



STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL



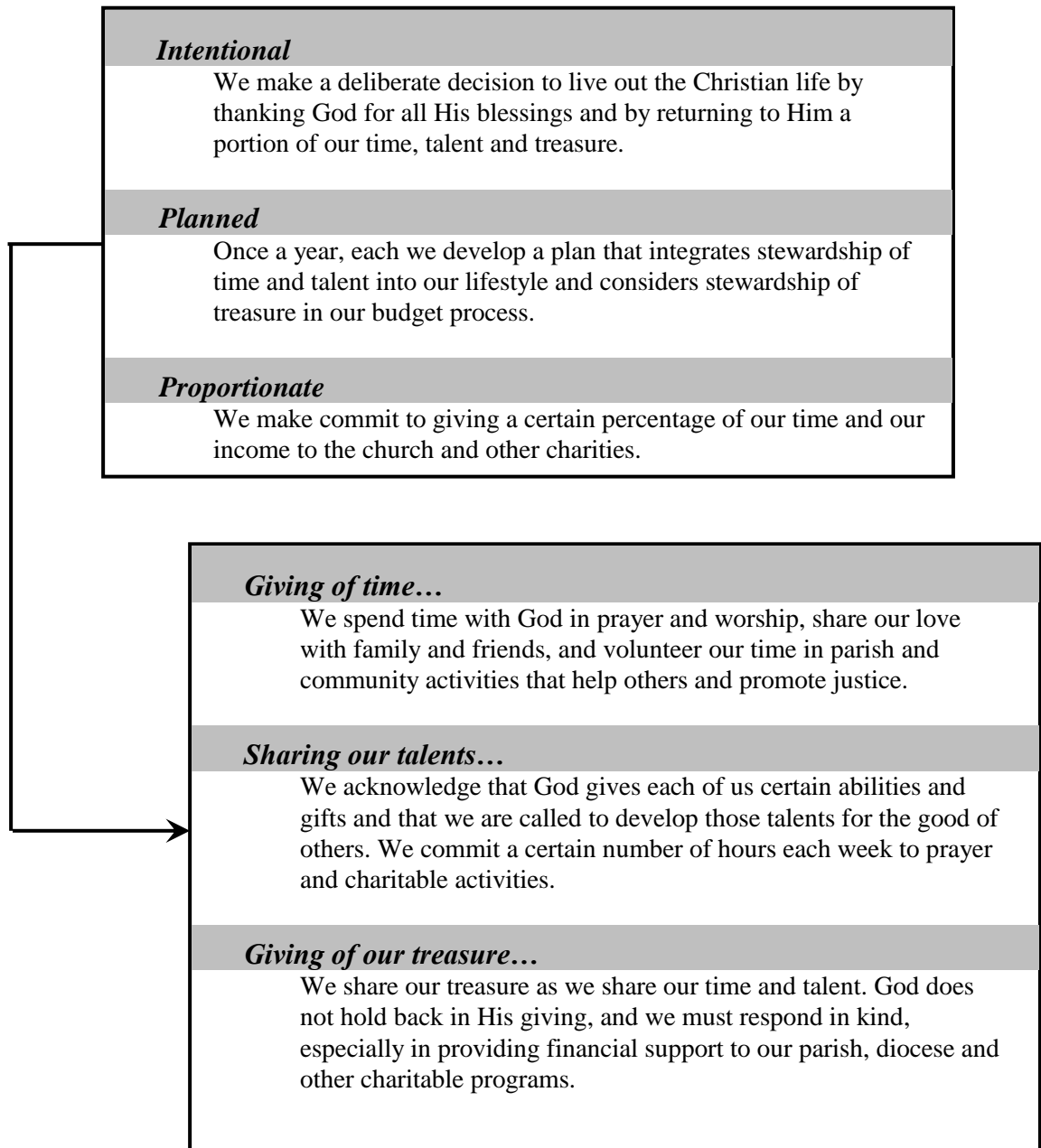
ROMAN CATHOLIC
Diocese of Grand Rapids

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Stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure

Stewardship involves *intentional, planned and proportionate* giving of our *time, talent and treasure*.



The Christian steward is one who receives God's gifts gratefully, cultivates them responsibly, shares them lovingly in justice with others, and returns them with measure to the Lord.

To understand Catholic stewardship more fully, begin by studying *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, the U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter, and *To Be a Christian Steward: A Summary of the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship*.

Using Our Gifts of Time, Talent and Treasure

Time

Time cannot be stopped, reversed or altered in any way. It is completely beyond our control, to be accepted “as is.” It is, however, a gift to be cherished, God has given each of us a certain amount of time. It is our responsibility to use that time wisely to build God's kingdom on earth. Good stewardship requires us to make the most of our time. In so doing, we make God the center of our lives. God is present whether we are spending our time at work, with family or just relaxing.

Do I see stewardship as a way of life, recognizing that God is present at each moment of the day?

Talent

Our loving Creator has given each of us special blessings: talents, skills and abilities. He has entrusted us to “steward” our gifts, calling us to use them to benefit others. Unlike time and treasure, which we may believe we have in short supply, our many, diverse talents are a major, untapped resource that we are called to share with others - for our own sake and for the good of all humanity.

Have I taken the time to discover what my talents are and how I can use them as a faithful steward?

Treasure

We often hold onto our treasure with a firm grasp or a tight fist. Though it can be difficult to let go, that is exactly what we are called to do (let go and give back to God the first portion of our treasure). By doing so, we acknowledge that all we have is a gift from God to be shared with others - for our own benefit and for the benefit of others. When we recognize that what we accumulate in this life does nothing to prepare us for the next life, it is easier to let go and use that treasure in ways that will pay dividends in heaven.

Do I use my treasure for my parish, community charities, and the environment with which God has blessed me?

Deepening Our Understanding of and Relationship with God

The Call

Stewardship is a lifestyle which involves a deeper understanding of our relationship with God, ourselves and others. It is a joyful response to the gospel invitation to recognize our responsibility to live our lives as Christian caretakers of God's gifts.

The call to a stewardship is a way of life that leads us to become disciples of Christ. Embracing stewardship leads to sharing what we have to make our family, parish, diocese, community and the world a better place.

Responding to the Call

Jesus' call is urgent. He does not tell people to follow Him at some time in the future but here and now - at **this** moment, in **these** circumstances. There can be no delay.

“Go and proclaim the kingdom of God....No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:60,62)

Source: U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship

We respond to the call of Christian stewardship through the use of our time, talent and treasure. Each of us is blessed in a variety of ways. These blessings come from God, not from what we may see as our own efforts. Any talents we possess that will allow us to achieve success are blessings from the Lord. Any treasure we may reap as a result of those talents is also a blessing from God. We don't know how much time we will have on this earth, but whatever time we have, we are called to use it wisely.

Becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ leads to the practice of stewardship. Discipleship and stewardship make up the fabric of a Christian life in which each day is lived in an intimate, personal relationship with the Lord. Following Jesus is lifetime work involving an ongoing process of study, reflection, prayer and action.

The way of discipleship is privileged beyond any other. Jesus says, “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10). But discipleship is not an easy way. “If you wish to come after me,” Jesus also says, “you must deny yourself and take up your cross daily and follow me. For if you wish to save your life you will lose it, but if you lose your life for my sake you will save it”

Stewardship Renewal Process – Suggested Schedule

X-3 Weekend	<p>MAIL Letter Message: Parish stewardship renewal starting; begin prayerful consideration; (<i>optional</i> - include ministry opportunities)</p> <p>Bulletin and Pulpit Announcements Stewardship renewal starting; look for mailing</p>
X-2 Weekend	<p>Bulletin INSERT Listing of parish ministry opportunities; promote Ministry Fair) Summary of how parish spends offertory, description of parish needs, Treasure Giving Guide</p> <p>Bulletin Article Stewardship and promoting ministry involvement/participation</p> <p>Pulpit Announcement Promote Ministry Fair next weekend – Draw attention to INSERT</p> <p>Prayers of the faithful</p>
X-1 Weekend	<p>Ministry Fair Following each Mass - Ministry opportunities information/sign-up available</p> <p>Pulpit Announcement Promote Ministry Fair – Attention to bulletin insert; treasure also important Announce Renewal [Commitment] Weekend, letter and renewal form coming in mail</p> <p>Bulletin Article Stewardship renewal (commitment) next weekend, treasure guide</p> <p>MAIL Letter Include stewardship renewal form; next weekend is Commitment Weekend)</p> <p>Prayers of the Faithful</p> <p>Lay Testimony/Challenge</p>
X Weekend	<p>RENEWAL (COMMITMENT) WEEKEND (<i>Return completed Stewardship Renewal Form at Mass</i>)</p> <p>Bulletin Article Stewardship and importance of participation</p> <p>Pulpit Announcement Need for full participation – Complete renewal brochure</p> <p>Stewardship renewal forms and ministry opportunities List (available in pews)</p> <p>Lay Testimony/Challenge</p> <p>Prayers of the faithful</p>
X+1 Weekend	<p>Bulletin Article Stewardship and importance of participation</p> <p>Pulpit Announcement Need for full participation – Complete a renewal form available in pews</p> <p>Stewardship Renewal Forms and Ministry Opportunities List (available in pews)</p> <p>Prayers of the Faithful</p>
Follow-up	<p>Thank-you letter to parishioners who have responded</p> <p>Letter to parishioners who have not yet responded (include stewardship renewal form)</p> <p>Commitment Follow up Time and Talent</p>

Stewardship Process – Communications Resources

Following are models to use or modify as appropriate for your parish.

X-3 Weekend

Bulletin Article to be placed in bulletin for next weekend

Our Stewardship Renewal begins next week. Stewardship is based on the spiritual principles of the Old Testament and Jesus' teachings. By returning to God a portion of our time, talent and treasure to do His work in this parish, we demonstrate good stewardship of the gifts we have received and show our gratitude for His blessings. Over the next few weeks you will receive more information about stewardship and living as His stewards every day. Please be open to the Holy Spirit's guidance in sharing your blessings.

Pulpit Announcement (Pastor)

This week you will receive a letter announcing the start of our parish stewardship renewal. As followers of Christ, we are called to regularly review the blessings we have and how we are using them to further God's work – including here at this parish. It is through the sharing of our time, talent and treasure that we respond to the call of Jesus and to build His kingdom.

I ask everyone to participate in this process – to learn about the many ways your talents, time and financial resources can benefit our parish. In responding to God's invitation to do His work, consider the ways you can be more fully involved in the life of this parish. I ask you to:

- Spend more time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit for guidance.
- Share some special talent, skill or knowledge with our parish.
- Contribute a greater portion of your treasure to our parish.

In the next few weeks, please listen carefully to how God is calling you to participate here at (parish name).

Sample letter for mailing

(Date)

Dear (Name of parish) Parishioner:

Spiritual growth and renewal are an ongoing part of the life of any Christian. They also are essential to our parish life.

An important part of this spiritual growth is embodied in the principle of stewardship. Stewardship leads us to recognize the blessings we have received from God and to show our gratitude for the gifts we have received by returning to Him a portion of the time, talent and treasure He has given us.

During the next few weeks, our parish will be conducting a stewardship renewal. You will hear about the many opportunities to do God's work here at (parish name). You will be asked to reflect on the three specific areas of stewardship and how you live them out in your life. Among the important questions are:

Time: How much time each week do you contribute to parish programs, ministries and activities?

Talent: How are you using your talents, skills, abilities and knowledge to benefit our parish family?

Treasure: What percentage of your yearly income do you give to support the important ministry and work of this parish?

God is the origin of all of our gifts. Jesus speaks of the **faithful and prudent steward** as one the master assigned the responsibility to manage resources. A good steward receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with all, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

During the next several weeks you will have a special opportunity to consider your gifts and to reflect prayerfully about your personal stewardship and your relationship with the Lord. Take time to think about and recognize the abundant gifts you have received. Reflect on how you can use those gifts to further His work here at (parish name).

Sincerely,

(Pastor's Name)

X-2 Weekend

Bulletin Article

None of us lives for oneself...whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Romans 14:7-8.

Whatever we have in this life, we have it because God gave it to us. We are working only with the gifts with which he has blessed us – including our family, our natural abilities, our education, our money and the opportunities that have crossed our paths. All of these are gifts from God. Our very lives are a gift from God and thus belong to Him. This is why we must actively pray to know how God wants us to use the life He has given us. We are called to be His disciples in today's world.

Our talents are special blessings from our loving God. As stewards of the talents entrusted to our care, we are called to use them for God's work. The insert in this week's bulletin lists many opportunities for parishioners to utilize your **time and talents** in our parish. If you don't see anything that fits your abilities, then suggest how you would like to share your time and talents at the parish. Collectively we have many gifts, and there always are more or different ways the parish can further the message and work of our Lord. Consider how you will respond to the Lord's call to **"Come follow me and feed my sheep."**

The bulletin insert also gives important **treasure** information about the parish. Providing financial support for our parish is another component of Christian stewardship. Because of the rampant consumerism that surrounds us daily, sharing our treasure with the parish may be difficult for some. We are tempted to keep all the money for us and, in the process, become more attached to things.

Matthew 6:19-21 communicates a strong message about what we accumulate in this life:

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 destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

Matthew's message is even stronger in 6:19-21:

Jesus said "this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."

With these words Jesus teaches us that the depth of our generosity is not measured by the size of our gift, but by the size of the heart of the giver.

As good stewards we must give back from our "first fruits," not from what is left over.

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce (or paychecks). Proverbs 3:9

Pastor

Pulpit Announcement (Pastor):

This past week I mailed an important letter to each of you. Over the next couple weeks, I ask that you take an honest look at the time, talent and treasure you give to your parish. On (date) I will ask you to commit a portion of your time and specific talents to our parish. You also will be asked to determine the portion of your income you plan to give to the parish as a way of expressing your faith and trust in God.

The insert in today's bulletin lists the many ways to share your gifts with (parish name). You also will find information regarding how your offertory supports important parish ministries and programs. Please take the time to read this important information.

Also, next weekend our Ministry Fair will provide you with the opportunity to speak directly with parishioners directly involved in our many ministries and programs. You can find out their purpose and activities, whom they serve, what resources and volunteers they need, the time commitment involved, opportunities, etc. Please plan on visiting the Ministry Fair after Masses next weekend, prayerfully consider how you will share your time and talent with our parish and then sign up!

Prayers of the faithful

We pray for the success of our parish stewardship renewal, that each of us will recognize God's gifts to us and respond joyfully by giving from our first fruits to further the work of our Lord through this parish.

Listing Opportunities for Time and Talent

Your time and talents are gifts from God who instilled them in you for His purpose before you were born. Below is a listing of our parish ministries. Share your blessings with your parish family by offering your time and talents. *“For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10)

Adult day care volunteer Adult education facilitator AIDS program volunteer Altar guild Altar server Arts and crafts teacher Artwork for publications Auto repair Auxiliary minister Baby-sitting Baptism/marriage preparation Bereaved/terminally ill Bible study leader Board member of community agency Budget planning Campus ministry volunteer Capital campaign volunteer Carpentry CCD teacher Choir member Choir Clothing ministry volunteer Coaching Athletics Communion Distributor to Shut-Ins Communion Service Community Life Commission Computer assistance Crisis pregnancy volunteer Crossing/Traffic Guard Driver Education Commission member Electrical work English as a second language teacher Eucharistic Adoration Eucharistic Minister Evangelization Commission member Family Life Commission member	Finance Commission member Food bank Volunteer Food deliveries to sick/shut-ins Greeter at Masses Habitat for Humanity volunteer Home and School Association Hospital/hospice volunteer Kitchen help Knights of Columbus Lawn care Lector Legion of Mary Library Volunteer Literacy program volunteer Liturgy Commission member Masonry work Mass Nursery Program Migrant ministry volunteer Mothers' morning out volunteer Musician Newcomers' coffee Newsletter work Outreach to inactive Catholics Outreach to the unchurched Painting Paper Drive Coordinator Parish dinner preparation Pastoral Council member Phone answering Photographer Plant and shrubbery care Plumbing work Post Grad/Senior Program Prayer group Printer Pro-Life volunteer Program director Public relations assistance RCIA volunteer School Tutor School volunteer Scout leadership Scouting Programs	Sewing Social service agency volunteer Sound systems/electronics Soup kitchen volunteer Sports team coach Steven Minister Stewardship Committee member Sunday morning coffee Teacher's aid Teacher's substitute Telephone ministry Typing/Clerical Usher Visiting sick/shut-ins Wills Awareness Committee Women's club/Guild Young adult minister Youth group counselor
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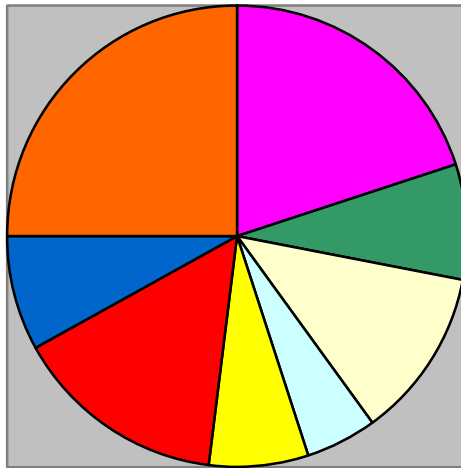
Next weekend after each Mass you will have the opportunity to visit our Ministry Fair to learn more about our ministries, programs, activities and other ways to serve our Lord through this parish. Representatives will be available to answer questions about the many ways you can share your time and talents with the parish. *(Insert details of where – food – child care - refreshments, etc.)*

SAMPLE X-2 Bulletin INSERT *(front and back on following pages)*

What Your Offertory Supports

Total Church Budget \$_____

Total Weekly Offertory Required \$_____



Guide to Proportionate Giving

Weekly Income	Yearly Income	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
\$200	\$10,400	\$4	\$8	\$12	\$16	\$20
\$385	\$20,000	\$8	\$15	\$23	\$31	\$39
\$770	\$40,000	\$15	\$31	\$46	\$62	\$77
\$1,154	\$60,000	\$23	\$46	\$69	\$92	\$115
\$1,538	\$80,000	\$31	\$62	\$92	\$123	\$156
\$1,923	\$100,000	\$38	\$77	\$115	\$154	\$192
\$2,307	\$120,000	\$46	\$92	\$138	\$185	\$230
\$2,692	\$140,000	\$54	\$108	\$162	\$215	\$269

The effectiveness of this faith community depends upon the support of our entire parish family. As stewards, we are challenged to show gratitude to God for bestowing us with gifts of time, talent and treasure. With our financial support, we help build the kingdom of God. Think of God first. Give your gift to God from the first fruits, not from what is left over.

X-1 Weekend

Bulletin Article

Stewardship is our faith in action through the contribution of our time, talent and treasure. We all are blessed differently and something different is expected from each of us. Jesus said, “Strive first for the kingdom and all these things will be given to you as well.” Does that mean we will have money and blessings dumped into our life and bank accounts if we give? His promise has nothing to do with winning some kind of divine lottery. Rather, *if we give proportionately based upon our blessings*, we will have what we need.

St. James tells us, “Every good and perfect gift is from above.” We are accountable for the gifts we receive. Stewardship rejects the notion that we must “have it all” and, instead, demonstrates the value of giving in love, in service and in justice. If we are disciples in our giving, we always will have enough! When we share our time, talents and treasure in His name for His glory, we become true disciples, responding to Jesus’s call to, “**Come follow me.**”

Next weekend we are asking everyone to renew your commitment of time, talent and treasure by completing and returning the stewardship renewal form that will be mailed to you. Please reflect *honestly* on your current level of support to the parish. Consider the blessings the Lord has provided to you and the great things that can be accomplished if we all share the blessings we have received. Pray that your heart and mind are open to the call of stewardship and what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

Each of us demonstrates our faith by our actions, which are the use of our gifts – an act of stewardship! Let all of us come together next weekend as a faith family and act as generous stewards of God’s blessings.

Pastor

Pulpit Announcement (Pastor):

Please take time after Mass today to visit our Ministry Fair, located (place). It is an opportunity to learn more about the many ways you can share your time and talents. Next weekend, we will ask you to make a formal commitment of your time, talent and treasure to our parish. You will receive a stewardship renewal form in the mail later this week. I am asking each of you to complete the renewal form and bring it with you to Mass next weekend. That’s why visiting the Ministry Fair today is so important! Go, ask questions, become informed and determine how you will share your time, talent and treasure with this faith community. Everybody has something to give. I challenge you to earnestly discern how God is calling you to use your gifts, to live your life God-centered rather than self-centered. Honor God first doing His work here at (parish name). You will be blessed in return.

Prayers of the faithful:

We pray that God, Giver of all gifts, strengthens our faith and grants us the spirit of Christian stewardship so that we may give generously of our time, talent and treasure to build His kingdom here in our parish.

Lay Testimony/Challenge:

A two to four minute lay testimony/witness can provide a practical example of how we can use our gifts for our parish and the joyful results. People are motivated by hearing from others and can gain a better understanding of daily stewardship from hearing a peer describe what stewardship means to him/her, how he/she makes decisions regarding sharing time, talent and treasure; and the results.

MINISTRY FAIR

Conduct a Ministry Fair following weekend Masses.

- Make available copies of the time and talent opportunities list.
- Locate the fair in the parish center or a place convenient for people to go after Masses.
- Ask all parish ministries to be present.
- Identify each table/booth/area by ministry and make sure a ministry representative is present at all times.
- Provide refreshments to entice more people to attend and consider having an activity available for children so that it can be a “family event.”

Sample X-1 letter for Mailing

(Date)

Dear (Name of Parish) Parishioner:

Such as My Love has been for you...so must your love be for each other.

In recent weeks you have been hearing about stewardship at (parish name). I have asked you to reflect on the blessings you have received and consider this a time for personal renewal of your relationship with the Lord. I have challenged you to think about your stewardship of time, talent and treasure and what it means in your life.

Your Time - Time is a precious commodity. The demands of family, work, school, parish and community are overwhelming at times. It makes sense to re-evaluate our priorities regularly to determine what in life really is important. We must strive to balance our time against what we know we must do. I hope that you are re-examining your priorities during this time of reflection and ensuring that you give some of your time to the parish.

Your Talent - Everyone has a variety of talents, skills and abilities. Yours may be in music, art, writing, organizing, planning, driving a car, supervising an initiative, even making other people laugh. Our parish provides many opportunities to use your talents to benefit our parishioners, our community and beyond. I challenge you to consider your talents and how you can share those talents with your parish.

Your Treasure - Financial and material things can be both a necessity and an evil in today's world. Too often we think we don't have anything to share because we aren't wealthy. God doesn't look at our gifts in comparison to others' gifts. He looks at what we give in relation to what He has given us. Your gift of treasure supports our many religious, faith formation, outreach, evangelization and social ministries. The weekly offertory collection is the primary source of all of our parish programs, ministries and the upkeep of our facilities. Stewardship of treasure involves committing a regular portion of our income to the parish. I challenge you to consider committing a specific percentage of your annual income to our parish and making your contribution on a regular, consistent basis.

Accompanying this letter, you will find a stewardship renewal form. I ask you to renew your stewardship commitment to this parish via this form this coming weekend.

Read the enclosed and reflect on the gifts God has provided for you and determine how you will share your gifts to serve others through our parish. Your gifts will make it possible to continue and expand the spiritual, sacramental, social and outreach ministries of (parish name).

Join your fellow parishioners by returning your completed stewardship renewal form at Masses next weekend. It will be an important day for all of us at (parish name) as we continue to build a community of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the name of Christ,

Pastor

X Weekend *Renewal (Commitment) Weekend*

Bulletin Article

This weekend is our Stewardship Renewal weekend. We have asked every parishioner to think and pray about making a commitment to the parish based on what the Lord has given you and to complete and return the stewardship renewal form. Be as generous with your time, talent and treasure as God has been with you - for your own spiritual growth as well as for the parish's spiritual growth. If you did not bring your completed stewardship renewal form with you, return it next weekend or mail it to the parish office. Every parishioner's stewardship commitment is important to continue building a community of faith.

Pastor

Pulpit Announcement (Pastor) (at offertory time)

Over the past few weeks, you've been asked to pray about your commitment of time, talent and treasure. This is our Stewardship Renewal weekend and you are asked place your stewardship renewal form in the offertory collection today. If you forgot your form, extra copies are available in the pew or you may return your form next weekend.

Jesus promised us that we will grow spiritually by being good stewards. The Bible contains many references to stewardship. In one, Jesus tells us, "You can be sure that whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of my followers will certainly receive a reward." (Matthew 10:37-42) We give a drink of cold water in a symbolic way when we contribute our time and talents and treasure to our parish. Every parishioner has a responsibility to give a drink of cold water by supporting the parish as it brings Christ's healing touch to our parish family and to all those we serve. This parish family is blessed with many different members, who all blessed abundantly in different ways. Today, we bring forth our gifts in God's name.

Prayers of the faithful:

Invited to be God's co-workers, may we joyfully participate in the work of the vineyard by sharing of our time, our talents and our treasure.

X+1 Weekend

Bulletin Article

Last weekend was our Stewardship Renewal weekend when we asked each parish family to return a stewardship renewal form. To those of you who responded, thank you! If you weren't with us last weekend or you haven't returned your stewardship form for another reason, please do so today by placing it in the offertory or mail it to the parish office. It is important that everyone respond. Additional forms are located(*details*)..... and in the pews.

God has granted each of us the privilege of being part of a wonderful, caring and vibrant faith community. This privilege implies a responsibility to share our blessings. Please do your part as a good and faithful servant of the Lord. I'm counting on each and every one of you to be part of the stewardship renewal at (parish name) to further His work as Jesus instructed us.

Pastor

Pulpit Announcement (Pastor):

As good stewards we are called to recognize that everything comes from God and to return to the Lord our "first fruits." Last weekend we asked you to return your completed stewardship renewal forms committing your time, talent and treasure to support this parish. If you weren't with us last weekend or otherwise haven't returned your stewardship form, please do so today by placing it in the offertory or mail it to the parish office this week. Extra forms are available(*details*)....in the pews. We are one body in Christ, with many and varied blessings. Please respond based upon your individual circumstances. Sharing your time, talent and treasure not only will deepen your relationship with God, but will make an enormous difference in our parish. I need everyone to participate. As it says in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Everyone must give according to what he has inwardly decided; not sadly, not grudgingly, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Prayers of the faithful:

That we may show our gratitude for God's generosity with our generous contribution of time, talent and treasure to the ministry of this parish.

Sample Pastor Follow-Up Letters

Sample Letter for Mailing

For non-responding parishioners

(Date)

Dear (Name of parish) Parishioner:

I am writing to you because we have not yet received your parish stewardship renewal commitment form.

Over the past several weeks, our parish community has been learning more about stewardship – *a way of life* in our worship and in our homes. We have asked all members of our parish community to discern prayerfully how God has uniquely gifted each of us; to reflect on what priority God and His church play in our lives; to decide how we will share these gifts with God and His Church; and to make an intentional, planned and proportionate gift of time in prayer, talent and treasure to our parish.

When you share your gifts, you enable our parish to “keep the lights on” but also to continue its important ministries and programs, including (specify for your parish):

- Assisting those in need through outreach programs and activities
- Providing quality Catholic education and faith formation to children, youth and adults
- Training parish leaders
- Building up our faith community through social and fellowship programs and events.

It is important for our parish to know your stewardship commitment so that we can plan appropriately for our ministries in the coming year. Please return the enclosed stewardship renewal form to the parish office by mail this week or simply place it in the collection basket at Mass this weekend. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Thank you for your participation,

In the name of Christ,

(Pastor's Name)

“As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” 1 Peter 4:10

Sample Letter for Mailing

Thank you for responding

(Date)

Dear (name)

I am deeply grateful for your Stewardship Renewal response. Through your participation, you are helping to make Stewardship a way of life at (parish name).

Thank you for making the following commitments:

Stewardship of time: Attend Mass regularly
Stewardship of talent: Usher, RCIA instructor
Stewardship of treasure: \$25.00 weekly

It is my prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide our use of time, talent and treasure at (parish name). Through our combined efforts, we will build a strong faith community to carry out Christ's work on earth.

May God bless you and your family.

(Pastor's Name)

As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace. 1 Peter 4:10

Enclosure

Sample Stewardship Renewal Commitment Forms

Options for a stewardship renewal form:

- 1) A downloadable tri-fold template is provided for parishes to customize and print in-house.
- 1) Our Sunday Visitor (OSV) provides a renewal commitment form which can be customized for your parish, personally addressed and mailed directly by OSV. You will find a sample of the commitment form by using the link to the OSV website below.

Additionally, OSV provides a complete stewardship renewal program. Parishes may elect to utilize some or all the OSV stewardship services. Contact OSV directly or go to the following link for further/additional information.

<http://www.osvoffertory.com/Parish/Stewardship/StewardshipRenewal.aspx>

- 2) Your parish may choose to create your own stewardship renewal form.

**2014 Fall
Readings/Messages**

Date	Message/ Readings
9/6-7	All comes from and belongs to God (1Chr 29:14-16)
9/13-14	First fruits (Dt 26:1-4, 10-11)
9/20-21	Offering and sacrifice (Sir 35:7-11)
9/27-28	Generosity to the poor (Dt 15:7-8, 10-11)
10/4-5	Being content with little or plenty (Phil 4:11-12)
10/11-12	Give and it will be given (Lk 6:38)
10/18-19	Store treasure in heaven (Mt 6:19-21)
10/25-26	More blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)
11/1-2	Love in action and truth (1 John 3:17-18)
11/8-9	Giving and friendship (Lk 11:5-8)
11/15-16	The generous employer (Mt 20:1-16)
11/22-23	One body, many parts (Romans 12:3-8)
11/29-30	Reap and sow; God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:6-12)

Fall STEWARDSHIP Renewal

Diocese of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Q&A

What is the purpose of a fall STEWARDSHIP Renewal?

The fall STEWARDSHIP Renewal program offers opportunity to build parishioners' awareness of STEWARDSHIP as a lifestyle and to encourage their embrace of STEWARDSHIP as a path to discipleship. The renewal program can enhance parishioners' realization that Gospel teachings call each of us to be responsible stewards of the gifts we have received – which, beyond expressing gratitude for what we have received, also includes sharing our gifts with others as a demonstration of our appreciation.

Is it a good idea to talk about STEWARDSHIP in tough economic times?

The message of STEWARDSHIP is timeless because it doesn't focus on how much we have – or don't have. Rather, STEWARDSHIP is a constant, consistent commitment to use God's gifts to accomplish His work, whatever those gifts are. STEWARDSHIP teaches us that God will provide all that we need and that real security comes only from placing our trust in Him. The answers to many of our worries are found in the STEWARDSHIP Way of Life. Peace and comfort come from:

- Placing our trust in God.
- Putting God first in our lives.
- Recognizing the blessings that we have.
- Taking time to thank God for His abundance.
- Re-ordering our priorities.
- Recognizing the difference between what we actually need, what we want and what society constantly tells us we must have.

Why should our parish do a fall STEWARDSHIP renewal?

A fall STEWARDSHIP renewal is important for many reasons:

- Just as we occasionally assess our goals and where on the road to accomplishing them we are, we also are responsible to evaluate and assess our personal STEWARDSHIP. Regularly and consistently reflecting on God's blessings reminds us that we are called to manage those blessings and to share them with others as a demonstration of our gratitude. Prayerfully discerning His will in the management of His gifts will help us make the best use of our blessings and to bring balance to sharing them in proportion to what we have received.

- An annual, structured **STEWARDSHIP** renewal program will help build parishioners' understanding of how God calls each of us to use our gifts of time, talent and treasure and provide opportunity to adjust our priorities as needed.
- Parishioners can be guided to consider:
 - What are my God-given blessings (time, talent, treasure)?
 - How am I using my gifts?
 - What are my priorities in utilizing my blessings?
 - What should my priorities be?
 - Is giving back to God my priority?
 - Am I giving from my first fruits?
 - What adjustments do I need to make?
- God tells us to teach **STEWARDSHIP**. Both the Old and New Testaments are rich with **STEWARDSHIP** messages, with more than half of Our Lord's parables addressing **STEWARDSHIP**. If we are going to teach the Gospel, we must teach **STEWARDSHIP**. In the preface of the 2002 edition of their pastoral letter, [*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*](#), the U.S. Catholic bishops tell us, "*Once one chooses to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, stewardship is not an option.*"
- Teaching **STEWARDSHIP** is the tradition of the Church. Our Catholic parishes, schools, ministries and organizations exist primarily because of the good stewardship and generosity of our Catholic people. For generations, Catholics brought their gifts to the Church without the gimmicks of auctions, golf tournaments, raffles, etc. A return to **STEWARDSHIP** allows a parish to stop using all of its time and talent to raise treasure.
- A return to **STEWARDSHIP** often increases the freewill financial gifts that parishioners give/pledge to the offertory by 5-20%.
- A return to **STEWARDSHIP** often increases the number of parishioners who volunteer in activities and ministry and expands the types of ministry that the parish can offer.
- A return to **STEWARDSHIP** encourages parishioners to spend more time with God, helps them deepen their faith life and gives them strength to resist the rampant materialism of our society.

What is the best way to conduct a fall STEWARDSHIP Renewal?

Catholics are bombarded every day with commercial messages that tell them to put their own personal and material wants first. A fall **STEWARDSHIP** Renewal is a time to challenge Catholics to put God first in their personal planning and in their budget. The best way to get this message across is through:

1. Printed materials that allow parishioners to read and reflect on **STEWARDSHIP**.

2. Activities (ministry fair) that promote a greater understanding and awareness of ministry and involvement opportunities.
3. Witness talks on the **STEWARDSHIP** way of life.
4. **STEWARDSHIP** pledge cards that encourage parishioners to commit to faithful and generous stewardship.

Sacred scripture tells us, *“The intention in the human heart is like water far below the surface, but the man of intelligence draws it forth.”* (Proverbs 20:5) Most Catholics want to be good stewards. They want to follow the Gospel call to share their blessings. Yet, their best intentions often are never realized because they do not make the commitment to put them into action. By conducting a **STEWARDSHIP** Renewal, distributing materials, discussing **STEWARDSHIP** from the pulpit and asking parishioners to complete a **STEWARDSHIP** commitment card, you can help them convert their good **STEWARDSHIP** intentions into actions.

How does the diocese support the fall STEWARDSHIP Renewal?

The diocese supports parish **STEWARDSHIP** efforts with the following activities.

- A model for a **STEWARDSHIP** Renewal program has been developed and is available for parish use.
- Model **STEWARDSHIP** brochures, letters, intention cards and bulletin articles have been created so that parishes can focus their efforts on developing more parish-specific materials and activities.
- **STEWARDSHIP** efforts in the parish are reinforced in the *FAITH* magazine and through resources provided in the monthly stewardship newsletter, support for parish stewardship committees and other activities.

If our parish did a renewal last year, why do we need to do it again?

Because **STEWARDSHIP** is essential to discipleship, it is important that we reinforce its importance on an ongoing basis. Just as we annually celebrate Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Advent and Christmas, **STEWARDSHIP** is an important part of our faith to be regularly recognized and celebrated. A fall **STEWARDSHIP** Renewal is a time to call all Catholics to greater faith and trust in God. This is not something we do once. This is something we should do constantly.

What is the benefit for my parish?

Parishes that teach and encourage **STEWARDSHIP** are stronger parishes. Recognizing and encouraging gifts of time and talent helps parishioners improve their faith life, and they tend to become more actively involved in the ministry of the parish. When you recognize and encourage gifts of treasure, parishioners become more generous (typically giving about 8% more), and concerns about parish finances and budget diminish. A **STEWARDSHIP** Renewal will be a time for parishioners to realize that each of us has a responsibility to live as God’s stewards and to support our parish with our time, talent and treasure.

Fall is such a busy time of the year? Why do a STEWARDSHIP Renewal at this time?

Research across the country shows that parishioners are most receptive to the **STEWARDSHIP** message in the fall because:

- The Gospel readings during fall Ordinary time often contain strong **STEWARDSHIP** messages that make it easy to remind parishioners that God calls us to **STEWARDSHIP**.
- We tend to think of fall as a new beginning. Thus, with the summer behind them and the rush of the holidays not yet upon them, parishioners are more inclined to sign up for new parish ministries in the fall.
- The success of the **STEWARDSHIP** effort depends on parishioners being in the pews to hear the message. Parishioners are most inclined to be in their home parish in the fall.

The parish is very busy in the fall. How can we possibly add a STEWARDSHIP Renewal?

STEWARDSHIP is not just one more thing to do. **STEWARDSHIP** is a total way of life that will sustain the parish and keep it strong. The question should not be, “How can we find time to do this?” Rather, it should be “How can we afford not to do this?” It is recommended that a **STEWARDSHIP** Committee be part of every Pastoral Council. It is the responsibility of that Committee, in collaboration with the pastor, to plan and implement an ongoing **STEWARDSHIP** effort in the parish. Help in establishing a **STEWARDSHIP** Committee in your parish is available via the Office of Stewardship and Development at 616-475-1251.

What if our parish prefers to conduct a STEWARDSHIP Renewal at some other time of year?

If it is not feasible for your parish to conduct your **STEWARDSHIP** effort in the fall, then determine what time of year is best and proceed accordingly.

Stewardship Fair – Ministries/Programs

Dear _____ Ministry/Program Coordinator:

To maximize the potential to build awareness of parish ministries/programs AND to increase parishioners' contributions of time and talent, we are asking each ministry/program to provide and staff a table/booth during the Stewardship Fair following all Masses the weekend of _____.

Please coordinate your volunteers to make sure someone is present after each Mass and is able to answer questions about your particular ministry/program, including:

- Its purpose
- Whom it serves
- How it serves
- Outcomes (what has been accomplished)
- When it meets, how often, for how long, where and the purpose of meetings.
- Opportunities for parishioner participation, including specific needs, e.g., number of hours per week, particular skills, e.g., attorney, accountant, bi-lingual, writing;
- Number of new members needed
- Expectations of volunteers/new members
- A sign-up sheet requesting name, phone, email and best time and way to contact. If not many new people are needed, indicate such on the sign-up sheet and let people know they will be contacted as soon as the need arises.

It is the ministry coordinator's responsibility to assure that all parishioners who sign up at during the Stewardship Fair are called within two weeks – to acknowledge the parishioner's interest and to inform him/her regarding next steps.

We all have different obligations, varied skills and talents and different interests, but we all share a common responsibility to be active members of the Body of Christ.

Please complete both sections.

Section 1
Giving of my **TIME AND TALENT**

Section 2
Giving of my **TREASURE**

Instructions:
Take a step forward in each area of your personal stewardship. Complete each section and bring this stewardship renewal form with you to Mass on **(date)** and drop it in the offertory collection.

Thank you!

The promise of living as a good and faithful disciple of Jesus is a beautiful one:

“Come, share your master’s joy.”
Matthew 25:23

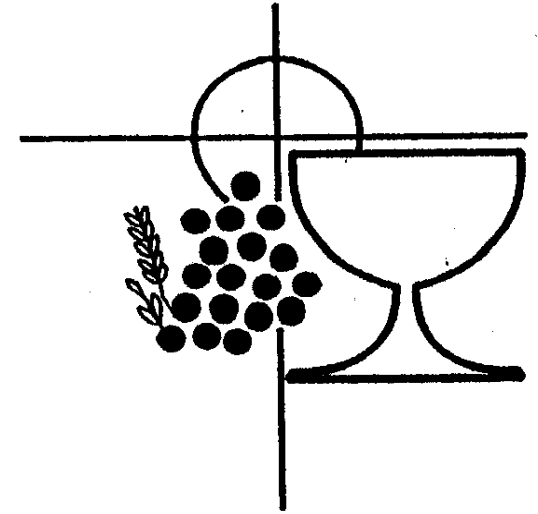
Discipleship is:

- **Receiving God’s gifts gratefully,**
- **Cherishing and tending them in a responsible and accountable manner,**
- **Sharing them in justice and love with others,**
- **Returning them with increase to the Lord.**

“The gift you have received, give as a gift.”
Matthew 10:8

(Parish Name)
Street Address
City, MI Zip

My Stewardship Renewal



*Discipleship is
a Response*

(Parish Name)
Street Address
City, MI Zip

Being a follower of Jesus Christ requires us to live as good and faithful stewards.

"There are different gifts but the same spirit; there are different ministries but the same Lord; there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." 1 Corinthians 12:4-

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My Covenant with God

As an act of faith, with a spirit of hope and as a demonstration of gratitude for my blessings, I renew my personal covenant with the Risen Lord Jesus. I understand that as a Catholic and, in following the message of Jesus, I am called to share my God-given **TIME**, **TALENT** and **TREASURE**. In so doing, I will enrich the quality of my faith life and the faith life of my parish. I acknowledge this opportunity as a moment of grace and blessing for myself and my parish community.

Name (print) _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Section 1 TIME AND TALENT

(List parish ministries in which you want to participate)

GUIDE

Household Income		2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
Wkly	Yrly					
\$200	\$10,400	\$4	\$8	\$12	\$16	\$20
385	20,000	8	15	23	31	39
770	40,000	15	31	46	62	77
1,154	60,000	23	46	69	92	115
1,538	80,000	31	62	92	123	156
1,923	100,000	38	77	115	154	192
2,307	120,000	46	92	138	185	230
2,692	140,000	54	108	162	215	269

A Guide:

Some Catholics choose the biblical norm of giving 10 percent of their treasure (tithing). Some give more. Others might start at two or four percent. After prayerful thought about the amount of your gift, when you do not find yourself making excuses for the amount, when you know in your heart that you have been completely honest with God and yourself, then your gift is the proper amount.

Section 2 TREASURE

In thanksgiving for my many blessings from God, I pledge my financial support to our parish:

\$ _____ weekly **or**

\$ _____ monthly **or**

\$ _____ quarterly

OR

Hourly worksheet:

(A) \$ _____ my hourly pay rate

(B) # _____ of hour(s) per week of my pay I will give to my parish

(Example: 1,2,3 hours)

(C) \$ _____ my weekly gift goal

(Multiply A x B)

_____ I cannot commit at this time, but will do my best and give what I can throughout the year.