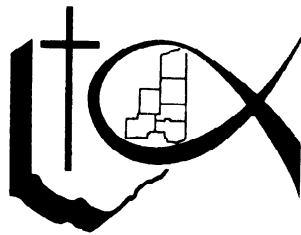


# **STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE PROCESS**

**PARISH MANUAL**



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# **PARISH STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE PROCESS OVERVIEW**

The Parish Stewardship of Treasure Process involves the following steps:

## **One month prior to launching the Process**

1. Purchase Stewardship Brochure/Commitment Cards from the Diocesan Stewardship Office.
2. Recruit volunteers for materials distribution, record keeping, and pulpit presentations.
3. Analyze parish offertory giving patterns for sharing during a pulpit presentation.

## **Week One of the Process**

4. Insert bulletin announcement #1 in the parish bulletin.
5. Announce the beginning of the Process at all Masses.

## **Week Two of the Process (Commitment Weekend)**

6. Insert bulletin announcement #2 in parish bulletin.
7. Pulpit Presentation by Clergy or Lay Volunteers.
8. Distribute the Stewardship Brochure/Commitment cards during the Masses, invite parishioners to complete them in the pew and collect them.

## **Week Three of the Process (Follow-up Weekend)**

9. Insert bulletin announcement #3 in parish bulletin.
10. Place Stewardship Brochure/Commitment cards in pews before Masses.
11. Make an announcement that those not yet responding should do so at this time.

## **Week Four of the Process**

12. Mail follow-up letters, stewardship brochure/commitment cards to those not responding in church.

## **Week Five of the Process**

13. Make an announcement that those not yet responding should do so at this time.

## **Week Six of the Process**

14. Mail thank-you letters to those that responded with a commitment.

## BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Insert #1

Week One

### STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE PROCESS

During the next few weeks, our parish will be conducting a Stewardship of Treasure Process.

Our Stewardship of Treasure Process challenges each of us to demonstrate our discipleship in Jesus by putting God first in our management of money and possessions.

Take a step...invest in your faith and in this parish community as a sign of your good stewardship.

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Insert #2

Week Two

### STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE PROCESS

#### \*\*\*\*COMMITMENT WEEKEND\*\*\*\*

Stewardship of Treasure Cards will be distributed at all masses (or mailed) this week. Take a step...invest in your faith and in this parish community as a sign of your good stewardship.

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Insert #3

Week Three through Week Six

### STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE PROCESS

We have received Stewardship Cards from \_\_\_\_\_ parishioner families. Thank you!

We hope you find peace and joy in your sacrificial commitment to our Lord through your support of (Parish Name).

We have not received Stewardship Cards from \_\_\_\_\_ families.

Please fill-out a Stewardship Card at Mass and place it in the offertory basket.

Every member of our parish family should take part in our Stewardship of Treasure Process. If you have not responded, please do so at this time.

Take a step ... invest in your faith as a sign of your good stewardship. Use your offertory envelopes regularly.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

### **“A Disciple’s Response”**

**“As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” (1 Peter 4:10)**

#### **Putting Faith Into Practice**

**When we apply Stewardship to all that we do in our daily lives, we put our faith into practice. We live out our faith as Disciples of Christ in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.**

#### **An Entire Way of Living**

**The Pastoral Letter calls upon Catholics to recognize that all of creation is a gift to us from a loving God. Therefore, we are responsible to be grateful Stewards of the gifts that God has entrusted to us.**

#### **In Everything That We Do**

**Good Stewardship includes relationships with our families and friends, our employers, co-workers and neighbors, and our own health and recreation. Stewardship also includes our participation in community activities and national issues as witnesses to the spirit and ideals of Jesus Christ.**

#### **Stewardship Is More Than Finance**

**The Bishops’ Pastoral Letter, “Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response,” emphasizes that Stewardship involves more than giving and managing money, or volunteering time and talent to the Church.**

#### ***EVERY FOLLOWER OF JESUS IS A DISCIPLE***

- **To live as a Christian Steward is an expression of mature discipleship. It is a conscious, firm decision carried out in action to be a follower of Christ despite the cost.**
- **A commitment to Stewardship is not carried out in a single action or series of actions over a period of time, but in one’s entire way of life.**
- **The practice of Stewardship has the power to change how we understand our lives. Good Stewards recognize God as the origin of life, and the source of all that they are, and all that they possess.**

# ELEMENTS OF SACRIFICIAL GIVING

## SACRIFICIAL GIVING IS:

**PLANNED:** The decision to give is just that -- a decision. It requires thought and time, so that it is integrated with other financial decisions as part of a careful, intentional response to God's generosity.

**PROPORTIONATE:** Part of our planning ensures that our giving is of "first fruits" -- the gifts given first and not after other obligations are satisfied. They are proportionate to what God has given to us. Some use the biblical concept of the tithe as a guide, but in any case the gift is a proportion of our resources.

**SACRIFICIAL:** The proportion of our gift becomes sacrificial when it comes from our substance rather than our abundance. When we give out of our substance, we are changed in the process because we have given away something we thought we needed for ourselves. We have relinquished our trust in material resources in order to place our trust in God.

**A GIFT:** Our gifts are made not only in proportion to what we have been given, but also in the manner in which God gives to us -- unconditionally. Our giving expresses our trust in God who will provide for us a community that will use the gifts to build the Kingdom.

**PRAYERFUL:** Our giving is an act of prayer and is appropriately dedicated in the context of the Offertory of the Mass. The total sacrifice of Jesus, which we re-enact in the Eucharist, serves as a model for our own sacrifice and we pray that our gifts will be transformed for the giving of life even as the gifts of bread and wine are so transformed.

### THE NOTIONS OF SACRIFICE:

- a sign of gratitude;
- a sign of praise to our Creator and Savior;
- a sign of our trust in God who is our ultimate security;
- a sharing in the paschal mystery of Jesus;
- a willingness to give from the very core of who we are and what we have --
- a giving from substance rather than abundance;
- a giving of life to others through which we find new life. This is not a matter of bargaining or trading, but a realization of the very core of what life is about...loving.

# **PARABLES OF JESUS THAT DEAL WITH MONEY AND POSSESSIONS**

- The Two Debtors (Lk. 7:41-43)
- The Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44)
- The Costly Pearl (Mt. 13:45)
- The Unmerciful Servant (Mt. 18:23-35)
- The Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37)
- The Friend at Midnight (Lk. 11:5-8)
- The Rich Fool (Lk. 12:16-21)
- The Barren Fig Tree (Lk. 13:6-9)
- The Tower Builder (Lk. 14:28-30)
- The King Contemplating a Campaign (Lk. 14:31-33)
- The Lost Sheep (Lk. 15:3-7)
- The Lost Coin (Lk. 15:8-10)
- The Prodigal Son (Lk. 11-32)
- The Unjust Steward (Lk. 16:1-7)
- The Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31)
- The Unjust Judge (Lk. 18:1-8)
- The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Lk. 18:9-14)
- The Generous Employer (Mt. 20:1-16)
- The Wicked Tenants (Mk. 12:1-12; Mt. 21:33-46, Lk. 20:9-19)
- The Servant Entrusted with Supervision (Mt.24:45-51; Lk.12:42-46)
- The Talents (Mt. 25:14-30; Lk. 19-12:27)
- Sheep and Goats (Mt. 25:31-46)

## PARISH OFFERTORY REPORT

It is strongly recommended that a Parish Offertory Report be presented to the congregation at some point in the Process. The Report offers a reflection of the level of commitment currently offered by parishioners for the temporal needs of their parish. It also demonstrates a standard of accountability on behalf of the parish leadership. This report can be given during the Pulpit Presentation on Commitment Weekend, or it can be offered when the Process is announced the weekend prior to Commitment Weekend.

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### SAMPLE PARISH OFFERTORY REPORT

Envelopes are sent out to 975 families each month. Throughout the year, approximately 550 families use envelopes.

#### AVERAGE WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION BY NUMBER OF FAMILIES JANUARY 1 THROUGH JULY 31 OF THIS YEAR

NUMBER OF FAMILIES	AMOUNT PER WEEK
48	\$ < 1/Week
95	\$ 1-5/Week
99	\$ 6-10/Week
77	\$ 11-20/Week
49	\$ 21-30/Week
13	\$ 31-40/Week
16	\$ 41-60/Week
6	\$ >61/Week

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Calculate a similar Report for your parish.

# SUGGESTED STEWARDSHIP PULPIT PRESENTATION OUTLINE

## For Commitment Weekend

- I. Begin with a personal story that deals with sharing and self-sacrifice.
- II. Relate your story to today's Scriptural Readings.
- III. Announce the parish Stewardship of Treasure Process.

*The Process challenges us to demonstrate our discipleship in Christ by using our money in service to God and others who are hurting before considering our personal desires. It asks that we give sacrificially...deliberately make a commitment to give a percentage of our income in support of our parish community, diocesan church and other charities of our choice regularly. Thus, actively demonstrating our faith priorities.*

- IV. Briefly review current giving patterns at the parish using the Parish Offertory Report.
- V. Invite the congregation to make a commitment using the Stewardship of Treasure Card included in the brochure found in the pew.  
If the parish is mailing Brochure/Commitment Cards instead of placing them in the pews, ask the congregation to bring their completed Commitment Card to Mass next week or to mail it to the rectory.
  - A. Remind the congregation to review the Sacrificial Giving Guide on the back of the Commitment Card before completing the card.
  - B. If done "in pew," walk the congregation through the filling-out of the card.
- VI. Bring closure to the presentation by tying together the themes. Thank those present for listening to your presentation and responding to the call to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to them by a loving God.

# SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP LETTER

## TO NON-RESPONDENTS

To be mailed by the parish in Week Four of the Process

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1 Cor, 12-27)

Dear (Parishioner's Name):

The past few weeks, I shared in the joy of the members of the Body of Christ here at (parish name) who responded to our Stewardship of Treasure Process. Sacrifices like these have made it possible to further Jesus Christ's Mission at (parish name) over the past (number) years.

However, our records indicate that you did not return a completed Stewardship of Treasure Card. I sincerely believe that a prayerful response will enrich your faith daily. In addition, your response will demonstrate your commitment to our parish community. For that reason, I write asking you to respond at this time.

Take a few minutes to read the enclosed brochure and Sacrificial Giving Guide. Find where you fall on the Giving Guide and prayerfully fill-in our Stewardship of Treasure Card on the back of the Giving Guide. Place it in the enclosed envelope and return it by mail to the parish office or place it in the Offertory Collection at Mass this weekend. Thank you.

God Bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor

P.S. If you returned your Stewardship of Treasure Card while this letter was being sent to you, THANK YOU. Please disregard my letter.

# **SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER**

To be mailed by the parish in Week Six of the Process and thereafter as parishioners respond

“Give, and it will be given to you.  
A good measure, pressed down, shaken  
together, running over, will be put  
into your lap; for the measure you  
give will be the measure you get back.”  
(Luke, 6:38)

Dear (Parishioner’s Name):

Thank you for participating in our parish Stewardship of Treasure Process by returning your Stewardship of Treasure Card.

This Process provides us the opportunity to reflect individually and as a parish community on our stewardship of God’s gifts of money and possessions. When you return to the Lord a sacrificial measure of these gifts, your response shows your faith and trust in the Lord and your willingness to make an investment in Christ’s work here at (parish name).

May the Lord Bless you for responding.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor

P.S. I, along with members of our Parish Council, pledge to be good stewards of the sacrificial gifts entrusted to us.