



INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

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Dear ICSC Parish Member:

Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy left us with a legacy of stewardship that touches the lives of Catholics throughout the United States, Canada and the world. The International Catholic Stewardship Council announced the creation of the Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy Memorial Parish Stewardship Award in 1998. The award is presented each year at our annual conference to the parish which best exemplifies a long-term commitment to stewardship as a way of life. Its purpose is to recognize a parish that has embraced every aspect of stewardship and has shown evidence of spiritual growth and community outreach.

Every parish that is a member of ICSC may apply for this award. Included with this mailing are an application form and an evaluation form that details the items by which your submission will be judged. Please pay close attention to the application criteria and complete the enclosed form in detail. The application form, the one-to-three-page summary and supporting materials should be enclosed in a file folder or three-ring binder. Please send this information to:

This year, the Murphy award committee has adapted the criteria to better consider parishes of all sizes for this award by looking at the amount of growth a parish has had as a result of putting stewardship more fully into practice – not necessarily the amount of activities a parish does.

Scott Bader
ICSC Parish Stewardship Education and Services Committee
Archdiocese of Seattle
710 Ninth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

The deadline for submitting all nominations is April 24, 2009.

If you have any questions or need clarification on any of the application criteria, please feel free to call Scott at (206) 903-4619, or email to ScottB@SeattleArch.org.

May God continue to bless your stewardship efforts as together we work to build His Kingdom.

Scott Bader, Chair
ICSC Stewardship Education Committee

DIOCESAN MEMBERS: We encourage you to encourage your great parishes to apply!

Please note that for parishes that aren't at the point of applying for the Murphy Parish Stewardship award, ICSC now would like to recognize other good stewardship parishes with the ICSC Stewardship Parish of Excellence Award. Any parish that meets the criteria for this recognition will receive the certification. Included with this mailing is the application for this recognition. We'd like to recognize YOU!

ICSC Stewardship Parish Recognition Process

The International Catholic Stewardship Council is now offering a self-assessment tool to help parishes reflect upon and measure their progress against certain threshold criteria with regard to the practice and promotion of stewardship. A parish that thoughtfully completes this evaluation and satisfies these criteria will be recognized for a three-year period as an “ICSC Stewardship Parish.”

This “ICSC Stewardship Parish” Recognition Process was developed because:

1. ICSC recognizes that many parishes are extraordinarily good stewardship parishes. Since the Murphy Award can be given to only one parish each year, ICSC wanted an additional way to recognize the many other exceptional stewardship parishes.
2. ICSC is hopeful that the self-assessment requested for this recognition will encourage parishes that are already practicing and promoting stewardship to focus on how they can grow even more in this Christ-centered way of life.
3. ICSC hopes to develop a pool of parishes achieving the “ICSC Stewardship Parish” designation

To receive this recognition, a parish must:

- Be a member of the International Catholic Stewardship Council.
- Demonstrate that they have made progress toward half or more of the objectives under each goal on the assessment instrument.
- Agree to be listed as a “mentor” parish for three years, be available to provide advice via e-mail or over the phone about promoting and practicing stewardship.

Under each goal are listed several objectives. For each objective, the parish is asked to briefly describe how it accomplishes the listed objective. If a parish does something additional or different, that should be added or described as well.

After three years, each parish will need to re-evaluate their stewardship efforts and then re-submit for recognition.

Recognition will be given and announced at the ICSC Conference each year. The application for recognition must be submitted by March 31. Parishes achieving recognition will also be specially noted in the ICSC directory.

APPLICATION FOR ICSC STEWARDSHIP PARISH RECOGNITION

A true “stewardship parish” recognizes the living presence of Christ in its midst, and sets out to steward this gift of God to all of humanity. A stewardship parish receives and delights in this greatest of gifts, and then offers the abundance of life and love that flows from Him to the people of the parish. This ICSC self-assessment tool is meant to help each parish evaluate its stewardship way of life with Him in their midst.

Goal: Christ-centered Community

- Attendance at daily and Sunday liturgies has increased
- Parish has scheduled times for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- Increased recognition of stewardship as a way of life with Christ in the Church
- Spirituality has grown in the parish, including increased personal devotion and more frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance
- Parish strategic planning that is intentional about seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and includes fostering stewardship as a way of life as a vital part of the parish plan
- Participation in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) has grown
- Other

Goal: Stewardship Outreach

How does the parish share stewardship resources of time, talent and treasure lovingly in justice with:

- Individuals in need?
- The local poor?
- The local community?
- The arch/diocesan community?
- The national community?
- The worldwide community?

How does the parish show that it is a good steward of:

- Creation?
- Vocation?
- The Church?
- Mission?

Goal: Spirituality/Worship

- Witness talks are given each year by parishioners who are stewards of Christ's life and love
- Homilies regularly include stewardship themes
- Financial gifts are brought forward during the offertory procession, showing the link between the sacrificial offering of the people and the Eucharist
- Parish encourages prayer focused on asking for the grace to live as good stewards (e.g. prayer cards, prayer at parish meetings, prayer at home, reciting a stewardship prayer together occasionally at Mass)
- Other

Goal: Education/Stewardship Catechesis

- Stewardship is an integral part of the school, religious education, and faith formation curriculum from preschool through young adult
- Adult formation shows that a steward's life is the Christian life lived to its fullness
- The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) teaches stewardship as a way of life with Christ in his Church
- Other

Goal: Welcoming/Hospitality

- Greeters are present at every Mass
- Fellowship provided regularly after Masses
- Registration for new parishioners is easy for them (e.g. welcome table, welcome information in pews)
- New parishioners are offered some kind of orientation and official welcome by stewards of the parish
- Visitor guide is available for all who celebrate with the parish
- Newcomer's packet is designed to welcome all new families who register
- Extra effort is given to offer genuine friendship to newcomers through the works of parish life
- Important days in people's lives are celebrated (e.g. parish recognizes wedding and baptismal anniversaries, etc.)
- Other

Goal: Stewardship of Treasure

- An annual commitment renewal takes place
- All parishioners (unless they've requested otherwise) are sent offertory envelopes on a regular basis
- Commitment reminder letters are sent
- Parish annual report includes every aspect of stewardship, including treasure
- Contributors are regularly thanked
- Parish gives at least 5% of ordinary income to charities (not counting special collections)
- Planned Giving is promoted regularly
- Appreciation for the fact that treasure offered *outside the parish* in the community-at-large is also good stewardship
- Other

Goal: Stewardship of Time and Talent

- An annual commitment renewal takes place
- An annual ministry fair is hosted
- The ministry guide is updated annually
- Volunteers are thanked, shown appreciation and recognized
- Appreciation for the fact that time and talent offered *outside the parish* in the community-at large is also good stewardship
- Other

Goal: Communications

- Bulletin insert on stewardship is distributed on a 'regular' basis
- Weekly bulletin includes a stewardship column or note
- Parish uses an annual Stewardship video
- Parish newsletter regularly contains information about stewardship as a way of life
- Website references stewardship information beyond the parish commitment materials for time, talent, and treasure
- Other

Goal: Forming Stewardship Leaders

- Parish Leadership (Stewardship Commission, Pastoral Council, Finance Council, etc) regularly studies the Pastoral Letter and educates itself about the basics of stewardship
- Stewardship commission meets regularly
- Parish mission statement indicates a mature understanding of stewardship as a way of life and includes the stewardship vision set out in the Bishops' pastoral letter
- Parish stewardship goals, objectives, and evaluation for the parish are prayerfully set by the stewardship commission in concert with the pastoral council and pastor
- Parish leaders regularly attend ICSC, Regional, and/or Diocesan Stewardship Conferences
- Other

Contact person completing this form:

Name: _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

Parish Name _____

Parish Website _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Pastor's Name _____

Signature of Pastor _____

Return this form to:

ICSC Parish Committee for Stewardship Education and Services
Certification Subcommittee
1275 K Street NW, #880
Washington, DC 20005

This list of goals and objectives is inspired by the book, *Keeping Stewardship Alive, Proven Stewardship Ideas*, from the ICSC. It is full of great ideas you can implement to help you become an ICSC recognized stewardship parish.

The ICSC Committee for Parish Stewardship Education and Services will review the parish's self-assessment and provide feedback and suggestions to help the parish deepen its understanding and practice of stewardship as a way of life. This committee will determine whether a parish has met the criteria. Should further steps be needed to reach the criteria, the Committee's feedback will encourage parishes to re-apply the following year.