

Good evening.

My name is Jeff Stanek, and my wife, Elizabeth and I have been members of the parish since 2008 after we enrolled our oldest, Brock, in 1st grade and our youngest, Drew and Maddy in preschool at St. Eds. In 2015 I finally listened to Gods call and enrolled in RCIA, and at Easter Vigil the following spring became baptized into the Catholic faith.

So seeing as how I'm pretty new at this, my first thought after being asked to speak to you today on stewardship was -- what would I have to tell to people that have been doing this far longer and know way more about faith than me. So what I'd like to talk about is how my stewardship has helped me grow my own faith and hopefully inspire some of you to do the same

One of the things I noticed as a new member, is when someone mentions stewardship they either, A: grab their wallets to open it up or B: to get a firmer grip.

So I did some deep research on the meaning of stewardship and consulted the dictionary:

Stewardship:

... *the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.* –

When we act in the role of steward it means that we have been entrusted with something that does not belong to us.

So I thought, what then, is the true biblical meaning of stewardship?

It basically boils down to three major points:

1. God owns it all.
2. We are all stewards.
3. We have a responsibility to manage it for His glory.

We are all stewards of everything we possess! More than just our money - our time, our breath, our very life, all that we have – has been given to us by God. Life itself is a gift from God. All that we have in this life is part of that gift. Stewardship reinforces this belief and reminds us that our time, talents and resources are the gifts through which we show our love and appreciation to God

While monetary giving is a vital part of stewardship, giving of your time and talent is just as important.

If you are looking for ways in which you can practice stewardship, consider the following:

- Worshiping: Daily Mass, taking time from social media and TV for Prayer, adoration of the blessed sacrament, contributing during mass as Eucharistic Minister, Lector, Usher, or greeter
- Faith Formation: The Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) weekend retreat, which is coming up next spring, our youth groups, the Rockclimbers, Edge program and Life Teen, starting a group Scripture study, & even home catechesis.

- Serving: Knights of Columbus Fish fry during Lent, The Catholic Daughters of America, The BeFrienders Group, The FOOD project and the food pantry, prison ministry, pro-life ministry, and St Joseph the workers club.
- Donating: Weekly Giving; online giving; the new church building fund, and diocesan annual appeal are just a few
- Finally, encourage and inspire stewardship in others. Last year, Deacon Rick called me up and asked if I would be willing to help out with RCIA. That one request, and me listening to the call, opened up many more doors for me in my spiritual life. From there, I have gone on to be lector, eucharistic minister and leadership team of CRHP, in addition to continuing involvement with RCIA. As I have increased my own stewardship, my knowledge, appreciation and love of the church has also increased. God may be using you for His voice. The one common thing I hear from other “new” Catholics or those returning to the faith is “if someone would just ask I would do it”. So If you are involved in something in the church, no matter how small it seems, invite someone you know to share of themselves, especially those that may not seem very involved or “just going through the motions”

In conclusion, I urge us all to commit to living each day as Christian Stewards by:

- Praying with grateful hearts,
- Nurturing our family with time and love,
- Sharing our God-given gifts with the parish community, and
- Giving back to God the first fruits of our labors