

Section 3:

Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

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"In the lives of disciples, however, something else must come before the practice of Stewardship. They need a flash of insight – a certain way of seeing – by which they view the world and their relationship to it in a fresh new light."

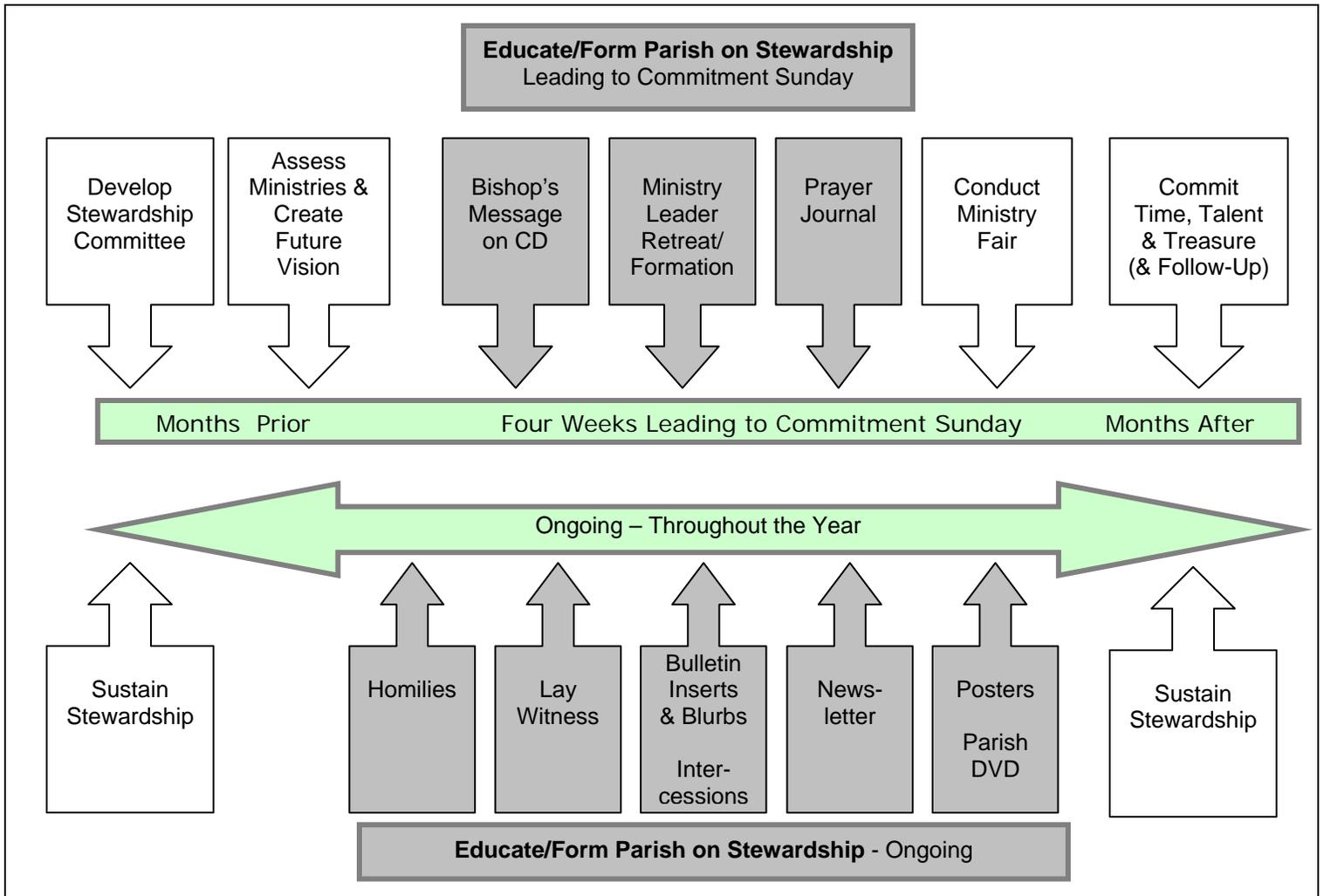
~Stewardship: A Disciple's Response, U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship



GOD'S GIFTS *for* GOD'S PEOPLE

time, talent and treasure

Stewardship Roadmap



The Stewardship Manual provides a roadmap to implementing and sustaining a successful Stewardship process in a parish. The roadmap is divided into 6 sections:

1. Developing a Stewardship Committee
2. Assessing Ministries and Creating a Future Vision
3. Educating and Forming the Parish on Stewardship
4. Conducting the Ministry Fair
5. Committing Time Talent and Treasure
6. Sustaining Stewardship

The Manual contains 4 additional sections containing materials for:

- Appendix A – Discernment of Gifts
- Appendix B – Children's Stewardship
- Appendix C – *A Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal*
- Appendix D – *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship*

Each section provides an overview, suggested steps for implementation, lessons learned, tools, sample materials, and external resources that can be used to initiate and sustain Stewardship in a parish. This section (highlighted in gray above) addresses **Parish Stewardship Education and Formation**.

Parish Stewardship Education and Formation



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation Overview

There is an old saying, “If you want to be heard, *whisper*.” Try it, it really works. But in the case of Christian Stewardship, it has been proven that the best approach in getting parishioners attention is to be loud and clear with the message of what Stewardship is about. This section has been designed to help clarify the concept of Stewardship through an on-going education and formation process for parishes. Stewardship is a way of life, an attitude of the mind and heart that is expressed in action.

Objectives

There are two objectives in the process of Stewardship Education and Formation of the parish:

1. To teach the four principles for growth as a steward as defined by the U.S. Bishops’ Pastoral Letter, *Stewardship— A Disciple’s Response*:
 - receive God’s gifts gratefully
 - cultivate them responsibly
 - share them lovingly in justice with others
 - return them with increase to the Lord
2. To challenge the parish to Stewardship in action.

Components

Parish Stewardship Education and Formation is an ongoing process and requires a variety of components. This is not something that can be accomplished in one day, one week, or even one year, but rather requires ongoing effort. Varied approaches to education and formation are needed to accommodate varied styles of learning and to reinforce the message as it is heard or received in different ways.

While approaches to Parish Stewardship Education and Formation continue to develop, the following components are provided in this manual:

- Steward’s Prayer and Reflection Journal
- Bulletin Inserts and Bulletin Blurbs
- Posters
- Prayer of the Faithful
- Lay Witness Guidelines
- Stewardship Message from Bishop Richard G. Lennon
- Leadership Retreat and Formation
- Parish Newsletter Guidelines
- Parish Stewardship DVD Guidelines



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Another critical element in parish formation is homilies which help the faithful make the connection between the biblical underpinnings of Stewardship and actively living it out in their lives. To assist preachers in uncovering the themes of Stewardship in the Scriptures for any Sunday or feast day, *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship*, written by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, is included in Section 10 of this manual.

This resource provides “homily helps” built around six themes that are typically and repeatedly used in a period of six weeks. Four of the six themes correspond with the elements of a good steward as written in the USCCB Pastoral Letter, *Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response*. The remaining two themes are also basic to Stewardship with one referring to humanity’s creation in the image of a self-giving God and the other describing Stewardship as a way of life.

These “homily helps” will also provide value to those who are interested in developing prayerful reflections or retreats around the themes of Stewardship. The *Liturgical Index*, also provided in Section 10, serves as a useful tool in identifying the homily helps that focus on each of those themes.

A final component in the education and formation process is following the timing on the Stewardship Roadmap (*page 3*) and Bulletin Insert Index, *Example 3.1 (page 23)* for mailings, lay witness talks, bulletin announcements and inserts. Taking all these recommended steps will help provide value in making the greatest impact on the parish in developing Stewardship.





Getting Started

Ideas for educating and forming a parish in Stewardship can be as limitless as a parish and its committee allows them to be! What follows are ideas that have been used by many parishes around the country. Parishes are invited to implement these various components in a way that best fits their culture, and to add ideas of their own.

Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal

Stewardship requires conversion – a conversion of heart in the realization that everything in life is a gift from God. Conversion requires prayer – prayer to open minds and hearts to God's will. The *Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal* offers parishioners a four-week prayer journey to help them deepen their awareness of giftedness and God's presence in their lives, and encourages them to use those gifts in a way that builds the Kingdom on earth. This resource may be used in small group study or for one's own private prayer. The reflections in this journal compliment the themes found in the homily helps section of this manual – *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship*. Section 9 of this manual.

Bulletin Inserts and Bulletin Blurbs

The parish bulletin is a familiar resource to all parishioners and can be built upon as a provider of formational material. Bulletin inserts (separate documents that can be inserted into a bulletin) and bulletin blurbs (small announcements that can be added to the text within the bulletin) can be used year round for catechesis of Stewardship as well as for specific messages to prepare parishioners for the various components of the annual Stewardship renewal process. The following regarding bulletin and blurbs are provided at the end of this section:

- Stewardship Initiative Bulletin Insert Index with Suggested Timeline
Example 3.1 (page 23)
 - Bulletin inserts specific to the Stewardship commitment process
Examples 3.2 – 3.11 (pages 24-35)
 - Bulletin inserts for general Stewardship formation throughout the year
Examples 3.12 – 3.13 (pages 36-40)
 - Bulletin inserts that correspond with the six themes used in *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship* (Section 10)
Examples 3.14 – 3.19 (pages 41 – 46)
 - Bulletin Blurbs using Scripture references to Stewardship
Example 3.20 (pages 47-51)
 - Bulletin Blurbs providing short Stewardship reflections
Example 3.21 (page 52)
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Posters

Sometimes a brief inspirational message as parishioners enter or exit the church is enough to serve as a reminder to put gifts to use in a way that builds God's Kingdom. These six posters may be used separately or in conjunction with the six themes of Stewardship used in the homily helps of *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship* (Section 10). Posters are provided in the plastic sleeves immediately following this section under Tab 3 of this manual.

Prayer of the Faithful

Including Stewardship messages in the Prayer of the Faithful reinforces the understanding that Stewardship is a *way of life* which begins with our on-going dialogue with God.

According to *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, Chapter II, paragraph 70 the prayers should be in the following order:

1. for the needs of the church
2. for public authorities and the salvation of the world
3. for those oppressed by any need
4. for local community

Intercessions for Stewardship would generally fall under the category of the local community. They could be included once a month for a yearlong Stewardship reminder or just for the weeks of the parish Stewardship renewal.

The following are simple guidelines to keep in mind when writing intercessions. They should be:

- tied to the readings
- concise and to the point
- consistent and begin with the same wording. For example:

For those....

That....

May...

The following Examples of Prayer of the Faithful are provided at the end of this section:

- Prayer of the Faithful for a 4 week Stewardship renewal
Example 3.22 (page 53)
- Prayer of the Faithful for the parish family
Example 3.23 (page 54)
- Prayer of the Faithful corresponding to the months of the year
Example 3.24 (page 55)
- Prayer of the Faithful focusing on people as “stewards”
Example 3.25 (page 56)



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- Prayer of the Faithful focusing on the elements in *Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response Example 3.26 (page 57)*
 - Prayer of the Faithful compatible with the six themes of Stewardship used in the homily helps section of this manual – *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship Example 3.27 (page 58)*
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Lay Witness Guidelines

As with the first disciples, Christians today are gifted by the Holy Spirit to share their experience of God’s presence, gifts, and blessings. They give evidence of their faith by sharing their experiences and relationships with others.

The practice of the Christian faith becomes evident in every circumstance of life and manifests through prayer, daily behavior, good works, and the words used to give practical testimony to the power of God’s Spirit at work in the Church. Through daily activities at home, work, church, and in local and global communities, one is afforded many opportunities to exercise belief in the Stewardship way of life.

True conversion to a Stewardship way of life requires true commitment to a life of gratitude. In growing as a faithful steward, one should follow the promptings of the heart to share how one has changed and what one is becoming. As witnesses willingly talk about personal successes and failures (not necessarily in a polished or dynamic way, but sincerely) they help the parish community to become more fully the Body of Christ.

The lay witness is a unique opportunity for the disciple to encourage others to be faithful stewards. In presenting the Stewardship message through stories of real people living real lives, others are inspired. It provides support for those facing challenges in their daily lives and invites them to a deepening of faith and spiritual conversion.

It is essential to continually educate parishioners about Stewardship. The expression of a sincere faith, although imperfect, is a powerful witness. This imperfect faith acknowledges failings and doubts while seeking God’s will through service practiced in small and loving ways.

Through reflection on the wisdom and commitment of its members, the parish community can develop a shared vision of how the Holy Spirit is leading it to grow in holiness and act with purpose and hope. Touched by the lives of others, faith is awakened and confidence restored. Members will also hear the call to discipleship and grow in faith and understanding.

Through sharing over and over again, listeners realize that many of the challenges and obstacles, as well as the opportunities and responsibilities they face, are common experiences in learning to be trustworthy stewards. They also learn that prayer, worship, discernment, and spiritual growth are essential.

Sample lay witness talks are provided as Examples 3.28 and 3.29 (pages 59-62). Given below are easy to follow instructions in choosing and preparing people in their lay witness efforts.



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How to prepare a lay witness talk

- Pray – talk to God as when reflecting on His blessings in life and listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.
- Set aside feelings of shyness, inadequacy, pride, and embarrassment. Recognize the opportunity to acknowledge, in this unique way, God's generosity.
- Attend information sessions, if available.
- Prepare the talk in a way that is comfortable, using natural words and a personal style of speaking.
- Write a personal testimony, word for word, underlining areas/words to be emphasized.
- Share the talk with the pastor or parish representative, seeking feedback.
- Rehearse aloud (in the church, if possible). Be comfortable enough to look away from the written words to the congregation.
- Remember that the message will be conveyed and accepted if the message is sincere, truthful and natural in the way the witness is delivered.
- A faithful response is all that is needed – God will do the work of changing hearts.

Who should present a lay witness talk?

Persons who:

- are recognized by the pastor and church leaders as faithful in efforts to live the Stewardship way of life.
- often share with others the gifts they have received as an expression of gratitude to God.
- try to express their faith in concrete ways daily through relationships at home, in the workplace, at church, and in the greater community.
- are respected and active in the church congregation.
- can share their Stewardship experience as a natural part of life.

Lay witness talks may be given by individuals or couples of all ages and walks of life. Often, the wisdom and experience of the elderly as well as the innocence and honesty of today's youth are able to touch the hearts of listeners.

Potential speakers should be discerned through the wisdom of the community by seeking input from the pastor, parish staff, Stewardship Committee, and ministry leaders.

The invitation to present a lay witness should be extended by the pastor or representatives from the Stewardship Committee either in person, by phone, or in a personal note.

Elements of a lay witness talk

The lay witness talk is developed from the personal experiences of the speaker. However, many of the following should be included in the structure of the talk:

- Introduction – describe background, family, religious formation, and involvement in the parish
- Define understanding of Stewardship and tell how Stewardship experience began



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- Mention successes as well as failures, talking openly about efforts
- Express any reservations, knowing others will relate to discomfort
- If change of attitude or lifestyle was necessary, how did it occur – what motivated change?
- Reaction of family to Stewardship decision
- Effect Stewardship had on faith life
- Benefits obtained from Stewardship
- Share anecdotes and interject humor when appropriate
- Share experiences that have really mattered
- Express personal need to give back to God
- Share sense of joy and fulfillment
- Relate how giving of time, talent and treasure is determined
- Urge congregation to pray and respond to becoming better stewards of blessings received

How to present a lay witness talk

On the day of the presentation the Lay Witness should be sure to:

- Arrive 15 minutes before Mass
- Dress appropriately, and respectfully
- Meet briefly with the celebrant immediately before Mass and agree as to when the witness will be given – before, during, or after Mass; ask where would be the best place to sit
- Speak for no more than 4-6 minutes
- Deliver the witness slowly, in a loud and clear voice with enthusiasm, looking up at the congregation often. Conviction, not eloquence, is important
- Remain after Mass to share informally with others
- Graciously respond to feedback

Role of the Stewardship Committee for lay witness talks

Catholics, traditionally, are reluctant to share publicly how they live their faith and experience God at work in their lives. Since the sharing of stories is at the heart of how God's presence and love is manifest among Christians, the Stewardship Committee should promote parish participation in lay witnessing by providing:

- Encouragement and support to those invited to witness
- A strong message that giving a personal testimony is an opportunity to generously and gratefully acknowledge God's gifts. This can be delivered through bulletin inserts, newsletters, homilies of pastor and priests, inviting guest witnesses, video presentations during small group meetings, and various other means.
- Support and resources for preparing a lay witness through training sessions or individual meetings that:



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- explain the format and logistics
- include suggestions of what to say and how to express the witness according to one's own style
- coaching on important elements to be included or even excluded
- stressing the necessity of a positive message
- opportunity to role play
- helpful feedback and affirmation
- encouragement to practice the witness to the pastor or small
- Communicate with the celebrants of all the liturgies (pastor, associates, visiting priest) the strategies in place for encouraging parishioners' active participation in Stewardship.
- Continual information and resources to educate the parish regarding how the commitment to a life of Stewardship develops and grows through sharing the meaningful faith experiences that are a natural part of our lives.

The pastor and committee should be responsible for seeking out individuals in every age group and socio-economic status represented in the parish, who appear to be living daily in an attitude of Stewardship. Invite them to minister to and inspire the parish community through their real, practical, and personal story of using their time, talent, and treasure in gratitude to God.

Message from Bishop Richard G. Lennon

It is helpful to hear words from the teaching authority of the local church, and it is with that in mind that a message from Bishop Richard G. Lennon about Stewardship is included in this manual. His message is provided on both a CD (included in the pocket of the Stewardship Manual) and in print Example 3.30 (page 63) (in the event a parish would prefer to use it as a bulletin insert). His message provides words of encouragement and support in living a Stewardship way of life and his endorsement of it being a valuable component in being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Leadership Retreat and Formation

Developing Stewardship as a way of life is a journey as each of us understands what it means to become a mature disciple of Christ. Educating a parish as a whole, must begin with the parish ministry leaders. These leaders by virtue of their ministry to the Church are already good examples of Catholic Christian stewards; however, it is imperative that they gain a deeper understanding of Stewardship. Below are two different suggestions to deepen the understanding and spirituality of Stewardship among parish ministry leaders.

Leadership Retreat

Reaching a deeper spirituality of Stewardship begins with prayer, "Stewardship of time."



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“Time is the result of God’s precious gift to us: Life. Because He gave us life, He also gave us time. Our time on this Earth is very limited compared to the Eternity that awaits us. Since God created us to know love and serve Him in this life so that we may be happy with Him in eternal life, our use of time should work toward that end. We are called to holiness—to be disciples—therefore the ways in which we spend our time reflects who we are and who we want to become. To be good stewards of time – knowing, loving and serving God – means spending time with God with family, with work ,with our parish and community and with relaxation..... The Stewardship of time means using some of the time God has given us to refresh ourselves so that we will be able to serve well.”¹

A Leadership Retreat offers such refreshment as it provides a focus for the purpose of ministry and motivation for carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ. Below are steps to take in planning such a retreat.

- **Decide on who should attend.** Some parishes restrict the retreat to ministry leaders only, whereas others open it up to the whole parish. The parish should decide this based upon the personality of the parish and its stage of development in developing Stewardship as a way of life. Expected attendees would include: staff, Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Stewardship Committee and all ministry leaders.
- **Decide on date and format of the retreat.** It is recommended that the retreat be part of the renewal process each year and be scheduled for an evening and approximately half of the next day.
- **Choose a retreat leader.** The retreat leader should be someone with strong presentation skills and a deep understanding of Stewardship. As noted in Section 6 of this manual, *Sustaining Stewardship*, there are several speakers in the diocese. These include: Fr. Wally Hyclak, Fr. Norm Douglas, and Fr. Tom Dragga. There are many national speakers as well. Check with the Diocesan Stewardship Office for specific recommendations. A sample of a retreat outline may be found in Example 3.31 (page 64).
- **Select a location for the retreat:** Most retreats are conducted in parish facilities. Offsite facilities or retreat centers may also be considered.
- **Plan meals and refreshments well in advance:** Keep food and refreshments simple.
- **Send invitations and Thank You’s:** the ministry leaders should receive a personal invitation from the pastor, such as the one shown in Example 3.32 (page 65). Stewardship committee members or other appointed individuals should follow up with phone calls encouraging leaders to attend. Following the retreat, thank you notes should be sent to all who attended such as the one shown in Example 3.33 (page 66).

Leadership Workshop

Often times ministry leaders are confused as to the specifics of their role as a leader in the parish. Sometimes the ministry leaders have not had previous experience in a leadership role so even the basics of providing direction to others is new to them. Or, if a ministry leader has had previous leadership experience, their understanding of responsibility to budgets, development of volunteers and general reporting structures may be different in their jobs from the realities of parish life.

¹ Used with permission from the Diocese of Wichita: *Characteristics of a Stewardship Parish in the Catholic Diocese of Wichita*



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Because of these areas of possible confusion, it may be helpful to have a workshop to guide ministry leaders in the most effective ways for them to carry out their roles in the parish. Such a workshop is intended to offer direction to new ministry leaders as well as assistance to returning ministry leaders. The listing of examples and templates below are designed for this workshop to be conducted in a prayerful setting and stresses the spirituality of Stewardship.

- Ministry Coordinator's Leadership Workshop Invitation
Example 3.34 (page 67)
- Ministry Coordinator's Leadership Workshop Objectives and Agenda
Example 3.35 (pages 68-69)
- Ministry Coordinator Role Description
Example 3.36 (page 70)
- Ministry Coordinator Time and Talent Renewal Checklist
Example 3.37 (pages 71)

Another resource that may be helpful for training ministry leaders is a book entitled: Everything about Parish Ministry I wish I Had Known by Kathy Hendricks, Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic, CT. 2002.

Parish Newsletter Guidelines

Mathew 28:19 commands us as followers of Jesus Christ to spread the *Good News*. The more creative a parish can be to get the message out, the greater the benefit. A newsletter provides a way to reach all parishioners about how to live their lives as good stewards through the examples of other parishioners.

There are many decisions to be made *before* beginning a parish newsletter. Below are guidelines to consider when making these decisions, all of which should help in creating an interesting and valuable means of communication.

1. **Cost** – this is an important factor in planning a newsletter. In establishing a budget be sure to include the following elements, of which more will be said later in this section:
 - possible postage
 - possible use of a mail service
 - color print or black and white
 - number of pages
 - volunteer or paid writers and editor
2. **Description** – Will the newsletter have news type articles or rather focus on articles which educate parishioners on the meaning of Stewardship? Will the newsletter have overt soliciting of volunteers versus articles about ministries which inspire others to join that ministry? Will the newsletter advertise events and programs or instead provide diverse examples of ministries and good Stewardship in the parish? The answers to these questions will help define the type of newsletter the parish intends to create.



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The following is a sample newsletter description:

The newsletter will contain a balanced blend of inspirational, spiritual, educational and informational content to promote Stewardship among members of the parish. The publication will be written to meet the diverse needs and interests of all members of the parish—young and old, involved and uninvolved, committed or disaffected. It is not intended to be news oriented.

Along with the questions above, the following suggestions may help in the consideration of subject material for the newsletter:

- people-oriented articles
- new information – not old news, such as committee reports
- a variety of pictures of people

3. **Distribution** – A newsletter is an effective method of evangelization and a way to reach out to parishioners who are not attending Mass. With that in mind, should the newsletter be available only to those attending Mass or should it be mailed to all registered parishioners? This decision will likely be effected by budget considerations. The cost of postage is a factor as well as the decision on the use of a mailing service. If a mailing service is not used, it is recommended that a large group of volunteers be organized to apply mailing labels and prepare the newsletter for bulk mailing. If the use of volunteers and bulk mailing is the chosen method, be sure to check with the local post office for guidelines on proper preparation for bulk mailing.

In addition to parishioners, consider the following as recipients of the parish newsletter:

- nursing homes
 - assisted living facilities
 - senior citizen centers
 - parishioner-owned businesses, with their permission
4. **Format and execution** – How many pages and what size will the newsletter be? Will the newsletter be published once a month, every other month, or quarterly? Will it be printed in only black ink or will colors be used? In answer to all of these questions, remember that parishioners receive a large volume of junk mail and are bombarded with lots of printed media. Aim to make the newsletter stand out among the other options competing for their attention.

Listed below are elements found to be most common in successful parish newsletters, though budgets will play an important role in deciding what will work best for each parish:

- 8 ½ X 11 inches, folded or non-folded (a non-folded newsletter affects the cost when mailed). This size is created by using 11 X 17 inch paper.
- 8 pages is a common length (newsletters must contain multiples of 4 pages to allow for proper layout)
- monthly distribution
- 2 color – allows the use of screens and shading to make a more interesting product



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- glossy paper
 - consistently produced (same time each month or quarter)
5. **Name** – These suggestions may help when considering a name for the newsletter:
- convey the mission of the parish and the goal of the newsletter
 - make it catchy and unique so it is recognized when mentioned in conversation
 - keep it simple so it is easy to remember
6. **Design** – Look at magazines and other newsletters to get ideas and notice what is interesting and appealing. Below are other points and thoughts to consider:
- first page should be the same for each issue
 - if folded, keep the bottom half of the first page different each time to provide easy differentiation
 - liberal use of color through tints, bars, and graphics
 - interesting quotes as graphics to break up text and add color to pages
 - headings in italicized color text with color bars above and below
 - subheads in color text and different font to break up the text
 - lots and lots of photos throughout
 - easy-to-read type, at least 10 point with adequate leading
 - three columns of type instead of two
7. **Writing style/tone** – Some simple guidelines to follow in writing newsletter articles:
- warm, personal, friendly tone is best received
 - light-heartedness when appropriate
 - personal perspectives with occasional use of first person point of view
 - liberal use of quotations with parishioners' names and photographs
 - fun to read
8. **Newsletter personnel** – There are a variety of people who participate in the creation of a newsletter. Each of these positions could be one individual or a combination of people:
- editor in chief – should be a member of the parish staff or someone who works closely with the staff. The individual must be highly committed to the newsletter and to the process. Being responsive to the other personnel and very knowledgeable about what is happening in the parish are essential qualities for success. The editor's duties typically include the following:
 - determine the subject matter for the stories
 - consult with the Stewardship Committee and the staff for stories, comments and criticisms
 - obtain approval from the pastor for the stories



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- obtain review by the pastor for articles dealing with matters of faith or morals
- assign the articles to the writers
- arrange for photographs
- edit the articles
- determine the line-up of the articles
- arrange for submission of the articles to a graphic/layout artist
- provide final approval for the newsletter before submission to the printer
- maintain mailing list
- be available to parishioners for comments and criticisms.

An assistant editor may be used to help with editing of the newsletter, and assist the editor with the other duties mentioned above.

- writer or writing committee – Must be experienced in writing and if possible, newsletter writing, rather than asking parishioners to write articles. Otherwise a professional editor will be needed to help restructure stories, watch for sensitive issues, and possibly have to explain why an article is not used. Parishioners may have a fabulous story to offer but not know how to write it. Instead, parishioners should be interviewed for a story.

These additional thoughts may be helpful in considering writers or a committee:

- a committee of writers tends to slow the process because it creates more steps
 - o articles must be assigned
 - o more follow-up is needed
 - o a central person collects/edits articles
- one writer commits more time and may require payment
- it is helpful for this person/these people to assist in editing
- this person/these people will participate in decisions about story line-up
- graphic/layout artist – Has expert knowledge of graphic design software. The two most popular types are Quark Express (Mac users) or InDesign (PC users). Microsoft Publisher is generally not usable by printers. The role of a graphic artist includes the following activities:
 - create the initial template
 - provide the layout for each issue, adding creative graphic touches
- photographer – Pictures are a very important part of the newsletter. Pictures of parishioners, ministries, or parish events add to the impact of the newsletter. Parishioners can submit their own pictures for articles as an alternative to using a photographer.
- printer and mailing service – The following suggestions may help in choosing a printer:



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- get quotes from at least three printers
 - determine if there are parishioners who are printers and will provide printing for a discount
 - know that some bulletin companies also print newsletters at a reduced cost or free of charge
 - have the printer make the arrangements with the mailing service, if one is to be used
9. **Content of the articles** – Every parish has wonderful examples of Stewardship on which to write! When selecting the articles for each issue attempt to have a balance and variety of articles that include various ages and groups of parishioners such as youth, seniors, PSR families, school families, etc. Here are some ideas for recurring pages or articles:
- feature about a specific Stewardship theme such as gratitude, focusing on a parishioner who exemplifies that theme
 - letter from the pastor
 - reflection box on Stewardship fundamentals of time, talent, and treasure
 - page with photos of new parishioners
 - calendar of major events at the parish and holy days
 - treasure reports including the pastor's yearly report on parish finances
 - spotlight on parish staff and employees
 - ministry spotlight
 - article about a youth who puts his her faith in action

To see samples of parish newsletters, go to the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Stewardship web site by going to www.dioceseofcleveland.org and clicking on the Stewardship link; or call the Stewardship office for samples – 216-696-6525 X2120 or 800-869-6525 X2120.

Parish Stewardship DVD Guidelines

People are accustomed to living in a visual society, spending more and more time in front of the TV, computers, or looking at the video screen of their I-Pods. It is important to use all possible methods of communication to reach parishioners. Another creative vehicle for educating parishioners about Stewardship as a way of life is through a DVD. Listed below are guidelines to consider in creating this tool of education and formation.

1. **Determine the audience** – Will the DVD be shown at Mass? Will the DVD be given to all parishioners or just to new parishioners? Will the DVD be shown to ministry groups? These questions must be answered first to determine the length of the DVD. A DVD to be shown at Mass cannot be as long as a DVD given to parishioners to view at home. If being shown at Mass or to ministry groups, the audience is likely more sophisticated in their understanding of Stewardship. However, if the DVD is being sent to all parishioners, the message may need to be more basic.



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2. **Determine the content** – Stewardship embodies numerous elements. Don't try to put too much information in one video. As a first step decide upon a central theme such as gratitude, enriching a relationship with God, or sharing gifts. Look at the readings for the dates of the parish Stewardship renewal and tie the theme into those readings.

Prepare an outline of the points to be made in the DVD. From the outline select the people that will support the message. Select a diversity of people: male and female, young and old, families and singles.

Preparation of content is critical for a high quality product. The Stewardship committee or a subcommittee should begin planning the content of the DVD early. Write a script for any voiceovers. Although witnesses can't be "scripted", the topic for each witness should be determined ahead of time.

3. **Determine if a video or "still photos" are preferred** – A great looking DVD can be created without being a movie producer! A video can be created by just using still photos with a voiceover. Software is available to create a "Ken Burns" documentary effect. Still images are brought to life by slowly panning and zooming over portions of the pictures, adding dynamic impact to the DVD. Transition effects can be added between pictures as well as subtitles, voiceover and background music.

If a video is the chosen medium, be certain of the sound quality of the recording. Most amateur video cameras pick up too much extra sound. When played over a church's sound system, with everyone listening quietly, bad sound quality is amplified and the impact of the Stewardship DVD will not be as positive as hoped. Do a test recording early to work out any bugs in the sound of the DVD.

4. **Video witnesses** – Prepare video witnesses in advance. While the Holy Spirit speaks through many witnesses, a rehearsed witness may be easier to watch than one who intersperses the message with frequent "uhs" and "you knows". The message also needs to be succinct. Watch interviews done on TV for examples.
5. **Resources** – Solicit help from parishioners who have experience in professional video production or film weddings.

Another wonderful resource is The Diocese of Cleveland Department of Communications Audio & Video Production Department which offers production services to parishes. For information contact 216-696-6525 X3820.





Lessons Learned (Tips and Tricks)

Lessons learned in developing communication tools for the Stewardship message:

- **Appearance counts!** – Use eye-catching, attention-getting, thought-provoking, excitement-generating materials! That sounds like a tall order but the fact is that eye appealing materials make a difference. Remember that a picture is worth a thousand words so don't hesitate to use a lot of clip art and other types of graphics in written communications. Consider using color in the text and graphics, and glossy paper. While these aspects increase the cost, they may make the difference between the materials being read or set aside.
- **Personalize the material** – A different theme and logo each year is one way to make Stewardship material more interesting. These should appear on all documents associated with the Stewardship initiative.
- **Think beyond written material** – Consider other vehicles to use for Stewardship education that helps the message permeate life in a variety of ways. For instance, choose a hymn that can be played at Mass throughout the year that has a Stewardship theme and fits with the theme and logo that was selected. Hymns such as “We Are Called”, “Servant Song”, “God Has Chosen Me” are just a few of many that are popular. It is important that a variety of tools be used beyond the time of the Stewardship commitment process to help it be incorporated truly as a way of life.
- **Remain focused on the *Stewardship Roadmap*** – It is critical to the success of the Stewardship initiative because all of the steps build on one another.
- **Step by Step Tips for Coordinating Educational Material:**
 - Determine specific dates on the *Stewardship Roadmap* (page 3)
 - Review all Stewardship education materials provided in this manual
 - Customize the materials as needed
 - Decide on a theme and logo to personalize your Stewardship initiative
 - Decide on an appropriate method for production and distribution of the *Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal* (Section 9)
 - Select and plan for use of bulletin inserts (Examples 3.2 – 3.19) and bulletin blurbs (Examples 3.20-3.21)
 - Select places to hang posters provided in plastic sleeve under tab 3 of this Stewardship Manual
 - Select or customize Prayer of the Faithful (Examples 3.22-3.27) and choose dates to have them read
 - Recruit and schedule Lay Witnesses for all weekend Masses and review guidelines with them (pages 8-11)
 - Select a date to share Bishop Lennon's Stewardship message via use of the CD (provided in pocket of the Stewardship Manual) at Sunday Masses or as an insert in the bulletin (Example 3.30)
 - Schedule a speaker for a Leadership Retreat and/or make arrangements for a Leadership Workshop (see pages 11-13)



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

- Determine if a Parish Stewardship Newsletter will be created or if a parish newsletter currently in use will be modified to highlight Stewardship activity
- Determine if a Parish Stewardship DVD will be created
- Make assignments among team members for the execution of the activity selected above

Specific lessons learned for lay witnessing:

- **Give direction** – Be clear and continually updated on the pastor's expectations and involvement.
- **Be flexible** – For a variety of reasons, many parishioners will never consent to standing before the congregation to tell their story. However, they may be willing to be interviewed or write their witness for inclusion in a parish newsletter or Stewardship promotional materials.
- **Pray!** – Choosing lay witness presenters should always be done through prayer and discernment of parish leaders and not by a blanket invitation to the congregation.

Specific lessons learned for parish newsletters:

- **Frequency** – The newsletter must be published often enough to make an impact on parishioners. It is recommended to publish a newsletter no more than monthly and no less than quarterly.
 - **The use of color** – While color adds cost to the newsletter, it also goes a long way in making an eye-catching product. Choose colors that are vibrant and lend themselves to shading. Be sure the printed type is in a legible color...black is a safe bet.
 - **Photographs** – The more the better! Also, remember that photographs, when not in full color, look better in black and white than other colors.
 - **Keep it unique** – The parish newsletter and parish bulletin are two separate documents. Be attentive to using the two for different purposes.
-





Examples and Templates

Included in this section are sample materials for your reference, adaptation and use in providing Parish Stewardship Education and Formation. Included here are:

- 3.1. Bulletin Insert Index

Bulletin inserts specific to the Commitment Process

- 3.2. What Is Stewardship
- 3.3. Stewardship and Our Parish
- 3.4. Our Prayer Journal
- 3.5. Our Parish Ministry Catalog
- 3.6. What is the Ministry Fair and
A Christian Steward Receives God's Gifts Gratefully
- 3.7. What is Stewardship Commitment Weekend?
- 3.8. A Christian Steward Cultivates God's Gifts Responsibly
Sharing His Gifts – A Christian Steward Shares God's Gifts Lovingly
- 3.9. First Fruits – A Christian Steward Returns God's Gifts with Increase
- 3.10. Sharing Your Time, Talent, and Treasure
- 3.11. Millie Grazie

Bulletin inserts for general Stewardship formation throughout the year

- 3.12. The Spirituality of Stewardship
- 3.13. Stewardship of Time
Stewardship of Talent
Stewardship of Treasure

Bulletin inserts that correspond with the six themes used in *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship* (Section 10)

- 3.14. Stewards know they are created in the image of God
- 3.15. Stewards identify and nurture their gifts in the Church community
- 3.16. The steward is grateful and generous
- 3.17. Stewards help others
- 3.18. Stewards share their treasures and gifts
- 3.19. Stewardship is a life long journey

Bulletin blurbs

- 3.20. Bulletin blurbs using Scripture references to Stewardship
- 3.21. Bulletin blurbs providing short Stewardship reflections



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Prayer of the Faithful

- 3.22. Prayer of the Faithful for a 4 week Stewardship renewal
- 3.23. Prayer of the Faithful for the parish family
- 3.24. Prayer of the Faithful corresponding to the months of the year
- 3.25. Prayer of the Faithful focusing on people as “stewards”
- 3.26. Prayer of the Faithful focusing on the elements in *Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response*
- 3.27. Prayer of the Faithful compatible with the six themes of Stewardship used in *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship*

Lay Witnessing

- 3.28. Lay Witness talk by an individual
- 3.29. Lay Witness talk by a couple

CD Message

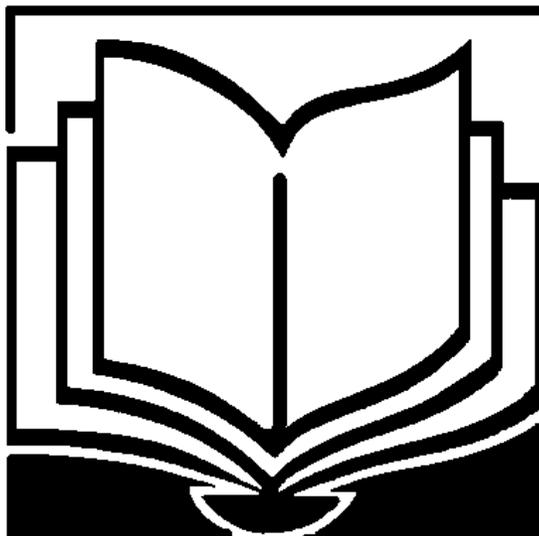
- 3.30. Stewardship message from Bishop Richard G. Lennon

Leadership Retreat

- 3.31. Leadership Retreat Outline
- 3.32. Leadership Retreat Invitation
- 3.33. Leadership Retreat Follow-up Thank You

Leadership Workshop

- 3.34. Ministry Coordinator’s Leadership Workshop Invitation
- 3.35. Ministry Coordinator’s Leadership Workshop Objectives and Agenda
- 3.36. Ministry Coordinator Role Description
- 3.37. Ministry Coordinator Time and Talent Renewal Checklist



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.1.

Bulletin Insert Index For the Stewardship Commitment Process

DOC. NO.	TITLE	CONTENT	WEEK RELATED TO COMMITMENT WEEKEND
3.2	What is Stewardship?	Definition of Stewardship from the 1992 United States Bishops' Pastoral Letter, "Stewardship – A disciple's Response"	7 weeks prior to Commitment Weekend
3.3	Stewardship & Our Parish	Introduction of concept of Stewardship with a listing of educational tools to be detailed in future bulletins	6 weeks prior to Commitment Weekend
3.4	Our Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal	Explanation of journal with emphasis on daily reflections, meditation and prayer	5 weeks prior to Commitment Weekend
3.5	Parish Stewardship Ministry Catalog	Brief explanation of plan guide with reference to needs for resources to maintain current ministries, and the relationship to ministry activity with Stewardship	4 weeks prior to Commitment Weekend
3.6	What is the Ministry Fair? (2 pages)	(1) Explanation of Ministry Fair (2) Meditation on concept of "Gratitude"	3 weeks prior to Commitment Weekend
3.7	Stewardship Commitment Weekend	Explanation of Stewardship Weekend with dates	2 weeks prior to Commitment Weekend
3.8	Cultivating and Sharing His Gifts (2 pages)	(1) Meditation: Concept of "Cultivation" (2) Meditation:: A Christian Steward Shares God's Gifts Lovingly	1 week prior to Commitment Weekend MINISTRY FAIR WEEKEND
3.9	Returning His Gifts With Increase	Meditation: A Christian Steward Returns God's Gifts With Increase	Use on Commitment Weekend COMMITMENT WEEKEND
3.10	Sharing Your Time, Talent and Treasure	A gentle reminder to parishioners who did not respond to Commitment Weekend (also provided in letter format in Section 5)	1 week after Commitment Weekend
3.11	Mille Grazie A Thousand Thanks	A thank you to all who responded to the call to commitment (also provided in letter format in Section 5)	2 weeks after Commitment Weekend



Example 3.2.



WHAT IS STEWARDSHIP?

Stewardship can be a confusing term for Catholics. For many years, “Stewardship” has been seen as a predominately Protestant term that was synonymous with raising money. When the United States bishops’ pastoral letter, “*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*,” was published in 1992, a new concept was introduced to most Catholics. *Stewardship* was no longer simply a “churchy” word for fund raising. *Stewardship* is now understood as *a way of life*, the faithful response of a Christian disciple to the Lord’s invitation to follow him “without counting the cost.”

In “*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*”, the bishops offer four essential characteristics of a Christian steward:

A Christian Steward is: One who receives God’s gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

If one is to grow as a steward, one must give attention to these four areas. Stewardship is a way of life, an *attitude of the mind and heart that is expressed in action*. Christian stewards are women and men who acknowledge God as the owner and giver of all things. We are called to be stewards of all God’s blessings—both material and spiritual.

Generous sharing is one of the concrete actions that results from a Stewardship attitude which affects the way we think and the way we live. When we think like stewards, we want to share *all* the blessings that God has given us. The Church provides many opportunities for Christian disciples to develop and share God’s gifts as we give to God through the parish and diocesan ministries.

A Steward’s Prayer:

*“Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?”*

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI “Called to Discipleship” 2002



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.3.



Stewardship and Our Parish

[PARISH NAME] will be presenting the concept of *Stewardship* and its impact on our parish community through an education and discernment process focusing on helping each of us to learn something about ourselves as stewards and how to put our Stewardship into action.

Over the next several weeks, you are going to hear and learn a lot about personal Stewardship and the Stewardship of our parish through:

- ✓ Our Prayer Journal
- ✓ Bulletin announcements
- ✓ Homilies
- ✓ Our Parish Ministry Catalog
- ✓ Lay Witness Talks During Weekend Masses
- ✓ Our Ministry Fair **(DATE)**
- ✓ Stewardship Commitment Weekend **(DATE)**
- ✓ **(NOTE: Add others as appropriate, i.e., your parish website, newsletter, etc.)**

Please give special attention to these events in the life of our parish. Meditate on the meaning of Stewardship as defined by the 1992 United States bishop's letter, "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response - Who is a Christian Steward: One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

We are all stewards – caretakers of the many gifts God has bestowed upon us. Our challenge as Christians is to make good use of those gifts.

A Steward's Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.4.



Our Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal **A STEWARD'S JOURNEY THROUGH THIRTY DAYS OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION**

This week you will receive a copy of our Prayer Journal. It will help you with your thoughts about the concept of Stewardship. The Prayer Journal gives daily reflections, meditations and prayers on the four characteristics of a growing steward presented in the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on Stewardship: "A Christian Steward is: One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

Using the Prayer Journal will give you a wonderful opportunity to expand your thinking about Stewardship and to consider ways in which you may grow as a Christian steward. Take some "quiet time" and share it with your family – together open your hearts to prayer and reflection about the importance of Stewardship in your personal lives as well as in your spiritual lives as you learn the true meaning of Christian Stewardship.

A Steward's Prayer:

"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.

My Stewardship is my gift to you.

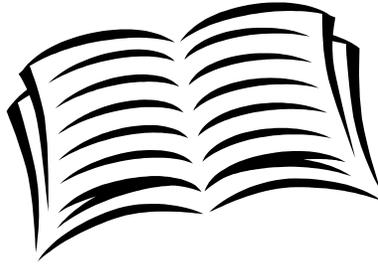
How shall I serve?"

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.5.



OUR PARISH MINISTRY Catalog

This week you will receive in the mail a copy of our Parish Ministry Catalog that will help you understand how Stewardship affects our parish. The objectives of the Parish Ministry Catalog are:

- ❖ To tell you what ministries, programs and groups are currently active within our parish
- ❖ To tell you what resources—both human and financial—are necessary to provide all the current ministries, programs, and services in the parish.
- ❖ To tell you about the possibility and need for additional ministries and services in the parish.
- ❖ To help you see the connection between the sharing of your time, talent, and treasure and the parish's ability to provide current and future ministries and services.

We hope that the catalog will help you see the breadth and depth of ministry that takes place here at **(NAME OF PARISH)**. We are truly blessed to have so many exciting things happening here.

Please carefully read the Parish Ministry Catalog. Take some time to meditate on the meaning of Stewardship. God gives each of us gifts and talents. We are stewards of those gifts and are called to share them with each other for the glory of God.

The bishops of the United States define a Christian steward as: "One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

A Steward's Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.6.

Bulletin Insert, side 1

WHAT IS THE MINISTRY FAIR?

On the weekend of **(DATES OF MINISTRY FAIR WEEKEND)**, we will be offering a Ministry Fair here at our parish. The Ministry Fair will give you an opportunity to see all the ministries of our parish represented in one place at one time. You will have the opportunity to learn how the ministries of our parish help and serve others. This will also help you see how Stewardship has an impact on the lives of other parishioners and the larger community in which we live and work.

After visiting the Ministry Fair and reviewing the Parish Ministry Catalog, it is hoped that you will prayerfully consider joining with others already actively involved with one or more of the ministries or groups within our parish. Watch the bulletin for more information about when and where you can sign up for those special areas in which you would like to share your God given gifts of time, talent and treasure.

Won't you please give special attention to this extraordinary event in the life of our parish? We look forward to seeing you and answering any questions you might have about our parish ministries and groups on the **(DATES OF THE MINISTRY FAIR WEEKEND)**! It is because of the many good stewards in our parish that we continue to be a vibrant faith community.

A Christian Steward is: One who receives God's gifts gratefully,
cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others,
and returns them with increase to the Lord.

A Steward's Prayer:

"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.

My Stewardship is my gift to you.

How shall I serve?"

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.6 (cont'd).

Bulletin Insert, side 2

A CHRISTIAN STEWARD RECEIVES GOD'S GIFTS GRATEFULLY

"Yours, O LORD, are grandeur and power, majesty, splendor, and glory.
For all in heaven and on earth is yours;
yours, O LORD, is the sovereignty;
you are exalted as head over all.
Riches and honor are from you, and you have dominion over all.
In your hand are power and might;
it is yours to give grandeur and strength to all . . ."
(1 Chronicles 29:11-12).

We are trustees, not owners in this world. What comes our way comes with a divine expectation that we will use whatever we have for God's good purposes. Time, talent, and treasure are gifts from God entrusted to us for a relatively brief time.

A Steward's Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously



Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.7.

What is Stewardship Commitment Weekend?

Stewardship is acting on the belief that God is the owner and giver of all things and that we have the opportunity to manage and share the gifts that God has given us.

Over the last several weeks, we have been learning, meditating, and praying about Stewardship. This has been, and is, a wonderful growth experience for our entire parish.

However, there is a difference between knowing about Stewardship and participating in Stewardship as a way of life. Jesus asks us to not only *hear*, but to *do*. We are called to be persons of action and commitment (Matthew 7).

On the weekend of **(Date)**, we will have the opportunity to put our Stewardship into action through the Stewardship Commitment Form. The Commitment Form asks us to consider what gifts of time and talent we would be willing to invest in our parish for the work of Christ among us.

It is important to remember that Stewardship is a term that describes how we live out the totality of our lives, not just a part. Overemphasizing one aspect of life is just as harmful as de-emphasizing an aspect of life. Stewardship is about time, talent, and treasure. Stewardship does not equal money, but it does include how we manage our money. Stewardship is not just about our talents—our skills, aptitudes and interests—but it includes all of those things. Stewardship is not just about our time, but it includes the management of this precious resource. The concept of Stewardship includes all of these aspects of our lives and this is reflected in every part of our mission to grow as stewards.

The only way that any one of us can make a faithful decision as to how God would use us is to pray. So, as you consider your commitment to ministry through the parish, please pray the Stewardship prayer we have used for the past few weeks:

***“Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?”***

Stewardship is a way of thanking God for all of the Lord's blessings by returning to Him a portion of the time, talent and treasure we have received.

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI “Called to Discipleship” 2002



Example 3.8.

Bulletin Insert, side 1

**A Christian Steward
Cultivates God's Gifts Responsibly**

"Be doers of the word and not hearers only . . ." (James 1:22)

Stewardship is an action concept. It is about who we are, what we do, and how we do it. A Christian steward sees all life as a call to faithfulness to God in all things. Every aspect of life is a trust from God that we cultivate faithfully out of respect and love for God.

Stewardship involves a change of heart, embodied not just in a single action, nor even a series of actions, but in one's entire life.

A Steward's Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

Receiving Gratefully – Giving Generously



Stewardship

A Way of Life

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.8 (cont'd).

Bulletin Insert, side 2

Sharing Your Gifts

A Christian Steward Shares God's Gifts Lovingly

"He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Matthew 22:37-39)

When thinking about sharing God's gifts in love and justice, a person sometimes wonders where this sharing is to take place. The reality is that there are people in need, to love and serve everywhere. There are lonely people everywhere. There are hungry people to feed and homeless people to house everywhere. It's a matter of deciding to "bloom where you are planted" by serving others wherever you find them.

A Steward's Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

Receiving Gratefully – Giving Generously



Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.9.

FIRST FRUITS

A CHRISTIAN STEWARD RETURNS GOD'S GIFTS WITH INCREASE

“The choicest first fruits of your soil
you shall bring to the house of the Lord, your God.” (Exodus 23:19)

While there is much to say about spontaneous acts of generosity, the Scriptures have more to say about planning to give. Giving that is purposeful is giving that has been considered, deepened and enlarged through prayer. Planning one's giving is the first step in making Stewardship a faith venture, not simply an impulse venture.

The late Archbishop Thomas Murphy once said: *“All giving is: Planned, Proportionate, Prayerful, and Sacrificial. You are just one person, but you are important to God and to God's work. Be faithful as you give of your time, talent and treasure.”*

May God bless you exceedingly as you give of yourself in ministry through our parish!

A Steward's Prayer:

*“Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?”*

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI “Called to Discipleship” 2002



Example 3.10.

SHARING YOUR TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE

These are really exciting days at **(PARISH NAME)**. During the last several weeks, many parishioners have been involved in our Stewardship initiative that is helping all of us become better stewards of God's gifts.

Many parishioners have already made a commitment to share time, talent, skills and financial resources so that many outstanding ministries and services can be supported through our parish.

You may not have had the opportunity to be a part of the excitement last weekend as we all had the opportunity to acknowledge our response to a challenge to practice Stewardship. Would you be willing to grow as a steward? Would you prayerfully consider sharing your time? Would you be willing to use your unique skills and talents for God through the parish? Would you be willing to grow in your financial support?

Stewardship Commitment Forms are available at the back of the church and in the parish office. Why not fill one out today? But before you fill it out, stop for a moment and pray the Stewardship Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

When you have prayed, do what you feel that God wants you to do. Please use the envelope provided to return your Commitment Form in the offertory or to the parish office.

Together we can do more for God's Kingdom than we could ever do alone. I am excited by the possibilities as we grow as stewards and as we see our Stewardship make a difference in the lives of people.

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Pastor's Signature

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Example 3.11.

Millie Grazie
Millie Grazie

(A Thousand Thanks)

Thank you for your wonderful response to our Stewardship initiative (**or use your initiative name here**). Many parishioners have expressed gratitude for the opportunity to learn more about being a steward of God's gifts and the opportunity to put that knowledge into practice.

As you know, it is important to plan wisely in any endeavor. Many decisions must be made in our parish based on parishioners' statements of intent to provide human and financial resources. Your commitment to the ministry of Christ through the parish is making this possible.

There is an old saying, "The best is yet to come." I believe that it is true for our parish. You have been willing to give yourselves to the challenge to grow as Christian stewards. God will bless you, and God will bless our parish because of your faithful response.

A Steward's Prayer:

*"Lord, my life in the Church is your gift to me.
My Stewardship is my gift to you.
How shall I serve?"*

Receiving Gratefully — Giving Generously

Adapted from RSI "Called to Discipleship" 2002



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.12.

The Spirituality of Stewardship

When the American bishops published their pastoral letter on Stewardship in 1992, the title they chose for this historic document was *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. How does the title for this document contribute to our understanding of Stewardship as a way of life?

Stewardship is a relatively new term in the Catholic vocabulary. The underlying principles (gratitude, accountability, generosity and giving back with increase) are ancient—dating back to themes in the Old and New Testaments and to the earliest Christian writers. But their application to the choices of modern living is new. Until recently, Catholic Christians were asked to approach Stewardship as an *obligation*—either to support the work of the Church or as an expression of Christian charity. There was not much emphasis on the personal, spiritual dimension of Christian Stewardship as a way of life.

The bishops' pastoral letter sought to change the emphasis from giving out of a sense of obligation to giving as a response to God's love for us. Stewardship is not simply an obligation, the bishops say, but it is also a joyful response to the Lord's invitation: "*Go, sell what you have. Give it to the poor and come follow me.*" Stewardship is a *response in faith*. It is our "yes" to God's invitation to totally give ourselves to him.

Stewardship is a form of spirituality. It is a way of responding to the invitation/challenge we have received from the Lord to follow him without counting the cost. In fact, *how we respond* to God's call determines whether or not we are good, generous or responsible stewards. The pastoral letter calls attention to the many ways that a disciple of Jesus Christ can respond in faith to this radical, life-changing invitation, but *the way we respond* determines whether or not we are faithful stewards of the gifts and talents we have received from God.

Mary is the first Christian steward and the model for all who wish to follow her son because her response to God's call was an immediate and unreserved "yes." The saints also provide us with powerful examples of how to respond in faith to the Lord's call to be his disciple—without counting the cost. In a very real way, the saints help us to understand the *spirituality* of Stewardship. They show us that there are many different ways to respond to God's love and still be faithful, generous stewards of all God's gifts.

For example, Franciscan spirituality is nothing more (or less) than the way St. Francis responded to the Lord's call through simplicity of life and solidarity with all God's creation. The spirituality of St. John Vianney, a humble parish priest, was very different, but it was no less genuine and no less powerful as a witness to Christian discipleship. Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta responded to Jesus by serving the poorest of the poor. St. Thomas More responded to the Lord by living a life of integrity and choosing to die for his faith. When we say that Stewardship is a way of life, and an expression of Christian spirituality, we mean that it is a way of responding to God's personal call—a way that respects the gifts and talents of each individual and that seeks to discern and do God's will in the specific circumstances of every person's life. As the bishops' pastoral letter tells us, the supreme model of Christian Stewardship is Jesus himself. He was the Good Steward—the one who shared himself with others completely and perfectly and who gave himself back to the Father in the fullness of love.

Stewardship is a form of spirituality because it challenges us to develop and use the gifts and talents God has given us and then to "give them back with increase" by making a generous, grateful response to whatever the Lord asks of us. The spirituality of Stewardship is profound. But it is also practical. It involves the choices we make every day: how we spend our time, what we do with the skills and talents God has given us, how we care for the environment, what we do with our money. Stewardship is a way of saying "yes" to God through the actions of our daily lives. It is a way of living the Gospel in the real world.

How do I respond to God's invitation to be his disciple? The way we answer this question determines our personal spirituality and the quality of our response to the Lord's call to be a generous and loving steward.

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Example 3.13.

STEWARDSHIP OF TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE

Killing time.
How do I kill time? Let me count the ways,
By worrying about things over which I have no control.
Like the past. Like the future.
By harboring resentment and anger over hurts real or imagined.
By disdainning the ordinary, or rather, what I do mindlessly call ordinary.
By concern over what's in it for me rather than what's in me for it.
By failing to appreciate what is because of might-have-beens,
should-have-beens,
could-have-beens.
These are some of the ways I kill time.
Jesus didn't kill time.
He gave life to it.
His own.

Reflection by Leo Rock, S.J.

Stewardship of Time

No gift is greater than time, and yet nothing is so easy to waste. Contrary to our cultural norms, good Stewardship of time doesn't mean being busy all the time. Time spent in prayer, nurturing relationships with our family and friends or just enjoying the beauty of the world around us is time well spent. In fact, taking "time out" to nourish ourselves spiritually can be the best thing we can do to deepen our relationship with God.

Stewardship requires the spiritual use of time. To the Christian steward motivated by love of God and mankind, there is a practical understanding of time. Recognizing that each instant of the day has been God-given, the Christian steward understands that the application of his time need not be confined to the use in strict liturgical formality but should be applied to a liturgy of Christian living throughout the day, as well.

A simple commitment upon awaking each day to make every minute of the day dedicated to a love for God, and a simple commitment of thanksgiving at the close of each day provide the guidelines for using time in a Christian sense all day long. These guidelines set the pace for action and reaction in every effort. By following these guidelines – spirituality, grace, hope, love, charity, compassion and justice will be derived whether the action takes place within the family, at school, in business, at one's trade, in social life, or even in leisure.

At the very least, parishioners should make the most of their observance of the Lord's day. Even more, people will grow in their faith by spending time in daily prayer.

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Example 3.13 (cont'd).

Bulletin insert, side 1

Stewardship of Talent

In the Parable of the Talents (*Matt. 25:14-30*), the Master of the house gave different talents to each servant. Those talents were gifts from God. The first two servants used those talents wisely and made them grow. The Master was pleased and gave them more talents. The third servant hoarded his talents and did not use them, nor did he make them grow, so they were taken away from him. The lesson is clear. ***Use your talents or lose them.***

Each of us has varied talents. As an example “the ability to smile” is a talent. If that smile is hoarded and not used, that ability will be taken away. When you smile, the inner essence of your soul is visible to others. That ability to smile through whatever comes your way helps others learn to cope with the trial in their lives. To share that smile with another human being is being a good steward of the *smile* talent that was freely given to us by God. A smile can be used in many ways. A smile can show love, it can show pleasure, it can show agreement, it can show caring, but most of all it can show the compassion of God.

There are many talents that we possess. The Stewardship of talent calls us to search out those talents, nurture them, and help them to grow, and then share them with other human beings. Our first and greatest commandment, “To love our God with our whole heart, our whole soul and our whole mind.” We do that by using our God-given talents for the benefit of others, and doing that brings us directly to our second greatest commandment, “To Love our neighbor as we love ourselves.”

The Stewardship of talents shows us the way to a spiritual life, a oneness with God through reaching out to another human being. So, the spirituality of giving through the Stewardship of talent is a part of the open secret of living a spiritual life.

We are often held back from recognizing or sharing our gifts because of a narrow definition of “talent.” We think “talented people” are extraordinary achievers or have easily identifiable gifts, such as musical ability or artistic talent. We must remember that each one of us was created by God and was given the ability to serve God and each other in some way.

over



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.13 (cont'd).

Bulletin insert, side 2

Talents include being a good listener, being able to organize people, relating well to children or teens, being patient with others and numerous other less-recognized gifts. Our gifts often change during our lives: in our youth our gift may be energy; when we're older, it may be knowledge. We are each one-of-a-kind creations of God with unique contributions to make in this world.

As Christians we recognize that our gifts of talents and skills are meant to be cultivated and shared with others, beginning with our family and friends, with our parish community **and** with the world. Sharing the gift of ourselves is how we express our gratitude for being created as a unique and gifted people.

St. Paul reminds us: "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different talents . . . but the same God gives talent to everyone." (1Cor. 12: 4-7) Our parish communities invite us to develop and share with others the distinctive gifts and talents we have received from the Holy Spirit. This sharing of gifts may be formal or informal. It may be public (serving on the Parish Council, as a lector, or as a Eucharistic Minister), or it may be "behind the scenes" (quietly helping a family in need or stuffing envelopes for an important parish mailing). The same God gives talent to everyone and invites us to freely share our gifts with our parish family.

We are stewards of the Church as well as stewards of human life, creation, the environment, our money and possessions, etc., who have time, talent and treasures to be shared in solidarity.

"... the laity can also feel themselves called...to work with their pastors in the service of the ecclesial community, for its growth and life, be exercising a great variety of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord is pleased to give them."

"Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life" (1983)

Note: We all know the Parable of the Talents, but have you ever wondered what the value of a talent might have been in Jesus' time? According to the Wikipedia Encyclopedia: "Talents were used as a unit of currency. It is impossible to be exact about their value, and different kinds of talent were in use. However, even the lowest value for a talent puts it as worth several thousand denarii, and a denarius was the usual payment for a day's labor. So a talent was the value of many years of work by an ordinary person."

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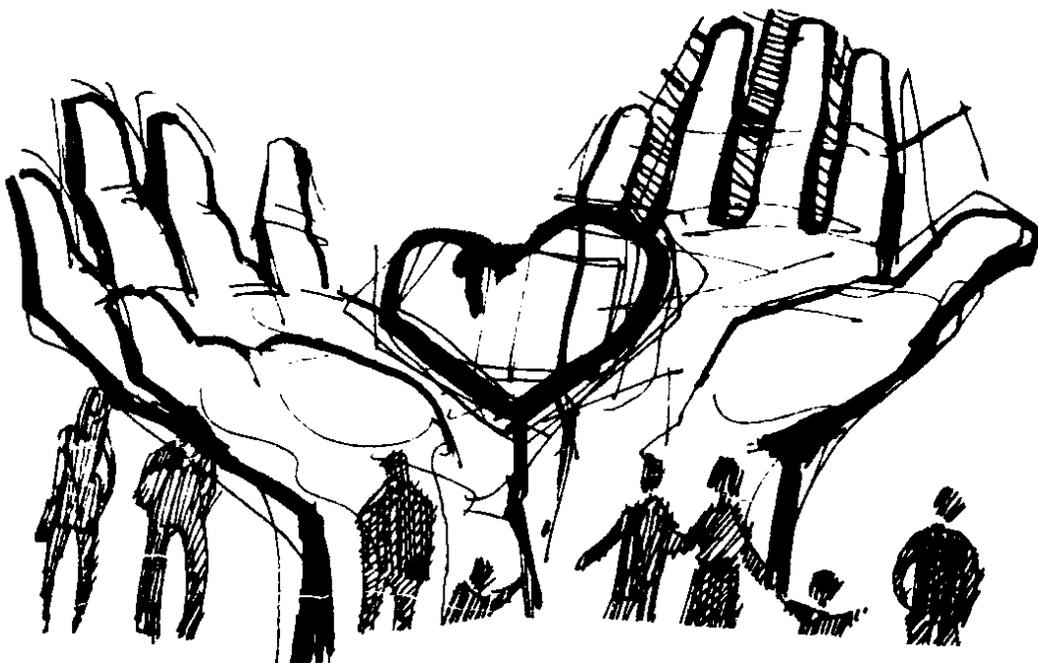


Example 3.13 (cont'd).

Stewardship of Treasure

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will also be also.” (Matt. 6:21) That is why nearly two-dozen of the Lord’s parables deal with money and possessions. When it comes to spirituality (things of the heart), money matters. How we use money, what we think of it, whether we are willing to share it – all make a difference in the way we live our lives, because, “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Catholics are called to give witness to the Stewardship of treasure in and through support of their parish communities and through the larger diocese in which they live. Of course, this means contributing to the support of the parish –and to its many ministries. But Stewardship of treasure means much more than church support. It means accepting money – and all the material things we possess – as gifts to be cherished and **shared**, not for their own sake but for the good of others, especially our families, our communities and those whose needs are greater than our own. Catholics are invited, and challenged, to make gifts to the parish and the diocese that are **planned, proportionate, and sacrificial** -- not simply because, “They need the money,” but because each of us has a **need to give**, as God has given generously to us.



Example 3.14.

Stewardship: A Way of Life

***Stewards know they are
created in the image of God!***



God created man in his image; in the divine image he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them. God looked at everything he had made and he found it very good.

Genesis 1:27, 31

Step out into this wonderful world God created! Step out on a clear bright night! Look up and count the stars! Step out on warm windy day and face the wind! Let it take your breath away! Where does the wind come from and where does it go? Why and how do small seeds grow into huge trees? Why does lightening streak across the sky? Our lives are filled with many “whys!” We may never be able to answer these questions. But we do know the answer to one question. Why did God make you? God made you to know Him, to love him, to serve him and to live forever with Him in Heaven. Jesus chose to become human to love us and to live among us. Jesus chose to be human because to be human is to be in relationship with God and others. It is not difficult to live out the realization that we are created in God’s Image. It is quite simple. Love the people in your life. Honor your relationships. Imitate Jesus, serve Him in your relationships, and community and express your love for yourself, others, and God.

A Steward’s Prayer:

*Lord, Creator, help me realize what it means to be created in your image.
Help me recognize and celebrate the goodness in others.*



Example 3.15.

Stewardship: A Way of Life

Stewards identify and nurture their gifts within the Church community.



Jesus proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the 'birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.'" *Matthew 13:31-32*

Why does the mustard seed grow into a large bush? Because that's what it was created to do. The person in the parable who sowed the mustard seed helped this small seed grow into what it was meant to be. Our Church community is the sower of our gifts. It identifies and nourishes our gifts, and helps us grow into who we were created to be. Our Church community is our field, our home where we grow in grace and love in relationship with God and others. But, our Church community cannot grow into the Kingdom of Heaven without our gifts. Use your gifts!

A Steward's Prayer:

*Lord, show me my gifts.
Help me recognize and celebrate the gifts of others.*



Example 3.16.

Stewardship: A Way of Life

The Steward is grateful and generous.



While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. *Matthew 26:26-28*

Jesus is Lord! We follow and imitate Jesus! Why? Because Jesus chose to live with us and to become one of us. Because Jesus showed us how to love. Because Jesus rescued us from sin and its dreadful desolate darkness. Because Jesus surrendered all of Himself for you and me so that we can live forever. Because Jesus would not leave us alone but gave us the Holy Spirit who guides and consoles us. How can we who have been so gifted by God show our gratitude in our lives and in our Church community? We show it each time we pray, worship together, and share the Eucharist! We show it when we enjoy and use our time well. We show it as we treasure and nurture our gifts and talents and then and most importantly, give them all away.

A Steward's Prayer:

*Lord, I will follow you, show me where you want me to go.
Help me share my life with others.*



Example 3.17.

Stewardship: A Way of Life

Stewards help others.



When he entered Capernaum, a centurion approached him and appealed to him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, suffering dreadfully." He said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion said in reply, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed. For I too am a person subject to authority, with soldiers subject to me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come here,' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I say to you, many will come from the east and the west, and will recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the banquet in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom will be driven out into the outer darkness, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth." And Jesus said to the centurion, "You may go; as you have believed, let it be done for you." And at that very hour (his) servant was healed.

Matthew Chapter 8:5-13

How and why did the Centurion know Jesus could help his servant? He was a Roman. He was not Jewish. Yet, he knew Jesus could heal! Where did this great simple trust and faith come from? The Centurion must have told someone about his concern for his suffering servant. Someone the Centurion regarded highly must have wanted to help the Centurion and his servant. Someone told the Centurion about Jesus. Do you want to help someone? Tell them about Jesus. Tell them about the Kingdom

A Steward's Prayer:

*Lord, help me be a servant of your love.
Show me where you want me to help.*



Example 3.18.

Stewardship: A Way of Life

Stewards share their treasures and gifts!



When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves." (Jesus) said to them, "There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have here." Then he said, "Bring them here to me," and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over – twelve wicker baskets full.
Matthew 14:15-20

Why are we such a generous people? It is because we are free. It is because we care. Most of all, it is because we are compassionate. The love that fills our hearts moves us to share what we have with others. We share what we have in many ways. We put money in the poor box, we drop off our surplus for St. Vincent de Paul, and we donate money to charities and to our church community. The greater our hearts break over others the more generous we are.

A Steward's Prayer:

*Lord, show me how to serve your people.
Help me identify and share my treasure with those who need my help.*



Example 3.19.

Stewardship: A Way of Life

Stewardship is a life long journey.



Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” *Matthew 28:18-20*

We are called to make disciples of all nations. How can we do that? As Stewards of this world and our faith we do that day by day. Stewardship is a life long journey. We strive each day to live righteous lives as we seek to discover God’s will. Daily, we pray and rely on God’s grace and mercy as we grow in righteousness and love. We worship together and share Eucharist as we grow in Faith. We believe the fullness of the kingdom will come and that our Lord Jesus will be with us to help us until the “end of the age.”

A Steward’s Prayer:

*Lord, show me what your will is for my life.
Help me proclaim the Good News with my life.*



Example 3.20.

Stewardship in Scripture References

References to the concept of Stewardship can be found throughout the Old and New Testaments. The following may be used as bulletin blurbs or in announcements. Introductory comments can be added in an effort to prompt parishioners into personal prayer and reflection about the reading and the connection to Stewardship as it pertains to them in their daily lives. There are many, many more Biblical references that can be used as part of the foundation and development of a Stewardship program. Whenever possible, it is recommended that the reading reflect the message of the Sunday Gospel.

NEW TESTAMENT STEWARDSHIP REFERENCES:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Matthew: 6:3

“But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing. . . .”

Matthew 6:19-21

“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 destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.”

Matthew 6:31-33

“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 7:2

“For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you.”

Matthew 25:14-30

Parable of the Talents

Matthew 25:35

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me. . . .”

Matthew 25:36

“I was naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.”



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.20 (cont'd).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Mark 10:21 “Go, sell what you have, and give to [the] poor and you will have treasure in heaven . . .”

Mark 10:43-44 “. . . whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all.”

Mark 12:44 “Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty.”

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Luke 3:11 “Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise.”

Luke 6:38 “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 10:2 “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”

Luke 12:33-34 “Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide moneybags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.”

Luke 18: 22 “. . .sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

John 6:27 “Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”

John 12:26 “Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.”



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.20 (cont'd).

John 15:12-16

“This is my commandment: love one another as I love you . . . go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.”

John 20:21

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

John 21:15-17

“Jesus said, “Tend my sheep . . . Feed my sheep.”

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

“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.”

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER:

1 Peter 4:9-11

“Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

OLD TESTAMENT STEWARDSHIP REFERENCES:

Genesis 28:22

“This stone that I have set up as a memorial stone shall be God’s abode. Of everything you give me I will faithfully return a tenth part to you.”

Leviticus 27:30

“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.”

Numbers 15:21

“Throughout your generations you shall give a contribution to the Lord from your first batch of dough.”

Numbers 18:12

“I have also assigned to you all the best of the new oil and of the new wine and grain that they give it to the Lord as their first fruits.”



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.20 (cont'd).

- Deuteronomy 15:10 “When you give to him give freely and not with ill will; for the Lord, your God, will bless you for this in all your works and undertakings.”
- Deuteronomy 14:22 “Each year you shall tithe all the produce that grows in the field you have sown. . .”
- Deuteronomy 16:10 “You shall keep the feast of Weeks in honor of the Lord, your God, and the measure of your own freewill offering shall be in proportion to the blessing the Lord, your God, has bestowed on you.”
- Deuteronomy 16:17 “. . . 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 18:4 “You shall also give him the first fruits of your grain and wine and oil, as well as the first fruits of the shearing of your flock. . .”
- Deuteronomy 26:2 “. . . you shall take some first fruits of the various products of the soil which you harvest from the land which the Lord, your God, gives you, and putting them in a basket, you shall go to the place which the Lord, your God, chooses for the dwelling place of his name.”
- Tobit 4:8 “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 . . .”
- Tobit 4:11 “Alms are a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who give them.”
- Tobit 4:16 “Give to the hungry some of your bread, and to the naked some of your clothing. Whatever you have left over, give away as alms; and do not begrudge the alms you give.”
- Tobit 12:8 “Prayer and fasting are good, but better than either is almsgiving accompanied by righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than abundance with wickedness. It is better to give alms than to store gold.”



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.20 (cont'd).

Sirach 4:31

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

Sirach 35:7

“In generous spirit pay homage to the Lord, be not sparing of freewill gifts.”

Sirach 35:8

With each contribution show a cheerful countenance, and pay your tithe in a spirit of joy.”

Sirach 35:9

Give to the Most High as he has given to you, generously, according to your means.”



Example 3.21.

Stewardship Reflections for Bulletins

- How much time, other than an hour on Sunday, do you give back to God for the many blessings that you have received?
- We are all stewards – caretakers of the many gifts God has bestowed upon us. Our challenge as Christians is to make good use of those gifts.
- God gives each of us gifts and talents. We are stewards of those gifts and are called to share them with each other for the glory of God.
- How much you have has nothing to do with you. There are no packets on your birthday suit. We come into this world with nothing and we will leave it with nothing. We are called to recognize that all we possess is a gift from God.
- You are just one person, but you are important to God and to God’s work. Be faithful as you give of your time, talent, and treasure.
- Giving of our time, talent and treasure is not about giving until it hurts. Rather, it is about giving until you feel good about what you have given.
- Stewardship involves a change of heart, embodied not just in a single action, nor even a series of actions, but in one’s entire life.
- As Catholics, we are not to focus only on ourselves, but are called by our baptism to reach out and share our time, talent and with our brothers and sisters.
- “Wherever your treasure lies, there your heart will be.” (Luke 12:34) What is your treasure? How about your friends, your family, your faith?
- Stewardship is a way of thanking God for all of the Lord’s blessings by returning to God a portion of the time, talent and treasure we have received.
- God has taught us that you cannot love without giving. God’s most precious gift to us was his son, Jesus. What gifts can YOU share that will show the measure of your love to God?
- Stewardship opens an avenue of thought that allows us to give, “With no strings attached,” and without questioning what we will get in return.



Example 3.22.

Prayer of the Faithful for a Four Week Stewardship Renewal

Week #1

That a deeper faith is realized by the members of (name of parish) who, out of gratitude for God's abundant gifts, share their talents with others, we pray to the Lord...

Week #2

For all members of (name of parish) who, through their Stewardship of time, talent, and treasure, are eager to share their gifts with their parish and diocese, that their faith is deepened and their lives become further enriched, we pray to the Lord...

Week #3

For all members of (name of parish), that through our Stewardship of time and talent and service to God on earth, we will realize greater personal and community faith we pray to the Lord...

Week #4

For all (name of parish) parishioners, that our Stewardship of treasure to our parish and diocese will be an expression of gratitude for what God has given to us, we pray to the Lord...



Example 3.23.

Prayer of the Faithful for the Parish Family

Lord, you are the giver of every gift, including the most precious and holy gift of your son, Jesus Christ. Help us to remember how important it is for us to also be a generous giver of gifts, so that we can carry out Christ's mission for His Church on earth, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, instill in our heart a spirit of charity and compassion. Help us to be open to ways that can make a difference in our parish and community, by being generous with our abilities and treasure, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, grant us the ability to honestly evaluate our lifestyle that it might reflect a desire to walk closer with you, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, help us to wisely use the gifts you've entrusted us to steward, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, give our parish family the desire to do your will, giving generously of ourselves and our gifts for the mission of the Church, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, we offer up a prayer of thanksgiving for the abundance of treasure and abilities with which you have blessed us. Give us the desire to joyfully share our gifts for the good of our Catholic community, we pray to the Lord.

Lord make us trustworthy stewards of your abundant blessings. Show us ways that will enable us to fully embrace your teachings of charity, we pray to the Lord.

Lord, help us to have the courage to be good stewards of God's many blessings, we pray to the Lord.



Example 3.24.

Prayer of the Faithful Corresponding to the Months of the Year

January

May we resolve during this year to share more generously than ever our time, talents, and treasure with our parish community and others...We pray to the Lord.

February

That our actions will continue to build up our parish community as we live our call to be good stewards of God's many gifts...We pray to the Lord.

March

During this season of Lent, may we open our hearts to the needs of the poor and oppressed...We pray to the Lord.

April

That our actions will demonstrate our gratitude to God for the gift of salvation and eternal life...We pray to the Lord.

May

May we follow the example of the Blessed Mother and open our hearts to follow the message of God without measuring the personal cost...We pray to the Lord.

June

May we become better stewards of our time, especially the time that we spend with God...We pray to the Lord.

July

May we open our hearts to return to God, the first fruits –giving from our substance rather than our surplus...We pray to the Lord.

August

That we may always seek to see the face of God in all people we encounter...We pray to the Lord.

September

May we always remember – “all that we are” and “all that we have” are gifts from God...We pray to the Lord.

October

That all members of our parish community will be united in our common faith journey...We pray to the Lord.

November

During this season of giving thanks, may we always remember that God is the source of all the blessings in our lives...We pray to the Lord.

December

As we prepare during this season of Advent to receive God's greatest gift, His son, may we reflect on our need to share with others...We pray to the Lord.



Example 3.25.

Prayer of the Faithful Focusing on People as Stewards

That as conscious stewards, we may open our minds and hearts to hear God's call as we prepare for our upcoming Stewardship renewal, we pray to the Lord...

That as aware stewards, we will reflect upon what it means to be the hands of Christ as we begin our Stewardship renewal, we pray to the Lord...

That as gifted stewards, we may use and share our God-given gifts in loving service to help build God's kingdom, we pray to the Lord...

That as committed stewards, we may receive the gift of the Eucharist to help us move from faith to action as the hands of Christ, we pray to the Lord...

That as the hands of Christ, we may have the perseverance to follow Jesus and his teachings in all aspects of our lives, we pray to the Lord...

That all of us as Christian stewards may live a life that gives witness to the fact that we are the hands of Christ, we pray to the Lord...

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Example 3.26.

Prayer of the Faithful Focusing on the Elements in Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response

May our loving Creator and Giver of all good gifts, bless our parish, strengthen our faith, and grant us the spirit of Christian Stewardship so we may give generously of our time, talent, and treasure to spread Your Kingdom here in our parish. For this, we pray to the Lord.

May the gifts, talents, and abilities given to each of us by our Lord enable us more effectively to carry out the mission of the parish. For this, we pray to the Lord.

That we may take time to enjoy God’s gifts to us, appreciate them, and share them with others. For this, we pray to the Lord.

That we may remember to be grateful to God for all of our successes and accomplishments, for without Him we could do nothing. For this, we pray to the Lord.

For all those who so generously support the work of our parish and the greater Church, that they may know the joy God promised to those who do His work. For this, we pray to the Lord.

Used with permission from the Diocese of Winona, Minnesota



Example 3.27.

Prayer of the Faithful Compatible with the Six Themes of Stewardship used in Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship

Theme I

For the human family all over the world. May we grow as nations, peoples, and communities in the likeness of God, recognizing the preciousness of life and sharing all our gifts in love. Let us pray to the Lord.

Theme II

For the Church in every age. May the members of the Body of Christ affirm, acknowledge and strengthen each other as gift and then proclaim good news by generously sharing the Gift of God with the world. Let us pray to the Lord.

Theme III

For the members of our parish and our community. May we see in one another and in our own lives the blessings and gifts that God has showered upon us. May we live grateful lives. Let us pray to the Lord.

Theme IV

For all the broken-hearted, the poor, the oppressed, and those forgotten. May we reveal the love of God in our hearts by our generosity to the poor and our dedication to justice. Let us pray to the Lord.

Theme V

For the Body of Christ, especially among our parish community. May we grow our gifts for the sake of the Gospel through our generous participation in the life and ministry of the Church. Let us pray to the Lord.

Theme VI

For the conversion of heart among all the people of God. May the members of Christ's Body continuously grow into gifted and generous stewards of life emptying themselves for the sake of the Kingdom. Let us pray to the Lord.



Example 3.28.

Lay Witness Talk by an Individual

Good morning. My name is _____. Fr. _____ asked me to speak to you a little bit this morning about Stewardship in my life. I've been a member of Parish Name for _____ years. I was married right here at this altar _____ years ago to my wonderful husband, Name and we now have _____ beautiful children, Name, who is _____ years old, and Name, who is in Xth grade. *(Possibly provide some appropriate information about the children or family life such as...)* Name was baptized here, and made her 1st Holy Communion here this past Month.

Here at Parish Name *(Provide information about involvement in the parish such as...)* I am a Lector/Commentator, I'm currently a member of our Parish Council, and am also a member of the Choir. My hope is to also become a Eucharistic Minister in the near future.

Stewardship, to me, is about praise and thanksgiving. We respond with these words every time we celebrate the Eucharist, "It is right to give Him thanks and praise." I consistently offer prayers of thanks. It can be for something as simple as getting out of the house on time. Getting that extra load of laundry done. Waking up to a fresh pot of coffee (I have to give thanks to my husband for that one, too). I have some very big things to be grateful for as well.

(Share a personal story of experiencing a life of Stewardship such as...) My family has gone through some very hard times over the last few years, with job changes, job losses, relocations, and more, but I never wondered where God was through any of it. I just knew there was a reason for *every single thing* we went through. At one of our darkest points, we were actually in a situation where, in a matter of days, we'd have no place to live. We were going to move in with my parents until we could figure something out – but at that time, my sister had just given birth to her baby prematurely, and she was living with my parents so she would have extra help. We'd be staying in the basement...it was the only space left.

Two days before we were moving, I couldn't bear it any more. I literally fell down on my knees crying and begged God, "Please soften someone's heart, Lord. Touch someone and help them help us. I don't know how, I just know it has to happen through YOU, because we can't help ourselves right now." The next day distant cousin called me who heard about what we were going through. She had moved out of state, but her house was still for sale near to us. She took it off the market and gave us a home. When we had nothing, we paid nothing. When we had a little, we paid a little. She told us not to worry and we could start to pay her rent when we were back on our feet. How do you thank someone for a gift like that? We still haven't figured out how to truly thank her, but we do give thanks to God every day for answering our prayers in our time of need.



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.28(cont'd).

For of the last 10 years, my family and I have moved around quite a bit – 7 times in those 10 years. It seemed like every time we settled in and picked a parish, we were on the move again. I wanted to get more involved in the church, but could never find a place that felt like home.

When we ended up moving back to the area I was thrilled to be home again, not only near my family, but back in my church.

As I attended Mass each Sunday, I could feel myself being called, but didn't know to what. So I prayed. I knew that when the time was right, the Holy Spirit would move me. After a few months, Fr. _____ announced that Parish Council elections were the next week, and I knew that is what God wanted me to do. I then also chose to participate in the choir.

I did have some doubts...how was I going to find the time to attend meetings, choir rehearsals, and participate on Parish Council...all with a job, two little kids, and hungry husband? Well, the Holy Spirit had everything worked out. My husband is not only accepting of my involvement, but very supportive. My kids understand that there are meetings and functions I go to for the church, and I believe that has made them more curious about our faith. There are times when I've had such a long day; the last thing I feel like doing is going to a meeting. But I honor the commitment I made; I go; and find myself renewed in mind and spirit afterward, and again give thanks to God that I made the decision to be an active part of this parish.

Going to church and being a part of a faith community is not only about praying. It is about praising. About joy, and glory, and celebration. I have noticed as I've gotten more involved in the church that the Holy Spirit stirs in me with more and more frequency. I am moved to tears by the words in the prayers I've recited since I was a child. Their meaning now reaches me in a whole new way. Once I started giving more of myself, I found I had more of myself to give.

Last week my husband and I celebrated our 10th anniversary. While we were at dinner, we were talking about how difficult things had been, and how funny we would end up right back here where we started. But because of all the hardship, we are able to appreciate how truly wonderful everything is now. He has a job he loves, and an employer that loves him. Our kids are making friends and spending more time with their extended family than they ever have before. Our marriage, our family, and our lives are 100% better than they were a year ago. And I thank God every day for letting us take that difficult journey that brought us to where we are today.

So that's my story, at least part of it. If you have any questions about ministries or Stewardship, I'll be here after Mass and would be glad to talk to you. I pray every day for all of you and your families, that the Holy Spirit will move you, and you will know the joy and fulfillment of giving that I now know.



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.29.

Lay Witness Talk by a Couple

(Give general personal information such as...)

Husband

- Introduce ourselves, length of time in the community
- We have been Catholic our whole life – all schooling... grade school, HS, and college
- Describe numbers, ages, and general information about children
- Our Ministries at St. _____ have been – *(List all areas of involvement)*

(Share a personal story of experiencing a life of Stewardship such as...)

When our parish leadership started talking about Stewardship we sensed a good deal of resistance. Many people had only heard the word “Stewardship” used in the same sentence as “money”. However, we had never been exposed to it in that way.

To us, Stewardship has always meant, “What was I doing with God’s gifts,? **and** How was I responding to the Call to Discipleship?”

And, since I never really had much money, I had always looked at my time and the little talent I have, as the things I would give back to God.

My spiritual development was taking shape in the 70’s and one of the popular songs of the time, that struck a chord (excuse the pun) with me, was from Godspell – All Good Gifts. The refrain was: “All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above... So thank the Lord, thank the Lord for all his love.” This, along with my mother’s constant reminders on the same subject, would impress upon me that all that I had, all that I possessed, was a gift from God.

Wife

Many times we think we have God’s will figured out, when suddenly He throws us a curve, like making it clear to me that the path I had pursued as a member of a religious community for 9 yrs. was not where my discipleship was to be lived out. Grateful for all I had learned and open to what would be next, I moved on and discovered the “new” gift he had for me was my beloved husband. We knew that finding each other could NEVER have happened except by God’s grace.

As we matured, married and started acquiring “things”, we could never get away from the reality that our lives were filled with blessings from “heaven above”:

Husband

- as our children grew into terrific adults, we knew that we could not take a whole lot of credit for **that**.
- as my wife and I grew more in love each year of our 33 yr. marriage, we knew we could not take full credit for **that**
- as each job I acquired was supplying my family’s physical needs, I could not take full credit for **them**.

Wife

The first 10 years of our marriage were rocked by low income jobs, job changes, unemployment and, for a time, living on food stamps. There were health issues, financial insecurity, and flooded basements.... lots of flooded basements, and all the usual concerns of a young growing family.

We were strengthened by the gift of knowing that God would provide, and by the support of family and kind members of our church and neighborhood community who brought Christmas gifts for our children and sent money orders signed only “friends in Christ”.



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.29 (cont'd).

One day we found a pkg. of lemonade mix and a can of Spaghettios from a local convenience store at our front door – we think, a gift from a neighbor child who heard of our plight.

In our walk with the Lord we often found ourselves apprehensive of what God would ask next, as a result of all He had given us. He taught us to replace anxiety with expectancy. My husband often prayed, when interviewing for jobs, “This, or something better, Lord.”

Our life continued with wonderful trips provided by the new job, struggles, hardships, the joys and heartache of raising our children, caring for & losing to death beloved family members.

We have learned to rely on our loving God in good times and bad and that all His gifts bring good into our lives.

Husband

- as we were able to purchase a comfortable home (**with no basement**), in a peaceful setting, we knew that we did not find **that** on our own.
- and finally, when we found such an open, vibrant and welcoming parish as we walked through the front doors at St. _____, we knew this was another one of God’s blessing “sent from heaven above”. So, as the song goes, “I thank the Lord for all his love.”
- We do this by giving our time to St. _____ and other worthwhile causes or ministries. We use our talent which, for me, is still hard to determine.
- We give of our resources, so that ministries can be started or maintained.

But, HOW do we determine how much of our time, talent and resources to give? Well I guess it’s mainly through experience. There was a point in my Stewardship journey that I couldn’t say “no” and I got burned out. I was so burned out that I quit everything and even stopped attending church. Then, slowly, I re-entered the church community, and I now listen to that little voice in the back of my head that helps me find a sense of balance - between service and my chosen vocation of being a good and faithful father and husband.

Wife

It was in the time we had the least – when we were both unemployed, with a 6 yr. old and 2 yr. old, and on food stamps - that we learned to give generously of our treasure. When someone sent us \$15, we gave \$1.50 on Sunday. When we received \$150, we gave \$15. We only had what was given to us to give. We never forgot those times and God taught us to give from a grateful heart. We did not learn a formula for giving and we do not currently tithe, but we gratefully increase our giving as the Lord inspires us, and we seek ways to help and support others.

When we found ourselves in this area and then at St. _____ parish we were so humbled and filled with gratitude – not only for our home and parish community but because we were able to envision how every step of the way in our daily lives, a generous and faithful God had opened our hearts and minds to receive his love and goodness, and He was still teaching us to make a return in love for His “good gifts”.

We have the comfort and experience of knowing that God will not be outdone in generosity! And we have learned to pray a simple Stewardship prayer: “Please keep us in your love, guide us on your path – Thanks, for all that has been; Yes, to all that lies ahead.”



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.30.

Stewardship Message from Bishop Richard G. Lennon

(printed version of message that is also provided on CD)

As your parish embraces this formation process in stewardship as a way of life, I want to affirm the importance of stewardship within our Catholic faith. Stewardship as a way of life and discipleship is so central to our Church life that I established a diocesan office to support and develop it.

Good and faithful stewards recognize that God is the origin of life, the giver of all we have, are, and will be. As Catholics we believe that all we have in our lives has been entrusted to us by God. Notice, I said “entrusted” not “given”. What I mean by this is that our relationships, our work, our time, our possessions, and our very life itself, are all given to us by God not to become our possessions, but to be our means for life and instruments for building the Kingdom on earth. Good stewards recognize that we are responsible to God for the manner in which we use all that he has entrusted to us.

Every bit of our personal time, our unique talent, and our hard-earned treasure can be understood as a seed planted within our lives. By faith and grace, good stewards grow these precious seedlings into maturity – making the most of them for the love of God. We nurture our own gifts and those of others through loving within both our families and the Church. In imitation of God Himself, we spend our lives sharing and giving away that which has been entrusted to us by the Lord. Living generous lives as stewards of God’s gifts enables us to share the presence and power of God with others by doing justice, repairing the earth, and giving glory to God.

Put more simply and profoundly in the words of St. Paul, living lives as stewards means to constantly work at living the life God intended us to live - to live a life of holiness. As with anything important, stewardship doesn’t happen overnight - it is a lifelong journey of growth that we are called to walk together.

Stewardship requires formation. For that reason, many excellent resources and assistance will be provided you in the weeks and months ahead to help you and your fellow parishioners achieve deeper levels of participation in the Church’s mission. Through preaching, witnessing, ministry fairs, and other activities you will be encouraged to see life from a new perspective. Your time, talent, and treasure can now be seen, no longer as possessions and blessings for you – but as God’s precious commodities entrusted to you for the benefit of the Church and the world.

Seeing oneself as a blessed steward entrusted by God with gifts, we can be nothing but grateful. The Eucharist is the most powerful way for anyone who is grateful to give thanks to God. Make the celebration of Mass the centerpiece of your parish and your lives as God’s stewards. When you are asked in the weeks ahead to pledge your time, talent, and treasure for the coming year, I hope you will take a step further and re-dedicate your whole life to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to a fuller life in the Church. Return to God all that is God’s – your faith, hope and love. Thank you for your attention and for who you are and for all you do for the Lord within the Church.



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.31.

Leadership Retreat Outline

Parish Letterhead

Use as a Bulletin insert (if retreat is opened to the entire parish community)

Please consider joining us for our first Parish Stewardship retreat

Insert day and date, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Insert day and date, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Held in the *Name of Location*

This retreat will be composed of four sessions, which will be as follows:

Insert day of the week for DAY 1

- 6:30 p.m. Dinner
- 7:15 p.m. Session One - "God Is Our Father"
 - Overview of the Retreat
 - Talk - "God Is Our Father"
- 7:45 p.m. · Reflection Time
- 8:15 p.m. · Small Group Discussions
- 8:45 p.m. Night Prayer
- 9:00 p.m. Dismissal for the Evening

Insert day of the week for DAY 2

- 8:00 a.m. Mass
- 8:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:15 a.m. Session Two - "God Calls and Equips His Disciples"
 - Talk
- 9:45 a.m. · Reflection Time
- 10:15 a.m. · Small Group Discussions
- 10:45 a.m. Session Three - "To Be A Christian Steward"
 - Talk
- 11:15 a.m. · Reflection Time
- 11:45 a.m. · Small Group Discussions/Lunch
- 12:30 p.m. Session Four - "Stewards of the Church"
 - Talk
- 1:00 p.m. · Reflection Time
- 1:30 p.m. · General Large Group Discussion
- 1:50 p.m. Closing – Commissioning
- 2:00 p.m. Dismissal

"There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service, but the same Lord; there are different workings, but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation the Spirit is given for some benefit." 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

RSVP to the Parish Office at *phone number* by *date*

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Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.32.

Leadership Retreat Invitation

Parish Letterhead

Use as a letter for all parish leaders

Date

<First and Last Name>

<Street Address>

<City, State, ZIP>

Dear <Name>,

I would like you to attend our upcoming Parish Retreat along with other leaders at *Parish Name* such as the members of the Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Stewardship Committee, and the leaders of our parish ministries.

Parish Retreat

Insert day and date, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Insert day and date, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Held in the *Name of Location*

This spiritual retreat is a time for all our parish leaders to draw aside and spend time with God and with one another. It is an opportunity to reflect on the future direction of *Parish Name* and your role as a parish leader. Your spouse is also invited to attend.

The retreat will be lead by *Name*, an excellent speaker who conducts similar retreats at parishes around the *diocese/country*. In addition to *Name's* talks, there will be time for personal reflection and small group discussions.

The retreat will begin with dinner on *Day, Date* – 6:30 p.m. It will continue on *Day, Date*, with Mass at *8:00 a.m.*, and the retreat will end about 2:00 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be included, and there is no cost to attend.

To confirm your attendance, or to ask any questions, please phone the parish office at *phone number*. This retreat will be a time of spiritual enrichment for all our leaders who attend, and I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor's Name

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Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Example 3.33.

Leadership Retreat Follow-Up Thank You

Parish Letterhead

Date

<First and Last Name>

<Street Address>

<City, State, ZIP>

Dear <Name>,

Thank you for participating in our recent Stewardship Retreat. We truly appreciate your taking the time from your lives to pray and reflect on Stewardship with us. As (*Parish Name*) works to develop Stewardship as process of parish life, the gifts that each of you have to offer will continue to be vital to our parish.

Hopefully you have learned that Stewardship isn't a program, but a way of life for each of us to use God's gifts wisely to the best of our ability and for the good of the Church.

Thank you again and may God Bless you and your family abundantly.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor's Name

Stewardship Chair's Name

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Example 3.34.

Ministry Coordinator's Leadership Workshop Invitation

OUR HEARTS ARE BURNING

A leadership meeting for ministry coordinators

You, as a person of leadership at

parish name,

Are encouraged to attend one of our annual Ministry Coordinators' Workshops.

Take a look at your calendar, decide which one of the following dates would work best for you, and call or email the parish office to register by **date**

List options of dates of workshops here

Give location information here



Everyone's involvement and input is important.

Join us for this walk to Emmaus

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Example 3.35.

Ministry Coordinator's Leadership Workshop Objectives and Agenda

**Ministry Coordinator's Leadership
Workshop Objectives**

**Insert Dates
of workshops here**

Theme:
"Our Hearts Are Burning" Luke 24:32

Objectives:

- To deepen coordinators' understanding of the message that their role is not just a task oriented one, but truly a ministry of developing others.
- To recognize coordinators & express appreciation for their efforts.
- To provide opportunity for coordinators to come together & discuss common issues & to build a network of support.
- To clearly communicate roles & expectations of ministry coordinators at the parish.
- To promote theological understanding of Stewardship & enrich the understanding of coordinators' roles in fostering that theological message to those involved in their ministries.
- To build community among ministries & coordinators.



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Example 3.35 (cont'd).

Ministry Coordinator's Leadership Workshop Agenda

- 30 minutes** 1. Begin in the Chapel for Opening prayer service focusing on Luke 24:13-35 including music & time for reflection & sharing with 1 person.
- Reflection question:** Each one of us has our own Emmaus story. We ask you to choose one person and both of you will take an Emmaus walk together. Take 10 minutes to share your story of times in which you have experienced challenges as a ministry coordinator as well as times in which God's intervention has given you hope and consolation, just like the disciples on the road to Emmaus.
- 10 minutes** 2. Move to meeting room for program.
- 15 minutes** 3. Stewardship message
- Theology of Stewardship (Biblical Background)
 - Discussion of vision statement and goals set by Pastoral council
 - How has your involvement in Stewardship affected your life?
 - How can you as a leader in Stewardship help facilitate that in others?
- 20 minutes** 4. Break out into small groups:
- New Coordinators - New within this past year, facilitated discussion reviewing the role description of a Ministry Coordinator (*Example 3.36*)
 - Other Coordinators - Small group review and discussion of their 3 biggest challenges this past year and how they handled those challenges
- 10 minutes** 5. Discussion of our Stewardship Process
- Review of the Parish's expectation of coordinators (see "Ministry Coordinator Time and Talent Renewal Checklist" (*Example 3.37*))
 - How they will receive list of new volunteers
 - Timeline for follow - up of volunteers
 - Importance of follow-up
 - What to do if you can't reach a volunteer:
 - Stewardship Committee support and involvement
- 10 minutes** 6. Discussion regarding: How is our Stewardship process working?
- 10 minutes** 7. Close the evening with prayer and candle service, include music



Example 3.36.

Ministry Coordinator Role Description

Your Parish Name

Ministry Coordinator Role Description

Responsibilities*

- Attend annual Ministry Coordinators' Leadership Workshop.
- Help develop a ministry mission statement, which is consistent with the parish mission, and discuss with the ministry team how this mission is fulfilled.
- Make sure parish Stewardship secretary has a copy of the current ministry mission statement.
- Maintain an updated list of volunteers and report changes to the parish Stewardship secretary.
- Set ministry goals and calendar for the year. Be sure to communicate these to the ministry team.
- Communicate with parish staff about scheduling of events.
 - Scheduling of the parish facilities must be approved by parish staff.
 - If special room set-up is required, forms are available in the Parish office and must be filled out at least 3 days prior to an event.
- Establish a trained back-up coordinator or assistant coordinator.
- Maintain responsibility for contacting, training, and developing ministry members.
- Provide regular communication with ministry members.
- Recognize and acknowledge volunteers.

Qualifications

- Registered, active member of the parish.
- Commitment to the mission of the Catholic Church.
- Positive outlook about Stewardship and his/her ministry.
- Ability to organize and a willingness to assume responsibility for development of his/her ministry.

Responsible To

- Stewardship Secretary

*This can be adjusted based on the unique personality of your parish

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Example 3.37.

Ministry Coordinator Time and Talent Renewal Checklist

- Reviewed ministry description for Ministry Catalog and updated as needed
- Returned updated ministry description to parish office
- Filled out and return Time and Talent renewal brochure
- Received volunteer list by (DATE)
- Contacted all volunteers by (DATE)
- Reported all volunteer list changes to Stewardship Committee representative
- Contacted parish office about need of follow-up postcards
- Filled out and mailed follow-up postcards to volunteers unable to reach by phone

Notes:

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Parish Stewardship Education and Formation



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND WEB SITES ON STEWARDSHIP

http://dioceseofcleveland.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=129&Itemid=255

Link to the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Stewardship Office. OR go to <http://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/> and click on the Stewardship Office link.

<http://www.catholicStewardship.org/en/index.html>

Link to the International Catholic Stewardship Council.

<http://www.cruzblanca.org/hermanoleon/>

Link to a Catholic free clip art web site.

www.diometuchen.org/Stewardshipoffice/prayer_treasures.htm

Link to Diocese of Metuchen --resources for weekly scripture selections based on Stewardship themes.

<http://www.StewardshipIi.org/>

Link to Diocese of Rockville Stewardship page, with many free downloadable resources.

www.nccbuscc.org

Link for a variety of resources on Stewardship and other topics from the US Bishops Conference.

<http://www.archstl.org/Stewardship/whatis/inserts.html>

Link to the Archdiocese of St. Louis, and in particular, their bulletin inserts regarding weekly Stewardship themes.

http://www.cdowk.org/Stewardship_development/about_Stewardship.shtml

Link to the Diocese of Wichita Stewardship page with free downloadable resources.

<http://kingdomassignment.com/welcome/#>

Link to learning more about this incredible journey of parishioners sharing gifts. St. Barnabas Parish in Northfield has had a remarkable experience with this approach.

<http://livingfaithatwork.org>

Link to a Catholic perspective and suggestions for fostering faith at work.

Useful Web sites for personal prayer/study:

www.activeparishioner.com/

www.centeringspace.org/



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

www.creativecommunications.com

This link leads to publications for use in parishes, particularly products to enhance the liturgical worship and personal devotional life for Catholic parishes. Their catalogs include hundreds of Christian print and electronic media products.

www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.htm

dioceseofcleveland.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=25&Itemid=107

www.henrinouwen.org/home/free_eletters/

www.nccbuscc.org/nab/index.htm

www.jesuit.ie/prayer/index.htm

www.praythenews.com

www.sacredspace.ie/

www.universalis.com

www.vatican.va

Related DVDs available to borrow from the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Stewardship Office (call 216-696-6525 and ask for the Stewardship Office)

NOOMA, *“Rich”*, an engaging 10 minute DVD about the need to share our gifts with the larger world.

RSI Catholic Services Group, *“Reflections on the Pastoral Letter”*, an enlightening DVD featuring the late Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy who shares his experiences of chairing the Bishops’ committee that wrote the USCCB Pastoral Letter – [Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response](#).

Books, articles and other links related to Stewardship

Buckingham, Marcus and Donald O. Clifton, [Now, Discover Your Strengths](#), New York: Free Press, 2001.

Buckingham, Marcus, [First, Break All the Rules](#) (see www.gallup.com).

Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, Evangelization Office, 1404 E. Ninth Street, Cleveland, OH, 44114 or call 216-696-6525. [All Are Welcome – A Manual for Parish Hospitality](#).

Champlin, Joseph, M, [A Way of Life](#), Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004 or go to <http://www.litpress.org/Detail.aspx?ISBN=0814630065>.



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Clements, Justin C., Stewardship – A Parish Handbook, Liguori, Missouri: Liguori Publications, 2000 or go to www.liguori.org.

Conway, Daniel, Stewardship in America – A Countercultural Way of Life, Indianapolis, Indiana: Saint Catherine of Siena Press, 2006 or go to www.saintcatherineofsienapress.com.

Conway, Daniel, What Do I Own and What Owns Me?, Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2005 or go to www.twentythirdpublications.com.

Diocese of Wichita, 424 N. Broadway, Wichita, KS 67202; Four Pillars of Stewardship, invites parishioners to experience, witness and live the Stewardship way of life in response to their baptismal call to discipleship or go to http://www.cdowk.org/Stewardship_development/Stewardship_pillars.shtml.

Diocese of Saginaw, 5800 Weiss St., Saginaw, MI 48603; <http://www.saginaw.org>/
Little Burgundy Book on Stewardship – scriptural reflections on Stewardship.

Heart to Heart Communications, 40 University Avenue, Akron, OH 44308, 330-434-3278 or go to www.H2HC.org (good resource for information on applying faith to work issues).

Hendricks, Kathy, Everything About Parish Ministry I Wish I Had Known, Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2002 or go to www.twentythirdpublications.com.

Hueckel, Sharon, Stewardship by the Book (Bulletin bits based on the Sunday readings), Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2004 or go to www.osv.com.

International Catholic Stewardship Council, 1275 K Street, N.W., Suite 980, Washington, DC 20005-4006, call 1-202-289-1093 or go to www.catholicStewardship.org.

Leider, Richard J. and Shapiro, David, Whistle While You Work: Heeding Your Life's Calling, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Lenahan, Phil, 7 Steps to Becoming Financially Free, Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2007 or go to www.osv.com.

Mahan, Daniel J., More Than Silver or Gold – Homilies of a Stewardship Priest, Indianapolis, Indiana: Saint Catherine of Siena Press, 2005 or go to www.morethansilverorgold.com.

Morris, Danny, and Olsen, Charles, M., Discerning God's will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1997.

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Our Sunday Visitor publishes many different resources on Catholic Stewardship. Go to <http://www.osv.com/MiscNav/AdvancedSearch/SearchResults/tabid/97/Default.aspx?Search=Stewardship&Scope=B>.



Parish Stewardship Education and Formation

Paprocki, *You Give them Something to Eat*, Notre Dame, Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1998.

Petro, Vicky and Palencar, Lee, *Spiritual Gifts Experience* is a Gifts Discernment workshop and workbook that is foundational to living and grooming exceptional Stewardship. Call Vicky Petro for details and to schedule a presentation for your parish or group. at 440-506-0811.

U.S. Catholic Bishops, Office of Publishing and Promotion Services.

Call 1-800-235-8722 or go to www.nccbuscc.org Numerous resources including: *Stewardship – A Disciple’s Response* (A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship); *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*, reflections of the U.S. Catholic Bishops on the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, and *Global Climate Change*, a religious and moral perspective on the need for environmental protection.

Warren, Rick, *The Purpose Driven Life*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002 or go to www.zondervan.com.

Winesman, Albert L., Clifton, Donal, O., and Liesveld, Curt, *Living your Strengths*, New York: Gallup Press, 2003-2004.

Zech, Charles E., *Why Catholics Don’t Give...And What Can Be Done About It*, Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2006.



Stewardship Logo

of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland

Our logo is designed to encompass elements of the Catholic Christian's Stewardship journey. The three colored spheres signify the most common themes of Stewardship practice – time, talent, and treasure. The loop encircling the top of the cross represents the Church, where we are enabled and encouraged to live out our gifts in the hope of building God's Kingdom on earth. This hope is rooted in the cross, the most basic tenet of our faith. In the death and resurrection of Jesus we are offered salvation and our place in the Kingdom. Living a life of Stewardship is living fully in the knowledge that God will supply all our needs through the gift we are to each other. The beautiful font, colors, and general design combine contemporary and traditional styles which reinforce the awareness that Stewardship is an age-old but ongoing process within our Catholic lives.



GOD'S GIFTS *for* GOD'S PEOPLE
| *time, talent and treasure* |