
COMMUNICATING STEWARDSHIP STEP 2

An effective stewardship process must include planning and implementing communication about stewardship. Ideally there will be elements of communication that occur in the context of Mass and those that occur outside that context.

Printed and Audio Visual Communications

◆ ***Direct communication to parishioners.***

The stewardship committee should evaluate and decide on which types of stewardship material should be sent to all parishioners, and which should be targeted primarily to active parishioners.

◆ ***Parish Newsletter and/or Web Site***

Are essential elements of communication to parishioners. A newsletter or web site allows parishioners to find out about all the daily and weekly activities and ministries going on in the parish. A professional web-site is a 24 hour location for family members to receive up to date information of parish activities and information. With growing numbers of web users, a good website is cost effective and necessary.

◆ ***Commitment Cards and Envelopes.***

An important element of the stewardship effort is the commitment form or card. Parishioners are generally asked to complete a Personal Commitment of Time/ Talent form at the conclusion of a Time/ Talent Stewardship education process and to complete a Financial Commitment or Intention Card at the conclusion of the Financial Stewardship educational process. The Commitment forms or cards can be placed in a collection basket, mailed to the parish or brought forward and placed in a special container in the context of Sunday Mass.

◆ ***Expressions of appreciation.***

Volunteers should be thanked, directly by the pastor and staff and by mention in the parish bulletin for contributions of time and talent. It's important to also thank any young people, by name, for any specific services they were able to offer. Financial contributions should also be acknowledged by an individual thank you. Such a thank you can include some mention of the ministries that were made possible by the donation.

◆ ***Educational resources.***

The parish should make available to staff, school, and parishioners a variety of resources about stewardship including books, videos and audio tapes. Many of these are available for through the Diocesan Stewardship Office.

◆ ***Print resources.***

A variety of brochures and pamphlets are available from commercial distributors. Some sample resources are contained in this workbook. See the Appendix for more information on resources available for purchase.

◆ ***Bulletin.***

The bulletin should be used to highlight ministries, to thank volunteers, and to report in an ongoing way the good news about the generosity of parishioners in their offerings of time, talent and treasure.

◆ ***News releases.***

Parish staff and ministry coordinators should utilize the news release to inform the public of programs and achievements in the parish. Local papers will often print such news releases verbatim. If the release is about an upcoming event, make sure to be explicit about whether the program is ecumenical (open to all who are interested). Newspaper articles about parish events engender pride in the parish.

◆ **Parish brochures.**

Well designed parish brochures which contain directions, hours of Masses and other useful information can be left at local hotels and bed and breakfasts.

◆ **A Parish Ministry Directory** is an informative guide to the organization and activities of the parish for all parishioners. It communicates what is going on in the parish to new and present members. It can reduce calls to the church office for names and telephone numbers of contact person for parish groups. See sample of a Parish Ministry Directory. The directory can be printed on 8.5 x 11 sheets or in a booklet form. The following are suggested items for inclusion in the Directory.

- Parish Mission Statement
- Parish Goals
- Description of ministries/groups
- Skills/training needed
- Time commitment

(A sample ministry booklet can be obtained from the Diocesan Stewardship Office and modified for specific parish families)

◆ **Kiosks.** Located in a central meeting place in the church or parish, a kiosk contains informational posters and pamphlets on various organizations and services within the parish. Kiosks can include pictures of the parish staff, Parish Pastoral Council leaders, new families, etc.

◆ **Video/Audio.** Either an audio or videotape can be made of parish activities and given to new families to welcome them to the parish.

Communications during Mass

◆ **Lay witnesses.** There is tremendous value in having lay people share the story of their commitment of time, talent and treasure and comment on how such sharing has affected their lives.

◆ **General Intercessions.** Including a stewardship intention in the recitation of prayers of petition throughout the year serves as a continuing reminder of the importance of accepting stewardship as a way of life.

◆ **Communication from the pulpit.** One of the most effective methods of educating parishioners about stewardship is for the pastor and other priests to communicate their own commitment to stewardship. The pastor's commitment is by far the most powerful force in motivating parishioners to become more dedicated stewards.

◆ **Pulpit Announcement.** Typically a pulpit announcement this is used to announce special events or needs in the parish. In some cases the pastor may make a personal appeal for participation in a special activity.