



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL PARISH STEWARDSHIP

Education and Services Committee e-Bulletin • May 2008



The month of May is both named for and dedicated to Mary, Our Blessed Mother, the Mother of God. It is the month we venerate the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Fatima (May 13) and commemorate the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (May 31). May is the month traditionally known for “May crownings;” Catholics have honored Our Blessed Mother for centuries by placing a crown on her image. In *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, the United States Bishops heralded the Virgin Mary as an example of stewardship *par excellence*, maintaining that all of the essential elements of stewardship are found in her life. In this E-newsletter for May, we offer you a deeper insight into Christian stewardship and Our Blessed Mother, and a true stewardship prayer of the Virgin Mary, as well as our other offerings for the month. If you have some stewardship materials you would like to share for future E-newsletters, we would be delighted to accept them. During this month of transforming seasons, may the Lord transform our hearts and bring us closer to Him. Amen.

A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER: *The Magnificat*

The *Magnificat* is a prayer of the Blessed Virgin Mary, taken directly from the Gospel of Luke (1:46-55). It was spoken by Mary on the occasion of her visit to her cousin, Elizabeth. In the Gospel scene, Mary greets Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptist. The baby leaps in Elizabeth’s womb at the meeting of the two cousins. When Elizabeth expresses admiration for Mary’s faith in God, the Virgin Mary responds as a steward of God’s great gift of divine life that is within her. It is the prayer we call the *Magnificat* and can be prayed as follows:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; and
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
For he has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness;
behold, from now on all ages will call me blessed.
The mighty One has done great things for me
and holy is His name.
His mercy is from age to age
to those who fear Him.
He has shown might with His arm,
dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.
He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones
but lifted up the lowly.
The hungry he has filled with good things;
the rich he has sent away empty.
He has helped Israel his servant,
remembering his mercy,
according to his promise to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and
to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen

ICSC Parish Stewardship Promotional Awards

Submit Your Parish Stewardship
Promotional Materials!

Every year ICSC recognizes those parishes that have best promoted the concept of Christian stewardship through print and video during the year. Parishes are invited to submit their materials for the ICSC Parish Stewardship Promotional Awards in the following categories:

- Total Parish Stewardship Promotional Materials
- Parish Stewardship Commitment Renewal Brochure and Related-Materials
- Parish Capital Campaign Materials
- Parish Stewardship Video

Please review and complete the application for one or more categories in which you wish to be considered. The deadline for submission of award entries is June 30, 2008. The awardees will be announced at the 2008 ICSC Conference in Chicago this October.

Mary: THE FIRST CHRISTIAN STEWARD

During May, the Church asks the faithful to turn their attention to Mary, the Mother of God. "For this is the month during which Christians, both in Church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration," Pope Paul VI once said. "In this month, too, the gifts of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance." (*Mense Maio*)

So often in parish life, the Blessed Virgin Mary is the recipient of a wonderful devotion. We come to her in prayer, lighting candles, asking for her assistance for our many worries and troubles. And so it should be! As our Mother, Mary is the one who can attend to our many personal needs.

Yet, how many of us enlist her aid in our stewardship efforts? As we call forth the gifts and talents of the faithful, how many of us ask for her intercession in making our initiatives more fruitful? I would like to propose that in parish and community life, Mary is the best person to assist with our teaching and practice of stewardship. Why?

Because she was the first steward of Jesus Christ.

Consider the Gospel account of the Wedding at Cana (Jn 2:1-11). Mary shows us the path of true stewardship through four natural steps: 1.) participating in a close personal relationship with Jesus; 2.) paying attention to the needs of the people around her; 3.) asking Jesus to fulfill those needs; and finally, 4.) allowing herself to be an instrument in the Lord's providence and abundance.

So often in parish life, the Blessed Virgin Mary is the recipient of a wonderful devotion. We come to her in prayer, lighting candles, asking for her assistance for our many worries and troubles.

Mary's stewardship is a way of both dependence and action. Her relationship with Christ naturally makes her more attentive to other people. When she recognizes that a lack of wine will be an embarrassment to the wedding hosts, she does not try to fix the situation herself. She goes to Jesus. *This is key!* As the first steward of the mystery of the Incarnation, Mary appreciates the fact that she cannot provide what is needed on her own. Once she asks for his assistance, she is so confident in his ability to provide that she tells the stewards: "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn 2:5). The outcome of abundance is well known to most of us, but it bears repeating from a stewardship perspective. A dependence on the living Jesus results in an act of providence that is far greater than anyone could have imagined.



With the Lord present in the tabernacles of our parish churches, why would we expect anything less today?

During May, as we gather our Marian altar flowers and have our May processions, let us ask the Blessed Mother, the first steward of the mystery of Jesus in our midst, to help us pay attention with her eyes, with her sensibility, with her open heart. There are tremendous needs in our homes, parishes, dioceses, communities and world. Indeed, "the Lord calls each one of us to act as a steward of his providence for our neighbor," teaches Pope Benedict XVI (Lenten Message 2008).

Our gifts of time, talent and treasure are meant to be shared. But before this "disciple's response", we must ask for the grace to approach our stewardship with Mary: to deepen our relationship with her Son; to ask for a *heart that sees* the needs around us; to go to Christ *first* as we learn to depend on him alone; and finally to allow ourselves to be the instruments of his Father's providence, through the work of the Spirit of Love.

--Mary Beth Newkumet

A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Pentecost Sunday • May 10/11

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the followers of Jesus at Pentecost marks the beginning of the Church. They experienced a sudden burst of energy and joy; the work of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to continue his own work. The disciples were strengthened in their faith that the Risen Christ would come again. In the meantime, the message about Him had to be proclaimed. The Holy Spirit is within each of us in a profoundly unique and robust way, engaging us, encouraging us. As stewards of this magnificent gift, how are we responding? How are we proclaiming the Risen Christ?

The Most Holy Trinity • May 17/18

In the Creed, we profess our faith each Sunday in Jesus, God's only Son, the risen Christ who continues His loving, active presence in the world through the Holy Spirit. We believe in an intense, loving communion of three persons in one God. This divine communion of love that binds Father, Son and Spirit is the same communion that unites and nurtures us as a communion of faith; so that we can be one even as the Trinity is one. It is a communion of women and men with God and each other. This week, reflect on how you can contribute to your parish being as "one".

Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ • May 24/25

God sent His only Son so that He might be present to us in a way in which we could relate in the person of Jesus. In turn Jesus gave us the gift of the Eucharist, that he might be present to us always. In the Eucharistic prayer at Mass, what was once ordinary bread and wine is transformed into the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Good stewards understand that when they leave the Eucharistic celebration, they bring Christ's very presence, his peace and his healing to a broken world. After participating in the Mass, how do we honor the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ? How do we choose to bring His presence to others in our family, neighborhood and world?

Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time • May 31/June 1

Jesus said: "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven..." This teaching near the end of his famous "Sermon on the Mount" reminds us that discipleship in the Lord requires more than just going to Mass. It means putting the Eucharist into action in our daily lives. Christian stewardship involves making those day-to-day decisions to make the "Good News" of Jesus Christ come alive. What will we do this week to make Jesus remember us when we see him face-to-face?

**SAVE
THE DATE**

2008 Catholic Stewardship Institute

SUMMER SESSION July 21-25, 2008

San Damiano Retreat Center, Danville, CA



Newly Designed

The ICSC Catholic Stewardship Institute has been re-designed to address the specific needs of individuals, parish leaders and diocesan officers who are looking for a comprehensive, well-grounded introduction to the theology and practical application of Christian stewardship in their own faith journey and in their parishes.

This Institute is the only one of its kind to offer such a comprehensive treatment of stewardship. The Institute is offered in a peaceful and prayerful setting of a Catholic retreat center.

Offering Outstanding Faculty Members

ICSC offers an engaging and expert faculty with over 100 years of combined experience working with parishes and dioceses in North America and beyond.

RESERVE YOUR PLACE NOW!

For more information visit
www.catholicstewardship.org
or call **800.352.3452**



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

2008 Conference

Hyatt Regency Chicago
October 12-15, 2008



Save the Date!

Please join us for the 2008 annual conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council in Chicago, Illinois.

The ICSC annual conference offers the most comprehensive and relevant programs on the theology, spirituality and practical aspects of Christian stewardship.

Network! The ICSC annual conference is widely recognized as the most valuable opportunity for those involved in Christian stewardship to connect with others who share their commitment to teaching stewardship as a way of life. Many say meeting others with similar experiences is the main reason they attend the ICSC Conference!

Learn! The ICSC annual conference is filled with sessions and forums that provide practical information you can take home and use immediately. You will be exposed not only to topics that offer fundamentals but also new ideas, innovations and strategies!

Grow in your Catholic faith! The ICSC annual conference is a great opportunity to get away from your busy schedule to pray, reflect on your own life of faith, listen to inspiring reflections and participate in invigorating liturgies!

Register today! Online at www.catholicstewardship.org or call ICSC toll free at 1.800.352.3452



Stewardship Ideas in the Month of May

Warmer weather and longer daylight hours provide opportunities to spend time outside enjoying the wonders and beauty of God's Creation. Plan time to sit outside, enjoy a walk, picnic, drive or sport. Find pleasure watching the birds, planting a garden or bringing some flowers inside.

Children's Book Week (May 12-18) – Books open doors to knowledge, understanding, exploration and appreciation in people of all ages. Gather books to share with children, especially those without opportunity to own personal books. Take time to read to children, and let them read to you. Discuss favorite books.

Memorial Day (May 26) – This day we remember, with gratitude, those who have served and lost lives in military service to our country. Check local memorial events and participate in showing respect for these dedicated men and women. Express appreciation to those serving in the military – with prayers, care packages, notes, treats and support to family members.

From Suzanne Erpenbach, Director, Stewardship/Development, Diocese of Knoxville, TN

We encourage you to check out the ICSC Forum at www.catholicstewardship.org under 'members' where members can share ideas and questions. The Parish Stewardship section is reviewed every day by members of the Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee.

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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International Catholic Stewardship Council, Inc.
Total Parish Stewardship Award
2008 Application Form

The Total Parish Stewardship Award is presented annually to a parish for all materials used to spread the message of stewardship, (not limited to commitment renewal materials (could be bulletin inserts, formation materials, prayer materials, DVD, etc.)). This award is for those parishes with 5 years or less in the Stewardship process.

Name of individual submitting application

Title

(_____) _____
Telephone

_____ Email

Name of parish applying for award

Parish Address

Parish contact person

_____ Position

(_____) _____
Telephone number of parish contact person

Pastor

Parish Website

Diocese/Archdiocese

Describe how these items are used in your Stewardship Efforts:

Please submit all nominations to Scott Bader, ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee, Archdiocese of Seattle, 710 Ninth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104.

International Catholic Stewardship Council, Inc.
Yearly Parish Stewardship Commitment Renewal Brochure & Materials
(Parish-Created)
2008 Application Form

Name of individual submitting application

Title

(_____) _____
Telephone

Email

Name of parish applying for award

Parish Address

Parish contact person

Position

(_____) _____
Telephone number of parish contact person

Pastor

Parish Website

Diocese/Archdiocese

While your information may be focused on one aspect of Stewardship Renewal, please let us know when your various parish stewardship renewals took place.

Please check all that apply during the past year:

_____ Our parish's Stewardship of Time & Talent effort occurred (date) _____

_____ Our parish's Stewardship of Time effort occurred (date) _____

_____ Our parish's Stewardship of Treasure effort occurred (date) _____

_____ Our parish's has a combined Time, Talent & Treasure effort which occurred (date) _____

Describe how these items are used in your Stewardship Efforts:

Please submit all nominations to Scott Bader, ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee, Archdiocese of Seattle, 710 Ninth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104.

International Catholic Stewardship Council, Inc.
Parish Capital Campaign
2008 Application Form

Name of individual submitting application

Title

(_____) _____
Telephone

Email

Name of parish applying for award

Parish Address

Parish contact person

Position

(_____) _____
Telephone number of parish contact person

Pastor

Parish Website

What is your number of registered parishioners? _____

What was the purpose of the campaign? _____

Did you use outside counsel to create/prepare these materials? If yes, whom? _____

What multiple of your annual offertory and holy day income was the campaign goal? (1X, 2X, 3X, more) _____

Did your offertory and holy day income: increase? remain level? or decrease? during the campaign? _____

Did your other diocesan commitments: increase? remain level? or decrease? during the campaign? _____

Describe how the capital campaign was tied to stewardship (include campaign materials and results)

Please submit all nominations to Scott Bader, ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee,
Archdiocese of Seattle, 710 Ninth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104.

International Catholic Stewardship Council, Inc.
Parish Stewardship Video
2008 Application Form

Name of individual submitting application

Title

(_____) _____
Telephone

_____ Email

Name of parish applying for award

Parish Address

Parish contact person

_____ Position

(_____) _____
Telephone number of parish contact person

Pastor

Parish Website

What is your number of registered parishioners? _____

What is the primary manner in which your parish video is used? _____

In what other ways have you utilized the video? _____

Did you use an outside company or in-house talent? _____

Describe how your parish video helped to better form your parish in the spirituality and practice of holistic stewardship:

Please submit all nominations to Scott Bader, ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee, Archdiocese of Seattle, 710 Ninth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104.