

December 2018



A Christian Steward is:
One who receives
God's gifts gratefully,
cherishes and tends them
in a responsible and
accountable manner,
shares them in justice
and love with others,
and returns them with
increase to the Lord.

WISDOM

from ICSC strategic partners

This month's contributions come from the following ICSC Strategic Partners:



Each month ICSC sends you practical information, whitepapers, and tips, as well as other insightful information from our Strategic Partners to assist you with your responsibility as stewards of the Church. We are very grateful to our Strategic Partners for their partnership and commitment to ICSC, and their professional wisdom is a wonderful gift to ICSC members.

In this edition ICSC provides for you:

- * six myths that can inhibit your stewardship goals presented by **GP Catholic Services**.
- * a way to use technology to build parish-wide daily prayer compliments of **J.S. Paluch Company**.
- * five tips on ways to communicate and maximize your year-end giving potential offered by **Lynch Development Associates**.

For additional information and resources from our strategic partners visit the ICSC website at: [ICSC](http://www.icsc.org)

ICSC promotes and supports Catholic teaching on stewardship by providing education and resources for dioceses, parishes, and institutions of the Roman Catholic Church.

Mythbusters: Stewardship Style!

A review of the ICSC Annual Conference presentation

The Catholic Church is one of the greatest forces for good in the world. Its schools, healthcare systems, and sanctuaries have provided a spiritual, educational, and healing home for billions of people across the globe throughout the millenia.

GP Catholic Services is committed to continuing to elevate philanthropy in the Catholic Church. And, as a follow-up to President and CEO Elizabeth Zeigler's recent presentation at the International Catholic Stewardship Council Annual Conference in Nashville, we're out to bust the myths that can inhibit your goals.

1

Myth: Stewardship is a transaction.

Fact: Stewardship is even more than volunteering for an hour or making a small donation online. A Catholic steward has gratitude, accountability, generosity, and a willingness to return God's gifts with increase.

2

Myth: Only the most devout Catholics give.

Fact: Though giving is correlated with Mass attendance, don't overlook those who attend irregularly. While 92% of frequent Mass attendees are part of a giving household, 20% of infrequent attendees are part of a giving household.

3

Myth: The less overhead, the better.

Fact: Praising development efforts for lean overhead numbers sends the wrong message to donors, Church leaders, and others: that running a lean effort is all that matters. It's a cyclical process - a high rate of staff turnover means that overall impact declines, which compromises effectiveness, which makes talented leaders avoid the sector, which does not propel your mission forward.

4

Myth: Only frontline fundraisers are fundraisers.

Fact: The more familiar a parishioner is with the solicitor, the greater likelihood they will make a gift. This means that the development officer shouldn't always make the ask. This means that a family member or friend, asking in person, could be a successful solicitor of funds.

5

Myth: Giving should take a stepladder approach.

Fact: Major gifts take time and investment, but also bold thinking and the courage to make a big ask early or outside of a campaign. Remember that a first ask can be a big ask, with proper cultivation.

6

Myth: The majority of philanthropic decisions are made by men.

Fact: 84% of philanthropic decisions are made or informed by women. In the United States, women control 51% of total personal wealth, and 45% of millionaires are women. Lastly, 40% of American households have a woman as the primary breadwinner.

GP Catholic Services, a division of Graham-Pelton Consulting, is a leading fundraising consulting firm serving the Catholic Church. Specializing in designing and managing fundraising campaigns for dioceses, schools, parishes, and religious orders, we offer decades of fundraising and development experience with a powerful focus on the Catholic Church.

Give Us This Day Our Daily... Bells? ***Using Technology to Build Parish-Wide Daily Prayer***

As we near Christmas, it is good to take a step back and remember what the incarnation means. It was the choice of God to take on our nature so that his love would be made visible to us. However, we live after the time of Christ's birth. As bodily creatures endowed with five senses, how are we to participate in his love in a way that we can see and hear? The Church points the way again with a call to prayer.

In the Our Father, we see how prayer is meant to be a daily lifting of our minds and hearts to God. "Give us this day our daily bread" is a recognition of both the trials of human existence and our radical dependence on God. When we engage in daily prayer, we are keeping ourselves grounded in the present moment and acknowledging the beautiful work of the Holy Spirit in even the most everyday of our tasks.

How can we encourage this vital habit of daily prayer in a world filled with distractions? Monks and nuns give us a great low-tech example: bells. The call to prayer via bells has existed for thousands of years, and the bells of monasteries provide a broadcast invitation to step outside of the moment and engage with Christ in the present. However, in many places parish churches are no longer the center of our towns, and our bells may not reach the sprawling congregations of suburban or rural parishes. What would 'modern church bells sound and look like? How can we imitate church bells' vital qualities and harness their power to gain our attention in today's modern world?

Church bells have three captivating qualities for this purpose: they are unique, they are broadcast, and they are scheduled. The ringing of church bells is a unique sound and form of communication, so it garners instant recognition of meaning. The sound is broadcast, reaching everyone at the same time (those within earshot at least). Ring times are scheduled, providing a sense of habit and regularity that spans the day-to-day.

We can imitate these qualities of church bells with a variety of prayer apps and smartphone alarms. Imagine the level of engagement if your parish priest stopped in the middle of his homily and said, "I want everyone to take out your phone right now and turn it on. Everyone, please set an alarm for 3:00 p.m., every day. We're going to pray together as a parish each day at that time." There are a variety of prayer apps to

assist you, and even some that will send a reminder as well. A prayer shared by your whole congregation, each day, at the same time, spanning your entire community! What a blessing for your parish to bring such sanctification and grace, using 'modern church bells' to call you to prayer.



'Tis the Season...

For Giving!

It is somewhat intuitive to know that a substantial amount of annual giving occurs toward the end of the year. Statistics show nearly 30% of giving occurs in December with 12% specifically on December 29, 30 and 31st!* This is a tremendous opportunity! However, knowing it is one thing, maximizing it is another. Here are 5 tips on getting the word out and maximizing your year-end potential:

1. **Annual Report:** Many dioceses, parishes and schools produce a stewardship report in the Fall. This report should not only contain your financials, but a complete review of the year. Highlight positive outcomes, new ministries, future goals and include an envelope or other means for people to share their gifts with you. In addition to print, send a digital version containing a link to your online giving platform. Tell your story—it is good news and invite people to connect with you!
2. **IRA Mandatory Distributions:** Your friends who are over 70 1/2 years of age with IRA'S are required to take a mandatory annual distribution. Done properly, there are no income taxes to pay on this contribution. While seniors are aware that they need to take the distribution they may not have made the connection that they can contribute to the Church in this manner! Clear and regular communication is key.
3. **Gifts of Long-Term Appreciated Securities:** While you're making connections, gifts of stock are another responsible way to give. Here, the contributor can receive an income tax deduction for the full fair market value of the gifted stock and avoid capital gains taxes as well. The receiving entity can then sell the securities at their appreciated value. Good stewardship of resources benefits two-fold!
4. **Repeat Your Case:** If you are engaged in a recent capital campaign and some were hesitant to give during the earlier part of the year, perhaps it is time to revisit the invitation to do so. Presenting an update on your projects and financial progress might help people make a connection to your good works and their year-end giving.
5. **Other Year-End Mailings:** Maximize your regular year-end communications with an update, a look forward and an ask. The end-of-the-year mailing is usually the largest of the year - going to your entire data list. Whether it is your Christmas Newsletter, Mass Schedule, Bulletin or Report, give readers a reason to include you in their year-end contribution list. Highlight good news while looking forward to the coming year.

Providing people with positive reasons to give, an accounting of what they have already shared and a responsible means in which to give will maximize your year-end giving for sure!

*Sources—Network for Good; Neon

LDA

LYNCH DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES

LDA is a nationwide Catholic development firm that specializes in assisting dioceses, parishes, schools and other entities with their development needs. Our directors are intimately involved in every aspect of your campaign enabling us to maintain a 98% success rate in meeting our goals. Decades of experience allows us to give clarity to your vision and together, make your dreams a reality.

Contact us for a free consultation:

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