

**St. Ambrose Stewardship Institute**  
**A collaborative initiative of St. Ambrose University,**  
**the Diocese of Davenport, the Diocese of Des Moines**  
**and the Archdiocese of Dubuque**  
**2009**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the St. Ambrose Stewardship Institute is to develop parish leaders who will promote stewardship within the Diocese of Davenport, the Diocese of Des Moines and the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

**Methods:** The Institute will use a variety of approaches to learning about stewardship. These include: sharing of ideas in person and by email; reading and writing occasional reflections about statements, articles and books about stewardship; reflecting weekly on Scripture; meeting face-to-face with a coach on a regular basis; meeting face-to-face with other participants and coaches at the beginning, middle and end of the Institute; and participating in efforts to infuse stewardship ministry into a parish. An alternative model that some participants can consider is the parish model, in which a small group in one parish (or one area) gets together on a weekly basis during both of the 8-week sessions of the Institute and shares the experience face-to-face.

**Responsibilities:** The responsibilities of the participants of the Stewardship Institute are: to read and reflect on weekly passages from Scripture; to read other materials from the books and reading lists; to share weekly reflections with a coach about the Scriptural passages and other readings; to meet at least once per month with a coach; to attend three face-to-face gatherings with other participants and coaches; to write a concluding personal reflection (once during both of the 8-week sessions) to a coach about the readings; to assess stewardship ministry in their parish and present the findings to their pastor; and to get involved in parish stewardship ministry.

**Commitment:** Participants will make a commitment to advance the ministry of stewardship in their parish.

**Support:** Support and encouragement will be provided by each of the diocesan offices and leaders of stewardship ministry in the three participating dioceses, by St. Ambrose University and by other participants and coaches of the Stewardship Institute.

**Facilitator:**

Dan R. Ebener, Director of Stewardship  
Diocese of Davenport  
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[Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org)

**Key contacts for the Institute include:**

Msgr. Tom Toale, Archdiocese of Dubuque [T.Toale@arch.pvt.k12.ia.us](mailto:T.Toale@arch.pvt.k12.ia.us)  
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## Timeline for 2009

The 2009 Stewardship Institute will be organized into **two 8-week sessions** with a summer break between the two sessions. At the conclusion of each session, participants and coaches will be expected to submit an evaluation to Dan Ebener at: [Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org).

- The first 8-week session will begin on Easter Monday, **April 13**.
- The Opening Gathering of the Institute, which is a face-to-face, 2-hour workshop, will be held at a location central to each diocese at a date to be selected by each diocese.
- The first session will conclude after 8 weeks on Friday, **June 5**.
- Evaluations of the first session will be due on Friday, June 19.
- A summer break will run from June 20 to August 10. During this time, participants are expected to read a book on stewardship that is selected in consultation with their coach.
- The second 8-week session will begin officially on Monday, **August 10**.
- The Halftime Gathering of the Institute, which is a face-to-face, 2-hour workshop, will be held at a location central to each diocese at a date to be selected by each diocese.
- The second 8-week session will conclude on Friday, **October 2**.
- Evaluations of the second session will be due on Friday, October 16.
- Feedback and evaluations of the Stewardship Institute will be conducted via email from October 2 - October 16.
- Each diocese will hold some type of Concluding Event, such as a Stewardship Day, in October 2009. Discussions are underway about possibly holding a joint gathering to conclude the 2009 Institute.
- All graduates of the Stewardship Institute will receive certificates of graduation at the concluding event to be planned and scheduled in each participating diocese.

## Session One

The emphasis for the first session will be on the spirituality and theology of stewardship.

- a. Opening Day: All participants and coaches are expected to attend the opening event in their diocese. It will include an explanation of the practical logistics of the Institute and instructions on the technology to be used. Each participant will be matched with a coach at Opening Day. Students and coaches clustered in certain geographic areas may schedule times to get together on a parish or regional basis during the Institute.

It is important that if you are signing up for the Institute, that you submit your email address to your diocesan coordinator or directly to [Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org)

- b. Weekly Reflections:
- i. Pastoral Letter: Each participant will read the 1992 pastoral letter of the US Bishops, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. (Those who have already read the pastoral are asked to read it once again for further reflection.) For the first six weeks, weekly reflections sent to the coaches should integrate reflections on weekly Scriptural passages (see below).
  - ii. Diocesan statement: Each participant will read and reflect upon the 2007 statement of the Diocese of Davenport, *Fostering Stewardship as a Way of Life*, and will integrate reflections on this statement in an email sent to their coach during Week 7.
  - iii. Other readings: In addition, participants are encouraged to read and reflect on another article(s) they select for reading (from list below). Reflections should be sent to the coach by the end of Week 8.
  - iv. Summer reading: Before the summer break, each participant is asked to consult with their coach about selecting a book on stewardship to be read at their leisure over the summer. The list of stewardship books (below) can be used as a guide for the selection of this book.

### **Readings and assignments of the week for Session I**

- April 13: Read the introduction to the pastoral letter.  
Send reflections on this and the first Scripture reading (Genesis Chapter 1, Story of Creation) to your coach.
- April 20: Read Chapter One of the pastoral letter.  
Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (John 1:35-50, Calling of the Disciples) to your coach.
- April 27: Read Chapter Two of the pastoral letter.  
Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Matthew 25:14-30, Parable of the Talents) to your coach.
- May 4: Read Chapter Three of the pastoral letter.  
Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Acts 2:1-47, Communal Life) to your coach.
- May 11: Read Chapter Four of the pastoral letter.  
Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (2 Corinthians 9:6-15, "Whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly") to your coach.
- May 18: Read Chapter Five of the pastoral letter.  
Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Luke 12:32-46, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be") to your coach.
- May 25: Read the diocesan statement, *Fostering Stewardship as a Way of Life*.  
Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Chronicles 29:10-19, Riches are from God) to your coach.

June 1: Write a Reflection Paper on a stewardship topic of your choice, using the book and article list as necessary (See list at the end of this syllabus.)  
Send this paper and your reflection on the weekly Scripture reading (Mark 10:17-31, The Rich Young Man) to your coach.

The first session will conclude on Friday, June, 5.

By June 19: Students submit evaluations of the first session to Dan Ebener,  
[Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org). (An evaluation form will be emailed to you.).

By June 26: Coaches submit feedback to their participants and evaluation of the first session to  
[Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org).

Weekly reminders: At the beginning of each week, the facilitator will send an email message that will address that week's assignments and announcements. If you do not receive this email by April 13, please email: [Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org).

Reflection papers: For the purposes of this Institute, a reflection paper simply means that the participant has read the materials and written their own comments in response to the weekly readings. There is no page minimum for these papers and they will not be graded. However, participants can expect to get a response to their reflections from their coach.

Integrating reflection and action: Students are encouraged to get involved in stewardship activities in their parish throughout this Institute and to integrate their thinking about that involvement into their reflections and communication with their coach.

Suggestions for weekly reflections: For the first six weeks, consider the questions "For reflection and discussion" listed at the end of each chapter of the stewardship pastoral to be read for that week. You may want to focus your written reflections on answering those questions that seem most compelling to you.

Suggestions for optional articles to be read: Those who wish to do additional reading beyond that assigned for each week are encouraged to review the list of readings on the e-reserves at St. Ambrose Library (from the list of articles provided below). Reflections on these readings can be integrated into the weekly reflection that is emailed to the participant's coach. (The password for e-reserves at the SAU Library for 2009 is "astro".)

Suggestions for e-dialogue: Participants will engage in email dialogue with their coach about their weekly reflections on the readings and Scripture passages. Some reflections may be sent to the facilitator to be shared with the full group of students and coaches.

Suggestions for meeting face-to-face: Participants may also engage in occasional dialogue with other participants and coaches through parish or regional meetings that will be set up as part of the Institute. These face-to-face discussions may take the place of written reflections.

## **Session Two**

The emphasis for the second session will be on the implementation of stewardship in a parish. The second session will begin officially on Monday, **August 10** and continue for 8 weeks until Friday, **October 2**.

- a. Halftime gathering: On a day to be determined in each diocese, all participants and coaches of that diocese will meet face-to-face at a location(s) central to those participating in the Institute. That gathering will begin with prayer, theological reflection and introductions. It will include witness talks and presentations on various aspects of the implementation of stewardship from coaches and graduates of the Stewardship Institute. That gathering will also include a review of the first half of the Institute, a discussion about the logistical and technical parts of the Institute, a discussion and explanation of any changes that might be made and instructions on technology to be used and the plans for the second half of the Institute.
- b. Practical Guide to the Pastoral: For the second session, each participant will be asked to read *Stewardship Disciples Respond: A practical guide for pastoral leaders* (ICSC, 2004).
- c. Parish assessment: As a new part of the Institute, each participant will be asked to assess the stewardship ministry of their own parish using a parish self-assessment tool that has been developed by this Institute and will be emailed to all participants and coaches. (That tool is based on a set of criteria that is used by ICSC to measure a high-performing stewardship parish.) Participants will also be asked to share their results with the pastor and possibly the parish council and finance council of their parish.
- d. Other activities: In addition, each participant will write a weekly reflection to their coach about their readings and activities.

## **Readings and weekly assignments, Session Two**

August 10: Finish reading the book selected for summer reading. Send reflections on this and the first Scripture reading (Psalm 116, “What return can I make to the Lord, for all the good he has done.”) to your coach.

If you have a stewardship committee in your parish, schedule a meeting with them to be held sometime in the next few weeks to discuss its work and the parish stewardship self-assessment tool used in this Institute (see below).

August 17: Read pages 12-31 of the Practical Guide to the Pastoral. Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Matthew 6:25-33, Dependence on God) to your coach.

August 24: Read pages 32-40 of the Practical Guide to the Pastoral. Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Luke 16:1-13, “You cannot give yourself to God and mammon...”) to your coach.

August 31: Review pages 46-78, the Appendices of the Practical Guide to the Pastoral. Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (1 Cor 4:1, “Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”) to your coach.

Sept. 7: Begin to conduct the parish self-assessment on stewardship ministry for your parish. If there is a stewardship committee in your parish, or a group that works on stewardship, involve them in evaluating the stewardship ministry in your parish. Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (Sirach 35:1-10, “With each contribution show a cheerful countenance, and pay your tithes in a spirit of joy”) to your coach.

Sept. 14: Finish reading the book you selected about implementation of stewardship. Send reflections on this and the Scripture reading (1 Peter 4:7-11, “As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God’s varied graces”) to your coach.

Sept. 21: In consultation with your coach, select a topic on implementation of stewardship in a parish and find a reading related to that topic. (Suggested topics include: “how to set up a ministry fair”, “how to organize a stewardship committee”, or “how to give a stewardship witness talk”.) Write your thoughts about this topic and your reflections on the weekly Scripture passage (Matt 6:1-6, “When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing”) to your coach.

Sept. 28: Complete the parish stewardship self-assessment about your own parish. Send those results and your reflection on the weekly Scripture reading (Proverbs 3:1-12, Attitude toward the Lord) to your coach.

Upon completion of the parish stewardship self-assessment, schedule a meeting with your pastor to share your evaluation of your parish and your recommendations for improvement. If possible, schedule meetings with your parish council and finance council as well.

The second session of the Institute concludes on Friday, October 2.

By Oct. 9: Students submit evaluations of the 2nd session to Dan Ebener at [Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org). (An evaluation form will be emailed to you.).

By Oct. 16: Coaches submit feedback to each of their participants and evaluations of the 2nd session to [Ebener@davenportdiocese.org](mailto:Ebener@davenportdiocese.org).

### **Concluding event**

Each diocese will schedule a concluding event, possibly a joint Stewardship Day in Iowa in the October 2009. If a joint event is not possible, each diocese will organize its own concluding ceremony to recognize the participants and the coaches of the Institute and to present the 2009 graduates of the Institute with a certificate of graduation from their own bishop.

## **Session One. Suggested book list**

Catholic Diocese of Wichita (1999). *Characteristics of a Christian steward*. Fifty pages with a list and description of ten characteristics of a good steward. Available from the Diocese of Davenport Stewardship Office.

Conway, Daniel. (2005) *What Do I Own and What Owns Me? A Spirituality of Stewardship*. Stewardship is one of the chief characteristics of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Twenty-Third Publications. 72 pages.

Conway, Daniel. *I Like Being in Parish Ministry*. In a simple, practical, and concise style, the author shows why stewardship is an essential aspect of Christian living. Twenty-Third Publications. 45 pages.

Downey, Michael (2000). *Altogether Gift: A Trinitarian Spirituality*. The author guides us in a poetic, direct and conversational style to a deeper appreciation of the Triune God who is Giver, Given, Gifting. Orbis Books. 140 pages.

Hellwig, Monica (1999). *Guests of God: Stewards of Divine Creation*. Paulist Press. We are guests of God on this earth and we must cultivate a deep awareness of God's hospitality and be responsible faithful stewards of all creation. 127 pages.

Leddy, Mary Jo (2002). *Radical gratitude*. This guide to attaining the gratitude that frees our spirit helps us to appreciate more deeply, family, community, the earth and ourselves. Orbis Books. 182 pages.

Mahan, Dan (2005). *More Than Silver or Gold*. St Catherine of Siena Press. Fr. Dan has stewardship homilies for many Sundays in each of the three cycles. A great help for pastors and also a nice gift for them. 39 homilies in 176 pages. A great resource.

Shaughnessy, John (2006). *One More Gift to Give*. St. Catherine of Siena Press. This book of 58 pages is a story of an unforgettable Christmas Day filled with love, loss and the gifts that matter most. A quick and delightful read!

Smith, Colleen (2001). *Catholic stewardship: Sharing God's gifts*. This book is an easy read with many stewardship tips and a solid theology of stewardship. Our Sunday Visitor. 76 pages.

Zech, Charles (2008). *Best practices in Parish Stewardship*. This book is based on research and has practical suggestions. It is an easy read. Our Sunday Visitor. 124 pages.

## **Session Two. Suggested book list**

Catholic Diocese of Wichita (1997). *Characteristics of a stewardship parish in the Catholic diocese of Wichita*. Twenty pages with practical information on a stewardship parish. Available from the Diocese of Davenport Stewardship Office.

Clements, C. Justin (2000). *Stewardship: A parish handbook*. Liguori Publications.

Clements, C. Justin (2006). Time, talent and treasure: *Reflections on the US Bishops model for parish stewardship*. Liguori Publications.

Judd, Marilyn (1992). *Creating a stewardship council*. The Liturgical Press.

Kelly, James (1995). *Sustaining and strengthening stewardship*. This has 24 questions and answers on stewardship, bulletin thoughts for two years, and a list of 36 Sunday gospels that offer stewardship messages. The Liturgical Press. 45 pages.

McNamara, Patrick (2003). *Called to be stewards*. This contains eight case studies of Catholic parishes adopting a stewardship approach, highlighting the range of challenges involved in implementing. The Liturgical Press. 170 pages

Wilkes, Paul (2001). *Excellent Catholic parishes*. Westminster John Knox Press. Based on research, this book gives helpful, hopeful stories of vibrant Catholic parishes.

### **Suggested Articles (or booklets) List:**

Note: It is suggested that participants consult with their coaches about the selection of two articles for review during each session. Some articles on stewardship will be placed on e-reserves at the St. Ambrose Library. The course title is **DIO 100**. The password is “astro”. Directions for accessing these e-reserves will be distributed to Stewardship Institute participants.

*Today's Parish* has many, many articles on parish stewardship. Each year, this publication includes a special edition on stewardship that is filled with helpful articles. Some of these articles are included below. But many more are available in *Today's Parish* each year.

Clemens, C. Justin (2007). Stewardship conversion: Some nuts and bolts, *The Priest*, pp. 13-19.

Haefner, Douglas (2004). Christian stewardship. This three page article tells stories of thanksgiving which express the habit of giving. *Church* magazine, Spring 2004 issue, pp. 32-34.

International Catholic Stewardship Council (1974, 1986, 2000). *The life of the Christian steward*.

Kuczka, Kathy (2002). Stewardship in tough times. This six page article tells stories of what parishes and dioceses can do to discover gifts and respond in gratitude. *Church* magazine, Spring 2002 issue, pp. 27-32.

Ryan, Bishop Sylvester (2007). Stewardship and a parish response, *The Priest*, pp. 10-12.

Saint Francis of Assisi Parish (2001). *Stewardship: Living life as God intended*. This is the plan and the success story of St. Francis of Assisi Parish of Wichita, KS, written in May 2001.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2003). *Called and gifted for the third millennium*.

Zech, Charles (2004). 6 essential building blocks. Stewardship is not about something we do, but rather it is about who we are and Whose we are. *Today's Parish*, September 2004, pp. 9-13.

Zyskowski, Bob (2003). True stewardship. Stewardship is about the reign of God. It's all of us together, looking at our lives. We have to lead people to a place that transforms them. *US Catholic* magazine, March 2003 issue, pp. 12-17.

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