

Minutes of the December 4, 2008 Stewardship Commission Meeting

Attendees: Deacon John Nicholson, Fr. Michael Bova Conti, Elisa Riedl, Mark Nevils, Donna Biggins, Ted Vander Els, Jen Sneath, Jim McCarthy

Parish Financial Update Review: The Commission reviewed some of the information from the December 1 combined PPC and Finance Council meeting, at which Jul – Nov 2008 parish financials were shared. Some of the observations:

- Grand Annual collection is running 28% below 2007 collection. Typical contribution intake is Oct 50%, Nov 25%, Dec 25%.
- Recession concerns and economic gloom are impacting charitable giving in most sectors. Weekly offertory collections are less-impacted, but year-end giving may reflect how parishioners feel their 2008 investment portfolios have fared.

Stewardship Calendar: We continue to schedule individual ministries to be featured at monthly Hospitality Sundays and Souper Saturdays:

Nov 1, 2	Honduras Mission Trip, Flower Committee	Done, need follow-up
Dec 6, 7	Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Music Ministry	Done, need follow-up
Jan 3, 4	Too busy after holidays – do not schedule	
Jan 31, Feb 1	Pastoral Visitors	
Feb 28, Mar 1	Stewardship Commission, Parish Nursing, Knights of Columbus	
Mar 28, 29	Religious Ed/Catechists, and 1 or 2 others (PPC is considering this weekend)	
May 2, 3		

- ❖ Jim McCarthy to contact Chris Hammer (Honduras Trip) and Carol Hammer (Flowers) to verify if follow-up is required for Nov 1, 2 interested attendees.
- ❖ Ted Vander Els to contact Paul Coughlin (Lectors) and Joan Coughlin (Eucharistic Ministers) to verify if follow-up is required for Dec 6, 7 interested attendees.
- ❖ Elisa Riedl to contact Cynthia Carpenter (Music) to verify if follow-up is required for Dec 6, 7 interested attendees.
- ❖ Deacon John has contacted John Reardon regarding Parish Pastoral Council participation.

RCIA: Ted Vander Els, Deacon John, Father Michael, and Jim McKelvey met to discuss launching this new ministry. Preparation tasks include: obtaining RCIA training programs and materials, training the new ministers, and rolling out our unique program. We want it to have enough flexibility to be able to adapt to what we find as our initial candidates. We feel our biggest target audience may be those who have been baptized, but never confirmed.

Stewardship Commission Objectives/Priorities:

Consensus was Charles Zech book, *Best Practices in Catholic Stewardship*, may be 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. We will assess how OLF stacks up versus Zech's eight best practices:

1) Be a Welcoming Parish:

- We should look for ways to add a more personal welcome to new parishioners. We have maybe 2 – 3 new families register on-line each month.
- Continue to encourage Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers to lend greeter support as people arrive for Mass.
- Explore opportunities for weekend couples' retreats.
- Integrate key parish social activities into the parish calendar, e.g. St. Patrick's Day dinner, appreciation dinners, parish picnic, potluck suppers.
- Presider at Mass should highlight that specific ministries will be featured at the Hospitality Sundays, and encourage people to stop by the ministry display.
- The ministers who are working the ministry display tables are in essence "lay witnesses," so they should be prepared to "tell their story."
- We discussed Donna Biggins' proposal to launch a "Breaking Bread" dinner program where eight parishioners, randomly assigned, meet for dinner at a host's home. No set agenda, casual conversations, mixed composition of older and newer parishioners. Although once-a-month dinners may be optimal, that might be too frequent from a logistics viewpoint. Consider every-other-month or quarterly. Look at starting the dinners in February, so we will need to firm up the launch of this program at our January meeting.

Next Monthly Stewardship Commission Meeting: Thursday, January 8, 2009 at 7:30pm