



Stewardship: Living Christianity [Radically]

Stewardship Chicago-style

Mr. Tom Voboril, Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Wichita, ended his recent talk about his diocese's move towards stewardship with the line from an Irish folk song: "The world is about to turn."

Speaking on June 21st at the Holiday Inn-Orleans to a room brimming with priests and lay representatives from Chicago parishes and schools, Voboril indicated that though Wichita's work is admirable and he has been invited to speak nationwide about their success in stewardship, if "Chicago" became a leader in this area, the world of stewardship, particularly for Catholics nationwide, would change because of the respected reputation of the Chicago Archdiocese. Though there may be some truth to his testament, Chicago and every other (arch)diocese nationwide and worldwide "do" stewardship because of our Gospel mandate.

Dr. Nicholas Wolsonovich, Superintendent of Catholic Schools and Anne Marie Tirpak of the Department of Stewardship and Development also

shared how their offices are collaborating to support parishes and schools as they move toward intentionally living and functioning through the lens of stewardship. Committing to work with a group of cohort parishes to study and incorporate stewardship at a level of depth, the offices are collaborating on a two-year educational program of prayer, education and support. This "program" will include studying the stewardship pastoral, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*; Catholic Social Teaching as it relates to stewardship; Baptism, Vatican II and our call to serve; "standards" for stewardship and ways to incorporate these into parish and school life; and local, national and international service. If you would like to be considered to pray, learn and serve with this stewardship cohort group or if you have questions, please dial 312/655-7713 or email atirpak@archchicago.org by August 1.

Assessments and preliminary meetings will be held with parishes prior to the November 6 kick-off.

STEWARDSHIP SERVICES:

Consultation with Parish Councils, Finance Councils, Stewardship Committees

Training, coordination and assistance with implementation of Planned Offering Programs and Stewardship Renewals

Ongoing education and support through newsletters, on-line resources at http://www.archchicago.org/departments/stewardship_dev/stewardship.shtm .

Stewardship-related retreats for parish leadership and/or pastoral staff.

Interested? Dial 312/655-7713.

My deepest vocation is to be a witness to the glimpses of God I have been allowed to catch.

-Henri Nouwen

Websites for Inspiration:

www.simpleliving.org

www.gratefulness.org

www.thereidgroup.biz

A Look Ahead:

September 12-15

International Catholic Stewardship Conference, New Orleans.

November 6

Leadership Day at Maria High School

"Discipleship in Action: Boldly Responding to God's Abundance"

Keynote by Bishop Robert Morneau, Auxiliary Bishop of Green Bay, WI

**"THIS IS WHAT THE LORD ASKS OF YOU:
TO LIVE JUSTLY, TO LOVE TENDERLY, TO
WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD." MICAH 6:8**

**DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP AND
DEVELOPMENT
721 NORTH LASALLE
CHICAGO, IL 60610**

The parish stewardship office of the Archdiocese of Chicago's Stewardship and Development Department exists to support and educate our priests and people to enable them to realize the joy that is theirs by boldly reclaiming their role as baptized disciples of Jesus Christ, recognizing and embracing God as the Source of all, and gratefully responding to God's abundance by sharing our gifts.

We're on-line at
[http://www.archchicago.org/
departments/stewardship_dev/
stewardship.shtm](http://www.archchicago.org/departments/stewardship_dev/stewardship.shtm)

Parish Spotlight: St. Josaphat, Lincoln Park

Fr. Dominic Grassi, Pastor
Jane Dewey, Development Director

St. Josaphat's Resource Development Committee plans quarterly Leadership Brunches for parishioners giving \$60 or more per month to the Sunday offering. These brunches are held after the 10 am Sunday Mass and last approximately two hours. The attendance has ranged from 20-35; the ideal size is 20-25.

These gatherings are held to recognize the generosity of parishioners, highlight the ministries of the parish and provide participants an opportunity to have a dialogue with their pastor about topics of most interest to them. At the brunch, parishioners are also educated about the need for parishioner involvement and support. Participants are encouraged to increase and/or maintain their Sunday giving at the "leadership level" of \$100 or more per month.

Another benefit of the brunches is the warm exchange among the participants who share their stories about their involvement with the parish. There is always a nice mixture of long-term and brand new parishioners at the brunches. New connections are formed and friendships are made as a result.

The brunch is offered at no charge and is completely volunteer-driven. A parishioner couple is recruited to "host" the brunch and their names are highlighted on the invitations. At the brunch, Fr. Grassi offers a brief welcome, but the volunteers hosting the brunch are the facilitators. Complimentary babysitting is offered for attendees with children.

For the cost of printing invitations and approximately \$7 per person for food, the parish has generated goodwill, has given parishioners an opportunity to welcome and serve, and has groomed "committed givers" to continue--and increase--their financial support.

For more information about the Leadership Brunches at St. Josaphat Church, contact Jane Dewey at 773/327-8955 or jdewey17@aol.com.

Stewardship Reflections

July 11, 2004: 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Go and do likewise." Luke 10:37

This was Jesus' simple command to all of us at the end of the Good Samaritan story. How do we do "likewise?" By taking the time to help when we are needed. By sharing our skills. By reaching into our pockets when financial help is needed. In short, by being a good steward.

July 18, 2004: 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's readings speak of hospitality. Abraham, who cheerfully did for his guests all that desert hospitality required, was rewarded with his heart's desire - a son. Martha also busied herself with all the details of hospitality, but grudgingly and with complaint. Am I a cheerful or a grudging giver?

July 25, 2004: 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jesus is describing God's immeasurable generosity when He says in today's Gospel, "Whoever asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; whoever knocks, is admitted." But it should also be the description of us as Christian stewards - those seeking to follow Christ by using our gifts in service to others.

August 1, 2004: 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions." Luke 12:15

The Gospel message today is so contrary to our modern culture where advertising continually tries to convince us that our value lies in the many things we possess. Jesus showed us that our true value lies in the way we live our lives. He challenges us to not store up or hoard material possessions. Rather, strive to be rich in that which matters to God.

August 8, 2004: 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Much will be required of the person entrusted with much and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more." Luke 12:48

Jesus would probably consider that most of us living in this country are among those "entrusted with more." Compared to other parts of the

world, we are abundantly blessed. Just as God "entrusted" us with many blessings, He also trusts that we will use those gifts to do His work.

August 15, 2004: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

"The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name."

Luke 1:49

Mary is a perfect model of stewardship for us. She gave over her entire life to serving the Lord and doing His will. Her stewardship is based in the words of her canticle, where she recognizes that God has done great things for her. When we, too, take time to recognize the great things that God has done for us, we find it much easier to trust in our Father. We are able to let go of our need to control our lives. We have the faith to open our hands and hearts to share the gifts God has given to us.

August 22, 2004: 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

"For behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last." Luke 13:30

Our standards in our society are so different from God's standards. We often rate or rank people by what they have, how powerful they are, or how successful they are. Jesus reminds us that God will not judge us by the same earthly standards.

August 29, 2004: 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Luke 14:14

We have a difficult time with the concept of giving without expecting something in return. Even when we give to charity we often want something in return - a raffle ticket, a dinner, or a chance to play golf. Yet, as Christian stewards we need to remember that the true reward for our giving awaits us in heaven.