

We Receive God's Gifts Gratefully – Prayer & Worship (focused on Gratitude)

- Place a book of Gratitude in the back of church (for people to write down what they are thankful for –counterpart to a book of petitions.) Perhaps reprint a selection of each of these (anonymously) in the bulletin's stewardship column
- Include a prayer of the faithful with a stewardship focus
- Reprint a portion of the psalm for that Sunday in the Stewardship column in the bulletin when it is a psalm of gratitude (and in the column ask parishioners to pray this prayer during the week.)
- Music with a stewardship 'theme' when appropriate (especially during 'commitment renewals'.)
- Collection taken by passing the basket and the collection is brought up with the rest of the offertory (and not hidden.)
- Ask parishioners to make a yearly commitment to prayer and worship (Stewardship of Time) – beginning of Lent can be a good time
- Share stewardship prayers monthly with all councils/commissions/committee to use as opening/closing prayer to help spread the meaning of stewardship

Cultivate them responsibly – Formation about and for Stewardship

Media methods

- Bulletin column on stewardship (includes financial giving, a short 'blurb' about stewardship in general, a short salute of a different volunteer or group each week, something to be grateful for.)
- Occasional bulletin insert about stewardship or how to be a better steward.
- Include general information about stewardship in other parish mailings, perhaps offertory envelope mailings.
- Parish newsletter tells the story of someone who is endeavoring to be a good steward (like a written witness testimonial.)
- Have a stewardship section on the parish webpage that allows people to pledge financially, volunteer in ministry, and learn more about stewardship.\

Faith Formation

- Youth– whether in the parish school or the religious education program.
 - Includes catechesis about stewardship as appropriate, and catechists connect other activities (charity, taking care of the environment, taking care of oneself and others) as stewardship.
- Adult
 - Preaching on stewardship when the readings provide a good basis for doing so (not just during commitment renewal time.)
 - Occasional adult education series connects to stewardship (knowledge of their strengths, financial planning, end of life planning, how parents can be good stewards of their children (parenting.),

Share them lovingly and in justice

- Promote 'Other Half' giving (giving an equal amount as one gives to the parish to charity), often through a budget worksheet that lists other opportunities such as diocesan and national special collections.
- Parish gives a percentage of parish income outside the parish.
- Parish Day(s) of Service where the parish comes together to help others in the community. (sometimes these happen around holidays like MLK Day, President's Day, Veteran's Day to salute the service of important people to our community.)

Return them with increase to the Lord

- Yearly Commitment Renewal to ask parishioners to volunteer in ministry
- Occasional ministry fairs (at least every five years or so)
- Create a new ministry directory every year
- Yearly Commitment Renewal to ask parishioners to give financially to support the parish
- Offer electronic giving
- Parish provides a yearly annual report that is comprehensive (doesn't just cover \$\$)
- Quarterly commitment reminder & thank you letters (covers time, talent, and treasure)
- Remind parishioners regularly of how they can give through their estate to support the Church and various entities of the Church

Welcoming/Hospitality

- Greeters at Mass
- Welcome table at Mass
- New members reception – include tour of the church
- Postcard inviting those who have moved into the zip codes served by the church to come
- Hospitality after all Masses
- Remember parishioners' special days by sending them a card or ecard (their baptism anniversary, wedding anniversary, perhaps anniversary of the passing of a loved one.)
- Regular social events – parish picnic, Christmas open house
- Three times a year invitation mailed to all parish households with schedule of Advent/Christmas activities/services, Lent/Easter activities/services, and in September as parishes often ramp up activities in the fall.
- Photos of new parish households in the back of church, and welcome them in the bulletin, and on the website.
- Congratulate in the bulletin and on the website the newly married, newly baptized, newly confirmed, those who've just received first eucharist, those celebrating significant wedding anniversaries
- Weekly parish email bulletin (midweek) with supplemental stuff – prayers of the faithful, midweek reminder of upcoming activities, a prayer, maybe a reminder of the point of last Sunday's homily

Stewardship Structure

- Responsibility for stewardship is in some staff person's job description
- Stewardship Commission exists (or if parish is too small, it's a regular agenda item on pastoral council agenda.)
- Commission meets monthly, regularly learns more about stewardship, attends conferences
- Commission/committee has an annual plan & reviews where they are every month

Evaluating Your Stewardship Journey – Where Have We Been and Where Are We Going?

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Standards to Evaluate Against

Absolutely Must Do's (Regardless of other goals/objectives)

How do your efforts compare to 'The Standard'

Where Are We Going (? - Maybe)

Resources

- www.catholicstewardship.com
- Resources at websites Archdioceses of Atlanta, Seattle, Milwaukee; Dioceses of Cleveland, Orange, Rockville Center
- Catholic Strengths and Engagement Community