



2017
STEWARDSHIP
RENEWAL

*ASSUMPTION OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY PARISH*



Stewardship

NOT A PROGRAM
NOT A FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN
NOT AN EMPTY BUZZWORD
A WAY OF LIFE



BECOMING A STEWARDSHIP PARISH

In common language, "stewardship" simply means taking good care of one's belongings. But at Assumption, when we talk about stewardship, we mean something more than that.

As Christians, we believe that humans don't really own anything, per se. God has created all things; everything we "own" is really "on loan" from God. From this perspective, then, stewardship means taking care of God's gifts.

Everything that God has given us — special skills, a nice smile, a good income — is meant not only for us, but for others as well. As strange as it seems, being a good steward of these gifts involves giving them away. As we learn from Jesus' life, self-giving is the road to true happiness.

*Stewardship is using our
Time, Talent, and Treasure to build
God's Kingdom. All three elements
are equally important.*

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Our Annual Stewardship Renewal is an important event for the community of Assumption. It is a time when we encourage each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts by making commitments of time, talent, and treasure.

Renewing ourselves in these areas results in great spiritual benefits for us as individual parishioners and for the community around us. This year, how will you use your gifts?

TIME: Do I make time for prayer, to read the scriptures, to thank God and ask for His help?

TALENT: Is my talent at work, actively building the Body of Christ?

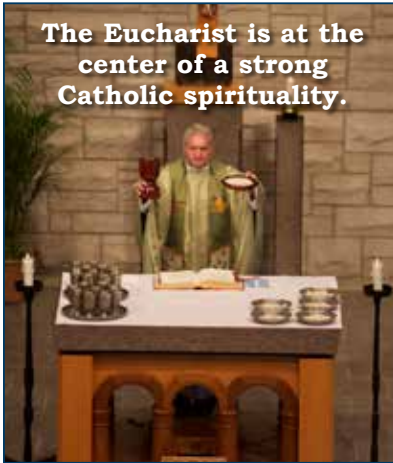
TREASURE: Do I give a proportionate amount of my treasure to God through the weekly offertory?



MAKING COMMITMENTS

All parish families are asked to fill out a Stewardship commitment card, then bring their card to Mass on **Sept. 30/Oct. 1**. Your card allows you to make commitments to prayer and sign up for parish ministries. You also can make your treasure commitments to the weekly offertory.

PREPARING YOURSELF SPIRITUALLY



The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "Prayer and Christian life are inseparable." In fact, St. Paul tells us to "pray constantly." But as anyone who has ever tried to pray on a regular basis will tell you, prayer can be hard work. That is why we have to make a firm commitment to be persistent. Just as we learn to budget our money or schedule occasions for service, we also have to be very specific when we make time for prayer. Many people set aside 30 minutes in

the morning to sip a cup of coffee and read Scripture. Others pray a Rosary on the way to work. Still others pray with children before bedtime, or pray with their spouse before retiring for the evening. Whatever the format, the important thing is that we make a conscious effort to spend time with the One we love most.

*"Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."
(1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)*

Action Steps to Improve Your Prayer Life

- Pope Francis encourages all to spend 15 minutes every morning in quiet prayer by reading and reflecting on sacred scripture. A helpful place to start is the readings for each day, found at uscgb.org/bible/readings or on Catholic phone and tablet apps, such as *iBreviary*, *Magnificat* or *Divine Office*.
 - Thank God for the good things He has given you that you might take for granted throughout the day.
 - Examine your conscience before going to sleep and say an act of contrition like we do at Mass.
 - Pray with your children each night before bed, giving each family member an opportunity to pray for something and concluding with an Our Father, Hail Mary and the Glory Be.
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BEING AN ACTIVE SERVANT

Every week, our parish is buzzing with activity. There are groups that pray together, groups that minister to other parishioners, and groups that reach out to the community. Christ Himself taught us that “whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40). When we lay down our wants and desires to serve each other, God blesses our efforts! Will you consider where God is calling you to serve Him?



“Jesus said to them, ‘Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ Then they abandoned their nets and followed him.” — Mark 1:17-18



Action Steps to Improve Your Prayer Life

- Pray about how the gifts God has given you can best be used to serve others.
- Use your Commitment Card to find a parish ministry that will help you grow personally in living out your faith.
- Commit to being faithful to God through those you serve in word and deed.

CONSISTENT & GENEROUS GIVING



Our deepest reason for giving is not because our parish has needs, but because we have a spiritual need to give. We are called to give to God from our first fruits, and to recognize that everything comes from Him. Our gifts to God should be out of faith and gratitude for what God has done for us. Just like the apostles who laid down their nets the moment that Jesus called them, we too should lay down

everything, even something as important to us as our finances, to follow Christ. God's promise to us is a promise of life and security when we place all of our trust in Him. "The Lord will be with you and will never fail you or forsake you. So do not fear or be dismayed" (Deuteronomy 31:8).

Take a Step Toward 10 Percent

At Assumption we honor the scriptural tithe. We invite parishioners to give 5% of their gross income to God through the offertory and 5% to other charities. Using the chart in the Commitment Card, find your current percentage of giving, then determine what steps you can take toward giving 10% of your household income. Consider increasing your gift by 1% or 2% increments until you reach the scriptural tithe, and then be faithful to your commitment, whatever it may be.

Action Steps to Be Financially Generous

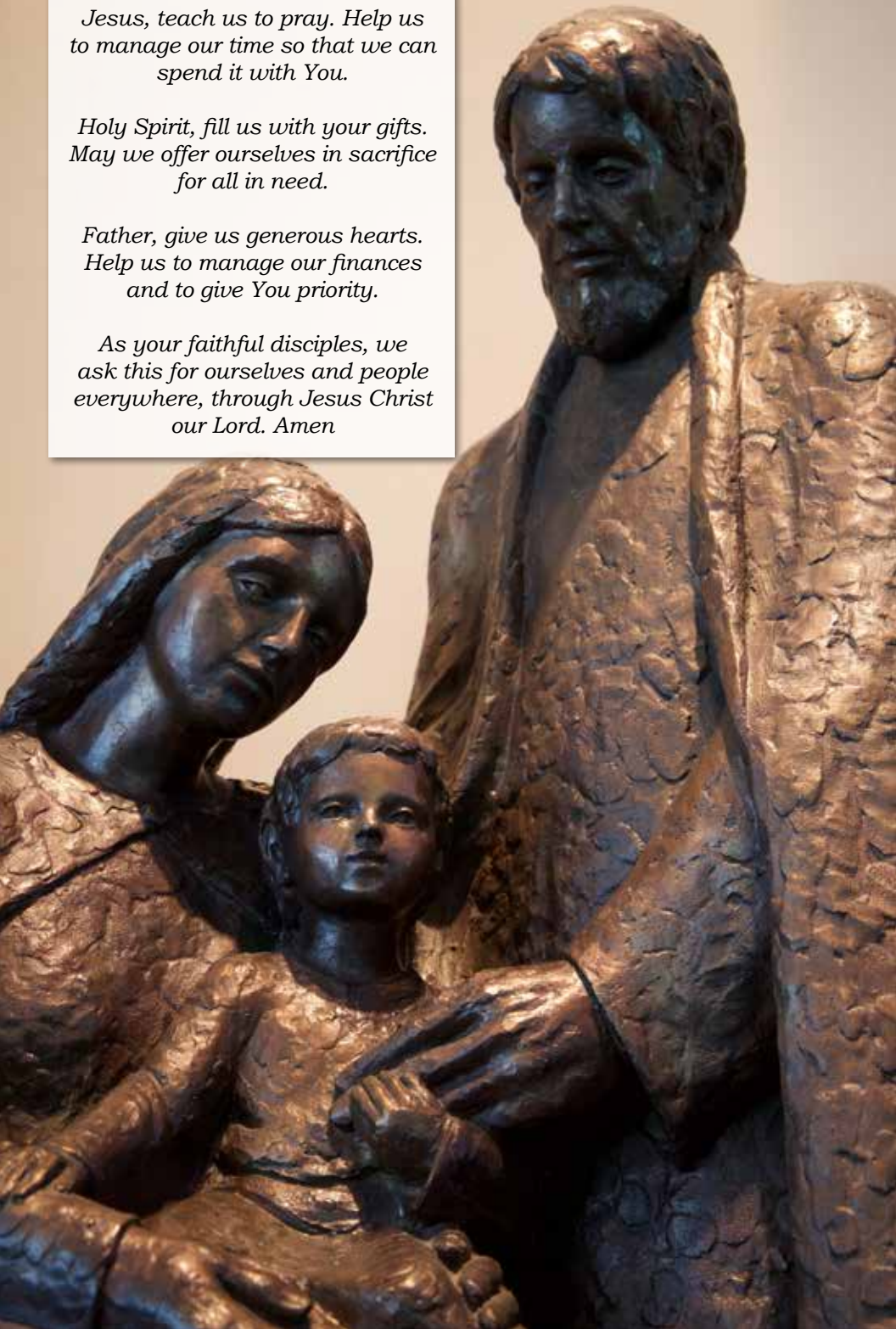
- *Pray about the best use of your financial resources and ask God to show you where you need to give Him priority in them.*
 - *Evaluate your regular offertory gift and increase it based on what you think God is calling you to give until you reach the full tithe.*
 - *Make a commitment to give regularly to God through the parish offertory, and be faithful to your tithing commitment, even when you attend Mass elsewhere.*
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*Jesus, teach us to pray. Help us
to manage our time so that we can
spend it with You.*

*Holy Spirit, fill us with your gifts.
May we offer ourselves in sacrifice
for all in need.*

*Father, give us generous hearts.
Help us to manage our finances
and to give You priority.*

*As your faithful disciples, we
ask this for ourselves and people
everywhere, through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen*



Your Offering To God

STEWARDSHIP INVOLVES COMMITMENT

It's difficult to give God any percentage of our time, talent or treasure if we do not first give Him 100 percent of our hearts. For this reason, our Stewardship Renewal is a time for conversion above all else. It is a time to make God our top priority, and then express this conversion through written commitments.

The collage features three documents related to parish stewardship:

- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish 2017 Commitment Card:** A card with a colorful stained-glass design at the top. It lists several commitments:
 - Attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days
 - Attend weekday Mass at least once a week
 - Attend Adoration once a week
 - Spend at least 15 minutes a day in personal prayer
 - Play together with my loved ones
 - Read the Bible for at least one hour a week
 - Play the Piano at least weekly
 - Go to Reconciliation every other month
 - Schedule time for a spiritual retreat
 - Write a friend or acquaintance to Mass
 - Pray for the sick of our parish
- Stewardship Renewal Form:** A form with three main sections:
 - Time:** "Share time with God in prayer". Includes instructions to check the box next to commitments and a list of activities like attending Mass, Adoration, and prayer.
 - Talent:** "Get involved; use your talents". Includes a section for "Pillar of Hospitality" with a list of ministries (e.g., Altar Servers, Sacristan, Greeters) and a "Pillar of Prayers" section with a list of ministries (e.g., Altar Servers, Sacristan, Greeters).
 - Treasure:** "Making a consistent gift to the offering". Includes a pledge to give 5% to Assumption and 5% to other charities, and a "Weekly Giving Chart" showing income levels and corresponding weekly gift amounts.
- Weekly Giving Chart:** A table showing the percentage of households that can afford to give a certain amount weekly based on their income level.

Please bring your completed commitment card to Mass on **Sept. 30/Oct. 1**, or mail it to the parish in the envelope provided.

TIME

Several suggestions for regular prayer are listed on your Commitment Card. Will you set aside time each day to spend with God?

TALENT

Your Commitment Card lists numerous parish ministries available for your involvement. Will you offer yourself in service to God through others?

TREASURE

This year, will you make a specific financial pledge to contribute to the Sunday offertory?

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY PARISH

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Please keep until Fall 2018