



PARISH STEWARDSHIP PLANNER

*How can I repay the Lord
for all the good done for me?* Psalm 116:12



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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

During my time in the Diocese of Sacramento, I have been impressed by the generous sharing of time, talent and treasure from the faithful of our diocese. This practice of stewardship is central to our call to be the Lord's disciples.

Christian stewardship begins with a sense of who we are as disciples of the Lord Jesus. A good steward recognizes that all blessings come from the Lord and these blessings are to be used to serve all of God's children.

This concept of Stewardship as *a way of living* is not focused on our temporal or temporary needs such as facilities and debt. It recognizes the innate spiritual desire to give. This desire lies within all our hearts. Our loving God created us in His image with the potential — and expectation — to share our gifts with the world around us.

My hope is to grow stewardship as a way of living within our homes, our parishes and throughout the twenty counties of the Diocese of Sacramento.

Essential to our success in accomplishing this vision will be the encouragement and formation of our clergy and laity in practicing and teaching stewardship as a way of fulfilling one's ministry in the parish.

I trust that the enclosed resources for parishes, schools and agencies will prove helpful in teaching the principles of Christian Stewardship.

I thank each of you for your generous spirit. Together we are living stones in the Temple built for the glory of God. Christ is our capstone. In union with Him we continue to build up that Temple so that all God's children can seek His comfort and know His love. May the intercession of Blessed Virgin Mary help us all to respond with joy to the Lord's invitation.

Respectfully,



+JAIME SOTO
Bishop of Sacramento

Why Stewardship?

A Summary of the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter

Stewardship: A Disciple's Response

In the early 1990s, the United States Catholic Bishops collectively prayed and reflected on the hallmarks of Christian discipleship. With many solid biblical foundations, the bishops concluded that a disciple of Jesus is truly a thankful, responsible and generous caretaker of God's many blessings. In short, Jesus' disciples practice authentic stewardship.

While the New Testament does not provide a total portrait of the Christian steward all in one place, elements of this image abound in its pages. Based on several parables and the many apostolic instructions, Jesus' disciples understood they were to share their gifts with others.

Guided by Scripture, we believe that the Christian steward is a person whose prayer leads to a constant awareness that God is the creator of all blessings in life — spiritual and material. Jesus presented the ultimate gift to God — the gift of his life — and we, too, are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps by:

- Receiving God's gifts gratefully
- Cultivating them responsibly
- Sharing them lovingly in justice with others
- Returning them with increase to the Lord.

God has entrusted to Catholics the gifts of material creation, individual vocation, and the Church. Gratefully caring for these gifts leads to these tangible examples of stewardship in our daily lives:

- Stewardship of Creation: Respecting life, protecting the environment and developing our world through noble human labor
- Stewardship of Vocation: Faithfully carrying out our unique individual roles in God's plan
- Stewardship of the Church: Prayerfully sharing our time, talent and treasure to fulfill the mission of the parish, diocese and universal Church.

Stewardship as a way of life has astonishing implications for our relationships and daily lives. We can experience life-shaping changes of mind and heart as we commit ourselves to the Lord. Recognizing God as the origin of life, we are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and one another.

The journey of discipleship is one of intense joy, fulfillment and peace. As Mary the mother of Jesus lived her ministry in a spirit of fidelity and service, we can find the same favor with God by living as authentic stewards of our world, our vocation and our Church.

Adapted from *Stewardship, A Disciple's Response — A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*, ©1993, United States Catholic Conference, used with permission.

Timeline for Parish Stewardship

Commitment Season 2012

JUNE - AUGUST

Stewardship Chair (Committees) formed/meet to determine stewardship commitment plan

Update parish census data

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

Diocesan wide Stewardship Conference

Development and preparation of parish communication materials: reflection guide and posters, commitment form, pastor's letter, General Intercessions, bulletin announcements, and accountability report

Selection and recruitment of lay witness presenters

Parish communication materials ordered from the printer

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

Stewardship committee meets – reviews and finalizes plan

Lay witness orientation

Communication materials returned from printer

Oct. 27-28 Awareness Weekend #1

Introduction of the stewardship (renewal) effort by the pastor. Parish Stewardship Accountability Report, bulletin announcement, Mass announcement and General Intercessions.

Nov. 2 Stewardship Commitment Mailing (Optional)

Letter from pastor, reflection guide, commitment form, reply envelope

Nov. 3-4 Awareness Weekend #2

Lay witness on time, talent and treasure, bulletin announcement, Mass announcement and General Intercessions

Parish Ministry Fair (Optional)

Nov. 10-11 Stewardship Commitment Weekend

Pastor's invitation to participate, commitment forms in the pews, commitment forms returned, bulletin announcement, Mass announcement, General Intercessions and Invitation to Participate.

Nov. 12 Parish Administration and Follow-up — record intentions and send thank yous

Nov. 17-18 Follow-up Weekend — opportunity to return commitment forms, forms in the pews, Mass announcement and General Intercessions

Nov. 19-23 Mail Follow-up to Non-respondents and thank you notes to respondents

Nov. 24-25 Thank You Weekend – Pastor/Stewardship Chair thanks all parishioners who returned a commitment form and reports on the results to date

DECEMBER

Calls made to all new volunteers to involve them

Planning and Preparation

Role of the Pastor

Critical to the success of a parish stewardship effort is the visual and real commitment of the Pastor to Stewardship as a way of living in his own life and for those of his parish. This commitment should be expressed in the following ways:

- 1 Personal formation to gain a better understanding of the concept of Christian stewardship as an important element to our call to discipleship.
- 2 Commissioning and formation of the Parish Stewardship Committee. Insuring the Stewardship Committee is represented on the Parish Council.
- 3 Attendance at the Parish Stewardship Committee Meetings.
- 4 Serving as the chief spokesperson for stewardship in the parish — including during awareness weekend to introduce the stewardship effort, as well as during commitment weekend to invite parishioner's participation.

Role of the Parish Stewardship Committee

An active, practicing Stewardship Committee is critical to a parish for the ongoing education and commitment of parishioners to the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

Forming a Stewardship Committee

Ideally, the Stewardship Committee functions as a freestanding committee having the general responsibility for stewardship formation and the annual renewal of stewardship. The Stewardship Committee functions best when it is not under the auspices of the Finance Council, as that group tends to focus on the financial needs of the Church rather than an individual's need to give. It also tends to favor treasure over giving equal emphasis to time, talent and treasure.

The committee should consist of five or more members, depending on the size of the parish.

Members of a Stewardship Committee

When recruiting parishioners to serve on a Stewardship Committee, look for people who:

- **Are spiritually motivated**
It is important that members be people of prayer who are concerned about parishioners' relationship with God, not solely about the needs of the Church. Look also for people who are "Eucharistic," who have a deep relationship with Jesus, are grateful for that relationship and act out that gratitude.
- **Exemplify and live out stewardship**
Look for members who are already personally committed to stewardship as a way of living. They may not call it stewardship but they live it. Those committed to stewardship already give their time in various parish and community activities. They will also be regular and generous givers to the offertory collection, the Annual Catholic Appeal and other community organizations.
- **Envision where stewardship can take the parish**
It is important that members of a Stewardship Committee are formed in stewardship and are willing to learn as much as they can to be able to convey the message to fellow parishioners. Initially, some may see stewardship only as giving money. Others may see stewardship only as recycling paper or volunteering time to Church organizations. Developing a working definition of stewardship which references the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral on Stewardship, yet is particular and personal to the parish, will be part of the committee's challenge. It will help consolidate the diverse viewpoints of the committee.
- **Are comfortable talking about money**
and its relationship to our faith.



An active, practicing Stewardship Committee is critical to a parish for the ongoing education and commitment of parishioners to the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

Responsibilities of a Stewardship Committee

1 Renew the stewardship process on an annual basis. This “process” usually runs four weekends every year. The first three weekends are “awareness weekends” and include: a homily by the pastor on stewardship; an accountability/stewardship report provided by a lay person on the ministries made possible by the parishioners support; a personal testimony (lay witness) on how stewardship is lived out in their life or lives.

The final weekend would always be a Stewardship Commitment Weekend, where parishioners, along with the pastor, would bring their commitment forms of time, talent and treasure to Mass and place them in the offertory.

Typically, annual communication activities include: a mailing containing information on stewardship sent to each household in the parish; General Intercessions; Mass announcements; and messages in the bulletin and on the website.

2 Recruit individuals and/or couples to share their personal testimonies about stewardship with the parishioners. The lay witness testimonies are probably the most educational and motivational part of the stewardship process. This is the most personal and inspiring method of communicating the joy found in the returning of God’s gifts.

The lay witnesses should be individuals who believe and practice stewardship — those who give of their time, talent and treasure from a thankful heart.

Initially, some may see stewardship only as giving money.

3 Prepare and regularly update a time and talent list or catalog of parish activities and organizations. A time and talent list or catalog gives parishioners the chance to connect with opportunities available in the parish. They may range from altar server to youth group counselor. Some parishes develop an actual catalog which describes each group. Other parishes may simply list each ministry. While the emphasis is on existing groups or activities, it is recommended to include one-time volunteer opportunities, as well (e.g., crab feed cleanup crew).

4 Ensure that those who respond are contacted and invited to become involved. It is important that the Stewardship Committee work with the appropriate parish ministries to ensure that those who commit their time and talent are personally invited to become involved. This activity of the committee is its most challenging and ongoing task. It takes planning before the stewardship commitment process and follow-up afterwards to make sure people are connected to the ministry to which they have committed. If people just have their names on a list without personal contact, they will not respond to future stewardship renewals. They may also start to believe that all the parish wanted was their money.

5 Evaluate parish stewardship and communication. The stewardship process in the parish needs to be evaluated annually. Review comments, criticisms and questions received with commitment forms. Evaluate the written materials used throughout the year — letters, Reflection Guides, bulletin announcements, newsletters, articles, etc. Discuss the verbal presentations. For example, are the homilies and lay witness testimonies getting across the message we want expressed? What more could we be doing to get stewardship information out to people? What kind of results are we getting from the stewardship process?

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Planning and Preparation

Responsibilities of a Stewardship Committee (continued)

6 Enhance parish hospitality. Work with the appropriate parish ministries to help enhance the process for welcoming new parishioners. Be sure to include a discussion of, and materials about, stewardship in the presentation and/or the packet. In addition, review the current state of how the parish welcomes and demonstrates gratitude for all members of the community during Mass and all parish functions.

7 Establish parish goals. Vibrant parishes have a shared vision and goals that support that vision. Goals should be set for all ministries. They should be challenging yet realistic and, when possible, measurable. It is important to note that goals should be communicated clearly to the parish. The parish and its ministries also need to report on the progress made toward reaching their goals.

8 Develop a Parish Stewardship Accountability Report. The purpose of this report is to help parishioners understand the priorities, goals and accomplishments of their parish. Key themes for this report include: thanking, informing and inviting participation.

9 Publicize stewardship reflections throughout the year in the weekly parish bulletin and General Intercessions. It is easy to remind people about stewardship on a regular basis. Reflections in the bulletin can include Scripture quotes from the Old and New Testaments. You may also find a few sentences from books, magazines and newspapers, or you may jot down ideas that you think of as you go about your stewardship work in your parish. The committee can develop General Intercessions with a stewardship message that can be prayed every other week throughout the year.

10 Publicize stewardship reflections on the parish website. Stewardship reflections could include profiles of individuals or couples in the parish who are examples of good stewards, questions and answers on stewardship, thoughts or commentaries on stewardship. You may also want to consider producing a special web page that focuses only on your stewardship.

11 Incorporate comments about stewardship in Sunday homilies. The Parish Stewardship Committee could suggest that the priest(s) incorporate comments about stewardship in Sunday homilies on a monthly basis. In looking at the three-year cycle of Gospel readings, there is at least one Gospel with a stewardship related message, in whole or in part, for all 36 months. In some instances, the whole homily could be on stewardship. In others, a few sentences can be incorporated into the context of the entire homily.

12 Expand your focus beyond the parish. Invite the parish as whole and individual parishioners to consider the needs facing others in our local communities, our diocese, and the universal Church.

Planning and Preparation

Parish Materials and Print/Mail Services

Excellent communications are essential to a successful parish stewardship effort. This can be accomplished by providing your parishioners with informative, personalized, visually appealing and easy to understand communications.

Parish Materials

- Mass announcements
- General Intercessions
- Bulletin reflections
- Letter from the pastor
- Two (2) reflection guides
- Commitment form (prayer, time/talent and treasure)
- Stewardship prayer
- Poster
- Thank you card

These materials are also available in Spanish.

Visit www.tcfsac.org and click on the “Parish Stewardship” link to view the samples electronically.

Print/Mail Services:

To assist parishes with their printing and mailing needs, the Office of Stewardship and Development has arranged with a few local printers/mail houses to provide your parish with your printing and mailing services. Your parish would contract directly with the printer. Services offered will include:

Data preparation:

Updating your household data and preparing for mailing — sorting by zip code; proper salutations.

Personalization, customization and printing of all parish print materials:

Your letter from the pastor and commitment forms will be customized to your parish and personalized to your parish households.

Prepare and send mailing:

The printer/mail house will prepare and send the personalized and customized mailing (letter from pastor, Reflection Guide, commitment form and reply envelope) to each household. Posters and prayer cards will be sent directly to the parish.

Steps for parish material and data preparation:

- Selection of Reflection Guide for parish mailing
- Selection of parish time and talent ministries
- Determination of plan for printing and mailing — selection of printer/mail house

Additional preparation:

- Selection and recruitment of lay witness presenters
- Preparation of time and talent catalog
- Customization of Mass announcements, General Intercessions and bulletin reflections
- Preparation of Parish Stewardship Accountability Report
- Coordination of Parish Ministry Volunteers



Critical to the success of a parish stewardship effort is the visual and real commitment of the Pastor.

Sample Pastor Talk on Stewardship — Introduction

Today we are beginning the Stewardship process here at _____ Parish. It is an important and significant event in the life of our parish, one that I hope will change how we view our world and our lives as well as the life of our parish.

In the coming weeks you will hear from two of our parishioners about the stewardship of our parish and their personal stewardship journey.

At the end of the four-week stewardship process, you will be asked to make a specific commitment of your time, talent and treasure to our parish. We will ask for your commitment in each of these areas and will ask you to complete and return your commitment form on Stewardship Commitment Weekend.

So you may be asking...*what is stewardship?*

Christian stewardship begins with a sense of who we are as Christians — as disciples of our Lord Jesus. A good steward recognizes that all blessings come from the Lord and these blessings are to be used to serve all of creation.

This concept of Stewardship as *a way of living* focuses not on our temporal (temporary) needs such as facilities and debt; rather, it focuses on our spiritual “need to give.” This need lies within all our hearts. Our loving God created us in His image with the potential — and expectation — that we share our gifts with the world around us.

Stewardship is a way of living.

It is a lifestyle, a life of total accountability and responsibility. It is the acknowledging of God as the Creator and the Owner of all. Christian Stewards see themselves as the caretakers of all God’s gifts. Gratitude for these many gifts is expressed in our prayer, worship, offerings and action. Stewardship is a way of thanking God for all our blessings by returning to God a portion of the many gifts (everything we have — our time, talent, and treasure) that we have been given.

In the coming weeks we will be called, as God’s faithful servants and members of our parish, to:

- Prayerfully discern how God has uniquely gifted each one of us — our time, our talents and our treasure.
- Reflect on what priority God and His Church play in our lives.
- Decide how we plan to share these gifts with God and His Church.
- Make an intentional, planned and proportionate gift to God and His Church in the areas of
 - Time in prayer
 - Talent, and
 - Treasure

This material is also available in Spanish.

Witness Talks

Sample Pastor Talk on Stewardship — Commitment Weekend

During the last month, we have discussed and learned about Christian Stewardship and how it is *a way of living* — impacting all of us individually, in our families and in our parish. I hope you have learned and grown from this experience as much as I have.

I want to thank our fellow parishioners for sharing their personal witness over the past few weeks. I also want to thank each of you for the gifts of yourselves. You are the Church, and together we will build up God's kingdom on earth and answer His call to discipleship.

At Mass today, we are all asked to return the personal stewardship commitments we intend to share with God and His Church. You should have all received my letter and commitment form in the mail, and hopefully you have brought your completed form with you today. If not, don't worry we have extra forms in the pews.

At this time, I ask the persons at the ends of the pews to pass across to their fellow parishioners the stewardship commitment forms and pencils.

Pause

Now, let's take a few moments together for those who have not yet completed their forms, to join me in completing it.

Step one: Your Household

Record your household information.

Step two: Time in Prayer

Make a commitment of your time to attend Mass regularly and pray for God's work through our Church.

Step three: Talent

Share your talent with your parish through the ministries chosen on the reverse side of the commitment form. Select a ministry area where you are already involved or where you would like to become involved as a family.

Step four: Treasure

Record the financial amount you plan to share with God and His Church for the coming year and the frequency of your financial support.

Pause

After communion

I have asked the ushers to collect all our stewardship commitments, and we will have our Stewardship Chair, _____, bring your commitments to the altar.

Again, thank you. Sharing your gifts with God and His Church will make it possible to continue and expand the spiritual, sacramental, social, and outreach ministries at our parish.

This material is also available in Spanish.



Christians throughout history have been raised to a new level of awareness by learning how a deeper sense of spirituality has taken over the lives of people just like them.

The Need for Lay Witnesses

An important part of stewardship education is the testimonies presented to the congregation by individuals whose lives have changed as a result of stewardship. These lay witnesses are necessary to the success of the parish effort. There are many reasons for this. Stewardship is a part of the internal change of heart or conversion process that we know so well from the Scriptures. The Old and the New Testaments are full of stories of real people who became aware of the need to put their faith into action.

Lay witnesses send a strong message to their fellow parishioners about giving of oneself and one's possessions and time in gratitude for what God has given them. People who hear that stewardship is working for other people are motivated to bring stewardship into their own lives. Christians throughout history have been raised to a new level of awareness by learning how a deeper sense of spirituality has taken over the lives of people just like them.

Selecting Lay Witnesses

The lay witnesses should be individuals from the parish who match the demographics of your parish. They should believe and practice stewardship — giving of their time, talent and treasure in an intentional, planned and sacrificial way. They should also be individuals who can relate well to other parishioners, feel comfortable speaking to a group about their personal experiences, and be enthusiastic about their mission.

A potential lay witness may say, "Yes, I believe in giving back to God in gratitude, but I don't want to stand up and tell everyone what I am doing because it sounds like I'm bragging about myself."

The response to that person could be, "You are not bragging because you are unselfish in your giving. By sharing with us how you arrived at your decision for stewardship, you will be testifying about the Lord and reaching out and touching individuals like yourself."

Preparing for a Lay Witness

The lay witness needs to meet with the pastor about how to present the concept of stewardship and to discuss the pastor's expectations of the stewardship effort. It would also be helpful for them to read scriptural passages about stewardship. We also recommend that they read material about stewardship included in this manual.

Prepare your personal remarks so you are comfortable with them. Use your own style, wording and delivery. Write out your talk word-for-word. If you feel comfortable with the approach, use notes or key words to guide you through the presentation so it is more natural.

The pastor, or a person designated by the pastor, should approve the lay witness talk in advance.

Rehearse your talk aloud. It is preferred that you practice in the Church using the sound system. Be comfortable enough with your material so that you can look up from your notes and make eye contact. In a large church, remember to turn to the sides occasionally and include everyone.

Above all, be sincere, enthusiastic and friendly.

Lay Witness Talk — Time in Prayer, Talent and Treasure Helpful Hints and Sample

When planning your talk:

- Introduce yourself.
- Be personal — share your testimony — your personal faith journey to stewardship and the deepened faith and joy that has resulted.
- Explain how stewardship means giving the first fruits, not the leftovers, e.g., when making your gift to the Church. (“First fruits” is a term from the Hebrew Scriptures, wherein the people brought the first share of their gifts, e.g., livestock, harvest, etc., to be shared with the community.) Returning the “first fruits” to God means placing the Church ahead of other interests.
- Include examples of how you balance your busy schedule — job, family and parish.
- Motivate people to become good stewards of time, talent and treasure, and show the many opportunities for this kind of stewardship that exist.
- Show people that their work, at home and/or in the office, is a genuine exercise of stewardship.
- Do not be afraid to share your failings as well as your accomplishments in managing your time.
- Challenge people to reflect on their values and the importance of the Catholic faith in their lives as evidenced by how they use their gifts from God. Question whether we really use these gifts to do the work of our Lord.
- Challenge them with practical questions. As they receive increases do they, in turn, increase their gift to the Lord? This increase enables the ministries to continue to grow.
- Stress the role of the commitment form and emphasize that its return is a sign of participation and commitment.

Include the following explanation in regard to completing the commitment form in your talk:

- “Soon you will receive a commitment form in the mail. The commitment form will include opportunities for commitments of time in prayer (to pray and attend Mass regularly), service (volunteer your gift of talent), and financial giving to our parish.
- “Everyone is important and everyone has something to give back to our parish and diocesan communities, whether it be visiting the sick or reading at Mass. [YOUR PARISH] belongs to you, and the growth and vitality of this parish depends on you. Don’t limit your parish involvement to attendance at Sunday liturgy.
- “Review the Parish Talent Opportunities portion on the back side of the commitment form and find your niche. Complete the gifts of Time in Prayer, Talent and Treasure portion of your commitment form and place it in the collection on Stewardship Commitment Weekend. Even if you are currently involved in a ministry, renew that commitment by completing the form.
- “The commitment form is confidential and is not legally binding. What the commitment form will do is help our parish to plan for the future. The Parish understands you have multiple philanthropic priorities. When you decide on a percentage you intend to give, allow half of this for our parish and half for other charitable causes, such as the Annual Catholic Appeal.
- “Please complete the form and return it in the offering. Thank you.”

This material is also available in Spanish.

Parish Accountability

Time and Talent Coordination — The Volunteer Coordinator

There is nothing more harmful to the process of increasing participation in your parish ministries than asking for time and talent and then not following up with the parishioners who came forward. You can be sure they will not do so readily again, for the unspoken message is “we don’t want/need you.” In actuality, it may be that “we’re disorganized” or “we don’t know what you could do” or “we’re too busy to make another phone call.”

To avoid this pitfall, we recommend appointing someone on the Parish Stewardship Committee to serve as the *Volunteer Coordinator* who makes sure parishioners are matched with an appropriate ministry and are put in contact with the person who heads that particular ministry. The Volunteer Coordinator may also arrange orientation and training, coordinate the commissioning of new volunteers and be responsible for keeping the parish ministries catalog current. The Volunteer Coordinator should be a both detail orientated and a “people person.” The person should be able to get parishioners involved in the parish in ways that are satisfying and rewarding for the individual and which give the parish the benefit of the person’s gifts.

Volunteer Orientation and Training

In order to be successful, every new volunteer taking on a new role needs some instruction and guidance. They need to know exactly what is expected of them, they need to know who to go to for help, and they need feedback to know how they are doing and how they can improve. Learning the ropes for child care during Mass may take five minutes for a mom, or learning the routine for providing coffee and donuts after Mass may take working side-by-side one Sunday; but teaching a Religious Education class will require Catechiest Certification classes. The person in charge of each parish ministry and the Volunteer Coordinator are responsible for the eventual formation of each new volunteer.

What is a Parish Stewardship Accountability Report?

The purpose of the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report is to help parishioners understand the priorities, goals and accomplishments of their parish.

Individuals are called to be responsible stewards of the gifts entrusted to them by a good and gracious God, and so are our parishes.

The parish has the responsibility to be accountable to its parishioners who have entrusted their gifts from God to their parish. In addition, people benefit from and respond to instruments of accountability and want to know that their gifts make a difference.

Key themes to remember are that the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report should:

- Thank
- Inform
- Invite continued giving and participation in the parish

Parish Stewardship Accountability Report

What Are the Benefits of a Parish Stewardship Accountability Report?

Many successful stewardship parishes provide their parishioners with personalized stewardship reports. These reports are beneficial in a number of ways because they:

Increase the average donation

It has been proven in thousands of parishes throughout the country that parishes who provide regular (quarterly) stewardship reports experience an increase in their offering.

Help people fulfill commitments

People want to fulfill their stewardship commitment (regardless of whether they put it in writing), but tend to quickly lose track of their progress. Although very few people will ever initiate the question of their pledge fulfillment, parishioners will generally “get back on track” if a parish initiates the conversation. Many think no one has noticed or cares that they have fallen behind and might conclude, “It doesn’t make a difference.” Most of the “falling behind” has nothing to do with personal financial difficulty; rather, the trouble is with missing Mass and/or forgetting to write a check prior to the collection. People want to get credit for their gifts for tax purposes, for their pledge fulfillment, and/or for other human reasons. Thus, they are hesitant to drop significant, anonymous cash gifts in the collection basket when they have forgotten their check or envelope. The quarterly report reminds them of those Sundays and offers them a chance to “catch up.”

Lower absenteeism

Research has shown that as many as one-half of registered parishioners are absent from Sunday Mass on a typical weekend. This means that a parish that only provides a system of receiving gifts from the people who are in attendance at Mass is under-utilizing its potential resources. When people say they will give \$20 per week, they usually mean \$20 per week when they are at Mass and remember

their check and envelope. The quarterly report tends to gradually bring these parishioners to the practice of giving \$20 every week, whether they are on vacation, a business trip, or forgot their check or envelope.

Thank people

The quarterly report offers the parish a chance to affirm and show appreciation for their parishioners’ generosity.

Provide a financial update

Parishioners usually are not aware of the general status of parish finances. When appropriate, report the status in the quarterly report.

Tell a story and share the good news

Inform parishioners about a “good news” story describing a specific ministry impacted (in human terms) as a result of the generosity of others’ stewardship efforts.

Ensure accountability

People benefit and respond to instruments of accountability. This quarterly report is a tool that helps parishioners respond to the stewardship message of using their gifts in an accountable way.

Who Receives This Report?

All parishioners should receive this report. But we recommend that you NOT send it to newly registered people, families temporarily away, and those who asked not to receive the report.

Pre-addressed return mail envelopes:

The easier you make it for people to give, the greater the chance they will give. You could include a postage-paid business reply envelope with your report – which would require a permit from the post office. This usually makes it easier for parishioners to mail in “make-up” payments. You pay the postage only when it is actually mailed, not when it is placed in the collection basket. The cost of providing postage will be offset many times over by increased response. You could also use a plain reply envelope with the parish address on it.

Developing the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report

A member of the Parish Stewardship Committee should be asked to develop this resource. Below are the steps necessary to develop an accountability report (see *Sample Parish Stewardship Accountability Report*):

- Meet with the Pastor and the Parish Stewardship Committee to determine what will be contained in the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report. Develop the outline for the accountability.
- Meet with the parish ministry chairs and explain the plan for the accountability report and ask them to develop an inventory of the ministries made possible through their committee's work during the past year. Share with them the sample accountability outline

and ask for their accountability report within 30 days.

- Collect the accountability reports from the parish committee chairs and prepare a draft Parish Stewardship Accountability Report.
- Present the draft of the accountability report to the Parish Stewardship Committee and Pastor for their review and approval.

Completing the Report

- Prepare the final copy of the accountability report for insert in the bulletin and for a report to the entire parish during one of the stewardship weekends.



People benefit from and respond to instruments of accountability and want to know that their gifts make a difference.

Parish Stewardship Accountability Report

Presenting the Stewardship Accountability Report

Recruit a parish committee chair, or other parish leader, to give a brief overview of the accountability report during Mass on one of the awareness weekends.

(Note: Be familiar with the readings and the Gospel for the weekend the report is being presented to the parish.)

Remember, the stewardship accountability report can be shared with the parish on any of the stewardship weekends.

When planning your talk, try to...

- **Explain that through the support** of the many parish leaders and committee chairs, a Parish Stewardship Accountability Report has been developed that lists the results of ministries that are provided through your parish.
- **Explain that the purpose** of the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report is to help parishioners understand the priorities, goals and accomplishments of your parish.
- **Give a summary** of the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report by providing a summary of the number of parishioners who participate in the ministries, e.g.:
 - Parish Population
 - Sacramental Preparation Program
 - Sacraments Celebrated
 - Education and Faith Formation Programs
 - Parish Outreach Programs
 - Lay Liturgical Ministries
 - Community of Faith Programs, and
 - Administrative Programs
 - Mention that a copy of the Parish Stewardship Accountability Report is in the bulletin that Sunday. Ask them to take a few minutes to read it and to see what is being accomplished through time, talent and treasure.
- **Tell the story** of one particular volunteer and the impact their ministry had on the life of a recipient and how the time and talent of that volunteer and the support of the parishioners made this possible.
- **Thank those who share** their time and talent as volunteers/ministers who make all of this possible. Invite those not currently involved to consider doing so.

Sample Parish Stewardship Accountability Report

Parish Stewardship Accountability Report

Name of Parish, City

	Participants		Participants
Parish Population		Faith Formation Programs (continued)	
Households	_____	Ministry of Mothers Sharing (MOMS)	_____
Newly Registered Households	_____	Parish School Students	_____
Sacramental Preparation Programs		Men's Group Ministry	_____
Pre-Baptism Team Members	_____	Women's Group Ministry	_____
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)	_____	Parish Outreach Programs	
First Reconciliation	_____	Knights of Columbus	_____
First Communion	_____	Italian Catholic Federation	_____
Confirmation Candidates	_____	Saint Vincent de Paul Society	_____
Marriage Preparation Sponsors	_____	The Gathering Inn	_____
Sacraments Celebrated		Prison Ministry	_____
Eucharist/Masses	_____	The Lazarus Project	_____
Baptisms	_____	What Would Jesus Do? Inc.	_____
First Reconciliations	_____	Lay Liturgical Ministries	_____
First Communion	_____	Service Hours Performed by Confirmation Candidates	_____
Confirmations	_____	Communion to the Shut-ins	_____
Weddings	_____	Lay Liturgical Ministries	
Faith Formation Programs		Adult Choir	_____
Faith Formation Students (grades P/K - 12)	_____	Youth Choir	_____
• Families Involved	_____	Contemporary Choir	_____
Faith Formation Catechists	_____	Cantors	_____
Adult Faith Formation:	_____	Musicians	_____
• RCIA	_____	Eucharistic Ministers	_____
• Adult Catechism Study	_____	Lectors	_____
• Bible Study	_____	Servers	_____
• Catholic Book Study Group	_____	Ushers	_____
• Disciples on the Journey	_____	Greeters	_____
• Men's Weekend	_____	Community of Faith	
• Women's Weekend	_____	Parish Picnic	_____
• Lenten Faith Sharing	_____	Prayer Line	_____
Catholic Youth Ministry	_____	Quilters	_____
Vacation Bible School:	_____	Bereavement	_____
• Children	_____	Hospitality	_____
• Volunteers	_____	Administrative Programs	
Youth Ministry	_____	Stewardship Committee	_____
Catholics Returning Home	_____	Pastoral Council	_____
Charismatic Prayer Group	_____	Finance Council	_____
		School Advisory Commission	_____

This material is also available in Spanish.

Stewardship Messages in the Liturgy

General Intercessions

October

That a deeper faith is realized by the members of the _____ Parish who share their talents with the parish, we pray to the Lord....

October

For all members of _____ Parish who, through their stewardship of prayer, time, talent, and treasure are eager to share their gifts with their parish. That their faith is deepened and their lives become enriched, we pray to the Lord....

November

For all of _____ parishioners, that our stewardship of treasure to our parish will be an expression of gratitude for what God has given to us, we pray to the Lord....

November

For all parishioners at _____ Parish who make an intentional, planned and proportionate gift of their time in prayer, talent and treasure, that our offering will be a true expression of gratitude for all the blessings of God, we pray to the Lord....

November

For all members of _____ Parish that through our stewardship of time and talent and service to God on earth, we will realize greater personal and community faith, we pray to the Lord....

Note: Please refer to Timeline for suggested dates.

This material is also available in Spanish.



There is at least one gospel with a Stewardship-related message, in whole or in part, for all 36 months of the three-year cycle of readings.

Songs

In choosing music for the celebration of the Eucharist, priority should be given to psalms, songs, and service music that are in harmony with the scriptural readings and the liturgical season. However, since the topics of faith, discipleship and the call to serve are strong in the readings of Ordinary Time, songs and hymns such as these may prove especially useful during the time for stewardship commitment.

- We are the Light of the World
- For the Beauty of the Earth
- Sing a New Church
- Psalm 8
- Envia Tu Espiritu
- Let All Things Now Living
- Lord, You Give the Great Commission
- We have Been Told
- Gift of Finest Wheat
- Bring Forth the Kingdom
- Christ the King
- City of God
- Gather Us In
- Here I Am, Lord
- One Bread, One Body
- Go, Make of All Disciples
- Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service
- I Heard the Voice of Jesus
- Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Stewardship Prayer

Praised are you, O God, our loving creator and giver of all good gifts. Bless our parish, strengthen our faith and grant us the spirit of Christian stewardship so that we may give generously of our time in worship and prayer, our talent, and our treasure to the spread of Your kingdom here in our Church and throughout the world. This we ask through Jesus Christ, Your son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

This material is also available in Spanish.

Stewardship Messages in the Liturgy

Mass Announcements

October

This weekend is the beginning of a stewardship process here at _____ Parish — **Stewardship – a way of living**. It is one that can change our lives and the life of our parish. During the next three weeks, you will hear from our Pastor and fellow parishioners, and eventually be asked to make a commitment of your time in worship and prayer, your talent and your treasure to our parish. Let's use this opportunity to learn and grow as Disciple's of our Lord and embrace Stewardship as a way of living.

October

This weekend we continue our parish stewardship education effort — **Stewardship – a way of living**. Christian Stewardship is a recognition that God is the source and owner of all that we are and all that we have; that He has gifted us with our very lives; and that we are called to participate in the task of building the Kingdom of God by sharing these gifts with others in need. Today we will receive a parish stewardship report (an accounting by our parish) outlining many of the ministries made possible in our parish thanks to your gifts of time, talent and treasure.

November

As we continue our parish stewardship education effort — **Stewardship – a way of living** — we will hear today from our fellow parishioner(s) who will share their personal testimonial. Next weekend is our parish Stewardship Commitment Weekend. In the mail you will soon receive a letter and commitment form from Fr. _____ asking you to make a commitment of time in prayer, talent and treasure to our parish. Please be sure to complete your commitment form and return it in the collection during Mass next weekend.

November

During the last few weeks we have heard reflections on **Stewardship – a way of living** — and we have been invited to give prayerful thought to sharing our gifts of time in worship and prayer, our talent and our treasure to our parish. Today is our Stewardship Commitment Sunday; please return your household commitment form with your commitment of time in prayer, talent and treasure at Mass today during the special collection. If you did not bring your commitment form to Mass today, please bring it next week or mail it to the parish office. Thank you for sharing your gifts with God and His Church.

November

Last weekend was our Stewardship Commitment Weekend here at _____ Parish. We are grateful for those parishioners who returned their household commitment forms with their commitment of time in prayer, talent and treasure. If you have not returned your stewardship commitment, please do so today by placing them in the offertory or mail them to the parish office. Extra forms are located at the ends of the pews. Thank you for sharing your gifts with God and His Church.

Note: Please refer to Timeline for suggested dates.

This material is also available in Spanish.

Bulletin Announcements

October

What is Stewardship? **Stewardship is a way of living.** It is a lifestyle, a life of total accountability and responsibility. It is the acknowledging of God as the creator and the owner of all. Christian stewards see themselves as the caretaker of all of God's gifts. Gratitude for these many gifts is expressed in our prayer, worship, offerings and action. Stewardship is a way of thanking God for all our blessings by returning to God a portion of the many gifts (our time, talent, and treasure) that we have been given.

October

Stewardship – a way of living

Stewardship encourages everyone to participate in the task of building the Kingdom of God. God has gifted each of us with everything — our very lives. We are responsible for caring for these gifts, and accountable for what we do with these gifts. Stewardship rejects the notion that we must “have it all” and, instead, demonstrates the value of giving in love, in service and in justice.

November

Stewardship – a way of living

We are called as God's faithful servants and members of our parish to:

- Prayerfully discern how God has uniquely gifted each one of us – our time, our talents and our treasure.
- Reflect on what priority God and His Church play in our lives.
- Decide how we plan to share these gifts with God and His Church.
- Make an intentional, planned and proportionate gift to God and His Church in the areas of time in prayer, talent and treasure.

Next weekend is our parish Stewardship Commitment Weekend. In the mail you will soon receive a letter and commitment form from Fr. _____ asking you to make a prayerful commitment of time in prayer, talent and treasure to our parish. Please be sure to complete your Stewardship Commitment Form and place it in the collection during Mass next weekend.

November

Stewardship – a way of living

This is Stewardship Commitment Weekend. Please return your household commitment form with your commitment of time in prayer, talent and treasure at Mass today. If you did not bring your commitment forms to Mass today, please bring them next week or mail them to the parish office.

Note: Please refer to Timeline for suggested dates.

This material is also available in Spanish.

Stewardship Messages in the Liturgy

Scriptural References Relating to Stewardship

Hebrew Scriptures

Lv 27:30
Dt 14:22-29
Dt 15:7-8
Dt 16:10-17
Dt 26:1-4
1 Chr 29:14-16
Ps 24:1
Prv 3:9
Prv 11:24
Prv 28:27
Eccl 5:9-16
Sir 35:7-10
Mal 3:8-10

Christian Scriptures

Mt 6:19-21
Mt 6:25-34
Mt 23:23-24
Lk 6:38
Lk 15:11-32
Lk 16:19-31
Acts 4:34
Acts 20:35
Rom 12:6-8
1 Cor 4:1-2
1 Cor 16:1
2 Cor 8
2 Cor 9:6-12
Phil 4:11-12
1 Tm 6:7-9
Jas 2:14-17
Jas 4:2-3, 13-15
1 Pt 4:8-10
1 Jn 3:17-18

Parables of Jesus that deal with money and possessions:

The Two Debtors (Lk 7:41-43)
The Hidden Treasure (Mt 13:44)
The Costly Pearl (Mt 13:45-46)
The Unmerciful Servant (Mt 18:23-35)
The Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37)
The Friend at Midnight (Lk 11:5-8)
The Rich Fool (Lk 12:16-21)
The Barren Fig Tree (Lk 13:6-9)
The Tower Builder (Lk 14:28-30)
The King Contemplating a Campaign (Lk 14:31-33)
The Lost Sheep (Lk 15:3-7)
The Lost Coin (Lk 15:8-10)
The Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32)
The Unjust Steward (Lk 16:1-9)
The Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31)
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Lk 18:9-14)
The Generous Employer (Mt 20:1-16)
The Wicked Tenants (Mk 12:1-12, Mt 21:33-46, Lk 20:9-19)
The Servant Entrusted with Supervision (Mt 24:45-51, Lk 12:42-48)
The Talents (Mt 25:14-30, Lk 19:12-27)
Sheep and Goats (Mt 25:31-46)
Render Unto Caesar (Mt 22:15-22)

This material is also available in Spanish.

Sample Pastor Letter to Parishioners

Parish Letterhead

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (formal salutation),

In recent weeks you have been hearing about stewardship at _____ Parish. A theme of our educational efforts is addressing the question – What is stewardship and what does it mean in my life?

Stewardship is a way of living!

Stewardship begins with a sense of who we are as Christians – as disciples of our Lord, Jesus. It is the acknowledgement of God as the Creator and Owner of all, and the recognition of our need to serve as caretakers (stewards) of all of God’s gifts. Our gratitude for these many gifts can be expressed through our prayer, worship, offerings and action. Christian stewardship is actively returning to God a portion of the many gifts – our time in prayer, our talent and our treasure – that we have been given.

As God’s faithful servants, we are called to **Stewardship** as *a way of living* by:

- Prayerfully discerning how God has uniquely gifted each one of us
- Reflecting on what priority God and His Church play in our lives
- Deciding how we plan to share these gifts with God and His Church
- Making an intentional, planned and proportionate gift in the areas of time in prayer, talent and treasure.

Accompanying this letter, you will find a Reflection Guide and Stewardship Commitment Form. Please take some time to read the enclosed and reflect on the gifts God has provided you and determine how you plan to share these gifts to serve others through our parish. Your gifts will make it possible to continue and expand the spiritual, sacramental, social and outreach ministries at our parish.

I ask you to join your fellow parishioners by returning your completed commitment form at Mass on Stewardship Commitment Weekend.

Thank you for your gift of yourself. You are the Church and together we will build up God’s kingdom on earth and answer His call to **Stewardship** as *a way of living*. May God bless you for sharing your gifts in service to His Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor’s signature

This material is also available in Spanish.

Parish Stewardship Reflection Guides

Select one of the two Reflection Guides to accompany the pastor's letter.

Reflection Guide #1: Our Unique Role

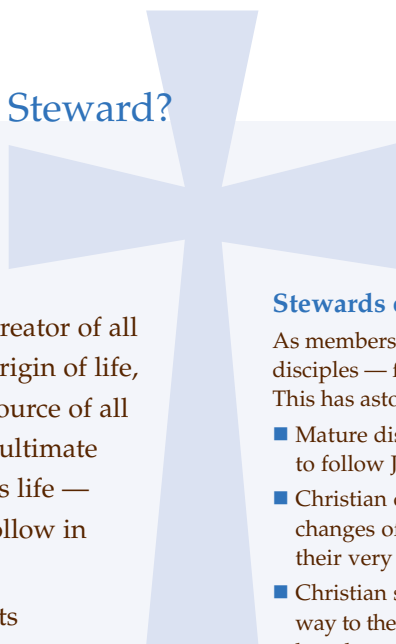
Who is a Christian Steward?

Guided by scripture, the Christian steward is a person whose prayer leads to a constant awareness that God is the creator of all blessings in life. He is the origin of life, giver of freedom, and the source of all things. Jesus presented the ultimate gift to God — the gift of His life — and we, too, are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps by:

- Receiving God's gifts gratefully
- Cultivating them responsibly
- Sharing them lovingly in justice with others and
- Returning them with increase to the Lord.

"Christ has no body now on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he is to go about doing good, yours are the hands with which He is to bless people now...."

— St. Teresa of Avila



Stewards of the Church

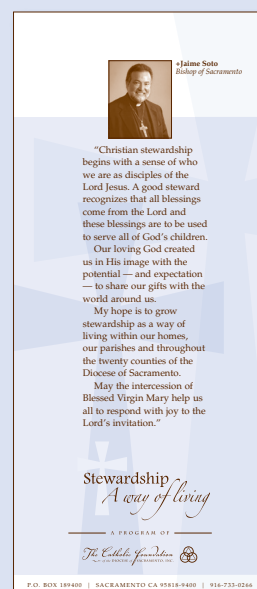
As members of the Church, we are called to be disciples — followers of our Lord Jesus Christ. This has astonishing implications:

- Mature disciples make a conscious decision to follow Jesus no matter what the cost.
- Christian disciples experience conversion — changes of mind and heart — and commit their very selves to the Lord.
- Christian stewards respond in a particular way to the call to be a disciple. Stewardship has the power to shape and mold our understanding of our lives and the way in which we live.

All members of the Church have a unique role to play in carrying out Christ's mission of proclaiming and teaching, serving and sanctifying:

- Parents by nurturing their children in the light of the faith
- Parishioners by working in concrete ways to make their parishes true communities of faith and vibrant sources of service to the larger community, and
- All Catholics by giving generous support — time in prayer, money and personal service to parish and diocesan programs and to the universal Church.

Adapted from *Stewardship, A Disciple's Response – A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*, ©1993, United States Catholic Conference; p. 45, used with permission.



This material is also available in Spanish.

Reflection Guide #2: Responding to the Call

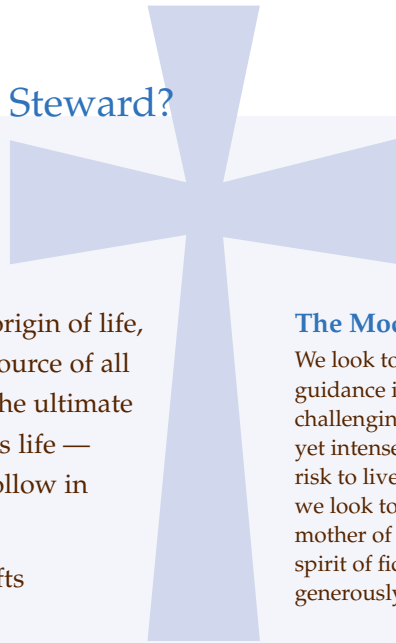
Who is a Christian Steward?

Guided by scripture, the Christian steward is a person whose prayer leads to a constant awareness that God is the origin of life, giver of freedom, and the source of all blessings. Jesus presented the ultimate gift to God — the gift of His life — and we, too, are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps by:

- Receiving God's gifts gratefully
- Cultivating them responsibly
- Sharing them lovingly in justice with others and
- Returning them with increase to the Lord.

"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."

(1 Peter 4:10)



The Model Christian Stewards:

We look to the life and teachings of Jesus for guidance in living as Christian stewards. It is challenging and difficult, in many respects, yet intense joy comes to those who take the risk to live as Christian stewards. After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. As the mother of Christ, she lived her ministry in a spirit of fidelity and service; she responded generously to the call.

Responding to the Call:

We must ask ourselves: Do we wish to be disciples of Jesus Christ and Christian stewards of our world and our Church?

Jesus calls each one of us individually by name. He has provided each of us with unique gifts. God intends for each of us to play a unique role in carrying out His divine plan. The challenge, then, is to understand our role — our vocation — and respond generously to Jesus' call by putting our gifts to work in building up His kingdom on earth.

God gives us this divine-human workshop, this world and Church of ours.

The Spirit shows us the way — Stewardship is part of the journey.

Adapted from *Stewardship, A Disciple's Response – A Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*, ©1993, United States Catholic Conference; p. 45, used with permission.

Stewardship
A way of living

RESPONDING TO THE CALL

*How can I
repay the Lord for all the good
done for me?* Psalm 116:12



Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento

"Christian stewardship begins with a sense of who we are as disciples of the Lord Jesus. A good steward recognizes that all blessings come from the Lord and these blessings are to be used to serve all of God's children. Our loving God created us in His image with the potential — and expectation — to share our gifts with the world around us.

My hope is to grow stewardship as a way of living within our homes, our parishes and throughout the twenty counties of the Diocese of Sacramento.

May the intercession of Blessed Virgin Mary help us all to respond with joy to the Lord's invitation."

Stewardship
A way of living

A PROGRAM OF
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This material is also available in Spanish.

Parish Stewardship Commitment Form

Front

_____ **Parish**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____



Please include all members of your family when sharing your gifts, and check the boxes below:

Time in Prayer

I/we plan to attend Mass weekly and pray regularly for God's work through the Church.

Talent

I/we plan to share my/our time and talent through the ministries chosen on the reverse side of this form.

Treasure

I/we will financially support the ministries and services of the parish.

I/we will give: \$ _____

Weekly Monthly Quarterly Annually

for a total of \$ _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I am interested in making my donation through electronic giving (checking, savings or credit card)

This material is also available in Spanish.

Back

How can I repay the Lord for all the good done for me? Psalm 116:12

Parish Talent Opportunities

Please list the family member's name next to the ministry in which they choose to participate.

Name	New Volunteer	Re-commit*	Name	New Volunteer	Re-commit*
Liturgy			Community Life		
Altar Servers _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bereavement _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Altar Society _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hospitality Committee _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arts & Environment _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catholic Book Club _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Liturgy of the Word _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Charismatic Prayer Group _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eucharistic Ministers _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disciples of Christ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lectors _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hospitality Sunday _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ministers of the Sick _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Circle of Friends _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music Ministry _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Couples for Christ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ushers _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cursillo Movement _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education			Marriage Enrichment _____		
Religious Education/ Faith Formation (Youth) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Men's Group Ministry _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ministry of Mothers Sharing (MOMS) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vacation Bible Camp _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prayer Line _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Advisory Commission _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prison Ministry _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Parents' Guild _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religious Vocations Committee _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Sports Committee _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Ministry _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Ministry _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welcoming Committee _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Service			Administration		
The Gathering Inn _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parish Council _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knights of Columbus, Council # _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance Council _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saint Vincent de Paul Society _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stewardship Committee _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What Would Jesus Do? Inc. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Office Assistance _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prison Ministry _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Skills You Would Like to Share		
			_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Re-Commit (for those currently involved in this ministry)

This material is also available in Spanish.

Participation — Promoting Ministries

Parish Ministries Catalog

One of the important responsibilities of the Parish Stewardship Committee is the development of a Parish Ministries Catalog. The purpose of the Parish Ministries Catalog is to inform parishioners regarding ministries sponsored by the parish in which they can volunteer their time and talent. It is recommended that the catalog include a sentence or two describing the purpose of each ministry, who is served, and who is responsible for the ministry and their contact information.

The catalog should be updated regularly and distributed in printed form as well as in PDF form on the parish website. The format of the catalog can be simple or elaborate; an inexpensive one-page handout or a large colorful document with photos and professional design features. Regardless, it must be easy to read, complete, accurate and reflect well the parish it represents. If yours is a bilingual parish, consider printing one catalog in one language from one “front” page, and the other language from the “back,” which is turned over to become the other front page.

Ideas for the content of your Parish Ministries Catalog

- Cover page including contact information for the parish (and school) staff – including Pastor, Parochial Vicar and Deacons, parish office; parish school; religious education and youth ministry
- Listing of the weekly Mass and Reconciliation times
- Sacramental schedule and requirements — Baptisms, Weddings, etc.
- Date of printing to keep track of updated versions
- Ministries — a sentence or two describing the purpose of each ministry, who is served, who is responsible for the ministry and their contact information. It is recommended that every ministry be listed under one of the following categories:
 - Liturgy
 - Education
 - Social Service
 - Community Life
 - Administration

Parish Ministry Fair

What is a Ministry Fair?

A Ministry Fair is an excellent way to communicate and personalize parish stewardship for all parishioners through the promotion of the various parish ministries and ways parishioners can practice their stewardship by sharing their gifts of time and talent. This is made possible by having representatives from all parish ministries available after all Masses on a weekend.

How do you do it?

The Stewardship Committee is responsible for the organization and coordination of the Ministry Fair. This responsibility includes:

- Enlist the support of the pastor, who may write a letter to accompany the new Parish Ministries Catalog, or in the bulletin to encourage attendance at the Ministry Fair.
- Set a theme, a timeline and responsibilities to coordinate the fair.
- Establish a theme that reflects the unique nature of your parish and/or communicates excitement and fun. For example, one parish's theme was "stewardship – a celebration of diversity" and included food representing all ethnic groups represented in the parish.
- Set the dates for the weekend of the Ministry Fair well in advance, and announce the dates as soon as they are determined.
- Select and confirm a location to hold the Ministry Fair.
- Personally contact the coordinator of each ministry in the parish and ask them to participate.
- Each organization or ministry should have its own table, booth or space.
- Encourage creative display of the ministries by having a contest for the most creative space.
- Every ministry/organization should have someone at their space after all Masses.
- Every ministry is to provide informational fliers. The fliers should include the date, time and place for the next event/meeting of that ministry, as well as the contact information for the coordinator of the ministry.
- Advertise the fair to parishioners a few weeks ahead of time by using the bulletin, Mass announcements, the website, posters, and possibly a postcard to all households.
- Make it convenient for the parishioners to attend. Hold the fair after all Masses in the parish gathering area (inside or outside depending upon the weather) or in the parish hall.
- Uniform signs provided by the Parish Stewardship Committee for each ministry looks more professional and organized.
- Provide refreshments that are an upgrade from the usual coffee and donuts.
- Make for a fun and festive atmosphere by having balloons, streamers and music; give out balloons to the children who attend; and give out prizes.
- Have a sign-up sheet/volunteer card to enlist new volunteers.
- Each ministry coordinator is responsible for follow-up with the new volunteers identified at the fair.

Sample Follow-Up Letter

Two weeks after Stewardship Commitment Weekend, a letter sent by the pastor to parishioners who have not completed a commitment form can be instrumental in encouraging additional participation in the Parish Stewardship program. This letter is to be prepared and sent by the parish. The letter below, or one similar to it, can be adapted to local circumstances and should be sent by the parish to all who did not return the commitment form.

Parish Letterhead

Date

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear (Formal Salutation):

Over the past several weeks, our parish community has been hearing about **Stewardship** – *A way of living* in our worship and in our homes. This Fall, all members of our parish community are asked to prayerfully discern how God has uniquely gifted each one of us; reflect on what priority God and His Church play in our lives; decide how we plan to share these gifts with God and His Church; and make an intentional, planned and proportionate gift to our parish in the areas of time in prayer, talent and treasure.

Through your generosity, we are able to share in the love that Jesus gives us. By giving generously of your time in prayer, talent and treasure, you enable our parish to continue to grow and provide essential services, including:

- Maintaining our place of worship
- Assisting those in need
- Providing quality Catholic education and formation to children, youth and adults
- Training and renewal of parish leaders who lead us in parish and diocesan worship
- Building-up our faith community through social and fellowship programs and events.

If you have not completed and returned your Parish Stewardship Commitment Form, I encourage you to do so. It is important for our parish to know your commitment as we plan our ministries in the coming year. Please return your form to the parish office by mail or simply place it in the collection basket at Mass this weekend. If you are in need of an additional commitment form or have questions, please feel free to call me.

Our parish community sincerely thanks you for your participation.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor's Signature

This material is also available in Spanish.

Thank You Note and Poster

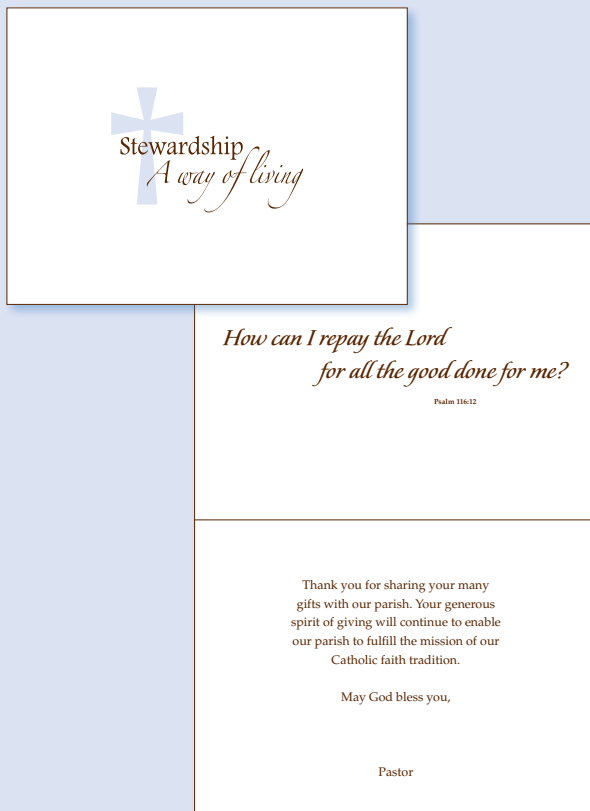
Thank You Note

It is important that all parishioners who return the commitment form receive a thank you note from the pastor. A personalized postscript gives acknowledgement that the parishioner is truly appreciated. This will benefit the parish in the years to come. This effort may take time, but it is time well spent.

It is also important that the thank you note be sent as soon as possible after receiving the parishioner's commitment. A quick response will ensure immediate action by the parishioner.

Thank You Sample

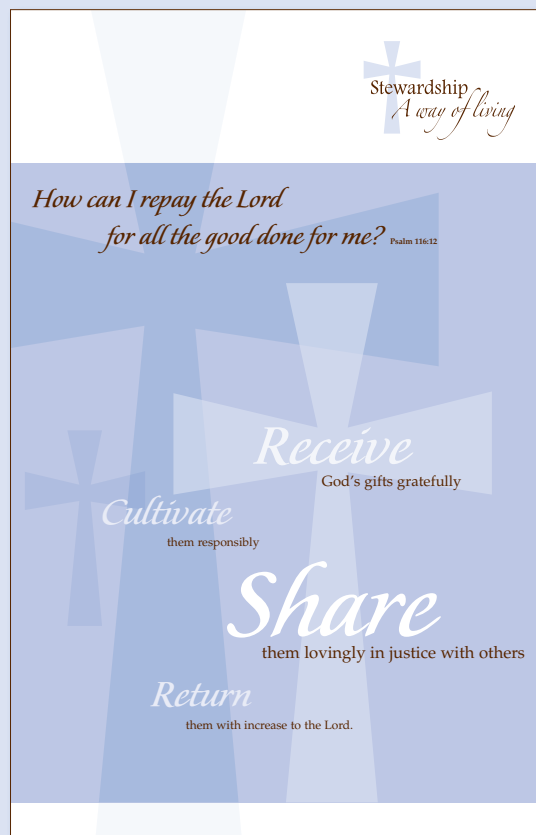
This sample thank you card is a fold-over panel card with the message shown. This format will provide the Pastor with additional space for a personal salutation and a handwritten message.



Poster

Poster Sample

This poster is 11" x 17" and should be prominently displayed throughout the parish campus during the stewardship renewal season.



This material is also available in Spanish.

This material is also available in Spanish.

Appendix — Yearlong Stewardship Education



Other Ways of Giving

What Is The Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Sacramento?

The Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Sacramento, Inc., provides a way for you to support the many ministries of the parishes, schools and agencies of the Diocese of Sacramento. Established in 2004, the Foundation's focus is to ensure a strong financial basis for continuing services to the faith community in our 20 counties of Northern California for years to come. The Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation which operates in support of the Diocese and is managed by an appointed Board of Directors.

Served by faith-driven, professional staff and advisors, The Catholic Foundation works with donors to receive and manage their gifts including outright gifts, bequests, and gifts in trust, endowments and other types of gifts to support the works of the Church in the diocese.

Why is The Catholic Foundation needed?

- To provide service to help parishes, schools, agencies and institutions develop perpetual funding sources.
- To exercise responsible stewardship of endowment funds through professional management and investment policies.
- To promote the unity of Catholic institutions and services throughout the Diocese of Sacramento.
- To provide an additional source of support for diocesan programs and services.

How does it work?

The Foundation holds many individual endowment funds for the benefit of parishes, schools and agencies of the diocese. Each year, an endowment's earnings are used to help finance the specific purpose for which the donor(s) created it.

How can I help?

- Become a partner in the work of the Foundation to preserve and promote our Catholic heritage in our diocese.
- Make an immediate gift of cash, securities, real estate or other property.
- Provide an estate plan gift in your will, life insurance policy, or trust agreement.

What are some of the ways I can make a planned gift?

There are many ways to make a planned gift and contribute to an endowment. You can make a planned gift and/or contribute to an endowment by:

- Giving a gift through your will (bequests)
- Giving a sizable gift at a small cost (life insurance gifts)
- Giving gifts that pay an income for life (charitable remainder gifts)
- Giving a home but continuing to live there (life estate arrangements).

What Assistance Is Available from The Catholic Foundation?

Marketing assistance

Promotions: The Catholic Foundation has marketing information to help promote the concept of planned giving to your parishioners. Brochures, bulletin articles and Mass announcements are available and can be customized for your parish.

Seminars: Staff members will work with your parish and with local professionals to present seminars for your parish and to assist you in marketing these seminars to your parishioners. All seminar attendees receive materials updating them on the opportunities and benefits of planned giving. Any and all follow-up leads are shared with the parish. All attendees are entitled to free and confidential proposals and consultations regarding their proposed gifts.

Confidential proposal and consultations

The Catholic Foundation staff is equipped to prepare personalized and confidential gift proposals for individuals and are always available to assist in the individual consultation.

The Catholic Foundation Planned Giving Committee

This committee of Catholic professionals from throughout the diocese serves as a valuable resource to The Catholic Foundation and to individual donors and their advisors regarding any planned giving question.

Remember...planned gifts and endowments are wonderful opportunities to be stewards of the Church for future generations.

**Contact The Catholic Foundation
of the Diocese of Sacramento, Inc.,
to become involved.**

Visit www.tcfsac.org

P.O. Box 189400
Sacramento, CA 95818-9400
p 916-733-0266
f 916-733-0224
info@tcfsac.org

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Best Practices in Parish Stewardship

The following list of best practices has been developed from materials collected by the Office of Stewardship and Development from various parishes within our own diocese as well as many others around the country.

1 Be a welcoming parish that takes community building seriously. Parishes need to warmly welcome all members. Everyone has something to contribute. Everyone is needed. Communities known for their hospitality to all members, for the vitality of their faith, and for the depth of their service to people in need invariably inspire others to participate in ministry and to be generous in their financial support.

2 Appoint a Stewardship Committee. Parishes that have an active and involved Stewardship Committee are more successful because the parishioners take an active role in planning and developing a stewardship program. They do more than focus on the renewal and commitment season; they help to plan a yearlong effort of communications and accountability.

3 Be accountable to your parishioners. Those parishes that focus their efforts on being accountable to their parishioners have more successful stewardship programs. Showing parishioners where their treasure gifts are used and how their time and talents are being managed can lead to a broader understanding of the message of stewardship. One way to share this message is by developing and communicating a Parish Stewardship Accountability Report.

4 Seek annual stewardship commitments. Stewardship requires a commitment on the part of parishioners. The annual commitment/renewal process should encourage parishioners to: prayerfully discern how God has uniquely gifted them (time, talents and treasure); reflect on what priority God and His Church play in their lives; decide how they plan to share these gifts with God and His Church; and make an intentional, planned and proportionate gift to God and His Church.

5 Set goals. Vibrant parishes have a shared vision and goals that support the vision. Goals should be set for all ministries. They should be challenging, yet realistic and, when possible, measurable. It is important to note that goals should be communicated clearly to the parish. The parish also needs to report on the progress made toward reaching their goal.

6 Communicate with parishioners on stewardship. The message of stewardship should be communicated many times over the course of the year — utilizing many media sources. Parishes that have been successful in the past have a comprehensive and informational stewardship presence on the parish website, include updates in the bulletin on a regular basis; include stewardship messages in the liturgy (General Intercessions), and provide parishioners with a Parish Stewardship Accountability Report. Most communications should thank, inform and invite continued involvement.

7 Identify lay witnesses. An important part of stewardship education is the testimonies presented to the congregation by individuals whose lives have changed as a result of stewardship. These lay witnesses are necessary to the success of the parish effort. There are many reasons for this. Stewardship is a part of the internal change of heart or conversion process that we know so well from the Scriptures. The Old and the New Testaments are full of stories of real people who became aware of the need to put their faith into action.

8 Be grounded in prayer. Several parishes have their own stewardship prayer and they invite all households to pray the stewardship prayer during the renewal season and at periodic times throughout the year. In addition, parishes open and close every meeting with a stewardship prayer.

9 Ask for help from the Diocesan Office of Stewardship and Development. Most strong stewardship parishes have not done it alone. They have worked together with the leadership of the diocese to create a plan that works for the parish. There is not one method that works for everyone. Our diocesan Office of Stewardship and Development can be a great help to parishes as they begin their annual stewardship plan. The office can be reached by calling 916-733-0266.



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Further Reading Suggested Resources for Stewardship Education

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

At www.usccbpublishing.org (Under Catalog: Leadership; Stewardship) (Publishing Services, USCCB, 3211 Fourth St. NE, Washington, DC 20017-1104) (1-800-235-8722)

- *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response* (Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship, available in both English and Spanish)
- *To be a Christian Steward* (Summary of Bishops' Pastoral in pamphlet format)
- *Stewardship and Young Adults: An Invitation to Change the World* (Pamphlet geared to young adults in promoting stewardship)
- *Stewardship — A 3-D Way of Life: Not for Adults Only* (A videotape that explains and promotes stewardship among teens of your parish)
- *Stewardship — A 3-D Way of Life: Money Back Guarantee* (A videotape to explain and promote adult stewardship in the parish)

International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC):

At www.catholicstewardship.org (202-289-1093) (Materials are available in both English and Spanish)

- *Stewardship: Disciples' Respond — A Practical Guide for Pastoral Leaders* (A manual for parish and diocesan leaders for the purpose of promoting stewardship as a way of life)
- *Children's Stewardship Manual* (A manual for parish and diocesan leaders who are interested in promoting stewardship for children)
- *Keeping Stewardship Alive: Proven Stewardship Ideas* (A manual and CD of creative and practical ideas submitted by parishes, dioceses, and individual contributors for the purposes of promoting stewardship beyond the first years)
- Matthew R. Paratore, Former Secretary General of the International Catholic Stewardship Council, has written a series of reflections on stewardship. They can be found on the ICSC website.

Liturgical Press

At www.litpress.org (keyword: stewardship) (1-800-858-5450)

- *Called to be Stewards: Bringing New Life to Catholic Parishes* (A book by Patrick McNamara with examples of bringing a stewardship approach to funding and ministry)
- *Creating a Stewardship Council* (A booklet detailing the development and formation of a stewardship committee)
- *Grateful Caretakers of God's Many Gifts: A Parish Manual to Foster the Sharing of Time, Talent and Treasure* (A manual by Msgr. Joseph Champlin to help foster stewardship in the parish)
- *The Heart of Stewardship: Sacrificial Giving* (A short video by Msgr. Joseph Champlin and Dutch & Barbara Schultz to promote stewardship as described in the Pastoral Letter)
- *Parish Stewardship Manual* (Step-by-step timetable with examples of letters, prayers, and bulletin announcements; packets with reflection guides, posters, and sample mailings are also available)

- *Sharing God's Gifts* (A small educational reflection guide that explains the meaning of stewardship)
- *Sixty-second Stewardship Sermons* (A resource book for pastors and deacons in preparing stewardship homilies. These short “sermons” on stewardship can also be used in newsletters and parish bulletins.)
- *Sustaining and Strengthening Stewardship* (A book by Jim Kelley with bulletin announcements, stewardship Scripture passages, and questions and answers on stewardship)
- *A Way of Life* (A booklet by Msgr. Joseph Champlin with four faith-sharing sessions on stewardship)

Our Sunday Visitor:

At www.osv.com (1-800-348-2440)

- *Why Catholics Don't Give, And What Can be Done About It* (A book by Charles Zech, Chair of the Economics Department at Villanova University)
- *Best Practices in Parish Stewardship* (a book by Charles Zech, based on surveys of stewardship parishes across the country)
- *Grace in Action* (Newsletters that can be used as bulletin inserts with feature stories on stewardship)
- *Stewardship by the Book* (English and Spanish available in both CD ROM and Paperback, this book by Sharon Hueckel, has stewardship bulletin announcements that reflect the Sunday Scripture readings)
- *Living Catholic Stewardship: Joyful Generosity* (An informative reflection guide written by Sharon Hueckel on stewardship)
- *Living Catholic Stewardship: Discerning Your Gifts* (A reflection guide on discernment for discovering an individuals gifts and talents by Lorene Hanley Duquin)
- *What the Church Teaches: Stewardship* (A short concise reflection guide on the Church teachings regarding stewardship)
- *Taking Care of God's Gifts: Stewardship A Way of Life (K-2)* (A stewardship coloring and activity book for children in grades K-2 by Laurie Whitfield and Robert Cammarata)
- *Taking Care of God's Gifts: Stewardship A Way of Life (3-5)* (A stewardship coloring and activity book for children in grades 3-5 by Laurie Whitfield and Robert Cammarata)
- *Catholic Stewardship: Sharing God's Gifts* (An informative paperback booklet by Colleen Smith that is sure to motivate people to a better practice of stewardship)
- Living Catholic Stewardship Conferences, sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor, provide outstanding speakers and presentations on the various topics of stewardship. For more information go to: www.osvenvelopes.com (under Stewardship Products & Services; Conferences & Events)

St. Catherine of Siena Institute:

At www.siena.org/Workshops.htm (1-888-878-6789)

- *Called and Gifted* (A workshop facilitated by the St. Catherine of Siena Institute to help parishioners recognize their unique gifts and their response to God's call)

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Suggested Resources for Stewardship Education (continued)

Twenty-Third Publications:

At www.twentythirdpublications.com (1-800-321-0411)

- *I Like Being in Parish Ministry: Stewardship* (A concise and informative booklet by Daniel Conway on stewardship with questions for reflection and prayer)
- *What Do I Own and What Owns Me?* (A book on the Spirituality of Stewardship written by Daniel Conway with a DVD of Archbishop Thomas Murphy and his reflections on the Pastoral Letter)
- *The Catholic Kid's Guide to Stewardship* (A book on children's stewardship written by Elizabeth M. Johnson)

Trumbauer Consulting:

4302 14th Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55407-3226 (612-823-7706)

- *Sharing the Ministry: A Practical Guide for Transforming Volunteers into Ministers* (A resource for helping parishioners recognize their unique gifts and call into shared ministry by Jean Morris Trumbauer)
- *Created and Called* (A program by Jean Morris Trumbauer for helping churches develop and manage a comprehensive approach to gifts-based ministry)

Parish Publishing:

At www.parishpublishing.org (1-888-320-5576)

- *Stewardship* (A newsletter, available in both English and Spanish, published monthly to help stimulate a better understanding of true giving)

Archdiocese of Louisville

At www.archlou.org Office of Stewardship and Development (502-585-3291)

- *Good Things are for Sharing: A Curriculum Guide in Stewardship for the Elementary School Level*
- *From the Heart: A Curriculum Guide in Stewardship for Middle and High School Levels*

Resources for Children's Envelopes:

- Our Sunday Visitor: www.osv.com (1-800-348-2440)
- Cathedral Corporation: www.cathedralstewardship.com (1-800-698-0299)
- National Church Service, Inc. — The Envelope Service: www.envelopeservice.com (1-800-627-9900)

Resources for Parish programs, retreats and missions with a stewardship focus:

- The Marian College Center for Catholic Stewardship offers programs, parish retreats and missions by Fr. Dan Mahan. www.marian.edu/stewardship
- Partners in Stewardship for Life offers retreats, missions, evenings of reflection and workshops with Ed and April Laughlin, At www.partnersinstewardship.com

Electronic Offertory Program

A hallmark of stewardship is that a family's giving decision is a prayerful, planned response to God's generosity. By inviting a family to budget their giving to their parish as they do other major household financial commitments, Electronic Offertory supports this principle of stewardship.

Research shows that in today's highly mobile society, regular Mass goers are away from their home parish an average of 17 times a year. (Source: "Why Catholics Don't Give...And What Can be Done About It" by Dr. Charles Zech). Electronic Offertory ensures contributions are received even when such absences occur.

Electronic Offertory is a safe, secure and efficient process whereby parishioner donations are collected directly from their bank (checking or savings) accounts; or credit card account by a

secure third party provider and deposited into your parish account. Electronic Offertory ensures the parish a stabilized giving pattern, increased levels of giving and convenience for today's busy households.

We understand the importance of continuing the personal, spiritual, ritual, and heart-felt aspect of giving; but are also sensitive to providing a convenient and secure means for parishioners to give.

If you are interested in implementing an Electronic Offertory Program in your parish and would like more information on vendors recommended by the Diocese, please contact The Catholic Foundation at (916) 733-0266 or info@tcfsac.org.



Electronic Offertory ensures the parish a stabilized giving pattern, increased levels of giving and convenience for today's busy households.

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