

## Got Money?

It is not too late to sign up for a Fall Planned Offering Program. Most parishes running the Archdiocese's increased offertory program experience a 25-38% increase in collections, and a few experienced 400-800% increases! If you would like to join the multiple parishes that have experienced hefty increases in their offertory collections, contact Anne Marie Tirpak in the Department of Stewardship and Development at 312.655.7713.

## Creating Community

The suggestions below are a continuation of ideas to become a more welcoming and hospitable parish community, as detailed by the Institute of School and Parish Development. See the June newsletter and future newsletters for additional suggestions.

### **Coffee and Donut Social**

- These socials are the standard at many parishes.
- Make your coffee and donut social interesting by offering a short speaker or playing games.
- Consider giving away door prizes or introducing an icebreaker activity to encourage parishioners to meet new people.

### **Mailboxes at Church**

- This is a unique concept where each parishioner has a mailbox, just like a post office, at church.

### **Parish Telephone and E-Mail Directory**

- Publishing a parish telephone/e-mail directory on an annual basis is a key communication vehicle.

### **Nametag Sunday**

- This strategy invites all parishioners to wear nametags one weekend per month at all Masses.
- The parish should provide nametags and pens at entrances to church.

- This welcoming strategy allows for people to get to know each other in a more personal manner.

### **Receiving Line**

- Invite new parishioners to participate in a receiving line.
- Attendees proceed through the line after Mass, and get the chance to personally meet fellow members of the parish.

### **Pastor Phone Calls**

- The Pastor calls each newly registered parishioner personally, within two weeks of their joining the parish. Hearing from the spiritual leader of the parish says "You're important to us –we care about you!"

### **New Parishioner Dinner**

- Held once each quarter, these dinners provide a small group setting for the Pastor, Associate clergy, Deacons and parish staff to get to know new members of the parish.
- All members who join the parish in a three-month period should be invited to that quarter's dinner.
- Staff and key leaders are present to share the history, mission and vision of the parish.

### **Thank-A-Thon**

- A take-off from the typical Phone-A-Thon, the Thank-A-Thon involves the Telephone Outreach calling parish volunteers one each year to thank them for their dedication and service to the parish.

### **Welcome Packets**

- This strategy introduces the parish to new parishioners. The packet should contain information about parish history, mission, ministries, key contact information, website etc.
- New parishioners in turn, prepare a welcome packet on themselves or their family. These packets are displayed in church for several weeks for members to learn about them.

*More suggestions to come in September....*

***This is what the Lord asks of you: to live justly, to love tenderly, to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8***

## Bulletin Inserts

*These inserts are adapted from the Archdiocese of St. Louis Stewardship and Development Office.*

**July 15, 2007**

### **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 22, 2007**

### **16th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her." Luke 10:42*

The story of Martha and Mary reminds us that good stewards give time both to serve the Lord and to simply be with God in prayer.

**July 29, 2007**

### **17th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Luke 11:9*

Jesus assures us that if we ask Him, God will take care of what we need. The problem is that in our culture we often confuse what we really need with what we simply want. We need very little. However, we usually want so much more. A good steward only asks God for what he needs.

**August 5, 2007**

### **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 12, 2007**

### **19th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." Luke 12:34*

Jesus encourages us to build up our treasure in heaven. The world encourages us to build up our treasure in real estate, investments, and material goods. How much time are you investing in building up a worldly treasure? How much time are you investing in building up a heavenly treasure? To invest more time in the things of heaven, you must let go of some of the things of this world.

**August 19, 2007**

### **20th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"Do you think that I have come to establish peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on a household of five will be divided..." Luke 12:51-52*

As Jesus predicted, stewardship can often cause division in a family as we struggle to define what are our needs and what are our wants. It might be helpful to remember that we all need to give back a fair share to God before we start trying to fulfill all of our material wants. For the Christian, giving is a need, not a luxury.

**August 26, 2007**

### **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.

**September 2, 2007**

### **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." Luke 14:14*

Many of us 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.

*This is what the Lord asks of you: to live justly, to love tenderly, to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*