



TIME · TALENT · TREASURE

A

GUIDE

FOR YOUR ANNUAL  
STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL



**PREPARED BY:**

**THE OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP & DEVELOPMENT  
DIOCESE OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL**

Stewardship is not a diocesan program. Stewardship is a process. Stewardship is a way of life. It is a journey that parishes undertake and needs to be renewed on an annual basis. The process of implementing and maintaining a stewardship effort requires a long-term commitment on the part of a parish community, clergy and laity together! In addition to “new” people, parishioners already involved within a particular parish ministry should be accustomed to renewing their commitments of time, talent, and treasure. Your annual stewardship renewal should be conducted in much the same manner as your initial stewardship effort. Following the same planning cycle, your annual renewal should culminate with your parish’s Second (Third, Fourth, etc.) Annual Stewardship Weekend.

## **COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL**

The lay witness presentation is an essential component when first introducing the concept of stewardship to parishioners (*please refer to A Guide for the Stewardship Lay Witness Presenter*). It is also very important when conducting your parish’s annual renewal. Delivered after the celebrant’s brief homily or before the final blessing, the use of a witness talk will serve to motivate people into action while demonstrating how the embrace and practice of Christian stewardship has made a difference in the life of the speaker. Those individuals or couples delivering a lay witness presentation can focus their talk on the growth that has taken place over the previous year.

To assist in your planning efforts, create a timetable for your parish’s annual renewal (*please refer to Appendix A of this Guide*). Be sure to schedule your stewardship weekend around the same time as the previous year. This will build a tradition within your parish and will give parishioners a sense as to when they can recommit their participation within a particular parish ministry. A Ministry Fair should be a celebration of the parish. If your parish plans to have a Ministry Fair, choose a different theme from the previous year (*please refer to A Guide for Planning and Organizing Your Ministry Fair*). As a way of assisting parishioners in their discernment of gifts, be sure to update your “opportunities to serve” booklet each year making sure that the ministry leader contact information is accurate. Invite new ministries and those who did not participate last year. It is very important to contact and thank those parishioners who indicated an interest in sharing their gifts of time and talent within a parish ministry. It does not make any sense to ask parishioners to come forward and then, through a lack of response, indicate to them that their gifts and talents are not needed or appreciated.

A recommitment to treasure may or may not be held every year. You may opt to send parishioners a letter thanking them for their continued generosity, asking them to maintain their current level of support. Similar to the time and talent phase, the parish’s treasure phase should also utilize directed homilies (*please refer to Appendix D of this Guide*), bulletin and pulpit announcements, Prayers of the Faithful, and a lay witness presentation. Design a commitment card that parishioners can use to indicate their increased commitment. Commitment cards can be mailed to parishioners along with a letter from the pastor (*please refer to sample letters included within the Stewardship Manual*). You can also place the cards in the pews or simply ask a representative from each family to approach the altar where they can offer their family’s commitment of treasure. Or, as an alternative, you may also instruct the ushers to collect the cards in the baskets. After a two-month period, prepare and mail a follow-up letter to those parishioners who did not complete a commitment card on the parish’s Treasure Weekend (*please refer to a sample letter included within the Stewardship Manual*).

Comprising part of the accountability aspect of stewardship, consider preparing an annual Stewardship Report that details the demographics of your parish as well as the many ministries and programs that are administered (*please refer to Appendix E of this Guide*). Utilize graphics and clip art in your weekly bulletin, quarterly newsletter, or other parish communications (*please refer to Appendix F of this Guide*).

## **MATERIALS PROVIDED BY THE OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP & DEVELOPMENT**

The Office of Stewardship & Development provides a wide variety of educational material in order to assist those parishes conducting an annual renewal of stewardship. Please note that these materials are provided at no cost to your parish.

**Please note that the \* denotes this material is also available in Spanish.**

### **\* Stewardship: A Disciple's Response**

In 1992, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published this pastoral letter on stewardship. Each parish stewardship committee member is asked to read the Pastoral Letter and reflect upon the review questions following each of the six sections. The Pastoral Letter describes a Christian steward as "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."

### **Stewardship Manual**

The Stewardship & Development Office has published a manual highlighting best practices from around the country and right here in our own diocese of successful stewardship education and implementation techniques. While the manual is certainly not all-inclusive, it does give a broad range of helpful information for parishes embarking on or continuing their parish stewardship journey.

### **A Guide for Parishes Developing Stewardship as a Way of Life**

Beginning with a letter from the bishop, this guide introduces the concept of Christian stewardship. In addition to focusing on recruiting the Stewardship Committee, responsibilities of committee members are also reviewed in detail. Suggestions are provided that offer wonderful ideas of how to keep the spirit of stewardship alive throughout the year. This guide also provides examples of time and talent opportunities to serve on an individual and youth level.

### **A Guide for the Lay Witness Presenter**

An effective vehicle for promoting the concept of Christian stewardship, the lay witness presentation serves as a way to encourage and inspire others to become good stewards. Besides listing helpful tips for composing and presenting your lay witness presentation, this guide also includes scriptural quotations and sample scripts that can be used in developing your talk.

### **A Guide for Planning and Organizing Your Ministry Fair**

A Ministry Fair is held to generate awareness, enthusiasm, and involvement among parishioners, ultimately increasing parish ministry. This guide describes the ten steps for a successful Ministry Fair. Some creative ideas are mentioned as well as possible themes for your fair. In addition, this resource also provides sample bulletin and pulpit announcements as well as photographs of parish Ministry Fair displays.

## **A Guide for Your Annual Stewardship Renewal**

After time, talent, and treasure have been introduced to the parish and ministries have flourished, an annual renewal should be planned. Refer to this guide for a listing of stewardship educational materials that are provided by the Office of Stewardship & Development. This parish resource also includes two sample homilies that focus on embracing stewardship as a way of life.

## **A Guide for Pastors of Stewardship Parishes**

The role of the pastor is critical to the success of the parish's stewardship efforts. Read this guide that provides some important suggestions for pastors of stewardship parishes. Sample letters from the pastor, bulletin inserts, intercessions, scripture messages, and stewardship prayers are included in appendices for easy reference. This guide also gives an example of dialogue that could be used for a Commissioning Service for parish stewards.

## **A Guide for Implementing Stewardship of Treasure**

Financial support is critical to the effectiveness of a parish community of faith. This resource will guide you through the five essential steps to implementing stewardship of treasure in your parish. Along with some tips to consider when implementing stewardship of treasure, this guide also includes letters from the pastor and sample commitment cards that can be utilized.

## **A Guide for Introducing Stewardship of Treasure**

When the spirit of stewardship begins to take hold within your parish, be sure to incorporate ministries and activities for the younger generation. This guide offers some ideas and suggestions when implementing children's stewardship in your parish community.

## **Children's Stewardship Manual**

Prepared by the I.C.S.C. Children's Stewardship Manual Ad Hoc Committee, this comprehensive children's stewardship manual will sure to be a valuable resource for parish leaders interested in introducing and fostering the concept of stewardship for children and youth.

## **\* Stewardship, Disciples Respond, A Practical Guide for Pastoral Leaders**

Prepared by members of the International Catholic Stewardship Conference (I.C.S.C.) Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee, this is a comprehensive pastoral leadership Manual for use by parish stewardship committees in promoting the concept of Christian stewardship.

## **Commitment Prayer Card**

For use at Mass or enclosed with a parish mailing, this commitment prayer card has been designed with the Diocese of Providence crest on the front and a commitment prayer on the reverse side.

### \* **Brochure**

This informational brochure entitled “Stewardship: Our Parish Journey” provides information regarding the three components of stewardship namely; time, talent, and treasure. This brochure, which includes a letter from the bishop, may be enclosed within a first parish introductory mailing, a follow-up recommitment mailing, and may also be inserted within a new parishioner welcome packet.

### \* **Poster**

This royal blue poster (17 x 12.5) with yellow stars in the background proudly proclaims, “We are a stewardship parish.” The poster states that as a stewardship parish we... “are warm and hospitable, recognize and share our many gifts and talents, are committed to be prayerful disciples of Jesus Christ, are active and involved in the life of our parish, and are consciously grateful.”

### **Banner**

This white banner (72 x 17.75) with blue lettering states, “Stewardship – A Way of Life.” It may be displayed at your Ministry Fair as well as any outreach event leading up to your parish’s Stewardship Weekend. Please note that this banner is not recommended for outdoor use.

### **Stewardship Calendar**

In order to promote stewardship awareness within your parish community, the Office of Stewardship & Development provides parishes with a listing of scriptural quotations and reflections. These stewardship thoughts may be used each week as space in your parish bulletin permits.

### **Commitment Cards**

This abbreviated time and talent commitment card, or one designed by your parish stewardship committee, can be used on your Commitment Weekend. Please note that a Treasure Commitment card is also available from our office.

### **Time and Talent Exercise**

On a double-sided sheet of paper, parishioners are asked to read 26 “interest” statements and indicate which ones they consider to be true. They are then asked to match their “true” responses with a corresponding parish ministry opportunity listed on the reverse side. Once completed, this survey will serve as a gifts assessment exercise for those looking for various ways to share their gifts of time and talent.

### **An Introduction to the Stewardship Lay Witness Presentation (Video)**

You have been recruited by your pastor to give a talk on stewardship. Now what? Don’t panic, this 31 minute video spotlights three couples and one individual who present their talks on stewardship of time, talent and treasure. Watch and learn how you, too, can deliver a powerful presentation.

## **CREATIVE IDEAS WHEN PLANNING YOUR ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL**

### **1. Mini Ministry Fairs**

Instead of having one Ministry Fair, consider spotlighting one particular ministry per weekend over a period of time. After the celebrant's brief homily, a representative or ministry leader says a few words about the good works that are accomplished through this weekend's spotlighted ministry. At the conclusion of Mass, parishioners can learn more about this particular ministry by visiting and talking with a representative staffing an informational display table located in the vestibule of the church.

### **2. Time and Talent Commitment Cards**

Another alternate to a parish Ministry Fair would be to use Time and Talent Commitment Cards. Including a space for the parishioner's name, address, and telephone number, this card lists the various parish ministry opportunities within the parish. On Commitment Sunday, the cards are filled out by parishioners in the pews following a motivational lay witness presentation. Commitment cards can either be presented to the altar during the offering of the gifts or can be collected by the ushers in a basket.

### **3. Appreciation and Recognition Ideas**

It is very important to thank parishioners for sharing their time and talent. In a short note card, thank parishioners for their response, letting them know that their participation is appreciated and thus enables the parish to continue its mission (*please refer to Appendix B of this Guide*).

You may also send parishioners a letter thanking them for their recommitment of stewardship. The letter, sent to parishioners every three months, summarizes their gifts of time, talent, and treasure within the parish community (*please refer to Appendix C of this Guide*).

Another way to bring your parish together as a community of faith is to host an annual "Thank You" dinner for parish volunteers. The dinner can include a "state of the parish" talk by the pastor. Consider presenting certificates of appreciation to parishioners who have shared their time and talent in exceptional ways within the parish throughout the year.

### **4. Ministry Cart**

Recruit a parishioner to build a ministry cart. Invite all ministries of the parish to create a tri-fold brochure on an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper. The parish makes copies of each brochure and places the copies in the slots on the cart (additional copies are stored underneath the cart). Assign parish ministry leaders to staff the cart after each weekend Mass for one weekend per year. With the approval of the pastor, a brief pulpit announcement is made regarding this ministry in addition to a short write-up appearing in the parish's weekly bulletin. Newcomers to the parish are encouraged to register by visiting the cart. The cart should be situated in a high traffic area within the parish center.

**APPENDIX A – Sample Timetable for an Annual Stewardship Renewal**

<b>6 weeks prior</b> to Stewardship Weekend	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Schedule regular Stewardship Committee meetings for the renewal effort. Recruit and train Lay Witness Presenters. Update Ministry leader contact information.
<b>5 weeks prior</b> to Stewardship Weekend	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Prepare Flyers (if desired), posters, banners and other promotional materials. Recruit a photographer to take photographs of your Stewardship Weekend. Decide upon what type of refreshments will be served.
<b>4 weeks prior</b> to Stewardship Weekend	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Utilize bulletin and pulpit announcements, Prayers of the Faithful. Recruit members of each ministry to staff their booth after each Mass on Stewardship Weekend. Write article for parish newsletter (if desired).
<b>3 weeks prior</b> to Stewardship Weekend	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Utilize bulletin and pulpit announcements, Prayers of the Faithful. Pastor sends letter to parishioners informing them about Stewardship Weekend. Make sure time and talent opportunities are up-to-date.
<b>2 weeks prior</b> to Stewardship Weekend	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Utilize bulletin and pulpit announcements, Prayers of the Faithful. Finalize scheduling of presenters for all Stewardship Weekend Masses. Select appropriate liturgical music for Stewardship Weekend.
<b>1 week prior</b> to Stewardship Weekend	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Utilize bulletin and pulpit announcements, Prayers of the Faithful. Insert Flyers into parish bulletin (if desired). Display posters and banners throughout the parish buildings.
<b>Stewardship Weekend</b>	Recitation of stewardship prayer. Deliver lay witness talk. Homily based upon today’s scripture with stewardship references. Celebrant should encourage parishioners to visit the Ministry Fair in the parish center after Mass.
<b>1 week after</b> Stewardship Weekend	Contact and follow-up, through a card or letter, with those parishioners responding to the Ministry Fair. Thank them for coming forward to share their gifts. Prepare a statistical report on your time and talent data.

**APPENDIX B – Sample Thank You Note to Those Responding to Annual Stewardship Renewal**

*Cover of Card*

***Time, Talent, Treasure***



**Stewardship**  
*A Way of Life*

***“We Give of Our First Fruits”***

*Inside Text of Card*

Dear Friends in Christ,

I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to you for your (time and talent / treasure) commitment to Saint Alfred Parish.

Your continued contributions will assist in not only the daily operations of Saint Alfred’s, but also makes the profound statement that you too have great hope for the future of our parish.

I thank you for your continued prayers and support and for giving of yourself through your time, talent, and treasure.

*Father James*

**APPENDIX C – Sample Appreciation Letter to Those Responding to Annual Stewardship Renewal**

**Saint Alfred Parish  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, RI**

Date

Mr. and Mrs. John Steward  
555 Oak Street  
Anytown, RI

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Steward:

Every season I take this opportunity to thank you and remind you of your commitment to Saint Alfred Parish. Please see below for an update of your stewardship to our parish.

Each year our parish establishes its ministries and its budget based on the stewardship intention cards we receive from all of our parishioners. The effective fulfillment of the mission of our parish is dependent upon your stewardship commitment. Thank you again for your generosity to our parish.

Sincerely,

Rev. James Smith  
Pastor

**OUR RECORDS INDICATE YOUR STEWARDSHIP OF TIME AND TALENT:**

JEFF

Lector  
Finance Council

MARY

Eucharistic Minister  
Sacristan  
Bereavement Ministry

**OUR RECORDS INDICATE YOUR STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE:**

Your annual commitment: \$1,200.00

Your gifts to date: \$600



## **APPENDIX D1 – Sample Homily Help for Time and Talent Stewardship Weekend**

*Please note: The following serves only as an example. Celebrants are encouraged to utilize any of these ideas when developing a more original and personalized homily.*

Blind Bartimeus

30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

The focus in this story is the call to discipleship. The blindness of Bartimeus represents the inability of the disciples to understand Jesus' mission and teaching on discipleship.

The connection between seeing and understanding is made clear by the question, "What do you want me to do for you?" James and John have asked Jesus to give them glory, Bartimeus asks to see. The plea of Bartimeus is answered. He immediately gets up and follows Our Lord while the 12 follow in confusion, not yet understanding. Seeing with eyes of faith leads to discipleship.

At our Baptism we are called by name and receive our life-long vocation as Disciples of Christ. Stewardship is a Disciple's response to the gifts God has given each of us. We lead a life of constant conversion as we learn to recognize the opportunities God places before us to be His servants in the world and by our example, reach out to others inviting them to join us on our journey of faith.

This weekend we are asked to focus on Time and Talent. We are asked to use our skills and abilities for the good of the community, and to take up our work in the building up of the Kingdom of God here on earth. Through prayer we come to know what we have to offer and open ourselves to the opportunities that come to each of us every day.

The parish Ministry Fair is an important part of this weekend. The Festival is where the congregation gets to see what each of the parish groups and ministries do. This is a good opportunity for people to see who is currently involved in ministry and be given information about their mission. Lay witness speakers will make a presentation at each Liturgy on Time and Talent Weekend. Lay witnesses are a powerful incentive for those in the congregation who may feel drawn to service but are reluctant to come forward on their own. It is a talk from committed laypeople who briefly express how they came to take a step by using the time and talent that God so freely entrusted to them. It is an inspiring presentation that helps fellow parishioners observe what living a life of stewardship looks like right here in their own faith community.

If we pray faithfully like Bartimeus, what would our service to God and His people look like? How would God's people benefit from a response in proportion to what I have received?

## **APPENDIX D2 – Sample Homily Help for Stewardship of Treasure Weekend**

*Please note: The following serves only as an example. Celebrants are encouraged to utilize any of these ideas when developing a more original and personalized homily.*

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew Chapter 5: 1 – 12a

The Beatitudes stand as one of the most familiar and defining portions of all Sacred Scripture for we who call ourselves Christian. In these words of Christ we are reminded of our responsibility of building right relationships out of respect for our fellow man. We are to die to the ways of the world so that Christ may come alive in us. We must find ways to build right relationships in order to participate in building the Kingdom of God on earth. When we live this way, a right relationship will occur between God and us. Out of gratitude for what we have so freely been given we give back, not from our excess but from our substance, caring for those who cannot care for themselves.

Because we live as members of the One Body of Christ, even one sinful act causes harm to the entire Body. It is also true that one act of humble generosity serves to strengthen the Body and builds our community of faith. On this second weekend of our stewardship initiative, we consider our financial resources, our treasure, and prayerfully ask, “Am I giving back according to what I have received? Do I give from what I happen to have in my pocket or do I have a plan for giving?”

We plan financially to go on vacation, we plan financially for the education of our children, we make financial plans for our retirement; do we plan financially to support God’s work in our parish community? Stewardship is living our lives in gratitude for all our gifts so freely and richly given to us by God.

Christ calls us as His disciples to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, and to be merciful. We are to be His peacemakers promoting justice for all the people of God like so many of the saints who have gone before us have done.

We are called by name to be disciples, we respond and along the way we experience conversion as we gain greater understanding of our vocation as Christian stewards. Let our prayer be that one-day we will come to understand the love the Father has bestowed upon us in letting us be called the children of God. May we become more Christ-like, faithfully responding as Disciples of Christ in the world.

## **APPENDIX E – Sample Stewardship Report to Parishioners**

### **Parish Annual Report Saint Alfred Parish - Anytown, RI**

**July 1, 200\_ to June 30, 200\_**

#### **Parish Population:**

2,140 households  
7,027 individuals  
189 new households registered

#### **Average Age:**

Under 5 years of age	432	40 years to 49 years	1,017
5 years – 12 years	918	50 years to 59 years	1,124
13 years – 19 years	843	60 years and over	2,072
20 years – 29 years	621		

#### **Sacraments Celebrated:**

96 Baptisms	420 Masses (47 funerals)
66 First Communions	20 Scripture services
57 First Reconciliations	10 Anointing of the Sick
43 Confirmations	1 Vocation to the priesthood / religious life
38 Marriages	

#### **Parish Programs:**

275 liturgical ministers (includes lectors, servers, Eucharistic Ministers, ushers, choir)  
37 members in Health Ministry (grief ministry, “new mom” ministry, etc.)  
400 participants in parish mission  
750 parishioners in attendance at parish picnic  
28 participants in Scripture study  
14 youths attended World Youth Day  
8,760 hours devoted to Perpetual Adoration

#### **Outreach Programs:**

42 families served by Saint Vincent de Paul Society  
170 families served by Christmas “Giving Tree”  
109 Thanksgiving food baskets prepared  
4,300 service hours performed by Confirmation students  
1,600 service hours performed by youth group  
24 parishioners participated in Focus Hope Walk  
105 Knights of Columbus members for 2,100 service hours

#### **School Program:**

40 kindergarten students  
320 students grades 1- 8  
160 students grades 9 - 12  
26 teachers

#### **Religious Education Program:**

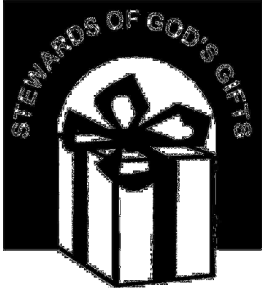
60 pre-school / kindergarten students  
518 students grades 1- 8  
80 students grades 9 - 12  
35 volunteer catechists

#### **Administration Programs:**

Parish Pastoral Council: 12 meetings, 13 members  
Publications: 2,200 parish directories, 52 weekly bulletins, 4 newsletters

**APPENDIX F – Sample Graphics and Clip Art**

*Please call the Office of Stewardship & Development and we will be happy to forward one or all of these stewardship images to you via E-mail.*



**If you would like more information about your annual stewardship renewal,  
please contact:**

**Office of Stewardship & Development  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence  
One Cathedral Square  
Providence, RI 02908  
Telephone (401) 277-2121  
Fax (401) 277-2120  
[www.providencediocese.org](http://www.providencediocese.org)**