If nothing new has been added for several years there is a good possibility the life of your parish is withering
  - ▶ Good stewardship means that we are constantly calling our parishioners to a new level of involvement
  
- ▶ Consider new opportunities in the following areas:
  - ❖ Praying, Celebrating, Liturgy or Worship
  - ❖ Learning, Teaching, Christian Formation or Education
  - ❖ Supporting or Caring
  - ❖ Belonging, Connecting or Parish Life
  - ❖ Serving, Helping, Christian Service or Outreach
  - ❖ Guiding, Maintaining or Administration
  - ❖ Creating, Skills or Talents



## Stewardship



### ▪ ***Are You Open to New Ideas?***

- ▶ Doing new and different things attracts new and different people
- ▶ Include the word “Other” and a blank line on your intention card. This invites all parishioners to offer a special talent or idea that they might have
- ▶ Consider a short pew survey or a survey of parish leaders. Asking one or two questions can generate a wealth of ideas:
  - ❖ What one thing could we do at our parish to make it better?
  - ❖ Is there a parish activity that you wish we had?
  - ❖ Do you feel that our parish does a good job of serving all parishioners? If no, what group do you feel needs more attention in our parish?
  - ❖ Does our parish do enough outreach to the poor and needy in our community? If no, is there a social justice activity you would like us to consider?
  - ❖ Does our parish offer enough opportunities for faith development? If no, what faith development activity would you like us to offer?
- ▶ While you may receive some ideas that are unrealistic, research shows that most people feel more positive about an organization that asks for their suggestions, even if the suggestions cannot all be implemented.





# Stewardship



## **THE ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

The release of an Annual Stewardship Report is the first step in a successful stewardship process.

**Do not confuse** an Annual Stewardship Report with an annual financial report.

- An **Annual Financial Report** is an official statement of the parish's financial position of revenues and expenses for the last year. While it is necessary to disclose this information every year, most parishioners don't find this to be inspirational.
- The **Annual Stewardship Report** includes the annual financial report and other information that inspires the parishioners, thus encouraging greater participation in the parish:
  - ▶ A letter of appreciation from the pastor.
  - ▶ The parish Mission Statement.
  - ▶ A list of parish statistics and fun facts. This helps parishioners see at a glance all that the parish accomplishes in a single year.
  - ▶ A summary of the highlights from the last year – including important parish events, improvements and accomplishments.
  - ▶ An Offertory report, including the number of households using envelopes and the number of households using on-linegiving.
  - ▶ Information on the trends and realities that are contained in the annual **financial** report.
  - ▶ A listing of all parish ministries and an estimate of the number of parishioners involved in each ministry.
  - ▶ A listing of all parish fundraising activities, how much was raised and how the money was used. (This helps parishioners see that supporting a fundraising activity is often not the same as supporting the parish through Offertory.)
  - ▶ The names and contact information for parish staff or volunteers who can answer any questions about the report.



# Stewardship



## **When Should You Release the Annual Stewardship Report?**

- Release your report one week before the Stewardship Sunday activity begins.
- **Do not** distribute or mail your stewardship annual report **before Labor Day!** It will be lost or overlooked in all the activities that traditionally surround this time of the year.
- Some parishes have also found it helpful to create similar reports to distribute after all **Christmas and Easter** Masses. These reports – featuring more seasonal, welcoming and upcoming event messages and less financial data – can put valuable information into the hands of parishioners who only visit your parish once or twice a year.

## **How Do You Create the Annual Stewardship Report?**

### **Option 1**

If you would like to have the report created for you using a template that complements all of the other Archdiocesan Stewardship Sunday materials, contact Our Sunday Visitor at [SMprocessing@osv.com](mailto:SMprocessing@osv.com).

The OSV Annual Stewardship Report is a very affordable, very attractive, four-page, four-color report. It includes all of the materials previously listed, plus full-color photos provided by your parish. Designed especially for parishes in the Archdiocese of St. Louis, its colors match the Archdiocesan stewardship materials.

Parishes simply send all of your information and pictures to OSV. Depending on your preference, within three or four weeks OSV will either ship the completed reports to you in bulk or mail them personally to all the parishioners on your mailing list.

### **Option 2**

If you have the time and the talent within your parish community, you can create the report as a special annual project. Contact the Stewardship Education Department at 314-792-7215 or [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org) for a sample template and more information.



# Stewardship



## **PARISH STEWARDSHIP MAILING**

Our stewardship goal is to have parishioners respond positively and commit to some level of stewardship. Here are some steps your parish can take to assist the parishioners with their reflection and response:

### ***Send a Letter from the Pastor***

It is essential that the pastor, as the spiritual leader, speak out on stewardship. One way is through a personal letter:

- Thank parishioners for their past generosity.
- Note the progress and accomplishments of the parish over the last year.
- Be specific in asking parishioners to review any other materials that might be included with the letter.
- Establish a sense of pride in the parish. (Consider a reference to the parish's strong history, the role stewardship has played in that history and the contributions the parish has made to the community.)
- Remind parishioners of the size of the parish, especially if the parish is growing. Sometimes we forget just what a major business operation a parish can be.
- Talk about your own feelings and experience as pastor.
- Ask parishioners to pray about how God may be calling them to participate in the parish and then to make a commitment by completing an intention card.

### **The importance of mailing a letter from the pastor includes:**

- By mailing, you reinforce the idea that **this is important**
- By mailing, you are assured that the material does indeed **reach the home** and doesn't end up left in the pews or littering the parking lot
- By mailing, you also **reach parishioners who were not at Mass that weekend**

### ***Include a Stewardship Brochure***

- Brochures have been an effective tool for over 20 years and are used by the St. Louis Archdiocese and many other dioceses across the country



# Stewardship



## ***Use a Stewardship Commitment or Pledge Card***

The Commitment Card gives parishioners an opportunity to make a real commitment to your parish. Depending on the needs and the goals of the parish, intention cards can include:

- An opportunity for parishioners to pledge more time with God through greater Mass attendance, daily prayer and spiritual reflection.
- List all the organizations, ministries, and activities in which parishioners can participate.
- A place for parishioners to pledge a regular financial contribution to your parish.
- A space for parishioners to write any comments or suggestions they may have.
- One intention card can combine all of the above opportunities for commitment or separate intention cards can be used for prayer, participation, and generosity pledges.

## ***Ask for a Pledge***

To let parishioners really see that you want them to complete and return the commitment card, you should ask for their pledge repeatedly. The recommended process includes:

- Have lay witness speakers talk at weekend Masses about the importance of all parishioners making a greater commitment or pledge to the parish.
- Have the celebrant reinforce this message by encouraging parishioners to talk about their pledge in the week ahead with God and with their families.
- Mail intention cards to all parishioners on Monday.
- Ask parishioners to return the cards in some form of collection or commitment ceremony at Mass the next weekend. Take time during Mass to bless the commitment cards and to thank God for the commitment that the parishioners are making.
- Remind those who may have forgotten their pledge card that they can fill out extra cards available in the pews or bring their pledge card from home the next week.



# Stewardship



## **USE LAY WITNESS SPEAKERS**

Many studies on stewardship have found that having a parishioner speak about his or her own stewardship journey is one of the most powerful ways to convert other parishioners to the stewardship way of life. To get the most from these lay witness talks, remember these points:

### ***Give Careful Thoughts to Who Your Speakers Will Be***

- **Pick new speakers every year.** If you keep using the same speakers the parishioners will begin to believe these are the only stewards in the parish.
- It may be helpful to have a different speaker at each Mass. This allows you to select speakers who can best address the unique character of each Mass.
- Your speaker should understand and embrace a stewardship way of life.
- Look for someone who has the style and experience to speak in front of a group.
- Your stewardship speaker should be someone who is recognizable as an active participant in the parish community. Lectors, choir members, ushers, Eucharistic ministers, and leaders of parish organizations are good choices.
- Husband and wife teams can make excellent lay witnesses, especially when they talk of their own struggles to accept one another's beliefs about stewardship.

### ***Plan to Get Extra Mileage from Your Talks***

- Insert the full text of the talks in the bulletin the next weekend. If several speakers are speaking at different Masses, condense key excerpts from each talk and make it into an attractive flier to insert in your bulletin.
- Send a small booklet of the talks to all parishioners.
- If you are doing telephone or letter follow-up to those who did not return an intention card, include a copy of the talk, the pastor's stewardship homily and/or an excerpt sheet.
- Publish the full talk on your web site. Tell parishioners they can go there to check it out.
- Consider asking your lay witness speakers to talk at other parish events – such as a New Parishioner Welcome event, a Back-to-School night, or meetings of parish organizations.



# Stewardship



## **FESTIVAL OF MINISTRIES SUGGESTIONS**

For many years a Festival of Ministries was considered the ultimate “Best Practice” for introducing parishioners to the many opportunities that exist in the parish for participation.

### ***Plan Early and Thoroughly***

- Get the leaders of your parish organizations involved with this project.
- If parishioners seem tired of Festivals, consider a different way to highlight your parish ministries and activities – *be creative*.
- Consider an accessible location, good food, activities for kids, prizes, interesting displays from organizations and any other activities that will entice your parishioners to attend.

### ***Publicize, Publicize and Publicize!***

- Get this date on your parishioners’ calendars early. Begin to publicize it in bulletins, outdoor signage, newsletters, and on your website about two months in advance.
- Mail personal invitations to all newparishioners.
- Talk about it at parish meetings.
- If you have an email or phone system for broadcasting messages, use it for your Festival.

### ***Actively Engage Those Who Attend***

- Be sure those who are volunteering in ministry booths are prepared to reach out and engage any parishioners who seem interested.
- Have parish priests, staff, and stewardship committee members “working the crowd.”

### ***The Most Successful Festival of Ministries:***

- Is usually called something else
- Is more “social” in nature and less “recruitment” driven
- Features good food and drink
- Involves children’s activities
- Offers attendance or raffle prizes (prizes should be “low cost” for parish, but “high value” to parishioners. For example, reserved parking for Christmas Mass)



## Stewardship



- Is scheduled during the natural flow of parish life and not “forced”
- Changes/evolves every couple of years
- Incorporated with existing parish activities (parish picnic, fall festival)
- Suggestion: Have Mass in your parish gym (or large gathering area) where ministry tables can be set up and parishioners pass by when leaving Mass.



# Stewardship



## **MINISTRY CATALOG AND COMMITMENT CARD**

Whether you plan a Festival of Ministries or not, you should definitely produce a Ministry Catalog and Ministry Commitment Card. If you are having a Festival, the Ministry Catalog can be designed as a guide book to the Festival with parish activities and ministries arranged in the same order that they are laid out at the Festival. Even if you do not have a Festival, it is helpful if the Ministry Commitment Card is arranged in the same order as the ministries are arranged in the Ministry Catalog. Here are some other tips to keep in mind while planning and designing these two important stewardship resources for your parish.

### ***Ministry Catalog***

- Design your Ministry Catalog to be an open invitation to parishioners to participate in all aspects of parish life. List and explain all of the many ministries, organizations, and activities that exist in the parish. For uniform style, have just one person write or edit the listings.
- Add a list of contact names, phone numbers, and/or email addresses for every ministry. For easy updating, consider making this a separate insert in the catalog.
- Strive to make the Ministry Catalog a valuable reference tool for your parishioners by including other helpful information such as location of parish meeting rooms and contact numbers for parish staff.
- Consider adding a **\*\*NEW\*\*** icon before new ministry opportunities. This creates interest in the catalog and encourages parishioners to review it carefully each year. (You may want to create other icons for ministries that can be done at home, family activities, one-time only activities or other types of ministries that might have special appeal.)

### ***Ministry Commitment Card***

- Arrange the listings on your commitment card in categories that create interest - such as liturgical ministries, outreach to the needy, youth activities, parish care and maintenance, spiritual enrichment, etc. Headings such as these are more inviting than just an alphabetical list.
- Add special skills and talents that might be needed around the parish such as photography, graphic design, sewing, baking, carpentry, electrical work, etc.
- List a category called "Other" with a blank line. This invites parishioners to suggest other ways that they may be able to participate in the ministry of your parish.
- Add a few lines for "Suggestions." Research shows that people feel better about an organization that asks for suggestions, even if you cannot implement all of their ideas.





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## **Creative Ways to Promote Participation**

Parishioners may not participate because they are not paying attention to the ways in which you are reaching out to them. If you are trying to communicate to those who are not yet involved, you have to keep in mind that they just may not be paying attention to your regular ways of communication (e.g., they are not reading the weekly bulletin). You might want to try some new ways to highlight your ministry activities.

Also keep in mind that research shows that the more ways you highlight your ministries the greater chance that people will pay attention. So don't just replace one strategy for another. Keep adding new ways to highlight the opportunities for participation.

### ***Use Modern Technology***

- Use the same technology your parishioners use
- Use multiple forms of communication. One size does not fit all. ► Print: bulletin, newsletter, annual report
  - Email
  - Website: Put printed material on your website
  - Social Media: Facebook, Twitter
  - Outdoor Signage: parish sign, signage at other parish events, sporting events

### ***Start Parish "Want Ads"***

- Some parishes have had success with monthly "classified" inserts into their bulletin.
- Write "Want Ads" in a unique and interesting way.
- People are more inclined to respond to a specific need than to a vague need. A sample want ad might read:

#### **Help Wanted**

Fifteen people are needed to provide Jesus with personal transportation each Sunday to visit one of our homebound parishioners. You will be given training as a minister of the Eucharist and a small sacred vessel to carry Our Lord to a handicapped or sick parishioner who is not able to come to church. This ministry requires less than an hour after Mass each Sunday yet provides incredible fulfillment and the opportunity to meet wonderful and inspiring individuals. Contact (Name) at (email and phone) for more information.

- Use all forms of communication, not just print.



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## ***Highlight a Different Parish Activity Frequently***

- Highlight a different activity each week
- An article about the activity in your bulletin or an 8½" x 11" "Activity Update" sheet inserted in your bulletin. (If using "Activity Update" sheets you can have them three-hole punched so parishioners can save them in a small binder.)
- A representative of the activity speaking briefly before or after Mass to educate parishioners about the ministry and invite them to participate.
- Sign-up information in the pews that can be completed and returned with the collection.
- A special intention for the work of this ministry in Prayers of the Faithful.
- An informational table outside of church or at a Hospitality event after the Masses.
- Develop a monthly lay witness program
  - ▶ Highlight a different ministry each month
  - ▶ Coordinate with monthly "Donut Sunday"
  - ▶ Have a different speaker at each Mass
  - ▶ Put talk on the parish website
  - ▶ Video talk and put on website

## ***Create a Ministry Video***

- Create a video of all your parish organizations and groups
- Show video in a continuous loop at meetings
- Video could be shown at Mass
- Post on parish website
- Give CD to new parishioners

## ***Publish Individual Ministry Brochures***

- Individual tri-fold brochures could be created to highlight the different types of parish organizations and activities:
  - ▶ All liturgy activities
  - ▶ All special events
  - ▶ All charitable and social justice volunteer opportunities
  - ▶ All faith enrichment opportunities
  - ▶ All women's activities
  - ▶ All men's activities



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- ▶ All activities for children and/or teens
- ▶ All advisory council roles
- If you plan twelve different categories you can insert a different brochure in the bulletin once a month for a full year
- Ministry brochures can also be displayed in the back of church, posted on your website, included in welcome baskets, or mailed to the homes with newsletters or other parish mailings.



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## **FOLLOW UP WITH THOSE WHO DO NOT RESPOND**

To show that your parish is serious about stewardship and that you truly are inviting all parishioners, it is important to follow up with those who do not respond or return an intention card.

The sooner you can follow up, the more effective your communication will be. Try to follow up the week immediately following the weekend when the intention cards were supposed to be returned to church:

### ***Organize a Group of Volunteers to Make Follow-Up Phone Calls***

- Generate a list of all parishioners
- Mark off those who returned cards and then have volunteers call those who did not return a card
- The purpose of the call is simply to tell the parishioner that the pastor has not yet seen their intention card and he was hoping they would take the time to review it, pray about it, and return it to the parish in the next week.
- It is okay to leave messages on answering machines
- Send a new intention card, if needed

### ***Send A “We Missed You” Letter or Card***

- A letter or card from the pastor – along with a second intention card – can be sent to all those who have not yet responded

### ***Invite Those Who Did Not Respond to an Informational Meeting***

- Parishes can schedule informational meetings for those who are reluctant to return stewardship intention cards
- Personal invitations from fellow parishioners are necessary, whether done in person, over the phone and/or via a personal note



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## **Follow Up with Those Who *DO* Respond**

When a parish conducts an organized stewardship appeal it is absolutely essential that we follow up with those who responded. Two kinds of communication are necessary with those who responded:

1. **APPRECIATION** for the gifts they have offered to share – whether those are gifts of time, talent or treasure. This should come from the pastor!
2. **NEXT STEPS** for those who have indicated an interest in participating in some parish activity. This should come from the activity contact person.

### ***Send Thank-You Letters to All Those Who Returned Commitment Cards***

- Show your appreciation for their pledge
- Send a small token of appreciation – a stewardship magnet or prayer card

### ***Make Public Announcements of Gratitude***

- Not only do people need to be thanked personally, but they also need to be thanked publicly
- Publicly thanking those who participated reinforces your gratitude for their commitment and lets other parishioners see your appreciation
- Put a thank you in the bulletin, the pulpit announcement, and/or a notice on your outdoor sign
- Mention how many families participated and what percentage of the parish they represent

### ***Have Organization Leaders Immediately Contact New Volunteers***

- Immediately forward names of new volunteers to the appropriate contact person
- Contact person should immediately call the new volunteer



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## Ways to Show Recognition and Appreciation

Good recognition and appreciation efforts are critical to expanding participation in your parish for two reasons.

1. Recognition and appreciation encourages those who participate to do more. They feel good and develop a deeper bond.
2. Recognition and appreciation shows those who are not actively participating that the parish values the gifts that parishioners give – gifts of time, talent or treasure. Newcomers and inactive members see the parish as a warm, grateful, and friendly place in which they want to participate.

Gratitude is a cornerstone of any good stewardship effort. As individual stewards we are called to thank God for our gifts by sharing them generously. As a parish community we are also called to come together to thank God for the gifts that He has given us through the generosity and good stewardship of individual parishioners. The words of St. Paul can be a good inspiration for our appreciation efforts. ***“We give thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love...”*** - 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

### ***Personal Recognition***

- A thank-you note from the pastor the first time a new parishioner uses his or her Offertory envelopes
- An annual letter from the pastor, thanking all parishioners for any contributions they have made in the last year. (These letters are typically sent in January.)
- A personal phone call from the pastor to recognize an extraordinary contribution, such as chairing an event or making a significant financial gift
- A thank-you note from a school child sent to all those who support the school through their financial contributions
- A follow-up email to report on progress as a result of a contribution
- An invitation to a private appreciation breakfast, lunch or dinner for those who have made significant contributions
- A small token gift of appreciation – such as a magnet, coffee mug or bookmark



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### ***General Public Recognition***

- Thank-you messages delivered from the pulpit
- Remarks of gratitude and appreciation in the pastor's column of the bulletin
- A letter of appreciation at the beginning of the Annual Report
- An annual appreciation Mass and/or dinner for all parishioners
- Donors' and volunteers' names in a basket at the foot of the altar
- A thank-you message on the outdoor sign, such as "Thank you for all you do! Fr. Bob"

### ***Specific Public Recognition***

- A memorial plaque, wall or brick walkway, where donors names are inscribed
- Membership in a particular "Society," usually reserved for those who make planned gifts
- A listing of donors to a specific fund in an annual report
- Publishing the list of parishioners who volunteer as chairs of various activities and thanking them for their leadership



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## **OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE PARTICIPATION**

We must accept the reality that even though we are ready to invite, all parishioners are not yet ready to respond. ***But, we must keep inviting!*** We must make sure that when parishioners are in a good place to participate more fully – whether it is February, May or November – we are still there inviting and welcoming them:

### ***Invite Them When You See Them***

- Present stewardship at other parish meetings (will reach people who may not attend Mass)
- Distribute stewardship materials at other parish meetings
- Ask people to make pledge at other parish meetings
  - ▶ Preparation meetings for Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, and RCIA
  - ▶ Meetings of major organizations such as Senior Citizens Group, Athletic Association, Men's Club, Ladies' Sodality, and Home/School
  - ▶ Back to School nights for day school and PSR families

### ***Be More Welcoming***

In his book, ***Best Practices in Parish Stewardship***, Dr. Charles Zech reported that he found an increase in stewardship participation when a parish had four or more different welcoming events. **One welcome activity is not enough** to make parishioners feel welcomed. Consider the following:

- Greeters at all Masses
- An easy registration process, after Masses or at Doughnut Sundays
- A Welcome Visit to new families, where you share information about the parish
- A Welcome Reception with mailed invitations to all new families
- A Welcome Mentor Program, where an active parishioner or family contacts a new parishioner or family of similar age and background and offers to answer any questions or possibly accompany the newcomer to a parish event
- A Welcome Letter from the pastor thanking the family for joining the parish
- A scheduled visit from the pastor, where he blesses the home and presents the family with a small gift from the parish





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## ***Keep Ministry Information Readily Visible at All Times***

- Prepare a “Stewardship” Center visible to everyone who enters your church
- Have stewardship materials available there
- Encourage all ministries to have information available
- Make pulpit announcements about the “Stewardship” Center

## ***Invite Children to Participate***

- Develop a parish children’s newsletter
- Send invitations to:
  - ▶ Children’s liturgy as Mass
  - ▶ Open House at school
  - ▶ Fun parish events, like parish picnic, annual blessing of pets or Halloween party



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## **STEWARDSHIP COMMUNICATION IDEAS**

Today all of us receive thousands of communications messages every day that tempt us to **NOT** be good stewards. Advertising tempts us to spend more on ourselves and give less to others. Modern technology tempts us to waste time. Social standards tempt us to put all of our energy in having and doing all that we want. It is unrealistic to expect that a few stewardship messages once a year can provide parishioners with the encouragement they need to be better stewards and resist the endless temptations of society. Thus, for stewardship to grow in a parish we must continually communicate its message. Many ideas for effective communications have already been covered in the manual including:

- Releasing an Annual Stewardship Report
- Using Your Parish Website
- Sending a Letter from the Pastor
- Expanding Recognition and Appreciation

***Other important communication strategies include:***

### ***Start a Stewardship Newsletter***

- Research indicates that newsletters are the form of communication that donors most appreciate
- An effective stewardship newsletter should be mailed to the homes quarterly

### ***Plan Christmas and Easter Stewardship Communication***

- Many parishes have some special stewardship communication on Christmas or Easter Mass
- Options include a specially designed holiday card with parish information on the back, a Christmas or Easter newsletter, a stewardship prayer card or a flier about upcoming events



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### ***Host an Annual Informational Forum***

- Plan to have an annual parish forum where parishioners can get detailed stewardship information about the parish budget, the accomplishments from the previous year, and the plans for the upcoming year.
- Have parish leaders give reports and allow parishioners to ask questions, participate in discussion groups and/or complete some simple survey questions. (Research shows that when an organization offers this kind of transparency, more people feel that the organization is very accountable, even if not a lot of people actually attend the event.)

### ***Take Inventory of All Communications Options***

- Take an inventory of existing forms of communication that could be used
- Are there existing newsletters for school or other organizations that could carry stewardship information?
- Are there meetings of organizations where a parish leader could talk about stewardship?
- Can the parish use email, neighborhood meetings and/or welcome events to reach out to more parishioners?
- Can you provide “take-home” information at heavily attended events, like sporting events or major fundraising events?



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## **OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES**

### **U.S. Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship**

***Stewardship: A Disciple's Response***, 10th Anniversary Edition of U.S. Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship. Published in 2002 by the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (Full text is available online in a .pdf file format at [www.usccb.org/stewardship](http://www.usccb.org/stewardship).)

### **Archdiocese of St. Louis Stewardship Website**

- [www.archstl.org/stewardship](http://www.archstl.org/stewardship)
  - ❖ Stewardship topics: electronic offertory, tithing, children's stewardship, etc.
  - ❖ Stewardship Training Manual
  - ❖ Current year marketing materials