

A PARISH'S STEWARDSHIP STORY

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA, MENDON, N.Y.

A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

GOD'S WORK -- ALL THE WAY

I Looking For The Magic Bullet, ? Stewardship:

---- International Stewardship Conference, Toronto , Canada, close proximity,
(**God's Work**)

---- Money available from a generous gift to help with expenses. (**God's Work**)

---- Staff and parishioners attended. The conversion process began.

First Suggestion:

When Stewardship is being initiated, make it a 'parish project'. Include the staff and as many parishioners as possible. It needs to be more than the Pastor's or the Administrator's idea.

II Formation Of A Stewardship Committee:

---- The committee met monthly for one year, with a goal of self education.

---- Read and discussed, The Bishop's Letter on Stewardship, A Disciple's Response, as well as other books on the topic.

---- Communicated with other Stewardship parishes.

---- Visited two Stewardship parishes.

Second Suggestion :

Committee self education is vital.

III Wondering About The Next Step:

---- Msgr McGread Stewardship Conference, in Wichita, Kansas. The program was practical, and appropriate for our needs., (**God's Work**). Attendance by Pastor and parishioners.

---- Conference sponsored by Catholic Stewardship Consultants (CSC), a group with good organization, and wide experience, helping parishes on the Stewardship journey.

---- CSC submitted a proposal to St Catherine's detailing services provided and potential benefits.

---- The Bad News—they cost \$, the equivalent of the salary of a staff person.

---- The Good News--- funding available from monies generated from Partners in Faith (**God's Work**).

Third Suggestion:

Be realistic, be practical, but do something!

IV Benefits of Catholic Stewardship Consultants:

- Provided the discipline.
- Established a timeline.
- Provided several resource people; ie writers, data entry etc.
- Developed professional material

Conclusion; without their assistance we would not be in the position we are today.

V Does Stewardship Work?

- 1st year, many questions about Stewardship, Many feeling its all about money.
- 2nd year, Stewardship is now part of the Church vocabulary, and beginning to be understood.

Subsequent years have shown that an increasing number of people are either renewing their commitments to Time, Talent and Treasure, or making new commitments.

VI What Helped Stewardship Work?

- Dedicated Staff and Stewardship committee
- Keeping the Stewardship message before the people through the bulletins, homilies, and lay witness talks.
- Acknowledging Stewardship deeds in the parish and in the community through a specific Stewardship recognition program.
- The monthly publication of a Newsletter that was mailed to all households.

VII What Could Have Been Done Differently?

- Work earlier with all parish committees to help deepen their understanding of Stewardship. .
- Involve the Faith Formation Director from the beginning.
- Give equal emphasis to the Treasure part of Stewardship from the start.
- Develop a systematic process for the selection and rotation of Stewardship committee members.

VIII Back to the Beginning:

Stewardship is **not** a Magic Bullet. It is not a gimmick.
Rather it calls forth a whole new way of looking at and living life.
That calling forth, that '**conversion of heart**' can change our parishes.

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