

Stewardship **Tool Kit**



OFFICE OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT

STEWARDSHIP

STEWARDSHIP TOOLKIT

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INTRODUCTION: STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE

In 1992, the United States Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) released a Pastoral Letter. This letter was meant to address the serious issues the US Catholic Church was facing. Many assumed that the bishops would launch another program to meet the foundering attendance and financial issues that faced the US Catholic Church. Instead, the ground-breaking Pastoral Letter, *Stewardship: A Disciples Response* was introduced to all. Not a new program, the bishops instead encouraged a new way of life for Catholics. We start with the concept that each of us is personally called through our baptism to respond to Christ's invitation to follow Jesus Christ as a disciple. Once we decide to follow Jesus Christ as a disciple, then living Stewardship as a Way of Life is how we do this.

In the Pastoral Letter, the Bishops explained discipleship and stewardship in the following manner:

Who is a Christian disciple? One who responds to Christ's call, follows Jesus, and shapes his or her life in imitation of Christ's. Who is a Christian steward? One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others and returns them with increase to the Lord.

(United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, Publication No. 5-465, USCCB Publishing, Washington, DC, 1992, p 9.)

Living the life of a steward is a life-long practice. First, there is learning what the word "steward" means to you, then it is discerning your response, and finally it is living the life of a steward each day. Starting with the definition of steward, according to the Oxford online dictionary, a steward is one who "manages or looks after (another's property)." In the case of our faith, all we have is gift from God. We are called to be good stewards of everything from the air we breathe, to our families, our health, our job, our possessions, our mind, and beyond, as everything is gift. Once we chose to follow Jesus Christ as a disciple, living stewardship is how we go about that life of discipleship day by day.

Living your faith each day as a steward can be challenging. Every day we witness heartache, pain, and sadness in the world. Instead of turning away or waiting for others to respond, what can you do to make a difference in your corner of the world? As Mother Teresa said, 'Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.' Choose today to live Stewardship as a Way of Life – you will not regret it when you give of your heart to others.

We may each be called, but not all will answer. Living as a steward is an individual conversion of heart. Do not worry about the responses of others. How are YOU called to respond to God's generosity with the gifts YOU have been given? Where can you make a difference in the life of those you encounter? How are you called to share your gifts?

Transitioning from Time/Talent/Treasure to
PRAYER/PARTICIPATION/GENEROSITY



If answering Christ's call to follow is being/becoming a disciple, then stewardship is how we go about living out our response to that call. ***Stewardship IS a way of life.***

Living as a steward is a personal conversion of one's heart, living with trust in God's generosity, and caring for all the gifts we have been given. Christ's call for us is today, not in the future when we have more time, more money, or more opportunity. What is your response today to all the gifts with which you have been blessed?

Early on, the concept of sharing your gifts with all those you encounter in your life was divided into themes of time, talent, and treasure. Some were confused on what gifts fit under each of the categories, and there definitely is an overlap in the categories.

We are called to be good stewards of our God-given gifts, and all is gift. Our minds, health, family and friends, our resources, our unique talents and skills – all have been given to us by God. God calls us to make the best of all that we have been given.

The Archdiocesan Stewardship Committee encourages parishes and individuals to move toward embracing more specific themes, of PRAYER, PARTICIPATION, GENEROSITY. These three themes embrace the call to stewardship as a way of life.



PRAYER includes your time in individual prayer each day, prayer time with your family, communal prayer through attendance at Mass (daily, Weekly, online), and other liturgical events.

Benefits of PRAYER

- Brings a deeper meaning, "Where is God leading me?"
- Showcase the opportunities for individual and communal prayer in your parish
- Encourage intentionality, with the person, in the family, and within the parish community

"Ask": How am I/are We called to PRAYER?



PARTICIPATION is all the ways we share our gifts with our family, at work/school, in our neighborhood, our community, our parish, the greater world.

Benefits of PARTICIPATION

- Outward act of using one's gifts to build up the Kingdom
- Love in Action - Charity of the Eucharist
- Each of us has been uniquely gifted by God
- Connects with Mission and Vision of the parish

"Ask": How am I/are We called to PARTICIPATE?



GENEROSITY is how we live our daily lives as stewards in response to all the gifts we have been given. Intentional giving of financial gifts, gifts in kind, planned gifts to create "forever gifts."

Benefits of GENEROSITY

- Responsibility to give as we are aware of our own blessings
- Give from our "first fruits" not what is left over at the end of the week/month
- We are part of something bigger than us.
- We are Church in the world.
- Our generosity allows us to participate/be receptive to God's generosity

"Ask": How am I/are We called to GENEROSITY?

BEST PRACTICES IN PARISH STEWARDSHIP

The following list of best practices is gathered from Catholic parishes throughout the United States.

- Be a welcoming parish and build community. Everyone has something to contribute. Communities known for their hospitality, vitality of faith, and service to those in need inspire others to do the same, share their gifts, and offer financial support to make these things happen.
- Form a stewardship committee.
 - Begin with their study of the USCCB Pastoral Letter written in 1992, Stewardship: A Disciple's Response.
 - Encourage opportunities in Prayer, Participation, and Generosity that deepen parishioner's faith and fit your parish identity, mission, and vision.
 - Provide opportunities for parishioners to learn about stewardship as a way of life in their parish, homes, work/school, and greater community.
- Weave Stewardship as Way of Life in all of the ministries, mission, and identity of your parish. Provide examples of prayer, ways to participate, and opportunities for generosity that fit with the parish mission.
 - Form parishioners on the baptismal call each receives to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. This call is a lifelong challenge. Living as a grateful and generous steward is what we do each day in response to our response to saying "yes" to become a disciple.
- Be accountable to your parishioners. Parishes that are accountable to their parishioners reap many benefits. When parishioners know that the gifts they share are appreciated and put to great use, they take the steps needed to deepen their faith and they gain a broader understanding of stewardship and a greater sense of who they are as a valued part of the parish. A Parish Stewardship Accountability Report can help parishioners understand how their gifts shared make are used in your community.
- Seek annual commitments of prayer, participation, and generosity. Living Stewardship as a Way of Life requires an individual conversion of heart, and a lifelong commitment. The lives of parishioners are constantly changing. An annual commitment/renewal process should encourage parishioners to: think about the the unique gifts God has given them, reflect on the priority God and the Church have in their lives, decide how to share their gifts with God, the Church, their homes, work/school, and the greater community. An active steward makes an ongoing commitment to prayer, participation, and generosity in gratitude to God for all the gifts they have been given.
- Set stewardship goals for the ministries and programs of the parish that match the parish's identity, mission, and vision. Challenging and realistic goals should be set for all ministries and clearly communicated to parishioners. Progress reports can also be shared to build on parishioner involvement and investment.

- Communicate with parishioners. Information about stewardship should be communicated throughout the year in as many ways as possible; on the parish website, in the bulletin, in the parish newsletter, and in the liturgy through music, preaching, and general intercessions. All communication should thank parishioners, inform them, and invite continued service. You can also provide inspiration and involve parishioners in creating and receiving a Quarterly Report and Annual Parish Stewardship Accountability Report.
- Identify lay witnesses. Testimonies to parishioners are an important part of stewardship formation. As parishioners hear from other parishioners whose lives have changed as a result of stewardship, it can become more real for them.
- Learn from the stewards who have come before us. As we know so well from scriptures – it was the stories of men and women who were called to put their faith into action that built the church from generation to generation.
- Be grounded in prayer. Invite all parishioners to pray a stewardship prayer during the renewal season and at special times throughout the year. Invite parish leaders to open and close every meeting with a stewardship prayer.
- Ask for help from the Archdiocesan Office of Mission Advancement and the Archdiocesan Stewardship Committee. You don't have to do stewardship alone and every parish is different. The Office of Mission Advancement can also be a great help to a parish throughout its stewardship journey.

SAINTS AND STEWARDSHIP

Sept 29: Arch Angels

“Some angels are given proper names to denote the service they are empowered to perform. Personal names are assigned to some to denote their ministry when they come among us. Thus, Micheal means ‘Who is like God’; Gabriel is ‘The Strength of God’; and Raphael is ‘God’s Remedy.’” ~ St. Gregory the Great

Oct 2: Guardian Angels

On the feats of the Guardian Angels, good stewards find in God’s loving providence yet another reason to give thanks. We have only to follow them, stay close to them, and we shall dwell under the protection of God’s heaven.

Oct 15: Teresa of Avila, Doctor of the Church

“He who possesses God,” said St Teresa of Avila, “lacks nothing; God alone suffices” “Love call for love in return” – in just six words, this steward saint has summed up the essential what and why of stewardship.

Oct 18: Luke, Evangelist

This good steward out his gifts at God’s disposal, allowed himself to be led by God’s spirit, and so is still serving the Lord as an evangelist – still preaching and teaching – 20 centuries later! The Lord will multiply our gifts, too, if we will use them in his service.

Oct 20: Paul of the Cross

If a man is united inwardly with the Son of the living God, he also bears his likeness outwardly by his continual practice of heroic goodness.

Nov 1: All Saints

Today we rejoice in holy men and women of every time and place. May their example inspire and encourage us and may their prayers keep us steadfast as we seek to follow your Son.

Nov 2: All Souls

We believe in the communion of saints – that we in our time and place are connected with all those in every time and place who have been baptized into Christ Jesus. In stewardship terms, that means that what we do with the gifts God has given us – gifts of time and abilities, of possession and relationships – has an effect and significance far beyond ourselves. May we strive to be good stewards of the gift of faith.

Nov 15: Albert the Great (Albertus Magnus), Doctor of the Church

Known as the “Universal Doctor” of the church and teacher of St. Thomas Aquinas, Albert had a great devotion to the Eucharist and wrote endearingly about the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary. His scholarship and devotion are the extraordinary gifts of this steward saint we celebrate today.

Nov 30: Andrew, Apostle

In the story of the multiplication of loaves and fishes, Andrew plays a central role, as he is the one who says, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But" he continues, "what good are these for so many?" What we learn from Jesus is that God's gifts, shared, will always be more than enough.

STEWARDSHIP PRAYERS

A Stewardship Prayer may be used to begin Stewardship Committee meetings and at other Stewardship gatherings. Stewardship Prayer Cards can be distributed to parishioners as part of Commitment Weekend, encouraged for use as parishioners fill out their commitment form and in their ongoing personal prayer.

Almighty and ever-faithful Lord, gratefully acknowledging Your mercy and humbly admitting our need, we pledge our trust in You and each other.

Filled with desire, we respond to Your call for discipleship by shaping our lives in imitation of Christ.

We profess that the call requires us to be stewards of Your gifts. As stewards, we receive Your gifts gratefully, cherish and tend them in a responsible manner, share them in practice and love with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.

We pledge to our ongoing formation as stewards and our responsibility to call others to that same endeavor.

Almighty and ever-faithful God, it is our fervent hope and prayer that You who have begun this good work in us will bring it to fulfillment in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Our parish is composed of a community of people. We help make it what it is. It will be friendly, if we are.

It will be holy, if we are. Its pews will be filled, if we help fill them. It will do great work, if we work together. It will be prayerful, if we pray.

It will make generous gifts to many causes, if we are generous givers.

It will bring others into worship, if we invite and bring them in.

It will be a place of loyalty and love, of renewal and faith, of compassion, charity and mercy, if we, who make it what it is, are filled with these same things.

Therefore, with the help of God, we now dedicate ourselves to the task of being all the things that we want our parish to be.

Amen.



Lord, You alone are the source of every good gift, of the vast array of our universe, and the mystery of each human life. We praise You and we thank You for Your great power and your tender, faithful love.

Everything we are and everything we have is Your gift, and after having created us, You have given us into the keeping of Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Fill our minds with His truth and our hearts with His love, that in His Spirit we may be bonded together into a community of faithful, caring people.

In the Name and Spirit of Jesus, we commit ourselves to be stewards of the gifts entrusted to us, to share our time, our talent and our material gifts as an outward sign of the treasure we hold in Jesus.

~ Monsignor Thomas McGread



*Loving God,
creator and giver of all good gifts, bless our parish, strengthen our faith, and grant us a spirit of purpose and generosity as we seek to share our time, talent, and treasure.*

Help us to be good stewards of all that you have given us and care for those in need.

*Help us to make stewardship a way of life. We ask this through Your Son Jesus, who is Lord, forever and ever.
Amen*



Almighty God, we thank you for all the gifts You have given us: our lives, our loved ones, all that we have and all that we are. Most of all, we thank You for Jesus, Your Son and our Redeemer, who came among us to show us the way to eternal life. Jesus was the perfect steward of your gifts, showing that complete trust in You is necessary, and that giving of self is a most important part of following Him. May the offerings of our prayer, our tithe and service be made in the same spirit of sacrifice that Jesus taught us by His life and death for us. Amen.

- Thomas Merton

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Coming soon

STEWARDSHIP LOGOS



ANNUAL FALL PARISH RENEWAL: THE WITNESS OF PASTORS AND PARISHIONERS OVERVIEW

People come to worship with many needs and expectations. Whether they come as individuals, families, newcomers, or long-time parishioners, they all come seeking faith and some purpose or understanding for their life. Therefore, it is important that all the messages of the liturgy support and encourage their journey of faith as much as possible.

It is vital to consider everyone who will hear the stewardship messages at the liturgy, especially visitors, those who are struggling with their Catholic faith, persons unemployed or on limited income, and those who are seeking a new prayer community.

If the first message a visitor hears on Christmas is that they are encouraged to donate generously, it is easy to imagine he or she may think money is the focus of the parish, even if it is not. Hospitality and engagement pave a human path to faith, parish investment, participation, and making stewardship a way of life.

THE SUNDAY SCRIPTURES

Themes of faith, discipleship, and service are found throughout the Sunday readings on the suggested stewardship weekends. The following themes are present in the Sunday scriptures for Liturgical Year C:

September 6-7

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1: Wisdom 9: 13-18b

Though mortals are weighed down by worldly burdens, through the Lord's counsel, earthly paths are made straight.

Responsorial Psalm: 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14-17

In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Reading 2: Philemon 1 :9-10, 12-17

Paul implores Philemon to accept Onesimus, not as a slave, but as a beloved brother in the Lord.

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

Jesus tells the crowds that whoever does not carry his own cross and leave their possessions behind to follow after Him, cannot be His disciple.

September 13-14

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1: Exodus 7-11, 13-14.

Although the Israelites have turned away from God, the Lord hears Moses' plea, shows mercy and remains faithful to the covenant.

Responsorial Psalm: 51 :3-4, 12-13, 17, 19

I will rise and go to my father.

Reading 2: I Timothy I: 12-17

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Those who come to believe in Him have everlasting life.

Gospel: Luke 15: 1-32

There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.

September 20-21

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading I: Amos 8: 4-7

The Lord will not forget those who do not treat the poor with justice.

Responsorial Psalm: 113: 1-2, 4-6, 7-8

Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.

Reading 2: I Timothy 2: 1-8

The Lord wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth.

Gospel: Luke 16: 1-13

The Lord commends good stewards: The person who is trustworthy in small matters is also trustworthy in greater ones.

September 27-28

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading I: Amos 6: 1A, 4-7

Those who are satisfied and comfortable in worldly things shall be the first to go into exile, where their feasting will end.

Responsorial Psalm: 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

Praise the Lord, my soul!

Reading 2: I Timothy 6: 1-16

Keep the Lord's commandment without imperfection or blame until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel: Luke 16: 19-31

The rich man who is unrepentant suffers torment after his days on earth, but the poor are comforted.

October 4-5

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

When will I have given enough – of my income, my time, of my talents? Today's Gospel suggests that only total stewardship will do: "When you have done all you have been commanded to do, say, 'We are useless servants. We have done no more than our duty.'"

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10 Great works can occur with faith, even faith the size of a mustard seed. Servants of the Lord obey the Lord's commandments through faith.

October 11-12

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jesus healed ten lepers in today's Gospel. Only one (ten percent) came back to say thank you. You, too, have received many blessings from the Lord – indeed, all you have is gift from the Lord. Have you remembered to thank him with your ten percent?

Gospel: Luke 17: 11-19 Out of ten who were healed, only one Samaritan returns to show gratitude to Jesus. Jesus tells the Samaritan his faith has saved him.

October 18-19

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's theme is perseverance – Moses keeping his hands upraised throughout battle, Paul urging Timothy to stay with the task of preaching and teaching, and the widow appealing to the corrupt judge. To be faithful stewards of God's gifts, we, too must persevere in the roles to which we are called.

Gospel: Luke 18: 1-8

The Lord will come to the aid of those who are persistent in their prayers.

October 25-26

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary

Both the first reading and today's psalm say clearly that the Lord hears the cry of the poor. Have I been given the gifts – of time or money or abilities – to be the means by which God answers their need?

Gospel: Luke 18:9-14

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted

November 1-2

The Commemoration of All the Faithfully Departed (All Souls)

On the Feast of All Souls we pray for those who have gone before us and stand in judgment before God. May we share with one another the treasure of love's memory, and console one another with the assurance of resurrection.

Gospel: John 6:37-40

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

November 8-9

The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

As we pray today for an increase in spiritual gifts, we are reminded by the bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship that good stewardship of the Church "means cherishing and fostering of the gifts of all, while using one's own gifts to serve the community of faith."

Gospel: John 2:13-22

And they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.

November 15-16

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's readings paint a somewhat frightening picture of the end of time. But the Gospel ends with the assurance to the faithful stewards that those who persevere will be saved.

Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

November 22-23

Christ the King

Today we celebrate Christ the King and are reminded that all was created through Him and for Him. Does your stewardship of the blessings entrusted to me give evidence that Christ is Lord of your life?

Gospel: Luke 23:35-43

Jesus assures the criminal on the cross that heaven is for all those who repent and follow him.

*Sharon Hueckel, Our Sunday Visitor

SONGS

When selecting songs to emphasize stewardship, it is best to choose songs that are familiar to the congregation. Priority should be given to songs that are in harmony with the Scripture readings.

The following songs are examples that may be especially appropriate.

- We are the Light of the World
- For the Beauty of the Earth
- Let All Things Now Living
- We Have Been Told
- Gift of Finest Wheat
- City of God
- Gather Us In
- Here I Am, Lord
- One Bread, One Body
- Sent Forth by God's Blessing
- Servant Song

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

All announcements and prayers for the Stewardship Commitment Weekend should be short, to the point, and written in a way that builds a relationship with parishioners.

It is important to remember that announcements and prayers are not to bear the whole weight of stewardship communication. Verbal wording should especially consider the time it takes to read them aloud.

Mass announcements generally take place after the Prayer After Communion. Any information, such as inviting commitment forms to be placed in the collection at a particular Mass or introducing parishioner testimonials should take place at the beginning of the Mass. Remarks can also be shared by the celebrant throughout the liturgy,

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

While the intercessions can express stewardship themes throughout the year; prayers about stewardship are especially appropriate during commitment weekends, The following prayers can be used as is or adapted as needed for your parish intercessions.

- ◆ For all those seeking to share their gifts of prayer, participation, and generosity more fully. We pray,
- ◆ For trust in God's love as we grow in gratitude and the sharing of the gifts with which we have been blessed. We pray.
- ◆ For care in matters great and small as we seek to be trustworthy stewards of the many gifts God has given to us. We pray.
- ◆ For all those seeking to be good stewards and live generous lives that support those most in need in our community. We pray,
- ◆ For all those seeking to grow in their faith, even if it is the size of a mustard seed. Let us make stewardship a way of life. We pray.
- ◆ For greater gratitude of our gift of faith and all that God has given us to share. We pray.
- ◆ For our parish community as we seek a greater understanding of how to share our gifts of prayer, participation, and generosity, and share with all those we encounter. We pray.
- ◆ For stewardship to become an expression of gratitude for all that God has given to us. We pray.

MASS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week One

This weekend we are beginning a stewardship commitment process for our parish, During the next three weeks, you will hear more about how to make stewardship a way of life and respond to God's call to be a disciple, It is a good time to consider what God has given you and what you can share with one another. Please take time to do so.

Week Two

As we continue to learn about how to make stewardship a way of life, please consider how you are called to share of your gifts in prayer, participation, and generosity. Each household will soon receive a letter and commitment form letting you know how you can share your gifts and asking you to make a commitment to do so. Please prayerfully consider your response, complete the form, and return it in the collection basket next weekend as part of our commitment weekend.

Week Three

During the last few weeks we have heard about how we can make stewardship a way of life and how we are called to share our gifts generously with the parish. If you did not bring your commitment form to Mass today, please bring it next week, or mail it to the parish office. Extra forms can be found in the pews. Thank you for sharing your gifts with God and the Church.

Reminder

Thank you to everyone who returned their commitment forms and offered your gifts of prayer, participation, and generosity. If you have not made your commitment, please do so and return your form in the collection basket or mail it to the parish office. Extra forms can be found at the ends of the pews. Thank you for sharing your gifts with God and His Church.

Last Call

Thank you to everyone who returned their Stewardship Renewal forms with their commitment of prayer, participation, and generosity they will share in the coming year. If you have not returned your stewardship commitment, please do so today by placing them in the offertory or mailing them to the parish office. Extra forms are located at the ends of the pews. Thank you for sharing your gifts with God and the Church.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week One

What is stewardship? It is a lifestyle. It is living a life of gratitude that stems from the knowledge that God is the creator and owner of all. We are stewards when we care for God's gifts. Gratitude for these many gifts can be expressed in our prayer, worship, financial contributions, how we care for those around us, and in all we do. Stewardship is a way of being aware of all that God has given us and giving thanks. Our love and gratefulness lead to a desire to share our gifts in return.

Week Two

Stewardship invites everyone to help build the Kingdom of God together. St James tells us "Everything good and perfect are gifts from above." We acknowledge this understanding when we use our gifts well and care for all that God has given us. Stewardship demonstrates how we give of ourselves in love and service to create a just world and build the kingdom of God.

Next weekend, <insert date>, is our Stewardship Commitment Weekend. You will soon receive a letter and commitment form in the mail. Please take time to consider how you are called to share your gifts of prayer, participation, and generosity with our parish. Fill out the form and bring it back to Mass next weekend. Completed forms can be placed in the collection basket. Thank you for being a part of the parish and offering your Gifts to God!

Appeal Weekend

This is Stewardship Commitment Weekend. Thank you for sharing your gifts in prayer, participation, and generosity with our parish community. Please review how you have been blessed, complete, and return your

Stewardship Commitment form. If you did not bring your forms to Mass, please bring them next week or mail them to the parish office. Thank you again for your part in making stewardship a way of life!

Reminder

Last weekend was our Parish Stewardship Commitment Weekend. Thank you to everyone who returned their completed household commitment form. If you have not yet done so, please return your household commitment form with your offering of prayer, participation, and generosity for this coming year, and place it in the collection during Mass or mail it to the parish office. If you need a form, they are available in the back of the Church.

Last Call

Thank you to all who have already responded and have completed and returned your Annual Stewardship Commitment forms. Your gifts shared help us plan for the coming year and allocate resources to meet the ministry, budgetary needs, and move forward our parish's mission and vision. We hope to have all of our households participate in the Annual Stewardship Renewal. There is no gift too small, and every gift makes a difference. If you have not yet responded, please return your commitment form with your offering of prayer, participation, and generosity for the coming year, place it in the collection during Mass, or mail it to the parish office. If you need a form, they are available in the back of the Church.

STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL RESOURCES

Pastor Follow-Up Letter (Parish Letterhead)

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

Dear NAME,

Over the past several weeks, our parish community has been hearing about Stewardship as a way of life in our parish. As part of that reflection parishioners were asked to prayerfully discern how God has uniquely gifted them, think about the priority God and the Church have in their lives, and decide how to share these gifts with the parish.

I am writing to you because we have not yet received your stewardship commitment form.

Please take some time to reflect on the gifts God has provided you and determine how you plan to share these gifts to serve others through our parish. I ask you to return the attached form to the parish office by mail or simply place it in the collection basket at Mass this weekend. If you are in need of an additional commitment form or have questions, please feel free to call me.

Through your generosity, we are able to share in the love that Jesus gives us. Your gifts enable our parish to continue to grow and provide essential services, including:

- Maintaining our place of worship
- Assisting those in need
- Providing quality Catholic education and formation to children, youth and adults
- Training and renewal of parish leaders who lead us in parish and diocesan worship
- Building up our faith community through social and fellowship programs and events.

Thank you for your past support of (Parish Name). It is my hope that you will be able to increase your commitment. Please consider taking a step towards tithing; by increasing the gifts you share in prayer, participation, and generosity for the coming year by 1% or 2% toward a tithe, or 10% gift. Know that we can never surpass the generosity of God in our lives.

Thank you for your part in making our parish a place of God's blessing.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(Pastor's Signature)

Pastor

Telephone Follow-Up Script

It is recommended that a follow-up phone call be made to those parish households who have not yet responded to the pastor's invitation to participate in the parish stewardship appeal (including the follow-up letter).

"Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of (Parish Name). May I speak with (First and Last Name), please? (If married ask for either.)

"Hello, (preferred name). We are contacting fellow parishioners on behalf of Fr. _____ about this year's parish stewardship appeal. Do you have a brief moment to talk?"

If no: "When would be a good time to call back?" (Note date and time on commitment form.) "Thank you and have a nice evening".

If yes but parishioner did not give/volunteer last year (nothing on their record): "Our parish would like to hear from every household and meet our goal of \$_____ in commitments for this year. Father is encouraging all parishioners to participate. Can we count on your participation to assist our parish in meeting our stewardship goal?"

If yes and parishioner gave last year (amount located on the commitment form): "I would like to thank you for your generous gift of \$_____ to last year's parish stewardship appeal. Your leadership in giving truly makes a difference for the ministries of the parish. Father would like to hear from every household this year and meet our goal of \$_____. Can we count on your gift of the same amount this year?"

If a parishioner has questions: Answer the questions to the best of your ability. If you don't know the answer, call them back once you know the answer, or refer the question to someone who could provide the answer. Your parish staff is a great source of information.

If a pledge or gift is made: Thank the person and let him/her know that you'll make a note of their gift. A thank you letter confirming the commitment will be mailed soon. If the parishioners wish, they can make the payment with ACH or a credit card. The information on the commitment form needs to be completed, including the date and the name of the person you spoke with (a cancelled check may also be needed).

If a parishioner decides not to give or is unable to give: Mark zero on the total contribution line and ask the person to pray for the parish and its ministries.

Thank You Card

It is important that all parishioners who return the commitment form receive a thank you card or letter from the pastor. A personalized postscript gives acknowledgement that the parishioner is truly appreciated. This will benefit the parish in the years to come. Send the thank you card or letter as soon as possible to ensure immediate action by the parishioner.

(inside) Thank you for sharing your many gifts with our parish. Your generous spirit of giving will continue to enable our parish to fulfill the mission of our Catholic faith tradition.

May God bless you,

(Pastor's Signature)

Pastor

Thank You Letter (Parish Letterhead)

(Entering the responses into Excel or a database and then using Word Mail Merge to craft the letter, filled with the individual/household responses.)

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

Dear NAME,

I am deeply grateful for your participation in this year's Stewardship Renewal. By returning your commitment form you are helping to make Stewardship a way of life at (Parish Name).

Thank you for making the following commitments:

Stewardship of Prayer: *[List commitments to prayer that the household/individual shared]*

Stewardship of Participation: *[List commitments of participation that the household/individual shared]*

Stewardship of Generosity: *[List commitments of generosity that the household/individual shared]*

It is my prayer that the Holy Spirit continues to guide our use of the gifts shared of prayer, participation, and generosity here at (Parish Name). Through our combined efforts, we will build a strong faith community to carry out Christ's work on earth.

May God bless you and your loved ones.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(Pastor's Signature)

Pastor

PLANNED GIVING

What is Planned Giving?

Planned giving typically involves planning for your charitable giving as part of your financial plan or estate plan. Gifts can be planned as immediate or future gifts.

Why is Planned Giving Important?

Christian stewardship impacts all phases of our life including plans for our worldly goods and resources after our death. For many, using a planned giving method creates an optimal way to exercise the stewardship of the gifts entrusted to us. Planned gifts are typically larger and more complex than normal Sunday contributions, capital campaigns or special fundraising events. A few examples of how parishioners can exercise their stewardship through planned giving include: leaving a gift through a will, establishing a charitable remainder trust, creating a gift annuity or designating your parish as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or individual retirement account.

An educational program designed to promote planned giving is a positive way to help parishioners who want to deepen their stewardship commitment to the Church. It can remind them of their overall stewardship responsibility and provide practical suggestions about how to use their accumulated assets to increase their income, save taxes, and contribute to sustaining the mission and ministries of your parish for future generations.

The benefits of a Parish Planned Giving Program:

- If you're not asking your parishioners for planned gifts, someone else is.
- A typical planned gift is 2-to-3 times the size of a parishioner's annual gift to the Church.
- Planned Gifts are made from assets and do not affect a parishioners' cash flow.
- Many parishioners are eager to make a planned gift, but don't know how.
- Parishioners making gifts through their wills will typically increase their annual fund support.
- Anyone can make a planned gift, but they might not know they can.
- Some parishioners have already named you in their will and you may not know it.
- There is great potential to increase financial support for your parish today and in the future.

The benefits of making a Planned Gift:

When parishioners prepare their will/trust or plan their estate to include charitable giving for your parish, they can:

- Continue to support the ministries of their parish that mean the most to them through a gift that can live on perpetually
- Gain charitable deductions now – even for future gifts
- Reduce or avoid capital gains tax

- Lower their estate taxes
- Protect and potentially increase the size of their estate for their heirs
- Increase their existing income

Ten Steps to Cultivating a Culture of Planned Giving in your Parish

Step 1: Establish a Parish/School Endowment Fund - A vehicle through which planned gifts can provide perpetual support.

Step 2: Get started with a 'Will Survey' or a "Search Letter or Flyer" to identify those parishioners who already have a charitable intent to leave the parish a gift from their will or estate plan.

Step 3: Recruit a person to chair your Planned Giving/Endowment Program - Recruit a parishioner to lead your parish's efforts to promote Planned Giving and grow your endowment fund(s). This person should serve on the Parish Stewardship Committee.

Step 4: Recruit a Planned Giving/Endowment Committee (note this committee can be a subcommittee of the Stewardship Committee).

Step 5: Set goals for the Parish Planned Giving/Endowment effort - Identify financial goals for the endowment fund(s) effort based on how establishment and growth of the endowment supports the parish's current or long-range strategic plan.

Step 6: Develop a 3–5-year timeline and action plan to educate and engage parishioners in supporting the parish or its endowment fund(s) and become members of a parish "Legacy Society".

Step 7: Establish a Legacy Society to formally honor parishioners who have named the parish or school in their estate plans or made a gift to the endowment(s). Consider naming the society after something unique in meaning to your parish or school.

Step 8: Add a link to the Catholic Community Foundation's planned giving web content on your parish's website. This online resource enables your parishioners to explore the benefits of a variety of planned gifts and learn how others have made a difference through a planned gift.

Step 9: Develop the necessary administrative policies and procedures to document, track and record annual cash and/or planned (deferred) gifts to your Endowment fund(s). This would include documents to record parishioners' written intent to leave the Church a gift from their estate as well as policies for accepting gifts to your endowment.

Step 10: Conduct an annual special event (e.g. Endowment Sunday) to recognize the Parish Legacy Society members as well as new members each year.

How to Create a Marketing Plan to Promote Planned Giving in your Parish

A critical element for any successful Planned Giving Ministry is to create a positive climate for giving within your parish. Like any ministry in your Church, parishioners will more fully engage themselves when they understand why the ministry exists, how it functions, how it relates to the overall mission of the parish, and how it relates to their own faith and spiritual development.

Even though parishioners are being bombarded with thousands of messages a day from a variety of media, parishes have an advantage because you already have an established community where people gather each week.

Surveys show that while Churches receive on average 33% of the charitable dollars in the U.S.A., they are only receiving 8% of bequests. The reason for this is that many parishioners have not thought about it. In his book, 'Creating a Climate for Giving,' Don Joiner suggests that many Churches have organized committees, developed policy statements, selected wise counselors and still failed to secure planned gifts for their ministries because of the following reasons:

- Unclear vision - Paint a vision of how Planned Gifts further the mission of the Church.
- Not knowing who will give - Determine who your audience is for planned giving.
- Not planning enough into the future – Show the importance of strategic planning.
- No budget - Devote enough resources to this area of stewardship.
- Lack of patience – Persevere - This is a marathon not a sprint.
- Focus on annual, not on long-term financial sustainment goals – Do both.
- Lack of passion – Demonstrate the advantages of planned giving.
- Lack of promotion – Spread the word!

All eight of these areas should be part of a multi-year Planned Giving Marketing Plan.

Planned Giving Marketing Steps

The following are some practical ways your parish can market planned giving and your endowment fund

1. KICK OFF: Mail or publish a letter from your Pastor and internal Champion(s) announcing the endowment and the planned giving resources available to parishioners via the tool kit. Include information about upcoming planned giving education efforts, such as seminars, Legacy Society events, web resources, etc.

On-going “touch” strategy begins, and should include:

- Regular mentions in the parish bulletin (i.e. language for wills, bequests, rotating “tips”).
- Ongoing content on webpage (i.e. “Planned Giving Corner”, language for wills, bequests, rotating “tips”).
- Mailings to your target audience(s), with phone or personal follow-up.
- Announcements at Mass regarding making bequests to the parish, endowment fund updates, planned giving resources.

- Planned Giving materials displayed in school/parish racks.
- Other periodic displays/posters/signage in school/parish, supporting following quarterly events.

2. FIRST SEMI-ANNUAL EVENT: The goal is to announce the parish's vision of the planned giving/endowment fund and educate potential donors about planned giving options. Consider hosting it at a natural gathering time or venue for one or more of your target audiences (after daily Mass, during a senior's group, during your parish festival, etc.). Send personal invitations to your target audience(s) and be sure to have a follow-up plan to reconnect with those who attend.

- Speakers may include your Pastor, Endowment Chair, Archdiocesan or Catholic Community Foundation staff.
- Possible topic: Leaving a Legacy at the parish
- Continue on-going "touch" strategy as described in Step 1.

3. SECOND SEMI-ANNUAL EVENT: Honor and Inspire

The goal is to honor those who may already have contributed to the endowment fund and inspire others to consider a legacy. Consider providing a meal (luncheon or dinner) and making this a social event for your benefactors. The program may include a testimonial from one of your benefactors.

Plan to provide a recognition gift to your benefactors. Examples might include a plaque or item with unique significance to your parish community.

4. YEAR TWO SCHEDULE

- Repeat "Touch Strategies" in Step 1
- Repeat Step 2
- Repeat Step 4, as it becomes an annual benefactor recognition event
- At year end, assess progress (i.e. – number of new will/bequest/beneficiary designations) and report back to the parish in the bulletin or personal letter.

Repeat these annually and you will succeed in creating a culture of Planned Giving in your parish.

Remember: Planned Giving education is a marathon, not a sprint. Consistent, steady communications are the key.

Planned Giving Resources

Sample Language for Wills and Bequests:

To leave a bequest to (Parish Name) please provide this suggested language to your legal counsel:

“I, (name), of (city, state, ZIP), give, devise and bequeath to (Parish’s legal name, street address, City, State, Zip) of (written amount or percentage of the estate, insurance policy or IRA, or description of property) for the (insert Parish Endowment Fund Name)”

Sample Bulletin and Web Site Message:

All individuals and families who make an estate gift to (Parish Name) automatically become members of (Parish Name) Legacy Society, which recognizes those who have chosen to ensure (Parish Name) future. Please contact (Parish Contact Person) at (phone number/email) for more information on a variety of planned gift opportunities.

Sample Search Letter

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

Dear NAME,

I am writing to tell you about the (Parish Name) Legacy Society. It was formed in XXXX (or “is being formed this year”) to honor individuals who have made a planned gift, such as a will bequest, life insurance policy or charitable trust, to (Parish Name). Individuals who make a planned gift to (Parish Name) are helping to create an endowment fund which will be a lasting legacy for restoration, repair and maintenance (or whatever the purpose of the endowment fund) of our beautiful parish church.

If you have made a planned gift to (Parish Name), I invite you to join the (Parish Name) Legacy Society today. Currently, the Legacy Society is made up of XX members (both living and deceased), who have made planned gifts to benefit our parish. I would be honored to include you in this esteemed group.

You can become part of the Legacy Society by completing the enclosed card and returning it in the envelope provided by (Deadline for RSVPs).

I host an annual brunch to honor (Parish Name) Legacy Society members. This year’s brunch will be held on (day, date, and time) immediately following XXXX am Mass. All Legacy Society members will receive an invitation to brunch within the next few weeks.

If you have not yet included (Parish Name) in your planned giving but would like more information on how to do so, please call (Staff or Volunteer contact at Parish) at (Phone number, or email).

Thank you for your continued support of (Parish Name)

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor’s Name (or Volunteer Leader’s Name)

Sample Search Flyer

You are invited to join the (Parish Name) Legacy Society
Membership is open to anyone who has made a provision for a planned gift to the (Parish Name).
Planned gifts include, but are not limited to, Will bequests, life insurance policies or charitable trusts.

A will bequest or other planned gift to benefit (Parish Name) is truly an extraordinary gift.

Please let us know you have made this wonderful gift by completing the form below and returning it to (Parish Name).

If you have made such a provision, let us thank you for your generosity.

All (Parish Name) Legacy Society members will be invited to brunch hosted by (Pastor Name).
Legacy Society Brunch (Day, Date, Year)

Invitations will be mailed to registered Legacy Society Members.
For more information please call (Staff / Volunteer Contact) at (Phone number, email)

(Parish Name) Legacy Society

☐ Yes, I want to register in the (Parish Name) Legacy Society.
I have made a provision for a will bequest or planned gift to (Parish Name).

☐ No, I have not made a provision for a will bequest or planned gift to (Parish Name), but I would like information about how to do so.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Work Phone () _____ Home Phone () _____

Email _____

Please return this form to: Legacy Society | (Parish Name) | (Mailing Address with City, State, Zip) |
(website)

Sample Will Survey Letter

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

Dear FIRST NAMES,

One of the priorities at (Parish Name) is to ensure the long-term viability of our parish community. By focusing on the future, we can ensure that dynamic liturgies, enriching faith formation programs and critical pastoral ministries will be available to the next generation of parishioners.

To this end we are pleased to announce the creation of a new "Legacy Society" at (Parish Name).

The purpose of our Legacy Society is to encourage planned and estate gifts to one of our parish endowment funds. As these funds grow, they will provide an increasing source of annual income to our parish, school and related ministries.

Creating our new Legacy Society allows us the opportunity to acknowledge and recognize parishioners like (individual or couple who agree to provide testimonial) who have remembered (Parish Name) in their will and/or estate plans. Their commitment to the future of (Parish Name) is founded in their strong faith:

"Our Catholic faith is the foundation of our lives, and our gift will ensure that future generations will benefit from the quality faith formation ministries we and our children have experienced." - Jim and Mary Klein

As we establish our Legacy Society, we are asking parishioners to respond to the enclosed survey so that we are aware of parishioners who already have included (Parish Name) as a beneficiary in their estate plan, or who perhaps are intending to include the Church in their estate planning. Please take a moment to complete and return the enclosed survey to the parish office by (date).

You will be learning more about the Legacy Society next spring as we begin to formally introduce our planned giving and endowment ministry here at (Parish Name). If you have any questions about the survey or Legacy Society, please contact (Parish contact) at (phone number or email).

Blessings,

(Pastor's Signature)

Pastor

Sample Will and Estate Plan Survey

There are many ways to express your stewardship of our parish, including a gift in your will or estate plan. Informing us of your intentions allows us to plan for the future and ensures that your gift will be used as you wish. Please complete this brief survey and return it in the enclosed envelope or drop it in the Sunday collection basket before (date).

Thank you for taking the time to respond!

1. I/We have a will or estate plan. ☐ YES ☐ NO
2. I/We have included this parish in my/our will or estate plans. ☐ YES ☐ NO 2A. (If applicable) I/We have included the parish/school in my/our will or estate plan ☐ YES ☐ NO
If you answered yes to 2 or 2A, would you like to be recognized as a member of our Legacy Society?

☐ Yes, you may include my name in Legacy Society recognition materials. Please note exactly how you'd like your name(s) to appear:

☐ No, I prefer to remain anonymous

3. I would like to learn about gift planning opportunities to benefit our parish and/or school endowment fund. Please contact me regarding:
 - ☐ Naming the parish and/or school endowment as a beneficiary in my will or estate plan.
 - ☐ Establishing a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust to benefit our endowment.
 - ☐ Donating stock or other appreciated property such as a home or share in a business to the endowment.
 - ☐ Designating the endowment as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement assets.
4. ☐ I would like to learn about creating my/our own permanent endowment fund to benefit the parish and/or school forever.
5. ☐ I have not included the parish in my will or other estate plans and do not care to receive information at this time.
6. ☐ Please contact me regarding serving on a committee to engage other parishioners in charitable planned giving to benefit our parish. ☐ YES ☐ NO

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Sample Letter of Intent for a Future Estate Gift

One of the common tools used in any planned giving program is a “Donor Letter of Intent for a Future Estate Gift.” Some may call it a pledge form, and it is a simple document that is not legally binding but records the expressed written intent of the donor(s) at the time they are making the commitment to join your Legacy Society.

The letter is designed to capture five essential pieces of information:

1. The formal indication of the donor(s) to include your Church in their Estate Plan.
2. The type of planned gift being donated (e.g. a simple bequest, a gift from a Retirement Account or Trust, Charitable gift annuity etc.).
3. Where the donor(s) would like to have the money spent in support of the Church (i.e. the specific endowment fund(s) they want to support.
4. The approximate amount or value of the gift if known.
5. The donor(s) permission to publicly list their names (i.e. recognize them for their commitment to join your Legacy Society) or if they wish to remain anonymous.

Having this information on file is essential for managing and tracking your Planned Giving/ Endowment program.

Among other things, this information will allow you to follow-up with family members of the donor(s) upon their death (i.e. to secure the gift from their estate) as well as give you a rough idea of how much money you can expect to receive from planned/estate gift donors who have joined your Society (commonly referred to as ‘planned gift expectancies’).

Sample Letter of Intent for a Future Estate Gift

Following is a sample format for you to use and customize for your parish:

As evidence of my/our desire to provide a legacy of support to (Parish Name).

I/we hereby inform you that I/we have made a provision for a gift in my/our estate plans. I/we understand that this commitment is revocable and can be modified by me/us at any time.

It is my/our intent to leave a legacy gift to (Parish Name) through my/our:

- ☐ Will ☐ Living Trust ☐ Retirement Plan Assets
☐ Charitable Remainder Trust ☐ Life Insurance Policy ☐ Other

My/our gift is restricted in support of (Examples): _____ Parish School Endowment Fund: to ensure quality education for future generations _____ Perpetual Care Cemetery Fund: to ensure a final resting place for future generations I/we wish to inform you for long-term purposes only that, as of this date, the value of my/our gift is \$_____.* (If your gift is a percentage of your estate, please indicate the approximate value of that percentage.) I/we understand that, by stating an amount, my/our estate is not legally bound by this statement, and I/we may choose to add, subtract, or revoke this bequest at any time, at my/our sole discretion. (Parish Name) kindly requests notification any time you make changes or adjustments to your gift. I agree to have my/our name(s) published on lists of legacy donors as a motivation for others to leave a future gift to benefit (Parish Name). (Note: The amount of your gift is not published and remains confidential) List your name(s) as you would like it (them) in print.

- ☐ Please list my/our names internally only (No outside publication)
☐ Do not list my/our names either internally/externally (Anonymous gift)

Donor Signature _____ Date _____

Donor Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

NATIONAL AND ARCHDIOCESAN COLLECTIONS 2025-2026

October 18-19, 2025	World Mission Sunday
November 9, 2025	Collection for Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA
November 15-16, 2025	Catholic Campaign for Human Development
December 13-14, 2025	Retirement Fund for Religious
February 7-8, 2026	Catholic Services Appeal Parish Kick Off
February 18-April 5, 2026	CRS Rice Bowl Program
October 18, 2026	World Mission Sunday

STEWARDSHIP RESOURCES

Archdiocesan Stewardship Committee

Mary Kennedy, Saint Olaf, Minneapolis, Chair
mkennedy@saintolaf.org or 612.767.6204

Nadine Friederichs, All Saints Church, Lakeville
nfriederichs@allsaintschurch.com or 952.469.6465

Adel Irwin, Saint Odilia Catholic Church, Shoreview
Irwin@stodilia.org

Joe Langfeld, The Catholic Church of Saint Paul, Ham Lake
joe.langfeld@churchofsaintpaul.com or 763-777-8603

Judy Logan, Emmaus Partners
jlogan@emmauspartners.org or 651.307.4013

Dean Rademacher, St. Joseph Catholic Community, New Hope
drademacher@stjosephparish.com or 763.544.3352, x110

Jeanne Schaaf, Catholic Community Foundation
schaafj@ccf-mn.org or 651.389.0867

Office of Mission Advancement

Jean Houghton, Director, houghtonj@archpsm.org or 651.291.4540

Marci Franzen, Associate Director, franzenm@archpsm.org or 651.291.4412

Melanie Sandoval, Database and Analytics Manager, sandovalm@archpsm.org, or 651.291.4435

Jackie Daugherty, Office Coordinator/Executive Assistant, daughertyj@archpsm.org or 651.251.7705

Archdiocesan Stewardship Website: www.archpsm.org/stewardship

Mission Support: missionsupport.archpsm.org • missionsupport@archpsm.org • 651-251-7777

Weekly Homily Reflections and Subscribe for weekly emails
[The Catholic Steward Blog - Catholic Stewardship Consultants, Inc.](#)

Stewardship Success: A Practical Guide for Catholic Parishes By Eric & Lisa Mcardle

Church Development (Stewardship and Capital Campaigns)

15 E 55th Terr, Kansas City, MO 64113

Contact: Denis Greene

[Stewardship Resources](#)