

Parish Stewardship Update

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Little Things Count

Bob Pfundstein

A friend shared this story with me and as I read it I could only think of the many stewardship stories I have heard regarding the small things that people do for one another that require giving of themselves. We can change how others see their lives by doing the small things well.

She had been shopping with her Mom in Wal-Mart. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful brown haired, freckle faced image of innocence. It was pouring outside. The kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the Earth it has no time to flow down the spout.

We all stood there under the awning and just inside the door of the Wal-Mart. We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up their hurried day. I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I get lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world.

Memories of running, splashing so carefree as a child come pouring in as a welcome reprieve from the worries of my day. Her voice was so sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance we were all caught in. "Mom, let's run through the rain," she said.

"What?" Mom asked.

"Let's run through the rain!" She repeated.

"No, honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit," Mom replied. This young child waited about another minute and repeated: "Mom, let's run through the rain."

"We'll get soaked if we do," Mom said.

"No, we won't, Mom. That's not what you said this morning," the young girl said as she tugged at her Mom's arm.

"This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?"

"Don't you remember? When you were talking to Daddy about his cancer, you said, 'If God can get us through this, he can get us through anything!'"

The entire crowd stopped dead silent. I swear you couldn't hear anything but the rain. We all stood silently. No one came or left in the next few minutes. Mom paused and thought for a moment about what she would say.

Now some would laugh it off and scold her for being silly. Some might even ignore what was said. But this was a moment of affirmation in a young child's life. A time when innocent trust can be nurtured so that it will bloom into faith.

"Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run through the rain. If God let's us get wet, well maybe we just needed washing," Mom said. Then off they ran.

We all stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They held their shopping bags over their heads just in case. They got soaked. But they were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars.



And yes, I did. I ran. I got wet. I needed washing.

Circumstances or people can take away your material possessions, they can take away your money, and they can take away your health. But no one can ever take away your precious memories...

So, don't forget to make time and take the opportunities to make memories every day!

To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven.

I HOPE YOU STILL TAKE THE TIME TO RUN THROUGH THE RAIN. After you do feel free to send me a note about how you and your parish are doing the little stewardship things well and I will pass it along through this newsletter. Thanks!

International Catholic Stewardship Council Annual Conference

Time is running out to register for the ICSD conference in San Diego, California from September 16 – 19. Contact the Office of Stewardship Development for more information and registration forms. The registration cost is \$450.

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

- Hebrews 13:16

Parish Stewardship Day 2001

Is coming
To

Christ the Teacher Parish
In DeKalb

Mark your calendar for
Friday November 2nd
Or
Saturday November 3rd

Registration forms will be mailed to all parishes and to all who receive a copy of this newsletter.

Summer Stewardship

Summer is a good time to review your parish stewardship efforts. Use some of the following questions to review the past year and plan for the next year.

Does your parish have a Stewardship Commission?

Are you teaching the stewardship message?

Do you have an annual renewal of treasure?

Do you have an annual renewal of time & talent?

Have you eliminated all second collections for parish operating expenses?

Are you sharing a portion of your income with others?

Has the stewardship message been part of your United In Faith Endowment campaign? If you are planning your own capital campaign for the future has you used the stewardship message?

Is planned giving a part of your stewardship efforts? (e.g. wills seminars, foundation accounts, other planned giving instruments)

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