



ICSC Stewardship Parish Certification Standards and Evaluation

Deadline June 30 Each Year – Applicants must be an ICSC member in good standing

The International Catholic Stewardship Council offers a self-assessment tool/certification to help parishes that meet certain threshold criteria in regards to the practice and promotion of stewardship. A parish that satisfies these criteria and thoughtfully completes this evaluation will receive a certification, good for three years, and will be honored as an “ICSC Stewardship Parish” and have their name posted on the ICSC website.

This certification is a result of several objectives ICSC seeks to accomplish:

1. ICSC recognizes that many parishes are extraordinarily good stewardship parishes. The Archbishop Murphy Award can be given to only one parish annually, so ICSC would like another way to recognize the many other exceptional stewardship parishes, striving to be the best they can be.
2. ICSC is hopeful that the self-assessment requested for this certification will encourage parishes already practicing and promoting stewardship to some degree, to make a thorough inventory on how they can grow even more in this Christ-centered way of life.
3. ICSC desires that parishes achieving ‘ICSC Stewardship Parish’ designation will agree to mentor other parishes striving for this certification.

To receive this certification, a parish must be a member of the International Catholic Stewardship Council and agree to be listed as a “mentor” parish available to provide advice via e-mail or over the phone about promoting and practicing stewardship, for the three years following receipt of this certification. Under each goal are listed several objectives. For each objective, please briefly describe how your parish accomplishes the task. If your parish does something additional or unique, please describe that as well. Parishes must demonstrate they have made progress toward half or more of the objectives under each goal to receive certification.

After three years, each parish should re-evaluate their stewardship practices and re-submit for certification, or perhaps apply for the Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy Award. Former parish Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy Award recipients are not eligible without special permission from ICSC.

The certifications will be announced and awarded at the ICSC Conference each year. ***The application for certification must be submitted by June 30.*** Parishes achieving certification will also be noted in the ICSC Conference Directory and on the ICSC website.

Please return this form via email to parawards@catholicstewardship.org. Please list “Stewardship Parish Certification” on the subject line. **Thank you!**

If you have questions, please contact the ICSC office at 800-352-3452.

If you do not receive a confirmation of our receipt of submission within 3 business days, please call our office at 800-352-3452.

APPLICATION FOR ICSC STEWARDSHIP PARISH CERTIFICATION

Deadline June 30

A true “stewardship parish” recognizes the living presence of Christ in their midst, and sets out to steward this gift of God to all of humanity. A stewardship parish receives and delights in this greatest of gifts, and then offers the abundance of life and love that flows from Him to the parishioners of the parish. Once parishioners recognize the gifts they have received, they can joyfully share them, knowing that they have been given for a purpose. This ICSC self-assessment tool is meant to help each parish evaluate its stewardship way of life.

Please underline the level that is closest to where your parish is for each item –

1 - nothing in place, 2 - plans made, but not yet in progress, 3 - in progress of instituting,

4 - in place for less than 1 year, and 5 - fully in place for 1 or more years and making measurable progress.

1. <u>Goal: Christ-Centered Community</u>	Low				High
- Increase in attendance at daily and Sunday liturgies (using annual Mass counts)	1	2	3	4	5
- Regular schedule for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	1	2	3	4	5
- Increased recognition of stewardship as a way of life with Christ in the Church	1	2	3	4	5
- Growth of spirituality in the parish, including increased personal devotion and more frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance	1	2	3	4	5
- Parish strategic planning is intentional about seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and includes fostering stewardship as a way of life as a vital part of the parish plan	1	2	3	4	5
- Growth in the RCIA program	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

2. Goal: Stewardship Outreach

a) How does the parish share stewardship resources of time, talent and treasure lovingly, in justice with:

- Individuals in need	1	2	3	4	5
- Local community	1	2	3	4	5
- Diocesan community	1	2	3	4	5
- National community	1	2	3	4	5
- Worldwide community	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

b) How does the parish demonstrate that it is a good steward of:

- Creation	1	2	3	4	5
- Vocation	1	2	3	4	5
- Church	1	2	3	4	5
- Mission	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

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<u>3. Goal: Spirituality/Worshipping the Lord</u>	Low	High
- Witness talks/reflections periodically by parishioners from all demographics/ethnicities who are stewards of Christ's life and love	1 2 3	4 5
- Superb homilies with stewardship themes regularly emphasized	1 2 3	4 5
- Inspiring and excellent music at all Masses	1 2 3	4 5
- Financial offerings brought up in the offertory procession, showing the link between the sacrificial gifts from the people returned to the Lord	1 2 3	4 5
- Parish encourages prayers for the graces to live as good stewards (provides prayer cards, prayer occurs at all parish meetings, encourages prayer at home, reciting a stewardship prayer together at Mass)	1 2 3	4 5
- Additional comments or measurements:		

<u>4. Goal: Communications</u>	Low	High
- Bulletin inserts on stewardship on a 'regular' basis	1 2 3	4 5
- Weekly stewardship bulletin columns or articles	1 2 3	4 5
- Parish stewardship video	1 2 3	4 5
- Monthly or quarterly parish newsletter to all parishioners highlights stewardship stories, opportunities, prayers, initiatives	1 2 3	4 5
- Weekly offertory accounting including external tithes in bulletin	1 2 3	4 5
- Website weaves stewardship throughout (beyond T/T&T commitment)	1 2 3	4 5
- Parish annual report includes every aspect of stewardship	1 2 3	4 5
- Parish uses social media to engage all of the parish community	1 2 3	4 5
- Additional comments or measurements:		

<u>5. Goal: Forming Stewardship Leaders</u>	Low	High
- Parish has an active Stewardship Commission/Council, not reporting to Finance Council.	1 2 3	4 5
- Stewardship Commission/Council meets regularly	1 2 3	4 5
- Parish mission statement indicates a mature understanding of stewardship as a way of life and it includes the stewardship vision set out in the US Bishop's pastoral letter	1 2 3	4 5
- Goals and objectives relating to stewardship are prayerfully set by the stewardship commission/council in concert with the pastoral council and pastor	1 2 3	4 5
- Parish leaders regularly attend ICSC or other stewardship conferences and events for ongoing stewardship formation	1 2 3	4 5
- Additional comments or measurements:		

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6. <u>Goal: Generous Welcoming/Hospitality for All</u>	Low				High
- Greeters at every Mass who greet people by name	1	2	3	4	5
- Hospitality regularly after (all) Masses, to allow fellowship and further engagement with parish	1	2	3	4	5
- Registration for new parishioners is easily accessible (welcome table, welcome info in pews)	1	2	3	4	5
- New parishioners are offered an orientation/official welcome by welcome committee	1	2	3	4	5
- Visitor guide/newcomer's package/basket	1	2	3	4	5
- Committed lay leaders and parishioners offer genuine friendship and invite all parishioners to become involved in parish life	1	2	3	4	5
- Important days in people's lives are celebrated (e.g., cards or bulletin announcements on birthdays, wedding and baptismal anniversaries, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

7. <u>Goal: Education/Stewardship Catechesis</u>					
- Stewardship is an integral part of the parish school, religious ed curriculum and children's liturgy	1	2	3	4	5
- Adult religious education programs include stewardship formation and themes	1	2	3	4	5
- RCIA teaches stewardship as a way of life	1	2	3	4	5
- Young adult programs include stewardship themes	1	2	3	4	5
- Annual parish mission with stewardship theme	1	2	3	4	5
- Small Christian communities offered/followed up/guidance offered	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

8. <u>Goal: Stewardship of Time and Talent</u>					
- Annual stewardship commitment renewal (either combined with treasure or not)	1	2	3	4	5
- Annual or quarterly Ministry Fair or other Ministry Awareness activities	1	2	3	4	5
- Annually updated ministry guide	1	2	3	4	5
- Volunteers are thanked/shown appreciation/recognized	1	2	3	4	5
- Opportunities for parishioner gifts discernment is encouraged and offered	1	2	3	4	5
- Giving of time and talent to the wider community at large is recognized as good stewardship	1	2	3	4	5
- Annual commissioning/blessing of ministers	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

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9. Goal: Stewardship of Treasure

	Low			High	
	1	2	3	4	5
- Annual stewardship commitment renewal (either combined with time and talent or not)	1	2	3	4	5
- All parishioners are sent envelopes regularly – not annually (unless requested otherwise)	1	2	3	4	5
- Children’s envelopes available	1	2	3	4	5
- Electronic giving encouraged/made easily accessible	1	2	3	4	5
- Commitment reminder letters sent	1	2	3	4	5
- Contributors are regularly thanked	1	2	3	4	5
- Parish gives at least 5% of parish income to charities (not counting special collections)	1	2	3	4	5
- Promotes planned giving regularly	1	2	3	4	5
- Appreciation for the fact that offerings of treasure should not be limited to parish-based gifts. Stewardship covers ALL aspects of our lives and ALL areas of our world	1	2	3	4	5
- Additional comments or measurements:					

Please provide the following contact information:

Name _____ Title _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Member Parish _____

Parish Address _____

(Arch)Diocese _____

Name of Pastor _____

Signature of Pastor/or person submitting for certification _____

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This list of objectives is inspired by the book, *Keeping Stewardship Alive: Proven Stewardship Ideas*, published by ICSC, from input by respected stewardship leaders. This publication contains over 200 ideas parishes can implement to assist their stewardship efforts – available at www.catholicstewardship.com.

The ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee will review the member parish’s self-assessment and provide feedback and suggestions to help the parish deepen its understanding and practice of stewardship as a way of life. ICSC will be the sole determiner of whether or not a parish has met the criteria.