



*Office of Stewardship and Development  
Diocese of Madison  
Fourth Quarter 2009*

**Annual Catholic Appeal 2009**

As the end of the year approaches, and the 2009 Annual Catholic Appeal comes to a close, we would like to provide you with a few informational pieces:

- Parishioners who made payments to their Annual Catholic Appeal pledge in 2009 will receive a year end statement. These will be mailed to each donor prior to January 31, 2010 from the Diocese.
- Letters will be going out to any parishioners who made a pledge to the Annual Catholic Appeal for 2009 have yet not begun payments or have lapsed payment on their pledge. Please note, if your parish has any payments from parishioners that need to be credited to their appeal pledge, send those to the Diocese as soon as possible.

As always, if you are receiving calls concerning parishioner's pledge or payments to the appeal, please contact our office or provide our direct contact information.

Daun Maier at 608-821-3046 or Jill Driscoll at 608-821-3039.

**Offertory and Time Talent and Treasure Programs**

We are working hard to eliminate confusion between the tax and the new ACA. In that regard, we continue to ask parishes to discontinue collecting for the "DSA" and work toward incorporating your tax into your budget. In an effort to assist with meeting this tax, we will again be offering training for the Offertory and Time Talent and Treasure programs for all parishes. Please contact the Office of Stewardship and Development with questions.

The following are the dates for the suggested Offertory/Time, Talent, and Treasure weekends:

- October 31 – November 1 – Announcement Weekend
- November 7 – 8 – Commitment Weekend
- November 14 – 15 – Follow Up Weekend

**Bless Our Priests**

The Bless Our Priests collection will be held the weekend of December 12 -13, 2009. If you need "Bless Our Priests" envelopes that the diocese provides, please contact Jill Driscoll at 608-821-3039 or [stewardship@straphael.org](mailto:stewardship@straphael.org). This important collection provides support to priest's right here in the Diocese. Please make sure to encourage participation at your parish to support so many priests who faithfully continue to serve. Thank you.

# *Stewardship Bulletin Reflections*

**NOTE:** *Please copy this page or pull it out for the person who prepares your weekly bulletins.*

**October 4, 2009**

**27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man." - Genesis 2:20*

The creation story reminds us that from the very beginning of time God put the entire world into our care. We are called to be God's stewards – offering our service and our sacrifice for the benefit of all.

**October 11, 2009**

**28th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." - Mark 10:25*

These words of Jesus are so harsh that sometimes we are tempted to ignore them, thinking that He really could not have meant them. Yet when our lives revolve around too many material possessions it is difficult to find the necessary time for God, for salvation and for God's beloved poor.

**October 18, 2009**

**29th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." - Mark 10:45*  
Jesus came on this earth to serve. Anyone who wishes to follow Him must also be willing to give time, talent and treasure to serve God's people, just as Jesus gave His very life for us. True disciples are true stewards, giving service and sacrifice, just as Jesus taught us to do.

**October 25, 2009**

**30th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way." - Mark 10:52*

Sight is just one of the many gifts that God has given to us. Like all of our basic senses and talents, sight is a gift we often take for granted. We pat ourselves on the back for our accomplishments, forgetting that whatever we do, we do with the gifts that God has given to us.

**November 1, 2009**

**All Saints**

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." - Matthew 5:3*

Those of us who have been well blessed by God could be a little discouraged by the Beatitudes. At first it sounds like only those who have problems will find a place in heaven. However, we are all guaranteed a spot in heaven if we are willing to be "poor in spirit." We are poor in spirit when we recognize that we really do not own anything. Everything we have belongs to God. When we take this attitude we can more freely open our hand and offer our time, talent and treasure to help build up God's kingdom here on earth.

**November 8, 2009**

**32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury." - Mark 12:43*

Notice that in the story of the widow's mite Jesus did not reach into the treasury box and give the widow back her coins. If He did not exempt her from giving, surely He expects each of us to share what we have to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, and promote the work of the Church here on earth.

**November 15, 2009**

**33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*"And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory..." - Mark 13:26*

Some people think that we should give until it hurts. However, true stewards give until it feels right. Our giving feels right when we know that we can stand before God when He comes in His glory and say to Him, "Lord, I gave all that You asked me to give."

**November 22, 2009**

**Feast of Christ the King**

*"Jesus answered, 'My kingdom does not belong to this world.'" - John 18:36*

How often do we put all our time and energy into building a kingdom here on earth, forgetting that life here is short? The real kingdom is in the next life. Yet, how much time and energy do we invest in working for that eternal kingdom?

**November 29, 2009**

**1st Sunday of Advent**

*"But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand." - Luke 21:28*

Images of the final judgment can be scary, especially if we have not been faithful to God's commands throughout our lives. However, if we have been good stewards, we have left nothing to chance. We have carefully planned our giving and followed Our Lord's example of service and sacrifice. Thus, no matter the day or the hour we will be ready to stand erect and raise our heads to meet God face to face.

**December 6, 2009**

**2nd Sunday of Advent**

*"And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, to discern what is of value..." - Philippians 1:9-10*

Glittery holiday ads can blind us to our stewardship values and distort our needs and wants. It is important that during this season of endless buying we remember that each of us also has the need to give back to God.

**December 13, 2009**

**3rd Sunday of Advent**

*"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God." - Philippians 4:6-7*

St. Paul reminds us that our God is an abundant God, the ultimate giver of gifts. He promises to give us all that we need. When we trust that God will take care of us, it is easier for us to share what we have been given.

**December 20, 2009**

**4th Sunday of Advent**

*"You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." - Micah 5:1*

We may think that the gifts we have to offer may be too small or too inconsequential to give to God. Today we are reminded that God brought forth His greatest gift to mankind, His own Son, through the humble town of Bethlehem. He can also accomplish great things through us if we generously offer our gifts to Him.

**December 27, 2009**

**Feast of the Holy Family**

*"Beloved, see what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God." - 1 John 3:1*

During this season of giving, let's also remember the gifts that God has given to us, including the gift of making us His children. Are we as grateful for that wonderful gift as we are for all the material gifts we have received? How do we show our gratitude to God for the gifts He gives to us all year?

# *Prayers of the Faithful*

## **October 4, 2009**

That we may care for one another, realizing that all people are gifts to us from God.

## **October 11, 2009**

That we may be good stewards by spending more quiet moments with God and pledging our service and our sacrifice to build up God's Church here on earth.

## **October 18, 2009**

That we may share our time, talent and treasure in a spirit of service and sacrifice.

## **October 25, 2009**

That we may more deeply appreciate and value the gifts of sight, taste, smell, hearing and touch, which God has given to us.

## **November 1, 2009**

That we may hold our gifts in an open hand, recognizing that everything belongs to God and that without God's blessings we would be among the very poor in this world.

## **November 8, 2009**

That, just as the poor widow gave her two mites, may we learn to give back more fully and completely to God, trusting that He will always provide us with all that we need.

## **November 15, 2009**

That we may give generously, so that when we meet Our Lord face-to-face we can stand before Him and say, "Lord, I have given all that You asked of me."

## **November 22, 2009**

That we may joyfully give our time, talent and treasure to build up God's Church.

## **November 29, 2009**

That we may follow Our Lord's example by carefully planning ways in which we can give service and sacrifice to build up God's Church for all generations.

## **December 6, 2009**

That we may resist the lure of holiday advertising and instead concentrate on the message of simplicity and trust that is found in the Christmas manger scene.

## **December 13, 2009**

That we may take time to be grateful to God, who is the ultimate giver of all gifts.

## **December 20, 2009**

That as Jesus is born again in our hearts, we may make a renewed commitment to faithfully and generously share our gifts, so that men, women and children in our community can feel the love of Jesus in their lives.

## **December 27, 2009**

That we may be grateful for all the blessings that have come into our lives in the past year, recognizing that God has surely given us more than enough to share.

*With acknowledgment to the Archdiocese of St. Louis*