



HOLY APOSTLES

CATHOLIC CHURCH
- Encountering Christ & Making Disciples -

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

INTRODUCING OUR NEW PARISH STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER

Dear Parishioners,

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 Holy Apostles 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 in 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! Later this winter, 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. 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

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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

Mean?

What 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!

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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 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”?

MEET THE USHER MINISTRY:

Welcoming and Serving All Who Enter Our Church

In his writing to the Romans, the apostle Paul instructed: “Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality” (Romans 12:13). And as a stewardship parish, we recognize hospitality as one of the four pillars of stewardship. A key part of hospitality is creating a welcoming atmosphere in the parish. Here at Holy Apostles, we have the Frontline Hospitality Ministry along with the members of our Ushers Ministry, who foster a true spirit of hospitality at Mass.

Art Figeroa leads the Ushers Ministry. One day, nine years ago, he was attending Mass when he saw a notice in the bulletin about the ministry, which sparked an interest in getting involved. Art has since been serving and recently took over leading the ministry.

“When I was a kid, my dad was an usher,” he says. “So I thought it would be kind of cool to do the same thing he did.”

When you walk into the church for Mass, you will be greeted with a warm welcome by a member of either the Frontline Hospitality Ministry or Usher Ministry. The goal is to encourage a welcoming, hospitable environment for any regular parishioners or visitors.

“There’s usually somebody at each entrance,” says Art.

There are approximately 20 ministry members involved in ushering, with typically three serving at each Mass. During busier celebrations such as Christmas or Easter, there are at least four ushers available.

The ushers distribute bulletins for the coming week, help people find and access seats, assist anyone with medical issues or other needs during Mass, and communicate with the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in case someone requires Communion to be brought to them.

Art enjoys being involved because it gives him the opportunity to help out his fellow parishioners. He believes helping people feel welcome is a great way to encourage them to come back.

“It’s important because we’re offering assistance,” he says. “Some people just come in and not really talk to anyone — they are not into fellowship, I used to be the same. But slowly this has made me more open. When I’m there



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FAMILY FAITH

We are blessed with a Family Faith Formation program that consists of four pillars – helping families learn how to pray, understand their Catholic faith, serve their neighbors, and make friends within the Holy Apostles community. Through these four pillars, families are encouraged to encounter Christ in an intimate way and to follow Him more closely as His disciples.

It is open to all families who have children in kindergarten through 12th grades and is the starting point for these children to begin preparing for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation. Through Family Faith Formation, children are prepared to receive God's love and grace through these sacraments, so they can live their life as His disciples.

"The mission of the Catholic Church is to go out to make disciples of all people," says Mike Picard, Director of Discipleship Formation. "Before we can do that, we must first have an intimate relationship with God and have some understanding of who God is



through the study of the Catholic faith. Family Faith Formation is the way that the parishioners of Holy Apostles participate in this mission of the Church. If we do not have families that can pass down their Catholic faith in such a way that helps their children truly live the faith, then the Church will not be able to fulfill the mission which Jesus Christ gave to it."

This year, some big changes to

the program should be expected. Mike shares that in the past, Family Faith Formation mainly focused on studying the Catholic faith to help the children better understand what we believe and why. This year, our parish aims to expand this focus to include showing and helping families how to live out the faith.

"We are going to begin every Family Faith Formation night with Mass, followed by a lesson," Mike

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– MIKE PICARD, DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP FORMATION

FORMATION:

Helping Families Know and Love Christ

says. "We will meet weekly, and each week there is a different aspect of the Catholic life we will focus on. During the first week of the month, we will focus on studying the faith to better understand God's love for us. In the second week of the month, we will focus on serving our neighbors through different service projects. In the third week of the month, we will focus on learning how to pray and coming to know God's love for us through spending time in Eucharistic Adoration. Finally, on the

fourth week of the month, we will have a social event that focuses on building friendships among families."

This year, families who are new to Family Faith Formation will participate in the Evangelization Year. This will focus on introducing them to the Bible and the basics of starting a prayer life. They will be following *God's Plan in Scripture* from Ascension Press, which helps introduce children to the Bible based on age.

Family Faith Formation needs

catechists to help with the students each week. The students will be divided up by grade level for the weekly lesson, and two catechists are needed per grade level. Volunteers are also needed to help provide meals for the families. You can get involved by making or donating food, even something as simple as a dessert, snack, or beverage. This is a wonderful way to get involved in helping the next generation of the Church come to know and love Christ.

If you are interested in being a catechist or in providing food please contact Director of Discipleship Formation, Mike Picard, at 719-597-4249 Ext. 108 or mpicard@holypostlescc.org.

USHER MINISTRY *continued from page 3*

and ushering, I'm a whole different person — that part has changed in terms of how I've interacted with people."

Stewardship is a key component of the ministry, as it is with any of the ministries that help bring people together in fellowship and hospitality.

"Anyone in ministry is a steward in the church and an extension of stewardship of God," Art says. "It's a chain of people that are here to help — we are

another link of the chain. We're there to make sure everything goes nice and smoothly. You want the experience to be good, to enjoy being in church. We're there to make sure everybody has what they need."

Anyone interested in becoming an usher must go through the Safe Environment training and then receive ministry-specific training to learn about how to serve in this capacity.

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For more information or to get involved, please contact Art Figeroa at 719-235-8678 or artfigeroa@yahoo.com.



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“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.”

Keeping Our Parish and Grounds Beautiful

Stewards Share Time and Talent for Our Church

The Catholic faith engages all of our senses. One of particular importance is sight — we want to ensure our parish and the grounds look beautiful. Guests and parishioners alike should have the chance to experience beauty when they come to Holy Apostles. A dedicated group makes sure that this happens.

Gary Vitt has been helping with mowing and lawn care for more than 35 years. He leads a team of about 20 stewards who mow using walk-behind and rider mowers. The mowing is done about once weekly, with each team mowing about every four weeks. Gary is using his talents to benefit Holy Apostles as he spent his career doing lawn fertilization and overseeing mowing and landscaping at a golf course.

“We are blessed with a beautiful parish that it’s our job to maintain,” Gary says.

In addition, Gary keeps track of the sprinkler system and pays attention to details that keep our outdoor spaces beautiful. He wants to thank all those who have participated in this ministry for their commitment. Some have been doing this work for more than 20 years. More parishioners are welcomed and encouraged to get involved.

Another parishioner who makes sure beauty is very evident at Holy Apostles is Jen Koop. To prepare for the ordination of Most Rev. James R. Golka, the Bishop of



Jen Koop fits gardening into her schedule whenever possible.

Colorado Springs, Jen did a lot of work on the flowers on the parish grounds. She’s continued that work to this day. This work includes flowerpots at the church’s front doors and Mary’s House and various shrubs on the grounds. She also cares for the gardens in the back of the property and at the rectory. Last year, she planted a small garden next to the Marian shrine.

Jen works full-time and fits gardening into her schedule whenever possible. She also knows that others help keep the flowers looking good — she sees the work get done but never knows who has done it.

“Beauty is one way God reaches people,” Jen says. “Beauty is a big deal to me. That’s why I’m also involved in the Music Ministry. Seeing beauty is really my driving force.”

For Jen, this involvement doesn’t feel like work because it comes so naturally to her. She’s glad to use her talents to serve the Lord and the parish.

“Nature does its thing, and I’m the little helper,” she says. “I feel connected when I’m gardening.”

Jen knows this ministry would be great for those who enjoy gardening but maybe don’t have space at their home.

“Anyone who appreciates beauty and wants to help, that would be great,” she says.

To help with lawn care, contact Gary Vitt at 719-237-5409. To help with the flowers, contact Jen Koop at 719-570-1733.





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4925 North Carefree Circle
Colorado Springs, CO, 80917
719-597-4249
holyapostlescc.org

OUR NEW PARISH STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER

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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 Holy Apostles, 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 Yours in Christ,

Fr. Tom Jamka
Pastor

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE:

Weekend Mass: Saturday (Vigil Mass): 5:30 p.m.; Sunday: 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m.

Weekday Mass: Monday-Saturday: 8:00 a.m.; Wednesday: 6:30 a.m.

Confessions: Monday-Saturday: 7:00-7:45 a.m.