

## THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IN FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP

The pastor's commitment is necessary in all phases—participating in the selection of the volunteer laity to conduct and be involved in the stewardship effort, helping coordinate it and delivering homilies that motivate parishioners to understand stewardship and to respond in a meaningful way. Generally, people will be lifted to the level of stewardship in the Bible to the extent the pastor, pastoral staff and stewardship leaders inspire them. Some suggestions include:

1. Exemplify a life of stewardship. Examine your lifestyle to consider what kind of stewardship life you are living, changes that may need to be made, the rewards in living in this way.
2. Understand that prayer is central to stewardship, and pray that parishioners will grow spiritually as a result of embracing a life of stewardship.
3. Spend time reading about and studying stewardship so as to understand its meaning and focus.
4. Encourage the pastoral council to learn about stewardship and “test” this way of living for six to twelve months.
5. Establish a Stewardship Committee composed of committed parishioners who are good stewards to oversee all aspects of stewardship in the parish.
6. Encourage ongoing parish outreach and giving to the poor. Set an example for parishioners by giving a portion of the offertory collection to community agencies and commit to provide volunteers for community projects.
7. Promote hospitality.
8. Utilize lay witnesses at least once a year to testify to the benefits of living a life of stewardship.
9. Conduct annual renewals of time, talent and treasure.’
10. Communicate the spirituality of stewardship in homilies, communion reflections, Prayers of the Faithful.
11. Help keep your parishioners honest as they discern between their wants and their needs.
12. Repeatedly thank parishioners for their involvement and support, communicating when they serve each other they serve God.
13. Focus on being faithful, not successful.