

Call to Stewardship

Winter 2009



A New Year

William Arthur Ward

Another fresh new year is here ...
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!

This bright new year is given me
To live each day with zest ...
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!

I have the opportunity
Once more to right some
wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,
And sing more joyful songs!

Happy New Year!

“Call to Stewardship” will no longer be printed and mailed out. The Development/Stewardship Office is *going green!* This newsletter will be sent out via first class email and it will be posted on the stewardship web page. www.rcan.org/stewardship

January is a good time of the year to make some resolutions that honor God and bring blessings to other people through our acts of stewardship. Stewardship begins with a changed heart which results in acts that demonstrate faith and love. As the Apostle John said, *“Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)*

February 7th and 8th is pledge weekend for the 2009 Archbishop’s Annual Appeal. I can’t think of a better way to share your treasure! I look forward to making my pledge each year.

March 29—Men’s Commission (see below for information).
Peace, prayers & blessings,

Lynn Gully
Associate Director—Stewardship & Special Projects

CATHOLIC MEN’S COMMISSION—ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

As men of God, we seek to guide one another towards Christ by spreading the Gospel, and pray that we may follow Him faithfully. The Archdiocese of Newark is pleased to introduce a Men’s Commission, an opportunity to offer a structure of fellowship and support to deepen men’s faith and relationships with Jesus Christ; and help guide their roles in their families, in the Church, and in society as men of God and men for others. To introduce the Men’s Commission throughout the Church of Newark, we will hold the first Catholic Men’s Conference (or Call to Catholic Men of Faith) which will be a large scale public gathering of men throughout the Archdiocese and beyond to come together and support one another in their personal discipleship and journey toward Christ.

Saturday, March 28, 2009.

The day will begin at **8:00 AM** and it will conclude at **4:00 PM**. The venue will be the **Essex County Richard J. Codey Arena** in West Orange, NJ. For more information please contact us via email at CatholicMen@rcan.org or 973-497-4545.

**Important
DATE!**



Stewardship Day was a Success!

Stewardship Day was held at Paramus Catholic High in Paramus on October 18th. Msgr. Corona from the Diocese of Metuchen was our keynote speaker and Rev. John Galeano was the Hispanic keynote speaker. The day was well attended.



Carla Gonzalez, Executive Director of Development/Stewardship Office and Monsignor Michael Corona.

The Development/Stewardship office also sold some items this year at Stewardship Day and with the proceeds we were able to purchase shades and new curtains for the day care center at Good Counsel Home in the Bronx. Good Counsel is a private Catholic agency whose primary mission is to help homeless, pregnant women by providing a loving family environment in a safe and secure shelter. Begun in 1985 by Fr. Benedict Groeschel and Chris Bell, both leaders in the pro-life movement.

Thank you for attending and helping Good Counsel!

“Why Catholic?” Journey Through The Catechism at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Scotch Plains



Dorothy and Jack Foulks, parishioners of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Scotch Plains have opened up their home to facilitate a “Why Catholic?” group. I met this lovely couple and they invited me to come and see what “Why Catholic?” was all about. It was so refreshing to gather with a group of people who hold the same set of values and want to share, learn and grow in their faith. “Why Catholic?” is designed to run over a four year period, with 12 sessions per year. Each of the four years will focus on a different pillar of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The session ran for approximately 90 minutes. I enjoyed it so much that I plan on joining them again in the Spring for six weeks. This group meets six weeks in the Fall and again for six weeks in the Spring.

STEWARDSHIP AT WORK

Did you know that 90 percent of homeless adults and children need a new, warm coat each winter because they have no place to keep one over the summer months? But it's not just homeless people who needed our help; some people are forced to make a choice between buying a winter coat and putting food on the table, or meeting other basic survival needs.

The spirit of sharing, caring and love for our neighbors showed through the chancery office working together as a team. The Development/Stewardship office organized a coat drive - “Clean your closets, warm a Soul” – it was a complete success thanks to the generous employees who work at the chancery office in Newark.

We received a total of almost 150 coats. The coats were donated to Catholic Charities for distribution to their several shelters that serve the Archdiocese of Newark.



SCRIPTURAL REFLECTIONS ON STEWARDSHIP—BULLETIN MESSAGES

January 4, 2009—Epiphany of the Lord

"The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts; the kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute. All kings shall pay him homage, all nations shall serve him."
Psalm 72:10-11

What gifts do you set before the Lord? Does your list of New Year's Resolutions include better ways to give back to God and thank Him for His many blessings to you and your family?

January 11, 2009—Baptism of the Lord

"Thus says the Lord: Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased." - Isaiah 42:1

At our own Baptism, each of us became a servant of the Lord. God has chosen us and equipped us to do special work for Him. Everything that we accomplish in this life is a direct result of all that God has given to us. The question is: Are we accomplishing the things God put us here to do? Are we acting as God's servant or are we only serving our own needs? Is God pleased with the way we are fulfilling His special plan for us?

January 18, 2009—2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, 'What are you looking for?'" - John 1:38

What are you looking for? That is a question Jesus asks each of us. It has been said there is a God shaped hole in every soul that only God can fill. Instead of spending time with God, though, we fill our days working for things that do not satisfy us but that society says we need to impress one another.

January 25, 2009—3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." - Mark 1:17

Jesus' call to "Come after me" is a call to all Christians. Jesus asks us all to help Him in His work. By being good stewards, we, too, can help bring others closer to God.

February 1, 2009—4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Brothers and sisters: I should like you to be free of anxieties." - 1 Corinthians 7:32

How many anxieties do we bring upon ourselves by constantly worrying about attaining ever more material possessions? Yet, God tells us that only the hand that is open to give can also be open to receive His peace and joy. A heart or a hand clenched in anxiety and greed can never receive anything.

February 8, 2009—5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed...He told them, 'Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come.'" - Mark 1:35, 38

Through today's Gospel reading we see a perfect example of stewardship. Jesus gives His time to doing all that God wishes - healing the sick and preaching. Yet Jesus also makes time to be alone in prayer. It is only through prayer, through spending time with God, that any of us can find the strength to do all that God wishes us to do. Be sure to find time this week to be with God.

February 15, 2009—6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"Brothers and sisters: Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." - 1 Corinthians 10:31

Are you doing everything possible for the glory of God? Or is there maybe some other way that you could use your time, talent or treasure for God's glory? Think about it.

February 22, 2009—7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"He rose picked up his mat at once and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this.'" - Mark 2:12

Have you taken any time lately to think about how truly good God has been to you? He may not have to cure your paralysis if He has already given you the gift of mobility. But do we glorify and thank Him for such simple gifts as sight, and speech, and general health? Do we give back to God in proportion to all the many blessings He has given to us?

March 1, 2009—1st Sunday of Lent

"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God..." - Mark 1:14

Do you ever think about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to come into Galilee, knowing that John had just been arrested for teaching the same message that Jesus was proclaiming. It must have taken great love and trust for Jesus to do what the Father had sent Him here on earth to do. In the same way, following a life of stewardship takes great love and trust from us. We must be willing to surrender completely to God, trusting that God will always give us all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.

March 8, 2009—2nd Sunday of Lent

"I know how devoted you are to God, since you did not withhold from me your own beloved son." - Genesis 22:12

Abraham was so devoted to God that he was willing to sacrifice his only son. How does our own devotion compare? Do we withhold time, talent and treasure from the God who sacrificed His only Son for us?

March 15, 2009—3rd Sunday of Lent

"You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth." - Exodus 20:4

Have you created idols for yourself in different shapes? An idol can be in the shape of money, sports, fashion, travel, or anything else that we value more than God and His Word to us.

March 22, 2009—4th Sunday of Lent

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son..." - John 3:16

Of all the wonderful gifts that God has given to us, the gift of His own Son is truly the greatest. How can we ever thank God for a gift like that? God does not ask us to sacrifice our own precious firstborn, but He does ask that we make some sacrifices for Him.

March 29, 2009—5th Sunday of Lent

"I will be their God and they shall be my people." - Jeremiah 31:33

What does it mean to be God's people? It means that first we recognize that everything we have and everything we are truly belongs to God. It also means that we are willing to use our gifts and our lives to care for the world just as God cares for us.

STEWARDSHIP FOR CHILDREN

Efforts to teach stewardship and giving to children are most successful if you concentrate on the basic concepts below. These concepts can be discussed in the classroom, in children's liturgies, in Children's Church programs and at home. The four concepts are:

1. Help children see that God has given them many blessings.

(This also teaches good self-esteem.)

- Challenge children to make a list of all God's gifts to them. There is no wrong answer! Everything is a gift from God.
- Regularly complement children on their special gifts – simple things like nice handwriting, pretty smile, nice coat to keep you warm, etc. Remind them that this special gift is a blessing from God and offer an idea on how they can be grateful or share that gift with someone else.
- Encourage children to recognize their talents and the talents of other people in their lives. Every talent does not have to be star quality. Talents can be simple - such as strong to carry a box, smart to help someone with homework, a good listener for someone with a problem.

2. Teach children to be grateful to God for the blessings He has given us.

(This also teaches an overall sense of gratitude and a positive outlook on life. It helps kids see that the cup is half full rather than half empty.)

- Ask children to write a prayer of thanks to God.
- Help children to see that God has given them blessings to share. Discuss the poor and needy. Talk about how God has trusted us to use our gifts to help those who have less.
- Encourage children to think about and pray for those in need.

3. Help children to recognize that stewardship is something we do all the time. It is how we live our lives. Every decision we make about how we use our time, talent or treasure is a stewardship decision.

(This also teaches good time management and budgeting.)

- Encourage children to keep a record of their time – How much time do they give to God in prayer? How much time do they spend learning – developing knowledge and talents they can use later for God? How much time do they spend helping others? How much time do they spend taking care of themselves so they are strong and healthy for God's work? How much time do they waste?
- Help them discover their talents.
- Talk about shopping decisions; about how we can waste money when others need it. Discuss the concept of giving back to God. Discuss the difference between something we need and something we want. We may need soccer shoes to be part of the team – but having the most expensive or popular brand is only a “want” not a “need.”

4. Help children recognize the joy that comes from stewardship.

(This also helps students realize that real happiness cannot be found in possessions.)

- Have children discuss how they feel when they help someone else.
- Share your own good feelings about helping and giving.
- Invite a young volunteer to talk to your children about their volunteer experiences.
- Invite children to be a part of the parish Stewardship Committee.

