

Parish Stewardship Update

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Phone (815) 964-6711

fax (815) 968-2808

Web Site: www.stewardshiprockford.com

Diocese of Rockford
Office of Stewardship Development

921 W. State Street

Rockford, IL 61102

Bob Pfundstein

Director of Parish Stewardship

e-mail: rpfundstein@rockforddiocese.org

Summer Fun!

Evaluating Stewardship Efforts

by Bob Pfundstein

Summer is quickly approaching and at my house we are preparing for the fun times we will have. In order to make this a fruitful summer we have been planning for success. It is no different for all of our parish stewardship efforts.

Planning for success requires a little time and effort at the parish or at home. We can look at three basic steps that will help evaluate your progress.

Step 1: Establish your current position

In order to recognize progress, it is always important to know where you are and where you have been. The first step is to document the efforts your parish has made. Write down the answers to the following questions and put them in a file marked "Parish Stewardship."

When did the parish last ask for time & talent volunteers? How many ministries were available to participate in? How many individuals signed up to share their time & talent? How many *different* ministry positions did those volunteers represent? What did the sign-up form look like? Is there a copy on file? Were all those who signed-up contacted?

When did the parish last ask for a treasure commitment? Was a pledge card used? How many

pledge cards were returned? Were people asked to increase their giving? Is a copy of the card on file? Were the pledges entered into the computer? How is the gathered information used?

Step 2: Evaluate your progress

Once you have documented your parish stewardship efforts, look at their effectiveness. Some of the questions to ask and compare to last year are:

How many new volunteers signed up? How many ministries fulfilled their annual goals? Has the parish expanded our ministry listing? Do our ministries fulfill the mission of the parish? Should any ministries be eliminated?

Has our income increased? Has the number of pledge cards increased? Can the increases be attributed to our stewardship appeal? Has the number of envelope users increased?

Step 3: Planning for success

If the parish continues to ask questions and document the statistical information, it can plan for the future success of parish stewardship efforts. The questions asked are very important to the future. They are not just historical facts about the parish. They represent the *living* history of your parishioners and their sense of gratitude for the gifts of their faith and their church. As you look to the future, rely on the past to help you set realistic goals. Ask a few more questions and put the answers in your growing parish stewardship file.



What ministries are most needed in our parish and our community? Which of these ministries should be continued or established at our parish? How can the gifts of our parishioners be developed and supported?

Are the parish financial needs being met? Are opportunities for our parishioners to give planned, proportionate, sacrificial, and meaningful financial gifts to the parish available? Can our parish fund the future through endowment and foundation accounts?

As rapidly as the years progress, the parish stewardship files will expand. Good documentation of the current situation as well as the current dreams will help the future parish leaders understand the history of their parish and realize the dreams of those who came before them. Good records also help the parish leaders establish their own dreams for those who will follow them.

At my house we have been looking at last summer to document what we did. We kept the lawn mowed, we played baseball, we swam in the pool, we grilled hot dogs and hamburgers, we rested in the hammock, we listened to and watched the birds, we made lemonade and we shared our love with one another. We are looking over this list to determine what we could do better this summer and what we need to do less of. We are establishing goals to swing more on the swings, keep the grill clean, pray more as a family, share our fun with friends, and enjoy the summer.

Good Stewardship ...

Keep the stewardship stories coming. Send some of your parish or personal sharing stories so they can be published to inspire others.

*In The
Spirit Of
Giving...*

Just a click away . . .

Join hundreds of others.

Save Paper! Save Ink!

Save Printing Costs!

Save Mailing Costs!



Request this newsletter via e-mail and receive it monthly as a PDF attachment.

There is still time to register! International Catholic Stewardship Council

Annual Conference

Every year the ICSC offers an opportunity to network with stewardship leaders from the United States and other countries. This year the conference is in Toronto, Ontario, Canada from October 27-30. Contact the Office of Stewardship Development for more information and registration forms.

The cost of the conference when registered through our office is \$440 prior to July 19. After July 19 the cost increases to \$500.

Register Early and Save \$\$\$\$\$