

## INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

# CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP

June 2015 • e-Bulletin

### A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER *for June*

Gracious God,  
So often you attempt to offer us  
a peaceful awareness of  
your presence. It is always there,  
but often we do not slow down  
enough to become aware of it.

Help us to slow down  
and appreciate the gift  
of your presence, and  
come to a deeper understanding  
of the movement of your Spirit  
in our lives. Help us recognize  
those moments when you  
rescued us, healed us, and  
reconciled us.

Increase our trust in you,  
And show us how to reach  
beyond ourselves to minister  
to others, and be better  
stewards and sacraments  
of your presence each day.

We pray this in Jesus' name.  
Amen.



## Stewards of Our Neighbors and Our Neighborhood



Summer brings with it a sea change in our neighborhoods. Suddenly, the streets are alive with joggers and baby strollers, the smells of backyard barbecue, and the drone of lawn mowers. As a Christian steward, have you given thought to your responsibility to your neighborhood? We take seriously the scriptural query, "Who is my neighbor?" but do we ever ask, "But what of my neighborhood?" In our grandparents' era, when many people lived in small towns and escaped the summer

heat by sitting on porches in the muggy evenings, neighborliness came with the territory. Everybody knew who was having a baby, which family was suffering through illness, who had just experienced a death or a wedding. Problems in the neighborhood were shared concerns. Today, in the era of two-parent wage-earners and automatic garage door openers, it's easy to come home after a long

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day, hit a button and watch the neighborhood disappear as we enter the cocoon of our home. June offers us the opportunity to change that. Do you have a "back fence neighbor"? Maybe now, when he's out in the yard, is the time to get to know him better. Host a barbecue, or a neighborhood potluck. Invite someone over for an evening iced tea on the patio. If there's a community picnic, be sure to go and introduce yourself around. Don't miss the parish picnic. Invite your pastor over for burgers. Go for a long stroll in the early evening and look at your neighborhood with fresh eyes. Stop to visit with people working on their lawns or in their flower beds.

There's a famous quote: "All politics is local." Do you know who represents your neighborhood on the city council and on the school board? Are you acquainted with your parish council members? The quote could very well have added that most religion is local as well, alive in our parish. The church, and the community, lives and breathes in the neighborhood. Is there a pressing local issue, a speed bump needed or a stop sign missing? Is there a neighborhood clean-up day? Get involved. For the Christian steward, opening our eyes to the people next door or to the folks sitting next to us in the pew can be a great project for a sunny summer.



## STEWARDSHIP SAINT *for June*

St. Anthony of Padua is one of the most beloved and admired saints in the church. Because he was a prolific preacher and witness to the Gospel in his personal life, he is known as a great stewardship saint.

St. Anthony was born on the Feast of the Assumption in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195 to a wealthy and educated family of the Portuguese nobility. He entered the Augustinian religious community at an early age where he devoted himself to the study of sacred scripture and Latin classics.

He joined the Franciscan Order when he was 26 years old and traveled tirelessly to preach what it meant to live according to the Gospel. He is believed to have made as many as 400 trips to towns in both northern Italy and southern France.

St. Anthony knew that preaching was not enough to help people understand how to live according to the Gospel. He believed he had to give witness to the Gospel by the way he lived his personal life. He adopted and maintained a simple lifestyle consistent with what he believed the Gospel was calling him to.

St. Anthony died in Padua, Italy, on June 13, 1231 at the age of 36. He was proclaimed a saint less than one year after his death. So simple, yet compelling and inspiring was St. Anthony's teaching of the Catholic faith that he was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius XII in 1946.

Best known for his patronage of seekers of lost items, St. Anthony is commonly referred to today as the "finder of lost articles." Few people know that he is the patron of many other causes including the poor and those who travel. His feast day is June 13.

Because he was a prolific preacher and witness to the Gospel in his personal life, he is known as a great stewardship saint.



## Stewards of Our Strengths

When my parish first began its stewardship journey, it was not uncommon to have conversations that began like this: "I understand the need to be a good steward of my time. Each of us only has so many hours in a day, and we never know when our life will end. I "get" that we need to be stewards of our treasure. Even though I always feel I need more money, I can learn to separate my wants from my needs. But stewards of our talents? What are our talents? What does it mean to be a steward of talent?" For many years, we searched for ways to help people become aware of and grow as stewards of their talents. That is one of the many reasons why we were so excited when we discovered StrengthsFinder. Many ICSC members have used StrengthsFinder to help their parishioners identify their talents and build strengths, growing as good stewards of their talents and finding new meaning and purpose in life as a result.

StrengthsFinder is a culmination of over 60 years of research. This research helps us understand talent as natural ways of thinking, feeling and behaving. We are born with natural tendencies: things that we do well, enjoy and give us energy. Our talents come so naturally to us that we may not recognize them without help. In fact, we often think the things we do well are things that everyone does well! That is where the StrengthsFinder questionnaire comes in: it helps us recognize our greatest areas of talent and to begin to build strengths by applying those talents in all aspects of our lives.

Over the years, a number of ICSC members have asked for more opportunities to learn about strengths and to more effectively lead people in their parishes to become good stewards of their strengths. We are excited to announce a great opportunity for this in the form of a pre-conference workshop, **Stewards of Our Strengths**, just before the annual ICSC conference begins. Stewards of Our Strengths is for everyone: beginners and those who have experience with strengths. Join us for this great opportunity to grow as leaders who help one another be good stewards of our talents!

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This is the eighth in a series of stewardship reflections by Leisa Anslinger for parish stewardship leaders. Leisa is an author and co-founder of Catholic Strengths and Engagement Community (CSEC).



# STEWARDSHIP

*in the Footsteps of Pope Francis*

Chicago, Illinois | October 22-25, 2015



**“I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.”** (John 13:15) The ICSC 2015 conference takes place less than a month from our Holy Father’s visit to the United States. As Jesus demonstrated for the apostles, and us, in the washing of the feet, Pope Francis also leads us by example. As stewards, he inspires us to go forth in the world to both proclaim and live the joy of the Gospel, and to journey with and serve everyone we meet. Pope Francis encourages us to allow ourselves to be surprised by the God of surprises.

The ICSC annual conference is filled with workshops and forums providing us with practical information we can take home and use immediately as we journey, serve, proclaim, and live our faith. The conference exposes us to fundamental topics, as well as new ideas, innovations and strategies. It is a great opportunity to take a break from our hectic schedules to pray, reflect, learn, listen, share, and participate in uplifting liturgies.

Internationally recognized as the most valuable conference for those involved in Christian stewardship, the ICSC annual conference is an opportunity to connect with others sharing the commitment to live and teach stewardship as a way of life. Many of our participants tell us that sharing experiences with peers is the main reason they attend every year. **We invite you to join us in Chicago...in the Footsteps of Pope Francis!**

## First-Ever Preconference Workshops!

ICSC conference attendees have an opportunity to receive additional education at little or no extra cost. This year, ICSC has partnered with organizations to provide three separate pre-conference workshops! See brief descriptions below. For detailed information on these workshops and how to register, visit our website at

[www.catholicstewardship.org](http://www.catholicstewardship.org)

### Strategic Partner Workshops

Thursday, October 22, 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

**FREE for ICSC 2015 conference attendees**

Twenty workshops for parishes and dioceses from our strategic partners on topics such as parish and diocesan capital campaigns, parish leadership training, ideas for stewardship, offertory increase programs, and new approaches that inspire faithful living and giving, and many more!

### Catholic Foundation Forum

Begins Wednesday, October 21, at 4:00 pm

Ends Thursday, October 22, at Noon

**\$95 for ICSC 2015 conference attendees**

**\$150 for non-conference attendees**

Calling all Foundation Directors, CEOs, Board Members, etc. Join us for the First Annual Catholic Foundation Pre-Conference Forum.

This will be a highly interactive format, addressing challenging and timely topics of discussion facilitated by subject experts. Not to be missed!

### Stewards of Our Strengths

Thursday, October 22, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm

**\$95 – Open ONLY to conference attendees**

Led by Leisa Anslinger and Stephanie Moore, from Catholic Life and Faith, the morning session is divided for beginners and those more experienced with the StrengthsFinder® talent-identification tool. In the afternoon session, the group comes together to focus on strengths-based ministerial teams, and leaves with the knowledge and tools they need to quickly and effectively implement the experience when they return to their parish or diocese.

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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REGISTER TODAY! \$499 Early Bird Rate (before July 31, 2015)

The 2015 ICSC Annual Conference offers something for everyone whether you are a priest, deacon, religious, parish life administrator, stewardship and evangelization coordinator or committee member, parish business manager, youth minister, ministry leader, or a faithful parishioner feeling called to do more. A sample of the conference's many sessions includes:



- Developing Leadership in Our Youth
- Stewardship and Evangelization: Two Sides of the Same Coin
- Best Practices for Successful Grant Writing
- Stewardship of Our Elders
- The Ministry of Parish Management
- Stewardship Success on a Budget
- Parish Strategic Planning
- Theology and Spirituality of Stewardship
- Engaging Parishioners With a Parish Covenant
- Best Practices for Working with Consultants
- Calling Forth Gifts of Time and Talent
- Stewardship and the Family
- Separate Parishes Moving Forward as One
- Numerous how-to workshops in Spanish
- Exclusive sessions and forums for diocesan staff working with stewardship, development and Catholic foundations
- And many, many more!

**How does stewardship equip us to go forth in the world to proclaim and live the joy of the Gospel?**

Join Catholic stewards from around the world at the annual conference of the International Catholic Stewardship Council October 22-25 in Chicago, Illinois, and we will learn together!

More details and online registration available at [www.catholicstewardship.org](http://www.catholicstewardship.org) or call 1.800.352.3452, or e-mail us at [register@catholicstewardship.org](mailto:register@catholicstewardship.org).

The International Catholic Stewardship Council has named the recently renovated Hyatt Regency Chicago at 151 East Wacker Drive as host hotel for the 2015 annual conference. The Hyatt Regency Chicago is conveniently located in downtown Chicago, is connected to the Illinois Center and within minutes of the Magnificent Mile. A block of rooms has been reserved from October 21 to 25, 2015, at the rate of \$229 single or double occupancy, plus taxes. For best availability, please reserve your room early! Reservations must be made through our conference coordinator, Plaza Meetings, at [www.plazameetings.com/icsc/](http://www.plazameetings.com/icsc/)



# Ministry: A Work of the Spirit

by Mary Ann Otto, Stewardship Director, Diocese of Green Bay, WI

When I read or hear the words of the *Acts of the Apostles*, I am always overwhelmed by the intensity of the Holy Spirit's presence in the lives of the early disciples. To try and place oneself as an onlooker to the very dangerous yet joyful time in our church history is a challenge but a worthwhile endeavor. This year there is a new resource for doing just that.

Beginning this past Easter Sunday and continuing for ten Sundays, I have followed the 12-hour miniseries *A.D.* on NBC. This series follows the enormously successful work, *The Bible*, created by producers Roma Downey and Mark Burnett. Both Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, D.C., and Reverend James Martin, S.J., editor of *America* magazine, commented on the early Church as part of the initial airing of the series.

For me, the depiction of the work of the disciples reminded me of something that retired Auxiliary Bishop Robert Morneau of Green Bay, Wisconsin, once wrote: *The theology of ministry and service emphasizes that it is not so much that we do things for others but*



*rather Jesus is doing something for others through us. Being aware of the difference between "for" and "through" changes the whole manner of service."*

Using some creative license, the director of the series would use the sound of wind and we would see evidence of a slight breeze come across the faces of the disciples as a sign of the presence of Jesus. I found it to be a powerful image.

Whatever the ongoing experience of the Holy Spirit was like for Saint Peter and the first disciples, it was a reminder of why they were living in this new way.

It was not only love, mercy and compassion they offered but they also had the ability to see their world in a different light. What a gift!

As we continue to exercise prayerful stewardship over our own time and talent, especially as it results in serving our parish and diocese, it is important to remember that our service is truly the work of Jesus taking place through us. Just thinking about it in this light renews my energy, commitment and opens my eyes to the possibilities. Remind me, Holy Spirit!

## Calling All ICSC Parish Members!

### ICSC 2015 Parish Stewardship Award Information

Has your parish developed stewardship materials that would help others? Did your committee work hard on resources you are proud of? Please consider applying for one or more ICSC Parish Awards in 2015. Parishes at all stages of the stewardship journey are encouraged to apply!

Entries will be judged by members of the ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee. Application Deadline is June 30. All applicants will be contacted by August 15.

For additional information, list of awards, and entry forms [CLICK HERE](#)





Called.  
Transformed.  
Sent to serve.

**BECOME AN ICSC MEMBER TODAY**

It will enhance your stewardship efforts tremendously!



**INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC  
STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

## Who is ICSC?

The International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) is a professional organization recognized internationally as a source of education, networking and information to advance the ministry of Christian stewardship as a way of life in the Roman Catholic Church in dioceses and parishes worldwide.

ICSC is the only organization dedicated exclusively to advancing Christian stewardship in North America as well as overseas. Founded in 1962, ICSC has over 1,200 members representing over 800 dioceses and archdioceses, parish communities, Catholic organizations and professional firms.

## ICSC Provides

- Expert advice for introducing Christian stewardship to your parish community
- Techniques proven to revitalize parish life
- Practical stewardship ideas
- Support for teaching stewardship to children
- Reflections for preaching stewardship
- A network of speakers for parishes and diocesan gatherings
- Conferences that offer the wisdom and experience of those committed to stewardship as a way of life
- Retreats that offer in-depth reflection and study on Christian stewardship
- Publications that inform and enhance our understanding of stewardship
- Access to stewardship resources, models and samples online
- Opportunities to exchange ideas and information with stewardship parishes in North America and beyond
- Best practices for promoting stewardship in the parish



## Membership Includes

- Discounts for conferences, institutes and publications
- Membership directory
- Access to past conference presentations
- Monthly parish e-bulletins offering weekly reflections, prayers, bulletin inserts and much more
- Web site section for members only with the latest parish stewardship resources
- Access to parish leadership planning tools
- Opportunities to exchange ideas, network, share best practices and grow in faith



*“The promotion of the practice of stewardship is important for the mission of the Church and for the spiritual well-being of each individual Christian. Everyone benefits from the sacrificial gift one makes of his time, talent, and treasure.”*

*-Pope Benedict XVI*



## A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

### **Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ Weekend of June 6/7, 2015**

Today's Gospel gives St. Mark's account of Jesus gathering his disciples for a last supper, revealing to them a new covenant established through his own sacrificial blood. Every time we participate in the Eucharist, we make a pledge to renew and deepen our participation in Christ's covenant in practical ways. For the steward, that means making daily, personal sacrifices to strengthen this covenant relationship such as deepening our relationship with the Lord in prayer, supporting our parish, and giving comfort to the poor. Now is a good time to reflect on what we can do to strengthen our covenant with the Lord and our community in practical ways.

### **Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of June 13/14, 2015**

In today's Gospel, Jesus compares the beginning of God's kingdom to a mustard seed. This tiny seed, which fits in the palm of a hand, can grow to fifteen feet with sprawling branches! Like the mustard seed, the Christian community had a tiny, seemingly insignificant beginning. The church, which began with about 120 followers, added three thousand people on Pentecost Day following the descent of the Holy Spirit. Since then, the number of Christ's disciples has grown incalculably and continues to grow throughout the world. Good stewards go about God's business of "planting seeds" among all those they encounter. What will we do this week to add to God's kingdom?

### **Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of June 20/21, 2015**

In today's Gospel reading we hear Jesus commanding the wind and sea to be at peace, to be still. The Gospel scene depicting Jesus and his disciples on a boat seems appropriate for the summer. It is a season to contemplate nature and to find God in the wonders of His creation. It is also a time to contemplate, as stewards of the Lord's abundant gifts, all of creation as God's gift and that ultimately it is God who has control over the world and not us.

### **Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Weekend of June 27/28, 2015**

In today's second reading, St. Paul offers the community at Corinth a spirituality of giving. He urges them to give and helps them understand that through their generosity, they will in turn be recipients of a spiritual abundance. They will receive from those who are the beneficiaries of their own giving; a reciprocal gift that amounts to an equality of giving through the generosity of Christ. A good reflection this week would be how Christian stewards enjoy spiritual abundance through Christ Jesus because of their generosity.

INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC  
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(800) 352-3452

ICSC@catholicstewardship.org  
www.catholicstewardship.org

We encourage you to check out the ICSC online community at [www.catholicstewardship.org](http://www.catholicstewardship.org) under 'members' where members can share ideas and questions. The Parish Stewardship section is reviewed every day by members of the Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee.