

Teacher Quick Guide Card



HOLY HABITS CHALLENGE



MANAGE HEAVENLY RICHES



PRACTICE CONSISTENT STEWARDSHIP TO YOUR PARISH.



MAKE A MONTHLY DONATION TO SOME OTHER CATHOLIC CHARITABLE OUTREACH BESIDES YOUR PARISH.



KEEP A "NO-COMPLAINTS JAR": GIVE UP COMPLAINING AND TOSS MONEY INTO A JAR EACH TIME YOU SLIP UP TO GIVE TO THE POOR.

The Background

Throughout the Old Testament there are examples of collections being taken, or resources being set aside, to fund the buildings and sacrifices needed for worship. In the Gospels we read that the daily needs of Jesus and his disciples were funded by the resources of community members who were convinced of the importance of Jesus' mission (Lk. 8:1-3). There are also several examples of collections and offerings made for the poor and the vulnerable.

What emerged from these ancient practices is the Christian habit of giving resources to support the needy and also to support the essential needs of the Church itself. As the outreach and structures of the Church grew in scope, it became a Church commandment (or precept) for Catholics to support the needs of the Church with their resources.

We know this these days by the term "Stewardship" which is the understanding that all of our time, talents, and treasure comes from God, and that as stewards (those who manage something for someone else who lends it to them), we have to dedicate a portion of our resources solely for the Church's needs.

Just as all Catholics are obligated to give, the leaders of the Church also have the obligation and responsibility to manage the donations they receive wisely, using them only in the way the donors intended.

Giving to charitable causes regularly helps to keep our own attitudes about money and material goods in a healthy perspective. We are less likely to become possessed by our possessions if we easily hand them over to others for their needs. As we do, God blesses us in return.

It is very difficult for us to be giving people if we are not grateful people. As we grow in the regular practice of thanking God for what we have, we will also grow in generosity, and we will complain less and less.

Useful texts:

Suscipe Prayer of Saint Ignatius of Loyola:

"Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding and my whole will. All that I am and all that I possess You have given me: I surrender it all to You to be disposed of according to Your will. Give me only Your love and Your grace; with these I will be rich enough, and will desire nothing more."

Holy Habit Pledge:

"I pledge, together with my brothers and sisters in Christ, to make the Holy Habits Challenge, and to run so as to win the crown of righteousness."

A Saint for the Habit:

- **Saint Elizabeth of Hungary:** A wife and mother who used her personal fortune to benefit the poor who lived near her.
Feast Day: November 17th

Classroom Tips:

- Incorporate the Habit and Logo on a classroom board.
- As a class, decide to have a penny war with proceeds going to the poor or a charity that the entire class agrees to choose.
- Talk often about what the students will do for OTHERS at Christmas this year.
- Point out complaining when it happens in the classroom and challenge the students to think of a positive comment instead.
- Make a class donation of prayer time to the parish by collecting prayers offered in a spiritual bouquet.

Catechism Connection:

- See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sections 2443-2446 on service to the poor.
- See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* section 2447 on the works of mercy.
- See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* section 2043 on the precept obligating Catholics to support the material needs of the Church according to their abilities.

