FOSTERING GENEROSITY AND PRACTICAL FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Sponsored by
Parish Development Ministry
Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania,
Orthodox Church in America

The Widow’s Mite

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Parish Development Ministry, Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania, OCA
These Themes Will Be Further Developed at…

Open to All
3:00 PM Thurs June 18 thru noon Sat. June 20
$100/per person
Info & register:
ocadwpa.org/smallparishforum.html

- Stewardship
- Motivating Change
- Building Lay Leaders
- Worship & Music
- Small Parish Education
- Sharing Your Faith in the World
- Case Study Scenarios.
Speaker

Joseph Kormos
Parish Development Ministry leader, Archdiocese of Western PA

- Seven Years Parish Development and Renewal
  - Visited 82 Orthodox parishes
  - Over 25 multi-parish workshops & webinars

- Christ the Savior – Holy Spirit Orthodox Church
  Cincinnati, OH
  - Numerous positions
Basic Approach

- Opinion
- Variety of attendee situations
- Train stewardship leaders
Sources

- Web
  - Archdiocese of Western PA Stewardship page
  - Stewardship Advocates

- Books:
Goals

- Review fundamentals of Christian Stewardship
- Share a few ideas that...
  - Have worked
  - Are important.

Effective parish stewardship efforts...

- Help parishioners to increase the level of meaning the Gospel and Christ’s Church has to them and their lives.
- Motivate them to invest time, talent & $ in its future.
- Foster positive attitudes toward generosity
Outline

- Background
- Stewardship Basics
- Financial Prerequisites
- 12 Stewardship Practices
- Objections
Stewardship is Not For Sissies
The Stewardship Problem
Money and more
The Unfortunate Stewardship Cycle

- Limited funds
  - Incessant collections; baskets “fees”
  - Urgent needs arise
  - Fund raising
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
  - Mentality of parish frugality
  - Risk Averse

- Limited creativity/low expectations
  - Limited funds
  - Incessant collections; baskets “fees”
  - Urgent needs arise
  - Fund raising
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
  - Mentality of parish frugality
  - Risk Averse

- Limited vision of ministry
  - Low annual/weekly donations
  - Limited funds
  - Incessant collections; baskets “fees”
  - Urgent needs arise
  - Fund raising
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
  - Mentality of parish frugality
  - Risk Averse

- Sense that no $ available (“people have no $; unwilling”)
  - Limited vision of ministry
  - Low annual/weekly donations
  - Limited funds
  - Incessant collections; baskets “fees”
  - Urgent needs arise
  - Fund raising
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
  - Mentality of parish frugality
  - Risk Averse

- “Too much money talk”
  - Timid “ask”
  - Ineffective annual donation appeal
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
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- Limited “value story” for annual appeal
  - Timid “ask”
  - Ineffective annual donation appeal
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
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- People hold back regular giving
  - Limited “value story” for annual appeal
  - “Let’s sell steak knives”
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- Poor understanding of stewardship
  - People hold back regular giving
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- Low expectation; Herd mentality
  - Poor understanding of stewardship
  - People hold back regular giving
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Why Are We Like This?

- Large parishes – spread burden
- Economically similar -- and economically low end
- Attitude of scarcity
- Poor Christian formation – never taught “stewardship”
- Insularity
- Stuck
- Afraid to change
Stewardship Transition

From
- Dues
- Minimal donations (or pledges)
- Imperiled Special appeals
- Sell stuff
- Surviving

To
- Proportional, willing
- Thoughtful, meaningful commitments
- ‘Fundraising’ for external purpose
- Ministry
- Building meaning and a sense of future.
- Thriving

Something Better!
Stewardship Practices

1: Ask Good Questions

- Is generosity a core value for a Christian?
- Is it the job of a parish to teach parishioners proper Christian behaviors/responsibilities?”
Stewardship Basics
Stewardship: A Definition

- Careful responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care.
- Delegated authority to be practiced on behalf of the interests of another

Christian Stewardship…
Responsibly working with God to manage all of our God-given resources for the purpose of turning our life toward God – and *not* ourselves.
Stewardship Basics

What We Give Back Should Be:

- Responsible
- Willing – *Trusting not fearful*
- Joyful
- Proportional
- Meaningful
- First portion -- *Not leftovers*
- Thoughtful
- Motivated by… *Excellence*
### Stewardship Basics

#### Generosity Cornerstones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Identity as Christians</th>
<th>...teaches us to... <strong>Trust</strong> God &amp; be <strong>Trustworthy</strong></th>
<th>...and enlivens a spirit of... <strong>Gratitude</strong></th>
<th>...reminding us to give back to God in <strong>Love</strong>... to care for His Church</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s easy to understand being created by God. We are also created for God. We are His servant. Our bodies are not our own. We are not our own – and all the things we have are not our own. We are stewards of what God has given us.</td>
<td>As people created for God we trust God. We remember that God, not us, makes things happen. God provides what is important – though not necessarily what we want. In order to receive God’s trust we need to be trustworthy. We express this, in part, by how we handle our material resources.</td>
<td>Gratitude is born from trust -- and being trustworthy. We gratefully focus on things given to us. We see everything as a gift. In the liturgy we act accordingly -- gratefully giving back to God: “thine own of thine own we offer unto thee”. Gratitude helps us to appreciate what we do have and to stop seeking what we don’t need.</td>
<td>Love is a requirement of being a Christian. It is not optional. Giving helps us not focus on ourselves. If we are required to love then we also must be able to give. Loving spouses share a mutuality of receiving and giving. If we only received that would not be love. We give back to return the love. It becomes the challenge of a steward to see the Church not as a building or even a collection of people but as someone we love. We then see the responsibility - expectations &amp; accountability - that comes with that loving relationship. If we can love a spouse we can love the Church. Treat the church the same way you would treat your spouse. <strong>Is she well provided for?</strong></td>
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It becomes the challenge of a steward to see the Church not as a building or even a collection of people but as someone we love. We then see the responsibility - expectations & accountability - that comes with that loving relationship.

If we can love a spouse we can love the Church. Treat the church the same way you would treat your spouse. **Is she well provided for?**
Financial Prerequisites
Financial Prereqs

Dues method cannot sustain a parish in 21st century
Financial Prereqs

- No dues
- Effective fiscal management
  - Budget
  - Keep parishioners informed
  - Clear, simple reporting
  - Computer based accounting system
Financial Prereqs

- No dues
- Budgets & reports
- Charity Line Item
Financial Prereqs

- No dues
- Budgets & reports
- Charity Line item

- Electronic methods – expand giving options
  - Automatic withdrawal
  - Online banking
  - PayPal
Stewardship Practices

2. Limit Fund Raising

- <10% of income
- Seekers not looking for opportunity to bake cookies
- People are busy -- particularly young people.

"Let's sell steak knives"
3. You Have to Ask (Effectively)

- Laity must participate in the asking
- Don’t beg (or plead or scare)
- Describe something valuable to invest in
- Balance…
  - Spiritual & Practical
  - Short & Long Term
4. You Need a Method

Pledging Preferred

- On balance “pledging” is best approach (IMO)
  - Most parishes do this *poorly*

- Advantages
  - Free will -- not forced rules
  - Fairly spread duty of care
  - Build commitment through personal *call to action*
  - Converts, people from newer parishes expect it
  - Aligns priorities with parish mission/gospel
  - ‘License’ to ask; thank
  - Correlates with growth; vibrancy
Offerings by $ Amount

% of Donations by $ Amount

Annual Giving Categories

- 0-$1000: 73% Dues, 36% Pledging
- $1000 to $3000: 22% Dues, 43% Pledging
- Over $3000: 5% Dues, 22% Pledging

Stewardship & Generosity -- Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America

5/19/2015
Stewardship Practices

5. Say Thank You Often

- Pledging provides a framework for asking & thanking
6. Parish Council Commitment

- Leaders Lead
  - PC owns this problem/opportunity
  - Pledge first

- Beware delay & obfuscation
  - “Maybe we shouldn’t jump into this right away”

“Don’t allow the voices of the least generous people on the parish council or in the congregation to deter your efforts.”

Michael Durall
7. Stewardship Ministry

Meaning Before Money

- **Purpose**
  - Help parishioners to increase the level of meaning of Christ and His Church in their lives.
  - Foster positive attitudes toward generosity.
  - Increase number who support mission and want to invest in future

**Goal is to not necessarily $**
Stewardship Practices

7. Stewardship Ministry

Stewardship Ministry:

- **Financial practice**
- **Formation** – all ages/stages
- **Annual Appeal**
- **Structured Ministry—landing places**
- **Listening & dialogue**
- **Member Expectations**
- **Future Vision**

*Increased Meaning of - Christ & His Church*
Assess the Situation in Parish

Factors Affecting Our Ability to Improve Parish Financial Stewardship

Forces Moving Us Forward >>>

- Dire need
- Sense of future
- We have an opportunity
- Love of God
- Love of parish – want it cared for
- Opportunities for ministry

<<<Forces Holding Us Back

- “Habit”
- “Don’t have it”
- Don’t understand stewardship
- Lack identity as people of God
- Lack trust that God will provide
- “Church spends too much”
- Poor fiscal mgt
- ‘Bad investment’; ‘prolonging the inevitable’
- Looking backward not forward
- “We’re getting by” (real or imagined)
- “I give my time”
- Incessant special collections
- Fear negative reaction to asking; OD’d on $
7. Stewardship Ministry
Gather Baseline Data

Annual Donation by Household
XYZ Parish
# Donations in Each Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th># Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$.5K</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$.5K - &lt;$1K</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1K - &lt;$2K</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2K - &lt;$3K</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3K - &lt;$5K</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5K - &lt;$10K/yr</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10K /yr +</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do we have a vision sufficiently large to generate $10K/year donations?
Stewardship Practices

9. Tailor Communication to Motivation

- People give for different reasons
  - Age
  - Time in parish
  - Other experiences
  - Varies from year to year

One size/ approach does not fit all.

Some are motivated by maintaining the building and the congregation.

Others are motivated by helping people who are less fortunate & strengthening their relationship with God.

Others by future generations
Stewardship Practices

10. Start “New” (Early)

_Not_ on first greeting …but visit not long after settling in

- Welcome
- Questions
- Stories of Meaning
- Expectations – both ways
- Your “gifts”/ How to contribute
- Ask

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• Expectations set at entry point have significant impact.
• If the parish encourages low level giving among new members it’s hard to elevate these expectations later.
11. Personal Contact

Good Questions

1. How important is the parish/Orthodox Church to you & your family? In what ways does it sustain you? Relative to other things --where does the parish “fit”? 

2. What is our responsibility to the ~XX children of this parish… and their children? What do we need to be doing for them? 

3. What is our parish’s responsibility outside our walls? How well are we meeting it? 

4. Do you believe our parish uses its financial resources wisely and effectively? What aren’t we doing? 

5. How do you view the role of money in your life? Is generosity a core value of a Christian? 

6. How do you decide what you give to the church? 

7. Have you considered Proportional giving? Why? Why Not? 

8. If you had the job of heightening awareness of good stewardship as a Christian value in this parish what would you do? 

9. “What would it take --what would you need to see us doing as a parish -- for you to become truly enthusiastic about making a generous meaningful pledge to the parish?”
Stewardship Practices

12. Start Young

- Church school unit on stewardship - grow good stewards when young.

“The second half of a man’s life… is made up of the habits he acquired in the first half”
Dostoyevsky
Summary – Stewardship Practices

1. Ask good questions
2. Limit fund raising
3. Ask effectively
4. Need a method
5. Thank often
6. Council commitment
7. Stewardship ministry
8. Forward vision
9. Tailor communication to motivation
10. Start “new”
11. Personal contact
12. Start young
Objections
# Common Objections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objection/ Concern</th>
<th>Possible Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nobody could <em>ever</em> give this much money</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNO - “That’s not Orthodox (pledge/tithe/charity)”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I’ve got things up in the air right now.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Church is always asking for money</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“The church has enough money”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“We pay the priest too much”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I don’t want to be involved”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I give in other ways”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What am <em>I</em> getting for this?”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Don’t want to let the parish down”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostage taking: “Unless… I will…”</td>
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**Basic Approach**
- Feel…
- Felt…
- Found…
Questions?
Thank You

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