

Dear Friends,

During my lifetime, I can think of two awards that I won. The first one was a second place for a horseshoe tossing tournament I was in, my first year of seminary. That was nice. Of course my partner was very good at it. I was just lucky I didn't hit him in the head with any of my throws. The other award was a first place in a pool tournament. We were playing Eight Ball and I won. It wasn't anything ESPN would pick up on. In fact, I am quite bad at pool. It just turns out I got lucky and nobody else in that tournament was very good. Oh well, it was a lot of fun.

I must say, though, that the award our parish received from the International Catholic Stewardship Council is a point of tremendous pride for me. I believe our parish has always shown a high propensity for being generous, hard working and faithful. Our beautiful church and parish center give tremendous witness to the generosity and dedication of our parishioners. I have seen how kind people are to the poor in our community. I have seen how wonderfully present parishioners are to those who grieve. I have seen the concern people have for young people in the military who live so far away. I have seen your willingness to support the Crisis Pregnancy Center, the Genoa-Kingston Food Pantry, and many other charities. Your generosity predates my arrival at this wonderful parish.

However, for some people in this parish, the word "Stewardship" had a bit of a negative connotation when I first got here because when people heard that word, they immediately thought it meant that our money was going to go to the Diocesan Stewardship appeal, and that was all the word "Stewardship" meant. With this award you have shown that you have a real willingness to look beyond the minimal definition of the word "Stewardship" to embrace its deeper meaning. God is the owner of all creation and has given everything to us for our benefit and for the goodness of our lives. Still, we are not owners of everything. We are merely stewards who are responsible for what God bestows upon us.

Being responsible means that we are generous with what we have. It also means that we will always use what we have been given for the goodness of our own lives, and for those who are in need of our generosity. Over the last five years, we have worked to develop an understanding of what it means to be a stewardship parish, and I am so proud of the work that we have done here. Thank you for your generosity. Thank you for your commitment to living as Christian stewards. Thank you for all the kindness, support and hard work you do for the life of this parish. The award we received is something more than an affirmation of hard work. It is an affirmation of our faith and the goodness of our response to the call to live as Christian stewards and disciples of Jesus Christ. Congratulations. I am so proud of this parish.

In joyful hope,

Fr. Tim Seigel