"I feel Renewed and Refreshed!"

Ah, to take a moment away, just you and God. We all need to do that sometimes! For 300 people from across our diocese (and a few from elsewhere), that’s just what they did. Our “Renew the Spirit” Mini-Retreat Days are over, but not forgotten! The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. We are grateful to Dot Horstmann (pictured left), Deacon Kevin McCormack, and Suzanne Richards (below right) for providing a wonderful, prayerful experience.

And, about 120 people attended our “Nuts and Bolts Workshops.” Four topics for this Spring’s Renewal were explored. We found a new way of doing our formation for Time and Talent—and those attending agree this is the way to go!

It’s Spring - It's "Time and Talent"

The Renewal is Right Around the Corner

It’s almost time! Many parishes in our Diocese have begun to prepare for this year’s Time and Talent Renewal (see timeline on page 9). At our stewardship gatherings and workshops, we have heard about many exciting and different plans. The gift of creativity is certainly not lacking in our stewardship coordinators and directors and those with whom they make plans!

We do Time and Talent Renewal in the Spring each year because, when parish stewardship was still new in our Diocese, many parishes asked this Office to separate the Financial Renewal from the Time and Talent Renewal for very practical and logistical reasons. Then, we were asked to center the Renewal for Time and Talent around Pentecost, because of the obvious connections. This has now been the practice in most stewardship parishes for the last several years.

We have revised our annual resource for parish leadership – the Spring, 2003 Time and Talent Leadership Update. This tool assists parishes in designing a plan for Time and
Talent Renewal. Included in the Update are some new ideas and much of the current thinking (local and national) on each of the components of the renewal. It is available to any parish leader in our program. If you need copies for you, your parish staff, and your Committee - just give us a call! (516-379-4055 x3).

Regardless of whatever creative means your parish uses to implement this year’s Time and Talent Renewal, there are five essential pieces in the process:

1) **Effective Homilies with stewardship language** for the weeks of the renewal. This tool is designed for parish clergy so that connections can be made. By now, all parish clergy should have received “Homily Helps” to assist with this. (If not, give us a call.)

2) **Lay Witness Talks** that are never a plea for help, but always a story of conversion. For ideas about this, consult this year’s Update – pages 48 to 52, and 61 to 62.

3) **Time and Talent In-Pew Commitments** by parishioners. Many parishes design a Commitment Form that helps people plan to make or renew commitments to shared gifts in the community. Some parishes find that it is best to ritualize the manner in which the forms are collected. (See pages 9, 27, and 45 to 46 of the Update.)

4) **Gifts Celebration** at and/or after each liturgy on Pentecost Weekend. Here is where the community celebrates the shared gifts of its members. It can be as grand as an interactive Ministry Fair or as simple as a Litany of Ministries, or anything in between! (See pages 8, 25, and 68 of the Update.)

5) **Updated Ministry Directory** shows people the many ways their gifts can be shared in the parish. Ministry directories can be very basic or can be as elaborate as a parish’s particular time and talent allows. (See pages 32 to 35 of the Update.)

It can be said that the time and talent part of Stewardship Renewals can be the most involved and require the most work. Remember - do what you can with who and what you have at this point in time! Keep the five essential pieces we have described as your guide. Anything above and beyond that consider for future plans next year or over the next three years.

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**Gift Discovery Workshop**

**“Training the Trainer”**

We as a community of the Baptized have been given all the gifts we need to help build God's kingdom! As parish leaders, we have a responsibility to help others discover, share and use their gifts for this purpose!

Join us at St. Mary’s Parish, East Islip

Sacred Heart Hall

Saturday, April 26, 2003

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Share this information with your parish staff, ministry leaders, volunteers, or anyone in the parish who wants to explore God's generosity in their lives as well as help others do the same!

Call Marcela at (516) 678-5800 ext. 631 or fax (516) 536-3473 to register. Registration is required. The fee for attendees from parishes enrolled in the Parish Stewardship Program for the 2002-2003 year will be paid for by the Office of Parish Stewardship. For all other registrants, the fee for Gift Discovery: “Training the Trainer” is $30 for each participant. Please bring “Brown Bag” lunch; beverages will be provided.
On the grounds of most Churches it is hard to keep every area in top condition. There is usually some spot that never gets enough attention. At Our Lady of Grace in West Babylon there was an area along the side of the Church that was seen by many people coming to Church but that needed personal attention.

A retired man in the parish offered to make the area a flowerbed. Frank takes great pride in his work. He tenders the garden each spring. The art of his craft is very evident for all to see and enjoy. This is a great example of stewardship at its best. Not only did it bring forth the talents of a very good man but it also showed the pride of ownership by a parishioner who values his parish.

Recently I bought material to make a covering for the altar here at Holy Cross in Nesconset. But the material needed to be cut and hemmed. I didn’t have a clue who might assist with this. A few days later a woman approached me to say that she was a seamstress and would like to volunteer her talents. From my perspective this was stewardship right from heaven. I admired God’s timing and made use of Millie’s gifts.

Stewardship is a way of living our Christian life by using the gifts we possess and doing something beautiful for God and for others. As a member of the Diocesan Stewardship Committee I have been encouraged by the positive spirit of the fine people who serve in our Diocesan Office of Stewardship. The examples I give above are multiplied many times over in parishes throughout our Diocese. There are wonderful creative ideas that can be shared through the Diocesan committee and the Stewardship workshops. At the same time stewardship is not just about doing good works. Stewardship is about being the person God’s created us to be. We are most ourselves when we use the gifts God has given us to build up the Body of Christ. Thus the retreat days that have been sponsored this semester are as important as the workshops we have enjoyed.

Let us continue to glorify God by letting our gifts shine in our world. If we trust God by using the gifts God has given us and if we trust one another by working together in our parishes, we will bring the Good News of Christ alive for another generation.

“We are most ourselves when we use the gifts God’s has given us to build up the Body of Christ.”
“I have never fasted as these faithful have.”

“As a dry and weary land without water, so my soul thirsts for you my God...” Those words of psalm 63 sprang from my heart as we crossed for the first of many times, the mountains of Haiti. Such barrenness left me speechless. Without water, there will be no food. How could such a land sustain a people? Sadly, I discovered that in many ways it doesn’t.

Everywhere we went on our very limited journey, we encountered hunger and its devastating effects. One trip took us to a small mission to the Cathedral parish where we observed the people in a Lenten day of prayer and fasting. I have never fasted as these faithful have. The realization shamed me. I held a small child whose bones I thought would break no matter how gently I held him on the bumpy trip to the hospital. The hospital is run by Mother Teresa’s Sisters of Charity where I pray daily he will be nurtured back to wholeness through their loving care.

Another day found us delivering a “hot lunch” to the young students in a small parish school. There wasn’t a sound from the children ranging in age from 3 to 8 as their teachers prepared the only food they would eat that day, a bowl of hot cereal (actually cold by the time it was served) topped with chunks of bread. A small child, ill with a high fever, had been sent to school and told that no matter what, he wasn’t to leave until after the food had been served. There was no food for him at home...

Rays of hope were present in the lives of people we met who truly lived steward discipleship. Sharing their time and talents of engineering or medicine, faithful disciples from France and the United States tirelessly served Jesus in disguise in these the poorest of the poor. The Church, too, the lone voice for the voiceless, shares its treasures of personnel and money (limited though they are in both!) to relieve the suffering of their people.

Children outside school in Gonaives, Haiti, washing their hands in preparation for this only meal of the day: hot cereal with bread.

(Continued on bottom page 5)
On May 18th we will participate in the Peter’s Pence Collection that enables the Holy Father to respond with emergency assistance to the most needy throughout the world – those who suffer as a direct result of war, oppression and natural disasters. The beginnings of this worldwide Collection are found in ninth century England when King Alfred the Great collected a “pence” from English Landowners as financial support for the pope. Pope Pius IX instituted the modern Peter’s Pence Collection in the 1860’s. Originally held on the Sunday closest to the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, today the collection is taken up on a Sunday determined by the local diocese. More than 98 cents of each dollar directly supports the Holy Father’s spiritual and charitable works. Administrative costs account for less than 2 cents per dollar. Now that’s good stewardship!

The gospel continually challenges us to be good stewards of all that the Lord in His goodness has given us. That means to lend a helping hand to those in need, to help build a better world with justice for all. This special Collection is an opportunity to demonstrate justice as well as kindness to our brothers and sisters in need. We need one another in order to grow in discipleship in the journey that is life on earth.

Since my return, I find myself constantly mindful of Donna Marie McGarigill’s Servant Song: What do you want of me Lord? How (where) do you want me to serve you? As I ponder and reflect on these questions in light of my own call to discipleship, I pray that Jesus will light the way for me to use my talents to establish deeper communion between our privileged First World and our struggling brothers and sisters in the Third World.

I invite you to share how your parish extends its gifts of time, talent and treasure to our global church.

Peter’s Pence

“Other Half”

by Sr. Catherine Kelly, S.S.J., Director, Mission Office, Diocese of Rockville Centre
We are coming to the one time in our Church year that we request that you share your gifts of treasure in a generous and loving way with the retired Religious Sisters and Brothers who have ministered to so many of us in the Dioceses of Rockville Centre and Brooklyn. For many, many years they are the ones who gave freely of their gifts to serve us.

Many of us received good Catholic education in schools and religious education programs from these Religious. Many of us have received quality health care in Catholic hospitals run by these Religious and many of our parents are now receiving or did receive pastoral care in homes and nursing homes ministered by Religious women and men.

Thinking back over my own years of education in Catholic schools and those of my husband and children, I cannot help but be filled with gratitude and awe at what these Religious Sisters and Brothers have given to the people of our Dioceses - years and years of dedicated service.

Until recent decades, the care of elderly Religious was ensured, by the women and men who entered Religious life and provided financial and human resources for care of their elderly. Today, however, elderly members far outnumber those Religious who earn salaries or stipends in the workplace.

Please consider sharing your gifts by donating a portion of your “other half” when the Collection for Religious Retirement is taken in your parish on the weekend of May 31/June 1, 2003. This is our opportunity to say thank you for a lifetime of service.
I have been a parishioner of St. Anthony of Padua for 43 years and actively involved in ministry for about 12 of those years. At that time we were called volunteers. When St. Anthony’s first began Stewardship I realized my husband, my children and I had already embraced Stewardship. However, we embraced only the time and talent part. Our thinking was, if we put God first by giving our time and talent that was enough. But the more we learned about the whole picture of time, talent and treasure, that all we are and all we have is a gift from God, we began to realize we weren’t putting God first in our checkbook. So we prayerfully decided to take a step each year since. We now embrace Stewardship as a way of life, in good times and in hard times.

I attended the Pastoral Formation Institute and around the same time I began to work part time in Religious Education as a Catechetical Leader. When the time came to take a third year track I thought for sure I would take the Religious Education track. But God had another idea in store for me. Around this same time our Pastor Father Richard Hoerning announced to the staff that he would be looking for a Coordinator of Stewardship to help him with the many details. I approached Fr. Richard and asked if I took my third year track in Stewardship, could I become the Coordinator of Stewardship. That was September 2000.

During that third year I began to attend the Stewardship Training Days and attended a workshop given by Maureen Venetucci entitled STEWFORKIDS. Since I already worked in the Religious Education Program, I took her idea and ran with it, using many of the materials Maureen provided for us at the workshop. Along with my co-worker Eileen Schlee, we distributed Good Deed Certificates to all the children in grades 3-8 of our Weekly Religious Education Program. After an explanation of Stewardship all the children participated in this Lenten Project.

We also had a Children’s Ministry Day. Children (we now call them disciples) who are involved in using their time and talent in the church or in the community volunteered to give a short description of their ministry and what they did. We had over 30 disciples come forward to speak. Parents and the weekly religious education classes were invited to attend. It was beautiful to hear these disciples speak about the gifts of time and talent given to them by God. Parents approached us afterwards, they hadn’t realized there were so many ministries for children and how can they get their kids involved. The Good Deed Certificates have now given way to a day we call “Young Stewards’ Day” where each Religious Education Class is responsible to use their time, talent and earned treasure in service for a family, charity or organization during the season of Lent. Before they even discuss a project, time is spent explaining what Stewardship is.

“We now embrace Stewardship as a way of life, in good times and in hard times.”

“It was beautiful to hear these disciples speak about the gifts of time and talent given to them by God.”

("A Coordinator is Key" continued on page 8)
is and how we can use it towards our long tradition of Catholic Social Teachings. The actual Young Stewards’ Day consists of a Stewardship Prayer Service, each class has a lunch table to display their project, and a reporter from each class reporting on what their class service project was. Thanks to our dedicated and creative catechists this day is Spirit filled and a favorite of all who attend.

As the year progressed I had many questions about Stewardship and needed to make many phone calls to the Diocesan Office and other directors and coordinators of Stewardship. I turned to Marie McNally of St. Sylvester parish in Medford and Jo Ann Torres of St. Frances de Chantal in Wantagh. They were very helpful, shared many ideas with me and sent me samples of materials they use. I can call them for anything.

This past year the Stewardship Committee hosted our first Gifts Discernment Workshop. For parishioners to use their gifts in a ministry, they must be able to name their gifts and prayerfully decide in what ministry their gifts can be used. A Gifts Discernment Workshop does just that and our hope is to continue this each year.

Last year the committee also hosted a Ministry Celebration after taking a break the year before because of poor attendance. Our Ministry Celebration is held in the school, a separate building from the church. Often times we lose parishioners between the two. The question was how do we get the parishioners to come to the school instead of going to their cars. The committee decided on banners in the church procession, footsteps and signs directing everyone to the school, balloon animals, and an entry in a free raffle (dinner for two and other smaller raffles) to all who attended the Ministry Celebration. It was very successful and many, many parishioners took part.

Our Stewardship Committee has been through many changes, my coming aboard, adding new jobs for the committee, a new pastor and some committee members leaving. But those that remain are strong in their belief of Stewardship, faithful and faith filled. They make me strong and I am humbled to serve with them on the Stewardship Committee. Because our number is small, we decided to add some people to the team. We spent a few meetings prayerfully discerning names of new members. The process is beautiful and it works. We truly believe the Holy Spirit was present in our choosing the names of new committee members.

What else is new? Our Parish Outreach has begun a new C.A.R.E. ministry. To include those in our parish who are faced with a disability in ministry and our liturgies. We are in the beginning stages.

The Evangelization team along with the Stewardship Committee is working towards a new ministry of welcoming new parishioners. In the fall, with a combined effort, a welcome dinner is planned for new parishioners and a new welcome packet is being worked on to distribute to them. Hopefully new stewards will come forward to share their gifts in this new ministry and take it from there.

Stewardship in St. Anthony’s is continually growing and enlivens our parish by connecting one to another, one by one, to bring about the Kingdom of God.

Our new Pastor Msgr. John Dreason fully supports all our Stewardship efforts and gently encourages parishioners to embrace Stewardship as a Way of Life.
A Stewardship Prayer

Creator God,

At Baptism, we accepted the call to follow Jesus. Be with us as we move along on our faith journey. Send us your Holy Spirit, that we might have wisdom for the journey. Help us to develop and share our gifts as good stewards, that we may use them in love and service in your Kingdom.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

“We Walk by Faith”
2 Cor. 5:7

John 11:25
Signs of the Holy Spirit

Throughout Jesus' life he taught us how to live as stewards of God's gifts by his example and his stories. Jesus knew this way of life is not always easy and that we would need help. Jesus promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to help and guide us. How do we know that the Holy Spirit is with us? There are nine signs or “fruits” that we can look toward to see that the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives as Christian stewards. The Holy Spirit will be with us always. When we experience these “fruits” or gifts, we experience Jesus' gift to us—the Holy Spirit.

Find the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (listed below) in the wordsearch. Then, take three of them and explain how you can show or be witness to the Holy Spirit working in your life. When you have more time, do the other six!

I can be witness to the Holy Spirit's gift of ____________________________

by ____________________________

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I can be witness to the Holy Spirit's gift of ____________________________

by ____________________________

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I can be witness to the Holy Spirit's gift of ____________________________

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WordArt is a tool that allows you to play with your text and make it look funky. There are several options you should become familiar with in order to get a full control of your WordArt. Open a Word document and choose Insert - Picture - WordArt… A box titled WordArt Gallery will appear. Choose the type of WordArt that is closest to what you want (you’ll have a chance to modify it later) and click OK. Another box titled Edit WordArt Text will prompt you to type your text in. If you want your text to be on several lines, use the Enter key (just as you would with regular text) to break it. Use Font: and Size: options to format your text. You can also make it bold or italic. When you are done, press OK. The text will be displayed along with the WordArt toolbar. You can drag the WordArt around your document with the mouse. You can resize it, by dragging one of the transparent squares surrounding the WordArt. You will also see a yellow diamond appearing under the WordArt. Move the left/right to tilt the text. Another yellow diamond, which appears on the left side of some of the WordArt styles, lets you adjust the curvature of the text.

Now let’s see what the WordArt toolbar can do for us. (If the toolbar disappeared while you were making adjustments, right-click on your WordArt piece and choose Format WordArt…) This toolbar gives you an ability to further customize the appearance of your text.

Click to display WordArt Gallery box again. This is simply a shortcut (for Insert - Picture - WordArt…) that allows you to create a new WordArt piece.

Click to bring back the box that we used to create and format the text. You can always go back and edit the content and formatting of your WordArt. If you have several pieces of WordArt in your document, select the one you want to edit (by clicking on it) before using this button.

If you want to change the style of your WordArt, click and choose a different style, and click OK. Unlike the button, which creates new WordArt, this button modifies the existing WordArt only.

There are a lot of formatting options here. You can change the color of your text, resize and position it. Make sure to check out the Fill Effects… option (go to the Color and Lines tab and open the Fill—Color: drop-down box. Choose the Fill Effects… option.

Change the shape of your WordArt! Bend it, twist it, shape it as a flag or as a stop sign! WordArt is very flexible.

This button is for rotation. When you press it, you will see little colored circles appearing around the selected WordArt. Click on any circle and move the mouse up or down. Release the mouse and the WordArt will rotate. Don’t get dizzy :)

Change the relative position of the WordArt to the text. The Edit Wrap Points option gives you a fine degree of control over the wrapping without affecting the WordArt itself. Just click and drag any of the little black squares.

This button stretches all letters vertically to the full height of the WordArt box. This makes all letters of the same height, while the type (small or caps) remains unchanged. This is an on/off button, click it again to undo changes.

This one is easy…it changes the direction of the text from vertical to horizontal and back.

With this button you can align the text within your WordArt same way you do it to the regular text. You need to have more than one line in your WordArt piece to see the difference.

Is your WordArt too crowded or too loose? Suit yourself by changing the character spacing.

Remember, if you want to put your “Two Cents” in, send me a Publisher, Word, or Office tip for our next issue. Just give us a call! 516-379-4055 x3 or e-mail stewardship@prodigy.net - John
The Resurrection, God’s Kingdom and Stewardship

“In Christ, God has entered fully into human life and history. For one who is Christ’s disciple there is no dichotomy, and surely no contradiction, between building the kingdom and serving human purposes as a steward does. These are aspects of one and the same reality—the reality called the Christian life.

God’s kingdom is not an earthly kingdom, subject to decline and decay; it is the everlasting kingdom of the life to come. But that ‘life to come’ is in continuity with this present life through the human goods, the worthy human purposes, which people foster now. And after people have done their best, God will perfect human goods and bring about the final fulfillment of human persons.”

From “Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response” (by the U.S. Bishops—Chapter V, pages 42)

By his life, death, and resurrection, Jesus showed us what the kingdom of God is like. As followers of Jesus, we are called to help bring about God’s kingdom here on earth while believing that the fullness of the kingdom is yet to come.

God, in profound generosity and love, has given us many gifts. We have been gifted so that by our “worthy deeds,” in an imperfect yet meaningful way, we come closer to the kingdom.

The resurrection of Jesus is a powerful sign of the kingdom for Christian stewards. It is in the fullness of the kingdom that those who believe will be glorified. Jesus’ resurrection forms our hope for the promise of the fullness of God’s kingdom.

Some questions for reflection and discussion:

• What impact does the resurrection of Jesus have in my daily life?
• What do we mean when we pray for the coming of the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven?
• How do my God-given gifts help point towards the kingdom?
• In what ways in my life (my relationships, situations; my vocation) can I see God’s kingdom present?
• What is the connection between stewardship, the resurrection of Jesus, and the coming of God’s kingdom?