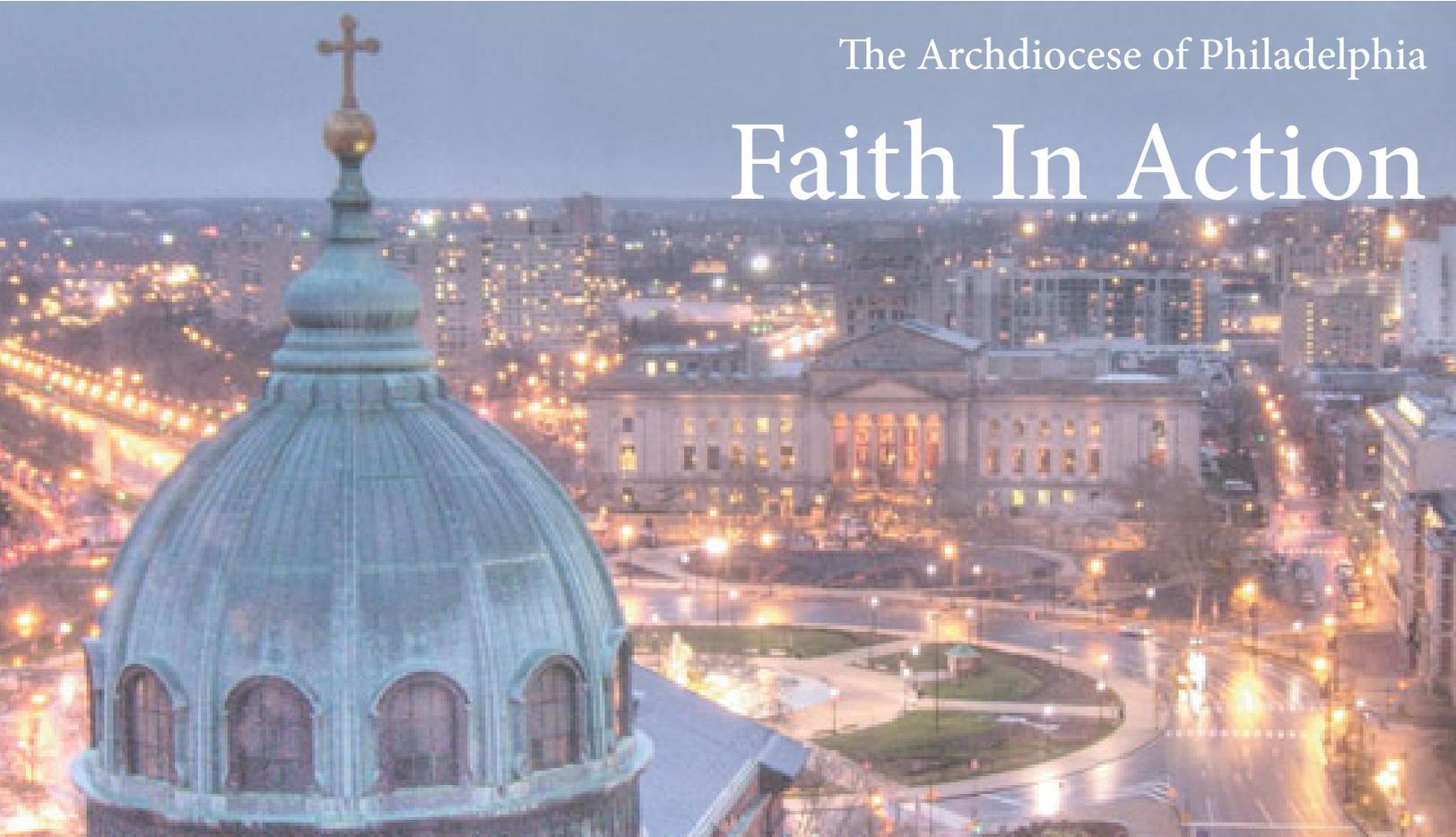


Faith In Action



What is Stewardship?

In essence, stewardship is the tangible expression of Christian discipleship. At our Baptism, we are called to be disciples of Jesus. In living our lives as Catholics, we have the responsibility to be good stewards of all God's gifts: of our own vocations, of our time, of our talents and abilities, of any financial resources we may have. We are also to be good stewards of the Church and of the natural created order that physically sustains us.

According to the United States Bishops' 1992 pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, the true basis of stewardship is discipleship.

- ◆ Disciples make a conscious, firm decision, carried out in action to be followers of Jesus Christ no matter what the cost. The Bishops remind us "The life of a Christian steward, lived in imitation of Christ, is challenging, even difficult in many ways; but both here and hereafter it is charged with intense joy."
- ◆ Beyond this conscious decision to follow Christ, disciples – or stewards – experience a process of conversion, i.e. a change of mind and heart. Their commitment to Christ is expressed not in a single action, nor even in a number of actions over a period of time, but as an entire way of life.

It means committing one's self, and all that one has, to God.

A Christian steward is defined in *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response* as "one who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be. Stewards know themselves to be recipients and caretakers of God's many gifts. The act of sharing God-given gifts of time and talent, and even money, is not done out of obligation, but out of sincere gratitude. Stewarding and sharing become acts of worship.

How we choose to spend our time, use our talents, and give our treasure is a clear reflection of our convictions. As Pope Benedict has reminded us, "If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to him, are we not afraid that He might take something away from us? No! If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great."



A Word from Msgr. Beach

For many of you reading this newsletter, the word Stewardship calls forth a variety of images and definitions. Simply put, Stewardship means expressing our gratefulness for God's abiding love. Stewardship embraces all of the important tenants of our faith, but a commitment to stewardship requires an ongoing process of conversion and renewal which has as its ultimate goal a deeper union with God and others. Stewardship, at its core, is the New Evangelization that Blessed Pope John Paul II called the world to embrace.

Perhaps you have been curious about introducing Stewardship in your home or parish but were not sure where to begin. I hope you will find, as you read this inaugural edition of this quarterly publication, *Faith In Action*, that many of our daily activities already incorporate the principles of the call to Christian Stewardship in the Church. A faithful life is Stewardship.

In the months and years ahead, the Office for Stewardship and Development will commit itself to giving you the tools necessary and helping to eliminate the barriers that make it harder to live as a disciple. With the support of Archbishop Chaput and guided by the experience of other dioceses, as well as many of our Stewardship parishes, my staff will strive to energize our parishes and our Archdiocese by providing ongoing formation to those who seek to draw closer to the Lord through a commitment to Stewardship. It is my earnest desire that our entire Archdiocese become acquainted with our office and look to it as a valuable resource. For parishes who seek to introduce Stewardship or who want to live it out more fully, we are at your service!

I pray that God may bless each of you and your families as we continue our journey of discipleship and as we all strive to continually renew our Church! May God bless the work of our hands.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

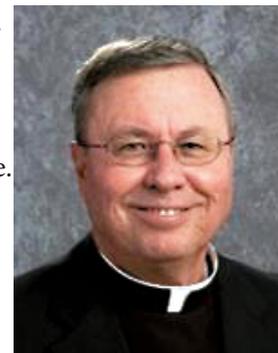
Monsignor Francis W. Beach
Archbishop's Delegate and Executive Director
Office for Stewardship and Development

Contact The Office

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Does your parish have exciting Stewardship News? Did you just hold a successful ministry fair? We want to share how you did it. Recently formed a Stewardship committee? We want to hear about it!

Send your updates to the Office for Stewardship and Development at shanley@adphila.org.



Don't Miss the Stewardship Track: Featured at Catholic Life Congress

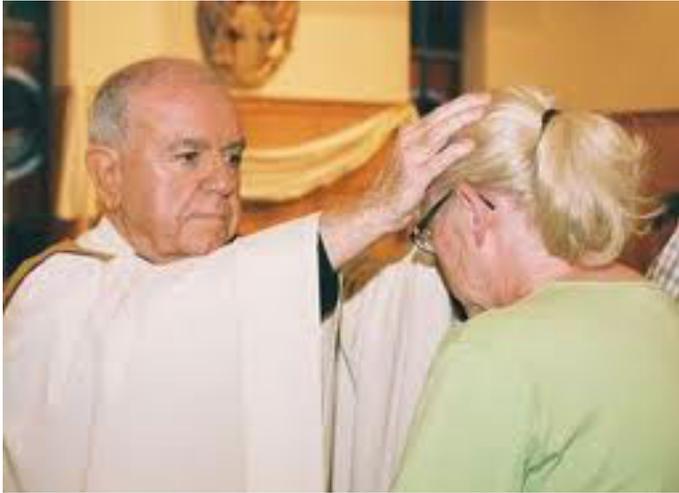
Join in fellowship with Catholics from across the Archdiocese and learn about Stewardship and the Word of God at the 2011 Catholic Life Congress (CLC). CLC, held on Saturday, November 5, has earned a reputation as being an exciting and inspirational event for the lay people, religious and priests of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

This year's event features the introduction of a Stewardship Track, which will provide an opportunity for Stewardship formation from two nationally-recognized speakers; Rick Jeric, Executive Director of the Office for Development and Planning for the Diocese of Columbus, and Bob Pfundstein, Director of Parish Stewardship for the Diocese of Rockford, Illinois.

The event will begin with Mass celebrated by Archbishop Charles Chaput at the historic Cathedral-Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. Following Mass, the event will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in Center City.

The CLC is organized each year by the Office for the Formation of the Laity. For more information or to register, call Marianne Harrington at 215-587-0500.





A Stewardship Advisory Group

In an effort to maximize resources and enhance relationships, the Office of Stewardship and Development has formed the OSD Advisory Council. The council is comprised of clergy, lay leaders and OSD staff. There are five sub-committees with a chairperson on the advisory council, one of which is the Stewardship Sub-Committee. Twelve members have agreed to serve on this sub-committee in order to advise and support the Office for Stewardship and Development in promoting Stewardship as a way of life to all the parishes of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Monsignor Thomas Flanigan, pastor of Corpus Christi Parish in Lansdale, was asked to chair the committee that had their first meeting on September 12th. “Monsignor Flanigan’s enthusiasm for Stewardship is inspiring and contagious. Working with him is a joy,” offered Sarah Hanley, Director of Stewardship for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Monsignor Flanigan praised the first meeting: “I felt that there was great excitement in the room. The people are excited to use their gifts and talents to help people.”

Monsignor Flanigan selected committee members from across the Archdiocese. The members represent clergy and lay, inner city and suburban, men and women. “I also told them that we don’t want to hear what they think we want to hear,” explained Monsignor Flanigan on a recent afternoon. “We want to hear their experience; that is the only way to grow.” “Every parish has good programs to address the needs of the people. Our committee is just trying to coordinate everything they have done with a renewed spirit.” Monsignor has great expectations for the new Office for Stewardship and Development and his sub-committee: “I am excited to be part of this, and I am looking forward to seeing it unfold year after year.”

Stewardship Sub-Committee OSD Advisory Board

**Monsignor Thomas Flanigan,
Chair
Pastor, Corpus Christi, Lansdale**

- Lou Mahlman: Past President, United Way Phila
- Moira Murphy: Director of Stewardship, St. Norbert
- Msgr. Joseph Murray: Pastor Emeritus,
St Stanislaus, Lansdale
- Msgr. Joseph Nicolo: Pastor, St Helena, Blue Bell
- Father John Olenick: Pastor, Visitation BVM
- Marty Harris: Parish Services Director,
SS Simon & Jude
- Mary Damian: Stewardship Council, St Elizabeth
- Father Steven Wetzel: Pastor, St Joachim
- Monsignor Albin Grous: Pastor,
St Andrew Drexel Hill
- Karen Farley: Business Manager, St Thomas Villanova

Meet Sarah O. Hanley, the Director of Stewardship:

Before joining the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in July, Sarah’s career was centered in the corporate world. For Sarah, who resides with her husband and two teenage sons and is a member of Saint Kevin Parish in Springfield, it was a match made, if not in heaven, at the Archdiocese. While her background may be in business, her heart is always with the Church, as evidenced by her commitment to her parish: “My skills and talents are in management, team building, and execution. Stewardship is at the heart of all we do as Catholics – it is our response to our baptismal call and truly our Faith in Action. I feel privileged to be able to use this experience for the benefit of the parishes of our wonderful Church of Philadelphia.”





PROFILES IN PARISH STEWARDSHIP

Getting to Know...Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish

Parishioners of Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish have much to be proud about! Recently, the parish published an extensive Stewardship report, which coincided with the parish patron's feast day of October 10th.

As part of the festivities, Saint Thomas welcomed parishioners from Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in West Philadelphia, its "sister parish." St. Thomas of Villanova provides financial assistance to Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament's food pantry.



This donation, along with dozens more which the parish made during the last fiscal year, was highlighted in the report, along with a count of the number of hours dedicated to various ministries around the parish.

Stewardship Stats:

- ◆ The parish contributed funds to 46 different charities over the course of the year. These charities ranged from small local groups to international service organizations, from the Augustinian missions to Philadelphia's Project HOME.
- ◆ 58 people spent 1330 hours cooking casseroles for Saint Francis Inn
- ◆ The parish Prayer Line group donated over 2300 hours.
- ◆ 60 people donated 1200 hours to a local "Interfaith Hospitality Network"

United By Stewardship

St. Norbert parish aspires to become One in Christ, as a community of fervent disciples...

Thus begins the mission statement of Saint Norbert Parish in Paoli. The Office for Stewardship and Development spoke with the pastor, Father Michael J. Lee, O.Praem. and the Director of Stewardship, Moira Murphy. They offered valuable perspectives on the importance of Stewardship in the life of an individual, a parish, and a diocese.

When Moira Murphy retired from the practice of law, she discerned how God wanted her to serve in this new phase in her life. "I see it as a calling," she said of her new position. Moira is inspired by Jeremiah 29: "Seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you; pray for it to the LORD, for upon its welfare your own depends."

She knows that her parish was the "city" she was being called to serve, though she admits, jokingly, "It's difficult to imagine Paoli as a place of exile." What she felt was a real calling to Stewardship as a practice of Christian discipleship. Moira established a Stewardship committee and was brought on board as a volunteer Stewardship Director. She sees Stewardship as a way to live out the call to be "disciples in community." "Stewardship is woven into the fabric of everything Saint Norbert's does," said Murphy, "If not in word, then certainly in practice."

To Moira, the depth of Stewardship as the practice of discipleship is what makes this way of life so appealing. She also notes that Stewardship is a two-way street. "We must be good Stewards of the parishioners' time, talent, and treasure," Moira explains. She and Father Lee believe they are pro-active in addressing the concerns of parishioners. For example, in November, the parish is hosting an Open House on Parish Finances. The goal of these initiatives is to model Christian Stewardship for the entire parish.



Moira expressed hope that the Office for Stewardship and Development can help promote Stewardship throughout the Archdiocese. "This is not optional for Christians," she pointedly explains. She looks forward to serving on the OSD Advisory Group Stewardship Sub-Committee. Both she and Father Mike view Stewardship as an excellent way to revitalize parishes, so that all may experience the joy of God's call to "seek the welfare of the city...for upon its welfare your own depends."