



FORMING A STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Taken from: *Stewardship Manual: A Guide for Individuals and Parishes Developing a Stewardship Way of Life*
Diocese of Charlotte, Office of Development

We suggest the parish form a stewardship committee as a committee under the Parish Council with the general responsibility for stewardship awareness and the annual stewardship "program". We suggest that the stewardship committee not be under the auspices of the Finance Council because that tends to put too much emphasis on the treasure instead of equal emphasis on time, talent and treasure.

The committee could consist of five or more members, less with a smaller parish or mission. A smaller parish or mission may even need to add stewardship responsibilities to an existing committee or council. Members could be appointed to serve three years.

*Stewardship Committee Members, much like the Pastoral Council, should be selected to serve for a specific (preferably 3-year) term, with the option of renewing for a second term. To assure having new members, who will bring new ideas, ask your original committee members to commit for 1, 2, or 3 years for their first term. Always select both a chairperson and vice-chairperson to insure the presence of qualified, experienced leadership.

MEMBERS OF A STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

In recruiting parishioners to serve on a stewardship committee, consider the following qualifications or criteria:

1. Spiritually Motivated - It is important that members be people of prayer and be concerned about parishioners' relationship with God—not about the needs of the church. If their primary concern is raising more money for the church or getting more volunteers for the church, then they would not be appropriate to be on the stewardship committee. Look also for people who are Eucharistic, who have a deep relationship with Jesus, who are grateful for that relationship and who act on that gratitude. Such persons spend time in studying Scripture and often are people who go to Mass daily.
2. Exemplify and Live Out Stewardship - Look for members who are already personally committed to stewardship as a way of life. They may not call it stewardship but they live it. Those committed to stewardship volunteer their time in various parish and community activities. The pastor will certainly know or can find out about people's volunteer activities at the parish and may even know about a person's involvement in the community. Those committed to stewardship will also be committed, regular and generous givers to the offertory. Again, the pastor will know or can find out about people's giving levels.
3. Envision Where Stewardship Can Take the Parish - It is important that all members of a stewardship committee have the same understanding of stewardship in a general way before they join the committee and, more specifically, after they join the committee and are educated. Some may see stewardship only as tithing your money; others may see stewardship as recycling paper products; others may see it as volunteering your time to church organizations only. Developing a working definition of stewardship will help consolidate the diverse viewpoints of the committee members. It is also important that the members be able to develop a vision of where the parish can be 5, 10 or 15 years from now.
4. Have Personal Qualities that Contribute to Success - Look for people who are accountable (they do what they say they are going to do when they say they are going to do it), persistent, optimistic, organized, patient, creative and willing to share their faith with others.