

“STEWARDSHIP ESSENTIALS FOR 2017!”

Dear Friend,

To foster individual, family, and community stewardship takes concerted effort in several key areas. Let the following keys help you in creating a mission-successful community of good stewards!

1. Stewardship Education and Efforts Must Be Permanent – Creating a community of good Christian stewards is a long-term and permanent project. There are always young people growing up in your church and new people moving into your church. Living as a Christian steward is a life-long project. Christian stewardship must be taught throughout the year and yearly.

2. Pastor Must Be Committed to Stewardship – The pastor’s living of stewardship and commitment to stewardship is key to growing a parish of stewards. He/she cannot give what he/she does not have. People follow the leader.

3. Stewardship Must Be Understood as 3-Fold: Time, Talent, and Treasure – Stewardship is like a three-legged stool. Some churches emphasize time and talent and neglect treasure; others emphasize treasure and neglect time and talent. All three are part of effective stewardship. We need to spend time in prayer to know God’s will, use our talents and involvement to make things happen, and give treasure to make things happen. We use this process in all of life.

4. Churches That Link Ministries and Financial Affairs are the Most Successful – Ministry takes people and resources. If your church has stated ministerial priorities, they should be reflected in the people and resources (budgets) committed to the ministries. Make a clear connection for your community of your priorities and the people and resources you’ve committed to them.

5. Form a Stewardship Committee for Principles and Practices – Form a Stewardship Committee that meets monthly or quarterly to highlight stewardship in your community through prayer, homilies, witness talks, stewardship renewal, and increased offertory programs.

6. Run Stewardship Presentations with Personal Witness Talks – Everyone expects the pastor to live and support stewardship. Recruiting church members to give witness talks throughout the year challenges every parishioner to look at their own hearts, lives, and stewardship commitments.

7. Form a Welcoming Committee – Churches that have active Welcoming Committees have higher levels of lay involvement in ministry. Gatherings with refreshments and presentations of ministry opportunities initiate new members into the life of your community. Follow-up calls for ministry involvement are even better!

8. Parishes that Match Talents to Ministries are More Successful – “Filling slots” or seeking “warm bodies” does not honor the God who calls us by name. Carefully consider what a ministry calls for and then seek out specific individuals with those gifts.

9. Make Ministries Time Specific – People’s time is precious. People have many involvements today. And people want to be involved in significant, life-changing ministries. But people do not like open-ended commitments. Make all committee and ministerial appointments time-specific with a chance to leave ministry or renew commitments to ministry every three months, six months, or year.

10. Run a Regular Stewardship Education/Pledging Effort – Run a strong, four-week-long stewardship education and commitment period with one or two other two-week reflection periods during the year. The time that you spend in prayer, homilies, and liturgy/worship over the course of the year will show people that you are serious about stewardship.

11. Every Three to Four Years Consider an Increased Offertory Program – Every three to four years consider an Increased Offertory program that focuses on prayer, parish mission, homilies, and a challenge to increase financial stewardship.

12. Thanks and Recognition is Key to Increasing Gifts – Gifts given should be acknowledged. Through personal notes, newsletter recognitions, coffees, luncheons, award ceremonies... and more, show your people that you appreciate the time and financial resources they’ve given. Signs of gratitude and recognition lead to more gifts of talent and resources.

If you have found the “Stewardship Essentials for 2017!” helpful or wish to talk about Increased Giving Programs or Capital Campaign, then contact Mark Filips and VisionWorks today at 402.999.2970 or markf@VisionWorksCo.com!