



Living Out our Baptismal Ministry Through Stewardship: It's Up to Us

by Don Henry, Chair of the Vestry Stewardship Committee

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It's that time of year again and our Annual Commitment Appeal for 2009 is currently underway! And as we have traveled together on this journey towards becoming good stewards, we have gathered a few key learnings along the way:

- Stewardship is not about the need of the parish to receive - *it is about our individual need to give.*
- Stewardship is not about liking or agreeing with parish leaders and/or our policies and practices - *it is based on our individual relationship with God.*
- Stewardship is not a program - *it is a process, a process of conversion.*

Stewardship centers upon the conversion of people, not the collection of more dollars!

If you consider this perspective - by talking it over with others and even by praying about it - you, too might see the act of pledging differently. Because we are Christians who have this need to give, we therefore need and expect the parish to remind us, encourage us and support us in growing into an ever deepening and loving relationship with God so that we might become more faithful stewards. Over the past three Sundays we have had a different parishioner speak during both the 8 AM and 10 AM services on our stewardship of time, talent and treasure:

- ***Time and Talent*** - Saint Peter's has numerous opportunities for each of us to make offerings by volunteering our time and unique skills to God's service. On October 12th I talked about the challenge I face with balancing time spent at St. Peter's volunteering and my requirements at work, time with family and time for self. During our services on October 19th, Don Smith spoke about how he uses his talents in worship to make gifts to God and to Saint Peter's over the many years he has been a parishioner.
- ***Treasure*** - pledges and special gifts and bequests make this community of faith a community center of service and spiritual authority and support for all. This past Sunday, October 26th, Diane Clark addressed the many ways gifts of money further the work of God, not only in our parish but in our community. You may recall the wonderful story she told about how gifts made in the early part of the 20th century provided the beautiful stained glass windows we enjoy today. She also mentioned how our monetary contributions allow us to do God's bidding in our community through our Outreach Program.

When all is said and done, stewardship is a private decision - a personal choice - between each of us and God. We give because we love... We love Saint Peter's and the people we know here; we love our community, where we live our lives with family and friends. We give because we love God.