

Stewardship Bulletin Message (May 2014)

"STEWARDSHIP"

Love in Action

Our parish formally adopted the stewardship way of life over a decade ago. During those years, we have been incredibly graced by an understanding of the spirituality of stewardship. We have come to a growing knowledge that all that we are and all that we have are gifts from God. In gratitude for these gifts, we have come to experience profound happiness in giving back to God the first portion of our time, talent and treasure to help build the Kingdom of God in Lawrence and beyond.

This year, we have incorporated the phrase "Love in Action" in our printed stewardship materials and on our display posters. What is the intended message behind this phrase?

In 1968, Peter Scholtes wrote a landmark hymn that has remained popular ever since, "We are One in the Spirit", with the refrain "They'll know we are Christians by our love". The lyrics were inspired by John 13:34-35, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another".

Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Galatians (5:6), states that "faith working through love" counts above all else in Christ Jesus.

Pope Francis, in his apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel", (paragraph 37) tells us that "Works of love directed to one's neighbor are the most perfect external manifestation of the interior grace of the Spirit." and quotes Saint Thomas Aquinas: "The foundation of the New Law is in the grace of the Holy Spirit, who is manifested in the faith which works through love".

Clearly, our recognition of God's infinite unconditional love for us should motivate us to share that love with others through evangelization and action.

Quoting again from "The Joy of the Gospel" (paragraph 121): "All of us are called to offer others an explicit witness to the saving love of the Lord, who despite our imperfections offers us his closeness, his word and his strength, and gives meaning to our lives. In your heart you know that it is not the same to live without him; what you have come to realize, what has helped you to live and given you hope, is what you also need to communicate to others. Our falling short of perfection should be no excuse; on the contrary, mission is a constant stimulus not to remain mired in mediocrity but to continue growing."

Here are a couple of suggestions to practice good stewardship through "love in action".

- Call a member of your family who you have not talked to lately.
- Send a card to someone who is sick or home bound.
- Share words of comfort with someone who is going through a difficult time.
- Invite someone to attend Sunday Mass with you.
- Volunteer at our Cor Unum Meal Center.

Someone needs to hear from you. God will give you the words. Put His love into your action.

Ed Sampson
Stewardship Commission Chairman