A Guide to Parish Stewardship

Catholic Diocese of Charleston
Acknowledgements

The Office of Stewardship and Mission Advancement would like to thank Mr. Mark Blanchard, Director of Stewardship and Development for the Diocese of Baton Rouge. It is from his diocesan Stewardship program that inspired us to create our own version of his work. We are grateful for his willingness to share his success with us. We would also like to thank Mr. James Kelley, Director of Stewardship and Development for the Diocese of Charlotte for his continued guidance, support and years of service assisting others embrace Stewardship as a way of life.

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Introduction

The package of materials you have received contains two parts: a set of four videos and a packet of written material. They are intended to be used together and to complement each other. The four “Conversations in Stewardship” videos are:

   “What is Stewardship?”

2) Francis (“Dutch”) and Barbara Scholtz, Diocese of St. Augustine
   “Sacrificial Giving”

3) Rt. Rev. Francis Kline, O.C.S.O., Abbot of Mepkin
   “Stewardship and Prayer”

   “Stewardship of Time and Talent”

The print material elaborates the three main themes of the stewardship effort which are Sacrificial Giving, Prayer and Ministry of Time and Talent. We have included an introductory booklet on the pages which follow and samples of commitment cards that can be reproduced for your parish’s year-long stewardship effort. We are suggesting that parishes consider using these materials in a phased stewardship effort over an entire year so that the concept of sharing our gifts is reinforced in a consistent and sustained manner. We have included a prayer component which many parishes will use during the Advent or Lenten seasons since those seasons are centered in prayer. Based on the successes of other parishes across the country we also encourage parishes to consider implementing the Ministry Component in the Spring or Fall around the beginning and end of the school year. In terms of Sacrificial Giving, timing your effort with the annual Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal may save you time and resources as well.

We strongly encourage parishes which are just beginning their journey toward Stewardship to start with the Prayer component. We have added the Stewardship of Prayer in addition to the customary emphasis on time, talent and treasure because prayer is essential to our faith lives and inextricably connected to our call to conversion and discipleship. Our parishes are where stewardship lives and thrives. We hope that pastors and all those involved in parish stewardship efforts will find these materials helpful and useful. And we hope that parishes will call on us whenever necessary for assistance in launching or implementing their stewardship efforts.
**Getting Started**

Before “taking the leap of faith” it is strongly encouraged that pastors and parish leadership (i.e. parish finance councils, pastoral councils) view “Conversations In Stewardship Volume 1” followed-up by a meeting with the Diocesan Stewardship staff to discuss Stewardship with parish leaders.

Once the pastor decides to move ahead with Stewardship, the pastor then appoints a parishioner(s) to develop a Stewardship committee.

Then invite the entire parish to a town-hall meeting to discuss Stewardship.

Review materials sent to new parishioners. Make sure the materials are consistent with the parish's philosophy of Stewardship, welcoming and hospitality.

Try to contact new parishioners within 48 hours welcoming them. Provide them with opportunities to get involved with the parish.

Provide reminders throughout the year to parishioners (weekly, monthly or quarterly) emphasizing the importance of everyday Stewardship.

Make available the “Conversations in Stewardship” video series to all parish groups and small faith communities.

Have the pastor drop his Stewardship commitment in the basket first for each phase.

Some parishes do not collect commitment cards. They ask their parishioners to fill them out and when it comes time to bring them in, parishioners are asked to place the cards in a safe place, preferably a Bible. This variation is done to signify the commitment being made is between the individual and God.

Pastors sometimes underestimate the effect that even the slightest hint of negativism on their part can have. Staying positive through any new endeavor is crucial.

Encourage parishioners to give personal testimonials on how Stewardship has impacted their lives.
Forming a Stewardship Committee

In recruiting parishioners to serve on a Stewardship committee, consider the following qualifications or criteria:

1. Spiritually Motivated

It is important that members be people of prayer and be concerned about parishioners’ relationship with God; not about the needs of the church. If their primary concern is raising more money for the church or getting more volunteers for the church, then they would not be appropriate to be on the Stewardship committee. Look also for people who are Eucharistic, who have a deep relationship with Jesus, who are grateful for that relationship and who act on that gratitude. Such persons spend time in studying Scripture and often are people who go to Mass daily.

2. Exemplify and Live Out Stewardship

Look for members who are already personally committed to Stewardship as a way of life. They may NOT call it Stewardship but they live it. Those committed to Stewardship volunteer their time in various parish and community activities. The pastor will certainly know or can find out about people’s volunteer activities at the parish and may even know about a person’s involvement in the community. Those committed to Stewardship will also be committed, regular and generous givers to the offertory. Again, the pastor will know or can find out about people’s giving history.

3. Envision Where Stewardship Can Take the Parish

It is important that all members of a Stewardship committee have the same understanding of Stewardship in a general way before they join the committee and, more specifically, after they join the committee and are educated. Some may see Stewardship only as tithing money; others may see Stewardship as recycling paper products; others may see it as volunteering time to church organizations only. Developing a working definition of Stewardship will help consolidate the diverse viewpoints of the committee members. It is also important that the members be able to develop a vision of where the parish can be 5, 10 or 15 years from now.

4. Have Personal Qualities that Contribute to Success

Look for people who are accountable (they do what they say they are going to do when they say they are going to do it), persistent, optimistic, organized, patient, creative and willing to share their faith with others.
Starting a Children’s Stewardship Program

Develop a program in collaboration with the Religious Education Program of your parish. If possible, find a sponsor to help execute the program, perhaps, the Mother’s Group/Club. A Children’s Newsletter can be an effective way to communicate the Stewardship message. Designing the children’s envelopes, or finding prepared programs are all ways to begin. A good basis for understanding is to use Genesis: God created all and gave it to us as a gift for us to use wisely and return.

Create or purchase special envelopes for children and young adults. Several parish envelope companies have prepackaged sets available at reasonable prices. Make sure the envelopes have space where children can write down good deeds and other positive things they did during the week.

Consider having the children come forward during the Mass, before or after the general collection, to place their envelopes in a special basket.

Designate space in your bulletin to list every good deed from the children’s envelopes.

Conversations in Stewardship Video Discussion Questions

Volume 1: Stewardship

1. What does the term Stewardship mean to you?

2. What is meant when Bishop Baker says Stewardship is an “attitude?”

3. In your parish, what could you do to get more people “plugged in?”

4. How can you promote a conversion to embracing Stewardship within your parish? Family?
General Suggestions

Consider a creative gesture such as placing the cards in a special area within the church and leaving them there serving as a weekly reminder of the commitments made.

Be sure to include a prayer commitment card for each member of the family. Empower each member of a family to make their own commitment.

Have the prayer commitment card envelopes brought up in the offertory procession.

Offer a special blessing over the cards after Communion.

Consider creating a special intention book to be placed somewhere within the church.

Timeline

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Bulletin Articles

Bulletin Article #1

“The Earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” Ps 24:1

We are all called to be good stewards; however, we must first hear the call. Jesus calls us to many things, but we can simplify these into three major areas. He calls us to share our *time* in some form, to share our *talents* with others, and to share our *treasure* for the building of His Kingdom.

God himself bestows these gifts of time, talent and treasure upon us. How we utilize these gifts tells us what kinds of stewards we are becoming. In basic terms, a steward is someone who is in charge of something that belongs to someone else. Over the past several years here in _________ Parish, we have learned to become better stewards of the gift of time through prayer, the gift of our talents through ministry, and the gift of treasure through finance. Thus by returning a portion of these, we are embracing stewardship as a way of life.

“Stewardship” is not just a catch phrase. Although the term has come into more widespread use since the Second Vatican Council and the 1992 Bishops’ Pastoral Letter entitled *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, it is not a new concept in the church. This doctrine of shared responsibility and accountability has firm roots in the Old and New Testaments. Our parish will be exploring these roots and the other aspects of this call from Jesus as we continue to invite every parishioner to examine his or her stewardship of prayer, ministry and finance.

We begin the process this year with the stewardship of prayer, the basis of all other facets of stewardship and the firm foundation which makes all things possible in our parish. Please watch your weekly bulletin and your mailbox in the coming weeks to learn how you and your family can respond to God’s call to stewardship and thus open your heart to Christ.

*Reprinted from the Diocese of Baton Rouge*

Bulletin Article #2

“Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you.” Matthew 7:7

Last week we reminded you that we would soon launch our stewardship education and commitment drive for (insert appropriate years). Through this invitation, we answer God’s call to return a portion of our time, talent and treasure by means of prayer, ministry and finances. Although we here at _________ Parish are emphasizing stewardship commitments at this particular time of year, remember that stewardship is a process, not an event. As part of this process, Father _________ is asking each parishioner to make a personal commitment to prayer.

Prayer is the first step toward establishing and maintaining one’s unique relationship with God. Even though so many parishioners already have a strong commitment to prayer, studies show us that, in some parishes, 40% of the members do not have a daily commitment to regular prayer. One of the tasks of your parish then, should be to assist all of our parishioners, both young and old, to learn how to pray to God in a way that fits their inclinations, capabilities and lifestyle.

*continued on page 8*
Prayer, whether personal or communal, is not simply something the church asks of us. The time we spend in prayer should be nourishment for our soul and emotional health. Prayer should be gratifying and should help us to experience peace and joy and to instill in us a sense of well-being. Prayer provides guidance and solace. When prayer becomes our daily priority, the problems we face in our families, jobs and personal relationships are put into perspective.

But let’s face it — we live in a world of “instant everything.” The marketplace sells us e-mail, fax machines, cable channels with movies on demand, cellular phones, and faster and faster Internet connections. Will we soon be able to simply “download” our prayers and be done with them? Staying focused on prayer, although challenging, is possible. A commitment to prayer enables us to make it a priority over all the busyness that clutters our lives.

Next week we will explore the forms of prayer available to us, both personal and communal. The following week we will ask each member of every family to reflect upon their personal prayer life, set prayer goals for the next 12 months, and make a private commitment in writing.

**Bulletin Article #3**

“Again I tell you if two of you join your voices on earth to pray for anything whatever, it shall be granted to you by my Father in heaven.” Matthew 18:19

Next weekend we celebrate our Stewardship of Prayer Commitment Sunday. As we prepare to carefully and thoughtfully reflect on our commitment to be good stewards of our time through prayer, let us ask ourselves these questions. The answers may help us to determine where we should focus our prayer commitment.

- Do I believe that everything I have is a gift from God, including the gift of time? How am I returning a portion of this gift through time spent in prayer?
- Is daily prayer, whether private or in worship, simply a task on my schedule that can be easily moved, postponed or canceled?
- Am I willing to make a written, tangible promise to make Prayer a priority? Am I willing to share this decision with God and my pastor?
- Do I believe that prayer consists of simply words and phrases, or do I understand that it impacts my spiritual well-being on deep levels?
- Have I considered inviting friends or family to join me in prayer?
- Am I involved in at least one prayer-centered or spiritual activity in my parish?
- Is my family committed to fostering Christian stewardship as a way of life?
- Is Sunday Mass a priority in my life? (Recall that in a recent survey of Catholics, 47% admitted that attending Sunday Eucharist was not always among their weekly activities.)
Do I or does my family give thanks before every meal regardless of circumstances or location?

When my child attends religious activities at school or church (e.g. serving Mass or participating in a religious education event, etc.), do I find myself dropping him or her off and waiting in the car, or do I get as involved as I can?

In the coming week Father ______ will be mailing you a “Stewardship of Prayer Commitment Card” which he will ask you to complete and return. Please “answer the call” to prayer by indicating your prayer commitment for the next 12 months. The card lists a number of possibilities for prayer as well as space to add anything special that is not listed.

St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Ephesians, “At every opportunity pray in the Spirit, using prayer and petitions of every sort. Pray constantly and attentively for all.” (Ephesians 6:18)

Sample Letter from Pastor

Pastor’s Transmittal Letter

We are all called to be stewards of the gifts that God has given to us. These gifts He measures out in ways and for reasons only He knows. But these gifts are not to be hoarded and kept out of sight; they are to be used for our own benefit and are to be shared with others.

We share our gifts by returning a portion of them back to God through time, talent and treasure. God has freely bestowed these gifts upon us. How we utilize them shows the type of steward we really are. Are we the type that uses these gifts to help improve the Kingdom of God on earth or are we the type that buries them so as not to lose them? As we saw in the Scripture story of the three stewards, God wants us to put our gifts to use for others and ourselves.

We return our obligations of time with our commitment of prayer, our obligation of talent with our commitment to ministry, and our obligation of treasure with our commitment of finance. By returning a portion of what we receive we are embracing stewardship as a way of life.

Last year we asked you to commit your talents to ministry. As we begin this year’s campaign we are asking you to commit to the stewardship of prayer. Prayer is the basis of all other facets of stewardship and the firm foundation, which makes all things possible in our parish and diocese.

In the coming weeks we will be focusing on the stewardship of prayer in the weekly bulletins. We hope that each member of your family will become a “Steward of Prayer,” one who will commit to furthering the Kingdom of God here in our own parish.

Enclosed is your prayer commitment brochure and magnet. Fill out the commitment card and return it on commitment Sunday. The other half should be displayed using the magnet for your own reference and reminder.
Conversations in Stewardship Video Discussion Questions

Volume 3: Prayer

1. What is Prayer to you?

2. How are Stewardship and Prayer related?

3. Am I selfish in my Prayer life?

4. How can I use Prayer to improve my spiritual life?
General Suggestions

Make sure that you follow-up and make direct contact with parishioners that sign up for a ministry within seven (7) days! This is the most vital element of any program. When parishioners agree to do something, we must nurture that spirit while it’s still fresh within them.

Consider creating a ministry database to have an active record of parishioner involvement.

Have the ministry commitment cards brought up during the offertory procession of the Commitment Sunday liturgy.

Consider including organizations and ministries outside of the parish to participate (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, right-to-life organizations, Knights of Columbus)

Timeline
Bulletin Articles

Bulletin Article #1

In the coming weeks you will be hearing about opportunities we, as parishioners of ________ Parish, can share our time and talent with others. Father ________ has asked us for a commitment to prayer, he will also ask us for a commitment to ministry. We all have a responsibility to give back our time and talent to build up the Lord’s Kingdom here at ________ Parish.

Bulletin Article #2

Please keep an eye on your mailbox in the weeks ahead. You will be receiving information on how you and your family can become more involved in the activities here at ________.

Bulletin Article #3

On ____, ________ Parish will be hosting a Ministry Fair. We encourage each individual and family to make the time to learn more about the many ministry opportunities available here at ________ Parish.

Bulletin Article #4

By now each individual and family at ________ Parish has received in the mail a package from the parish office. This weekend we celebrate Commitment Sunday. We ask you to reflect on our commitment to be good stewards of our time and talents through ministry. If you have yet to receive a commitment card, there are cards available in the church. Please fill it out and return it to the parish office as soon as possible.
Fourteen Fun Facts For A Successful Ministry Fair

1. Start early: allow yourself at least three months.

2. Identify the people you will need to create a successful weekend. Some suggestions:
   - All Ministry Leaders
   - Hospitality Team
   - Set-Up and Take Down Crew

3. Identify the paper you will need. Some suggestions:
   - Ministry Sign Up Sheet
   - Ministry Booklet
   - Display Boards for each ministry

4. Identify who you will invite. Is this a Ministry Fair for Parish Ministries only? Many parishes include either Outreach Tithe Recipients or opportunities to volunteer for community activities such as Meals on Wheels, soup kitchens, etc.

5. Use the talent that you have available. For example, if you have a school, you might invite some students to participate as roving “saints” dressed in costume and encourage parishioners to ask them who they are. Or, ask your children’s choir to sing while the parish is in the area.

6. All display areas should have a representative available. Part of the purpose of a Ministry Fair is for parishioners to get to know each other.

7. Set up a Leadership Evening at least two weeks ahead with a representative from every ministry and all staff present. This is an opportunity to cover details, stress importance of following up with every volunteer, and pick up or examine condition of display boards. It can be a time of work, prayer, and play.

8. Try to have an area that little ones may enjoy. A Nursery, or, Young Mother’s Corner can distribute helium balloons or have a little play area prepared.

9. Services like Parish Nurses checking blood pressure, or, a political responsibility table with voter registration forms, are nice additions.

10. Set up a Parish Registration Table and have information readily available for any newcomers.

11. Make the whole fair appealing and eye catching with balloons, white table cloths on all the tables, colorful tri-fold displays and wide aisles for good traffic flow.

12. Advertise on the front of your order of worship on that weekend, in the bulletin at least two weeks early, and if possible, include music at the Masses that speaks of stewardship and sharing your gifts.

13. Get some great door prizes and put the “chances” in the seats at all Masses. The door prize box should be placed so that anyone wishing to drop off a ticket must walk through the whole Ministry Fair.

14. Have an acknowledgment process ready to take effect once the information is collected from new volunteers. E-mail may need to be added to your data system. A postcard thanking the new volunteers should be promptly mailed. A sorting system for all volunteer sheets will need to be in place.
Advanced Stewardship: Ministry Emphasis

Ministry Leadership Evening

This is an evening of prayer, community building and information dissemination in preparation for the Ministry Fair, and another year of active leadership of a parish ministry.

Ministry Fair or Time/Talent Festival

This is an opportunity to showcase the parish in many ways. Some points to consider:

- All groups should make a display board for their group. These can be stored from year to year and updated as needed.
- If you have a young mothers’ group, they can distribute balloons.
- Hospitality can provide a welcoming table.
- If your parish offers nametags, this group should be prominently displayed.
- If your parish has an outreach tithe process in place, provide suggestion slip at their table.
- Make sure that when you name “ministry”, that your definition is broad enough to include wider thinking. Invite local ministries like Meals on Wheels, Literacy Association, soup kitchens, to participate and find volunteers.
- If you have a school, “wandering saints”, or, musical opportunities can be incorporated to highlight our many gifts.
- Offer a suggestion box.
- Have some great door prizes to encourage traffic.
- New member packets should be available.

Use every available publicity tool: bulletin, order of worship for that Sunday, posters, announcements. Perhaps, a sign naming “What is new this year?” would help create some interest if this is all a “repeat performance”.

A Ministry Booklet listing all parish ministries, leadership names, and pertinent information should be available for distribution. (Sample enclosed)

A Parish Ministry List for sign up should be included at all tables and distributed in some form that weekend. Consider making this a “mailback” form so it can also be placed in the welcome packet (sample enclosed). Both the Ministry Booklet and Ministry Sign Up Form should be a part of your Newcomer’s packet and updated every year.
Ministry Fair Follow-Up

A postcard should be mailed to everyone who volunteered. A sample:

Thank you for volunteering your time and talent to our Parish Family! We have given your name to the appropriate organization(s) and you should be hearing from us soon. If you are not contacted regarding your desire to volunteer, please call __________ at __________. We are grateful to you for being a generous steward of the gifts God gave you. May the Prince of Peace bless you!

Sincerely, in Christ,
The Stewardship Committee

Tally Ministry Fair results to begin a way to understand your success in actual volunteers. Over the years, it will be a helpful tool for the development of an attitude of stewardship within the parish and to show growth and progress.

Put together a Parish Stewardship Brochure. Depending on your goals, this can be done at the time of the Ministry Fair or at anytime of the year when deemed appropriate. Many parishes offer a brochure during the Christmas season as a ways of educating those Catholics who we see rarely. It can be offered before Mass begins or included in a parish bulletin.

Ministries Directly Related to a Good Stewardship Effort

Outreach Tithe Group

Empowering a parish to live stewardship also means recognizing as a parish that the community must take that “leap of faith” and begin the tithing journey. In many parishes a 10% tithe is set aside to give to the needy, locally and internationally. This process should be lay driven. The tithe can be put in place gradually so that the financial picture adjusts gradually. Recipients of the tithe are researched first and decisions are made by a small group in conjunction with a staff representative. Parishioners’ suggestions are solicited and donations and thank you’s are published in the weekly bulletin.

Establish a Ministry Data Base

Keep a hard copy of each year from your computer records so that you can see what ministries have evolved, grown, or become defunct. Encourage updating of lists every year after the Stewardship Fair. This will also help in creating a parish profile of ministry development.
Young Adult Education

Consider a “Gifts” workshop for those in Confirmation process, newly confirmed, or teens. This could be a simple understanding that everyone has gifts to share, gifts change, and naming the gifts of others as well as your own. Be creative and include prayer.

Educational Materials

Consider writing a series of articles for the website or parish newsletter on the variety of ways to be a good steward. In a small parish, highlighting a different good steward monthly or quarterly, may be an option.

Welcoming Ministry/ Newcomer Welcome

Create a group whose sole purpose is to be a “voice” to welcome parishioners to the parish family. Let them define the commitment and infrastructure for their ministry.

Long Range Planning

As good stewards, it is important to name what the parish goals may be and begin to plan for them. Recruiting a team for this type of ministry can be challenging but has its rewards if there are growth issues to be examined and data to be collected.

Marketing Group

If there is a need for financial help beyond what your parish has been able to save, consider forming a Marketing Group to look at how to deliver this message in the form of a capital campaign. This group may choose to begin by looking at the parish logo and how you communicate your message to others. In the ideal stewardship parish, this last group would never be necessary because lived stewardship would provide the necessary funds.

Children’s Stewardship Education

Develop a program in collaboration with the Religious Education Program of your parish. If possible, find a sponsor to help execute, perhaps, the Mother’s Group. A Children’s Newsletter can be an effective way to communicate your message. Designing the children’s envelopes, or finding a prepared programs are all ways to begin. A good basis for understanding is to use Genesis: God created all and gave it to us as a gift for us to use wisely.
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<td>Newly Married Group</td>
<td>I'm willing to be a leader in my ministry area.</td>
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Name _____________________________________________________
Address___________________________________________________
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Phone (h)______________ (w)________________________
e-mail ____________________________

I need help discerning where to apply my talents.
I am not able to give my time and talent at this time.
However, I do pledge to pray for the parish.
I'm willing to be a leader in my ministry area.
Sample: Letter to Parish Ministry Leaders

Dear Ministry Leader,

Every year we gather in preparation for the Ministry Fair and this year is no exception. We are asking that you attend an organizational meeting here on

   Tuesday, August 28 after 7:00 PM Mass.

We are planning the Ministry Fair for September 8-9 and there are some details that we will need to examine. The display boards will be available for pick up and many of them need a little attention. We will once again host the Ministry Fair in the church and we would like to have someone from your ministry at the table after each Mass. Candy and snacks were overdone last year, so we ask that you refrain from this effort. We will provide a hospitality table for all.

Right now there are over 60 ministries at Prince of Peace and we are very proud of that! We hope to use this Ministry Fair to encourage new members to become involved and for the “oldies” to have an opportunity to meet and greet everyone! Your leadership is vital to the success of this parish activity. Once again, if you cannot attend, please find someone from your group who can! Please RSVP by using the enclosed postcard.

Gratefully,

Conversations in Stewardship Video Discussion Questions

Volume 4: Ministry

1. What role does Ministry play in today’s church?

2. How can we as a parish promote our Ministries?

3. Does our parish have a mission beyond our own needs? How can we improve upon this?

4. What are the essential elements of a successful Ministry program?
sacrificial giving

General Suggestions

Offer the commitment cards to be brought up in the offertory procession of the Commitment Sunday Liturgy.

Consider having the pastor place his card in the basket during the Commitment Sunday Liturgy.

For a different spin, instead of asking parishioners to “turn in” their commitment cards, express to them the commitment they are about to make is a commitment between them and God and to place their completed card with their other important papers as a reminder of their gift.

Having lay presenters from different age groups/backgrounds (married couples with school children, retirees, single people) speak at Masses leading up to the Commitment Sunday.

Encourage parishioners, through the bulletin or even on the bottom of parish letterhead to remember the parish in their will.

Include a Stewardship phrase or quote when reporting the parish collections in the weekly bulletin.

Timeline

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A Guide for the Stewardship Lay Witness

Role of the Lay Witness

One of the most effective means of presenting the Stewardship message is through the Stewardship Lay Witness Talk. This talk is usually given after the homily by people who are already practicing Stewardship in their own lives. It may be given by an individual, or a couple. In some cases, even children may participate. The talk has two purposes: to inspire people to become good stewards; and to share real life examples of how Stewardship is lived.

Sample Outline for Composing Lay Witness Talk

1. Introduce Yourself
   While many of your fellow parishioners will know you, some may not. Give a description of your family, the number of years in the parish, etc.

2. Properly Define Christian Stewardship
   It is a response we make in gratitude to God for what He has given to us. It is an intentional, planned, proportionate giving of our time, talent and treasure.

3. Discuss How You Began Practicing Stewardship
   When did you first become aware of the concept? Did you have reservations? Be honest about your first reactions. People will relate to any feelings of “discomfort.” How did your family react to the idea? Was the initial “plunge” difficult? How did you go about it?

4. When did you begin to experience the benefits?
   Speak of the effect that Stewardship has had on you faith life. Use anecdotes from your own family life if possible. How do you and your family give your time and talent? Were you able to give full tithe (10%) right away? If not, how are you working toward that goal?

5. Urge your fellow parishioners to get involved
   Invite the congregation to join you and your family in making your parish a Stewardship parish. Ask them to look at all that God has given to them and make a generous response to His many gifts.
Tips for Presenting Lay Witness Talk

- An important part of people’s acceptance of the concept of Stewardship is the personal witness and individual testimony you provide with your presence and the way you give your talk. The following are tips you should consider in preparing your comments:

- Prepare your personal remarks so you are comfortable with them. Use your own style, wording and delivery.

- Write out your talk word for word. Then, if you feel comfortable with the approach, use notes of key words to guide you through your presentation so that it is more natural.

- For you to give a good presentation, it is best for you to rehearse your talk aloud. If you just practice reading it silently, you won’t have the same effect. If it is possible, practice it in the church when no one is there, using the sound system.

- Be comfortable enough with your material so that you can look up from your notes and make eye contact. In a large church, remember to turn to the sides occasionally to include everyone.

- If you are doing a renewal, ask the person who did the talk last year to listen to your talk and make suggestions from their experience. Ask the pastor to listen to you deliver your talk in the church and offer suggestions.

- Nervousness can make your throat dry. If you think this may happen, have a glass of water in an unobtrusive place...and use it if you need it.

- Above all, be sincere, enthusiastic and friendly.

Some Do's and Don'ts for the Lay Witness

Do
*(If time permits and if any of these fit into your talk.)*

- Explain that Stewardship means giving of the “first fruits,” not what was left over
- Talk about the personal need of each Christian to give back in gratitude.
- Say “Many of you know from your own giving experience that what I have told you is true.” (Acknowledging that you are not in this alone.)
- Stress the sense of joy and fulfillment that comes to those who give God the first share of the time, talent and treasure as a way of expressing their gratitude and trust in God.
- Emphasize that it is important to give all three “time, talent and treasure.”
- Explain that Stewardship involves not only church (parish and diocese); it also includes community
Don’t

- Talk in bargaining terms (e.g. “I give this much time or treasure and God gave me this in return.”)
- Stress church needs or budgets
- Talk in dollar or time amounts: “If everyone could give $10 a week” ... “we need $2 more a week” ... “give our fair share” ... “If everyone could give 3 hours per week”
- Use threats of possible consequences stemming from the failure to give: “We won’t be able to heat or air-condition the church”... “We’ll have to close the school.”
- Suggest that Parish Stewardship is an obligation

The most important goal of living a life based on the principles of Stewardship is a deepening of faith...a real spiritual conversion. Your sharing your spiritual journey with other members of your parish family is a unique gift and a true statement of your commitment to Stewardship. You are showing your gratitude by this sharing.

Thank You.

Getting Started ... and Ending Up

Many find that the hardest part of a talk is getting started and winding up. To open your Stewardship talk simply introduce yourself:

“Good morning, (evening) I’m Jane Doe and this is my husband John. We are parishioners here at St. Kunagunda’s along with our three children, Manny, Moe and Jack. We’d like to share with you what stewardship means to our family and how it has affected our lives ...”

The following is a suggested closing paragraph:

“As we continue with our liturgy this morning (evening), and our gifts are brought forward, let each of ask ourselves if this gift of our treasure which we offer today, is truly a measure of the gratitude we have for what we have been given. Let us look at what we give to our church and the community in terms of time and service, and ask ourselves if this, also, is proportionate to God’s gifts to us. Let us remember that the God who takes care of the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, will likewise take care of each of us when we give generously and trust in His love.”

Produced by the Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina
Conversations in Stewardship Video Discussion Questions

Volume 2: Sacrificial Giving

1. What are the four principles of Sacrificial Giving?

2. Discuss the personal benefits of Sacrificial Giving?

3. How can you begin Sacrificial Giving in your parish? Family?

4. The Scholtz’s discuss being willing to take a leap of faith. Are you (your parish) willing to do so?
Stewardship Sunday Liturgy Suggestions

Hymns

“I Want to Call You” (Haas)
“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God” (Lafferty)
“Here I Am Lord” (Schutte)
“Send Us Your Spirit” (Haas)
“We Are Called” (Haas)
“This Is The Day” (Haugen)
“All That We Have” (Ault, Daigle)
“Be Not Afraid” (Dufford)
“Song of Thanksgiving” (Ducote)

Samples of Additional General Intercessions

That we may resist endless temptation from material goods and recognize the difference between what we need and what we want, we pray to the Lord.

For this community of faith, for all who seek to place their gifts at the service of others in God’s name, we pray to the Lord.

That we give generously back to the Lord, knowing His generosity cannot be outdone, we pray to the Lord.

For the poor and the hungry, the homeless and the oppressed, and for all who work to lift their burdens, we pray to the Lord.

So that we may fully appreciate and understand our responsibility as Stewards, to live the gospel, we pray to the Lord.

For the courage and strength to walk the path of Jesus Christ, we pray to the Lord.
Resources

Stewardship: Disciples Respond A Practical Guide (especially p. 16-18 sixteen responsibilities of a Stewardship Committee); International Catholic Stewardship Council; 202-289-1093

Children’s Stewardship Manual; International Stewardship Council; 202-289-1093

How to Present A Ministry Fair; Rita McCarthy Swartz; Sheed and Ward 1-800-333-7373

Stewardship Programs for Children and Youth, Rita McCarthy Swartz; Sheed and Ward 1-800-333-7373

Stewardship – A Parish Handbook; C. Justin Clements; Liguori Publications 1-800-325-9521

Sixty-Second Stewardship Sermons; Charles Cloughen, Jr., The Liturgical Press 1-800-858-5450

Sharing Treasure, Time & Talent – A Parish Manual for Sacrificial Giving or Tithing; Joseph M. Champlin, The Liturgical Press 1-800-858-5450

Sharing the Ministry; Jean Morris Trumbauer, Augsburg Fortress 215-951-6709

International Catholic Stewardship Council 202-289-1093
www.catholicstewardship.org

The Office of Stewardship and Mission Advancement 843-853-2130 ext. 7
www.catholic-doc.org/stewardship
I Timothy 6:18-19

Therefore, this is a foundation for the genuine and sound wisdom of men who are seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. What does all this say to busy people immersed in the work of their hands? They must not delude themselves that all these things are enough. They are not enough, as the Lord puts it, which He says through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, who says, "For you have regarded my servant and have anointed him. What do you mean by saying, 'Let us eat and drink, and enjoy ourselves, for tomorrow we will die, and the next day we will die again and be broken.'" (Isaiah 42:1-3)
Your Communion in the Eucharist Offertory Prayer:

Pray for me, Lord, and bless me. Amen.

My other prayer communion:
- Reconciliation
- Penance
- Morning Prayer
- Rorate Mass
- Wednesday Mass
- Sunday Mass

My other prayer communion:
- Reconciliation
- Penance
- Morning Prayer
- Rorate Mass
- Sunday Mass

Prayer in your Parish:
Your prayer communion is a reminder of your fidelity. Through the Sacrament of the Eucharist, you become a minister of prayer. This is a reminder of your sacrifice. Through the Sacrament of the Eucharist, you become a minister of prayer. This is a reminder of your sacrifice.

The Lord's Prayer:
The words are the center of the prayer experience. In our hearts, by our choices, and in the presence of others, the Lord's Prayer is written on our hearts. In the presence of others, the Lord's Prayer is written on our hearts.

The base of stewardship is a strong emplasia on public and private prayer.

A
Makuth 3:10

blessing
for you and pour down for you an overflowing
see I will not open the windows of heaven
put me to the least, says the LORD of hosts:
that there may be food in my house, and thus
bring the full into the storehouse, so

Amen

Rejoice we hold in Jesus
ever and ever, and ever and ever, till all ages

In the Name and Spirit of Jesus, we commit

A generous family, a caring people.
Bonded together in a community of faith, a
whole with His love, that in His Spirit we may be
Full our minds with His truth and our hearts

Christ

Glas us into the keeping of your Son, Jesus
your gift, after having created us, you have
Everything we are and everything we have is

Lord God, You alone are the source of every

Stewardship Prayer
I would like to receive a copy of the Stewardship Information.

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If you would like to receive additional stewardship information, please provide your contact details:

Phone: ____________________________
City and zip: ______________________
Address: __________________________

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Name: ____________________________

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Per week/month/year, would you be willing to support the Parish Gift (Parish Stewardship Fund) at $________ and the Diocesan Gift (Bishop's Stewardship Appeal) at $________?

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How can I become a steward of God's blessings?

- I feel a sense of purpose
- A sense of community
- Scholastic growth
- A gift of love
- Ready to serve the community
- A gift of love
- A sense of community

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A Journey in Faith
Answering the Call to Stewardship