Stewardship Renewal
Ministry Fair

Goal:

To increase levels of ministry and involvement which will result from more people completing time/talent commitment forms and from parishioners learning more about programs, ministries and services they can join or utilize. This will also help people deepen their relationship with God and with each other – thus furthering God’s kingdom.

Purpose:

- To **celebrate** the life of the parish – its mission, ministries, diversity and character.
- To **inform** parishioners of the different ministries/programs available and help them complete their time/talent commitment form.
- To **spur interest** in making a commitment.
- To **educate** parishioners about what is going on in their parish (even if they do not volunteer) so they feel better about their parish, make them more inclined to support it, maintain their membership and grow from using some of the services.
- To **organize** the ministries/programs in order to help develop a greater sense of their mission and increase their effectiveness.
Tips for an effective Ministry Fair:

DO:

- Form a team of volunteers that will help you to organize and execute the event. It may be your Stewardship Council or a sub group.
- Establish a budget.
- Set the date long in advance in order to prepare properly. Fairs take a great deal of time and planning.
- Ask every organization to participate and submit a brief description of their ministry/program (see page 4 for more information). Inform them of the purpose of the fair.
- Create and hand out a ministry catalog (see page 4 for more information).
- Each table/booth should have copies of their ministry information to hand out. Include names, e-mails and phone numbers of contact people. Be accurate!
- Make sure every table/booth has a representative to answer questions. If your parish is multi-lingual, make sure to have representatives that speak different languages.
- Provide some light food and beverage.
- Locate the fair indoors after all the masses that include time and talent presentations. This will maximize attendance.
- Get the word out. The pastor should announce the fair from the pulpit. Announcements should be included in the parish bulletin starting four weeks before event.
- Take pictures. You may share this with parishioners that were not able to attend.
- Develop activities for youth so the parents may browse the displays. Consider inviting your Youth Group to be responsible for these activities.
- Give parishioners the ability to propose and develop a ministry that currently is not available at the parish. Include that in the Commitment form.

DON’T:

- Try to host one without planning it at least four months ahead of time.
- Expect every ministry/program to set up a display. Don’t force any to attend. The fair is an opportunity and not a mandate.
- Criticize any display even if it lacks creativity. Instead thank and encourage any group that makes an effort.
- Solicit parishioners to join a group. The fair should be used for informational purposes – make that clear from the pulpit. Ask the parishioners to explore opportunities and ask questions.
Ministry Fair’s Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Plan a date and reserve an area.
- Create a list of the groups that need to be contacted. Then contact a representative from each group.
- Establish the budget.
- Plan the layout of the fair.
  - Ensure refreshments.
  - Develop activities for the youth. Contact the Youth Group if necessary.
  - Plan layout of the tables/booths.
  - Create a list of decorations: Balloons, table clothes, banners, etc.
- Prepare descriptions for each ministry.
- Decide who will serve as the hospitality group. This group will direct parishioners as they walk in.
- Decide who will set up and clean up.
- Prepare parish and pulpit announcements.
- Prepare a letter thanking representatives for their participation.
- Parishioner follow-up within two weeks of fair.
  - Personalized letter from pastor thanking them for joining as well as the name and phone number of the contact person.
  - Contact person should follow up with a phone call to inform new member of next meeting.
Ministry Catalogue:

The purpose of a Ministry Catalogue is to inform parishioners of the different volunteer opportunities. The catalogue should include a description of all parish ministries and the contact person and phone number. Smaller parishes may wish to use a list instead of a catalogue.

The Stewardship Committee should review and update the catalogue annually.

The description should include the following:

Name of the ministry:
Purpose and mission:
Responsibilities:
Qualifications/skills needed (if any):
Amount of time required:
When ministry meets or performs:
Training provided:
Contact person, e-mail and phone number:

Sample Ministry Description:

**Stewardship Committee** was created to develop and educate parishioners about the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. Members coordinate yearlong stewardship efforts and the annual stewardship renewal process. The committee meets four times a year. In addition, members are required to plan and coordinate an annual ministry fair and perform volunteer follow up duties during the renewal process. Members should be knowledgeable in the stewardship way of life.

Contact William Smith at 973-555-1212 or smith@yahoo.com for more information.
Sample Letter to Ministry Coordinators

Dear <Ministry Coordinator>,

As you may know, our parish will be conducting its Stewardship Renewal this fall. We will be encouraging our parishioners to share generously of their time, talent and treasure.

To increase knowledge of and interest in the many ministries in our parish, the Stewardship Committee will be hosting a Ministry Fair after all masses on <day of week> in the <location>.

We are asking that your ministry be represented at this fair. Tables for each ministry will be ready for you to decorate by <time> on <day of week>, <date>. To make this an effective experience for all visitors, we ask that you and/or a member of your ministry staff the table after each mass. This event allows parishioners to gather information, ask questions, and explore opportunities for sharing their talent. Please do not actively recruit new participants; however, feel free to welcome those who express a strong desire to get involved.

Please help make this a successful event through your ministry’s representation. To sign up, please call<name> at <phone number> before <deadline date>.

Thank you.