

Giving Discovering Responding Praising Forgiving
 Feeding Thanking Sheltering Deciding Evangelizing
 Praying Clothing Building Renewing Creating Nurturing
 Celebrating Comforting Building Renewing Creating Nurturing
 Caring Forming
 Loving Sharing Inviting Visiting Growing Serving

Stewardship CONNECTIONS

Office of Parish Stewardship, Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY

Summer, 2016

A Jubilee Year of Mercy!

Our Jubilee/Stewardship Connection comes from Barbara Geary, Director of Stewardship for St. Kilian parish in Farmingdale. Barbara has been a parishioner of St. Kilian's for more than 30 years! She joined the staff in 2006 and moved into her current position as the Director of Stewardship/Pastor's Secretary in 2010. Barbara is really making things happen in Farmingdale! Thank you for all you do!!



Stewardship Connections

Summer, 2016



Stewards of God in the Summertime

Here we are in the midst of summer. For some this is a time of relaxation and recharging with vacations, trips to the beach, visiting new places or just sitting out in our own backyards. Others may see it as an opportunity to "let up" and slow down even as we continue with our busy schedules. We all need some down time in order to be ready for the challenges that lie ahead (my September calendar is quickly filling up!). But when it comes to being good stewards of God's gifts there is really no down time; rather we are given opportunities to engage in good stewardship in other ways.

Living on Long Island we are blessed with oceans, beautiful sunsets, scenic areas and many other gifts that God has bestowed upon us. We act as good stewards of these gifts when we care for and protect them from harm. A simple act of cleaning up after ourselves when we have spent time at the beach is practicing being a good steward of the environment. If you were a Girl Scout (and the same is probably true for Boy Scouts) you learned the slogan "Always leave a place better than you found it". What does that mean for us as good and merciful stewards? In the case of leaving the beach, while walking to your car perhaps you see an empty bottle on the sand left by someone else. Instead of thinking "people are such slob" why not pick up the empty bottle and throw it out with your own trash? Perhaps the bottle was left by a mother with her children who was trying to gather them together to go home and struggled with getting them to cooperate. While we don't want to put ourselves (or our families) in jeopardy by picking up dangerous objects, we can allow ourselves to be the judge of how we can contribute to respecting our environment by taking that extra step as a merciful steward.

Another way of continuing our good stewardship and mercy to others during the summer months is to not forget about families in need. Every year the St. Kilian Outreach office reminds us in our weekly bulletin that hunger does not take a vacation. In fact, with children home from school there is a greater need to contribute food donations. Are you one of the people who only think of the needy at holidays like Christmas and Easter? God bless you for contributing at these times to allow those less fortunate in your community to celebrate with their families. How about making a commitment during the summer to one day drop off food to your Outreach Office or food pantry on your way to the beach or pool? Think of the example you will set for your children to take the time to think of those in need before enjoying your day at the beach.

It only takes one act of kindness to leave a place "better than you found it". The same is true when you show your mercy to human beings by going out of your way to help that person's life become "better".

In the words of Pope Francis, "Let us be 'protectors' of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment."



A Way of Life

Gifts Celebrations!

Those parishes who honored their ministries with a large celebration this past year.

Our Gifts Celebrations continue with St. Raymond's Parish in East Rockaway! This Pentecost, St. Raymond's parish celebrated the shared gifts of their community with a ministry fair and litany! These activities were the highlight of this year's Time and Talent renewal built around the theme of **"Believing with Joy!"**. Special thanks to Fr. Chuck Romano, Pastor, for the recap and pictures!!

A Celebration of Gifts... with Joy!



The Gifts Celebration at St. Raymond Parish was in "full swing" before the 5:00pm Mass on Saturday and continued through the final 4:30pm Mass on Pentecost Sunday. Ministry banners, beautifully constructed and infinitely varied in their color, shape and texture, were hung on our church's walls, alcove and choir loft. More banners, reflecting the "length and breadth" of service in our community, were displayed on poles and placed in the sanctuary. During the homily, each presider was pleased to mention the banners, noting this wonderful pageantry of celebration fostered a real appreciation of our stewardship theme **"Believing with Joy!"**. Awareness of the special celebration was also promoted through advertising and invitation in previous Sunday bulletins, along with Stewardship posters - large and small - strategically placed in all communal spaces. A parish-wide mailing containing a letter from me (the pastor) along with a Stewardship spiritual brochure rounded out parishioner invitation.

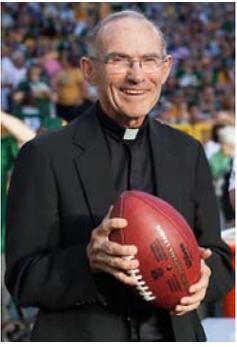
To further celebrate the recognition of the many God-given gifts to our faith community, after the Profession of Faith parishioners were invited to participate in a Litany of Ministries. Beginning with a connecting scriptural reference from the presider, the lector then "called" each ministry and invited the minister(s) to stand. When the Litany concluded, every parishioner by virtue of their Baptism - at every Mass - was standing! We closed with a recitation of the Stewardship Prayer. [A sample litany, letters and bulletin inserts as well as prayer cards and posters can all be obtained from the Office of Parish Stewardship at no cost! Email requests to stewardship@drvc.org or visit www.stewardshipli.org]

After the Final Blessing at each Mass on Pentecost Sunday, parishioners were invited to enjoy a full breakfast in the cafeteria. Hosted by our *Faith and Friendship Ministry*, this hospitality also afforded parishioners the opportunity to view and enjoy the "mini-display booths" that various ministries had assembled, complete with their own "fact-finding" information sheets! A more extensive and detailed Ministry Directory was also distributed, revealing the energy and vitality of the entire St. Raymond steward family in using their God-given gifts to build God's kingdom! Although our parish did not use a commitment card this year, we are hopeful the momentum generated by our celebration of gifts will encourage all our parish stewards to see themselves as truly gifted and to express that gift in service to their parish community and beyond.

What a celebration of our church! Gifts galore and even a cake!!



Flashback!



This Flashback isn't from one of our Newsletters, but instead, from one of our earlier manuals. The ***Seven Signs of Stewardship*** by Bishop Robert Morneau is timeless! Bishop Morneau, pastor, vicar general and retired auxiliary bishop for the diocese of Green Bay, WI has contributed countless articles and books, talks, retreats, etc. for the promotion and betterment of Stewardship throughout our world. He also served as a member of the US Bishops' Committee which wrote the pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*.

Perhaps you could use this list as a framework for your pastoral planning. Actually, Bishop Morneau added vision and planning to this list later on!!

Seven Signs of Stewardship

With these seven signs of a good Stewardship Parish: Bishop Robert Morneau stresses that, when these seven elements are present, stewardship not only works well but renews parish life!

Hospitality

Parishes need to welcome warmly all members. Everyone has something to contribute. Everyone is needed. Communities known for the vitality of their faith and for the quality of their service to people in need invariably inspire others to participate in ministry and to be generous in financial support.

Prayer

The authentic steward must be rooted in the sanctifying presence of Christ, which - when recognized, embraced and celebrated in prayer and in the sacraments - becomes spiritual nourishment and a bond of unity. The steward needs to be sustained, above all with constant contact with the Christian community - the parish - and with the opportunities that it offers for the nourishment of the faith.

Stewardship Committee

Parishes need a systematic way of infusing the theology and practice of stewardship into the life of the parish, identifying opportunities for members of the parish to share their time, talent and financial resources, and establishing an ongoing process to recruit, recognize and thank stewards in all parish ministries.

Recommitment

Stewardship is expressed not in a single program but, rather, in a constant reminder to commit one's very self to the Lord. Annual recommitments inform and form in order to transform individual lives and the life of the parish.

Outreach

The parish as a whole needs to set aside a portion of its resources to serve persons in need in the parish, the community, the diocese and the universal church. Ideally, parish outreach programs involve parishioners at the human level and create opportunities for human interaction.

Lay Witnesses

A key ingredient is the personal witness of individuals who have experienced a change of heart as a result of their commitment to stewardship. Personal witness is essential to building a solid foundation for Parish Stewardship.

Accountability

Constant accountability is fundamental to good stewardship. Parish Stewardship efforts require a visible commitment to accountability for the full range of parish activities - from the way decisions are made and carried out by parish personnel, to the way resources are collected, managed and used.



A Way of Life

Celebrating Young Stewards!

This spring's Time and Talent Renewal at St. Sylvester parish in Medford highlighted witness talks. One particular Mass featured a joint talk given by brother and sister, Charles and Catherine St. Hilaire. This dynamic duo has a solid grasp on what it means to be a good steward — it's just who they are!!

Serving with Joy!

Good morning. My name is Charles St. Hilaire and I'm an altar server. I started altar serving the year after I had received my first communion and I really enjoy it. My mom made sure to raise me so that I would always enjoy going to church, and she was happy to find out that I was interested in altar serving.

With soccer it's hard to make it on some Sundays but I take every opportunity to serve by covering for other servers. I also volunteer to serve at school masses which is always a pleasure. To volunteer both in and out of school doing something I really enjoy is great. Through this ministry I've made so many friends. As you know, me and Sam are always serving together and we've become very close as a result of it. I even got to know Father Tom much better too.

I continue to altar serve because I enjoy helping my community. In religion we're always being asked about how we, as young people can help in our community. In 2010, when I saw the ad in the bulletin that altar servers were needed, I knew that God was revealing to me how I can help my community. I really enjoy altar serving because it's fun. It makes me happy to participate in the

Mass because I feel involved. Sometimes, sitting in the pews just experiencing mass isn't enough. We have to get up and participate to really get anything out of it.

Even though we are not from Medford, my mom attended one mass here and fell in love. When I serve I know that I serve for my parish family. All of you mean so much to my family and really make it feel like home. So our ministry is like a "thank you" for always making us feel so welcome.

I think that everyone should try and get involved in some form of ministry. You might not be into altar serving or lecturing like my sister and I, but there are so many other things that the church offers from a drawing class to ushering. There's such a variety and the people here are so nice that I'm sure there's a place for everyone. I hope that whatever ministry you all choose, that you do it with all your heart and truly enjoy it like I do.

Thank you and here's my sister.

"...whatever ministry you choose, do it with all your heart..."

"...stewardship is us agreeing to serve God and use the talents He's blessed us with in a good way, so that we can help to accomplish His mission."

Good morning, my name is Catherine St. Hilaire and I'm here to speak to you about my ministry. At the church I'm a lector and it is an extremely rewarding experience. I first became interested in stewardship when my mother would tell me stories about how active she was in her church. Even though she doesn't actively participate in a particular ministry now, her joke is that she had us and gave us to the church for her ministry!

All jokes aside, lectoring is one of my favorite things to do. Partly I like the idea of getting up to go to the lectern and read, but even more so I like the feeling I get afterwards. When you participate in a ministry there's this sense of happiness that comes with it. The knowledge that

(Continued on page 6)



Celebrating Young Stewards! (Continued)

(Continued from page 5)

you made the decision to take the talents given to you by the Holy Spirit and use them for good - in the name of God - is so uplifting. When I read the Word of God I really feel it. I understand the reading better and get to personally interact with it. Most readings that I've done, we've covered in school and I feel that being able to make that connection is just amazing. When I think of stewardship I feel like it's another thing we can willingly say "yes" to! Just like Confirmation, First Communion and even Baptism, stewardship is us agreeing to serve God and use the talents He's blessed us with in a good way, so that we can help to accomplish His mission.

I see no reason as to why you wouldn't want to join a ministry. Our group of stewards here at St. Sylvester's are wonderful dedicated people, who you can see have God working through them. This past Thursday I was given the opportunity to attend a ministry meeting held by Ms. Whitfield and I came home smiling because I believe that what was said in the meeting reaffirmed my love to lector. I understand that we have previous commitments; I'm on a travel soccer team and I've had to lector and change in the bathroom right after Mass, but I still come. These "bushel baskets" as Ms. Whitfield called them, these things keeping us from shining in ministry, are not worth the attention we give them. Instead, I learned from some truly dedicated stewards that a true steward would do anything to keep their light going.

Ministry is the greatest reward I get from church. On Sundays I am truly excited to wake up at 7:00 am and come here at 9:00 am. The compliments from everyone are very nice as well, but don't compare to the feeling you have in your heart after delivering the Word. Now, you don't have to be a lector or a Eucharistic minister, or even an altar server like my brother. Our parish offers so many opportunities for you to use your God-given talents for the church. I hope that you not only look at and consider joining a ministry, but answer God's call to use whatever gift you were blessed with - whatever talent you possess - to try to further God's mission in the world.

Thank you.

Stewardship Prayer for the Jubilee

**Blessed are You, O God.
You are the giver of every good
and perfect gift.
Your Son, Jesus,
is our peace, our justice,
our mercy and reconciliation.**

**In this year of Jubilee,
we seek to be merciful like You, our Father.
As stewards of Your creation,
make us a people of peace, working for peace;
a people of justice, securing justice;
a people of mercy and reconciliation,
showing mercy and seeking reconciliation
with all people.**

**All glory be to You mighty God,
through Christ Your Son,
with the Spirit who dwells within our hearts
now and for ever.**

Amen.



**Network!
Learn!
Grow in our
Catholic Faith!**

The ICSC annual conference is widely recognized as the most valuable opportunity for those involved in Christian Stewardship to connect with others who share their commitment to teaching stewardship as a way of life.

**Sunday - Wednesday
October 2-5, 2016
New Orleans, Louisiana**

Visit www.catholicstewardship.org

Call our office for more information,
special rates and to register!

516-678-5800 x 297

**It's great to have ICSC
as our partner in the mission!**



Liturgical Resources

We hope you enjoy and utilize these Liturgical Resources for your Bulletin, Announcements and General Intercessions. Please know that they are also available on our website at www.stewardshipli.org → Special Leadership Section → This Week's Fax. (Note: Bulletin Reflections are taken from **Stewardship By the Book**, author Sharon Hueckel)

AT A GLANCE... AUGUST'S Stewardship Resources for Liturgy

August 7 - 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Bulletin Reflection: Am I waiting for the "right" time to become a good steward? Do I plan to share my time and talents "later?" Today's Gospel warns those who are procrastinating about stewardship to be prepared - "at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."



Living Stewardship: We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who recognize that giving and sharing are not a burden, but rather an opportunity to experience - every day - the deep satisfaction that can only be found by serving in the name of Jesus.

General Intercession for Mass: That as thankful stewards, we strive to be not only generous givers, but also gracious recipients, we pray to the Lord...✠

August 14 - 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Bulletin Reflection: In today's second reading, St. Paul encourages us not to grow weary or lose heart, but to persevere in following Jesus. Our willingness to give of ourselves, even in the face of conflict and division, is one way to measure our discipleship.

Living Stewardship: We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish whose faithfulness is evident, despite uncertain times and certain hardships, to provide continued service to their neighbor in need.

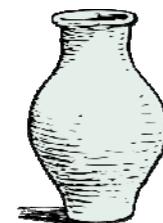


General Intercession for Mass: That as determined stewards, we make the conscientious and firm decision to help others through "thick and thin," we pray to the Lord...✠

August 21 - 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Bulletin Reflection: Today's reading from Isaiah describes the Israelites bringing their offering to the Lord "in clean vessels." The gifts of myself - my patient endurance and fidelity to the will of God - is as important as the monetary gift I offer.

Living Stewardship: We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who are aware of the activity of the Holy Spirit in their lives - a new baby, a wedding, a spiritual healing or a moment of deep insight or conversion - all leading to greater growth or action on behalf of God's kingdom!



General Intercession for Mass: That as good stewards, we seek to discover God's special transforming grace in our daily lives, we pray to the Lord...✠

August 28 - 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Bulletin Reflection: In the Gospel today, Jesus warns us not to give in hopes of repayment, but to give open-handedly to the poor and needy. That sort of giving mirrors the bountiful giving of God, and Jesus assures us it is blessed indeed!

Living Stewardship: We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who give real thought to how God has blessed them and then strive to give in proportion to what they have received.



General Intercession for Mass: That as generous stewards, we are truly grateful for the gifts that we have received making us eager to share what we have been given, we pray to the Lord...✠

A Way of Life