

# STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION PROCESS QUICK START GUIDE



**MĀLAMA I KA MAKANA**

Cherish The Gift | A Call to Stewardship in the Catholic Church in Hawaii

# Diocese of Honolulu

## Stewardship & Development

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September 2014

Aloha Dear Stewards in Christ,

*“The promotion of the practice of stewardship is important to the mission of the Church and for the well-being of each individual Christian. Everyone benefits from the sacrificial gift one makes of his time, talent and treasure.”*

Pope Benedict XVI

These words of the former Holy Father speak to all people. Stewardship is a practical approach to spirituality, it is what one does after saying, I believe. Indeed, it is an attitude of heart and mind that is expressed in action.

Earlier this year, Bishop Larry Silva instructed each and every pastor in the diocese to begin a stewardship effort at their parish this year. To do so, means organizing a core group to educate one another and to develop an actionable plan for each faith community.

To help parishes begin their stewardship journey, a prototype quick-start guide for the Kauai Vicariate was produced. It is a resource full of methods and examples to help guide the educational process necessary to make the stewardship effort at your parish a success.

The guide was a joint effort of the diocesan Stewardship & Development Commission and the Office of Stewardship & Development. Special acknowledgement goes to Sam Knepper, Commission Member representing the Kauai Vicariate and St. Catherine parishioner, for spearheading this initiative and to the Archdiocese of Detroit for much of the content.

Your feedback and ideas are welcome. In the meantime, may you continue to live and share the joy of stewardship with others in your family, your parish and your community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark J. Clark".

Mark J. Clark  
Diocesan Director  
Stewardship & Development

For more information on Stewardship and the Roman Catholic Church in Hawaii, please visit:

[www.catholichawaii.org/stewardship](http://www.catholichawaii.org/stewardship)

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## ***Section I: Introduction to Stewardship***

### **1. Overview of Prototype Stewardship Education Process**

“Stewardship is an expression of Christian discipleship, a practical form of spirituality. It is faith in action. Stewardship can be defined as an attitude of mind and heart that is expressed in action. It is not a program, a fundraiser, a technique for increasing volunteers or the weekly collection.” This quotation of D. Conway in *Advancing the Mission of the Church* is a good elevator speech – a description of Christian Stewardship that can be delivered in the time to ride between floors.

There is far more to Stewardship. As one comes to have a better understanding of Stewardship and as one begins to embrace its dimensions, the journey of Discipleship begins. This journey is a change of heart and a conversion that is transformational for the individual, for the parish and for the diocese. The purpose of the Kauai Vicariate Stewardship Initiative is to encourage the individual in their journey of discipleship.

Stewardship can be defined simply as making the most responsible use of one's gifts and resources. Everything we have is a gift from God: our time, our talents and our financial resources.

Just as we recognize our talents and skills as gifts from God, which we offer back in service, we recognize our financial blessing as a gift, which we are also privileged to be able to offer back to God.

*Stewardship, A Disciple's Response* is the title of a pastoral letter that was published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Its contents form the basis for the Kauai Vicariate Stewardship Initiative.

The Kauai Vicariate developed a prototype stewardship education process. This process is modeled upon a proven format that is being used successfully on the mainland. The intent is to start with a bare bones approach within the parish that will become, in time, the foundation of a unique process that reflects parish values, culture and strengths.

The use of the prototype parish stewardship education process has numerous benefits that include:

- The stewardship education process can be started in a timely manner.
- The use of the prototype stewardship education process will make it practical for the diocese to provide resources.
- The stewardship education process can be started without undue burden on the pastor and staff.

This manual is intended to be a quick start guide for starting the prototype stewardship education process within the parish. It is not intended to be an all encompassing resource guide for Christian Stewardship.

## 2. Figure 2-1 Flow Diagram

The prototype stewardship education process has four parts:

- Getting ready to begin
- The stewardship education process that is repeated every year.
- Commitment Sunday at the end of the education cycle.
- Follow up with those who participated on commitment Sunday.

Refer to Figure 2-1 SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE PARISH STEWARDSHIP PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM. This diagram provides a holistic view of the prototype stewardship education process at a glance. Each step has a letter cross reference for the discussion to follow.

The Office of Stewardship and Development will provide resources to assist the parish in the execution of the prototype stewardship education process. Some of the materials have been created including:

- Diocesan Stewardship website
- This manual
- Video(s)
- PowerPoint presentations

Additional materials will be developed when the need is identified.

The Office of Stewardship and Development will also provide consulting services to assist clergy, staff and the parish stewardship committee. The Director of the Office of Stewardship and Development is usually available for assistance. In addition, the Kauai vicariate has a representative on the Stewardship and Development Commission who is trained to provide assistance.

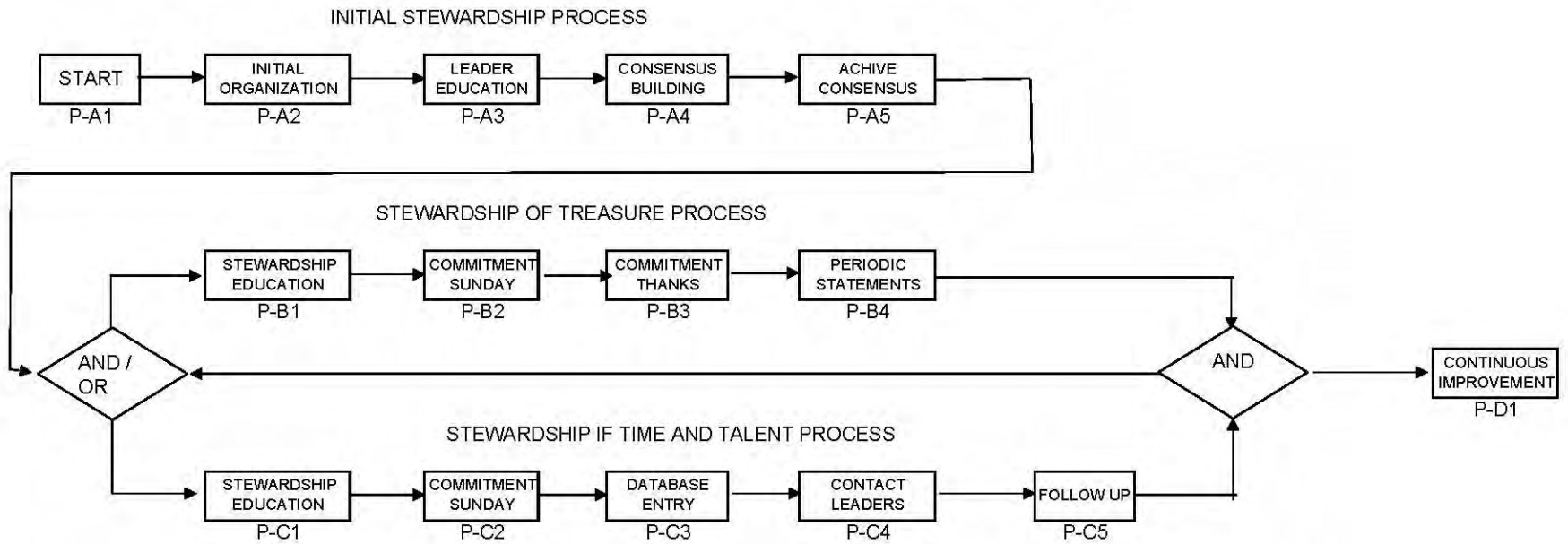


# MALAMA KE ALA

A Call to Stewardship in the Diocese of Honolulu



FIGURE 2-1 SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE PARISH STEWARDSHIP PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM





## ***Section II: Get Ready to Begin***

### **3. Getting Started (Process Flow Diagram Block P-A1)**

The prototype stewardship education process starts in the parish when the pastor determines that it is a good idea. Without the full support of the pastor the probability of success is very low.

A representative of the Office of Stewardship and Development and the Kauai member of the commission may meet with the pastor at this stage of the process to help with initial planning and to help with the pastor's due diligence.

### **4. Forming the Stewardship Committee (Process Flow Diagram Block P-A2)**

This is a critical step in the process. Forming a Parish Stewardship Committee of hard working, tenacious, empowered and motivated people is necessary to manage the work load of the pastor.

Five to twelve people should be recruited to serve on the stewardship committee. A wide array of talents should be represented on the stewardship committee including, but not limited to, the following.

- Public speaking
- Management
- Leadership
- Graphic arts
- Planning
- Electronic communication

The committee members should not be adverse to rolling up their sleeves and getting to work. This is a doing committee with numerous deadlines that need to met during the annual stewardship process cycle.

The term of service on the stewardship committee will be much longer than terms of other parish committees and councils. This is because it takes some time for an individual committee member to become educated in the theology of stewardship and the stewardship process. It will take two years of hard work, on average, for an individual to become highly effective.

Some thought needs to be given to the placing of the stewardship committee in the organizational structure of the parish. Because of the long term dynamic of committee membership some sort of standalone structure should be considered. Care should be taken to assure accountability.

It is important that the pastor invite individuals to stewardship committee membership. Prospective members should agree to membership with their eyes wide open to the effort and time required for both their stewardship education and for implementation of the stewardship education process.

The Office of Stewardship and Development can assist the parish pastor in the recruitment of stewardship committee members. This may include:

- Providing materials for membership candidate meetings
- Providing speakers for membership candidate meetings
- Providing assistance facilitating meetings. This may be on the vicariate level.

## **5. Educating the Stewardship Committee (Process Flow Diagram Block P-A3)**

The parish stewardship committee must have a firm foundation in the theology of stewardship. The basic understanding is achieved by study of the pastoral letter and by study of the prototype stewardship education process.

The Office of Stewardship and Development can assist in this process in several ways:

- By providing study guides.
- By providing materials including PowerPoint presentations.
- By assisting in the education effort by
  - Collaboration in the education effort on the parish level
  - Holding stewardship education sessions on the vicariate level.

It would be beneficial if other parish leaders lay leaders i.e. pastoral council, finance committee, would participate in the initial parish stewardship education cycle. Others with experience in the following areas would be useful but not necessary: liturgy, database management and faith formation.

As a result of the initial parish stewardship education process the parish stewardship committee, and others that participate, should become personally committed to Christian stewardship. Each committee member should become personally committed to prayer. They should understand that their primary motivation, as a committee member, should be the concern for parishioners' relationship with God, not about the needs of the parish or raising more money.

## **6. Consensus Building (Process Flow Diagram Block P-A4)**

Once the committee members have completed their initial stewardship education it becomes their turn to be teachers. The committee members, in collaboration with the pastor, convey to other parish leaders a general understanding of Christian stewardship and the prototype stewardship process.

As a result the parish stewardship leadership should become personally committed to Christian stewardship. Parish leaders, in general, should become personally committed to prayer. They should understand that their primary motivation, as a parish leader, should be the concern for parishioners' relationship with God, not about the needs of the parish or raising more money.

## **7. Achieve Consensus (Process Flow Diagram Block P-A5)**

Consensus is achieved when the pastor believes that a sufficient number of parish leaders have embraced the concept and have made a personal commitment to Christian stewardship.

Parish leadership cannot insist on individual parishioners making prayerful acts of faith toward embracing a life of stewardship without there being a real sense of reciprocity on the part of the parish. Indeed, the parish will make the leap of faith only after parish leadership has embraced the principles of Christian stewardship. It must be a sign of Christian stewardship to those people to whom it calls to the Eucharistic table.

The knowledge of Christian stewardship by parish leadership, and their commitment, will be invaluable when stewardship becomes a subject of the coconut wireless.

## ***SECTION III: Commitment Sunday***

## **8. Stewardship Education Cycle (Process Flow Diagram Block P-B1)**

Once there is a consensus among parish leadership the parish is ready to move forward. The stewardship education process is intended to instruct each parishioner in the principles of Christian stewardship. Normally, for the first education cycle, its duration is eleven weeks. In later years it can be shorter.

The stewardship education cycle may include many elements including, but not limited to, the following:

- Stewardship homilies
- Bulletin inserts
- Mailings to parishioners
- Lay witness presentations
- Ministry fair
- Brochures
- Posters and banners

Most of these elements will be created within the parish. The Office of Stewardship and Development will provide samples where feasible and a set of brochures.

The first step in the stewardship education process is to choose a date for commitment weekend. This should be well in advance because the planning for the education cycle does take time, especially for a new stewardship committee. After the date for commitment weekend is selected the timetable for the education cycle can be created. See figure 8-1 for a sample timetable. There is wide latitude for a parish to modify this sample to meet their requirements.

The prototype stewardship education flow diagram shows two flow paths at this stage. One is for stewardship of time and talent and the other is for stewardship of treasure. These can be accomplished one at a time or together. A determination needs to be made as to whether the discussion of treasure may be confused with fund raising. Some parishes do time and talent first so the attitude of gratitude may be cultivated. In the following year the concept of sacrificial giving can be better understood in terms of gratitude rather than obligation.

## Figure 8-1 STEWARDSHIP OF TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

### EDUCATION CYCLE TIME LINE

6 Months before

Start of education cycle

Set date of Commitment Sunday

Preliminary work

- Meet/notify other councils of roll-out plans
- Draft Pastor's Letter(s)
- Develop or procure brochure to be sent with letter
- Request letter from Bishop Larry (if used)
- Order banners for church entrances (if used)
- Develop "Time, Talent & Treasure" Commitment Form
- Create list of weekly bulletin announcements
- Develop bulletin insert with options for giving (envelopes, on line, debit, credit)

Week 1 Show Diocesan Stewardship video before each mass

- Read Bishop Larry's letter
- Stewardship Homily - Discipleship
- Bulletin content - Discipleship

Week 2 Stewardship Homily - Stewardship

- Bulletin Content: Four Fundamentals of Christian Stewardship

Week 3 Stewardship Homily

- Bulletin Content

Week 4 Stewardship Homily

- Bulletin Content:

Week 5 Stewardship Homily

- Bulletin Content – Where does our money go?

Week 6 Stewardship Homily

- Bulletin Content – Reminder of Commitment Sunday in two weeks
- Bulletin Insert – Pastor’s Letter
- Read Pastor’s Letter at all Masses

Week 7 Discernment Sunday

- Stewardship Homily
- Personal Lay witness at mass
- Ministry Fair

Week 8 Commitment Sunday

- Stewardship Homily – Sacrificial Giving
- Fill out commitment forms at mass

Note: This is an example of a Parish Stewardship education cycle time line. The actual time line will be devised by the Pastor and Stewardship Committee. A normal Stewardship Education cycle may be as long as eleven weeks for the first cycle or as short as five weeks for subsequent years.



## ***Section IV: Commitment Sunday***

### **9. Commitment Weekend (Process Flow Diagram Block P-B2)**

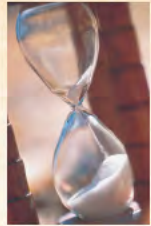
At the end of the stewardship education process comes Stewardship weekend. Each parishioner who is confirmed is asked to make their own personal commitment to Christian stewardship and to fill out the commitment form. At the end of the stewardship education cycle it should be understood that the commitment is between the individual and God and that it is being made out of gratitude, not out of obligation.

The commitment form is designed and produced by the stewardship committee. It may include commitment to:

- Pray with gratitude
- Nurture our family
- Give back to God out of gratitude.
  - Our Time
  - Our Talent
  - Our Treasure.

There are a number of ways that the commitment form can be given. One popular way is for each person to come forward during mass and place it into a container being held by the celebrant. This is most effective when the celebrant places his form in first.

See Figure 9-1 for a sample commitment form.



# Time

## Prayer and Using My Time Wisely

Stewardship begins with prayer. This special time with God spiritually prepares us to use our gifts in service to God and others. Below are specific ways you can commit to enhancing your time with others and God.

- \* Identify and reflect on my blessings
- \* Participate in Mass Sunday and Holy Days
- \* Participate in weekday Mass at least once a month
- \* Pray together with my family
- \* Read the Scriptures each week
- \* Pray the Rosary
- \* Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- \* Continue my faith formation
- \* Spend quality time with family members or those close to me
- \* Manage my time wisely and fairly at my workplace, school or in retirement
- \* Make time for myself for relaxation, recreation or exercise

# Stewardship... Live It!

time talent treasure



## Saint Rita Church

1008 Maple Drive  
Webster, NY 14580  
(585) 671-1100  
www.saintrita.org



the joy of

STEWARDSHIP

# Saint Rita Church

Annual gift of time, talent and treasure

## COMMITMENT CARD

First & Last Name (use one per household)

Address

City

State

ZIP

Telephone (important)

Email

We ask each family to return a Commitment card every year so we can keep our records current. Please return this card at Mass or to the Parish Office as soon as possible.

# Thank You





# Talent

## Sharing My Talents in Parish Ministry

Interested  
in joining

Already  
involved

### LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

- Liturgy Committee
- Altar Linens
- Altar Servers
- Children's Liturgy
- Church Arts & Environment
- Communion Ministers
- Leaders
- Lectors
- Sacristans
- Ushers
- Weekend Liturgy Planners

### MUSIC MINISTRIES

- Adult Choir
- Contemporary Music Group
- Children's Choir
- Lite Choir
- Instrumentalists
- Cantor

### FAITH FORMATION

- Bible Study
- Church Library
- Faith Formation Teacher/Aide
- Saint Rita School
- Vacation Bible School
- Baptismal Preparation Couple
- Marriage Preparation (Pre Cana)
- RCIA

### PARISH SUPPORT MINISTRIES

- Companions in Grief
- Dove Program
- M.O.M.S. Group
- Prayer Request Line
- Stephen Ministry (WPCC)
- Homebound Visits
- Saint Rita Society
- Welcoming/Newcomers
- Evangelization (WPCC)

WPCC = Webster Penfield Catholic Connection

Interested  
in joining

Already  
involved

### SOCIAL OUTREACH

- Social Action Committee
- Crop Walk
- Health Ministry (WPCC)
- La Casa (Migrant Ministry)
- Mary's Place (Parish Partnership)
- Soup Kitchen
- Monthly Food Delivery
- Funeral Coffee Ministry
- Prayer Shawl Ministry

#### Donate Item or Money to:

- Operation Rice Bowl (Lent)
- Thanksgiving Baskets
- Christmas Angel Gifts

### ADMINISTRATIVE MINISTRIES

- Parish Pastoral Council
- Finance Council
- Stewardship
- Communications
- Web Site/E-Newsletter
- Building & Grounds

### YOUTH MINISTRY

- Youth Group (Sr./Jr. High)
- Teen Minister/Aide
- Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts
- Girl Scouts
- CYO Sports Program

### PARISH LIFE

- Breakfast Club
- Fiesta Planning Committee
- Fiesta Weekend Volunteer
- Spectacular Raffle Committee
- Senior Social Group (WPCC)

### SEASONAL OR AS-NEEDED

- Baking/Cooking
- Child Care/Nursery
- Church Cleaning
- Gardening
- Handyman Activities
- Mailings
- Parish Office Help
- Speaker

### OTHER

- HOPE Ministry (at Holy Trinity)

A new ministry needed at Saint Rita is:

My talent to share at Saint Rita is:

# Treasure

## Making a Consistent Offertory Gift

In thanksgiving for our blessings, each household is asked to work toward giving a planned percentage of income and assets to Saint Rita Parish.



**Tithe Guide: 5% to Parish, 1% to Diocese, 4% to Charity (Catholic &/or Community)**

Annual HH income	5% to Parish	3% to Parish	1% to Parish
\$26,000	\$25	\$15	\$5
\$52,000	\$50	\$30	\$10
\$78,000	\$75	\$45	\$15
\$104,000	\$100	\$60	\$20
\$130,000	\$125	\$75	\$25

## My Pledge to Saint Rita Parish

Weekly Gift \$\_\_\_\_\_ x 52 = \$\_\_\_\_\_ annually  
or  
Monthly Gift \$\_\_\_\_\_ x 12 = \$\_\_\_\_\_ annually  
or  
Quarterly Gift \$\_\_\_\_\_ x 4 = \$\_\_\_\_\_ annually  
or  
Annual Gift \$\_\_\_\_\_

{ } I currently use automatic transfer. Please revise the amount of my/our **monthly** gift to \$\_\_\_\_\_

{ } I am interested in receiving information about automatic transfer. Please send me information.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

{ } Please send me information on Wills and making a Bequest to Saint Rita Parish

## **10. Acknowledgement and thanks (Process Flow Diagram Block P-B3)**

After commitment forms are returned, the people who have participated should be acknowledged and thanked. This includes both the people who submitted the forms and the volunteers who were active in the stewardship education cycle.

## **11. Periodic Statements (Process flow Diagram Block P-B4)**

After a stewardship of treasure education cycle is completed and some time has elapsed it is an option to send out periodic statements so parishioners can keep track on how they are doing with their commitment of treasure.

Statements should not be structured to lead the recipient to believe that it is all about money. It should be focused on the recipient's relationship with God, it should express the parish's gratitude and it should reinforce the concept of sacrificial giving.

### ***Section V: Follow-up with those who are committed***

## **12. Data Base Entry (Process flow Diagram Block P-C3)**

Now begins a period of hard work and high activity for the stewardship committee. A good number of commitment forms have been received on commitment weekend. Numerous parishioners have indicated their desire to give their time and talent. Additional people are identified that have been "under the radar" and are not registered in the parish. This step, and the two that follow, are concerned with getting these people involved with parish ministries and into the mainstream of parish life.

This step in the parish stewardship education cycle begins with entering all of the data into a database that can be utilized to sort data and produce reports. This will allow the process to be managed and be productive.

The diocese will provide support for this important step. At the time of this writing the data base issue is still being evaluated. All parishes have management software that is capable of some data base functions. PDS is the most common. It is hoped that existing, or updated, software can be utilized after training for the parishes.

## **13. Contact Leaders (Process flow Diagram Block P-C4)**

After all of the data has been entered into the database reports are produced and distributed to the leaders of the various ministries. The report lists the people that are interested in the ministry along



with their contact information. It is the responsibility of the ministry leader to contact the people who are interested in the ministry and to encourage and facilitate their joining.

At this point it should be obvious why the stewardship education process was not started until consensus among parish leadership was achieved. Each ministry leader should be expecting the listing of people interested in their ministry. It is not uncommon for a long time ministry leader to feel some ownership. Such a person may feel threatened by the perceived changes in procedure. These feelings are best dealt with proactively.

#### **14. Follow Up (Process flow Diagram Block P-C5)**

Sometime after the ministry leaders receive the listing of parishioners that are interested in serving in their ministry they will submit a report to the stewardship committee indicating their success. If the ministry leader is having difficulty then steps will need to be taken to obtain the desired results.

Once an individual decides that they are a Disciple of Christ and they take the leap of faith of Christian Stewardship, the parish cannot say no.

#### **15. Continuous Improvement (Process flow Diagram Block P-D1)**

Once the parish has an effective and motivated stewardship committee and once the stewardship committee has gained wisdom from doing the prototype stewardship education process, other stewardship opportunities will appear. Over time, the parish stewardship initiative will grow into something that is, in many respects, unique to the parish.

Further discussion of this process block is beyond the scope of this manual.

## APPENDIX 1

### 16. Prayers for Christian Stewardship

Prayer, especially in thanksgiving to God for all His generous gifts to us, is the first fundamental principle of Christian stewardship. Following are prayers with various themes for use in parish meetings and gatherings as well in parishioners' private prayer time. As your parish proceeds along your Christian stewardship journey, you may develop additional prayers to guide you on your way to discipleship in Christ.

#### a. To Be a Good Steward

##### A Stewardship Prayer

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*

##### A Stewardship Prayer

Dear Lord,

I pray that You give me the wisdom to guide me on this faith journey of stewardship.

Help me to understand that everything I have is a gift from You.

Open my heart and my mind so that I may use these marvelous gifts to give back to You here on Earth.

I pray that You welcome me into Your kingdom at the end of my life and that You are pleased with what I have done with all your gifts.

Amen.

##### Prayer for Christian Stewardship

Lord God,

You alone are the source of every good gift, of the vast array of our universe, and the mystery of each human life. We praise You and we thank You for Your great power and Your tender, faithful love.

Everything we are and everything we have is Your gift, and after having created us, You have given us into the keeping of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Fill our minds with His truth and our hearts with His love, that in His Spirit we may be bonded together into a communion of faith, a parish family, a caring people.

In the Name and Spirit of Jesus, we commit ourselves to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted



to us, to share our time, our talent, and our material gifts as an outward sign of the treasure we hold in Jesus. Amen

## **b. For Meetings and Group**

### **Pastoral Council Prayer**

**Leader:** We praise You, O God, for all Your works are wonderful. We praise You, O God, forever is your love.

**All:** Lord, thank You for each moment, for the  
blue-sky moment, for the softening earth,  
for freshening wind,  
for the sap flowing,  
the bird nesting, the yellow bush, for my full heart, and the joy rising in us!

**leader:** Soften us to receive whatever comes as gift and to praise You in it!

**All:** Lord, thank You for each moment, for the twilight moment, the pause, the good tired,  
for quiet reflection,  
the slowing down, the mysterious sunset, for our hearts, and the wisdom growing in us!

**leader:** Gentle us to feel whatever comes as gift and to praise You in it!

**All:** Lord, thank You for each moment, for the high-noon moment, the work of our council, the  
necessary routine, the straining struggle, the high risk challenge,  
for our fierce hearts,  
and the courage gathering in us!

**leader:** Focus us on whatever comes as gift and to praise You in it! May You find praise  
in the works of this council. We praise You, O God, for all your works are  
wonderful. We praise You, O God, forever is your love.

**All:** Amen. Prayer for Sharing

## **c. In Thanksgiving and Sharing**

### **Stewardship Prayer in Thanksgiving and Sharing**

Heavenly Father,

Eternally kind and gracious, we thank You for all we are and all we possess; this is all fruit of Your unlimited generosity and benevolence.

We thank You because we do not possess anything, not even our lives; this has all been a gift from You.

Enlighten our minds, so that we can use wisely all the gifts we receive from You daily.

Help us understand that it is better to give than to receive; because giving helps our soul give up the material and temporal, in order to ally it with a spirit of altruism and charity.

Help us comprehend more each day that by the means of giving, we can adjust the inequities of the human race, this is the only way the strong and the powerful can help the weak, so that

social peace can reign among us.

We place this in the name of Your beloved Son, Jesus, Who lives and reigns in the unity with the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

#### **d. On Life's Vocation**

##### **Prayer of Cardinal John Henry Newman on Life's Vocation**

God created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me, which He has not committed to another. I have a mission. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

Therefore I will trust Him. Whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; if I am perplexed, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in joy, my joy may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about.

#### **e. Prayer for Stewardship of the Church**

Gracious and Loving God,

We come to you in gratitude, nourished by grace, blessed by Your bountiful gifts.

We rejoice in the transformation of Your Son's suffering and death into the victory of new life and resurrection.

Help us be transformed as well so that we may have the power to change, to renew our Church and to bring about greater justice and peace in our homes and in our world.

Strengthen our commitment to be faithful stewards and more generous in our response to Your Church's needs.

Show us the power of Your love so that we may be joyful, comforted by hope, and drawn ever closer toward the vision of Your glory.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord,

Amen.

#### **f. Stewardship Prayer for Generosity**

Lord Jesus,

You came to show us that the meaning of life consists in giving.

You told us that those who cling too tightly to what they have — without thought of You or others — end up losing everything.

You offered us new values by which to measure the worth of a person's life.

Help us to realize it is not temporal success or riches or fame that gives life meaning. Rather, it is the service rendered to You and others that brings fulfillment and makes our lives worthwhile.

May all our service help build the kingdom of God,

and may our obedience bring true freedom,

our generosity increase love,

our sacrifices bear much fruit,  
and our death lead to eternal life.  
Amen.

### **Prayer for stewardship Renewal**

Generous God,

I give You thanks for the gifts you have given me — my life, my family, my friends, my time, talents, and material possessions. All that I have comes from You. Help me to remember this and rejoice in Your goodness.

Walk with me, my God. Help me on my spiritual journey, so that I may constantly renew my relationship with You and all the good people in our parish and community.

Renew in me Your Spirit. Give me the strength and courage to become a better follower of Jesus — to be a disciple.

Help me hear Your call to “*Come, follow me.*” I give glory to You, my God, as I make stewardship a way of life. Amen

### **Prayer to the Holy Spirit**

Creator Spirit, Come and bless us with Your heavenly grace.

You are called by the names of Paraclete, Gift of God Most High, Spring of Life, Fire, Love and the Soul’s Anointing.

You are the finger of the Father’s right hand. You are the clear promise of the Father.

Give our human tongues the grace of inspired speech.

Kindle your Light in our minds, pour Your Love into our hearts

And uphold with Your Unfailing Strength the frailty of our human nature.

Drive our enemy far from us and give us Your gift of peace. Ever guiding us, may we be always the stewards of Your Love.

Grant that through You, Most Holy Spirit, we may know the Father and the Son, and our faith professing, God Three in One. Holy Spirit of Love, teach us that stewardship is the disciple’s response.

Amen.

## 17. SCRIPTURAL TEXTS WITH A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

*The following passages are particularly suited to teaching the stewardship message.*

	“For everything is from you, and we only give you what we have received from you.”
Deuteronomy 14:22, 29	“Each year you shall tithe all the produce that grows in the fields you have sown...so that the Lord, your God, may bless you in all that you undertake.”
Deuteronomy 16:10, 16-17	“...No one shall appear before the Lord empty-handed, but each of you with as much as he can give, in proportion to the blessings which the Lord, God has bestowed on you.”
Malachi 3:8-10	“...Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me in this, says the Lord of Hosts.”
Proverbs 3:9	“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all you produce; then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow.”
<b><i>New Testament</i></b>	
Matthew 3:1-12	“Reform your lives...Give evidence that you mean to reform.”
Matthew 5:13-16	“In the same way, your light must shine before others so that they may all see goodness in your acts.”
Mark 12:44	“They gave from their surplus wealth, but she gave from her want, all that she had to live on.”
Luke 3:11	“Let the one with two coats give to the one who has none. The one who has food should do the same.”
John 9:1-41	“We must do the deeds of Him who sent me while it is still day.”
1 Corinthians 4:1	“Thus should one regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God...Moreover, it is required in stewards, that someone be found faithful to his gifts.”
Mark 10:43-45	“...Anyone among you who aspires to greatness must serve the rest; whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all.”
Matthew 6:24-34	“No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one or love the other or be attentive to one and despise the other.”

Matthew 10:37-42	“You can be sure that whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of my followers, will certainly receive a reward.”
Matthew 13:4-23	The Parable of the Sower

## **18. Suggested Bulletin Announcements for one year**

### **January (Year One)**

The Blessed Virgin Mary was the model steward with her unqualified, “yes” and complete trust in God’s will. When I put God first in my life, everything else falls into place.

The Magi brought the child Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What gifts do I place before Jesus? My time? My talent? My treasure?

As we begin a new year, let us take time to plan and make stewardship of time and talent a part of our lifestyle and stewardship of treasure a part of our budget.

Your first responsibility is to take care of your needs and the needs of your family – not necessarily all their wants. In looking at what we need versus what we want, we end up placing material things and money in their proper perspective.

“Everyone must give according to what he has inwardly decided; not sadly, not grudgingly, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (II Corinthians 9:7)

All too often, stewardship is presented only with the Church support or the funding of other charities as the goal. This is too limiting. Stewardship also involves time and talent.

“For your heart will always be where your riches are.” (Matthew 6:21)

### **February (Year One)**

Stewardship involves a willingness to give from the very core of who we are and what we have - from substance rather than abundance.

“None of those who cry out ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of God, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven”(Matthew 7:21). Jesus made it clear that being stewards of our time, talent and treasure is part of the will of His Father.

Stewardship of treasure asks only a percentage of income. Many people find that when they trust God and return a certain percentage of their income to the Church and other charities, they can live adequately on the rest of their income.

“Always seek to do good to one another and to all.” (II Thessalonians 5:14)

### **March (Year One)**

Lent is a time to reflect on our relationship with God. We are called to focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in our Lenten stewardship.

“Your light must shine before all so that they may see goodness in your acts.” (Matthew 5:16)

Giving of our time, talent and treasure mainly involves a change of attitude about giving. It's important to think in terms of giving in gratitude to God, of considering how blessed we are, of using our gifts and talents for the good of others.

In the area of time and talent, many individuals commit a certain number of hours each week to prayer and charitable activities.

In the area of treasure, some Christians choose the biblical norm of giving 10 percent of their treasure. Some, because of circumstances, give more than that. Others might start lower and work upward.

### **April (Year One)**

Stewardship opens an avenue of thought that allows us to give without always questioning what we will get in return.

Every one of us is talented in some way. Stewardship encourages us to use any talent we have to benefit an individual, the Church or the community.

“What shall I return to the Lord for all the Lord has given to me?” (Psalms 116:12)

Jesus asks us to demonstrate our love for Him through our generosity to others. In our everyday lives, He calls us to share our gifts of time, talent and treasure with others.

“While we have the opportunity, let us do good to all people – but especially to those of the household of the faith.” (Galatians 6:10)

### **May (Year One)**

Jesus asks us to commit ourselves to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us, to share our time, our talent and our treasure as an outward sign of the love and gratitude we have for Him.

How much time have you spent this week in prayer for others and for the work of the Church?

Have you ever thought about how many of your free hours you spend doing things for yourself versus how many you spend doing things for others?

“Let him with two coats give to him who has none.” (Luke 3:11)

### **June (Year One)**

Giving of our time, talent and treasure is not about giving until it hurts. Rather, it is about giving until you feel good about what you have given.

How much you have has nothing to do with generosity to God. If you don't give of your time, talent and treasure with what you have, you most likely won't do it if you have more.

“Whoever is faithful in small matters will be faithful in large ones.” (Luke 16:10)

You are just one person but you are important to God - and God's work. Be faithful as you give of your time, talent and treasure.

### **July (Year One)**



Stewardship is a way of life, a way of thanking God for all our blessings by returning a portion of the time, talent and treasure allotted to us.

Stewardship is based on the spiritual principles of the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus; and where it has been implemented, both givers' and receivers' lives have been changed.

Stewardship engenders a spirituality that deepens our relationship with Jesus. Stewardship involves intentional, planned and proportionate giving of our time, talent and treasure.

“Give and it shall be given to you. Good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over, will they pour into the fold of your garment. For the measure you measure with will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38)

“Above all, let your love for one another be constant, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be mutually hospitable without complaining. As generous distributors of God’s manifold grace, put your gifts at the service of one another, each in the measure you have received.” (I Peter 4:8-10)

### **August (Year One)**

Have you ever taken a moment to figure out how much time, on the average, you spend a week volunteering in your church or in your community?

“Do not neglect good deeds and generosity. God is pleased by sacrifices of that kind.” (Hebrews 13:16)

Have you ever taken some time to figure out what percentage of your income goes to the church and other charitable causes?

Stewardship is planned giving and does not leave giving to chance. It challenges us to plan. It asks us to appraise – deliberately – what we are doing with our time, our talent and our treasure.

### **September (Year One)**

Christian Stewardship provides a spirituality that you can take home from church, exercise at work and express through personal involvement in the community and church.

Stewardship is not job-oriented or project-minded. It is a way of life for a lifetime.

Christian Stewardship takes a positive view on money. It sees money not only as a medium of exchange but also as a symbol of the person who has it. The way we acquire it, use it, and share it, we are revealed in those actions.

Christian Stewardship trains us to become aware that God is the ultimate giver of the gifts we have. To give to God should be “from the top” – not what may be left over.

### **October (Year One)**

“No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other or be attentive to the one and despise the other.” (Luke 16:13)

Stewardship is an important concept for our spiritual growth as Catholics. It is a way of

thanking God for all His blessings by returning to Him a portion of the time, talent and treasure we have received.

Giving of our time involves being with God in prayer and worship and volunteering our time in the church and community activities that help others.

“Wherever your treasure lies, there your heart will be.” (Luke 12:34)

Sharing our talents arises from the fact that God has given each of us the ability and gifts to do certain things well, and we are to develop those talents for the good of others.

### **November (Year One)**

“Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful to his gifts.” (I Corinthians 4:1-2)

As we practice stewardship, we find that we grow spiritually and that our faith is deepened.

As we approach Thanksgiving Day, let us take a moment to consider all the blessings we receive from God and how we in turn thank God for our blessings. Stewardship of our time and talent and treasure is not limited only to the Church. Many people give time and money to other groups in the community as well.

### **December (Year One)**

“Be generous, sharing what you have.” (I Timothy 6:18)

We are all stewards – managers of the many gifts God has bestowed upon us. Our challenge as Christians is to make good use of those gifts.

Some of the obstacles that keep us from “making a straight path” for the Lord are the same obstacles that keep us from embracing stewardship as a way of life. John the Baptist calls us to reform our lives and let go of the selfishness and greed that keep us from following God’s will.

“Happiness lies more in giving than in receiving.” (Acts 20:35)

In our daily lives, we manage our family and work responsibilities. But to become occupied with these important matters to the exclusion of the need of others outside our home or work, is a mistake we could carry into eternity.