



ST. PATRICK

Catholic Community

HUDSON, WISCONSIN

Vol. I No.4

March 2009

COMING EVENTS

March 20
Fish Fry

March 28
St. Pat's Gala

April 3
Fish Fry

April 12
Resurrection

April 25
Social Justice Conference

October 17—20
Parish Mission

Continuing the theme of Stewardship, begun last month, our Faith Formation Director, Dr. Larry Huiras, here offers his insights into the Stewardship of Faith Formation.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF FAITH FORMATION

Faith is a gift. It is a gift that is given to us over time. It comes from many sources. For those of us who were cradle catholics that gift was given to us by our parents, godparents, family, and church community. This gift was nurtured in a catholic school or in a parish religion program until we were old enough to examine it, wrestle with it, and claim it as our own. For others of us this gift was as the result of a journey, a voyage of discovery if you will. As these adult seekers pondered the existence of God and the person of Jesus, people shared their gift of faith and their knowledge of God and Jesus with them along their way into the catholic faith. Regardless of how the gift of faith came to be in your life, that gift was given to you by someone else. Someone who had also been given this great gift, someone who as a good and wise steward of this gift knew they had to give it away.

In parish life we hear a great deal these days about stewardship. Stewardship is a disciple's responsibility for the abundance of gifts we are given in our faith community. In our parish or faith community the greatest of these gifts we are given to steward is the gift of faith.

How then ought we to steward this gift of faith? Quite often when talking about stewardship, we talk about stewardship in terms of time, talent, and treasure. It might be helpful to take a look at our parish's faith formation processes and programs using the T³ lens of time, talent and treasure.

The first part of stewarding a gift of faith is taking the time to deepen that faith. It is simply spending time with Jesus in prayer and in learning more about him through study and community. Do you take advantage of the many offerings for prayer and reflection at the parish such as daily mass, eucharistic adoration, men's spirituality, women's spirituality, prayer groups, etc.? Do you take time to get to know more about Jesus by attending a catechism class, scripture study group, or a Theology on Thursday lecture? Do your kids at-

tend our catholic school, faith formation sessions, or do you participate in the family faith formation process with them? Are you interactive with the community in groups such as the Knights of Columbus, PCCW, Home and School, Mom's group, or Fall Fest? Do your kids participate in the parish's youth ministry offerings? To be sure there are a lot of ways to deepen your faith but to deepen your "catholic" faith you need to do that in community. You need to spend your time with other catholics.

So what do your talents have to do with your gift of faith? The gift of faith is a gift that needs to be shared or given away. All the activities and organizations that are listed above and more, exist to give and enrich the gift of faith in others. All of these activities require people with certain talents or skills to exist let alone be effective and enriching. These various programs and processes need people with the various talents such as listening, teaching, leading, visioning, managing, communicating, writing, reading, painting, acting, computing, organizing, driving, telephoning, and on and on and on. There is always the call from the community to talented people to share their talents and through them their own gift of faith with others.

Finally we come to the treasure of our gift of faith. It is in the finding and the growing of our gift of faith that we discover its true treasure. For 2000 years this catholic faith has been handed down by saints and sinners just like us. As catholics that faith includes a tradition of consistent teachings and truths that have remained constant for over two millennia. But who is our faith in after all? The person of God in Jesus, who leads us to the Father and sends us the Holy Spirit. This is a triune God of love, mercy, and compassion. Jesus is our brother and friend. His love for us is so great that he gave himself over to death to be with us and one of us. He is a God of hope and salvation. Talk about real treasure, the gift of faith is all that and more.

In the end this all leads to one final question, a question only you can answer. *What sort of a steward are you when it comes to your gift of faith?*

