



Memo

Date: Wednesday, November 25, 2009

To: Pastors, Parochial Vicars, Deacons, Parish Administrators, Parish Office Managers, Parish Secretaries, Stewardship Staff and Volunteer Leaders

From: Christine Heusinger, Coordinator of Stewardship

Re: December Stewardship Office Newsletter

The following newsletter, *Stewardship: A Way of Life*, has important information regarding the 2010 Archbishop's Annual Appeal as well as timely articles that will help make stewardship *a way of life* at your parish.



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STEWARDSHIP

A Way of Life



The Newsletter of the Office of Stewardship for the Archdiocese of Atlanta

December 2009—Issue 2009-04

Save the Date!!

Stewardship Best Practices Workshop

Wednesday

February 10, 2010, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Our Lady of the Assumption Social Hall

Don't miss this great opportunity to meet with other stewardship-minded folks from around the Archdiocese!

Stewardship Throughout the Year

We know that the parishes that have the most effective stewardship efforts keep the stewardship message alive throughout the year.

Trish Johnston, longtime member of St. Jude the Apostle parish in Sandy Springs has written the first of three books based on scripture readings for each liturgical cycle.

Living Stewardship in the Parish - Year C

www.jspaluch.com/11031.htm

Beginning with November 30, the First Sunday of Advent (Year C), this bilingual (English/Spanish) book includes short stewardship reflections/essays that would be a great resource for parishes to use in their written communications and for website use as well.

For each Sunday of Year C and several of the year's feast days, Trish offers you a timely article and an inspirational thought for the week. Every article also includes an image to illustrate that week's message. And for parish bulletins that are short on space, there is a shorter version of each article.

The accompanying PC and Mac-compatible CD-ROM contains the long and short articles, the thought for the week, and the art in formats that you can easily insert into your parish bulletin or other publication.

This innovative resource provides thought-provoking stewardship material for the entire Sunday lectionary cycle and all the major Sunday feast days. In addition, you will find items for other special days such as Thanksgiving and Earth Day.

Whether your parish is new to practicing good stewardship and its role in building discipleship, or you have been actively promoting it for years, you will find *Living Stewardship in the Parish* to be a valued partner in helping your parish to live as giving disciples of the Lord.

2010 Archbishop's Annual Appeal

Lenten Parish Stewardship Pilot

Some parishes in the archdiocese are implementing a pilot stewardship program based on the traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The program was first developed by Msgr. Bill Hanson, pastor of St. Gerard Majella Parish in the Rockville Center Diocese, Long Island and is now used by over 40 parishes in the Erie Diocese along with parishes in other dioceses. Most parishes that have used this method have seen improvement in their bishop's appeal results over previous years.

This method works because of the use and power of symbols and ritual. It calls on the church to act out a scriptural event—in this case mimicking the church in the Acts of the Apostles laying gifts at the feet of the Apostles (Acts 4: 32-35). At St. Gerard, Msgr. Bill actually used the bishop's crosier, symbolizing his apostolic connection, and had gifts placed in a basket in front of the Crosier

The program occurs over three successive Sundays, ideally leading up to Ash Wednesday. The first Sunday has the parish focused on prayer

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**The Stewardship Office
has moved!**

See page 3 for details

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Mark your calendar: Regional Stewardship Conference in Savannah—May 1, 2010



The Call to Stewardship

by Daniel Conway

Every man, woman, and child is called to care for, and share, God’s gifts. Everything we have, and all that we are, comes to us from God as a precious and irreplaceable gift. The time we have been given here on earth, the skills and talents we have developed, and all of the material possessions come to us from God as generous gifts — to be cherished, nurtured, and shared with others.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we accept the call to follow him without counting the cost. In faith, we “let go” of any claim to absolute ownership or control — of our lives, our possessions, or our destinies. We place everything in God’s hands — confident in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. We accept our vocation as disciples of Jesus Christ who are invited, and challenged, to make stewardship a way of life.

The call to stewardship is a profound, spiritual experience. But it is also very practical — affecting all aspects of our daily lives. Once we embrace stewardship as a way of life, we find that life is different:

- Relationships, especially among family, friends, and co-workers, are influenced by a new spirit of generosity and sharing.
- Time is no longer “wasted” but is cherished as a gift to be used wisely and well — for the things that matter most.
- Gratitude becomes a dominant influence in our lives — teaching us to


rejoice over our many blessings and to place all our hope in God’s provident care and abundant mercy.

- Money matters (earning, saving, and spending) become means to an end, not ends in themselves. We share generously what we have because God has been generous to us.
- Caring for the world around us (air, water, and land) and for the communities we form (neighbors, cities, and nations) become a sacred duty, the responsibilities of good stewards and good citizens.
- Providing for the Church (Eucharistic stewardship) becomes much more than a weekly “obligation.” It becomes a privileged opportunity to give back (with increase) the many gifts we have received “from thy bounty through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Daniel Conway, President and CEO of Mission Advancement Services, has been writing and lecturing on stewardship themes for nearly 15 years.

Read previous issues of Dan Conway’s Stewardship Newsletters at www.omearaferguson.com/goodsteward.htm

Parish Mission Statements

 mission statement explains why your parish exists. How does it contribute to God’s mission in the world? What is your parish supposed to be doing? Why has God *called* your parish into being, and why does it want to see it continue to exist?

Without a clearly defined mission, members of a church will possess competing and contradictory agendas and they will be struggling with one another to take the parish in different directions.

Is your parish Mission Statement boldly printed on your parish’s main Web page? If not, please meet with your Web designer today and have it up front and center!

Do you need help in starting the process of crafting a mission statement? Contact the Stewardship Office and we’ll send you in the right direction.



Lenten Parish Stewardship Pilot

Continued from Page 1

and considering how they might enhance their prayer life during Lent. It would include a lay witness reflection on how prayer has changed their lives. Parishioners would be given a sheet/brochure with options for making a prayer commitment during Lent. The second Sunday focuses on fasting, with another lay witness talk reflecting the value of controlling one’s desires. The same sheet/brochure would include options for making a fasting commitment during Lent. The final Sunday is “commitment Sunday” with the pastor speaking about almsgiving and directing in-pew pledges from the congregation. The culmination of the program has the faithful placing their in-pew almsgiving pledge at the altar (with or without a crozier—a cross would do just fine), and perhaps receiving a nail as a reminder of their pledges. The pledges of prayer and fasting are kept by the individual.

As we go to print, St. Thomas More, Immaculate Heart of Mary, and St. Jude, are considering such a program. If you are interested in learning more, please contact the Stewardship Office.



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The Archdiocese of Atlanta has purchased a building in Smyrna. The Office of Stewardship, the Office of Formation and Discipleship, Black Catholic Ministries, and Hispanic Ministries will be moving into that building in early December. The rest of the chancery staff will not be moving out of the current Catholic Center in Midtown for several months.

Center in Midtown for several months.

The new location is right off of Highway 41, just south of Windy Hill. It is in the office park behind the wooden "clock tower" that is directly across Highway 41 from Target.



Kudos

St. Mary Magdalene not only has children's envelopes for the kids to learn how to be good stewards but each Sunday bulletin has a "Children's Offertory Time and Talent" column where the comments that the children write on the outside of their envelope is shared. Following are examples

of these comments from the 10/31/09 bulletin:

"Helped clear table; loaded the dishwasher; feed the dog; I see Jesus everywhere I go; I gave my brother my new toy; I will try to obey God; singing, praying; be nice when Grandma is here; not fighting with brother."

My personal favorite: "...helped watch over a 4 year old camping did with a bow-and-arrow..."

Children will be so excited to see their own comments printed in the Sunday bulletin. Pair this with catechesis on giving of their TIME (in prayer and study) and TALENT (by helping their parents and community), and with sharing of their earned allowance and you've got little stewards in training!



The Advent mystery is the beginning of the end of all in us that is not yet Christ.

- Thomas Merton



The Stewardship Office runs Progress Reports each week for both the 2009 and the 2010 Archbishop's Annual Appeal. These reports can be found at:

<http://archatl.com/aaa/parishtools.html> and are usually available by Tuesday afternoon. Call Christine If you need those reports earlier!

The word from Sarah and Geri in Gift Processing is that they are receiving a lot of in-pew pledges/gifts that do NOT have a parish name stamped on the outside envelope. These gifts might not be

credited to the right parish! If you have any in-pew pledge envelopes in your narthex, please make sure they have been stamped and are readily found in your narthex, or even better, in your hymnal holders.

The second letter from the Archbishop will be mailed in the beginning of February and will have a Lenten theme of fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

Have you shown the Archbishop's video? We have received very positive feedback from it!

Notice the Additions?

Did you notice two new names added to the Office of Stewardship staff list ? (above, left)

We are so happy to welcome Geri Delisle and Sarah Vandeusen to the Office of Stewardship! Previously in Finance, both Geri and Sarah live in Cobb County so they are pleased to be part of this great Stewardship team AND working closer to home.

Heck, Sarah could practically walk to the new building!



Lighten Up!!

Ryan and Bridget are flying to Australia for a two week vacation to celebrate their 40th anniversary.

Suddenly, over the public address system, the captain announces, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am afraid I have some very bad news. Our engines have ceased functioning and we will attempt an emergency landing. Luckily, I see an uncharted island below us and we should be able to land on the beach. However, the odds are that we may never be rescued and will have to live on the island for the rest of our lives".

Thanks to the skill of the flight crew, the plane lands safely on the island. An hour later Ryan turns to his wife and asks, "Bridget, did we pay our pledge check to St. Patrick's Parish yet?"

"No, sweetheart," she responds.

Ryan, still shaken from the crash landing, then asks, Bridget, did we pay our Archbishop's Annual Appeal pledge?

Oh, no! I'm sorry. I forgot to send the check," she says.

"One last thing, Bridget, did you remember to send a check for the Church Building Fund this month?" he asks.

Oh, forgive me, Ryan," sobbed Esther. "I didn't send that one, either."

Ryan grabs her and gives her the biggest hug and kiss in 40 years. Bridget pulls away and asks him, " So, why did you kiss me?"

Ryan answers, "They'll find us."

"... no program, no choice of words, no stewardship appeal slogans, no brochure, no letter from the pastor or even from the Archbishop will have any long term affect on the lives of people to encourage them to live a life of stewardship if the far more fundamental issue of faith and conversion is not addressed.

The issue of faith and conversion is behind the call of stewardship and it is an issue of faith and conversion that we have to speak to people on their own terms."

Year-round Education

It is vital to raise parishioners' awareness of the importance of the Archbishop's Annual Appeal.

There are 14 bulletin "briefs" available on our Web site. Each describe a different ministry/office that is supported by the Archbishop's Appeal. An example of just one:

Where Your Archbishop's Appeal Gifts are

Spent: The largest portion of the Archbishop's Annual Appeal goes toward the **Vocations Office**. The Archdiocese of Atlanta is blessed with over 40 seminarians. The cost to educate a seminarian is significant, totaling approximately \$40,000 per year. Most men are in the seminary for six years before they are ordained to the priesthood. Help prepare the next generation of priests who will bring us the Eucharist, marry our children, and baptize our grandchildren. Make your gift to the Archbishop's Annual Appeal today at www.archatl.com.



Parishes are encouraged to print these at least every other week on a rotating basis *throughout the year*. These bulletin briefs can be found at: www.archatl.com/offices/development/pt/



Christmas Visitors

IDEA—consider "welcome" cards in your hymnal holders greeting your Christmas visitors and inviting them back to worship again. Make them feel that your parish is a better place when they are present and that their attendance is not only a gift to the parish but to all it's regular members.



Bishop Thomas Murphy



Jesus
 Messiah
 Wonderful
 Counsellor
 Mighty God
 Prince of Peace
 Everlasting Father
 Jesus

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08-31-2007

I'D LIKE TO ROLL MY EARTHLY 401K OVER INTO SOMETHING HEAVENLY

Permission: <http://www.reverendfun.com/need/>

Planned Giving

Did you know your parishioners could support their parish *and* other Catholic ministries *and* improve their financial security at the same time? Sound too good to be true?

Well they can. At the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia, it's called "creative giving."

In fact, just one "creative gift" can return an immediate tax deduction plus lifetime income, plus long-term financial support to the Catholic Foundation or the ministry of their choice.

That's right...they benefit, their loved ones benefit and your parish can benefit. *If that isn't creativity, we'd like to know what is.*

Learn more today by contacting the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia today. Call Diane Duquette at 404-497-9440 (office); 404-550-8465 (cell); or e-mail her at dduquette@archatl.com

Have a Blessed Advent and a faith filled and Merry Christmas from your friends in the Archdiocese of Atlanta Stewardship Office.

Oh! This Planned Giving piece would be a great thing to put in our parish bulletin!

