

SAID ED January 13, 2013

Stewardship renewal

Today we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord. This feast marks the conclusion of the Christmas season. It has been a great time of joy and generosity. Thanks to all who made our celebrations so special!

This one Christmas visitor to our parish remarked: "You certainly have a lot of volunteers in this parish!" I was delighted that she noticed, but from deep inside of me came a slight corrective response. I said, "We like to think of our selves as a Stewardship Parish. The many people who make these things possible are the good stewards of the gifts they have and are sharing their time and talent with our parish." The visitor was as impressed as I was proud. This experience gave me the occasion to reflect on stewardship in the light of what goes on in our parish.

Stewardship has been a very important aspect of our parish life for many years. Our Stewardship committee has made it a priority to raise the awareness of our common call to be good stewards of the gifts with which God has blessed each of us. I think they are doing a wonderful job.

Stewardship asks that we take our baptismal call seriously. Support of the church has been expressed in different ways in other times in our church history. You may remember "The Laws of the Church": Abstain from meat on Friday, Attend Mass every Sunday, Contribute to the support of your parish. These formulations come from another time, but they speak to the responsibilities we share as members. Today we speak more precisely about our call to be *good stewards*. Our Stewardship committee continually raises our awareness about giving our gifts of time, talent and treasure.

I hope that you see yourself as a good steward, one - who uses the many gifts with which God has blessed you; putting them at the service of our community and beyond. At the end of each of our lives God will ask for an accounting of our stewardship. The Lord is going to ask us how well we used our gifts for the building up of the Kingdom on earth? It's up to each of us to use well the gifts that we've been given. As we begin to the new year, we need to re-commit ourselves to good stewardship.

This month we start our annual Stewardship Renewal process. We will hear how some of our fellow parishioners are being good Stewards as they put their gifts at the service of the community. In the weeks ahead we will be challenged to recommit ourselves to do the same. We rely upon the commitment and generosity of all.

Have a great week!
