



Parish Stewardship Effort for Children

*A Component of the Parish Stewardship Renewal Effort
Prepared by the Office of Development, Diocese of Charlotte

Parishes who have completed a successful first-time stewardship effort, and are committed to promoting on-going stewardship awareness, should consider the value of introducing stewardship as a way of life for the children and youth of the parish. They have been eager and interested observers of the adult effort over the past year, and many of your young people already practice stewardship as part of their family's commitment. A focus on Children's Stewardship should be done in addition to the adult stewardship effort with youth lay witnesses either on a separate weekend from the adult lay witnesses, or as part of a Children's Liturgy of the Word.

Suggestions for implementing Children's Stewardship in your parish

- **Support**--It is vital to enlist the support of the pastor, pastoral staff, Pastoral Council, Faith Formation Director, and (in parishes with a school) the school principal.
- **Education**--Include a 3-5 week mini-lesson on stewardship in your faith formation classes. Feature some of these children's activities such as posters, banners, essays, etc. during the weeks preceding Commitment Sunday.
- **Compile a children's time and talent list.** Be sure to include adult ministries that would welcome participation on the part of children. (i.e. housecleaning, lawn and garden care, visiting the elderly, etc.) Make that list available to the children.
- **Communication**--Introduce the idea of children's stewardship early through bulletin announcements, parish newsletter articles, and bulletin board materials. Include a note on children's stewardship in the letter from the pastor.
- **Children's Commitment Card**--Provide commitment cards for the children to complete their pledge of time talent, and treasure as their gift of thanksgiving for all of God's blessings in their lives.
- **Children's Envelopes**--Consider implementing use of a children's envelope that includes a space for sharing their weekly time and talent as well as treasure.
- **Lay Witness**--Ask a young person who is involved in ministry in your parish (altar server, children's lector, children's usher, etc.) to share with the other children what stewardship means to him/her.
- **Follow-up**--See to it that each child who completes a commitment card receives a "thank-you" and an invitation to participate in the ministry they indicated. Contact should also be made with parents regarding their role in the child's commitment.
- **On-going awareness**--Include a children's corner in your weekly bulletin, highlighting some of the time and talent items mentioned by them in their weekly envelopes. Include children's stewardship notes in parish newsletters, prayers of the faithful, faith formation classes and newsletters, and (when appropriate) in children's Liturgy of the Word or homilies for children.
- **Children's Stewardship Committee**—Consider forming a subcommittee of your parish stewardship committee to address the current and on-going needs of children and youth stewardship. That subcommittee would be responsible for coordinating every aspect of the stewardship effort for the young people of the parish.
- **Involve the youth in the process.** Do not plan stewardship activities for the youth; plan stewardship activities with them. Invite mature high school students to serve on the Children's Stewardship Committee. Ask one of them to be a liaison to the parish Stewardship Committee.