

Effective Stewardship Committees



In our diocese, a parish may have an active stewardship committee, or may want to revitalize the committee, or may have no stewardship committee at all.

How can you go about making your stewardship committee more effective? Here are some ideas:

⇒ **Keep focused** Sometimes, stewardship committees take on too much and lose sight of their original purpose.

Is it clear why your stewardship committee exists—clear to the parish staff, the parish at large, and to the members themselves? Does your stewardship committee see as its primary goal to help plan and coordinate the parish's stewardship formation and renewal efforts?

⇒ **Set Realistic Goals** Aside from routine functions of the committee, set short and long term goals and don't set more than two or three of each at a time. Goals should be realistic, achievable, measurable, specific, and focused. For instance, "Our parish will begin gift discovery in January by conducting quarterly gift discernment workshops for new parishioners and families."

What are the goals of your stewardship committee for this coming year? How does the committee set, measure and evaluate those goals?

⇒ **Be Clear** Position descriptions are helpful for all ministries in the parish. These tools help clarify expectations, responsibilities, the gifts needed and the time commitment involved for a particular ministry position.

Is everyone on the committee clear about what his or her role is? Are there job descriptions for committee members? Is it clear how the stewardship committee exists within the parish system? What relationship does it have to other committees and to the parish council?

⇒ **Communicate** A main function of the stewardship committee is to communicate the language of stewardship spirituality throughout the parish. Many parishes have a communications subcommittee component that utilizes (and sometimes produces) various communications media in the parish.

Is communication a primary function of your stewardship committee? What are your stewardship committee's goals for communications?

⇒ **Meet Regularly** Effective stewardship committees meet regularly, monthly or bi-monthly to sort out and implement the parish's stewardship plan. And, they have a plan for each meeting.

What is the frequency of your meetings? Do you set agendas?

⇒ **Reflect Diversity** The best stewardship committees reflect the demographical diversity of the parish (e.g. age, culture, language). Also, good committees have people who share a common vision yet bring their own thinking process and ideas to the table.

Does your stewardship committee include representation from the various age and language groups in your parish? Is your stewardship committee a group of individuals who feel comfortable freely sharing their ideas?

⇒ **Prayer and Study** Great stewardship committees plan part of their time together to include prayer and shared reflection on scripture and stewardship spirituality.

Does your committee use scripture and shared reflection at each meeting? When was the last time the stewardship committee reflected on pieces of the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral on Stewardship?

And remember, we are here to help you! Part of what we do is to meet with parish stewardship committees to help you move the vision along. Give us a call—516-379-4055 x3.

