

Stewardship in Action at St. Bernard



STEWARDSHIP: A FAMILY TRADITION

Everyone knows the old saying, “the acorn doesn’t fall far from the tree,” and when it comes to Stewardship, this idea is demonstrated by the members of St. Bernard’s Alaimo family, who have been active as stewards of the parish since joining in 1997.

Jim and Carolyn Alaimo have made it a priority to make sure that their four children follow in their footsteps by being role models and encouraging their children’s active participation in community service and ministry.

Over the years, Jim has served on Finance Council, is a lector, has worked on the Appalachia Project, has been a driver for IHN, serves as a Eucharistic Minister, has worked with the RCIA Program and is a member of the Knights of Columbus. Carolyn has been involved with New Moms/New Expectations, is a Respect Life repre-

sentative, was a catechist for many years, and can often be seen manning the Scrip Table. Both Jim and Carolyn have served on the Pastoral Council, the Baptism team, and the Cornerstone Retreat Teams.

As for the kids, both Christopher (23) and Gabrielle (21) have been involved with Youth Ministry, New Moms/New Expectations, Young Builders Club, and have been altar servers. Steven (16) has been involved with Young Builders Club, and Natalie (11) has been involved with Young Builders Club and the Youth Choir.

In terms of community service, Jim and both boys have been involved in Scouting, with Jim serving as a volunteer for 16 years, and Christopher attaining the level of Eagle Scout. Carolyn explains that the service orientation of the Scouting organization aligns well with their understanding of the call to service to Christ. She says she used the Scout laws to help teach her children

about discipleship. According to Carolyn, the qualities of a Scout mirror the qualities of a disciple: “trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.” She maintains that “as Catholics we are called to action. The traits listed do not take a lot of skill or talent; a child of 6 or 7 can be kind, friendly and courteous to a neighbor. I was trying to get the children to understand that service is not something that you have to wait until you are older or more talented or have more money before you can contribute.”

Some of the tasks that Carolyn and Jim have encouraged their children to do include helping neighbors during bad weather, helping elderly neighbors with mail and recycling, and bringing meals to neighbors and parishioners during times of need. Carolyn notes that “a smile to someone standing in line can do wonders; holding a door or offering assistance to a person in need, can make a person’s day” and has tried to make sure her children understand their responsibility to be stewards of Christ in whatever ways they can.

Carolyn explains that as Catholic parents, she and Jim have “tried to teach that in order to gain the happiness of heaven, we must know, love and serve God in this world.” She uses her favorite scripture verse, Matthew 25:33-40, which concludes with the verse “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did it for me,” to teach her children that “when we help others, we are in essence helping God.”



PARISH PICNIC THIS SUMMER

Once again, the Stewardship Council will sponsor a Parish Picnic. The event, to be held on parish grounds, is a great opportunity to meet other parishioners, or kick back and relax with old friends for a fun afternoon. The picnic will be held on Sunday, June 5th following the 11:30 am Mass. The rain date will be June 12th. Tickets will be on sale after Masses in May. Please consult the bulletin for additional information. We look forward to seeing you there!



THE PRIVILEGE OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

What is your area of expertise? What do you know how to do better than most people around you? What are you really good at and enjoy doing?

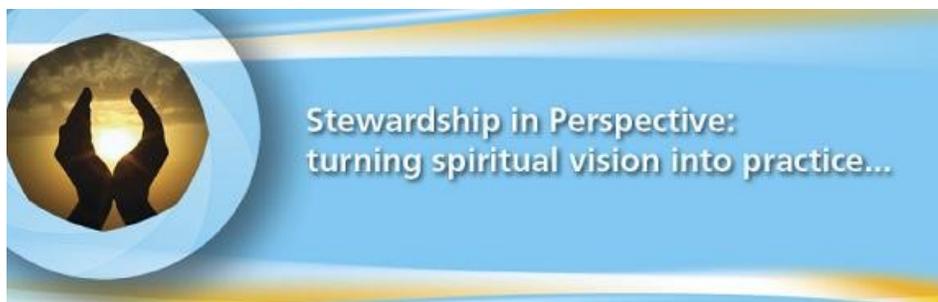
Perhaps it is parenting, or maybe you are an excellent accountant, or have a beautiful voice and can sing like an angel. You listen well and are a caring friend, or you know how to bake a mouthwatering apple pie. You are a creative and inspirational artist, or perhaps you are a teacher who has the ability to explain even the most difficult concept in a way that seems simple and easy to understand. These attributes are called *talents*.

God has given each of us one or more talents to share with others around us. God has also given us blessings. Perhaps they are financial, perhaps they are people like the loved ones that share our life, perhaps they are physical and practical like good health or the clean air we breathe and the fertile earth we live on, perhaps they are more intangible like our emotions, love, faith, hope.

Christian Stewardship is the precious partnership we have with God to manage and share the talents and blessings we have received from our loving Heavenly Father, and through this process, assure that God's abundance is distributed as widely and as generously as Grace affords. No talent is too small or unimportant; each has its place in the plan of God.

Who we are and What we believe are clearly revealed by How we share our talents and blessings. The good news is that God has given us the power to become what we believe, and to become all that we want to be, by the life-giving power we receive from the exercise of generous Christian Stewardship. All that we are, all that we do, and everything we strive to be is made meaningful and complete as we give, live, and serve the God who has given us an abundant life and the commission to share that abundance with others. This is the meaning and the privilege of Christian Stewardship.

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Interested in learning more about the Stewardship Council?

Please contact Mark Dransfield (dransfam@gmail.com or by calling 908-526-6649)
