

Stewardship in Action at St. Bernard



BEHIND THE SCENES AT ST. BERNARD: HONORING EVELYN MUTEK



After nearly 50 years of service to St. Bernard, Evelyn Mutek, our long-time Sacristan, is retiring from her position. The Stewardship Council is thrilled to honor Evelyn and extend a thank you on behalf of the entire parish community for her contributions to the church over the years.

Evelyn and her family joined St. Bernard Parish in the late 1960s, when the parish was still located in Raritan, and in 1971, Evelyn joined the Altar Rosary Society. As a member, she was involved in one of the Society's primary duties, which was the upkeep and care of the Sanctuary and the Eucharist. In the 1980s, when St. Bernard Church moved to our present home, Evelyn took on the majority of the responsibilities of maintaining and preparing the church and chapel for Masses and the various ceremonies that go on throughout the year. In 1982, she was officially installed as a Sacristan, and has served in that role for the last 35 years.

Working quietly behind the scenes, Evelyn's responsibilities cover everything from ordering supplies for the sacristy such as candles, wine, and altar bread, to maintaining the linens and vestments, to cleaning and polishing the sacred vessels used during the Mass. She is not only responsible for making sure that all is prepared for daily and Sunday Masses, but also for weddings, baptisms and funeral Masses at the church. As a result, Evelyn has been a presence at the church on a nearly daily basis for as long as many parishioners can remember.

Everyone who has attended Mass at St. Bernard over the years has had their experience enriched through the "backstage" efforts of Evelyn, so we are truly grateful for her dedicated service. She will surely be missed.

Evelyn will certainly be leaving big shoes to fill, and Msgr. Randy and Fr. Edmund would like to develop a ministry whose members will share the many duties that Evelyn has performed.



.Anyone interested in becoming a part of this vital ministry should contact the St. Bernard Stewardship Council at stewardship@stbernardbridgewater.org.

Please prayerfully consider joining this very special ministry.



ANGELS: THE IDEAL STEWARDS

Angels seem to be everywhere in December. They appear, naturally enough, atop manger scenes and crèches everywhere in the Christian world, but they are visible in otherwise secular settings too. Ironically, as society continues to move in a more mundane direction – “Happy Holidays” replaces “Merry Christmas” and “holiday music” shoves aside “Christmas carols” – angels pop up everywhere in retail shopping establishments and elsewhere.

Despite the ubiquity of angelic images, the serious Christian today likely hears and reads much less about angels and their actions here on Earth than her grandparents did. Perhaps we have reduced them in our culture to loveable caricatures of human beings and have forgotten that these heavenly spirits were created by God – before mankind – to serve both God and humans throughout eternity.

Let’s remember that in the Old Testament people experienced the impact of angels frequently, when they were sent as God’s messengers. Indeed, people often had difficulty distinguishing the angels from God himself. Christ overshadowed the angels in the New Testament, but the early Christians were known to deeply

revere the angels and took seriously their role in salvation history. Throughout Sacred Scripture, there are 227 references to angels, beginning in Genesis and continuing to Revelation.

If we consider the various roles the angels play in our history, we can readily see that they are the model practitioners of stewardship! Like the saints who also cooperate in God’s plan, angels also show us the way to holiness and to lives of good stewardship.

We know there are nine choirs of angels identified through scripture – Angels, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim. We know too that each of us is accompanied by a Guardian Angel, who is given to us at conception and stays with us throughout our lives. “See, I am sending my angel before you, to guard you on the way and bring you to the place I have prepared. Be attentive to him.” (Exodus 23:20-21)

Tradition maintains that our openness to the angelic presence can transform our attitudes and activities toward wholeness, creativity, and a charity that is abundant and joyous. What better



way to incline our paths to good stewardship than to contemplate the angels and consider how they can direct us toward achieving these lofty goals of ours?

As we prepare to celebrate the glorious feast of Christmas, let the next plastic angel we see in a manger scene be a reminder to invoke angelic assistance that Our Lord has provided for us – and to thank our own guardian angel for all we have been given to date.

Excerpted with permission from *Stewardship-in-Motion*, The Cathedral Corporation, December 2016.



Interested in learning more about the Stewardship Council?

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