

# Stewardship Lay Witness Speaker Training Manual 2018

## STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



When we use our gifts in the way God intends,  
we experience *true joy* – a supernatural joy that others notice!  
See how you can make a difference. Contact your parish office today.

**Stewardship Awareness Sunday – September 23, 2018**

G R A T E F U L   A N D   G E N E R O U S



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Office of Stewardship



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# STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



## PLANNING YOUR STEWARDSHIP LAY WITNESS TALK

### 1. Determine When You Are Scheduled to Talk

Ask your pastor or parish stewardship chair the following questions:

- What date are you speaking (usually the week after Stewardship Sunday- 9/23)  
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- At what Masses are you speaking? \_\_\_\_\_
- What time during the Mass will you speak (before Mass, after the homily or after Communion?) \_\_\_\_\_
- How long should you speak? (5-7 minutes is the recommended length) \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Determine What Points Your Parish Needs You to Cover

- Talks should stress:
  - Take time to talk and listen to God in prayer every day.
  - We are called to serve God and others by participating in parish ministries and other community service.
  - We are called to advance the mission of the Church through our financial support.
- Everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God.
  - We should be grateful for our gifts and generously share all of them (time, talent and treasure), not just the one or two we choose, especially the one gift that means the most to us.
  - Stewardship is a lifestyle; living a grateful and generous life.
  - Through good stewardship of all our gifts, we help each other get to Heaven!

Your parish may also want you to address any of the following points:

- An invitation to attend the Festival of Ministries.
- Review the Giving Guidelines on the back of the Stewardship: Share the Joy brochure.
- An explanation of the Covenant Card(s) and the importance of returning them.

### 3. Draft Your Talk Following the Five Components (Found on Page 11)



### TALKING ABOUT PRAYER

- When we think of giving time, we often consider it to be the same as giving talent. We think that we give our time and our talent when we volunteer at the parish. In reality, stewardship starts when we spend time with God, deepening our relationship with Him. By talking about prayer instead of time, we make that distinction very clear.
- Prayer is absolutely critical in the life of the individual steward and to the success of transforming the parish culture to a stewardship lifestyle.
- When we pray we must be careful that our prayers do not become a litany of telling God what we want Him to do. Our prayers must not be an endless list of requests and favors. Rather, our prayers must include praise and gratitude for all that God has given us. We also must ask God what He wants us to do with our gifts and then we must be quiet enough to listen for God's answer.
- St. Paul gives us a simple three-part guideline for our stewardship prayer. *"Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."* - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 If we can follow St. Paul's advice, then stewardship will become our natural response.
- By spending some time with God every day:
  - ✠ We feel how deeply God loves us and how abundantly He has blessed us.
  - ✠ We recognize God as the Master of our lives, and thus, we are able to give up our own strong control.
  - ✠ We can see more clearly how God is calling us to live our lives and share our gifts.
  - ✠ We establish the close relationship with Jesus that allows us to put our lives into His hands and to trust Him completely.
  - ✠ We are more able to make the kinds of sacrifices that stewardship calls us to make, because we know that God is in control of our lives.
- What we are asking is for people to have a daily conversations with God and develop a personal relationship with Him.
- Stewardship calls us to start with prayer. However, prayer is not the final goal. Prayer is not the end. Our prayer must lead us to action. Prayer must eventually lead us to participation and generosity.

#### Archbishop Carlson's Reflection for Prayer:

***"Lord, what do You want me to do with all the gifts You have given me?"***



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### TALKING ABOUT GENEROSITY

- When we talk about **treasure**, we are asking people for their financial support. **Generosity** asks us to dig deeper. It is important to remember that all giving is not necessarily generous. Stewardship calls us to give back to God **just as generously as God has given to us**. *“Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.” - Luke 12:48*
- When we think of **generosity** we think of going above and beyond, of abundant giving, of unselfishness. The good steward is called to give in an unselfish, abundant or even lavish manner. No matter how much or how little we have, we are all able to be generous if our gift is unselfish or abundant. The Poor Widow (Mark 12:41-44) is probably one of the most generous people we meet in the Gospels.
- Generous giving usually involves some sacrifice – it costs us something. Jesus taught us, *“Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.” - Matthew 10:8*
- Tithing (10%) is the guideline for generosity. However, most Catholics give 1% of their income. The first step in giving is to determine what percent we are giving now. Then ask ourselves if that amount is a fair reflection for all that God gives to us. We can gradually increase our annual percentage of giving to move towards a full tithe.
- Many Catholics are generous, however, the hard truth is that most Catholics are not generous in proportion to what they have been given.
- When we really understand that everything belongs to God, we realize we are not asked to give our money to God. We are asked to return to Him a share of what He gave to us.
- Never be afraid or embarrassed to ask people to contribute to the work of the Church. You are extending a holy invitation. We all should feel honored that God invites us to play an active role in the mission and ministry of the Church.

#### Archbishop Carlson’s Reflection for Generosity

*“Lord, how would You like me to be generous with all the gifts You have given me?”*



## STEWARDSHIP HOMILY

The priest's stewardship homily plays a critical role in setting the stage for a successful stewardship effort. As the spiritual leader of the people, the priest must remind the parishioners that it is God who calls us to live as stewards. This is done by reflecting on sacred scripture and on the Baptismal promises we all make. As the administrator of the parish, the priest also must remind the people of the important role good stewardship plays in the future of the parish. This is done by reflecting on the history of the parish and the accomplishments of the parishioners – both past and present.

The stewardship homily should contain four elements:

- Reflection on Sacred Scripture, both Old and New Testament. These reflections remind parishioners that stewardship is not some new fad or some idea made up by Church leaders. Stewardship is God's idea and it goes back to the very roots of our faith.
- Reflection on our Catholic heritage, made possible by the sacrifices of previous generations.
- Reflection on the mission of your own Parish. If your parish has a Mission Statement or Vision Statement, it might be appropriate to reflect on how stewardship fits into that.
- Reflection on the charge given to each of us in baptism to return to God, out of gratitude, a generous first portion of our time, talent and treasure, so this mission can continue.

Increasingly, clergy are finding that it is also helpful to include a personal reflection of how stewardship is real in their lives. This can be a memory from childhood, reflecting on the stewardship of parents, an example of the priest's own personal stewardship, or a reflection on the stewardship of friends or family. This kind of personal reflection lets the parishioners see that the priest really does understand the challenges and sacrifices of stewardship.

Additionally, parishioners are further motivated to live as stewards when they realize that their priests also make stewardship sacrifices.





# STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



## COMPONENTS OF LAY WITNESS TALK

Research and experience around the country shows that the most effective stewardship programs include public witnessing by people who are already practicing stewardship in their own lives. Such talks are especially powerful when given by lay people. The Pulpit Talk has two purposes: to inspire people to become good stewards and to share "daily life" examples of stewardship. A Pulpit Talk on Stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure should include the following five basic elements: *introduction, personalization, scripture reference, detail and invitation.*

### 1. Introduction

Begin your talk by telling people who you are, how long you have been in the parish and maybe a little bit about your other family members. Tell them what your topic will be. You may introduce your topic by:

- Telling how you felt when you were asked to speak on stewardship.
- Giving a definition of stewardship. (Stewardship is recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God, taking time to be grateful for those gifts, and returning a portion of those gifts to God – understanding that what God gave us He expected us to share.)
- Asking a question.
  - Do you give from your "first fruits" or from what is leftover?
  - When God asks you "what have you done with the gifts I have given you?" How would you respond?
  - Do you put other "gods" (money, power, ego) before God?

### 2. Personalization

People love to hear a story. A story catches attention. A story brings an idea down to earth and makes it real. Thus it is important that the stewardship pulpit talk includes a personal story about how stewardship is real in your life. Your story could be about any of the following:

- When and how you first realized the importance of stewardship.
- How stewardship impacts your daily life at home, at work, or in the parish.
- What joys you have experienced as a result of your stewardship.
- How you have overcome a challenge to your stewardship. (It's okay to say that sometimes stewardship is difficult!)



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**Pastor's Note:** The pastor or celebrant may want to be prepared to repeat and reemphasize the detail and invitation part of the talk after thanking the lay witness.

### A Stewardship Test

*You may want to walk parishioners through this test as part of your reflection on the giving of treasure.*

If you want to know how much God asks you to give back to Him in return for all that He has given to you, here's an easy formula.

- Take your pre-tax income.
- Round it to the nearest thousand.
- Then take off the last three zeros. For example, a person making \$40,000 annually would take off the last three zeros and be left with \$40.
- This is the amount you should be giving every week, if you are giving 5% back to God through your parish.
- **What about the other 5% that makes up a full 10% tithe?** The Church recommends that Catholics distribute that amount to whatever charities have meaning for them - including schools, hospitals, social service agencies, missions, religious orders and, of course, the Archdiocesan Annual Catholic Appeal and the Kenrick-Glennon capital campaign. So, in order to be giving a full tithe, a person making \$40,000 a year would strive to give \$40 a week to the parish and \$40 a week to other charities.

If you're not sure the formula works check the math. 5% of \$40,000 is \$2,000. Divide by 50 weeks. (Easier and quicker than 52 weeks.) You would give \$40 a week.



# STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



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*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Romans 12:21

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**On Gratitude:**

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*No one shall appear before the Lord empty-handed, but each of you with as much as he can give, in proportion to the blessings which the Lord, your God, has bestowed on you.*

Deuteronomy 16:16-17

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*But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have the means to contribute so freely? For everything is from you and we only give you what we have received from you. For we stand before you as aliens: we are only your guests, like all our fathers. Our life on earth is like a shadow that does not abide. O Lord, our God, all this wealth that we have brought together to build you a house in honor of your holy name comes from you and is entirely yours.*

1 Chronicles 29:14-16

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*What the Lord has given us to live on is certainly enough for us.*

Tobit 5:20

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*The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it.*

Psalms 24:1

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*Know that the Lord is God, he made us, his we are; his people, the flock that he tends. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name for he is good.*

Psalms 100:3-5

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*How shall I make a return to the Lord for all the good he has done for me?*

Psalms 116:12

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*Jesus said in reply, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?"*

Luke 17:17-18

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**On Prayer:**

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*Take care to keep my Sabbaths, for that it is to be the token between you and me throughout the generations, to show that it is I, the Lord, who make you holy.*

Exodus 31:13

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*For six days work may be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath rest, a day for sacred assembly on which you shall do no work. The Sabbath shall belong to the Lord wherever you dwell.*

Leviticus 23:3





## STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



*Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does.*

James 1:22-25

*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well," but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

James 2:14-17

*As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever.*

1 Peter 4:10-11

*For as in one body we have many parts, and all parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them."*

Romans 12:5-6

### **On Generosity:**

*This is what the Lord then said to Moses: "Tell the Israelites to take up a collection for me. From every man you shall accept the contribution that his heart prompts him to give me."*

Exodus 25:1-2

*From all the gifts that you receive, and from the best parts, you are to consecrate to the Lord your own full contribution.*

Numbers 18:29

*Each year you shall tithe all the produce that grows in the field you have sown...so that the Levite who has no share in the heritage with you and also the alien, the orphan and the widow who belong to your community, may come and eat their fill so that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you undertake.*

Deuteronomy 14:22 & 29

*The measure of your own freewill offering shall be in proportion to the blessings the Lord, your God, has bestowed on you...*

Deuteronomy 16:10

*It is the Lord's blessing that brings wealth and no effort can substitute for it.*

Proverbs 10:22



## STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



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### **On Materialism:**

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*No one can serve two masters. He will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*

Matthew 6:25

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*What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?*

Luke 9:25

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*Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it...This is the meaning of the parable. The seed is the Word of God...As for the seed that fell among thorns, they are the ones who have heard but as they go along, they are choked by the anxieties and riches and pleasures of life and they fail to produce mature fruit.*

Luke 8:7,11,14

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*Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions.*

Luke 12:15

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*Every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 14:33

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*For we brought nothing into the world, just as we shall not be able to take anything out of it. If we have food and clothing, we shall be content with that. Those who want to be rich are falling in to temptation and into a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils and some people in their desire for it have strayed from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.*

1 Timothy 6:7-10

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### **On True Treasure:**

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*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.*

Matthew 6:19-21

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*The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field which a person finds and hides again and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

Matthew 13:44

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*If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.*

Matthew 19:21

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*But God said to him, "You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?" Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God.*

Luke 12:20-21



# STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



## BASIC EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The pulpit speaker should be thoroughly familiar with the three basic components that make up the stewardship mailing: a brochure, a letter from the pastor and a Covenant Card. Each piece is important in its own way. **You should contact your parish office to receive actual copies of the brochure, letter, Covenant Card, and any other materials which your parish will be using this year.**

### The Brochure

The 2018 brochure is entitled *“Stewardship: Share the Joy”*.

Elements of the brochure, that you might want to talk about include:

- When we use our gifts in the way God intends, we experience true joy – a supernatural joy that others notice!
- Once we make the choice to trust God, prayer, gratitude, humility, generosity and joy flow immediately and naturally from our hearts.
- The giving guide on the back. You might want to encourage everyone to read this reflection on giving.

### The Pastor’s Letter

Check with your parish office for a sample of your parish letter. The most important aspect of the letter that you might want to stress in a pulpit talk is that the pastor has personally written to each parishioner and you hope everyone will take the time to read the letter and materials he has sent.

### The Covenant Card

The typical Covenant Card gives parishioners an opportunity to renew their covenant by spending more time with God, to sign up for any parish ministries that are of interest and to make a financial pledge. It is good to have a sample of the Covenant Card to show during your talk. Also find out from your parish stewardship committee when and how the Covenant Cards will be collected. These are details that you should mention. Remind parishioners this is an opportunity to “renew your covenant with God”.



## STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL LAY WITNESS TALK

1. Pray to the Holy Spirit for help and guidance.
2. Get inspired! Review all the materials in this manual and the Sunday readings for the weekend you are scheduled to speak.
3. Read books on the lives of saints for inspiration.
4. Write your talk. This is not the time to “wing it.”
5. Make it “hearable.” That means little words that are commonly understood. This is not the time to impress with your vocabulary. Rather impress them with your message. (Strive for an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level.)
6. Be sure to include the five components of a stewardship talk.
7. Be yourself! Talk naturally. Use words and phrasing that are really you, not contrived.
8. Have someone you trust review your talk. (PLEASE REVIEW YOUR TALK WITH YOUR PASTOR AND/OR STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE!)
9. Be careful not to list all the parish ministries you belong to – this may scare people. Your purpose is to inspire, not brag about yourself.
10. Prepare your script so that it is easy for you to refer to it while you also make lots of eye contact with your audience:
  - Do **not** staple the pages. Use a paper clip and number each page boldly on the upper right hand corner so you can see that pages are in the right order.
  - Use numbered and bulleted lists rather than long sentences.
  - Consider double-spacing.
  - Use a font size that is easy to see – at least 12 or 14 pt.
  - **Don't** try to make your script bigger by using all caps. This is very hard to read and our eyes are not accustomed to reading all caps.
  - Highlight sections that you are afraid you will forget.
11. Practice until you are able to make lots of eye contact and you don't have to read the script word for word. (Practice in front of a mirror and time yourself).

### BASIC COMPONENTS

1. *What was my life like before my conversion?*
2. *What happened to cause the change (over time or all of the sudden)?*
3. *What is my life like now?*



# STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



## FINAL CHECKLIST

Once you have completed the first draft of your pulpit talk, compare it to this checklist.

### Overall

- Did I keep my personal introduction very brief and avoid unnecessary details?
- Did I give a positive definition of stewardship, emphasizing that stewardship means a total giving of ourselves? God owns everything. We are only on earth to share our gifts.
- Did I remind people that the stewardship way of life is deeply rooted in sacred scripture, both the Old and New Testament?
- Did I emphasize the joy and fulfillment that I (and my family) have found in the stewardship way of life?
- Did I ask people to reflect on what's good in their lives? Ask them if God gets any credit for this goodness? Ask them how they show their thankfulness to God for this goodness?
- Did I share a brief story of what stewardship means to me or how stewardship has become a part of my life? Did I include my own struggles along the way?

### Prayer

- Did I talk about spending more time with God, so that we can know how God expects us to share our gifts?
- Did I stress that stewardship flows from our loving and grateful relationship with God? If we do not have God at the center of our lives, it is difficult for us to be good stewards.
- Did I emphasize that we must ask God each day what He wants us to do with the gifts He has given us?

### Participation

- Did I invite people to become involved in the ministry of the parish?
- Did I encourage people to offer their unique talents?
- Did I stress how much more rewarding the experience of parish can be when a person is actively involved in the ministries of the parish?
- Did I give examples of different kinds of parish ministries that need volunteers now?





## SAMPLE STEWARDSHIP LAY WITNESS TALK

### INTRODUCTION

Good Morning. My name is Steve Smith and I'm here to talk for just a few minutes about stewardship.

You may remember that stewardship is giving some of your time, talent and treasure back to God in appreciation for all that He has given you. I'd like to share my personal experience in trying to be a good steward in our parish.

### PERSONALIZATION

I am very thankful to both God and our parish for allowing me the opportunity to participate in different parish ministries. I have worked with many of you in our children's sports program and on our parish picnic committee. When I first came here, I didn't have a clue how I would be able to participate. But, at our first parents' meeting I took a chance and raised my hand and said, "Sure, I'll get involved. What do you want me to do?" Looking back, I'm grateful for the invitation to join and the welcome that my family and I received.

Wow, did my life change! I began associating names with faces I would see at Mass each week. The parish was no longer a bunch of strangers, but a group of friends, a family. After committee meetings I would find myself energized and eager to attend the next meeting. I can't begin to tell you the joy and happiness I have received as a member actively contributing and working in this parish. My involvement provided me with a sense of belonging. Accomplishments were being made and I was participating.

### SCRIPTURE

I also discovered that it was true what Jesus told us in Matthew, Chapter 6, verse 21 – "For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." In keeping with God's command to give back the first fruits to Him, my wife and I made a commitment to give a percentage of our income every month to the Church, before we do anything else. This isn't always easy, but it's been very gratifying to know that we are doing the right thing and helping our parish stay strong for future generations. And I can tell you that somehow God has always provided for us and our heart truly is in our parish and that is a joyful thing.



## STEWARDSHIP: SHARE THE JOY



### A LAST WORD – You Will Be Terrific!

Your stewardship pulpit talk will be successful if you remember the following:

- Pray.
- Prepare.
- Practice.
- Be yourself. Be natural.

Take encouragement from the words the Lord spoke to Jeremiah when Jeremiah complained that he was not ready to be God's prophet.

*"To whomever I send you, you shall go;  
whatever I command you, you shall speak.  
Have no fear before them, because I am with you..."*

- Jeremiah 1:7-8

#### **Offer Your Parish the Opportunity to Get Extra Mileage from Your Talk**

Please make the text of your talk available should your parish want to publish all or part of the lay witness talk(s) in the bulletin, on the parish web site, as a bulletin insert or in a parish newsletter. Excerpts or the full text of the lay witness talk(s) and/or the pastor's stewardship homily could also be mailed in a follow-up letter to parishioners who do not return an intention card.

If you have questions as you prepare your talk, feel free to contact:

**Dave Baranowski – 314.79.-7215 – [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org)**

Please send or e-mail a copy of your completed talk to:

**Dave Baranowski  
Director of Stewardship Education  
#20 Archbishop May Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63119  
Email: [davidbaranowski@archstl.org](mailto:davidbaranowski@archstl.org)**

***Thank You!!***