

Planned Giving News

Catholic Diocese of Rockford

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**From Greg Urban,
Diocesan Director of
Planned Giving**



Dear Greg :

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Diocese of Rockford Planned Giving Newsletter to learn about ways you can promote planned gifts within your parish or institution.

Keep planting seeds!

Ministry Quicklinks
[Rockford Stewardship web](#)
[Catholic Foundation web](#)

What Happens in Heaven

This is traditionally the season that reminds us to give thanks to God for our many blessings.

Included below a story that you may have seen. It is one of those Internet stories that rapidly proliferate. This particular story, whether the facts are absolutely accurate or not, should give us something to think about. It goes like this:

I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, "This is the Receiving Section here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received." I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section. The angel then said to me, "This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them."

I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally, at the farthest end of the long corridor, we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. "This is the Acknowledgment Section," my angel friend quietly admitted to me.

He seemed embarrassed "How is it that there is no work going on here?" I asked. "So sad," the angel sighed. "After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgments." "How does one acknowledge God's blessings?" I asked. "Simple," the angel answered. Just say, "Thank you, Lord."

"What blessings should they acknowledge?" I asked.

- "If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world.
- If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy."
- "And if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity."
- "If you woke up this morning with more health than illness... you are more blest than the many who will not even survive this day."
- "If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation... you are ahead of 700 million people in the world."
- "If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by, and more blest than, three billion people in the world."
- "If your parents are still alive and still married... you are very rare."
- "If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm, you're unique to all those in doubt and despair."

Ok, what now? How can I start?

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blest than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

Have a good day, count your blessings, and if you want, pass this along to remind everyone else how blest we all are.

ATTN: Acknowledge Dept.: "Thank you Lord, for giving me the ability to share this message and for giving me so many wonderful people to share it with"
"If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world."

A Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving to you all!

Bulletin Blurbs

More Donors See Benefits of Giving Securities over Cash

More donors are choosing to give charitable gifts in the form of securities - such as stock, mutual funds, and other investments - instead of cash, reports The Wall Street Journal. The current strong stock market as well as benefits of efficiency and tax savings for the donor and the recipient charity seem to be driving this trend, the newspaper says.

Gerry Golub, a former managing partner of an accounting firm who plans to make thousands of dollars worth of charitable donations in the form of appreciated stock this year, explains: "It's an opportunity for people who have done well in the stock market to count their blessings" and "help them give back" to worthy causes.

Giving a gift of appreciated stock with unrealized long-term gains allows a donor to claim a deduction against his or her federal income taxes for the current market value of the shares. Neither the donor nor the charity owes capital-gains taxes on the profit from the shares. According to a recent analysis by Fidelity Investments, 10 million to 20 million American households could potentially save between \$2.2-billion and \$4.5-billion a year in taxes by donating appreciated securities, instead of giving cash directly to charities.

Kim Wright-Violich, president of Schwab Charitable Fund, a donor-advised fund, says that gifts of appreciated securities are up 76 percent, to \$350-million in the first 10 months of this year, compared with a year earlier. The Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program says appreciated securities represent 69 percent of all donations so far this year, up from 46 percent last year.

End of Year Giving - Take Two...

Did you use the End-of-Year Giving Flyer? If you haven't modified and distributed the flyer mailed to each parish earlier this month, I encourage you to do so before the end of the year. It makes sense to give our donors a gentle reminder that the end of the year is approaching and to give them some ideas on how to be generous to their parish or school. If you misplaced the flyer, you can download it from our web site at: www.stewardshiprockford.org/pg/YearEndGiving2007.doc. It is available there in Microsoft Word format so that you can modify it by putting in the parish name at the top of page one and the pastor's name on the bottom of page two.

A planned giving expert has noted recently that for charities to be successful in the future, they will need to be "*near, dear, and clear*" to their donors. He meant that they will need to be physically *near* for frequent visits, *dear* to them in terms of touching their heart, and *clear* about what their mission is. There cannot be a better description about a committed parishioner's connection to his or her parish! I encourage you to use this flyer.

Parishioners who model Christ are most effective teachers, says pope

Clergy, lay catechists and parishioners who model their lives according to Christ represent the most effective tools for teaching the word of God, Pope Benedict XVI said. "Whoever teaches the faith cannot risk appearing like a sort of clown who just performs a role for one's job," the pope said Oct. 24 at his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square. The catechist should not go through the motions, but "must be like the beloved disciple who rests his head on the heart of his Master" to hear and learn how to think, speak and act, he said. Continuing a series of audience talks about early church theologians, Pope Benedict focused his remarks on St. Ambrose, a fourth-century bishop of Milan, Italy, and a doctor of the church. St. Ambrose would prepare his catechumens by going over the moral teachings of sacred Scripture "until they were following in the footsteps of divine laws," the pope said. (Courtesy of CNS)

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