



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

PARISH STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER

December 2009

ICSC Committee for Parish Stewardship Education and Services,

For questions or comments, please contact the Committee at parishstewardship@catholicstewardship.org

In This Issue

Stewardship Prayer for Parish Meetings	Page 1
New Publications	Page 1
Stewardship for Youth	Page 2
Youth Stewardship Ideas	Page 3
Stewardship Bulletin Insert Template	Page 4

Do you have ideas and material you'd like to submit for this newsletter? Please email them to ParishStewardship@catholicstewardship.org.

Please know that all submittals will be gratefully received, even if not all can be published.

NEW PUBLICATIONS/MATERIALS

Scott Bader, Archdiocese of Seattle

Advancing the Mission of the Church

Daniel Conway

St. Catherine of Siena Press

This new book by Dan Conway clearly links Development and Stewardship, and shows how they relate to each other. Dan answers three important questions in this book “What does it mean to advance the mission of the Church?” “What is the relationship between stewardship, philanthropy, development, and fundraising?” and “What is distinctive about ‘mission advancement’ in the Catholic Church.” But most importantly, Dan shows that there need not be any tension between development (properly understood) and stewardship, or working to carry out Christ’s mission.

This is an important book for all who work in church development/advancement, whether on the diocesan, parish, or institutional level. It is even more important for those who are just entering the field and haven’t yet thought through how development, fundraising, philanthropy and stewardship all fit together.

One of the most recent pastoral letters on stewardship has come from Bishop Paul Zipfel of the Diocese of Bismarck. It includes some good discussion questions at the end, so if your parish stewardship council is looking for some good continuing education check it out at <http://www.bismarckdiocese.com/uploads/resources/762/pastoral-letter.pdf>.

Stewardship Song of Praise –

*rooted in Gospel, realized as Gift,
returned in Gratitude.*

by E. Jane Rutter, Diocese of Jefferson City

Dear Lord, You call us to be rooted in Gospel.
Fill our minds, hearts and lips with Your teaching
so that we may serve with joy and understanding,
and stay true to Your way.

Dear Lord, all that we have, are and will be is realized as
gift,

You created us – man, woman and child –
as one family, and invite us to share
in the bountiful gifts of the world that are Yours.
Help us to build up one another’s gifts for the good of Your
kingdom.

Dear Lord, all that we have is returned in gratitude.
In the holiness of daily life may we walk as disciples of
Jesus,
spreading his message of Your love, and caring for Your
creation.

We are Yours, rooted in Gospel, realized as Gift and
returned in Gratitude.

Save the Dates!

for the 2010 ICSC Conference

September 19-22, 2010
San Diego, CA
(Watch for upcoming registration info!)

for the ICSC Parish Stewardship Institutes

May 17-19, Arnprior, ON
and
November 1-3, St. Meinrad, IN

STEWARDSHIP FOR YOUTH

Sue Erschen, Archdiocese of St. Louis
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Stewardship and Confirmation

Confirmation is a perfect time to teach young Catholics about the call and responsibility of stewardship. Yet, often Confirmation is so focused on the “service project” that the vision of stewardship as a total way of life is not adequately shared with the students. When we teach students to give service without also helping them see that their service must flow from their connection with Jesus, then we are really just teaching them **to be good volunteers, not faith-filled stewards.**

To help Confirmation candidates grow into mature disciples of Christ and stewards of God’s goodness it is important that Confirmation concentrate on all three of the traditional “T’s” of stewardship.

Time – Time is often linked with talent, presuming that we give our time to share our talent. Yet, true stewardship starts when we make a time commitment to Jesus Christ. If we are not in communion with Jesus, if we do not take time each day to be still with Him and listen to His plans for us, if we do not seek out the nourishment He offers us in the Eucharist, then we will not have the strength nor the direction to live a life of stewardship. At the very least, Confirmation candidates should be expected to attend Mass every Sunday. Confirmation

candidates should also be encouraged to formulate and commit to their own weekly prayer plan, finding time each day to turn off TV, disconnect from the Internet and connect instead with Jesus through prayer, spiritual reading and/or journaling.

Talent – Most Confirmation programs do incorporate the giving of talent through service projects. To help students make service a lifelong habit rather than just a project to complete it is helpful to:

1. Encourage students to take time to pray and ask for God’s guidance before selecting their service project. Help them see that service is something God calls them to, not something they are assigned or select themselves.
2. Discuss the simplicity of talents. Many people feel they have no great talents to share because they are not gifted musicians or artists. Ask students to identify the simple talents that they were called to use in their service projects – the ability to smile warmly, the ability to make someone laugh, the ability to comfort someone or the strength to pick up a box. When students see these simple attributes as gifts from God they will be more willing to share them throughout their lives.

Treasure – Most teenagers have a generous amount of disposable income. It is definitely time for them to learn to share that. Confirmation candidates should be required to research and understand the ways that the parish and the Church use donated treasure to carry out God’s work here on earth. Teens should also understand the Church’s teaching on tithing and begin to make their own commitments to share part of their financial resources to bring the love of Jesus to others. For more information on tithing email erschen@archstl.org and request the tithing resource sheets

STEWARDSHIP BULLETIN NOTES

From Dan Potvin, Archdiocese of Winnipeg



December 6th – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Generosity... authentic generosity is born out of an attitude of gratitude. How generous are you with your time? Advent is a time of preparation. A generous portion of our time given to prayer and to the service of others is a good way to make Christ's presence among us known. Stewardship is living generously. **Thank you** for your generosity this past year.

December 13th – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Trust... in our increasingly secular society it is not fashionable to trust God. Stewardship means that we are grateful for our many blessings, and we are generous with our lives and our possessions. In living this way we learn to **trust more in God and less in ourselves**. Trust is the cornerstone of any relationship, and our relationship with God is no different. God trusts us to do our part and we must trust explicitly in God.

December 20th – 4th Sunday of Advent

Gratitude, Generosity & Trust... these have been the focus of our stewardship reflections the first three Sundays of Advent. Having these in our hearts we are more ready as we await Christ's coming. This coming week will be a week filled with joyful anticipation. Good stewards live in anticipation of fulfilling, doing, and sharing in the Master's work.

December 27th – Holy Family

Mary and Joseph went searching for their son "in great anxiety." They were understandably worried. There are times when we worry about the young people in our lives. There are also times when they amaze us! Let us pray that in the coming year our faith community will continue to respond to the needs of families, and encourage and enable our young people to share their unique gifts. Amen.



Please feel free to reprint these bulletin notes in your bulletin.

Also, on the next page is a template bulletin that you may reprint for your parish bulletin.

How to be a good steward –
By Scott Bader, Archdiocese of Seattle

(#1 of a series of bulletin inserts that focus on practical ways to recognize God as the source of all our gifts and to be grateful for those gifts, to cultivate them and use them to build up the kingdom, and to share and return a proper portion of those gifts. May be reprinted as desired..)

Discerning what God would like you to accomplish

CONCEPT

The Pastoral Letter on Stewardship calls us to be “mature disciples who make a conscious decision to follow Jesus no matter what the cost.” One hallmark of mature disciples is coming to the realization that we can never have it all or do it all – and create a plan for what we *do* want to have and accomplish. But before we can create that plan, we need to do some discernment about what God would like us to have and accomplish.



BENEFITS

Some Rules for Happiness (from those who’ve studied what makes people happier)

- ☺ Don’t define yourself by your possessions – someone will always have more or better possessions than you.
- ☺ There is little correlation between money and happiness – once people’s basic needs are met, the correlation between money and happiness levels off dramatically.
- ☺ Being constantly and consistently grateful is one important way to make yourself happier. Dwelling on the good things in life – even if they are little, like a warm shower or chocolate chip cookies – will improve your happiness level.
- ☺ Studies show that devoting a lot of your time and money to things that bring short-term happiness – eating out, shopping, or expensive pastimes, for instance – won’t bring long-term happiness.
- ☺ Having purpose or direction in your life is a primary way to increase your happiness.

QUESTIONS

If you were stranded on an island, and could take only 10 possessions with you, what would you take?

If you only had one year to live, what would you do with that year?

Something else to ponder: To what extent are your answers influenced by your relationship with Jesus Christ and your faith?

ACTION STEPS FOR THIS MONTH

Remember your answers – they’ll be of use for next bulletin insert.