

**St. Catherine of Genoa
Stewardship Commission Meeting
February 17, 2009**

Those present included Fr. Tim Seigel, Jill Hansen, Betty Burke, Julie Carlson, Beth Gehringer and Jason Flesher.

We opened the meeting with a prayer service that included the readings for this Sunday.

We discussed Chapter 6 and 7 of "Stewardship-A Parish Handbook." Chapter Six gave us ideas for the parish newsletter. Suggestions included sending our newsletter to other parishes, establishing an editorial committee to discuss the content and naming our newsletter. We discussed our newsletter and ideas for improving it. Our newsletter is sent to 450 of the 600 families registered with the parish. To cut down on costs we don't include the 150 families that don't support the parish. After discussion we decided we should send the newsletter to all registered families in the parish. This could be a way to invite parishioners back to full involvement in the parish. We do need to encourage other parish organizations to include information in the newsletter. Handing out copies of the newsletter in the parish welcoming bags was suggested.

Other ideas for parish communication were discussed. If we had parishioners email addresses we could send out Father's weekly letter and the bulletin via email. Would this be an effective way to communicate with parishioners? What about those without a computer or would there be issues of people not reading their email?

Stewardship Conference

This year's "Our Sunday Visitor" stewardship conference is in Cincinnati, Ohio during June 24-26. This year's theme is "Loaves and Fishes." There will be a number of workshops and speakers on stewardship. Many good ideas come out of the conferences and it's a good way to meet other people involved in parish stewardship. Jill asked the committee if anyone was interested in attending. We could car pool. The parish would pay the \$425.00 registration fee but participants would need to share the cost of lodging and transportation. Let Jill know by the next meeting if anyone wants to attend.

Diocesan Stewardship Meeting

The closest regional meeting will be held at St. Mary's in DeKalb on March 18th from 7-8 p.m. Let Jill know ASAP if any of us are not able to attend. Bob Pfundstein suggests that we submit our stewardship materials to the diocese for awards that will be given out. We need to write up how we use our stewardship materials. The application is due April 24th.

Pro-Life Series Dinner-March 19th

The stewardship commission will be hosting the dinner on March 19th. Vegetable Beef soup will be served. The commission members volunteered to bring items to complement the soup (bread, butter, crackers, drinks and desserts). Forty people are expected to attend. We'll meet at church between 5-5:15 p.m. to set up and attend mass together.

Meeting with St. Mary's-DeKalb Stewardship Commission: We have been invited to attend their stewardship commission meeting on February 24th at 7 p.m. We'll bring our stewardship materials from the last cycle to the meeting.

25 Random Acts of Stewardship: Jill passed around the list of everyday things we could do to promote stewardship. This will be added to the bulletin this week.

Treasure Statistics

Jill distributed updated treasure figures showing additional pledges after the additional treasure letter was sent out. Eighteen more families pledged an additional \$19,700. The follow up letter was definitely worth while. This tells us that we can raise our expectation in terms of increased giving. The bar had been set too low. We still need to challenge parishioners to continue to give more financially.

Living Abundantly in Difficult Times

We discussed this pamphlet and how we might use it for stewardship education. There are references in here from Phil Lenahan's "Seven Steps to Financial Freedom" program that are very pertinent to the tough financial times we are all experiencing. Would we want to put this in the bulletin or have them placed at all entrances to the church? Jill will check on the cost of purchasing the pamphlet and we'll decide later if we want to pursue this.

Offertory Envelopes

Would we be interested in changing the envelopes we use for the offertory? Samples of other envelopes from "Our Sunday Visitor" were passed around. These would add a few hundred dollars to the cost of envelopes each year. Some of the envelopes included a different verse every month. We could add stewardship themes to the envelopes. Do we think different envelopes would increase giving? Our envelopes are very simple. We could ask "Our Sunday Visitor" if they could come down on the prices listed. We could also ask our envelope vendor if they have any other envelopes we could consider.

Stewardship of the Sabbath: We don't believe we will put together anything this year. We do want to keep it in mind for the future. We may want to work with this topic in conjunction with Religious Education next fall.

Children's Coloring/Essay Contest: We do want to organize this again this year using the same theme. This is a good stewardship education item. Jill will work with Laci to organize it this spring.

Recruit & Train Ministry Leaders/Ministry Fair: We thought about doing this in the spring. If we want to organize this for this year we need to talk about it at the next meeting.

Our **parish tithes** for April is the Genoa Food Pantry. Double the number of families are using the pantry. There had been 40 families coming and now there are 80.

Increasing the Offertory & St. Mary's in Aurora will be kept on the agenda. We'll want to find out if St. Mary's has any needs we might be able to help with.

Next month we will discuss **lay witnesses for Diocesan Stewardship**.

Father closed with a prayer.

The next meeting is March 10, 2009.

Submitted by
Beth Gehringer, Secretary