

Stewardship in Action at St. Bernard

BERNIE MCELROY: GIVING TIME FOR TREASURE



Every Sunday, Bernie McElroy is perched behind the “Scrip” table in the Narthex doing his part to try to raise much needed funds for the parish. This uncompromising commitment to serving our parish has been a big part of Bernie’s life since joining St Bernard back in 1992.

And although Bernie has served in many capacities at St. Bernard, the role that he holds closest to his heart is that of the Chairperson of the Parish Finance Council.

While serving on the Finance Council, Bernie has gained a comprehensive understanding of the parish operations, while helping to direct and influence how the budget is allocated to meet the many requirements of our growing parish. This is no small task, and Bernie remembers feeling a bit anxious and

cautious when first joining the Finance Council, thinking that he wouldn’t be able to fill such an important role. History now shows that this was just not the case.

One of Bernie's most notable successes as Finance Council Chairperson was directing the Council as they worked closely with Monsignor Joe to oversee last year's Stewardship Appeal campaign. At a time when the parish was facing serious economic challenges, the effort spearheaded by the Finance Council resulted in a much needed increase in weekly giving to St. Bernard, as well as a significant increase in Parish-Pay participation. For his part, Bernie participated in planning the campaign roll-out, spoke at numerous masses to promote the program, and tracked the results of the campaign.

Personal

Married, Jane – 42 years
Two sons, one daughter and two grandchildren
Joined St Bernard in 1992
VP of Business Development
North America, Adva Optical

At St. Bernard

Finance Council – 9 years; 8 years as chairperson
Trustee of the Church – 8 years
Youth Group volunteer – 8 years
Interfaith Hospitality Driver – 8 years
Golf committee member – 2 years

Recognition

Charlie Grille Award, 2012
Inducted as a Knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, 2011



PROFILE OF A STEWARD (CONTINUED)

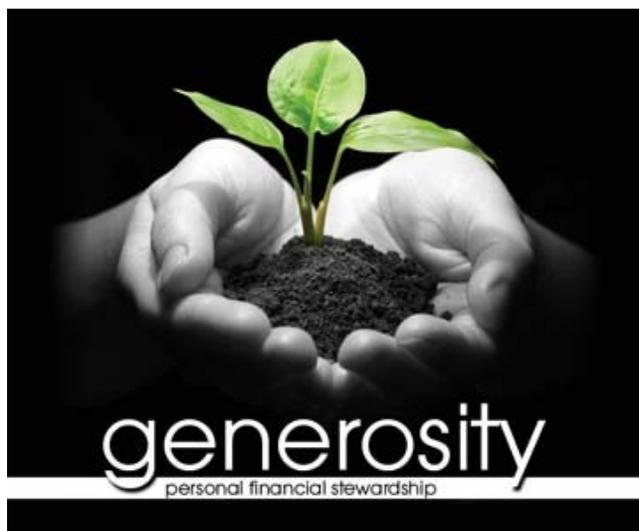
As for the motivation behind his efforts, Bernie states that the faith-based culture and community spirit here at St. Bernard has played a big part in his choice to devote so much time. He feels that one thing that distinguishes our parish from others is that parishioners are encouraged to take the initiative to get involved, even if the task, program, or ministry they envision does not currently exist. He feels that this creates a real sense of accomplishment, fulfillment and ownership, something he has personally experienced.

You would never think that someone who is now so dedicated turned away from the church many years ago, only to be brought back by his wife, Jane, who is also an important contributor to various ministries at St. Bernard. With the spark initially provided by Jane, Bernie has made a major impact on our parish community, and, in turn, has gained a network of good friends and partners in faith that have enriched his life.

After experiencing both the challenges and the rewards of a life of Stewardship, Bernie encourages all parishioners to get involved, even if the first step is a

small one. He believes that the benefits, in almost every case, far outweigh the sacrifice of time and effort.

Bernie's contributions to the parish certainly align with the true definition of Stewardship, which is comprised of our gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Because of Bernie's gift of time and talent, the treasure is in good hands.



Interested in learning more about the Stewardship Council?

Please contact Mark Dransfield (mlrek@optonline.net or call 908-526-6649)