



Volume 2 July/August 2012 Issue 9

# The Vineyard

A bi-monthly publication from  
the Development Office  
of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee  
and funded by the *Catholic Stewardship Appeal*

## *Don't Second Guess the Urge to Share*

Colleen Smith, author of *Catholic Stewardship – Sharing God's Gifts*, tells this story:

*“Even the smallest act of sharing can make a difference. I remembered that one summer day when slicing a cold watermelon. From my kitchen window I could see the thermometer’s reading of nearly 90 degrees by 9 a.m.*

*I heard the usual Friday morning roar as the lawn crew arrived with their mowers, blowers and edgers. These deeply tanned guys show up each Friday during mowing season, covered in dust and grass clippings. I know from experience that mine is not an easy job given my corner lot and the fairly steep banks on which my house sits.*

*Then it occurred to me how delicious and how welcome a slice of cold watermelon might be to these young men on a morning so hot and getting hotter.*

*I hesitated. I wondered what they might think. Would they consider it some sort of bribe? Was it improper? Would they grow suspect? Maybe they don't even like watermelon, I considered. Maybe they're allergic.*

*Then I caught myself. How frequently we censor altruistic instinct, fearing rejection, fearing misunderstanding, fearing something. The nonsense of this line of thinking struck me. Who doesn't like a cold slice of watermelon on a hot summer's day? I grabbed two slices and two paper towels. Based on their response, the pink fruit might have been gold ingots, so appreciative were they, so astonished.*

*That small sharing – the giving and receiving – made my day, and perhaps theirs.”*

**The next time you feel the urge to share, do it!**

- BULLETIN BITS & PIECES
- PUTTING GOD FIRST IN ALL THINGS
  - TO BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS...
  - MASS...IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR
- ICSC 2012 CONFERENCE IN CHIGAGO



*“Everyone has some natural responsibility for a portion of the world and an obligation in caring for it to acknowledge God’s dominion.”*

*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*  
*U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*

In this issue

# Bulletin Bits & Pieces

## Putting God First In All Things

### *A Stewardship Reflection*

What is this way of life,  
this putting God first in all things,  
this proportionate giving of everything unto the Lord,  
this conviction that all is gift, we but trustees not owners,  
this refusal to take more than we need?

Yesterday I met a flock of them, these stewards,  
gathered to thank God for His providential love  
and to tell again and again of the joy and peace of giving.

It wasn't the words that touched me,  
rather the quiet assurance that things were ordered;  
time, talent, treasure aligned rightly with transcendence,  
all coming from love, lived in love and directed toward love.

What touched me was the rightness of this way of life,  
this joyful giving, this sacrificial attitude, this sublime joy.

**Most Reverend Robert F. Morneau**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Green Bay, WI

## To Be Good Stewards...

Good and loving God,  
Source of every grace and blessing,  
We bring You thanks this day  
for the many gifts You have given us.

We seek to be good stewards, Lord!  
Bless us as we gather to share Your gifts.

Send us Your Spirit  
and be present among us -  
in the mouth of all who speak,  
in the ears of all who listen,  
at the heart of all we say and do.

We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen



**National Catholic Stewardship  
Council**  
1998 Conference Prayer

**S**tewardship, then, is all-encompassing. It provides a place for the simplest individual gesture of kindness as well as stewardship committees working for systematic justice and peace. Stewardship flowing from a personal and communal relationship to Christ holds a particular attraction to people. It is, ultimately, the pull and power of the Gospel come alive in our times and circumstances. from the preface to Stewardship A Disciples Response





Coming to an understanding of stewardship as a way of life is a very personal experience. Some of us change our perception of stewardship little by little. Others experience a conversion moment; a significant event that reshapes our stewardship response.

Many Catholics throughout our archdiocese share the gift of their real life stewardship stories with fellow parishioners; stories that teach, encourage and inspire all of us as we continue our growth as faithful stewards.

The following example tells the story of one family's devotion to attending weekly Mass.

### *Mass... it's a Family Affair*

I believe that my husband and I have strived to become better parents at taking the formation of our children's Catholic faith a little more seriously. We are fortunate to have a phenomenal school to partner with in the faith formation for three of our children, and also a great Christian Formation program, which has guided our son tremendously.

We cannot, however, take these resources for granted. We must nurture these children of ours at home with a prayer life, setting examples of Christian behavior and most importantly, attend Mass every Sunday—no matter what sporting event, club opportunity, and/or social engagement we may have on a particular weekend. Our busy schedules sometimes require us to go at separate times so that everyone gets there. Occasionally, we need to find a nearby parish (we have four in our cluster) that has a more suitable Mass time. We believe if we are to call ourselves Catholic parents, we need to take the time to receive God's gift of the Eucharist every week and give thanks for such a gift!

We travel as a family quite a bit and never miss the opportunity to attend Mass in a different city. Whether exploring caves in Kentucky, taking in Disney World in Florida, far away from home in another country like Mexico, or simply camping in the north woods of Wisconsin, we go to church. Why? We need to receive the Eucharist!

Our youngest son will be receiving First Holy Communion this year. He is so excited to finally receive this gift after all the years of watching us, that I am happy to say he will be very comfortable in saying aloud, "Amen!"

Everybody who practices authentic Christian stewardship has a moving, magical story. It's important that we tell our stories, not only to convey them to others, but also to reinforce them for ourselves. It's all too easy, once a miraculous moment has passed, to forget about it or to write it off to coincidence.

Reflect upon a time in your life when you have extended yourself, risen to the occasion, gone above and beyond the call of duty – and been rewarded in ways you could not have imagined. Tell your story to someone or write it down. This is a great exercise in inspiration!





INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC  
STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

## *Come to Chicago...*

***Early Bird registration rates expire July 15th, 2012.***

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.

ICSC has been offering stewardship conferences to parishes since 1965. 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.

*The 2012 ICSC conference will be held just south of our border in Chicago from September 16th-19th, providing a wonderful opportunity for parish representatives from our archdiocese to attend with a minimal amount of travel expense.*

### *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 Chicago!***

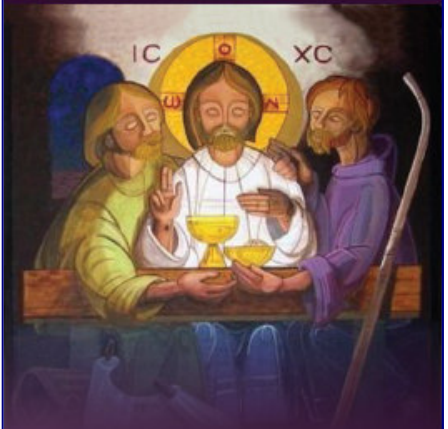
***Non-member parishes attending the conference for the first time, may take advantage of the archdiocesan membership to register at the member rate.***

For more information about the 2012 conference,  
or about parish membership in ICSC  
go to <http://catholicstewardship.org>  
or contact Barb Vite by phone (414) 769-3331 or e-mail: [viteb@archmil.org](mailto:viteb@archmil.org)



of teaching stewardship

# 2012 Annual Conference



## With Hearts on Fire

September 16-19  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

# Register today!

Register online at  
[www.catholicstewardship.org](http://www.catholicstewardship.org)