

# Planned Giving News

Catholic Diocese of Rockford

February 2008



## Pope Replies to Questions from Priests of His Diocese...

*Below is an article that appeared in daily news briefs on February 8, 2008. While it is not directly about planned giving, I believe it has profound implications in many areas of our ministry and lives. It is reprinted here courtesy of Vatican Information Service (VIS).*

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From Greg Urban,  
Diocesan Director of  
Planned Giving



Dear Greg :

I have included this month a lead article I thought interesting. I hope you enjoy it as somewhat of a change for this season of Lent. I have also included items for you to include in your weekly bulletins. If you do nothing else to promote planned giving in your parish, please consider placing these items in your bulletins.

**Keep planting seeds!**

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

During a meeting held yesterday morning in the Vatican's Hall of Blessings with priests of the diocese of Rome, the Holy Father answered a number of queries put to him on such matters as youth, evangelisation and the challenge of education.

Replying to a question about young people, the Holy Father noted the difficulty they can encounter in trying to live a Christian life, in the face of prevailing lifestyles. For this reason, he said, it is important for priests to bear witness to the fact that we really can know God, that we can be His friends and walk with Him. In this context he also highlighted the importance of the presence of God in the field of education and, referring to a Letter he had recently written on this subject to the diocese of Rome, he indicated that professional formation must be accompanied by formation of the heart, by the presence of God. One aspect of cultural formation, he added, is to know the Gospel.

On the subject of Lent, the Pope indicated that "it should also be a time to abstain from words and images, because we have need of a little silence. We need to create a space free from the constant bombardment of images, ... a silent space for ourselves, without images, in order to open our hearts to the true image, the true Word".

In replying to a question posed by an Indian priest who has lived in Rome for a number of years, Benedict XVI turned his attention to the theme of evangelisation, recalling the Note on that subject recently approved by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Dialogue, he said, means respecting others. Yet, he explained, this dimension of dialogue does not exclude the announcement of the Gospel, which is a gift of Truth that we cannot keep for ourselves but must also offer to others.

Mission is not imposition, rather it means offering the gift of God and allowing His goodness to illuminate us. To do otherwise, said the Pope, would be to neglect a duty. We too would be unfaithful if we did not present our own faith while respecting the freedom of others, he added, highlighting the importance of missionary work. Dialogue and mission do not exclude one another, but need one another.

The Holy Father also dwelt on the importance of the Final Judgement,

recognising that in the Church today there is perhaps too little reference to sin, Paradise and Hell. "Also for this reason", he said, "I chose to mention the Last Judgement in my Encyclical 'Spe Salvi'". Anyone who does not recognise the Final Judgement, he added, does not recognise the possibility of failure and the need for redemption. Anyone who does not labour for heaven does not work for the good of mankind on earth. In this context he noted that Nazism and Communism, which were concerned only with this world, ended up by destroying it.

Finally, the Pope turned to consider the increasingly important role of permanent deacons, of whom there are more than 100 in Rome. We must thank the Fathers of Vatican Council II, he said, for revitalising this ministry which, he concluded, is a link between the world of the laity and the priestly ministry.

### **Tax Rebates to Charity?**

#### **Small Share of Americans Plan to Give Their Tax Rebates to Charity, Poll Finds**

Just four percent of Americans plan to donate their federal tax rebates to charity, according to a [new survey](#) by the Associated Press.

An economic-stimulus bill passed last week by Congress would give most single people a \$600 rebate and married couples \$1,200. Forty-five percent of people report that they would use a rebate to pay bills, while 19 percent say they would spend the money on consumer goods. Just in one in 25 of the 1,006 adults surveyed would support a charitable cause. What can we do to change this?

## **Bulletin Blurbs**

### **Bulletin Messages for Lent and Easter**

#### **LENTEN SUNDAYS**

- Lent provides an opportunity to strengthen our devotion to God through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Perhaps this is the time to make a planned gift to our endowment which will strengthen our parish's future and keep your faith alive in the generations to come. Contact \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Lenten season brings us closer to our faith and living the life Christ modeled. One way to model Christ's love and generosity and to become a steward of our Church is to make a planned gift to our endowment. Call \_\_\_\_\_.
- As we repent of our sins and strengthen our devotion, we should remind ourselves of our responsibility to be stewards of our faith. Be an angel forever by making a planned gift to our endowment by contacting \_\_\_\_\_.
- As we consider our lives as Christians, we must ask ourselves if we're truly being stewards of our Church. Consider a planned, perpetual gift of financial stewardship to our endowment. Not only are we stewards of our time, talent, and treasure - we are also stewards of the assets that gave us the treasure and the opportunity to develop our talents.

#### **HOLY WEEK**

As we remember Christ's sacrifice, we are moved to express our faith and love. Call Deacon Greg Urban at The Catholic Foundation at 815-399-4300 to learn how a planned gift to our endowment can help preserve our precious heritage.

## EASTER

Give a gift of Easter Joy. Be an angel and make a planned gift to our endowment. Christ's resurrection gave us hope of eternal life. Your gift gives hope to our parish that we can continue to proclaim this joyous message for years to come. "Go and proclaim to all nations..."

### Contact Info

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

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