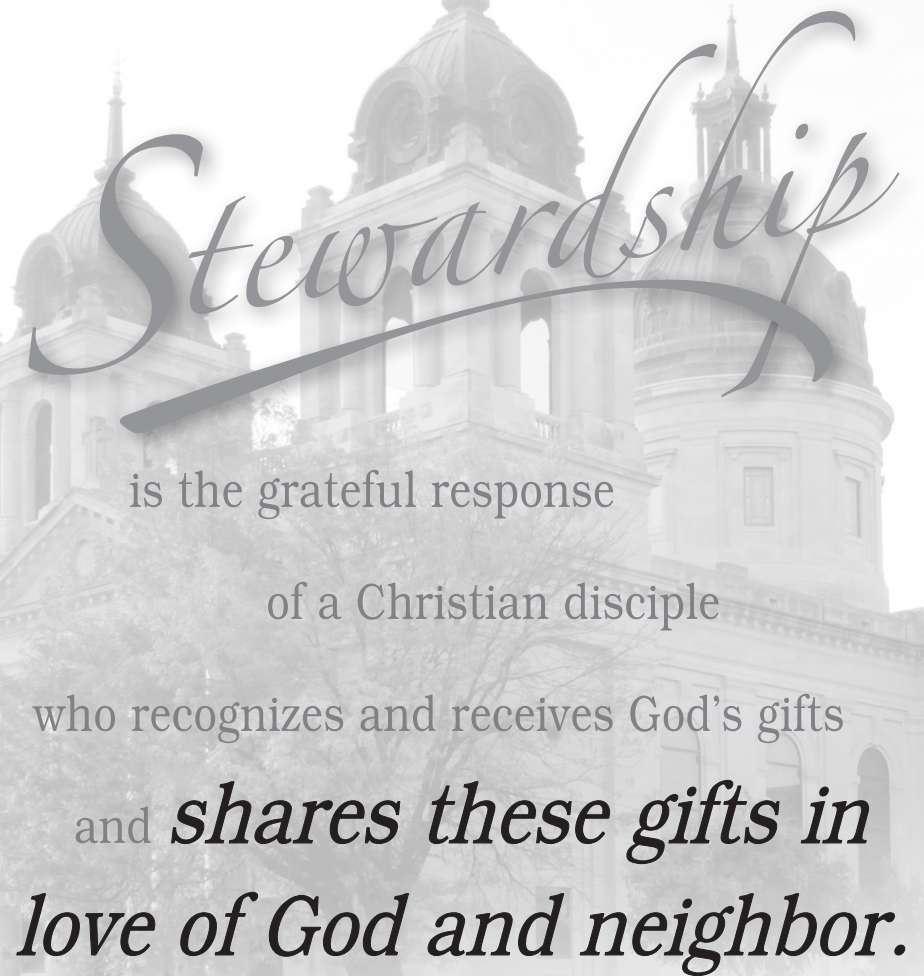


## OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP

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*Stewardship*  
is the grateful response  
of a Christian disciple  
who recognizes and receives God's gifts  
and *shares these gifts in  
love of God and neighbor.*

2011 ANNUAL PARISH STEWARDSHIP  
RENEWAL SCHEDULE AND GUIDELINES



Conducting and completing the follow-up and evaluation process within three to four months of Stewardship Commitment Sunday is imperative. The promptness in which volunteers are contacted, thanked and utilized will directly correspond to the results in growth as a stewardship parish. As a part of the annual Follow-Up phase, the Diocesan Director of Stewardship will send communication to all pastors and parish stewardship council chairpersons thanking them for their efforts in facilitating the most recent annual renewal. Accompanying this communication will be a suggested **Annual Parish Stewardship Renewal Evaluation form** to be completed and kept for reference when planning and preparing for the subsequent annual renewal.

Providing an appropriate parish structure to facilitate the sharing of gifts of time, talent and treasure, and providing spiritual, educational, and social services to the parish community is important.

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\* It is important to understand what it means to be a **parishioner**. A parishioner can be defined as:

*“One who is registered and actively participates in the liturgical / pastoral life of the parish through the generous, sacrificial, and proportionate sharing of his or her God-given giftedness of Time, Talent and Treasure.”*

Parishes should:

- 1) Communicate that the expectation of active stewardship of all parishioners is expressed through:
  - Regular Sunday Mass attendance
  - Participation in the sacramental life of the Church
  - The development of one’s personal prayer life
  - Formation as disciples through parish education
  - Witness to the teachings of the Church by one’s manner of life
  - Service in parish ministries
  - A good-faith commitment of one’s treasure
- 2) Invite and encourage all parishioners to complete and submit an annual stewardship commitment of Time, Talent, and Treasure.
- 3) Review school enrollment on the basis of active stewardship as defined in #1 above.
- 4) Review the contribution records of all households who have made financial pledges

## Parish stewardship monitoring and assessment

The effectiveness of the stewardship process or renewal cannot be judged solely on the basis of financial results and volunteer commitments. Stewardship is spiritually based; the results will be in the hearts and minds of those who are responding to the call. While we cannot always measure or see evidence in the quantitative results, it may be happening in qualitative terms, e.g. more enthusiasm, increased joy, deeper individual involvement, commitment and a Christ-like attitude which, over time, will provide increased quantitative results.

Commitments of Time, Talent and Treasure, on the other hand, can be measured. Ordinary “offertory” giving should be analyzed by looking at comparable periods in previous years, particularly that of the most recent year. Review of the numbers should include factoring in or out special fund raising that was or may be necessary. Reviewing the results of a renewal should also compare the number of volunteers participating from year to year. Keeping annual statistics on the Time, Talent and Treasure commitments can be very valuable when needed for trend analysis and projection purposes.

Monitoring parishioner\* involvement and participation in the parish stewardship process and that of serving the mission of the parish is vital to assuring the ongoing viability of the parish.

It is important for the stewardship council, the finance council and the parish pastoral council to annually meet with the pastor and associates to formally evaluate the results of each stewardship renewal. Statistics and trends should be reviewed. Parish structure should also be reviewed to determine if it is meeting the needs of the parish as well as providing parishioners the opportunity to serve and be served.

In the course of the annual renewal evaluation it is good for those in parish leadership to ask if they believe the parish is perceived by the parishioners as a place of hospitality, prayer, formation and service.

## Introduction

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Planning and conducting the annual parish stewardship renewal is very important if the spirituality of **stewardship** is to **come alive** and **remain alive** in your parish and become a “way of life” for parishioners. A parish stewardship renewal cannot be accomplished effectively in one or two weekends. It takes many weeks of preparation, communication, education, and related spiritual formation to spread the stewardship message and its importance in the lives of individuals and their parishes.

Once a parish has begun a stewardship renewal process, it should be conducted annually. Openly supported by the pastor, this effort should be facilitated by an active and committed parish stewardship council.

The communication and message throughout the renewal process should be that of invitation, while also encouraging and challenging the laity to recognize the importance of living stewardship and to dwell upon their **receptiveness** to this way of life and their **willingness** and **commitment** to share and return of their varied God-given giftedness and grace in service to the parish, the diocese and the wider universal Church.

The following date-specific schedule and related guidelines reflect the suggested sequencing of the three phases of the 2011 parish stewardship renewal process: The Preparation Phase, the Call to Commitment Phase and the Follow-up Phase. For additional information refer to the Diocesan “*Parish Stewardship Council Handbook*” and the “*Parish Stewardship Handbook*” available on the Diocesan Web Site - Office of Stewardship Page.

# *Preparation Phase*

*(June 1 - Oct. 23, 2011)*

## **June 1, 2011**

In preparation and planning for the fall 2011 stewardship renewal process, parish pastors and parish stewardship council chairpersons will be provided with the 2011 Annual Parish Stewardship Renewal Schedule & Guidelines brochure accompanied by a letter from the Diocesan Director of Stewardship.

## **June 6, 2011**

Pastors and parish stewardship councils should begin planning and preparing for the fall 2011 annual parish stewardship renewal process. This effort should include a review and evaluation of the 2010 renewal in an effort to determine what changes, if any, may be necessary to enhance the formation efforts, commitment results and follow-up process. This pre-planning and discernment effort will assist in assessing the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities pertaining to the parish stewardship process. It will also assist in identifying where added emphasis may be needed as the parish prepares for its 2011 stewardship renewal. This review and discernment process should take place between June 6 and July 5. Doing so will enable the pastor and stewardship council to respond timely to the **July 5** request (**August 1 deadline**) for ordering diocesan-provided stewardship renewal commitment forms and other related materials.

## **Treasure Commitment follow-up**

The Treasure commitment forms should be turned over to the appropriate individual or committee responsible for statistical and tabulation purposes, and then used to record the commitment in the parishioner contribution data file for financial / budget monitoring purposes.

A summary of the financial commitments should be prepared for the Stewardship and Finance Councils for the purpose of monitoring the level and trend of financial commitments being made to the parish. The Finance Council needs the information for planning and budgeting. The Stewardship Council would only need the overall totals for statistical and trend purposes.

It is extremely important for a thank you to be sent to those who also completed Treasure commitment forms.

## **Non-respondents and new parishioners**

The stewardship formation process never ends. It should be ongoing throughout each year. It is necessary and important to follow-up on those who have not responded, as well as those who join the parish during the year. This is part of the overall parish stewardship educational / formation process. Follow-up with non-respondents and educating new parishioners on the stewardship way of life can and will bring additional and new sources of energy and leadership to parish life. The welcoming of new parishioners should include an introduction as well as some expectation on their part to the parish and diocesan stewardship process.

## Time and Talent Commitment follow-up

The time and talent volunteer lists should be compiled from the Time and Talent commitment forms and distributed to the appropriate committees, groups and ministries. These various groups are to see that the parishioners' gifts of time and talent are put to use at the service of others. Accepting and receiving the stewardship commitment forms implies accepting the responsibility to help match the parishioners with the parish organizations and services that need and can use their time and talent.

Those who have completed commitment forms should then be provided with an appropriate thank you. This may be in the form of a letter, a card, a phone call or other communication that would be appropriate and effective. The most important part is the "thank you". Individual and personal forms of "thank you" are generally more effective than a general thank you from the pulpit or in the parish bulletin. A combination of the personal and general form of thanks would be the most desirable.

A committed and intentional effort should be made to review the names of volunteers to make sure they are being utilized as soon as possible. In large parishes, it may not always be possible to immediately use some of the volunteers. If this is the case, the volunteers should be advised of the number of volunteers and ask for their patience as they wait to be contacted. Or, you may want to invite those parishioners to consider volunteering for some other ministry activity where they would feel more actively involved.

## July

During the month of July parishes should give consideration to the possibility of planning and conducting a parish stewardship / ministry fair. If properly planned and carried out, a stewardship / ministry fair can be one of the most effective educational tools to foster an awareness of parish structure, activities and ministries serving the broad mission of the parish. Likewise, a fair planned and scheduled just prior to or during the "Call to Commitment Phase" can serve as an excellent opportunity to make parishioners aware of the numerous opportunities and ways in which they can get involved and volunteer their time and talent. For information and assistance relative to planning and conducting a parish stewardship / ministry fair contact the Diocesan Stewardship Office.

### July 5, 2011

During this week, a mailing will be sent to all pastors and parish stewardship council chairpersons for the purpose of reviewing and ordering of Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms and other related materials for the upcoming renewal. Included will be copies of the forms previously used, along with a form for ordering new, revised and / or existing commitment forms for the upcoming renewal.

While generic forms are available, the use of generic forms, unrelated to parish structure, ministries or services, is not advised. **The design of these forms should be representative of the parish structure, ministries and services available in the parish, as well as providing parishioners the opportunity to volunteer their time and talent in meeting the needs, services and mission of the parish.**

**Note: Pastors and parish stewardship council chairpersons should be prepared to respond promptly to the diocesan order request for Time and Talent commitment forms so that the preparation, proofing, printing and distribution of the forms to parishes can be completed in a timely fashion. This means that parish first-time preparation or any revision to its Time and Talent commitment forms should be in process well in advance of the August 1, 2011 order deadline.**

At this same time parishes will also be asked to indicate if they would like the Diocesan Stewardship Office to provide mailing labels from the *Catholic Advance* mailing list to assist in the distribution and / or mailing of stewardship renewal materials.

## August 1, 2011

This is the final deadline for parishes to complete and submit order requests for Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms, and other related materials. **Note: It is important for all parish form requests to be submitted on or before this deadline date.** Late requests may result in forms not being available when needed for parish mailing or distribution.

Parishes will continue to have the option of ordering (at no cost) the traditional stewardship prayer cards (miniatures of the annual stewardship poster) for distribution to parishioners and students as they so choose. **NOTE: Without exception, ALL orders that include requests for the prayer cards must be received on or before the August 1, 2011 deadline.**

## September 1, 2011

The pastor and parish stewardship council should begin recruiting lay witnesses (individuals or couples) to speak at designated Masses during the Call to Commitment phase, sometime during the four-week period leading up to Stewardship Commitment Sunday, November 19-20, 2011. If the parish is not able to recruit witness volunteers from the parish, an effort should be made to contact neighboring parishes for speakers or contact the diocese to help provide lay witness presenters. Experience suggests it is much more effective to use presenters from your local parish.

## September 17-18, 2011

During this weekend an article about stewardship in general and the upcoming annual stewardship renewal should be published in the parish newsletter, if there is one. If your parish does not have a newsletter, consider preparation of an article on stewardship to be inserted in the weekend parish bulletin. This should be made available to the parishioners just prior to or during the Call to Commitment phase so as to put them in a frame of mind to begin prayerful discernment of their annual stewardship commitment response.

# Follow-up Phase

(Dec. 1 / Feb., 2011)

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## December 2011 – February 2012

The timeliness of the renewal Follow-up phase is very important in the overall success and growth of stewardship at the parish level. Parishioners need and should expect to receive prompt and timely acknowledgement and thanks for their volunteer commitments of time and talent as well as for their gift of treasure. They also will be expecting the invitation and opportunity to share their gift of time and talent with the parish.

Although very important, the personal thank you and the use of those volunteering to give of their time and talent are the most neglected aspects of the stewardship follow-up process at the parish level. Experience in the parish renewals in the Diocese of Wichita as well as national research beyond our diocesan boundaries confirms that the failure or lack of timely follow-up with those who have completed commitment forms will significantly impact the success and long-term image of stewardship in the parish community.

Beginning on Stewardship Commitment Sunday and continuing as Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms are received, the stewardship council should have a plan in place to compile, record and track, over time, the results of each parish stewardship renewal.

## November 19-20, 2011

### *(Stewardship Commitment Sunday)*

Completed Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms are to be returned to the parish during this weekend. There are various ways to handle receipt and collection of the commitment forms. The suggested options listed below emphasize that the pledge commitments are gifts being presented by God's holy people to the Lord's Altar.

- a. Parishioners return their forms by presenting them in procession to the Altar.
- b. Commitment forms may be collected at the same time as the collection is taken up and presented.
- c. Drop-off boxes for the commitment forms can be provided and then taken to the Altar during the presentation of the gifts.

For a suggested introduction to the "offertory/presentation of the gifts" and possible prayer of blessing over the commitment forms received, please contact the diocesan Office of Stewardship.

The pastor's homily during this weekend may want to focus on a general stewardship theme conveying thanks to those who have taken of their time to complete and return the commitment forms. The pastor should also remind those who have not yet completed their forms to do so and return them the following weekend. Continue with appropriate bulletin announcements.

## October

Plan, conduct and/or continue with youth stewardship training. Youth stewardship formation should be ongoing within the parish, the school, and the PSR program. The diocesan youth stewardship curriculum "*Young Stewards In Formation*" serves as an excellent resource for school and PSR religious education instructors as they prepare lesson plans relative to stewardship spirituality formation and way of life practices.

For information regarding the youth stewardship curriculum "*Young Stewards in Formation*" please contact your parish director of religious education, parish school principal, Diocesan Director of Religious Education, Diocesan Catholic School Office or the Diocesan Stewardship Office.

## October 1-2, 2011

Bulletin announcements calling attention to the stewardship renewal should begin. It is a good time to begin display of posters, banners or other educational materials calling attention to the renewal process and stewardship in general.

The pastor and stewardship council chairperson should begin preparation of their annual cover letters that will accompany the Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms along with other related materials to be mailed or otherwise distributed to all parishioners during the Call to Commitment phase beginning October 24, 2011.

## October 10, 2011

Time, Talent and Treasure forms, prayer cards, labels and other related materials, if ordered from the Diocesan Stewardship Office, will be available for pickup at the Chancery. If pastors so choose, these materials will be available for distribution at the annual Clergy Conference scheduled to begin on Monday, October 17, 2011.

Preparation and assembly of parish materials to be mailed or otherwise distributed to parishioners should begin.

## October 15-16, 2011

Selected lay witness presenters should meet with pastor or stewardship council to plan, critique and coordinate their presentations. Continue with bulletin announcements.

The pastor and parish stewardship council chairperson should finish composing their annual cover letters that will accompany the Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms to be distributed to parishioners.

# *Call to Commitment Phase*

*(Oct. 24 - Nov. 20, 2011)* 

## October 24, 2011

Parish Time, Talent and Treasure forms, other related materials and the pastor's and chairperson's letters may be distributed to all parishioners during this week. Some parishes may choose to send the forms during the weeks of October 31 or November 7.

Those pastors that choose to present their stewardship homilies, one each on "time," "talent" and "treasure," should begin on the weekend of October 29 /30. These homilies should be planned and presented in advance of Stewardship Commitment Sunday (November 19-20, 2011). A homily on time, talent or treasure on Stewardship Commitment Sunday will generally be ineffective because the Call to Commitment forms are to be completed and returned on this same day.

## November 5-6, 2011

The pastors' homilies begin or continue this weekend. Lay witness presentations scheduled for this weekend, if any, may appropriately be given following the pastor's homily. Homilies and lay witness presentations should also serve to explain to parishioners why the renewal process is important and necessary in terms of annually and prayerfully discerning one's giftedness, how that giftedness may be changing from year to year and how one is then called to readjust how that giftedness is being shared in service out of love of God and neighbor.

Witness presenters should emphasize the completion of Time, Talent and Treasure forms and remind parishioners as to how, why and when those completed commitment forms are to be returned. Continue with appropriate bulletin announcements.

## November 12-13, 2011

The pastors' homilies may continue this weekend. Lay witness presentations scheduled for this weekend, if any, may appropriately be given following the pastor's homily. Presenters, if any, or the pastor, should emphasize completion of the Time, Talent and Treasure commitment forms and remind parishioners as to how, why and when those completed forms are to be returned. Continue with appropriate bulletin announcements.