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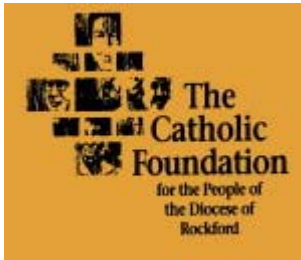
Planned Giving News

Catholic Diocese of Rockford

December 2008



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



Dear Greg :

We are in the midst of Advent and Christmas is right around the corner, indeed a busy time. Now more than ever we need to remember the "reason for the season." As grim as the stock and financial markets might appear, there is reason for

See and Tell

The King of Glory was born in a humble manger, void of the typical trappings of royal birth but not without notice. In truth, those present formed a humble group of witnesses. Obviously, they included the unassuming couple, the Virgin Mary and Joseph. Authors of a host of Christmas carols remind us that lowly creatures, the animals stabled near the manger, kept watch. And, of course, the shepherds to whom the angels had extended a personal invitation took in the scene firsthand. "The shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child."



Awakened by heavenly messengers to the incredible news, the shepherds obediently made their way to the stable to see the child. Greeted by the sights, the sounds, and the smells of lodging more suitable for animals like their own, they carried with them the echo of an angelic chorus. In ultimate appearance, it may have been a fairly modest arrival, but it was one announced by the heavenly host, a proclamation of the everlasting consequences of Christ's coming. And then, immediately afterward, the herders shared the news with others. "They made known the message." May we follow their example. Let's join the shepherds, approaching the Savior. Let us go see. Then let's tell others.

*"The Child, the Lord Jesus Christ-Word in our flesh, Wisdom in infancy, Power in weakness, and in true Man, the Lord of Majesty."
~ St. Pope Leo the Great ~*

Bulletin Blurbs

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

REMEMBERING OUR PARISH AT YEAR-END

Many of you make end-of-year contributions to other organizations because you do not recognize the needs we have here in the parish. Gifts to our parish, either current or through your will, including those of real estate and life insurance, stocks, bonds and certificates of deposit can perpetuate your ideals and Catholic faith. Please remember the ongoing and long range needs which exist here at (name of parish). Contact (insert

hope - our faith in God through his Son, Jesus, from whom all good things come.

Please accept my most sincere thanks for all that you do to foster the growth of God's kingdom here on earth.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year...

Greg

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

"See and Tell" and "In Closing, a Doxology" have been reprinted here courtesy of the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

Keep planting seeds!

Ministry Quicklinks

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

pastor's name) for specific areas which could benefit from your gift.

GIVE A GIFT THAT GIVES FOREVER

By making a gift to our Catholic Foundation endowment account, you'll be providing ongoing parish financial support - forever. This is a wonderful way to demonstrate your faithful stewardship and pass on your faith and love for (insert parish name). Contact (insert pastor's name) to learn more. Your faith is worth passing on...

GIFTS OF IRA ASSETS

If you are 70½ and older and want to make a gift to [parish name], consider taking advantage of the recent extension of the IRA Charitable Rollover provision by donating IRA assets and avoid paying income tax on the IRA withdrawal. To learn more, contact your financial or tax advisor.

In Closing, a Doxology

The music is centuries old. So are the words. Inspired by the message of Psalm 117, Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow is a familiar musical selection throughout Christendom and one with a revered place in many versions of the Catholic hymnal. More than a few Catholic liturgists know the hymn as the Doxology, a word often translated to mean "an offering of praise." As played or sung during Mass, such a proclamation of praise is an appropriate call to worship and a lyrical statement of faith. The devotional benedictions of parish priests echo similar assurances of blessing.

The Apostle Paul's concluding words in his letter to the Romans serve as something of a closing, devotional doxology, a doctrinal statement of deep and meaningful spiritual truth. "Now to him who can strengthen you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages but now manifested through the prophetic writings and, according to the command of the eternal God, made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith, to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ be glory forever and forever. Amen."

Most farewells-especially those among friends-are fairly simple. We say, "So long," "See you soon," "God bless you," "Take it easy," or "Tell everyone I said hello." We will make a point of touching base with many friends and members of our families during the holidays, so we'll offer dozens of similar farewell statements to friends and family in the coming weeks. It would serve as a confirmation of our faith-even a statement of our belief in the blessing of the coming Christ child-to say something more profound than "Take it easy." Following the Apostle's lead, "to him who can strengthen you" could become the inspiration for a simple statement of faith: "Stay strong. Be encouraged. Remember that God cares for you."

We say 'so long' to another eventful year. During the last twelve months, we have known times of ease and of distress, of challenge and of encouragement-situations both good and difficult that direct us to trust in our loving, merciful, and ever-present God. As you bid farewell to 2008, we join in asking for God's gracious presence and his generous blessing in your life. Merry Christmas and the best of holiday celebrations to you and those you love. And, before you close the door on your visits with them,

invite God's blessing in their lives as well.

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