

Minutes of the March 4, 2010 Stewardship Commission Meeting

Attendees: Deacon John Nicholson, Fr. Michael Bova Conti, Ted Vander Els, Jenn Sneath, Mark Nevils, Jim McCarthy

Stewardship Calendar:

Hospitality Weekends. We are continuing the practice of giving individual parish ministries the opportunity to be featured at the monthly hospitality weekends. Currently planned schedule:

- Dec 5 & 6: St Vincent de Paul, Breaking Bread
- Jan 3: Parish Nursing
- Feb 7: Women's Spirituality Group, Men's Spirituality Group, Children's Liturgy
- Mar 6 & 7: Stewardship Commission, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul
- May 1 & 2: Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council

Parish Outreach: Parishioner Georges Gemayel has taken the initiative to assemble a cross-section of OLF parishioners to explore possible ways to enrich our parish life, and to provide help to people whose commitment to their Catholic faith has been declining. An introductory brainstorming session was held on February 11, with attendees expressing their perceptions and experiences as to themes such as welcoming, youth involvement, what it means to be Catholic, why the attrition in church participation.

The intent is to identify key actions/initiatives we could take. The next meeting is Thursday, March 25, 7:00 – 9:30pm in the parish hall. It is important that the Stewardship Commission be tied into this initiative, since it has the potential to address a number of our key objectives/priorities.

Stewardship Commission Objectives/Priorities:

Consensus was Charles Zech book, *Best Practices in Catholic Stewardship*, is a good base document to assess where our parish currently stands in terms of stewardship implementation, and where our focus and efforts may be best applied.

5) Provide the Opportunity for Lay Witness Presentations:

Consensus is we are weak in this area. More attention is needed. Any witness talks to-date have dealt only with time and talent, with no mention of treasure. We need to include treasure. Have the witnesses reflect on what they received from God as gifts, and how they want to share those gifts with others. The witness talks should include all three components: time, talent, and treasure.

Some parishes appear to have had some successes in positioning treasure and pledging. We should look at some of these and try to identify some "best practices."

- ❖ Jim McCarthy to distribute the St. Patrick's, Lawrence, pledging documents and brochure which include specific commitments in terms of time, talent, and treasure. If commission members are aware of other parish materials to be used as a reference point, please bring samples of those materials to the next meeting.

- ❖ Commission members are asked to think of potential lay witness presenters and bring those names to the next commission meeting.

Communication of treasure and pledging will need to include a “what for?” message, an explanation as to how the money will be spent. The feeling is that, if specific parish needs are identified and clearly presented, parishioners will respond accordingly.

Commission members expressed the desire to move beyond discussion of treasure and pledging, and start to take action. That will be the focus of the next meeting.

Next Monthly Stewardship Commission Meeting: Thursday, April 8, 2010 at 7:30pm.