
PASTOR'S LETTER PURPOSE AND TIMING

Providing an appropriate parish structure to facilitate the gifts of time, talent and treasure, providing spiritual, educational and social services to the parish community is important. The success and effectiveness of the services provided will be commensurate with the adequacy of the structure in place to deliver the services.

Of importance in the parish stewardship renewal process is the pastor's annual communication (letter) to parishioners stressing the importance of stewardship in their individual lives and that of the parish. This annual communication to parishioners also serves as an invitation to prayerfully discern the gifts they have received and how they plan within the ensuing year to return of those gifts proportionately, generously and sacrificially in thanksgiving in service to their parish, community, the diocese and the universal Church.

The letter should be prepared on parish letterhead, personalized where appropriate and signed by the pastor and stewardship committee chairperson. The parish commitment forms should be referenced and enclosed. This communication should be mailed or distributed sometime during the period leading up to the commitment (impact) weekend. It is important for parishioners to have the commitment forms and related information in hand and on their minds as they hear the pastor's stewardship homilies and also important that they have them in ample time to prayerfully consider the completion and return.

It is important to thank them for their past generosity and to ask for their continued support by completing and returning the enclosed parish time, talent and treasure commitment forms.

The letter should briefly remind parishioners of their individual call to discipleship and that stewardship is the action of carrying out that discipleship.

Attached to or enclosed with the letter should be a parish ministry booklet, brochure or leaflet identifying and describing the various parish ministries and/or activities. The time and talent commitment forms should be designed around and representative of the ministries and activities available in the parish. The parish may also want to include additional stewardship information or educational materials.

The process of completing the forms along with how and when they are to be returned should be included in the letter. It is desirable to provide an envelope within which they can confidentially return their completed forms.

There are a variety of ways this letter and enclosures can be distributed or mailed to parishioners.

- 1) They can be mailed to all households.
- 2) They can be labeled and distributed following the Masses on the designated weekend. Those not picked up by parishioners can then be mailed.

Whatever process is followed, it is important for the letter and enclosures to be distributed to and/or mailed, in some fashion, to all parish households.