



*Sharing God's gifts,  
Serving others,  
In Christ's Love*

**Prepared by Ray Deis**

**This document will be updated on an ongoing basis.**

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## **101 Practical Stewardship Tips**

1. Archdiocese Stewardship Prayer said at weekend masses at the end of the Intercessory Prayers.

The Prayer is in the back cover of the hymn book.

2. Pastoral Council meetings usually begin with the Stewardship Prayer.
3. Reflection Suitable For An Examination Of Conscience For Personal Reflection or a Parish Penitential Service.

Many are familiar with the phrase, "time, talent and treasure" as a description of Christian stewardship, and these are important aspects of it. However, stewardship is much more. It entails accepting all aspects of our lives as gift and inviting God into each.

God cares deeply about how we take care of our bodies, emotions and relationships. God wants to use everything we have to bring about the Kingdom in our lives and the world around us.

In September, 2010, Bishop Robert Morneau [Green Bay, Wisc.] gave a presentation on the 'Spirituality of Stewardship' at the International Stewardship Conference in San Diego, CA. in which he presented this idea of stewardship as plots in a garden that we are called to tend in our lives.

The Stewardship committee for our archdiocese is pleased to offer the following reflections, based on Bishop Morneau's analogy of the garden, as a framework for

your personal reflection or a parish penitential service. You are free to adapt it and use it as you see best.

### **Introduction: Being Responsible Stewards Of Our Lives**

The Creation story in Genesis speaks about God placing Adam and Eve in a garden . The 'garden' we have been entrusted with, is the gift of our very life. Gardens are usually made up of a number of different plots each of which could represent a certain aspect of that life. The following examine looks a how well we have tended those plots and what kind of stewards and custodians we have proved to be.

### **The Garden Of The Body**

We can sometimes forget that our physical body is a gift given to us by God . St Paul reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. However, we often abuse or neglect our bodies with the excuse of doing more important things instead.

- ♦ Do you nourish your body with nutritious food and a balanced diet?
- ♦ Do you exercise regularly and maintain a healthy body weight?
- ♦ Do you receive a healthy amount of sleep or is your body sleep- deprived resulting in poor work achievement and less than productive interaction with others.
- ♦ Do you book regular medical, dental and eye examinations?
- ♦ Are you faithful in taking any prescribed medications for the maintenance of your health?
- ♦ Have you unnecessarily exposed your body to toxic and harmful substances?
- ♦ Have you exploited the body of another for your own selfish purposes?

### **The Social Garden**

Our relationships are precious gifts that we often neglect to nurture as much as we should. Sometimes the people we are closest to are the very ones we hurt or take for granted. Cultivating our relationships means being attentive, communicating, and showing our love, commitment and concern.

- ♦ Are there friends and family members that you should spend more time with?
- ♦ Is there someone whom you've neglected to tell how much you love them?
- ♦ Are you willing to take the risk of reaching out and welcoming new members of your neighbourhood, school or parish?
- ♦ Do you make it a priority to spend time with your family? Are there steps you can take to have more fun with them?
- ♦ Are you a good and attentive listener?
- ♦ Do you have unresolved issues with a family member or friend that is seriously interfering with your relationship with them?

- ♦ Is there someone you need to pray for?
- ♦ Do you make your relationship with you spouse a priority before all other commitments?

### **The Ecological Garden**

The Bible tells us that God has entrusted the earth and all its creatures to us, so that we might be good caretakers. St. Francis of Assisi made us particularly aware of God's mysterious presence in all of creation.

- ♦ Have you been wasteful or careless in the use of the material goods entrusted to you?
- ♦ Do you make an effort to recycle or re-use these materials wherever possible?
- ♦ Do you allow concern for the environment to influence your purchasing decisions and do you bother to educate yourself in these matters?
- ♦ Is there a step you could take to reduce the impact you have on the environment [ using cloth re-usable shopping bags, lowering your thermostat, using your automobile a little less, cutting down on the use of plastic water bottles]
- ♦ Have you considered supporting organizations that protect wildlife habitat, preserve parkland, and educate people about environmental issues?
- ♦ Do you understand that stewardship of the earth and its creatures is a way of honouring the Creator and lead to a greater respect for our fellow human beings?

### **The Garden Of Moral Decisions**

Decisions are a responsibility that we frequently fail to tend to. Allowing this plot in our 'life garden' to be overtaken by the weeds of laziness, neglect, fear and confusion is a betrayal of stewardship of our human will and intellect.

- ♦ Do you ever bring God into your decision-making by incorporating prayer into the process?
- ♦ Does your faith affect the decisions you make in your work?
- ♦ Have you considered counseling or spiritual direction to help you discern how and where God might be leading you?
- ♦ Have you been deliberately avoiding making an important decision which , in turn, has affected others in a negative way?
- ♦ What part of your life have you tried to keep God out of?

### **The Emotional And Psychological Garden**

Our feelings and mental state are integral parts of our humanity. However, like our physical health we have sometimes neglected to water and nourish the garden of our inner health needs.

- ♦ Do you take sufficient breaks and vacation time in order to replenish your mental and emotional energies?
- ♦ Are you a 'workaholic' trying to defy burnout?
- ♦ Do you ever ask for help and support from friends, family or professionally-trained people when you are drained or depressed?
- ♦ Do you allow your emotions to build up to an unhealthy level?
- ♦ Do you ever allow yourself to have fun?
- ♦ Do you have a hobby, sport or leisure pastime to give you a break from work and other demanding responsibilities?
- ♦ Do you allow yourself the gift of some quiet time or solitude?
- ♦ Have you taken any steps to deal with any serious issue that has been repressed within you for a long time?
- ♦ Is there a particular emotion within you that you wish to understand better and deal with in a more positive manner?

### **Our Political Garden**

We take for granted the rights, liberties and freedoms that our country affords us. Have we proved to be worthy good and worthy custodians and stewards of the rights of citizenship that we are privileged to have.

- ♦ Do you bother to acquaint yourself with political issues and vote in civic, provincial and federal elections?
- ♦ Does your faith influence your political views?
- ♦ Have you ever bothered to contact your government representative to express your concern about specific issues?
- ♦ Have you considered taking some small steps or initiatives that would create a more just community, either locally or on a wider scale?
- ♦ Have you ever attended a session of Citizenship Court to witness and welcome new immigrants as fellow countrymen?

### **The Technology Garden**

We live in a vastly different world from one just a few decades ago. Our advances in technology are changing our lives whether we like it or not. We have a responsibility to acquaint ourselves with these new methods of social communication and use them well in building a better world.

- ♦ Are you being called to learn more about some new form of technology or are you resistant to any change?
- ♦ Do you use the means of social networking in a constructive and responsible manner?
- ♦ Have you used the Internet wisely in terms of time and in terms of the content that you view?

- ♦ How has your use of computers , cell phones, iPods and other electronic devices affected your life style and your relationship with others?

### **The Garden Of History**

God calls us to learn about our past in order to better understand who we are now and what we are called to be in the future. The Bible tells of our ancestors in the faith and their relationship with the Creator. Wisdom is gleaned from the experiences and stories given to us from the past. Knowing the sources of our traditions aids us in handing them on to our children and our children's children.

- ♦ Do you possess a Bible and have you ever taken the opportunity to become familiar with its stories?
- ♦ Do you take advantage of books, videos, Internet, documentaries, and other resources to enrich your perspectives on world and church history?
- ♦ Have you ever researched your own family's background in order to share with younger generations an appreciation for their cultural heritage?
- ♦ Do you consider learning history important in understanding and interpreting the significance of current events?
- ♦ Have you ever bothered to take the time to reflect on your own personal history in order to comprehend and perhaps share what life has taught you?
- ♦ Have you thought about what God has taught us through the events of both world and our own personal histories?
- ♦ Have you had some experiences from the past that you now feel responsible to act upon?

### **The Intellectual Garden**

Science tells us that we only take advantage of a small part of the of our brain potential. Among all creatures on the earth, humans have been endowed with the greatest capacity to think, reason and learn. Yet perhaps we fall far short in cultivating a desire for knowledge and allow our intellectual gardens to go to seed.

- ♦ With the intelligence and education with which you have been gifted, how have you put this to the service of God and others?
- ♦ Have you sought out opportunities to improve your level of education in either secular or religious areas of interest? Have you checked out what is being offered in your parish, public library ,local community college or university?
- ♦ Do you seek out radio and television programs that instruct and educate rather than just provide shallow entertainment?
- ♦ Have you considered returning to school to upgrade your skills and education level?
- ♦ Have you encouraged young people to continue their education and have you ever volunteered to assist with things like reading programs in your local elementary school?

### **The Cultural Garden**

Our world would be a dull and colourless place without the creativity of the arts. Music, literature, drama, poetry and the many visual genres of art all enrich life and lift the human spirit. We are called to support and explore artistic creativity . In this , we also participate in the life of the Creator who has given us this gift.

- ♦ Do you desire to spend some time in developing an artistic talent -especially one that has perhaps lain dormant for a long time?
- ♦ Is there a particular art form that you have always wanted to explore?
- ♦ Do you support the arts in your local community and in your local elementary or local high schools?
- ♦ Do you take time to notice art around you and allow it to foster a deeper appreciation of beauty?
- ♦ Have you offered any of your artistic talents for the benefit of your local community, church, senior centre, etc.?

### **The Economic Garden**

All the material possession that we have are not really ours. They belong to God Who has entrusted them to us. Our role is to tend, nurture and share them. The question is often asked, "What do we own - and what owns us?"

- ♦ What possessions are you overly attached to? What would not be able to walk away from?
- ♦ Do you give 'from the top' of your material resources or from whatever is left over after you've spent on yourself?
- ♦ How and where have you invested your material resources?
- ♦ Have you ever thought of sponsoring a needy child or family in a foreign country?
- ♦ Do you financially support local, national or international charities?
- ♦ Do you generously support the financial needs of your church and do you ever volunteer your time and talent to assist with parish programs or projects?

### **The Spiritual Garden**

How do you respond when you are asked if you have a personal relationship with God, with Jesus, with the Holy Spirit? All relationships, like a garden, need on-going attention. Commitment, effort, time and communication are necessary ingredients for a healthy spiritual life.

- ♦ Do you pray regularly? Or just say 'prayers'.
- ♦ Have you ever made a retreat?
- ♦ Do you use prayer, fasting and almsgiving to cultivate your relationship with God?

- ♦ Do you make use of various resources [books, videos, music] to enhance your prayer and contemplative life?
- ♦ Do you ever set aside some quiet time in your schedule to simply allow God to speak to you in the silence of your heart?
- ♦ Have you ever taken time to learn more about liturgy and probe the deeper beauty of the public prayer of the Church?
- ♦ Do you allow your spiritual convictions to influence all the other aspects of the garden of life entrusted to you by God?

**Scripture Passages that might be used for a Lenten Penitential service based on a stewardship theme:**

- ♦ Matthew 24: 45-51 [the conscientious steward]
- ♦ Matthew: 25: 15-28 [Parable of the talents]
- ♦ Matthew 5:13-16 [ On not hiding your gifts -being salt and light]
- ♦ Luke: 16: 1-9 [The dishonest steward ]
- ♦ Luke 16:10-13 [On the use of material possessions]
- ♦ Genesis 1:27-31 [God entrusting creation to humankind]
- ♦ 1Cor. 12:4-11 [ the use of the gifts of the Spirit]
- ♦ 1 Peter 4:8-11 [using our gifts to glorify God]

4. Ministries Blessing and Renewal October 2011.

Thank you for a commitment of your time and talent for a one year term.

Ministries:

- Altar Server
- Children's Liturgy of the Word Leader
- ESL/Citizenship
- Eucharistic Minister to the Sick
- Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharistic
- Minister of Hospitality
- Minister of Music
- Offertory Collection Counter
- Proclaimer of the Word
- Sacristan

Distributed personalized Certificate and Candle with Stewardship Decal.

5. Advent Pre mass reflections PowerPoint show.

During Advent, we have A Time for Quiet Reflection: 20 minutes before the start of each weekend Mass. This is a special time to help focus on the mystery of the Eucharist and draw closer to the Lord.

We use a PowerPoint slide deck with reflections based on the Sunday readings, and stewardship quotes and insights. And Tweets from Pope Francis.

We start with a music video, then the slides, and end with another video. The videos are related to the theme of the readings for that weekend. We found the video at the beginning helps in getting the people to reduce their talking and settle in for the quieter reflection time.

We use videos from YouTube and we purchase videos from a site called [Sermon Spice](#) and [SkitGuys](#).

6. Lent Pre mass reflections PowerPoint show.

Same description as #5.

7. Christmas videos.

Christmas Eve and Day video after Communion. Instead of purchasing, I used a video the pre-kindergarten teacher recorded about the students talking about Jesus and the Christmas story.

8. Videos without audio about the Gospel before mass.

Loops continuously for about 40 minutes, then freezes on an appropriate frame for the duration of mass. Wedding Feast at Cana, Baptism of Jesus, Pentecost Flames.

9. Catholicism – Cookies – Coffee. January through Lent 2013.

Father Robert Barron Catholicism 10 part DVD series. Saturdays at 8 pm after evening Mass.

10. Lent Weekly Pocket Prayer Cards 2013, 2014. 2015.

These are like a business card. The front of the card has a scripture reference that corresponds to the Sunday readings and the back has a stewardship thought.

We distribute a different one each week throughout Lent and this year for the first time we continued the practice through the weeks of Easter because we wanted to promote that Easter is not just the Sunday but a season.

This idea for the cards was inspired by a story one of our parishioners shared. A couple of years ago she was one of the people distributing ashes at the Ash Wednesday mass. Months after the mass, she reached in the pocket of the coat



she wore that night and was surprised to find the card that said "Repent, and believe in the Gospel". This was the card she had used to remind her what to say when distributing ashes. She said, "It was like a prayer from heaven."

A few weeks after that a parishioner told me this story. Her husband passed away a few months before. When she was packaging up his clothes, she found a well worn pocket prayer card he had obtained many years ago.

11. Easter Weekly Pocket Prayer Cards 2015.

In 2015 with the idea of promoting Easter as a season we focused our card messages on being disciples, witnessing to our faith. We encouraged people to take multiple cards and share them with people they know and meet.

12. Eucharistic Adoration for one hour after Tuesday evening mass during Advent and Lent.

Father is also available for individual reconciliation during the hour.

13. Video Tribute to Mothers on Mothers Day weekend masses.

We invite parishioners to submit photos. I use ProShow Producer software to put the photos into a video show and add song tracks. The show is about 8 minutes and is shown after Communion as our Post-Communion meditation.

14. Video Tribute to Fathers on Fathers Day weekend masses.

Same description as #13.

15. Video Tribute to deceased loved ones on All Souls Day.

For all people that celebrated a funeral mass since the previous year's All Souls Day, we send a letter to the contact person inviting them and the family to attend a special mass in the evening of All Souls Day. We scan the memorial card that was used at the funeral and build a video show the same as Mother's and Father's Day.

16. Video Tribute to deceased loved ones during November, the Month of Remembering.

Same description as #13.

17. Videos are used during mass to enhance the homily message.

These are played before, during, or after the homily.

18. Guest Book.

In our Welcoming Area we have a Guest Book. In our opening announcements before mass we mention that if you are visiting our parish, sign the guest book and pick up a St. Cecilia bookmark (see Tip #19) which are beside the book. The person reading the opening announcements checks the book and if someone has signed, then they also welcome them by mentioning the city. Their name is not mentioned.

19. Stewardship Bookmark.

The bookmark beside the Guest Book has the following Stewardship message, Receiving, Nurturing, Sharing and Returning God's Gifts on the front with a photo of the church. The back has a Prayer which changes throughout the year. For the summer months it is a Prayer for Vacationers while the rest of the year it is a Prayer for Travellers.

We also have special ones for Christmas, New Years, Easter Season and Pentecost.

20. Special Bookmarks.

In addition to the Stewardship Bookmarks, we have ones for the following:

- A blessing for Teachers (Commissioning of Teachers).
- A blessing for Mothers (Mother's Day)
- A blessing for Fathers (Father's Day)
- Lent

21. Studying and reflecting on USCCB Stewardship A Disciples Response with Parish Council leadership.

22. Studying and reflecting on USCCB Stewardship A Disciples Response with parishioners.

23. Little Books of the Diocese of Saginaw, Michigan.

There are Little Burgundy Books, Blue Books, Black Books and White Books.

The book travels easily in your pocket, purse or backpack. The goal is to take 6 minutes of quiet time every day to walk through the book a page at a time. Six

minutes a day, pays big returns. Reflect on the Gospel passages assigned for weekday Masses with explanation and reflections. The book also includes a variety of quotes, information and timely thoughts.

The Burgundy books have a stewardship theme and there are four in the set with reflections based on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each book covers four weeks. I found many insights and practical ideas to put into action about stewardship. After studying and reflecting on the USCCB Stewardship A disciples Response with our Council leadership and the session we had with a small group of parishioners, we provided a set to each person.

24. The Blue Books are used a companion for the Advent and Christmas Seasons.
25. The Black Books are used a companion for the Lenten Season.
26. The White Book are used a companion for Easter Season.

The books cost about \$1 each and for Blue and Black books we asked people to give a suggested donation of \$1. The White Books were given out in a special Easter package with our Stewardship newsletter and Easter bookmark for the people that attended Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday. For the White Books we add a label on the cover with our Mission Statement and address. We do this different distribution at Easter because of the large number of visitors and people that are only attending church once or twice a year. For celebrations when you have a large number of unchurched people, we learned a strategy to give people something tangible.

27. In addition to the books for the parishioners we also provide about 80 to the teachers of our two elementary schools.
28. Gave Stewardship Little Burgundy Books to all participants that studied Stewardship A Disciples Response.
29. San Diego Stewardship Prayer. We found this prayer at the International Stewardship Conference. The prayer was used at the sessions for studying Stewardship: A Disciple's Response. We also use it at various meetings
30. Mission Statement

One of the practices of embracing a stewardship way of life is to have a parish mission statement.

The mission statement provides a focus, giving direction to the pastoral planning.

It defines our purpose - what we are trying to accomplish.

We invited people to help in develop our statement by submitting possible statements.

We gave people the choice of either emailing a statement or submitting it anonymously by dropping it a box in the Welcoming Area.

We received 45 statements.

Even the ones that were emailed, became anonymous. I copied the statement from the email with no reference to who sent it, and then deleted the message.

The anonymous part was important so when it came time to putting together the statement, the selection team wouldn't be influenced by who the statement came from.

The selection team was Father John, Stewardship Team Leaders, and 2 other people.

The guidelines for the mission statement were:

- ◆ One sentence.
- ◆ Express a higher purpose for the greatest good that gives meaning to the efforts of each individual.
- ◆ Reference Jesus or God and use of our gifts of time, skills and treasure.
- ◆ About how we live our lives as individual disciples of Christ day-in and day-out.

We used a practice of finding the top items in a list we reduced the 45 to 9 possible statements.

Then we discussed the 9 in detail and looked for keywords in each statement.

Through the discussion, we came up with one statement.

Even though the guidelines said one sentence, ideally a mission statement should be 7 – 10 words and one that people can remember and say and even one that a 7 year old can say.

We came up with an 8 word statement.

Our mission statement is:

Sharing God's gifts, Serving Others, in Christ's love.

This statement is our branding and appears on parish letterhead, fax cover sheets, bulletin, stewardship newsletter, and signage.

We introduced the statement to the parish community and also ways that will increase awareness of the statement so people can remember it and be energized by it.

31. Mission statement prayer.

We asked a couple of people to write the prayer. The prayer is inside the back cover of our Glory and Praise hymn books. We either say the Mission Statement Prayer or the Archdiocese Stewardship Prayer at the end of the General Intercessions.

32. Mission Statement Song.

We also found a song in our books with the title of We Are Called to Serve. The music groups are encouraged to include it once a month or every two months as the Offertory song

33. Mission Statement Sign.

We had a sign made of our mission statement and placed it above our front doors. The sign also includes a photo of Pope Francis.

34. Mission Statement Launch.

When we introduced the statement to the parishioners we had a special launch package in a plastic bag that included an origami rocket because we were out to launch.

35. Explanation of the Mission Statement Words.

The statement just isn't words that we want people to recite.

Most importantly, people need to live it as part of their stewardship way of life. It's like our stewardship prayer, we need to live it.

Because we need to live out the statement, there is significance to the words.

Father John prepared an explanation of the 8 words. The explanation was included in the launch package and we also had a sign made with the explanation which is posted in our Welcoming Area.

Mission Statement. Sharing God's Gifts, Serving others, In Christ's Love.

#### Sharing

We journey in faith, not as 'rugged individuals', but as a community, working collaboratively together. Our personal gifts are to be used for the benefit of others in the spirit of selflessness (St. Paul's analogy of the human body as the Body of Christ from Romans 12: 4-8)

#### God's

We acknowledge a Creator from Whom everything flows and to Whom all will return. God is the ultimate source of everything that exists.

#### Gifts:

Recognizing that everything we have is a gift from the Creator and our response is that of gratitude. We are not owners, but rather stewards of what has been entrusted to us.

#### Serving:

Reaching out to the needs of others. We are not a self-serving 'club' bent on simply maintaining our own comfort and security, but rather a community with a mission of witnessing to the message of the Gospel to the world.

#### Others:

This includes those of our parish, our universal Church, those of other faith traditions, those who claim to have no faith, and in general, all of God's children.

#### In Christ's:

We are a Christian community, not merely a service club. Jesus Christ is 'the Way, the Truth and the Life' for us. We acknowledge Him as the perfect human presence of the Creator, as articulated in our creed of belief.

#### Love:

Acknowledging that Love is the ultimate basis of God's message – a love that translates into action, which surpasses mere feelings and emotions, and shows itself in sacrifices, conscious choices and decision making.

### 36. Baptism Prayer Cards.

For our Baptism's which are 3 or 4 times a year, there are two Baptism Preparation sessions each time.

We prepare Baptism Prayer Cards. These are two part cards that we print on cover stock paper and perforate. To perforate, you can buy a paper cutter from a

place like Staples. The cutter has slip in blades that change from cutting to perforating.

We have the cards in our Welcoming Area the weekend after the first preparation session. We invite people to fill in their name on one part and promise to pray for the family and leave that part at church. They take the other part home as a reminder to pray. We make 3 – 6 cards for each family depending on the number of baptisms.

The cards are a Microsoft Word document and the child and parent names and gender details are added to a data file and then merged to produce the finished cards.

We also prepare cards for the adults preparing to be fully initiated members of the Catholic church at Easter and we also had 4 adults become fully initiated members at Pentecost this year.

### 37. Photos of Baptism Preparation Parents and Children.

We attend the sessions. We take photos of the parents, godparents, and children, then put together a display board of the photos which we post in our Welcoming Area.

We attend the Baptisms. At our parish, the Baptism are celebrated outside the mass and usually on a Sunday afternoon. We take photos of the families that we again post in the Welcoming Area.

### 38. Parish Gift at Baptism.

At the Baptism, we give the family the prayer cards along with a gift bag of parish items that include:

- ◆ St. Cecilia notepad
- ◆ Pen
- ◆ Bottle of Holy Water
- ◆ Bookmark of the season
- ◆ St. Cecilia Fridge Magnet
- ◆ Rosary
- ◆ A How To Pray The Rosary card.
- ◆ St. Cecilia Card
- ◆ Pope Francis Card.

39. Divine Office Liturgy of the Hours – Morning Prayer  
This is prayed 15 minutes before Thursday morning mass. <http://divineoffice.org/>
40. Users/Greeters Welcoming presentation.  
Gave a 5 minute presentation about Hospitality being one of the Pillars of Stewardship and it is the most important.
41. May Month of Mary Rosary Glorious Mystery Decade before weekend Saturday and Sunday mass. Because 5 decades and 4 weekends start in April.
42. October Month of the Most Holy Rosary. Luminous Mystery Decade before weekend Saturday and Sunday mass. Because 5 decades and 4 weekends start in September.
43. Blessing and commissioning of Sacred Heart and St. Francis School teachers.
44. Prayer for teachers bookmarks.
45. Quarterly newsletter focused on the men and women of our schools in appreciation for their commitment to serving God and showing good stewardship in using their gifts of time, talent and energy in building the Kingdom.
46. Meeting of stewardship representatives from Regina parishes.
47. Attended Media Art in Liturgy Conference in Calgary.
48. Attended Stewardship Workshop presented by Ed and April McLaughlin.
49. Ministry Renewal 2013  
Certificates and personalized magnet.
50. Month of Remembering  
During November used ceremonial binder in Welcoming Area and people wrote names of deceased loved ones. Binder carried forward with the Gifts.



51. Quarterly newsletter at Christmas.

This edition of the newsletter highlighted the St. Francis Advent community service projects. They are wonderful examples of putting into action and living our parish Mission Statement, Sharing God's Gifts, Serving Others, In Christ's Love.

52. Father personally signed a letter thanking people for their 2013 contributions and meeting our budgeted collection amount. He also addressed each letter.
53. School Lent Art Project. Post art in Welcoming Area. Photograph the art and use in the Lent reflection slides.
54. Growing in Human and Christian Maturity bookmark. Lent 2014. Accompanied Father's insert.
55. Catholicism: The New Evangelization Father Robert Barron 5 part DVD series. Saturdays after mass. Lent 2014.
56. Pre-K teacher at St. Francis invited the kids and parents to come to a Friday morning mass followed by a gathering in the hall with muffins. We provided something tangible to take home for the 20 families. It was a St. Cecilia Note pad, magnet, and God Bless Your Family card. Picture of the Holy Family on the front and Family Prayer on the back. Father asked all the kids to come forward during Communion for a blessing. At the gathering he was able to talk to many families and some were interested in baptism and joining the church.
57. Palm Sunday. Played Invite Me In video encouraging people to invite someone to the Easter Sunday mass. Video from Sermon Spice.
58. Easter. Bookmark with He Is Alive photo and Easter Prayer. Photo from Sermon Spice.
59. Packaged the Stewardship Easter newsletter, regular bulletin, bookmarks, and Little White Books in plastic bags. Added a label to the cover of Little White Books with Mission Statement and compliments of Stewardship Team.
60. Easter packages for Sacred Heart and St. Francis school teachers and staff. 84. Newsletter, bookmark, Little White Book, Pope Francis Church of Mercy book offer, magnet.
61. Easter Played Alive video from Sermon Spice after Communion.

62. Second Sunday of Easter. Played Reverse Psychology video from Sermon Spice as part of homily that was about Easter is not just a day but continues on.

63. Pope Francis Church of Mercy Book offer in partnership with a local Church Supplier. \$13. 125 books. Setup an email address or call the church office.

64. Father's Day Prayer Card.

Designed prayer cards for Father's Day which included a Prayer to St. Joseph.

65. Summertime Prayer.

Map of streets within parish boundaries. 3' x 4' map.

Jesus said, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Mark 12:31. In today's world, the sad fact is many don't know their neighbour.

1. Place the sticker on your street or area where you live or go for a walk. If your area is already highlighted, mark another area.

2. Pray for the people in the area you marked.

3. As you walk around the neighbourhood this summer, pray for the people you see and ones you don't see. Many of them could be people who do not regularly attend church; others may not come to church at all.

66. Prayer Request Book in Welcoming Area for Prayer Group.

Date Requested	Prayer Request
Date Answered	Comment

1. Please print your request.

2. The people gathering for prayer on Thursday evening from 7 to 8:30 pm will include it in the prayer request part of the evening.

3. When your prayer is answered, please fill in the "Answered" date and comment, so we can all be encouraged.

67. Develop Order of Mass and program for special occasions. For Example: 60th Anniversary. Good for the regular as something tangible to remember the event and for the unchurched.

68. Develop Order of Mass and program for Easter Vigil. Good hospitality for the unchurched and as reference to ease the anxiety of the catechumens and candidates.

69. The Carpenter Book

Pastoral and Finance Council Committee leaders read and discussed.

[Author Jon Gordon website.](#)

70. Positive Pledge.

Negative thoughts are the nails that build a prison of failure. Positive thoughts will build a masterpiece.

Negativity is the biggest problem in business and life today.

It costs organizations billions of dollars and impacts the morale, productivity and health of individuals and teams.

[Download the pledge.](#)

71. Elementary School Open House at the beginning of school year. Postcards with mass schedule and call to action if people want more information about preparing for sacraments, Baptism, First Eucharist, Confirmation, First Reconciliation or joining the Catholic Church, contact the parish office. Name of Office Administrator, so they know who they will talking with and photo of pastor and name.

72. Elementary School hosting of craft and bake sale.

Postcards with Christmas mass times and call to action if people want more information about preparing for sacraments, Baptism, First Eucharist, Confirmation, First Reconciliation or joining the Catholic Church, contact the parish office. Name of Office Administrator, so they know who they will talking with and photo of pastor and name.

73. About 30 Little Blue Books remained. Gave them to the teachers at both schools.

74. Developed a questionnaire which had the question What brings you joy at home, at work, at school, at church and other. The questionnaire was handed out after Communion during the First Sunday of Advent November 29 and 30 masses. The people were given about 5 minutes to fill it in and they deposited it in a basket as they left mass. 210 responses were received. Included some of the responses in

the pre-mass reflection presentations.

75. Developed a one hour special presentation called Joy! Joy! Joy! which was about cultivating joy in your life. This was a modified version of the 5 hour presentation for the the Archbishop M.C. O'Neill teacher retreat on October 31. Joy! Joy! Joy! was held Saturday morning from 9:30 - 11. That weekend was the 3rd Sunday of Advent which is Gaudete ("Rejoice in the Lord always") Sunday. The event included homemade breakfast sandwiches and 33 people participated.
76. Arranged and worked with the Burmese (Karen) choir to sing at the mass on January 1. Sing in English. One Karen song.
77. Gift bag package for new envelope users.
  - ◆ St. Cecilia notepad
  - ◆ Pen
  - ◆ Bottle of Holy Water
  - ◆ Stewardship Bookmark
  - ◆ St. Cecilia Fridge Magnet
  - ◆ Stewardship thank you postcard.
78. Taste and See the Goodness of the Lord.
79. Video Sources.

Sermon Spice <http://www.sermonspice.com/>
80. Stations of the Cross During Lent

Used a different one each week and different people led.  
Week 1 – Family  
Week 2 – Pope Francis 2015 Way of the Cross  
Week 3 – Creighton University  
Week 4 – Teenager  
Week 5 – Biblical Way. Included images.  
Week 6 – Marcheschi
81. Use Matthew Kelly as a resource for content to share.

<http://dynamiccatholic.com/>
82. Use Father Robert Barron as a resource for content to share.

<http://www.wordonfire.org/>

83. Use Lead Like Jesus as a resource for content to share.

<http://www.leadlikejesus.com/>

84. Evening Prayer before Tuesday evening Mass. Advent, Lent, Easter.

85. What's Next series bulletin inserts during Easter.

86. Gratitude app.

87. If you try something and it fails, that's one thing. But not to try at all? That's shameful.

88. Pentecost Bookmark with Fruits of the Holy Spirit, Increase the awareness and promotion of Pentecost. 3rd most important feast after Easter and Christmas.

89. Never too busy to make eye contact.

90. Leaders, You Better Laugh

[Fabulous article](#)

91. Have a camera always handy. Most of us have one in our pocket all the time because of our SmartPhone. Takes many photos of parishioners. You will have many opportunities to post the photos.

92. Attend all weddings and take photos of bride and groom and then post in the Welcoming Area.

93. Outreach to immigrants.

In our parish we have about 80 Karen culture people that came to Canada as refugees from Burma via a Thailand Refugee Camp. We held weekly ESL session on Saturday mornings helping them learn and improve their English as well as helping them to prepare for their Canadian Citizenship Exam.

94. Name tags for hospitality greeters, Children's Liturgy Leaders and Parish Council Team Leaders.

95. Postcards During Advent.

Inserted in the bulletin, encouraging people to invite someone to Christmas mass. Can also be done during Lent for Easter.

96. The parable of the Sower and The Seed. Some will fall in all three areas. Some will be on the rocks and they just won't get it. In fact studies have shown that 20% won't get it. Do not be discouraged. All God needs is for a little to take hold and you will see returns.

97. Attend Msgr. McGread Stewardship Conference in Wichita Kansas.

[Website Link.](#)

98. Attend Western Canada Stewardship Conference.

[Website link.](#)

99. Attend International Stewardship Conference.

[Website link.](#)

100. Attend Religious Education Congress. Annual event in Anaheim. Over 40,000 Catholics gather.

[Website link.](#)

101. 5 words that, if you stopped using them, can make your life and the lives of the people you interact with more positive and joyful.

Don't – 'Do as I say'

Used when you are imposing your will onto others, if you use this word when you need people on your side be prepared for them to reject what you're saying.

Try – 'Do or do not, There is no try' - Yoda.

Try simply means 'won't bother', or to not give 100%. Commitments must be 100% or not at all

Can't – There is no such word as can't

How often is this said to children and yet as adults we still use it.

Can't' is a negative word that is unsupportive and relationship damaging.

Won't – How to lose friends fast

I won't do it', 'you won't help me' - these words are a strong statement of negativity ensuring the end of a conversation.

But – 'That's great, now this is what I think'

Discredits everything said before it.

Always replace with the word 'and' however uncomfortable that may seem.

Using 'and' makes it more inclusive and friendly.

Example: I like the poster you created but it needs to have some photos of flowers. I like the poster you created and it needs to have some photos of flowers.

Example: I love you but I have to leave you'  
'I love you and I have to leave you'