

Planned Giving News

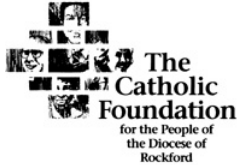
Catholic Diocese of Rockford

December 2007



In This Issue

Gift and Task
Bulletin Blurbs
Some Important Facts
EOY Giving Wrap-up



From Greg Urban,
Diocesan Director of
Planned Giving



Dear :

May the Lord bless your parish, school, or organization with a renewed and reinvigorated spirit of generosity and self-giving in the coming year. Dave, Bob, and I wish you a blessed Christmas and our best wishes for a prosperous New Year.

Keep planting seeds!

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

Gift and Task

Included below is an article by Fr. Paul Scalia reprinted courtesy of the Arlington Catholic Herald. During this time of Advent as we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth, it reminded me what true gifts really are and our responsibilities in receiving them. I hope you enjoy it!

When God bestows a gift, he always gives a certain task along with it. The gift and the task can never be separated. We find this principle throughout Scripture, even from the beginning. God gave Adam the gifts of sanctifying grace, immortality, and above all, intimacy with Him. He also gave him the task of cultivating and caring for the garden. Likewise God bestowed upon ancient Israel the gift of His covenant, of being His chosen people entrusted with the Law, the prophets and true worship. And these gifts carried with them the task of bearing witness to His truth before all nations, to be holy as He is holy.

Our Lord summarizes this principle in simple and sobering terms: "Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more" (Lk 12:48). The responsibility described here flows from the concept of stewardship. The talents and gifts we possess are not, in the end, our own. We are merely stewards who hold the master's goods - and not just for safekeeping, but for development and cultivation. When the master returns He will of course expect to find His wealth safe and sound. But even more will He desire to see some increase of His wealth (cf. Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:12-27). How shameful it would be to stand before Him holding His wasted and neglected gifts.

When we consider the gifts entrusted to us, we typically think first of natural goods: our time, wealth, talent, etc. And these are indeed gifts to be cultivated. To the extent we have been given them, we are expected to invest them for the glory of God. We know well, for example, just what a gift time is. In fact, we never seem to have enough of it. God entrusts us with time, however, not just for our enjoyment, nor only for getting a lot of work done and making more money. Ultimately, He entrusts us with time (and we never know how much that will be) for the cultivation of His life within us. Time affords us the opportunity to repent and to grow in grace. We ought to be, as St. Paul says, "redeeming the time" (Eph 5:16).

"Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more." We should hear these words not only as regards natural gifts, but also and even more so in reference to supernatural gifts. God's gifts of the faith, the sacraments and the Church far surpass any natural gifts we may enjoy. And they also bring with them a greater task.

He has entrusted the Church to us as our mother. So we should bear in our hearts the corresponding love for and fidelity to the Church, and desire to defend her from her foes. He has entrusted to us the Catholic faith as a bulwark against error and uncertainty, so that we can travel the road to salvation securely and confidently. As good stewards of this gift, we ought to deepen our knowledge of that faith, and make it known to others.

By baptism, He at once entrusts Himself to us and gives the task of cultivating a constant awareness of His presence within. In confession, He bestows the gift of forgiveness and the grace to overcome sin - and with it He confers the task of avoiding sin and seeking freedom from sinful inclinations. Most of all, in Holy Communion, He gives us His body, blood, soul and divinity - to nourish us and mold us evermore into His likeness. The proper response to this sublime gift is not to race out of Mass immediately, nor to return to the pew and daydream or watch

others go to Communion. Rather, this is a gift to be cultivated - to be planted deep within us and nourished with prayer and devotion, that it may bear fruit worthy of the giver.

Every gift imparts a task. This principle works in reverse as well: every task is indeed a gift. The task of cooperating with God's grace is a privilege granted to no other creature in the world. We alone have received the gift of participating in God's work of salvation. May we thank God for the gift of the task, and the task of the gift - and pray that His grace render us faithful stewards of what we have received.

Fr. Scalia is parochial vicar of St. Rita Parish in Alexandria, VA

Bulletin Blurbs

Bulletin Messages for the New Year

Make passing on your Catholic heritage your first resolution of the new year. Your planned gift to our endowment makes you an eternal steward of our parish.

BAPTISM OF THE LORD -- Baptism sanctified each of us in Christ to everlasting life. We can ensure that our stewardship to the Church lasts beyond our lifetime by making planned gifts to our endowment(s). Be an "eternal giver" by contacting _____.

Some Important Facts...

The following information is from a planned giving consulting firm that works principally with Catholic organizations:

Did you know?

- The largest single gift your Catholic institution will ever receive will be a planned gift.
- Catholics are still the most affluent religious denomination in the U.S.
- Religious and educational institutions received more than \$100 billion in charitable gifts last year.
- A large portion of the population does not have a Will.
- 70% of all charitable giving comes from people who regularly attend church.
- Over \$20 billion in charitable giving was made through Wills last year.
- Your donors are continually being asked to make Planned Gifts by colleges, universities, hospitals, and other charities.
- Your Catholic institution will receive Planned Gifts as a result of professional planned giving programs.
- Your current donors will participate in Planned Giving while maintaining and increasing their current giving.

Given this information, doesn't it make sense to make Planned Giving to your parish or school a priority in 2008? Please call me if you would like to schedule an Estate Planning Seminar and continue to remind parishioners through the bulletin to remember the Church in their Will.

End of Year Giving Wrap-up...

Donations: Pension Protection Act of 2006 and PDS

Thanks to those of you who distributed the End-of-Year Giving Flyer that was offered. From the phone calls that I have been receiving, it sounds like some of your parishioners are acting on it! If you have questions about what can be accepted as a gift to your parish, school, or diocesan agency, please refer to the [Diocese of Rockford Gift Acceptance Policy](#). If you do receive a

meaningful gift, please be sure to acknowledge it. We cannot thank our donors and benefactors too often!

One question that came up recently involves a parishioner gifting IRA proceeds to their parish under the rules of the Pension Protection Act of 2006. The parishioner desires some of the funds to be applied to 2007 weekly contributions and some to be applied to 2008 weekly contributions. That's great, but how do you enter that into PDS? If this gets entered as a normal contribution, it will be included in the year-end gift receipt that is generated by PDS. Because this direct IRA contribution is pass-through event, that is, it is distributed directly from the donor's IRA custodial account with no tax implications for the donor or for the qualified charity receiving it, it can not be claimed as a charitable deduction on the donor's federal income tax return. Therefore, you don't want to send a PDS end of year statement showing this amount as a tax deductible contribution. I would like to thank Sue Weeg for taking immediate action on this issue. I have included a link to a document that Sue created: [PDS: Receiving a Contribution Directly from a Parishioner's IRA Investment Account](#). This document contains detailed instructions on how to enter these "non-deductible" contributions. If you have questions, please call Sue.

Contact Info

Deacon Gregory S. Urban
Director of Planned Giving
Office of Stewardship Development
Ph: 815-399-4300 x358

[Forward email](#)

✉ [SafeUnsubscribe®](#)

This email was sent to gurban@rockforddiocese.org, by gurban@rockforddiocese.org
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by

