



Volume 4 April-June 2013 Issue 12

# The Vineyard

A quarterly publication from  
the Archdiocese of Milwaukee  
Parish Stewardship Office

## *Hello Again!*

Dear Faithful Stewards,

After a short absence, I am pleased to bring you this new issue of *The Vineyard*. This, and future issues, will continue to bring you seasonal stewardship reflections, prayers and thoughts meant for your own inspiration, and to be shared through your bulletins, newsletters and other parish communications.

In addition, *The Vineyard* will also contain practical “how to” examples of specific components of a basic parish stewardship plan. My hope is that this combination of inspiration and information will become an even more valuable resource.

Whether your parish is just planning its stewardship journey, has taken the first few steps, or is well on the way to cultivating a stewardship culture, *The Vineyard* will have something to help you along the way.

In this first quarterly issue, I ask that you take special note of the upcoming seminar; Stewardship: Beyond Time, Talent & Treasure. Complete information about this offering appears on page 5.

It’s good to bring the newsletter back, I hope to see you at one of the seminars, and thank you for all you do to bring workers into the vineyard!

*Barbara Vite*

Parish Stewardship Director

- BULLETIN BITS & PIECES
- MY “NEW YEAR” RESOLUTIONS
  - “YES” & “NO” PARISHES
- STEWARDSHIP 101; THE COMMITTEE
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In this issue



*“Eternal salvation is certainly serious business. But we can’t forget that our faith is an Easter faith. We Christians need to lighten up a bit. We could use more joy and celebration, and less lethargy and lamentation in our faith lives. Good humor and lighthearted spirits should be the rule, not the exception, for disciples of Jesus.”*

*Time, Talent & Treasure*  
Reflections on the U.S. Bishops’  
Model for Parish Stewardship  
by C. Justin Clements

# Bulletin Bits & Pieces



As we see the glory of spring, let's remember to give thanks to the Creator who designed the world with rhythms and cycles of life that operate with incredible precision. When you stop to smell the roses, take a minute to say thank you to the supreme Gardener!

*The heavens tell of the glory of God.  
The skies display his marvelous  
craftsmanship. Psalm 19:1*

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

**1 Peter 4:10**

## My "New Year" Resolutions

We all make resolutions in January as the new year rings in. Often we resolve to work toward better health; to lose weight, eat better, exercise. And, when we find that we are not as successful as we hoped, we make that same resolution the following year. We try again, and again, because the end goal is worth working for.

Throughout the Easter season, we talk about new life in the Lord. We want to experience what the disciples did; a close personal connection with the risen Savior. Here is a prayer that sets forth some resolutions to help us work toward that goal, a goal certainly worth working for!

***I resolve*** to trust God more, believing that, in His wisdom and abundance, he will give me all that I need.

***I resolve*** to spend more time with God, giving a few more minutes of each day to prayer, worship and spiritual reading.

***I resolve*** to find more ways to share my unique skills and talents so that my special strengths will make a difference in the world.

***I resolve*** to give a generous share of my resources to God's work here on earth, giving from the first fruits of my labor.

***I resolve*** to listen, to look and to be aware of what God calls me to do each day.

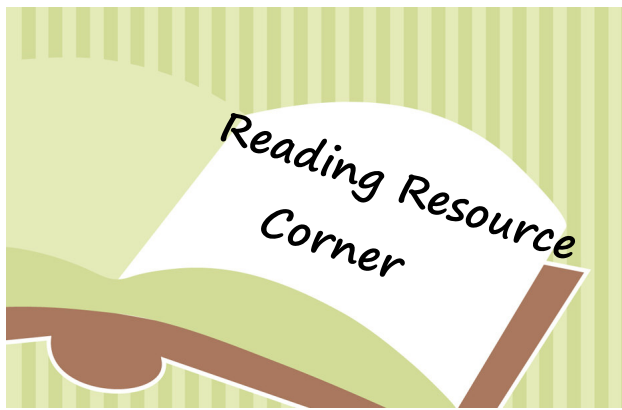
Lord, help me to keep my resolutions.

When I stumble, give me persistence to begin again.

When I lose my way, guide me back to the right path.

I ask this, with a grateful heart, in Jesus' name.

Amen



In each issue of *The Vineyard* I will be sharing excerpts from some of the many authors who have written about stewardship. Recounting their insights, experiences...and hopes, each author has something special to impart.

The reflection below is an excerpt from *Time, Talent & Treasure: Reflections on the U.S. Bishops' Model for Parish Stewardship* by C. Justin Clements. Now retired, Justin served as the director of the Office of Stewardship and Development for the Diocese of Evansville, Indiana from 1989 to 2009. He has written two other books; *A Steward's Way* and *Stewardship: A Parish Handbook*.

I begin my revelation by posing a simple question, "Why does stewardship conversion seem to take root and flourish in some parishes and not in others?" What is the fundamental stimulus that turns an ordinary parish community into active disciples of Jesus Christ who accept ownership of their parish and embrace stewardship as a way of life? I submit that successful parish stewardship conversion boils down to the two most powerful words in any language: *Yes* and *No*.

Each of us has experienced the impact of these two words time and time again in our lives, especially when they are spoken by someone with authority and power. Hearing the word "yes" can produce a wave of exhilarating, liberating emotions: "Yes, you may go to the movies." "Yes, you can use the car." "Yes, I will marry you." The Virgin Mary's "yes" changed the course of history. Jesus, the eternal yes, overcame the power of death for all mankind. But *yes* can also be alarming and destructive; "Yes, you have cancer."

Likewise, the word *no* can produce both positive and negative affective and behavioral consequences. Saying *no* to something that is dangerous, illegal, unethical, or immoral is obviously a good thing. On the other hand, repeatedly hearing "no" to suggestions, ideas, and recommendations made by members of a community sincerely trying to make a difference will stifle their creativity, destroy their motivation and eventually demoralize them.

When it comes to parish stewardship conversion, there are only two types of parishes; "*Yes-Parishes*", where stewardship thrives, and "*No-Parishes*", where stewardship fails. Yes-Parishes cultivate a positive "Yes! Culture" beginning with a formal commitment to the process of stewardship conversion by the pastor, staff members, and influential parish leaders. In a Yes-Parish, leaders model good stewardship and are willing to do whatever it takes, within reason, to move the parish toward its goal of total stewardship. Yes-Parishes encourage risk-taking. They are willing to try new things. They welcome feedback and fresh ideas, and celebrate diversity and creativity. Yes-Parishes are constantly on the lookout for ways to improve their hospitality, prayer life and services. Yes-Parishes are ALIVE! with an accountable, can-do attitude. Each day begins by asking, "How can we become better disciples of Jesus Christ today?"

By contrast, No-Parishes are controlled by an intimidating, systematic "No! Culture." Their leaders are skilled in the use of phrases that the business world calls "idea killers" such as: "We tried that before", "Our parish is different", "We're too busy", "It won't work here", "We've always done it this way", and the insidious, "You're right, but...".

So, when it comes to stewardship conversion in your parish - and in your life - what's it going to be: *Yes* or *No*?

from *Time, Talent & Treasure: Reflections on the Bishops' Model for Parish Stewardship*  
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**Welcome to Stewardship 101!** Building a stewardship culture in a parish does not happen by chance, by accident, or by wishing things would “get better”. Every successful stewardship parish begins with a plan. These parishes are seeing the fruits of a comprehensive stewardship effort (increased participation, revitalized ministries, growing financial support) because they began at the beginning - by developing a Stewardship committee.

The new Parish Pastoral Council Norms approved by Archbishop Liskecki in May of 2012 call for *Stewardship* to be among the standing commissions of the Pastoral Council. The official definition in section 11.1d. Of the norms states “*This commission educates and promotes the giftedness of all parishioners and the responsibility of all disciples to steward all resources. The members collaborate with the pastor and staff to develop strategies and practices which invite all parishioners, and the parish organization itself, to share time, talent and treasure.*”

A stewardship culture is alive! It must be tended, fed, pruned and given the attention it needs to thrive. ***This*** is the “job” of the Stewardship committee; guiding the collaborative effort, helping to keep the parish moving forward on its stewardship journey.

Every Stewardship committee has its own make-up and personality, but successful committees share common traits.

**An effective Stewardship committee should:**

- ◆ Have 8 to 10 members who are living examples of good stewards
- ◆ Focus on the attributes and attitudes of good stewards, not simply financial concerns
- ◆ Lead and promote the conversion and formation of good stewards
- ◆ Be responsible for stewardship awareness
- ◆ Work collaboratively with appropriate leadership groups to conduct annual renewals of time, talent and treasure

**Stewardship committee members should be people who:**

- ◆ Accept responsibility for the quality and maturity of their own faith
- ◆ Understand that prayer is not so much about what we say to God, but more about what we are willing to hear from God
- ◆ Are motivated by a desire to help others grow in their relationship with God
- ◆ See themselves as Church, and as Church, see themselves as evangelizers
- ◆ Are not afraid to grow, and who are willing to embrace change with an open mind and heart

**Begin forming (or strengthening) a Stewardship committee by:**

- ◆ Engaging the Pastor and the Pastoral Council members to identify prospective committee members
- ◆ Issuing *personal* invitations to those identified
- ◆ Hold an information session for prospective committee members where questions are answered and vision is discussed
- ◆ Encourage prospective members to prayerfully consider their participation - and give them the time to do so
- ◆ Reassure prospective members that this committee is not just about “the money”

To effectively achieve long-term systemic change over time, a Stewardship Committee needs an action plan and strategy flowing from a shared vision. To discern a clear vision for the future, a Stewardship Committee should spend time developing and deepening their individual and collective knowledge and beliefs about true stewardship.

**Start at the beginning. New (or revitalized) Stewardship committees should:**

- ◆ Pray together
- ◆ Talk about the dreams each member has for the parish community
- ◆ Study the U.S. Bishops’ pastoral letter, *Stewardship: A Disciples Response*
- ◆ Discuss immediate needs in the parish and the broader community
- ◆ Determine the committee’s mission and vision

Look for the next segment of **Stewardship 101; Stewardship Committee Planning Strategies** in the next issue of *The Vineyard*.

**Learn more about the Stewardship committee by attending an inspirational seminar;  
*Stewardship; Beyond Time, Talent & Treasure***

**See Page 5 for complete details**

# Stewardship; Beyond Time, Talent & Treasure

## An Inspirational Seminar featuring Proven Best Practices and Exciting New Resources

Effective stewardship practices help build spiritually vibrant, financially stable parishes with thriving ministries. Parishes across the country are increasingly aware of the vital role to be played by active, focused Stewardship Committees. Archbishop Jerome ListECKI's New Norms for Finance and Pastoral Councils include a Stewardship Committee as a formal standing committee of the Pastoral Council, further emphasizing the vital nature of this ministry.

Join Barb Vite, Archdiocesan Parish Stewardship Director, for a seminar that will examine effective strategies and activities that have a proven track record in helping parishes launch and execute unique, and successful, stewardship plans. Originally presented at the 2012 International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) Conference in Chicago, this session was very well received by parishioners and staff members from parishes nation-wide. In this seminar, Barb will share her ICSC presentation, and address additional topics including:

- Overcoming Misconceptions (*It's **not** just about the money!*)
- Parish Stewardship Best Practices (*What do flourishing parishes do?*)
- The Stewardship Committee (*You can't be successful without one!*)
- The *Stewardship Cycle* (*Inspire, engage, assess; then repeat, and repeat...and repeat*)
- Exciting New Resources to support your parish on its Stewardship Journey

**Spring, a season of renewal and reinvigoration, is the perfect time for all parish leaders interested in nurturing vibrant parishes and expanding ministry to attend this inspirational, and informative, seminar!**

Pastors and Parish Directors, Trustees, members of Pastoral Councils, Finance Councils, Stewardship Committees, Business Managers, and all parish leaders interested in fostering a parish culture of stewardship as a way of life are invited, and encouraged, to attend.

### When and Where? Each session will run from 6:30 to 8:30 PM

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Tuesday, June 4th    | St. Francis de Sales Parish, Lake Geneva |
| Thursday, June 6th   | Holy Family Parish, Fond du Lac          |
| Tuesday, June 11th   | Archbishop Cousins Center                |
| Wednesday, June 12th | St. Jerome Parish, Oconomowoc            |

**Register at <http://www.archmil.org/beyond-time.htm>**

For more information, contact Barb Vite, Parish Stewardship Director  
(414) 769-3331 [viteb@archmil.org](mailto:viteb@archmil.org)



Parish Stewardship

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC  
STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) is a professional organization recognized internationally as a source of education, networking and information to advance the ministry of Christian stewardship as a way of life.

Founded in 1962, ICSC has over 1,200 members representing over 800 dioceses and archdioceses, parish communities, Catholic organizations and professional firms internationally.

## *Come to Dallas...*

ICSC has been offering stewardship conferences to parishes since 1965. Each year the conference draws hundreds of participants who gather to exchange ideas, listen to marvelous speakers, learn, share and participate in the Eucharist together.

At ICSC conferences participants...

### **Come together as a Eucharistic people**

The annual conference is a wonderful time of grace; a time where you not only learn more about stewardship, but are inspired and spiritually nourished by the gathering, by sharing with one another and by celebrating the Eucharist as the summit of each day.

### **Are inspired by engaging and knowledgeable speakers**

Over 70 presenters give of themselves and share their experiences of stewardship. A planning committee of faith-filled Catholics from parishes and dioceses in North America and beyond work together to assemble insightful and engaging speakers who address interesting and timely topics.

### **Exchange new ideas**

ICSC conferences draw together Catholics from all over the world to cultivate friendships, network and share new ideas in parish stewardship

### **Come away with a renewed sense of energy and faith**

Participants return to their parishes refreshed and invigorated, ready to share the beauty and richness of the Gospel call to stewardship with others.

### ***If you want to:***

- ◆ learn more about stewardship best practices
- ◆ see examples of stewardship communications from parishes nation-wide
- ◆ hear some of the most inspiring, nationally known stewardship speakers
- ◆ share ideas, discover new methods and get recharged and reenergized

***...then, come to Dallas in September!***

**For more information about the 2013 conference, or about parish membership in ICSC  
go to <http://catholicstewardship.com>**

## *Is Yours an Award-Winning Parish?*

The ICSC annually recognizes parishes that give witness to stewardship in many areas of parish life. The Council recognizes parishes that have best promoted the spirituality and practice of stewardship in individual categories including video, parish-created print materials and capital campaigns. Parishes may also apply for the ICSC Certificate of Recognition for demonstrating an overall stewardship effort .

**The deadline for submitting all award applications is May 24th, 2013.**

For additional information and application forms go to <http://catholicstewardship.com>

*Let your light shine!*