

September 2023

A Letter From Our Pastor

# Introducing Our New Parish Stewardship Newsletter

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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am pleased to present to you our new parish newsletter! This newsletter will help us learn how the stewardship way of life is a disciple’s response to the call to know, love, and follow our Lord Jesus Christ. Every month we will share stories that will help us better understand who we are as Catholics and individual members of God’s family. The upcoming issues will feature activities and events happening within our St. Patrick community and how these help change hearts, minds, and lives as through them we grow closer to Christ and to each other. In each article, we will see how Christ is at work within us and our community as we more intentionally engage the stewardship way of life.



I hope that this newsletter will

be a meaningful way to continue learning more about our faith. As we learn more about our faith and how our fellow parishioners are living their faith out in our community, it will bear much fruit and inspire you to consider how

you can be more involved in the life of our parish — for some, perhaps this will be an opportunity to try new things.

This newsletter will help increase communication as we feature events that are coming up and share a lot of information with you. But I also want to hear from you! In early 2024, we will be conducting a comprehensive parish survey. The survey will be mailed to each home — I ask you to take the time to complete the survey and return it as soon as possible.

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# St. Patrick

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

*The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to stewardship. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions, or money. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!*

## What Does

# STEWARDSHIP

**W**hat comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship”?

Do you think of it as just another way to talk about money? Do you quickly dismiss it as a notion that has nothing to do with being Catholic?

Stewardship is actually a concept that is Scripturally-based and is vital to our life as Catholics. God tells us, in the very first book of the Old Testament, “Be fertile and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth” (Gen 1:28).

What does that mean to us today? It simply means that God is telling us, “This is yours, so take care of it.” One of the first things God tells us to do is to be good stewards of the gifts He has entrusted to us!

The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to stewardship. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions, or money. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!

As Catholics, we refer to the three facets of stewardship as “time, talent, and treasure.” Although these are three concrete ways to express and measure stewardship, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us that stewardship is part of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call in every aspect of our lives.

The Scriptures and Church traditions teach us one important point that cannot be overstated – that stewardship is primarily based on our need to give in gratitude, not on the Church’s need to receive. Of course, both the Catholic Church and our particular parish will always need money. However, we are not asked to give simply to defray costs and fund charitable programs. We are instead asked to remember our need to gratefully return a portion of our time, talent, and treasure to God, recognizing all that He has given to us.

It is important to remember that stewardship is a way of life, and not a program. True Catholic stewardship involves an ongoing call to live as followers of Christ. It takes time to find and define personal goals. You can begin

## Mean?

by examining your commitments to the parish. How do you live your faith in your daily life with your family and friends? How much time do you spend in daily prayer, going to Mass, or being involved in parish ministries and activities? What percentage of your income should you give back to God every week? What talents do you have that could be used to strengthen our parish family?

In the coming months, we will be increasing and intensifying our education and communication on stewardship. We will be developing a better understanding of how stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call to discipleship. And with God’s help, changes will occur in each of our hearts as we devote ourselves to a stewardship renewal within our parish. Examine how you are currently responding to God’s call to stewardship. If God called you home tomorrow, would He proclaim, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?



# ALTAR SERVERS

## *Faithfully Sharing Talents and Honoring the Sacrifice of the Mass*

The Eucharist is at the center of the Catholic faith — thus, the sacrifice at the altar is the most important part of the Mass. Since the Mass is of the utmost importance, our altar servers play a crucial role. The youth who serve on the altar show the utmost reverence and respect for the Mass.

Here at St. Patrick's, we'd love to see more young men come forward to serve at the altar of our Lord. Fr. Thomas Pressley leads the servers and looks forward to training a new group in late September. This is a perfect way to teach young people how to live a life of service.

"For anyone who wants to learn how to serve, this is a great opportunity," he says. "Jesus is the perfect example of humanity, and to be so close to Jesus—you will come to know how to serve and how to be a man."

Service at the altar will become a habit, and Fr. Pressley knows servers will enjoy it.

"It's really good to love coming to Mass," he says.

Servers play an essential role in the celebration of the Mass behind the priest — they are even mentioned in the Old Testament. In the temple, there were men serving who played an important role, and were not priests. This paved the path for modern altar servers.

"In the New Covenant, this role continues to help the priest offer the sacrifice at the altar on behalf of the people," Fr. Pressley says.

Fr. Pressley adds that service at the altar can be a launching pad for vocations to the priesthood and diaconate.

"It's helpful for young men to be so close to the altar, especially during the transubstantiation," he



says. "Altar servers are intimately present, and this shows them they may really like being so close to Jesus during Mass."

As Catholics, we know our ultimate goal is to go to heaven. During the Mass, heaven kisses earth on the altar, says Fr. Pressley. Servers have a front seat to that.

Fr. Pressley encourages parents to have their children get involved as servers. It can only help them grow and keep their faith into adulthood.

"God is love," he says. "Time spent with God — love Himself — can only be helpful."

Servers may also be tapped to help with weddings and funerals. Fr. Pressley appreciates the help, especially at funerals, so that he can be more present to the grieving family.

*To learn more about becoming an altar server, contact Fr. Thomas Pressley at 719-598-3595 or [tlpressley@stpatscs.org](mailto:tlpressley@stpatscs.org).*



# St. Patrick

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

## St. Martin de Porres

### *A Ministry of Great Compassion*

St. Martin de Porres lived his life in service to others. He is best known for the many ways in which he brought Christ's love and mercy to those in need throughout his 59 years. He did so without a second thought, and it is in this same spirit of charitable giving that our St. Martin de Porres Apostolate carries out its mission.

Under the patronage of St. Martin, the apostolate includes the four ministries within our parish that work to serve the poor in different ways — the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the St. Nicholas Advent Tree, the Mother Teresa Food Pantry, and the Holiday Food Baskets.

"These groups do so much good for our local community," says Nona Stuber, servant leader for the St. Martin de Porres Apostolate. "Their efforts reach beyond our parish bounds, and they make a big impact."

Nona became the servant leader for the apostolate over a year ago after spending a few years working with Deacon Dick Brown in the St. Raphael Ministry, where she also continues to serve today. Fr. Frank Quezada, surely noting Nona's heart for those in need, simply asked Nona if she would step up as servant leader for the apostolate, and she readily agreed.

"I have always felt called to reach out to those suffering," Nona says. "I worked for years as a labor and delivery nurse, and my time in the St. Raphael Ministry visiting the sick and the dying has really stirred up the desire to serve in a whole new way. Serving as a part of the St. Martin de Porres Apostolate is yet another opportunity for me to reach out to those in need and to bring God's love to them."



For her part, Nona coordinates the meetings with the servant leaders of each of the four ministries. They meet a few times a year to assess their needs and their activities, and beyond that, each ministry operates with a multitude of volunteers on its own.

The St. Vincent de Paul Ministry works throughout the year to provide emergency help with rent, utilities, and other key needs. When someone in need reaches out to the parish office, they are directed to the servant leader of the St. Vincent de Paul Society who then gathers the resources necessary to help.

The St. Nicholas Advent Tree is a Christmas-time-focused charitable ministry. Members of this ministry identify the needs of people who otherwise would not be able to get or give gifts at Christmas, and they place a tree with those needs hung on the branches in the Narthex during Advent. Over the years, the particular people the ministry has served has changed, and that will continue to be the case, as they work to be the hands and feet of Christ to those in need as best they can. Last year, for example, the tree's tags bore the needs and desires of children from Uvalde, Texas who had endured the trauma of the recent school

*"Everything we have is a gift, and we are called to give of those gifts in love for Christ and others. That is why I feel so strongly about serving in this way. I have been given so many gifts, and it is an honor and a blessing to give of those gifts for others."*

— Nona Stuber



# Porres Apostolate

## *Serving Our Whole Community*

shooting, as well as the needs of some Ukrainian and Afghan refugees in California. This year, the ministry will serve another group of individuals that has not yet been decided.

The Mother Teresa Food Pantry serves the needs of our local poor. Located in the basement of our church, the food pantry offers a variety of canned goods, produce, personal items, and more.

“It is quite the operation,” Nona says. “It looks like a mini grocery store, and it serves many people in need right here in our area.”

People come each Friday, and after a brief interview with one of the volunteers, they are offered the opportunity to take what they need. For this ministry, there are baskets located in the Narthex where we can make donations. Those donations, along with other items purchased by the ministry, then make their way to those who need them.

The Holiday Food Basket Ministry, much like the St. Nicholas Advent Tree, is seasonal-focused. Volunteers put together baskets around Thanksgiving and Christmastime with food for a holiday dinner. Those baskets

are then given to individuals and families who otherwise wouldn't be able to have a holiday meal.

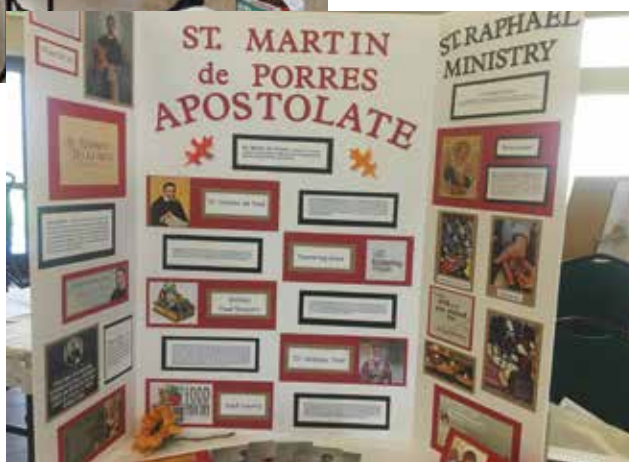
“These different ministries do an enormous amount of work altogether,” Nona says. “It is such a blessing to be a small part of it.”

What's more, Nona encourages all of us to consider getting involved. We can do so through small gestures like placing a donation in the food pantry baskets or larger ways by offering our time and talent to these ministries as volunteers. But in whatever way God is calling each one of us to serve, one thing is for sure — there's an opportunity for us to offer Christ's loving mercy

to those in need, and we ought to do it.

“We are so incredibly blessed,” Nona says. “Everything we have is a gift, and we are called to give of those gifts in love for Christ

and others. That is why I feel so strongly about serving in this way. I have been given so many gifts, and it is an honor and a blessing to give of those gifts for others.”



*For information about serving through this apostolate, please contact Nona Stuber at 719-598-3595.*



# St. Patrick

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

# “Be Transformed by the Sacred Liturgy”

## *The Celebration of the Paschal Mystery*

In a limited way, the liturgy can be compared to a story or a film – upon a first reading or viewing, we might understand the basic outline of the narrative, yet through every subsequent encounter, the story further unfolds before us, becoming richer and more complex.

Often, inquisitive children teach us about how to understand a story or the Mass. As a child inquires about the priest’s green vestments, the foregrounded wreath or the presence of palm branches, we might pause to recall the symbolism undergirding the rich rituals of the liturgy.

There is a sense of the sacred in the liturgy, but its rituals and ceremonies can appear as empty pantomimes when divorced from their meaning. Far from empty signs, the liturgy is the celebration of the Paschal mystery, of Christ’s passion, death, resurrection and glorification by which He “accomplished the work of our salvation” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1067).

From the Greek *leitourgia*, meaning public service or worship, liturgy in the Christian tradition refers to the communal participation of the people in the work of God, and God is always present and at work in the liturgy, acting in and with the Church through the sacraments.

Annually, the Church’s liturgical year is structured around the Paschal mystery, which we observe every Sunday. We begin each year with a season of anticipating Christ’s birth, and following a celebration of Christ’s Incarnation, we gradually enter a period of preparation for the Easter Triduum, for His passion, death and Resurrection. The year closes with a period of ordinary time – a time to grow in our faith and in living out the Gospel.

Daily, the Liturgy of the Hours unifies the Church Militant in prayers said by the clergy and increasingly by the laity. As the liturgical calendar structures our year, the Liturgy of the Hours structures our day, offering us an opportunity to consecrate each present moment to Christ.



Ultimately, the liturgical life of the Church “revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments” (CCC 1113), for we receive God’s grace to fortify us in our spiritual lives and as His disciples through the sacraments, particularly the Holy Mass.

The Mass nurtures us spiritually, inviting us to reflect on the Paschal mystery and to lift our hearts to God as individuals and a community through spoken and sung prayer.

The Mass moves us corporeally, drawing us to sit as we listen to the Word, to stand as we unanimously profess our faith, and to kneel as the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Mass inspires us apostolically, sending us out to proclaim the Gospel and to share Christ with our brothers and sisters.

Though the “source and center” of all prayer, the liturgy and a sense of the sacred has, in some ways, become marginalized in the American Church. Once robust parishes are seeking to rebuild, but they frequently overlook the connection between the empty pews and the decentralization of the liturgy, which was underscored by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

“I am convinced that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is, to a large extent, due to the disintegration of the liturgy,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote in his autobiography *Milestones*.

Something in the simplicity of the child’s experience of the liturgy teaches us to return to what we might call the basics of the faith – meaning a love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacraments and the rituals of the Church. Only through the liturgy are we nurtured on our stewardship journey and inspired to proclaim the Gospel.

As Archbishop Alexander Sample from the Diocese of Portland, Ore., writes, “If we are transformed by the sacred liturgy, then we, as believers, can help transform the culture.”



# The St. Raphael Ministry

## *Ministering to the Sick, Homebound, and Those in Need of Healing*

**T**he St. Raphael Ministry is a perfect example of what it means to serve as a disciple of Christ by living out a stewardship spirituality.

Inspired by the patron of the ministry, St. Raphael the Archangel, the ministry members visit and minister to the sick, the homebound, and those who are in need of healing — both physically and spiritually.

Deacon Dick Brown, who leads the ministry, notes that it goes beyond the walls of our parish to bring Christ to others.

“We assist those who are homebound, in hospice, living in assisted living homes or have been admitted to the hospital,” Deacon Brown says. “These people have been faithful Catholics their whole lives and have often been parishioners of St. Patrick’s for decades. Now they find themselves in a situation where they can no longer come to Mass and Church. It is our responsibility to not forget them.

“We must bring St. Patrick’s to them,” he adds.

And that is exactly what the volunteers of the St. Raphael Ministry do.

When someone is no longer able to go to Church or is in the hospital for a temporary time, the ministry team springs into action to bring the sacraments to them. Most often, this takes the form of bringing Christ in the Eucharist so that these Catholics can receive our Lord in His Body and Blood.

The ministry is an ongoing corporal and spiritual work of mercy.

“When we are notified that someone is now homebound or in assisted living, hospice, or the hospital, myself or another clergyman makes an initial visit to pray with them and assess their needs,” Deacon Brown says. “Then we assign a volunteer to that person to take them the

Blessed Sacrament, arrange other sacraments like Confession and the Anointing of the Sick, and pray with them on a regular basis.”

“The volunteers are truly doing what God calls us to do — to love one another,” he adds. “They are being stewards by directly offering their time and talent to bring Christ to others.”

Last year, the ministry served 50 people who had temporary needs and are now back to attending Mass physically. Currently, they are serving 21 people who are homebound, in assisted living, or temporarily in the hospital. They are also ministering to five who are in hospice.

“The people being served are absolutely awestruck that someone from St. Patrick’s is visiting and bringing the sacraments to them,” Deacon Brown says. “They are tremendously appreciative and enjoy the company.”

One of the branches of the St. Raphael Ministry that had to be temporarily shut down was the carpool ministry, which provided transportation to Mass for those who needed it. Deacon Brown is hopeful to start this service back up soon.

The most important aspect of the success of the ministry is that people who are in need or have loved ones in these homebound situations notify the parish. Informing the St. Raphael Ministry that you or a family member would like to be ministered to is as easy as calling the parish office.



*Please call 719-598-3595 to get more information or to request visits from the ministry.*

# St. Patrick

## CATHOLIC CHURCH



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### Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil: 4:30pm  
Sunday: 7:45am, 9:30am, 11:30am

### Weekday Masses

Wednesday, Friday: 7:00am  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 12:00pm

## Our New Parish Stewardship Newsletter

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ble. Your feedback is important to me and will help me and parish leadership better understand your thoughts about our parish. This survey will enable us to pave the way for our future.

Another important step in our stewardship journey will be our Annual Stewardship Renewal that will happen this October. The Renewal is our annual chance to ask ourselves how we prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. We will make written commitments to ourselves and to God concerning how we will be more devoted with our use of time (using our time on earth wisely; making time for personal prayer, family prayer, and quality time with friends and loved ones); talent (using our God-given gifts to strengthen the Church through service to parish ministries and other activities), and treasure (the wise and just management of our financial

resources; giving a proportionate amount of my income to the parish).

As we strive to develop stewardship as a way of life at St. Patrick, the support and involvement of each individual parishioner are necessary to sustain the life of our parish. All of you have a place here, and all of you have a role to fill in the life of the parish as we live our lives as disciples of Christ.

May the Holy Spirit renew and refresh all of us as we work together to build our parish family through the use of our time, talent, and treasure.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Quezada, Pastor