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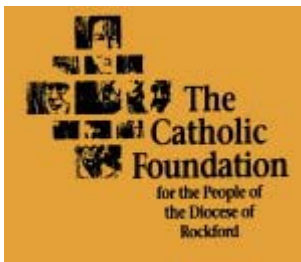
Planned Giving News

Catholic Diocese of Rockford

August 2008



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



Dear Greg :

This month I have included an article from Dan Conway entitled "Stewards of the Future." Dan is a professional fundraiser with many years of experience who truly believes that fundraising needs to be based on stewardship principles. I hope you enjoy

Stewards of the Future

We have hope for the future because the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ makes things happen and is life-changing. Through Him, the dark door of time, of the future, has been thrown open. We have been saved in hope. - Pope Benedict XVI

In his Encyclical *Spe Salvi* (Saved in Hope), Pope Benedict XVI expresses the Christian conviction that past-present-future are all united in Christ. The certainty of His coming again at the end of time influences the present. As a result, the decisions that we make about the future, if they are truly based in faith, can have a powerful impact on that future. "It is not the elemental spirits of the universe, the laws of matter, which ultimately govern the world and man-kind," the Holy Father says, "but a personal God governs the stars, that is, the universe... we are not slaves of the universe and its laws, we are free."

Disciples of Jesus Christ are called to be stewards of the future, a future that is full of hope. The future appears hope-less when we cannot imagine anything beyond the present, when we have no vision, no way of affecting change. The future is full of hope when people of faith join together to imagine, and then begin to build, a better world, trusting in the providence of God but not hesitating to act decisively and take risks for the sake of the Kingdom.

As Pope Benedict teaches, we can survive an "arduous present" if we have worthwhile goals, if we have hope. And miracles actually happen when we place faith before prag-matism and confident hope before a fatalistic sense of resignation that leads only to despair.

This is not blind optimism or a naïve form of self-delusion. It is Christian realism. Our faith in Christ's resurrection - his ultimate victory over sin and death and our firm belief in His coming again in glory at the end of time - have convinced us that our actions in the present can impact the future. We are not prisoners of a cruel fate. We are stewards (guardians or custodians) of the bright future that has been promised us by our Lord. And we are also stewards (agents or managers) entrusted with the responsibility to help build that future, with the help of God's grace, in the confident hope that our efforts really can make a difference.

What are some of the practical implications of this "stewardship of the future?" At the most basic and personal level, it means that we have the power to change our own lives, to undergo the kind of continuing conversion of life that disciples of Jesus Christ are challenged to embrace. We are not slaves of our own sinfulness; we can change and grow with God's help. We can be responsible stewards of our own destiny.

it. I also included an article on Advanced Directives. This is an important topic that needs to be shared with your parishioners.

I want to remind pastors and school administrators that the Catholic Foundation annual decisions forms are due back by August 31. I want to thank those persons who already submitted the forms to our office and encourage those who have not to do so as soon as possible. While there were no current earnings this year for many due to stock market losses, we still need the completed forms returned. If you have any questions in this regard, please give me a call.

P.S. Remember to place the enclosed "blurbs" in your bulletins or newsletters!

Keep planting seeds!

Ministry Quicklinks

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

Stewardship of the future also means that we can make a difference in our world. "We are not slaves of the universe and its laws," the pope tells us, "we are free." That means that we can have some impact on the political, economic and cultural forces that exercise so much influence over our daily lives. As individuals and as communities of faith, we can make a difference. We can work to provide our children and grandchildren with a future that is filled with hope - and with justice, peace and charity. Certainly, we will face many obstacles, but the powerful gift of Christian hope is the knowledge it provides us that although and we won't win every battle, the war has already been won! As stewards of a future that is full of hope, we can imagine the Kingdom that is coming, and we can work to make it happen - here and now.

The Gospel "makes things happen and is life-changing," Pope Benedict tells us. Can there be any greater hope than this? May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ help us to be faithful stewards of the future he has promised us. And may the Holy Spirit fill our hearts with courage, empowered by hope, to imagine and then begin to build the coming Kingdom of God.

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Bulletin Blurbs

The following messages can be appropriately inserted into your weekly bulletin:

CONTINUE YOUR LIFE'S WORK

Estate planning is the Way to Continue Your Life's Work. It is vital that you invest some time to insure that your life's efforts will continue in the hands of the causes and people who will most treasure your gifts. Your attorney in conjunction with your accountant will prepare a proper will and make other arrangements for the easy, inexpensive transfer of your estate.

LEAVING A GIFT TO THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

Below is a specific (most common type of) bequest. Typically it is for a dollar amount like \$5,000 or some other specific asset like appreciated stock. Here is sample wording to leave a specific bequest in your will:

"With gratitude for all that God has given me, I give, devise, and bequeath to _____ Parish (School or Diocesan Organization), {city}, Illinois an Illinois religious corporation, the sum of \$_____ (or description of specific property)."

Yes, it's that simple... If you have a question, give Deacon Greg Urban a call at our Catholic Foundation at 815-399-4300

DOES YOUR EMPLOYER MATCH GIFTS?

Your employer may help you increase your giving to the Church. Many companies will match gifts made to endowments. That means your gift may be worth more than you think. Ask your employer if they have a matching gift program.

Fundraising and Philanthropy

Fundraising is more than asking...

- It is supporting a vision of a better world.
- It is about your mission, not money.
- It comes from the heart.

Who is giving?

"Traditional philanthropy was defined as waiting until you were really old and very rich and writing a lot of checks," says Daniel Schley, Chief Executive of Foundation Source, a backroom-services specialist that helps family foundations become more efficient. "But the real power, drive and momentum in modern philanthropy is coming from people in their 40s and 50s who generated a great deal of wealth at an early age and have decided to leverage that wealth in philanthropy

These young activists are mostly coming up through the high-finance and tech industries. They are highly engaged in their causes, investing not just money, but also time, energy and oversight. By our conservative estimate, these activist philanthropists will be pouring between \$1.9 trillion and \$2.6 trillion into philanthropy over the 20 years that began a decade ago, roughly 35% of the total giving during this period. But the results-focused nature of this philanthropic capital will make it far more important than the charitable giving seen during the last century.

Advance Directives

Right now, life takes up all of your time. You are immersed in life, making hundreds of decisions every day about things that affect you, your family, your job, your future. And the likelihood is that you will continue to make those decisions for a long time.

But what if something happens, and you cannot act or speak on your own behalf? Who speaks for you, and what do they say? You can act now to decide whom to place in charge of your life, and you can give that person guidance, by drawing up advance directives.

Advance directives let you outline how you would like decisions to be made and whom you would like to make those decisions if you cannot. Advance directives come in three basic types:

- **Power of attorney.** This gives someone the authority to manage your financial affairs on your behalf. Most common is the durable power of attorney, which appoints someone to act on your behalf even if you are incapacitated.
- **Living will.** This document spells out what medical actions you want taken - and not taken - if you are incapacitated.
- **Health care power of attorney.** This designates a person to make medical decisions on your behalf if you are incapacitated. It can be combined in the same document as the living will. Some hospitals will not admit you without a living will and/or health care power of attorney, so it is best to draw up these documents now; dealing with these issues in the midst of a hospital admission can be extremely stressful.

These are important documents, and you should give them careful and extensive thought. You should talk them over with the people you love and, if you are religious, you might want to discuss them with your clergy or religious adviser. It can be difficult to address these issues, but it can be even more difficult if your family and doctors are making important decisions without knowing your wishes.

In considering either the durable power of attorney or the health care power of attorney, choose someone you trust deeply. You want someone who understands your feelings and who can be

counted on to act as you request, even if he does not agree. If you cannot think of such a person, you do not have to name someone in your health care advance directive; you can simply spell out your wishes. But it is better to give someone the authority to carry out those wishes.

Tell the person you choose and discuss his/her responsibilities ahead of time. You want the person to be comfortable with what you are asking him to do. Choose someone close by, who will be available to make decisions. You also can name an alternate.

In drawing up a living will, start by thinking about quality of life issues. How important is it to you to remain alive, and under what circumstances would you rather die? If you have strong religious beliefs, these are very likely to factor significantly into your considerations.

When you write your living will, don't be too specific. For example, you may not want to say that you don't want to be resuscitated under any circumstances. What if, after being resuscitated, you likely would make a full recovery? Instead, outline your feelings about what constitutes a quality of life that you could accept.

You can write your advance directives on your own, or you can use a lawyer. Sometimes lawyers include advance directives when they draw up your will. Usually the documents have to be witnessed and notarized; you can check the requirements of your particular state. The American Bar Association can walk you through the process on its Web site; search for "advance directives."

Once you have finished your advance directives, give copies to the parties involved. For example, your bank and any other financial institutions or contacts should get a copy of your durable power of attorney. Make sure the institution accepts the form; some banks prefer to use their own forms.

Give your doctor a copy of your health care documents, and discuss them. Most health care professionals have the right to refuse to carry out your wishes if they feel that to do so would go against their moral beliefs. But they usually will direct you to a doctor who shares your outlook.

Finally, put these documents with your important papers. Then you can rest easy, knowing that you have made a very difficult time as easy as possible for yourself and those you love.

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