



CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

A newsletter for Priests and Stewardship staff of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark, prepared by the Office of Stewardship

A New Year's Prayer

May God make your year a happy one!

Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,

But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;

Not by making your path easy,

But by making you sturdy to travel any path;

Not by taking hardships from you,

But by taking fear from your heart;

Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,

But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;

Not by making your life always pleasant,

But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,

And by making you anxious to be there to help.

God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.



Happy New Year!

Our annual Stewardship Day was held on November 3 at Paramus Catholic Regional High School in Paramus. Our keynote speaker, Mary Higgins Clark spoke about "What it Means to be a Steward" and took questions from the audience after her talk. The day was well attended and everyone enjoyed the various breakout sessions and visiting the vendors that sponsored the day.

The winners of the "Stewardship Contest for Youth" also attend and were presented with a check made payable to their school or parish. Each child also received an award.



Mary Higgins Clark and Carla Gonzalez, Executive Director of Development.

outreach and support whose home is nestled within the Church of the Sacred Heart in Rochelle Park.

Non-perishable food donations are received on an ongoing basis. Perishable foods are "gleaned" from a variety of local food establishments and restaurants seven days a week through the ministry's "Food Rescue Mission." Food items such as breads, cakes, produce and prepared foods are "rescued" daily through the efforts of team volunteers, before the items are unnecessarily discarded. "Rescued" food is delivered

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There are additional pictures posted on the Stewardship webpage from the day and a list of the contest winners - go to www.rcan.org/stewardship to view the pictures and list.

The first place essays can be found on page 2 of this issue.

On a different note, I had the opportunity to spend a beautiful Saturday morning with some of the volunteers that are a part of the *Helping Hands Ministry*. The *Helping Hands* is a ministry of

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 8, 2008

Please note the Archbishop's Annual Appeal 2008 Kick Off Dinner and rebate check distribution will be held on January 8, 2008 instead of January 17, 2008.

The 2008 AAA Video will be in DVD format. VHS will no longer be available. Please plan accordingly.

February 2-3, 2008

AAA Pledge Weekend

April 12, 2008

Hispanic Stewardship Day, Archdiocesan Center.

This newsletter and other Stewardship resources are now available on the web at www.rcan.org/stewardship

Grammar School Essay Winner

*Gabrielle Gubernat • St. Bartholomew Academy •
Scotch Plains • Grade 7*

Stewardship is one of the most important and one of the least practiced things in the world today. Stewardship is not a very difficult thing to practice. We are, in fact, given opportunities to practice it numerous times a day, from picking up a piece of trash on the floor to putting paper in the recycling bin. Minor yet powerful everyday things that really do make a difference. That is truly how to be a good steward of nature. But what of being a good steward to each other?

Stewardship actually means “responsibility to take care of something one does not own.” This applies to each and every single one of us. Though not necessarily being a good steward of nature, it means being a good steward to one another. Not taking others’ belongings and not bullying others is part of being a good steward. By taking responsibility for our own actions and helping others with the problems they have we are acting as the Good Samaritan did, in one of the parables Jesus Himself told. Through Samaritans and Jews did not get along, one could even call them enemies, the Good Samaritan helped not someone he saw as a Jew, but rather someone he saw as a brother. He aided him and took care of him as if he were his own kin, and then he paid for him to be taken care of. If the Samaritan could be kind to someone said to be his enemy, how is it that we can’t be good to our own brothers and sisters in Christ and our fellow human beings. Stewardship means taking care of one another, being there for one another, and, if the time comes, giving one another a shoulder to lean on in time of struggle. Why can’t we even aid one another in the simplest things, but are quick to criticize one another in the largest of things?

To be a steward you don’t have to be the most righteous person, or the smartest, or even the kindest. All you need is a good heart, even if for a split second you can see the good in another or help soothe the pain of another. The world needs us not only to keep it alive but also to turn it around. Today we hear about killings and racism, even the ruining and imprisoning of innocent teenagers because of the color of their skin. Today’s generation needs to be the one to turn all that around, not by force but by love. By loving one another and caring for one another is how we have to turn this all around. From the strongest to the weakest, the smallest to the biggest, worst of us to the best of us, we all need to be good stewards and save each other and the world while we still can, because we are truly the last hope. As Ida Scott Taylor once said, “Do not look back and grieve over the past, for it is gone; and do not be troubled about the future, for it has yet to come. Live in the present, and make it so beautiful that it will be worth remembering.”

High School Essay Winner

*AnnaLee Rice • Immaculate Heart Academy •
Washington Township • Grade 10*

Previously, when I heard the phrase “Christian Steward” I immediately envisioned summer afternoons, stuffy religious education classes and the glories of being nine years old. My religious education teacher would continuously drone on about the meaning of following Jesus and our responsibility to help others. At the time I thought nothing of it, preferring to zone out and fantasize about ice cream and swimming pools. I firmly held this mindset until February of 2007.

In the dead of winter, from February to March, I volunteer at Project Love-Match. It is a nonprofit organization that teaches the fundamentals of tennis to disabled athletes ranging in age from six to thirty. At the beginning of the eight week session every volunteer is paired with an athlete for the duration of the program.

I must admit that I was fantastically nervous the first day of Project Love-Match. I had no idea with whom I would be working. My thought process resembled this: “What would we talk about? Would she like me? What if I made a complete fool of myself?”

I was told the name of my athlete was Kristen. Originally, Kristen was to be coached by an older woman, but when she walked out on the court Kristen pointed to me and said: “Her.” And with that I became Kristen’s coach. A few minutes later a teenage helper tripped over a basket of tennis balls. Kristen and I burst into laughter, and all of my previous fears completely melted. Kristen is a bubbly blonde-eighteen-year-old with Down Syndrome. I, on the other hand, am only fifteen-years-old and have dark brown hair. However, our similarities far outweigh our physical difference. We both have an unfortunate tendency to laugh when people fall down, we love tennis and other athletic activities, and we both wear glasses. Our most significant difference, really, is just one chromosome.

After working with Kristen, I can now say what honestly constitutes a Christian Steward. It is a person who understands that Jesus was absolutely right about one thing - helping others instills the most satisfying feeling in the world. It does not require hours of time or millions of dollars; rather, caring words and simply being there and showing a genuine interest. And, of course, laughing when people fall down.

SCRIPTURAL REFLECTIONS ON STEWARDSHIP

Bulletin Messages

January 1 - New Year's Day

Today's second reading reminds us that through Christ we have been delivered from the old law and have become sons and daughters of God. New Year's Day provides a perfect opportunity to ask ourselves the question: Does my life reflect my gratitude for all that my loving Father has given me?

January 6 - Epiphany

Today we remember the three wise men from the East who came to pay homage to the infant Jesus, bringing Him rich gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The gifts we bring — our time, service, and some share of what we earn for the work we do — are equally precious in His sight.

January 13 - Baptism of Our Lord

Our Baptism, like the Lord's, is a consecration to service. The bishops' pastoral on stewardship reminds us that ". . . there is a fundamental obligation arising from the Sacrament of Baptism that people place their gifts, their resources — their selves — at God's service in and through the Church."

January 20 - Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Today's responsorial psalm is the theme song of the good steward: "Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will." May I, too, stand ready to offer myself and my gifts in the service of God.

January 27 - Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

The watchword today is "immediately." Peter and Andrew, James and John all respond immediately to the call of Christ. May I be as open to God's call and as ready to use my talents in His service as those first disciples were!

February 3 - Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Blessed are they who are what they are and do what they do for the sake of the kingdom! The Gospel today assures good stewards that their suffering and their service on behalf of the kingdom will be rewarded!

February 10 - First Sunday of Lent

What temptations lure us from the path of discipleship? Possessions? Pride? Power? Oh Lord, create for us a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit within us!

February 17 - Second Sunday of Lent

"Bear your share of the hardship for the Gospel," St. Paul tells Timothy in today's second reading. What sacrifice is asked of me for the sake of the Gospel? How willing am I to bear my share?

February 24 - Third Sunday of Lent

When Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, He opened the door for a life changing relationship with Him. Scripture says her testimony drew many others to Him as well. We, too, must be ready to respond whenever and wherever the Lord speaks to us and be prepared for it to change our lives!

March 2 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

The blind man was willing to let Jesus minister to him and willingly did all Jesus asked of him. The Pharisees were more resistant to His message, spending their time and energy to disprove the miracle. Which am I more like, the man born blind or the Pharisees?

March 9 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

When Jesus heard about the illness of His friend, Lazarus, He responded, "This illness is not to end in death; rather it is for God's glory, that through it the Son of God may be glorified." Every aspect of our lives — our gifts as well as our sufferings — can, if surrendered to Christ, lead to blessing for others and ourselves.

March 16 - Passion Sunday

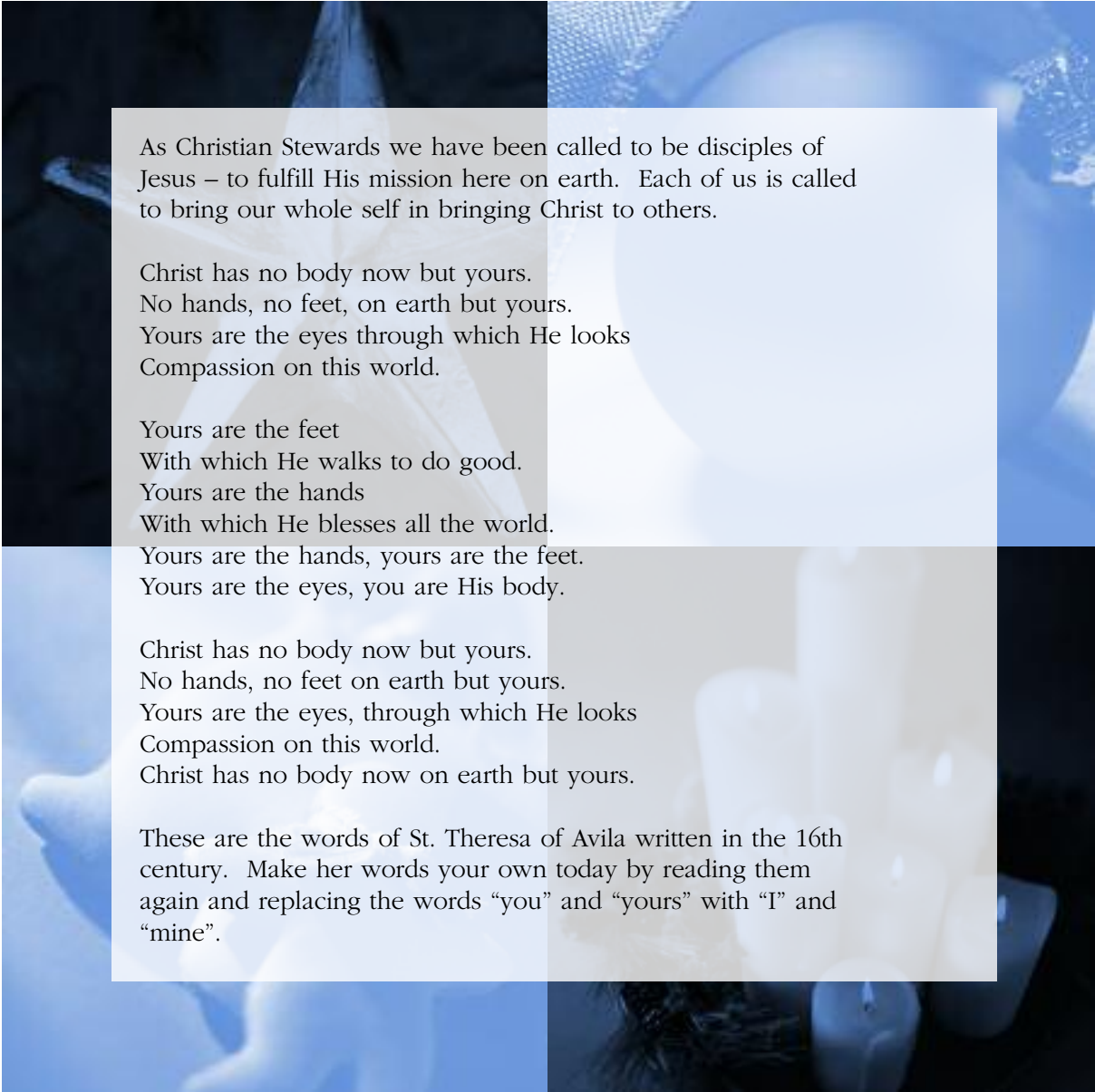
"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" shout the crowds in today's Gospel. May we be always ready to share our blessings when we are sent in His name!
or
"The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, that I may know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them," says Isaiah in today's first reading. The gifts God has given us are likewise given for the good of others. How am I using my gifts?

March 23 - Easter

Very early in the morning after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body with precious oils. The reward of this good and conscientious steward was to be among the first to know that Jesus had been raised from the dead! Alleluia!

March 30 - Second Sunday of Easter

Jesus meets the need of each disciple. To the fearful in the upper room, He speaks words of peace. To doubting Thomas, He provides the tangible proof of His resurrection. What do I need to become His disciple? What do I have to share that might meet someone else's need?



As Christian Stewards we have been called to be disciples of Jesus – to fulfill His mission here on earth. Each of us is called to bring our whole self in bringing Christ to others.

Christ has no body now but yours.
No hands, no feet, on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which He looks
Compassion on this world.

Yours are the feet
With which He walks to do good.
Yours are the hands
With which He blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet.
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.

Christ has no body now but yours.
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes, through which He looks
Compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

These are the words of St. Theresa of Avila written in the 16th century. Make her words your own today by reading them again and replacing the words “you” and “yours” with “I” and “mine”.

Happy New Year! *continued from first page*

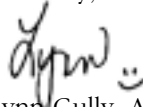
to The Lord's Kitchen where they are immediately sorted, repackaged and/or prepared by yet other teams of volunteers. All items are sorted in the ministry's walk-in freezer and held there for distribution on Saturday morning.

As each Saturday morning arrives, families gather in Sacred Heart's lower church hall not only in anticipation of what they might receive but, more importantly, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Linda Reichert, Ministry Chair, begins with asking the recipients if they are well and what's new before all hold hands to pray. It was a very moving experience for me to pray with everyone and be able to serve those in need of food.

During the 2006 calendar year, *Helping Hands* registered and served 254 families - comprised of 313 adults and 309 children. *Helping Hands* ministry is now active seven days per week.

If you would like to know more about *Helping Hands* or information on how to become a volunteer, please give me a call.

Sincerely,



Lynn Gully, Associate Director , 973-497-4589, gullylyn@rcan.org

*Let not your hand be open to receive and clenched when it is
time to give.
Sirach 4:31*